

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL / HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Fareham Museum Joint Management Committee

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

*Minutes of a meeting held on 20 October 2011
at Westbury Manor Museum, Fareham*

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs C L A Hockley (Fareham)
(Chairman)

Councillor J V Bryant (Hampshire)
(Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: B Bayford (Fareham) and R H Price, JP (Hampshire)

Other representatives: Mrs B M Clapperton and Mr M F Godrich (Friends of Fareham
Museum)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Fareham Museum Joint Management Committee held on 19 September 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record ([fm-110919-m](#))

3. ARTS AND MUSEUMS DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN - VERSION 2

The Joint Management Committee received a verbal presentation from Dr Janet Owen, Head of Museums and Arts regarding the Arts and Museums Draft Strategic Plan -Version 2 (copy [fm-111020-Strategic Plan Version 2](#), circulated at the meeting and appended to signed minutes). Dr Owen explained that the draft strategic plan was currently out for formal consultation with staff and trade unions for a three month period until January 2012. It was noted that the Hampshire County Council (HCC) Executive Member for Culture and Recreation would make a decision on the final version of the Strategic Plan and associated documents on 20 January 2012. Members of the Joint Management Committee were invited to submit their views/comments by the deadline date of 2 December 2011.

Dr Owen highlighted the proposals for Westbury Manor Museum in Phase 2. She advised that the aim is to continue the level of service in terms of exhibitions, education and marketing as the core part of service delivery. However, there was a need to address the approximate 16% reduction in budget from HCC. A key

proposal was to consider the development of volunteer involvement and seek ways to work more closely with the local community. The proposal was that community museums would deliver their service through the development of professional-volunteer community partnership arrangements. This type of arrangement would enable museums to benefit from the skill and enthusiasm of local people/communities and help to sustain the service in the long term.

With particular regard to Westbury Manor Museum, it is proposed that the role of the Area Community Curator and the Visitor Services Assistant (VSA) would continue, supported by a pool of volunteers. In response to member concerns about attracting sufficient numbers of volunteers, Dr Owen indicated that she was confident that there were enough people interested in volunteering and, with appropriate training and support, the development of a community partnership would be achieved.

In answer to a member enquiry as to alternative options if sufficient numbers of volunteers were not forthcoming, Dr Owen indicated that such options could include:-

- (i) fundamentally and significantly reducing the learning and exhibitions resources in the museum;
- (ii) fundamentally reducing the opening hours of the museum; and
- (iii) considering the introduction of measures to increase income eg admission charges. However, this would have to be balanced against a possible reduction in visitor numbers and decrease in the community value of the venue.

It was acknowledged that a reduction in opening hours could lead to a reduction in income and decrease in community involvement. Dr Owen expressed the view that for Museums and Arts generally, there is a need to demonstrate the community value of the services as well as the economic value and indicated that there are good examples of vibrant museums who have a very strong community involvement. One example quoted was the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery in Alton, which has volunteer teams involved in a range of activities whilst professional support was provided by HCC for collections, exhibitions, marketing and learning activities. It was further explained that the level of community involvement also enabled access to community funding.

On behalf of the Friends of Fareham Museum, Mrs Clapperton expressed the view that although volunteer numbers are reducing, she felt it was worth pursuing the proposal to get more volunteers involved. She considered that one of the most popular areas of interest for local volunteers would be local history. Also there may be an opportunity to encourage other community organisations/groups to get involved with the work of the Museum.

The Committee discussed the matter in some detail and it was generally agreed that a particularly important requirement was for volunteers to have the right training and support. It was reaffirmed that, subject to the approval of the HCC Executive member, the proposal was that the Westbury Manor Museum Visitor Services Assistant would manage a pool of volunteers with effect from April 2012.

The Chairman requested members to inform her as soon as possible if they had any concerns/comments about the proposal so that the views of Joint Committee members could be reported back by the deadline of 2 December 2011 and taken into account. Mr Godrich advised members that a response would also be sent on behalf of the Friends of Fareham Museum.

In response to an enquiry from the Chairman regarding the future management structure for the Museum and Ashcroft Arts Centre, Dr Owen advised that the proposal is to have a more integrated approach to Arts and Museums services. The Director of Ashcroft Arts Centre will take on the overall manager/curator role for both venues.

In light of the issues discussed at the meeting, the Chairman suggested that members may wish to give consideration to future plans/ideas for the museum. For clarification, the Head of Leisure and Community informed members that the lease agreement on the building expires in November 2012 and that there is no requirement to give any advance notice.

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) Dr Owen be thanked for her informative presentation and the information provided;
- (ii) that the issues raised be noted; and
- (iii) that members of the Joint Committee inform the Chairman of any views or comments they wish to be taken into account as part of the consultation process, in good time to meet the deadline of 2 December 2011.

4. DRAFT 2012/13 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Joint Management Committee considered a report on the draft budget proposals for 2012/13 (copy of report [fm-111020-fareham](#) JMC draft budget proposals - Version 1 circulated at the meeting).

It was reported that the provisional proposals would also be subject to approval by the HCC Executive Member for Culture and Recreation at the meeting on 20 January 2012.

The Committee noted the significant reduction in costs proposed for Phase 2, 2012/13 relating to front of house staff and management and marketing and that the proposed net expenditure for 2012/13 was £182,453. Members also noted that the draft budget statement had not included all Hampshire County Council central costs. It was the Committee's view that for clarification, details of HCC central costs should be included in the proposed draft budget statement.

The Committee discussed the proposed draft budget at length and made the following comments/observations:-

- (i) the draft budget proposals statement should be revised to include details of all HCC central costs;

- (ii) clarification be sought as to why the costs for the premises (maintenance of grounds), shown as £5,000, is included as a cost for the museum, as it is understood that the garden area is maintained separately as one of the Council's town centre parks.

A proposal was made by Councillor Price that the cost of £5,000 for grounds maintenance be removed from the draft budget. The proposal was seconded and, on being put to the vote, was NOT CARRIED (Voting 4 against the proposal; 2 for the proposal). It was therefore agreed that the grounds maintenance cost (£5,000) remain in the draft budget as shown.

It was AGREED that the draft budget proposals be updated, to include all Hampshire County Council central costs.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place, on Monday, 30 January 2012 commencing at 2.00pm in Westbury Manor Museum.

(The meeting started at 2.00pm and ended at 3.30pm).