

Review Update (Follow up)

Review:	Management of Conservation Areas
Task Group:	Management of Conservation Areas Task Group
Task Group Chair:	Councillor Rabi Martins
Final report published:	February 2016
Cabinet response:	7 March 2016
Scrutiny consideration of response:	16 June 2016

Recommendation 1:	Include information about conservation areas in annual council tax and business rate notices for properties with postcodes in these areas.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This was not done for 2017 notices. Should be reviewed for 2018 Notices.

Recommendation 2:	Introduce a symbol on lamp columns or existing street furniture to show that the street or neighbourhood is in a designated conservation area.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This will be worked up and included in the Conservation Management Plan review scheduled for late 2017 and 2018/19.

Recommendation 3:	Improve access to comprehensive information about conservation areas on Watford Borough Council's website, including guidance to residents about living or owning property there.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This will be reviewed as part of the work we are starting with the Development Management (DM) team to look at how we can be more efficient.

Recommendation 4:	Encourage Councillors to play an active role in raising awareness of conservation areas, for example through public meetings, promoting local history projects, arranging for officers to speak at local meetings etc.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This can be raised during the member training – first session scheduled for July 2017

Recommendation 5:	Consider alternative ways to engage with residents and businesses about the need for planning permissions for certain alterations in conservation areas. This might include utilising social media to sign-post them to the Council's website for comprehensive information.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This will be picked up during the work we are doing with DM team and as part of the CA management Plan review late 2017 and 2018/19.

Recommendation 6:	Review current Article 4 directions to reflect changes in the General Permitted Development Orders and consider whether other classes should be included.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This will be looked at with the DM team and a view taken as to how we should proceed.

Recommendation 7:	Ensure that procedures remain in place to undertake regular reviews of Watford Borough Council's Article 4 directions in order to address the potential impact of changes in technology or legislation.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	This will be looked at with the DM team and a view taken as to how we should proceed.

Recommendation 8:	Continue with the regular review of Watford Borough Council's toolkit of documents to ensure that these remain relevant.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	Two CA appraisals reviewed and amended in 2016/17 – Grove Mill and The Square. One is programmed for 2017/18 – Macdonnell Gardens and the Buildings at Risk Register is being reviewed as well.

Recommendation 9:	Ensure that Watford Borough Council's development management officers continue to consult with the conservation and policy team when considering applications adjacent to conservation areas, in order to minimise the impact of new developments on properties within those areas.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	The Council continues to employ officers to undertake this role.

Recommendation 10:	Continue to assign conservation area management responsibility to a designated officer and commit to providing adequate council resources to continue the excellent work that has been done to manage Watford's conservation areas and protect the character of Watford's built environment and street scene, particularly within designated conservation areas.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	The Council continues to employ officers with designated responsibility for this work.

Recommendation 11:	Include conservation, design and enforcement issues in the induction and development management training for Councillors to establish a comprehensive training programme.
Cabinet response:	Agreed to consider the task group recommendations inform the review of the conservation area management plan.
Latest update:	Obtaining dates has been difficult and planned sessions rescheduled due other member training requirements taking precedence and the elections. The first Conservation session is scheduled for 6 th July 2017.