

AT A MEETING of the CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND RURAL AFFAIRS
SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle,
Winchester on Friday, 20 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
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.

103. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received, all committee Members were present.

104. **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.

105. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements on this occasion.

106. **REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CULTURE AND RECREATION FOR 2012/13**

The County Treasurer and Director of Culture Communities and Business Services gave a

presentation to highlight the key aspects of the report (see Item 4 in the Minute Book) providing a summary of the overall budget position for the County Council and the proposed budget for services in the Culture and Recreation portfolio for 2012/13.

Members heard that all Departments were being expected to work within an 8% reduced budget for 2012/13. It was reported that the savings to be found from the services within the Culture and Recreation portfolio for 2012/13 were planned to be generated as a result of the impact of the recent reviews of the Museums and Arts Service and the Library and Information Service. Additional efficiencies were anticipated as a result of a reduction in back office functions resulting from the merger to form the CCBS Department and the next phase of the communications review. It was noted the workforce impact of the proposals was a total reduction in FTE across these services of 27. The cost of change was due to be met from the underspend from 2011/12.

It was indicated that the Capital Programme for the CCBS Department had been reported to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources. Members were alerted to aspects relevant to Culture and Recreation services.

It was noted that additional funding had been allocated to the Capital Programme for 2011/12 and 2012/13 for urgent maintenance works on the Basingstoke Canal. This was one off funding which was why the Capital Programme for future years was reduced. It was indicated that further survey work would be taking place regarding the condition of the canal, and it was anticipated that further works would be required, which would be phased over future years.

Members enquired regarding whether opportunities were explored to access external funding to support the upkeep of the canal. It was responded that the County Council were in discussions with Local Authorities in the canal area regarding possible developer contributions. It was noted that national funding through grants was sought, however the canal was not eligible for a specific grant from central government.

A Member queried where the customer charging increase referred to would be coming from. It was responded this was due to an increase in parking charges at Country Parks. It was indicated where this had been implemented in one park over the past year there had not been a significant impact on visitor

numbers. It was confirmed this would be monitored.

A Member commented that the budget report presented this year was more general than the reports received in previous years, and suggested that the new format did not break down the budget sufficiently. It was commented that some budget headings appeared to be reducing by more than the 8% required by the department as a whole. It was responded that overall the savings from the Culture and Recreation portfolio came to 7.8% of the budget for those services. It was requested that a fuller explanation be included in the written report in future.

Consideration be given to the level of detail provided in the budget report in future

RESOLVED:

- That the Select Committee supports the budget proposals as laid out in the report to the Executive Member for Culture and Recreation.

107. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman invited Members to comment on the Committee's Work Programme (Item 5 in the Minute Book). A Member commented that it would be helpful to be briefed on the CCBS Department's priorities for Culture and Recreation services, to scrutinise how this was reflected in the budget allocations (as indicated in the work programme item on the budget). The Director of the CCBS Department indicated the Department would be happy to brief Members on this.

Consideration be given to an appropriate opportunity to brief Members on the priorities of the CCBS Dept

RESOLVED:

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

Chairman, 26 April 2012