

Report



Leader of the Council

Part 1

Date: 15 February 2024

Subject Partnership Agreement between Newport City Council, Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru relating to the Heritage and Cultural Offer for Caerleon

Purpose To seek Cabinet Member approval to enter into a formal partnership with Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru to explore and deliver an improved heritage and cultural offer in Caerleon and agree the vision and objectives of the partnership.

Author Destination Development Manager

Ward Caerleon

Summary The cultural and heritage assets in Caerleon are of international importance and it is essential that we collectively recognise and maximise the potential of Caerleon's Roman heritage (archaeological sites and museums) for the benefit of the local community and visitors. Alongside Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru, the council is one of the key organisations responsible for promoting, managing and protecting Caerleon as a place. It is open to the council to be part of a formal partnership, bringing together key stakeholders to coordinate the delivery of an improved visitor offer in Caerleon.

Proposal Cabinet Member agrees to form a partnership with Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru and to agree the development of a vision and objectives which enables the partnership to explore, develop and deliver an improved heritage and cultural offer in Caerleon.

Action by Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Timetable Immediate
This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Finance
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Head of Law and Standards
- Strategic Director Environment and Sustainability
- Cadw
- Amgueddfa Cymru

Signed Background

The cultural and heritage assets in Caerleon are of international importance and it is essential that we both recognise and maximise the potential of Caerleon's Roman heritage

(archaeological sites and museums) for the benefit of the local community and visitors. The town already attracts significant numbers of visitors, including school parties, and it is important that we understand what is needed to maximise the visitor offer to ensure that visitors have a positive experience and continue to explore the wider visitor offer across the City. Such opportunities need to reflect the sensitive constraints within the town and ensure that visitors, residents and local businesses are not disadvantaged.

The council is one of the key organisations responsible for promoting, managing and protecting the wider city of Newport, but it is recognised that Caerleon has a significant role in showcasing the rich heritage and culture we have in the city. Other key partner organisations involved with the direct management and promotion of historic assets in Caerleon are Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru. By working collaboratively and through the development of a formal partnership with an agreed vision and objectives, there is an opportunity to ensure that the visitor offer meets the requirements of all stakeholders, including the local community and businesses.

Representatives from Amgueddfa Cymru, Cadw and Newport City Council have been exploring the opportunity to develop a new, long-term, joint vision for improving Caerleon’s heritage and tourism offer. The draft vision is:

To enhance the quality of the Roman and Romano-British heritage experience for the local community and visitors, enabling learning and discovery in a joined-up, inclusive and sustainable way.

The vision remains in draft form, awaiting community and stakeholder engagement. All partners recognise the need to involve the community as part of this project and it is intended to select or nominate community representatives to form part of the Partnership Governance Board and Steering Group. Each partner will nominate representatives to the Governance Board and Steering Group. The Council’s representatives will be agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member. A proposed organogram for the draft governance is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1.



The vision is supported by a series of objectives that are grouped under the three themes of engage, discover and conserve. In respect of ‘engage’, this is intended to focus on promoting

the wider historic and cultural offer and celebrating the heritage that is contained in Caerleon. This is intended to better integrate visitors and residents and ensure that tourism is managed sustainably and local businesses benefit. As part of 'discover', this focuses on sharing learning about the Roman and Romano-British heritage and the significance of the heritage assets and collections, how the Romans influenced modern life and traditions, and supporting further research. 'Conserve' is the third objective and focuses on protecting and maintaining the historic assets and collections, making Caerleon a centre of conservation skills excellence and raising awareness of the importance of heritage sites to reduce local vandalism.

There is no time limit on the length of the partnership agreement and the appointed Governance Board can take the decision to wind up the partnership. It is also reasonable to expect that the Council can withdraw from the agreement should the role and actions of the partnership come into conflict with the function of the council. Annual update reports can be provided to Cabinet, confirming progress and actions which have been agreed and are in delivery.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

Cadw are providing interim project manager/admin support for the Partnership with the aim of securing grant funding for a dedicated project manager who would be responsible for progressing and delivering any agreed projects. There is currently no financial contribution required from the Council for the partnership.

Risks

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?
Failure of a Partner to agree to form a Partnership	H	L	Failure to agree by all partners will result in there being a negative impact of the progression and delivery of agreed objectives. However, all partners are seeking formal agreement to form the partnership from their respective Authorities. The proposed governance structure ensures that there is suitable oversight and adjudication of the work of the Steering Group	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lack of funding to deliver agreed objectives or identified strategic projects	H	M	Projects which form part of agreed objectives will need to be supported by relevant funding which will be identified prior to delivery. The Council is not expected to play a direct delivery role for any identified strategic projects.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Lack of engagement from community	M	L	Community representatives will be nominated and/or selected by the board. There will be wider engagement with the local community on the work of the partnership and the progress being made. Elected ward members will be represented on the Steering Group.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
-----------------------------------	---	---	---	---

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

This partnership would complement the objectives of the Corporate Plan 2022-2027 'An Ambitious, Fairer, Greener Newport for everyone'.

Council Commitments / Priorities

This proposal supports the primary objective of the Corporate Plan 2022 -2027 to work to deliver an 'Ambitious, Fairer, Greener Newport for everyone.' To achieve this goal, Newport City Council has four well-being objectives that are the focus until 2027 and create the foundations for our longer-term vision for Newport over the next 20 years:

1. Economy, education and skills - Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.

Newport will become a destination that celebrates cultural diversity, heritage and delivers elite sporting events.

The proposed partnership will ensure that the assets and heritage of Caerleon are recognised, promoted and managed for the benefit of residents and visitors in a collaborative way for the long term.

RE&D Service Plan priorities:

Objective 2- Creating a vibrant and proud city where our tourism, destination, culture, leisure and heritage offer will be improved and promoted through events and marketing.

Options Available and considered:

The following options are available:

1. To form a partnership with Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru to explore and deliver an improved heritage and cultural offer in Caerleon, including the agreement of the vision and objectives of the partnership.
2. To not form a partnership with Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru, allowing the future visitor offer to be directed by Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru, with the Council's role limited to its statutory functions only.

Preferred Option and Why

1. To form a partnership with Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru to explore and deliver an improved heritage and cultural offer in Caerleon, including the agreement of the vision and objectives of the partnership. By working in a partnership, there are wider opportunities to

improve awareness of the heritage assets within Caerleon and across the city, as well as ensuring that any enhancements and promotion of the visitor offer is sustainable and integrated with the local community.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The report outlines a proposal to enter into a partnership with Cadw and Amgueddfa Cymru. It is stated that any initial costs associated with project management and administration will be met via Cadw. However, the report also notes a risk around longer term funding, which would ideally be met via grant. Therefore, whilst the Council is not required to make an initial financial contribution, there is potential for a contribution to be required in the future. If at any point the need for the Council to contribute does arise, the financial implications will need to be considered in detail at that point, and the necessary funding source identified, prior to any new commitment being made. The Council's capacity for further external borrowing commitments is severely restricted given the current funding climate. Therefore the use of s106 funds, grants, capital reserves and revenue funds are recommended for this where these exist and can be prioritised.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

It would be permissible for the Council to enter into the proposed arrangement in accordance with its general power of competence as set out in Part 2 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. There are no legal implications at this stage. Once a draft partnership agreement has been produced, the Council will need to consider what if any obligations arise from that agreement, for example, with regard to any requirement to make financial contributions or duties to third parties. It is noted that grant funding may be sought in the future and the Council should ensure that, if it is to be a party to any such funding, that the terms and conditions of such funding are clearly understood and that the funding agreement contains adequate protection for the Council in relation to the actions of other parties. Further, more specific legal advice can be provided with regard to the partnership agreement and any grant funding arrangement as and when required.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

This agreement supports the primary vision of the Corporate Plan 2022-27 in working to deliver an ambitious, fairer, greener Newport for everyone; specifically supporting Objective 2 (Economy, Education and Skills – Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all).

The principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and its five ways of working are supported through working in collaboration with partners and involving the local community to ensure the protection and promotion of the assets in the long-term.

There are no direct HR implications associated with the report.

Comments of Non-Executive Members

Caerleon Ward Councillors (including Cabinet Member for Social Services):

For many years the Councillors in Caerleon have supported the view that a more coordinated approach to promoting and preserving our heritage in Caerleon is required, namely a vision or master plan that all the interested parties can get behind, with a view of acknowledging and elevating Caerleon's historical importance as a national and international destination of significant historical importance.

This work has been championed by members of the Caerleon Tourism Forum which was set up by the council's tourism/ destination officers and supported and chaired by local councillors. We are incredibly

excited that we are now in a position to agree a partnership agreement between the three main players, which will involve a strong community involvement moving forward.

Having been part of the initial meetings that have brought us to this point, we are confident that we can work together and share a common vision of what can be achieved in Caerleon and build on the vast untapped potential of Caerleon in a way that benefits the local community and the wider city of Newport.

We have three local councillors in Caerleon who share a passion for history and as a group we welcome this opportunity and support the recommendations. We are certain that this will create a platform that will encourage community engagement, discussion and a plan that will benefit the region and set the foundations that open up significant opportunities for the region and future generations. As local councillors we will do all we can to ensure it's success moving forward.

Councillor Cocks:

The Roman remains in Caerleon are only rivalled in the UK by Hadrian's Wall. Many of the archaeological features to be found in Caerleon are unique not only within the UK, but also within Europe. The creation of the proposed partnership to develop the site is a highly positive development.

It is essential that the local community is engaged in the project from the beginning and it is pleasing to see that this is a prominent feature of the proposal. Developing the heritage offer will do much to benefit the community, but there will also be local concerns. Careful thought will need to be given as to how the local representatives on the board and steering group are selected.

It is also good to see that the report recognises that developing the site at Caerleon will contribute to the development of the city as a whole. This project not only has the potential to be of benefit to the local community and local businesses, but also has the potential to contribute to the economic regeneration of the city as a whole. Caerleon is part of an unrivalled Newport heritage offer.

The importance of the Roman remains in Caerleon allows the partnership to set an ambitious vision the future. I appreciate that the vision is only at a draft stage, but the importance of Caerleon as a Roman site, allows us to be much more ambitious than just to "enhance" the site. Amgueddfa Cymru and Cadw staff already do an excellent job, but I believe that the site deserves to be placed on a new level. The possibility of future grant bids will be greatly enhanced by an ambitious vision.

As a local member for Caerleon, I give the report my full support.

Scrutiny Committees

None

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**
- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

The council has a number of legislative responsibilities to assess the impact of any strategic decision, proposal or policy on people that may experience disadvantage or inequality.

The potentially global reach of the heritage and assets in Caerleon will require the partnership to give appropriate consideration to a very wide-ranging breadth of visitors and backgrounds. The partnership can potentially add to the diversity and demographic mix of visitors to the city, providing opportunities for Newport businesses, supporting local entrepreneurship, and jobs growth in turn.

The proposal supports the sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) through increased promotion and awareness of an internationally significant heritage offer through working in collaboration with partners and involving the local community to ensure the protection and promotion of the assets in the long term.

An FEIA has not been completed at this stage as the development of the vision and objectives of the partnership remains in draft form and subject to engagement with community representatives.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. Vandalism of historical assets is a national issue and the partnership will target engagement and work with local communities to raise awareness and civic pride in the assets.

Consultation

Ward Members informed.

Background Papers

None.

Dated: 7 February 2024