

AT A MEETING of the CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND RURAL AFFAIRS  
SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle,  
Winchester on Friday, 8 July 2011.

**PRESENT**

Chairman:  
p Councillor Elaine Still

Vice-Chairman:  
p Councillor Alan Rice, TD

Councillors:

p Alan Broadhurst	p Peter Mason
p Peter Chegwyn	p Alexis McEvoy
p Peter Edgar	p Frank Pearce
p Michael Geddes	p Jenny Radley
p Ron Hussey	p Thomas Thacker
p Roger Kimber	

Also in attendance: Councillor Keith Chapman, Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.

73. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies were received, all committee members were present.

74. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally at the time of the debate declare their interest, and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code.

Cllr Peter Edgar wished to clarify his position on the Select Committee given his role as Assistant to the Executive Member for Children's Services, and the measure in the Constitution of the County Council which indicated that a member of the Cabinet should not sit on a scrutiny committee.

Scrutiny Officer to  
clarify with the  
Monitoring Officer

75. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Culture, Communities & Rural Affairs Select Committee Meeting held on 17 May 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

76. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that some members of the committee had visited Runways End, the new outdoor centre being developed near Aldershot, the previous day. She reported that it had been great to see the excellent facilities including outdoor climbing tower and rope courses among the trees. Members were impressed with the amount of thought that had gone in to the site to make it flexible for different uses, and to enable disabled children to take part in the activities. The Chairman urged all members to take the opportunity to see the site at the official opening, and requested that officers confirm the date to members as soon as possible so it could be held in diaries. On behalf of the committee the Chairman congratulated the officers involved for this successful project.

77. **CONSULTATION ON FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**

The Director of Culture Communities and Business Services presented a report (see Item 5 in the Minute Book) regarding the future approach to the use of financial contributions to support the delivery of cultural and community services. It was noted that for 2011/12 grants to voluntary and community sector organisations from the Culture Communities and Business Services (CCBS) Department had been reduced by 8% across the board, to reflect the overall budget reduction the Department faced as a result of central government grant reductions. It was reported that the Executive Member was due to initiate a consultation with relevant stakeholders to consider the best approach for 2012/2013 and beyond given that further budget reductions were anticipated.

Members discussed the fact that the Solent Sea Rescue Organisation currently received a grant from the CCBS Department and also received funding from the Economy Transport and Environment Department. It was noted that issues in relation to this organisation could be covered by the Panel due to look into this topic in further detail.

Members noted that due to the budget reductions anticipated, difficult decisions would need to be made in future. It was suggested that a fair way to prioritise funding in future would be to fund organisations based on certain principles. A Member of the committee proposed the following principles: 1) That organisations be prioritised that are based in Hampshire, 2) That priority be given to smaller organisations, as a cut to a small grant is likely to have a bigger impact for the organisation concerned than a reduction to a larger grant. 3) Priority be given to funding organisations which were also supported by the relevant District/Borough Council.

It was also commented that organisations providing a similar service may need to consider merging or working more closely together in the current financial climate. Members accepted that a further cut to all grants risked a slow decline in all cultural providers, and that the County Council may wish to provide funding at sustainable levels for priority organisations instead.

Members discussed the recommendation that a small panel be appointed to consider these issues further and provide recommendations to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation on future policy. A draft terms of reference for such a group was tabled. Members agreed to set up a panel on this basis, therefore it was

**RESOLVED:**

That a time limited Scrutiny Panel be set up to consider:

- Stakeholder views on the approach to grant aid (based on responses to the consultation due to be initiated by the Department)
- Criteria used to assess grant applications
- Options to support service provision differently in future

For the Panel to make recommendations regarding the way forward to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.

Membership of the Panel to be as follows:

Cllr Elaine Still  
Cllr Alan Rice  
Cllr Frank Pearce  
Cllr Alexis McEvoy  
Cllr Peter Chegwyn  
Cllr Jenny Radley

Scrutiny Officer to make the necessary arrangements to set up the Panel, with the intention to hold an initial meeting by the end of July.

78. **HAMPSHIRE ARTS AND MUSEUMS SERVICE –  
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: PHASE 2**

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services gave a presentation to highlight the key points in the report (see Item 6 in the Minute Book). It was noted that 26 posts had been removed from the Museums Service as a result of Phase 1, and that further significant changes would take place in the coming year, as the budget for the service had to contract by 36% over 2 years.

It was reported that year on year museums audiences had been increasing in recent years, and the service wished to maintain this achievement. It was suggested that if the service positioned itself appropriately it would be in a good position to access external funding again in future. It was indicated that due to the planned integration of the Arts and Museums Services, it was anticipated that some management efficiencies may be possible.

Members heard that the draft strategy for the future of the Arts and Museums Service was based on 3 overlapping elements, as outlined in the report: Flagship Venues/Key Funding Interventions, Centralised Specialist Support Services, and Community Arts and Museums Service. It was noted that consideration was being given to using Milestones Museum as the hub for the service, to maintain a public facing focus, and that the intention was to develop an enterprise culture and develop local philanthropy. Members also learned that work was underway with Southampton and Winchester City Council's to consider if a joint approach to museums and arts provision across the three Local Authorities would be beneficial.

The Chairman enquired regarding the risk to the proposed approach of the decisions of District and Borough Councils regarding their support to Museums and the Arts. It was acknowledged that the role of District and Borough Councils was important, as they contributed significantly to Community Arts and Museums Venues. It was noted that the County Council would not be able to sustain venues where the local council withdrew funding. Members commented that it was important to keep Members informed of what the County Council supported in their area, and to consult local Members regarding venues in their area.

Members raised concerns that designating certain venues as 'flagships' reduced the importance of the

remaining venues. In response it was noted that during the consultation being undertaken over the next couple of months, views were invited on what criteria to use to designate flagship venues. It was also indicated that each strand of the strategy was of equal importance; flagships were being treated separately due to their regional profile and greater likelihood of ability to draw in external funding.

Members also commented that consideration should be given to the charging policy at museums, with a view to paying for entry to a museum being preferable to the museum being closed if it was not viable to run on a free entry basis. The response indicated charging was being considered, however a balance needed to be reached in terms of entry charge and visitor numbers, and that in some cases secondary spend was more likely to generate additional income for the service.

Some Members questioned the model of integrating Museums with the Arts Service and suggested that the Library Service also had similarities with Museums that could be exploited. It was acknowledged that synergies existed with a number of services including Archives, however it was considered that Arts and Museums fit well together for a number of reasons: the audiences were similar, the management needs were similar, they were put together in other authorities including commonly at District Council level, and both benefitted from creative management.

Following the discussion the committee

RESOLVED:

That the Committee supports the approach being taken to the restructure.

That the committee requests the next steps for the service be considered by this committee at the November meeting, prior to any decision by the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.

An item on the Arts and Museums Service be added to the work programme for the November 2011 meeting of the committee.

## 79. **PARTICIPATION IN SPORT**

The Director of Culture Communities and Business Services gave a presentation updating Members on the programmes supporting the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sports Partnership Strategy (see Item 7 in the Minute Book), aimed at increasing numbers of people undertaking physical activity. It was reported that the County Council provided a small grant to the Sports

Partnership, which provided value for money as the Partnership had generated over £2 million in external funding into Hampshire in the past year.

Members heard about a number of programmes aimed at increasing physical activity such as 'Chances 4 Change' aimed at disadvantaged groups, 'Return to Sport', and 'Sport unlimited' aimed at 'non sporty types' by offering alternative ways to get active such as street dance. It was also noted that initiatives were underway linked to the 2012 Olympics such as 'Sportivate'. A new campaign had also been launched called 'active living' aimed at low income families to encourage low or no cost physical activity such as walking and running.

It was indicated that a video was available online highlighting the 'Hampshire and Isle of Wight Games' and 'Mission Possible', the scheme to develop coaches linked to the Olympic games. It was requested that the link be circulated to committee Members. Members asked questions regarding particular sports and found out more about the range of sports that the Partnership supports including swimming, cycling and sailing.

The link to the video be circulated to Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Officer be thanked for the update.

80. **PROPOSED CHANGES TO LIBRARY CHARGES**

The Director of Culture Communities and Business Services presented a report (see Item 8 in the Minute Book) regarding proposed changes to library charges. It was reported that the key changes were: Introducing fines for children's overdue books (to encourage their timely return), introducing overdue fines for items borrowed from mobile libraries (though only the equivalent of one day overdue charge if the next available visit by the mobile unit is missed), and the introduction of a charge for reservation of children's books. It was also reported that the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation intended to initiate a system whereby library users would not be able to take out more items if they had not returned a number of items that were overdue.

Regarding charges at mobile libraries, Members commented that consideration should be given to the fine applying if the second opportunity to return the book was missed, as if the service only visited an area once every four weeks it would be easy to miss the first opportunity to return the book. It was noted that the

facility existed to re-new a book online or by phone at any time, and that where email addresses had been provided customers were notified by email two days before an item was due back.

It was reported that the changes would take effect in September/October, and that library staff would alert users to the changes over the coming months. Members questioned the recommendation that fines for overdue children's books would only apply to children over the age of 5, commenting that for young children the books were the parents responsibility, and that it was important to encourage the timely return of all library stock.

Following the debate, the Select Committee

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposals in the report be supported to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation with the following amendments:

- Overdue charges on Children's books also apply for children aged 0-5 (in addition to children aged 6-17, as proposed in the report).
- Where a user has a number of items overdue, further items not be issued (threshold for when this would apply to be decided by the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation)
- That the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation review the impact of the charging changes a year after their implementation.

Recommendations be considered by the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation at the Decision Meeting.

81. **APPROVAL OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INCOME GENERATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Chairman reminded Members that it was usual practice to only have one task and finish group take place at a time, and a panel looking at future financial support to cultural and community organisations had been agreed earlier in the meeting. Members commented that developing income generation opportunities was also timely due to the budget pressures the Department was facing. It was noted that pursuing both topics at the same time would be a significant time commitment for both Members and supporting Officers. Following debate the Select Committee agreed the following compromise:

RESOLVED:

That a Panel of Members (Cllr Elaine Still, Cllr Alan Rice, Cllr Frank Pearce, Cllr Tom Thacker, Cllr Peter Chegwyn, Cllr Jenny Radley) have the opportunity to contribute to development of income generation opportunities in Cultural and Community Services, through a number of informal meetings facilitated by relevant officers in the CCBS Department.

The CCBS Department arrange meetings for the panel of members identified to discuss income generation opportunities for relevant services.

82. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman invited Members to comment on the Committee's Work Programme (Item 10 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's Work Programme be approved, subject to the issues raised at this meeting.

---

Chairman, 2 November 2011