

**Heritage Management Services:**  
Capacity building and delivery in small districts

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High Peak Borough Council  
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

**Strategic Alliance**



**The Strategic Alliance**



**Background and context**

**The Strategic Alliance Councils**

- Prior to the Alliance, the **combined workforce** of High Peak Borough Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council was approx. **2000**
- Through outsourcing of services, efficiency savings through the Alliance and the CSR, the **workforce is now about 490**
- Combined population of approx **185,000**



**The Strategic Alliance: Background**

- Established in 2008 - *not established in response to the CSR*
- Two Councils looking to appoint a Joint CEO and look at selective joint management and delivery of services
- Initially to save about £600,000 in management costs and planned £2 million savings in service costs
- Joint CEO followed by joint Board of Directors followed by joint Service Managers
- Unusual as it extended across both county and government region boundaries

**The Strategic Alliance: Background**

- Early quick wins in operating joint services (eg street cleaning, parks, customer services and finance).
- Transformation programme looking at other services – this included planning policy, design, conservation, economic development and tourism
- HPBC and SMDC are contiguous, have very similar demographic profiles and geography and a similar range of issues in many service areas





### Comprehensive Spending Review

- HPBC/SMDC had to find **£4.5 million further cuts** over three years out of a combined £24.5 million revenue budget – approx 18½%
- Management review which led to reduction of the number of managers by 88% (96 down to 11) in order to maintain frontline services - invitation for VR with guaranteed acceptance
- Transformation programme brought forward so that all services jointly managed
- Better prepared to make the savings because of the measures already in place

### Heritage services in the Alliance

- Both HPBC and SMDC had teams of 1.8 FTE dedicated design and conservation staff (1.0 FTE managers and 0.8 FTE officers each) plus project staff (THIs) – **3.6 FTE plus project staff in total**
- SMDC Manager took early retirement leaving **2.6 FTE staff plus project staff and technical support across the Alliance**
- Service now sits in the **Regeneration Service** which encompasses planning policy, conservation, design, tourism, economic development, major planning allocations and strategic housing

### The Strategic Alliance



### Heritage management and regeneration

### Approach to heritage management and regeneration

Recognised the critical role that the built heritage plays in place making and the strategic management of towns

Avoid a narrow definition of heritage management which just sits as an adjunct to the development control process by:

- Aligning it with **corporate priorities**
- Establishing a fundamental role within the Alliance's **Financial Growth Strategy**
- Flexible use of resources and **pooling of skills**
- **Partnership working**

**Aligning with corporate priorities**

- Importance of aligning the conservation and management of the historic environment to current key agendas of **regeneration and sustainability**
- Both Councils have identified **town centre regeneration as a priority with heritage issues at the forefront** and have established a good track record of project delivery
- The Corporate Plans are framed around the **resources required to deliver the priorities**
- In comparison with all district authorities, **both HPBC and SMDC are in the top 20%** of highest spenders on heritage and planning policy *(Audit Commission)*

**Financial Growth Strategy**

- Strategy to move away from **reliance on government grant** in aid and Council Tax
- Already high net revenue income from infrastructure eg car parks and sale of natural mineral water
- Agreed programme of **capital projects that will generate revenue income** including business rates
- Fundamental to that has been the **programme of heritage-led regeneration**

**Heritage-led regeneration - Buxton**

- Almost £70 million gross value of development from an investment of £4 million from HPBC **Leverage rate of over 16**
- Attraction of new businesses to distinctive historic buildings eg University of Derby's Buxton campus – transformed Buxton's economy from a **below-average wage rate town to above-average**
- Re-emerging as *England's leading spa town*



**Heritage-led regeneration – Glossopdale THI and Liveability Project**

- Combined £5.65 million project - £2.9 million public realm improvements and 23 commercial buildings awarded grant funding
- Retained 95% occupancy rate in its high street compared with 88% national average (medium town)
- 37 jobs created and many more retained
- A survey of retailers setting up business in Glossop since 2009 showed that the attractiveness of the town and the improvements delivered by the public realm scheme were a factor in deciding to locate to the area



**Flexible use of limited resources & pooling of skills**

- Alliance allows specialist **staff resources to be moved across the two authorities** to reflect the peaks and troughs in workload of either Council
- The Alliance authorities happened to be a **good fit**
- Increasing amount of **project work undertaken** within which teams put together from across all of the Regeneration Service

	SMDC	HPBC
<b>Heritage management</b>		
Development management	✓	
Enforcement	✓	
Conservation area designation		✓
Conservation area appraisals/management plans	✓	
<b>Heritage regeneration</b>		
Managing grants programmes	✓	✓
Flagship projects – buildings at risk		✓
Town centre regeneration		✓
Design & place making		✓

**Partnership working**

Heritage profession is used to **partnership working** – funding partners, services at both tiers of local government, English Heritage, regional heritage forums.

- Partnership working and pooling of resources will become increasingly important in the future
- **New partnerships with the local community:**
  - Counting our heritage
  - Buxton Design and Place Making Strategy

**Counting our heritage**

Pilot funded by English Heritage and the Councils to look at logistics of establishing a network of volunteers to undertake Buildings at Risk surveys:

- 45 volunteers came forward
- 4 training sessions established
- 829 surveys undertaken
- 11 week survey period from May to August 2013

Now looking to undertake a County wide survey applying the methods tested

## Buxton – Clarity of vision



### Design & Place Making Strategy

- Town centre wide vision for Buxton
- Innovative process of preparation using 'Enquiry by Design'
- Community led and community owned
- Adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document



### Retail investment strategy

- Promotional brochure designed to 'sell' Buxton and deliver the principles set out in the Design and Place Making Strategy

## Conclusions

- Important to look at 'conservation' in a far wider sense whereby it can become a key **part of a Council's corporate regeneration and sustainability strategies**
- **Engage the public in developing a clear vision** for a town so as to take on ownership – would be very unusual for heritage issues not to come to the forefront of the local distinctiveness that most communities seek to retain and enhance
- **Use staff resources flexibly to deliver projects** – the aims of planning policy, conservation, tourism and economic development teams are often very similar and overlap
- **Work in partnership** – across Councils, with funders and with the local community. The heritage sector has a vast untapped resource of enthusiastic people who could be used to enhance diminishing professional staff numbers.