

AT A MEETING of the CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Monday, 20 January 2014.

PRESENT

Chairman:
p Councillor Elaine Still

Vice-Chairman:
p Councillor Frank Pearce

Councillors:

a	Phil Bailey	p	Fiona Mather
p	Peter Chegwyn	p	Patricia Stallard
p	Shaun Cully	p	Alan Rice
a	Brian Gurden	p	Tim Rolt
p	Rob Humby	p	John Wall
p	Mark Kemp-Gee	p	Chris Wood

Also in attendance:

Councillor Jonathan Glen – Chairman of Policy and Resources Select Committee
Councillor Keith Chapman – Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside

35. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None were received.

36. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting, they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore, Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the

Items to be actioned on the Committee's work programme:

Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

37. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee, held on 21 November 2013, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that this was the first meeting of the Committee under its new title, the Culture and Communities Select Committee. This change was agreed at the 20 November 2013 meeting of Council, to reflect the changes the Leader made to Executive Members' responsibilities.

Scrutiny of economic development had been transferred from this Committee to the Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee and rural affairs scrutiny transferred to the Policy and Resources Select Committee.

The Chairman also announced that the Countryside Service had achieved a Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 1 Bid Pass for Royal Victoria Country Park, which earmarked £1.7m to improve the park. This also provided £100,000 to develop the phase two bid for the project, as part of the Country Parks Transformation Strategy.

In addition, the Arts and Museums Service had been successful with a Heritage Lottery Fund Catalyst Stage 2 Bid, which secured approximately £300,000 to develop philanthropy and entrepreneurial skills and activity across the Hampshire museums and arts sector.

39. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

40. **OVERVIEW ITEM:**
**REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CULTURE,
RECREATION AND COUNTRYSIDE**

The Committee received a report and presentations from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services and the Director of Corporate Resources, which are available from the website and the Minute Book (item 6).

The Director of Corporate Resources' presentation set out the 2014/15 budget position for the whole Council. In summary, the Committee noted the anticipated net deficit of £32.2m for 2014/15. This would be covered by housekeeping work-

stream, to generate investment and inflation savings of £6.8m, and the balance (£25.4m) came from the Grant Equalisation Reserve.

Regarding the Culture, Recreation and Countryside budget, the Committee noted the proposed total net revenue expenditure of £22.4m and the proposed range of savings totalling between £795,000 and £915,000.

The presentations also highlighted the key challenges for the Department as:

- Establishing the Arts and Museum Services Trust Board
- Transformation of Countryside Parks
- Review of the Countryside Estate
- Maintaining or improving levels of income and moving toward self-sufficiency, for example Outdoor Services
- Maintaining customer satisfaction
- Reducing management and growing volunteer capacity
- Partnership working
- Focusing grants on outcomes
- The new library strategy

In order to meet the corporate savings target of 12% by 2015/16, the Director explained that, with the Executive Member, officers had explored all options before making the difficult recommendations set out in the report. In summary, it was recommended that the Accredited Community Safety Officer (ACSO) Service be deleted. The removal of this service would save £1.5m and would be used to invest in the corporate estate and reduce the savings needed by the Library Service. Whilst the loss of the ACSOs would be regrettable, officers highlighted the existing duplication of service between ACSOs, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Neighbourhood Wardens.

The presentation also highlighted the proposed savings to the Library Service. In summary, this related to the possible transfer to the community (or replacement with a mobile library shop) of the smallest and poorest performing libraries (Grayshott, Kingsclere and Milford-on-Sea). Full consultation on these proposals would begin in February 2014. During debate, the Committee noted the success of the Stanmore (Winchester) and North Baddesley libraries, following their transfer to community management.

The budget also proposed reducing the number mobile library stops from 350 to 250. These were the less well used stops, most of which had an average of less than five users per stop. In addition it was proposed that the Mobile Family Link service in Havant would be removed because residents in the area had relatively easy access to other services.

In response to questions, the Director explained:

- That the Council continued to consider possibilities of operating the library service in partnership with neighbouring authorities, to minimise management costs.
- That approximately 330 volunteers provide the Home Library Service for residents unable to reach their nearest library
- That, in consultation with the Executive Member, officers were currently in the process of selecting the interim trustees for the Solent Cultural Trust. Vacancies for permanent trustees would be advertised in the usual manner.
- That moving the outdoor service toward financial self sufficiency involved improved marketing, continuing to attract business from outside the county and ensuring that the service remained of the highest possible standard. During debate, a Member suggested the possibility of the Committee visiting the Council's Outdoor Centre in the Brecon Beacons.
- That the level of car parking charges at Country Parks took into account a variety of factors, including what the market was likely to bear. A Member suggested that the National Parks could take a greater role in the Council's countryside parks.

Officers to investigate

During discussion on the Archives and Records Service, a Member highlighted the potential to charge for on-line archive services.

Members also noted that the Sport Hampshire and Isle of Wight (SHIOW) could be hosted by an organisation other than the County Council and that further proposals were anticipated by summer 2014.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Chapman explained how the proposed budget moved towards making services more sustainable.

At the conclusion of debate, the Committee noted the presentations and report.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations, set out on page 10 of the report for the Executive Member, be noted.

41. **OVERVIEW ITEM:**
THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services. The presentation explained how the Council was learning best practices from other authorities; changing shelving to make the physical space of the library available for other community or

commercial uses; sharing space with partners, such as the Police; and promoting libraries as spaces for learning.

During discussion, Members noted that CDs would be gradually phased out as demand decreased and they became no longer cost neutral.

Members also noted that the Library Service Strategy was due to be considered by the Committee at its next meeting, to be held 26 May 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

42. **OVERVIEW ITEM:**
THE CONTRIBUTION, SUSTAINABILITY AND VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING TO CULTURAL AND COMMUNITIES SECTOR OF CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS SERVICES

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services summarised the key points from the written report (see Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The Committee noted the outstanding contribution the volunteers made to their local community and, in response to questions, the Director explained that there was a steady supply of new volunteers coming forward and that, whilst the Council had a duty of care, no upper age limit was imposed.

In response to a suggestion, officers agreed to consider the possibility of linking the volunteer service with organisations such as the Prince's Trust and Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Members noted that a function was held to recognise and thank volunteers in the Great Hall, Winchester and that there was scope to improve consistency for more locally held functions.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

43. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Corporate Services (see Item 9 in the Minute Book) which set out the Committee's work programme.

Members noted that, arising from the discussion on the budget above, a future meeting would receive an update on the

Olympic Legacy programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's Work Programme be approved as set out.

Chairman, 26 May 2014