

AT A MEETING of the CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Thursday, 21 January 2016.

**PRESENT**

Chairman:

p Councillor Anna McNair-Scott

Vice-Chairman:

p Councillor Frank Pearce

**Councillors:**

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

p Peter Latham (deputy  
Conservative Group Member)

**Also in attendance:**

Councillor Andrew Gibson – Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside

130. **BROADCAST ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

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

131. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Wall and Councillor Kemp-Gee. It was noted that Councillor Latham, the deputy Member for the Conservative Group was in attendance in place of Councillor Kemp-Gee.

132. **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 Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the 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.

133. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 19 November 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

134. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

135. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that the Consultation on the draft Library Strategy had closed on 16 January and nearly 9,000 responses had been received; one of the best ever response rates to a County Council consultation. Outcomes of the consultation would be included in the final version of the Library Strategy to be considered by the Select Committee in March prior to a final decision being taken by the Executive Member in April 2016.

It was reported that the Property Services team had won a national award from the Civic Trust for their role in bringing the HMS M33; one of the country's last World War I warships and Gallipoli survivor back to life.

The Chairman was very pleased to announce that the County Council had successfully made it through the first round of a grant application for £2.85m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Parks for People programme. This would contribute to a £4.2m project to transform Leigh Park Gardens at Staunton Country Park and was the second HLF bid that the Country Parks Transformation team had been successful in securing. A full update on Country Parks Transformation was presented at item 7 on the agenda (Minute 138 refers).

136. **REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CULTURE,  
RECREATION AND COUNTRYSIDE FOR 2016/17**

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services and the Director of Corporate Resources – Corporate Services (item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding the 2016/17 Culture, Recreation and Countryside revenue budget.

The overall position for the County Council of a reduction in Revenue Support Grant, following a change in the funding distribution pattern and adjustments to a number of other elements was set out. The reserves position was broken down and the overall impact on the proposed 2016/17 budget was outlined. The Culture and Recreation budget was outlined according to service area, with reference to workforce implications and the Capital programme. It was confirmed that the use of Grant Equalisation Fund was a one off solution and alternative solutions would be required in future years. It was also confirmed that the potential impact of the “living wage” was being examined in terms of the impact on the Council as a whole.

In presenting a detailed view of the Culture and Recreation budget areas, it was explained that no new cost saving proposals were being made as 2016/17 represented the second year of a two year programme. In terms of the future, the cost of change reserve and business unit surpluses allowed some flexibility across the department as a whole, demonstrating the advantage of being part of a larger department.

The Committee noted the commitment of the Executive Member that services within his department become financially self-sufficient in the coming years to secure their delivery. The potential benefits to the service from the digital programme were acknowledged and the successful engagement with the public on the library consultation was recognised. With regards to the countryside service, the support from the Transformation programme was outlined and it was confirmed that two services were on track to become cash-flow neutral. Members recognised the hard work of officers in responding to the situation, however there was some concern at the erosion of public services as a result of the national financial position.

The recommendations in the report were proposed and a vote was held:

In favour: 7

Against: 6

It was therefore RESOLVED:

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee:

recommends to the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside that he approves the following for submission to the Leader and Cabinet:

- i. The annual review of income and charges (as set out in Appendix 1).
- ii. The revised budget for 2015/16 (as set out in Appendix 2).
- iii. The summary budget for 2016/17 (as set out in Appendix 2).
- iv. The workforce implications of the proposed budget for 2016/17 (as set out in Appendix 3).

137. **TRANSFORMING THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S COUNTRY PARKS**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (item 7 in the Minute Book) to update the Committee on the transformation of Country Parks.

Members heard that the award of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the transformation of Staunton Country Park had been announced, noting the achievement of officers in this success.

The progress in each Park was set out. It was explained that the Staunton business case was well developed and that work with the local further education college was included. The working model for the re-development of Lepe was displayed and it was explained that the final design centred on usability and an environmentally sensitive design.

Plans for the Royal Victoria Country Park were detailed and the Committee heard how these were addressing the building and conservation of its heritage. The aim was to increase footfall and the visitor experience and plans included investment in the restaurant and children's play area. The scale of the original hospital buildings would be demonstrated through permanent displays of different elements of the building's history, including the use of original artefacts. Members acknowledged the timescales for the development and supported the project. It was proposed and agreed that the Select Committee visit the Park later in the year.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee:

Thank officers for their work on the transformation of the Country Parks and note and support progress.

138. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Policy & Governance - Corporate Services, item 8 in the Minute Book, which set out the Committee's work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be noted.

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Chairman: 22 March 2016