

AT A MEETING of the CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND RURAL AFFAIRS  
SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle,  
Winchester on Thursday, 12 January 2012.

**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
a 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.

93. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Peter Edgar.

94. **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.

95. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Culture, Communities & Rural Affairs Select Committee Meeting held on 2 November 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

96. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman highlighted to Members that a letter had been included with their meeting papers to indicate that two of the future meeting dates of this committee would be changed. It was noted that the meeting scheduled for 10 May 2012 would move back to 26 April 2012, and the meeting scheduled for 5 July 2012 would move back to 21 June 2012. This would mean the Select Committee would meet two weeks prior to the Executive Member's Decision Day in future, to facilitate improved pre-scrutiny of significant decisions.

97. **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 proposals for a restructured grants programme. It was noted that the proposals built on the recommendations made by the Select Committee (approved at the last meeting), which had been developed by the Select Committee Review Panel that had considered the future of grant allocation over a number of months.

It was reported that 2012/13 would be a transition year from the previous grant scheme to the new scheme, and that further detail of the operation of the new scheme would be developed over the coming year. A paper was tabled which listed the proposed grant allocations for 2012/13 to those organisations that had previously regularly received funding. It was indicated that the approach taken had been to re-consider each grant, rather than apply an 8% reduction across the board. Therefore it was proposed some organisations would receive a higher reduction in funding, and others would not receive any reduction. The proposals taken together would provide the 8% saving required in the Department's 2012/13 budget, with a remainder of around £150,000 to be allocated to grant applications received during the year.

The Chairman wished to record her thanks to the Members of the Panel that had been involved with this piece of work, and highlighted Members constructive approach and the cross party consensus achieved. The Chairman also expressed regret that the proposed grant allocation had been tabled, which left little time for Members to read the proposals. It was requested that papers be circulated to Members in advance in future.

Meeting Papers to be provided in Advance to allow Members time to read what is proposed

Members suggested that consideration be given to requesting that those organisations receiving significant grant funding invite a representative of Hampshire County Council to sit on their board of trustees. It was further commented that such representatives could be invited to report back to the County Council regarding the activities and progress of the organisation.

Members noted that the proposals did not 'close the door' for any organisation, and that organisations would be able to apply for project funding, or to reconsider their approach in relation to the criteria of the new scheme.

Members queried the situation regarding the Leigh Park Community Association. It was noted this organisation was experiencing financial difficulties and the County Council was working with Havant Borough Council to establish the best way forward. It was indicated that the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation would be monitoring the situation and taking a decision on the grant to this organisation at a later date.

Members also commented on the proposal to reduce funding to Solent Skies. It was noted that there was concern regarding the organisation lacking appropriate accreditation for the conservation of the artefacts in their care. It was noted the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation intended to visit the site and have dialogue with the organisation.

The Executive Member for Culture and Recreation thanked Select Committee Members for their views. It was noted that the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation was due to consider the report at the 20 January 2012 Decision Day.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Select Committee supports the proposals to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.
- That an update on the detailed plans for the operation of the grant scheme from 2013/14 be brought back to the committee when appropriate.

An update on the 2013/14 grants scheme be added to the work programme

98. **MUSEUMS AND ARTS SERVICE RESTRUCTURE PROPOSALS**

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services gave a presentation to summarise the key aspects of the report (see Item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding the draft Arts and Museums Strategic Plan and phase 2 organisational delivery proposals. It was

noted that the report followed on from the update provided at the November meeting of the Select Committee.

It was reported that staff and partners had been consulted on the proposals, and that the proposals built on the foundations laid during the phase 1 restructure of the Arts and Museums Service.

It was highlighted that the strategy outlined the County Council's continued ambition to connect communities with cultural excellence. Collaboration would be key to future resilience – through the development of professional-volunteer partnership models for community museums, working with regional cultural partners through the Alliance, and potentially working more closely with other local authorities as a fully integrated merger (see next agenda item). It was noted that Philanthropy would be a future area of potential external investment.

Members were pleased to learn that the proposals had been shaped by feedback received during consultation, and that there would be ongoing dialogue with the wider cultural sector and an open door to new ideas including from staff. No concerns were expressed with the proposals presented. It was noted that the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation was due to consider the report at the 20 January 2012 Decision Day.

RESOLVED:

The Select Committee supports the proposals in the report to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.

99. **MUSEUMS AND ARTS SERVICE – TOWARDS A FULLY INTEGRATED MERGER WITH SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL AND WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL**

The Director of Culture Communities and Business Services presented a report (see Item 7 in the Minute Book) regarding the progress to date with the Fully Integrated Merger (FIM) Project. The project was investigating the option of Hampshire County Council Arts and Museums, Southampton City Council Arts and Heritage and Winchester City Council Museums merging into a single organisation. It was noted that this piece of work was separate to the Phase 2 restructure, and that a final decision was not being made at this point, but approval being sought to undertaking further work on the merger proposal.

A Member queried why Portsmouth City Council was not involved in the proposed merger. It was reported that Portsmouth City Council were supportive of collaboration and a member of the broader cultural Alliance, however they did not consider it appropriate to move towards a merger at this time. Members commented that consideration would need to be given to the fact that setting up the merged organisation could end up costing more than predicted, and that establishing it as a charitable company limited by guarantee could reduce the extent of democratic control in the future.

It was noted that charitable organisations could generate additional revenue through applying 'Gift Aid' to ticket prices to reclaim tax. Members queried what the employment arrangements would be for staff transferred to the new organisation from three different local authorities with different remuneration arrangements. It was responded that issues such as this would be investigated during the next phase of development of the proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Select Committee supports undertaking further work on a Fully Integrated Merger for Museums, as laid out in the report.
- That the Select Committee be kept informed of developments with this project.

100. **LIBRARY SERVICE OPENING HOURS PROPOSALS**

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services gave a presentation to summarise the latest position for the Library Service in relation to proposals to reduce opening hours (see Item 8 in the Minute Book). A paper was tabled listing the current and proposed opening hours for all libraries in Hampshire.

It was reported that key libraries (the busiest library in each District Council area) would retain their current opening hours, and other libraries would see a reduction equating to a 5.8% reduction in hours overall. A consultation had taken place over the last three months of 2011, with over 5,500 responses received, ranging from 14 to 350 per library. Based on initial feedback, revised proposals were issued for 5 libraries during the consultation period. Proposed hours had been adapted for 26 libraries based on feedback, where the message was consistent.

That an update on progress with the Fully Integrated Merger be added to the work programme

It was noted that a number of town and parish council's had engaged with the County Council and expressed interest in supporting their local library to retain its opening hours. In some cases the parish council had agreed to provide up to 50% of the cost of self service technology for the library (to be match funded by the County Council) to enable the library to remain open with its current opening hours.

It was also reported that in one case developer contributions would be used by the District Council to extend a library. In one area volunteers were being recruited to help extend the library's opening hours. It was noted use of volunteers was a sensitive issue and staff and unions were being kept informed. It was reported that there had been some debate regarding which library in East Hampshire should be considered the key library. It was proposed that Petersfield be the key library at this time due to it being a busier library than Alton based on the current usage data.

Members reiterated their view that this had been a good example of public consultation, and were pleased to see that proposals had been adjusted in response to feedback. It was noted that the stands used in libraries to promote the consultation would be used to communicate the outcomes of the consultation. Members wished to record their thanks to the staff involved for their approach.

A Member asked if there was any update regarding the two smallest libraries (Stanmore and North Baddesley). It was responded that conversations were ongoing to identify community support for these libraries. It was anticipated a decision on these libraries would be taken later in the year.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Select Committee supports the proposals to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.
- That the Select Committee be kept informed regarding progress with Stanmore and North Baddesley libraries.

That an update on the situation for Stanmore and North Baddesley Libraries be added to the work programme

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

The Chairman thanked Cllr Pearce for Chairing the meeting of the Informal Income Generation Panel held in November in her absence. The Chairman reported that the recommendations of the Panel had been

provided to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation by letter (see Item 9 in the Minute Book). Members commented that the Panel had worked well.

RESOLVED:

- That the Select Committee monitor progress against the recommendations at a future meeting.

102. **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 any amendments raised at this meeting.

That an update on progress against the recommendations be added to the work programme

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Chairman, 26 April 2012