

West Wiltshire District Council

Cabinet

20 April 2005

Revision of Historic Buildings Joint Committees Constitutions

1 Purpose

To agree to the setting up of a joint Historic Buildings Joint Committee (HBJC) for Warminster and Westbury. To note that the current HBJC's for Bradford on Avon and Trowbridge are to continue and that the Melksham HBJC is to no longer operate.

2. Background

During the consultation process on the District's Historic Environment Conservation Strategy last year, it was noted that Westbury indicated that they would like to join forces with Warminster's Historic Buildings Joint Committee (HBJC) to provide financial support towards repairs of historic buildings in Westbury. At the same time Melksham indicated that they would reduce their financial contribution and operate a more ad-hoc system of grant allocation without a formal HBJC. This proposal was reported to the District's Cabinet in June 2004 and subsequently adopted as part of the Conservation Strategy.

3. Key Issues

On 21st February 2005, The Highways, Planning and Development Committee of Westbury Town Council agreed that they would like to participate in a tripartite partnership with Warminster and the District. They agreed to a £4,000 contribution to the HBJC.

On the 7th March 2005 Warminster HBJC resolved: "That Westbury be invited to join with Warminster HBJC, and that funds be protected with amounts ring-fenced." As a result it is necessary to take a report to the District's Cabinet for agreement to amend the Warminster's HBJC constitution to include Westbury. A copy of the amended constitution will be circulated at the meeting on the 20th April.

It is proposed that the area of Westbury to be included in the HBJC will be the area currently contained within the Conservation Area and will be open for repairs to Listed Buildings only. This will therefore be organised in line with the Warminster HBJC guidelines.

Financial Implications: Members will be aware that there is a 50% reduction in the District's HBJC budget in the new financial year starting in April 2005. This means that it will not be possible for the District to match-fund each of the District's HBJC's as previously agreed in the Conservation Strategy. It has been established that the reduced amount will be allocated across the District on a pro-rata basis. The table below shows the details of this provision. It should be noted that the funding for Melksham HBJC that has been in existence since April 2003 has now been curtailed.

<u>Bradford on Avon</u>	<u>Trowbridge</u>	<u>Warminster & Westbury</u>	
£10,000	£10,000	£5,000	£4,000 (Towns contribution)
£6,400	£6,400	£3,200	£2,800 (WWDC Contribution)

Legal Issues: None relating to this report other than the need to amend the HBJC Constitutions to include Westbury and amend the contribution from the District.

Other implications: None relating to this report.

Human Rights: None relating to this report.

4. Options

Cabinet has the option to comment on the proposal for Warminster and Westbury to have a joint HBJC. Whilst the views of both the Town Council in Westbury and the current Warminster HBJC are positive, the actual implications in terms of extra work have not been explored fully. The Technical Advisor, Mr Johns, currently manages the Warminster HBJC. However, Westbury would have to be managed in-house, as Mr Johns is already involved in Bradford. This could be balanced against the fact that the Melksham HBJC no longer operates and that this had been managed by the conservation officer previously.

5. List of background papers.

The WWDC Historic Environment Conservation Strategy, June 2004.

Minutes from the Highways, Planning and Development Committee of Westbury Town Council. (21/2/05).

Minutes from the Warminster HBJC (7/3/05).

HBJC Constitutions.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- Note this report and endorse the revised contribution by WWDC to each HBJC.
- Agrees to the formation of the Warminster and Westbury HBJC.

Cllr Michael Mounde
Portfolio Holder

Caroline Power
Conservation Officer

File Ref: POW/04-05

File Location: Committee Services and
Planning Policy and Conservation

