

ACTION TAKEN ON PETITION

Council Members are asked to note the action taken in relation to the under mentioned petitions which were presented to Council.

- (i) Petition from residents of Washington requesting a feasibility study for improved parking facilities in front of the shops on Vigo Lane, Harraton, Washington presented to Council by Councillor Ian Cuthbert.**

The former Director of Development and Regeneration agreed to undertake a feasibility study into a scheme to improve parking in front of the shops.

The feasibility Study has now been completed. A parking lay-by could be provided on Vigo Lane, in front of the shops, at an estimated cost of £66,000. This includes £42,000 for the diversion of underground NEDL and BT cables.

The Council's Capital Programme for traffic management schemes in 2010/11 has been significantly reduced following an in-year Local Transport Plan (LTP) budget reduction of circa £900k imposed by central government. Until such time as the LTP budget for 2011/12 is known and agreed, no decision can be made on progressing this scheme at this time.

Councillor Cuthbert and the lead petitioner have been notified.

- (ii) Petition from the Washington History Society – Request to install an Education and Heritage Centre which was presented to Council, by Councillor Jill Fletcher on 21 January 2010.**

The petition contained over 900 signatures

The Executive Director City Services considered the petition and following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Safer City a meeting was held with members of the local voluntary sector and officers from Culture and Tourism to discuss their aspirations and needs in relation to a proposed centre. It was agreed that a recommendation be taken forward to the Washington Area Committee for further consideration.

Washington Area Committee agreed at its meeting on 4 February 2010 for a funding application to go forward for a feasibility study to be carried out.

The funding would incorporate the following options:

- costs for the renovation and restoration of the preferred site (Spout Lane),
- to consider a range of options for alternative delivery incorporating the current heritage offer within the area,
- assessing the individual strengths and weaknesses of the heritage assets identified and how these assets contribute to the area and the city, and
- opportunities for collaboration between heritage sites and assets within the Washington area, including guidance on volunteers, management and governance.

In June 2010, following a procurement process undertaken by officers from Culture and Tourism and the Portfolio Holder for Safer City and Culture, the North of England Civic Trust (NECT) was awarded the contract. The contract commenced on 1 September 2010.

An interim meeting will take place in November 2010 with NECT and Members/Officers from the City Council. The purpose of the meeting will be to update on the progress of works, with a full presentation on the outcomes of the study planned for January 2011.

Councillor Fletcher and the lead petitioner are to be notified.