

AT A MEETING of the CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND RURAL AFFAIRS  
SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle,  
Winchester on Wednesday, 2 November 2011.

**PRESENT**

Chairman:  
a Councillor Elaine Still

Vice-Chairman:  
p Councillor Alan Rice, TD

Councillors:

p Alan Broadhurst	a 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, and Councillor Raymond Ellis, Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs.

Cllr Alan Rice in the Chair.

83. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Elaine Still, and Cllr Peter Mason.

84. **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.

85. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Culture, Communities & Rural Affairs Select Committee Meeting held on 8 July 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

86. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reminded Members that the official opening of the Runways End Activity Centre was due to take place the next day, and encouraged any members who had not been to go along and see what a fantastic facility the County Council now had there.

The Chairman announced the future meeting dates of the committee as follows:

20 January 2012, 10 May 2012, 5 July 2012, 8 November 2012 and 21 January 2013. These would all start at 10.00am and take place in the Wellington Room, Elizabeth II Court South, Winchester. It was also noted there would be an additional meeting on 12 January 2012 to enable the committee to comment on significant items prior to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation Decision Day on 20 January.

The Chairman also reported that a Hampshire artefact had been awarded a coveted place on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register. The Winchester Pipe Rolls, which were stored at Hampshire Record Office in Winchester, were one of only 20 artefacts selected from across the UK's archives, libraries and museums, to make it on to the register and represent the outstanding heritage of the UK. The Pipe Rolls were the most complete set of manorial accounts in the country, dating from 1208/9 almost unbroken to 1710/11. They depicted, in the most minute detail, a record of income and expenditure across the Bishop of Winchester's estates. The UK Memory of the World Register was part of UNESCO's work to promote preservation of and access to the world's archive holdings and library collections.

87. **MUSEUMS AND ARTS SERVICE RESTRUCTURE UPDATE**

The Director of Culture Communities and Business Services gave a presentation (see Item 5 in the Minute Book) regarding the proposals for the Arts and Museums service that were currently out for consultation.

It was noted that while the service was having to respond to significant funding reductions (8% for arts and 16% for museums), there were also opportunities, such as the funding available through the new Renaissance Major Grants programme that the County Council was bidding to in partnership with members of the new Hampshire Solent Alliance.

It was reported that the proposals for re-positioning the service were currently out for consultation with staff and external stakeholders, with final proposals informed by responses to be considered by the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation in January 2012.

It was noted that other regions such as Tyne and Wear had successfully used culture as a regeneration tool. It was the ambition of the Hampshire Solent Alliance to learn from such examples. The Alliance had already initiated a 2012 tourism marketing strategy, and had placed adverts in national publications which the organisations individually would not have been able to do. It was also highlighted that a fully integrated merger was under consideration for Hampshire Arts and Museums, Southampton Arts and Heritage and Winchester Museums. Members supported taking a regional approach to culture and tourism.

A Member asked whether there were plans in place for museums and arts to promote learning outside the classroom opportunities to schools, taking into account the greater freedoms available to those becoming academies. It was responded that members of the alliance were working on this agenda, and any good practice would be shared with other partners.

Members commented on the value of volunteer contributions in the arts and museums sectors, and indicated interest in focusing on volunteering capacity as a future topic.

A Member asked whether Arts Centre managers would be affected by the staff reductions needed in the service according to the proposals. It was responded that management reductions would be in senior manager posts not centre managers.

A Member commented that it would be important to monitor whether the current economic climate was having an impact on visitor numbers to museums that were free entry compared to those that charged for entry.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Officer be thanked for the update.
- That the Select Committee consider the final proposals in January 2012 prior to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation decision.

Scrutiny Officer to add to work programme as potential future topic

## 88. **LIBRARY SERVICE RESTRUCTURE UPDATE**

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services gave a presentation (see Item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding proposed changes to the library service currently out for consultation. It was noted that while the majority of the £1.2m (8%) budget reductions for the service for 2012/2013 had been achieved due to previous measures, £450,000 savings still needed to be made. The proposal was to reduce library opening hours to achieve this.

One key library had been designated in each District Council area, by identifying the busiest library based on current usage, with target opening hours of 50 hours a week over 6 days for key libraries. Remaining libraries would be designated based on issues per annum, with the following opening hour expectations:

- Large (200,000 issues per year) – 40+ hours
- Medium (100,000 issues per year) – 35+ hours
- Small (50,000 issues per year) – 20+ hours
- Neighbourhood – 20 hours with volunteer support

This model was intended to establish consistent service levels across the County. Criteria had also been proposed for the viability of 'neighbourhood' libraries including usage by local people and proximity to other libraries. Two existing small libraries, Stanmore and North Baddesley, would not meet these new criteria. It was proposed that discussions take place to explore the potential for other organisations or local groups to take over the running of these libraries. If such a transfer had not been found it was likely these libraries would be closed in September 2012.

It was noted that the proposals were currently out for consultation, and a stand with copies of the consultation materials had been placed in all libraries. It was reported that 2,000 responses had already been received. The proposals would be adapted based on feedback, for example around which opening times were preferable, with final proposals due to be considered by the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation in January 2012.

Members commented that the way this consultation had been handled was a good example of how to consult, and recognised that Hampshire was working hard to keep libraries open.

Members commented that e-books appeared to be increasing in popularity and that the library service would need to monitor the impact of this trend. It was

noted that the library service offered e-books at present.

RESOLVED:

That the officers involved and library service staff be thanked for their constructive approach to these difficult decisions.

That the final proposals be considered by the Select Committee prior to the Decision of the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation in January.

89. **PLAY STRATEGY**

The Director of Culture Communities and Business Services gave a presentation to support the written report (see Item 7 in the Minute Book) regarding the draft Play Strategy for Hampshire. It was reported that One in five children were overweight by the time they reached school age, and most children were only active for 20 minutes a day rather than the recommended 60 minutes. It was therefore important to encourage children to undertake more active play. The Play Strategy had been developed based on issues identified at an event held with partners involved in supporting play.

It was noted that one of the aspects identified in the Strategy was equality of access to active play, for example for military families and children in care. Members commented that integration of military families was an important issue. It was indicated that encouraging positive play opportunities in communities could help prevent antisocial behaviour.

Members welcomed the development of a Play Strategy, and supported the concepts in the strategy and the partnership working it demonstrated. Members highlighted the aspiration in the strategy that all residential areas have a speed limit of 20mph. Members indicated their support for this, though it was commented that this had been suggested previously and not been taken up due to the views of the police on whether it would be enforceable.

A Member commented that it was a surprise to see little mention of parents and families in the strategy, and stressed the importance of parents in supporting children's play. This point was accepted by the Executive Member who was present.

RESOLVED:

- That the Officer be thanked for presenting the strategy.

- That the Executive Member take Members comments on board in relation to the strategy.
- That the Select Committee recommends the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation supports the publication and implementation of the Play Strategy.

90. **REVIEW PANEL: FUTURE OF GRANT FUNDING TO CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**

The Chairman invited the Member who had Chaired the Panel meetings to present the findings of the Review Panel. The draft conclusions and recommendations of the Panel were tabled and Members who had taken part in the Panel spoke in support of particular aspects. A small number of grammatical points were noted. The Committee supported the direction of travel indicated in the Panel's conclusions and recommendations.

The Member who had Chaired the Panel indicated the Panel's preference that Members have the opportunity to comment on the proposed grants for 2012/13 arising from the recommended way forward. The committee agreed.

RESOLVED:

- That the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Review Panel be endorsed to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation
- That proposals for grants to Cultural and Community Organisations be considered at the additional Select Committee meeting to be convened on 12 January 2012, for views of the committee to be taken into account prior to the Executive Member decision due to take place on 20 January 2012.

91. **INFORMAL PANEL: INCOME GENERATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

The Chairman invited the Member who was Chairing the informal Panel to provide an update on progress. It was reported that the initial meeting of the informal income generation review group had taken place at the end of September, where it was agreed that a half day session of oral evidence would take place on 10 November. This would focus on what was already taking place in cultural and community services to increase income, and what ideas there were for the future. The findings were due to be circulated to Select Committee members for comment, then communicated by letter to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.

92. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman invited Members to comment on the Committee's Work Programme (Item 10 in the Minute Book). A Member requested that the findings of the informal income generation panel be formally on the agenda for the January meeting of the Select Committee.

RESOLVED:

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

Scutiny Officer to update the work programme

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Chairman, 12 January 2012