

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel (to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Wednesday, 6 November 2013

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Miss S M Bell (Chairman)

Councillor M J Ford, JP (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: T G Knight, Mrs S Pankhurst and R H Price, JP

Also Present: Councillor Mrs C L A Hockley (Executive Member for Leisure and Community) and L Keeble (Executive Member for Streetscene) (Minute 7)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were made by Councillors Mrs P M Bryant, N R Gregory and D Whittingham (deputy)

2. MINUTES

It was AGREED that the minutes of the Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel meeting held on 4 September 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements made at this meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OR ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. PRESENTATION - UPDATE ON THE FUTURE OF WESTBURY MANOR MUSEUM

The Chairman welcomed Dr Janet Owen, Head of Museums and Arts, (Hampshire County Council) who had been invited to make a presentation to members regarding the Hampshire Solent Cultural Trust Project and how this impacts on the future of arts and museum provision in Fareham, currently provide by Westbury Manor Museum and Ashcroft Arts Centre.

It was reported that the Project has been on-going since 2011/12 and is still at a transformational stage. Reference was made to the benefits from strategic partnership working with Winchester, Southampton and Portsmouth local authorities in securing funding for example from Arts Council England (ACE) and the Lottery. The proposed next step was the transfer of arts and museums services to a charitable trust to be supported by local authority grant funding.

Members were informed of the proposals for the setting up of a charitable trust which it was envisaged would take 2-3 years to become established. In the interim Fareham Borough Council was requested to agree to maintaining the current situation, in terms of the use of the venue (Westbury Manor) and the funding arrangements, for a period of 3 years. During this period the Council, the Trust and Hampshire County Council would work together towards a collective vision for the future of arts and museum services in Fareham and allow sufficient time for the Trust to establish itself financially and organisationally.

As regards timetabling, it was noted that Hampshire County Council has made the decision to establish the Trust and in principle to transfer services and staff during 2014/15 in partnership with Winchester City Council. During the implementation stage, November 2013 to March 2014, consultation would take place with Fareham Borough Council on the detailed proposals. The final decision on transfer arrangements was expected to be made in Spring 2014 and transfer to the Trust to come into effect by Autumn 2014.

Members asked a number of questions on various issues raised in the presentation and also expressed some concern about the new proposals and how they would affect museum services at Westbury Manor Museum.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) Dr Owen be thanked for her very informative and helpful presentation; and
- (b) a copy of the presentation be circulated to all Panel members.

7. REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Community regarding the Panels work programme for 2013/14.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor Mrs Hockley and Councillor Keeble both addressed the Panel during consideration of this item.

The Director of Community informed members of two issues likely to come to the Panel at a future date:-

- (i) Following Executive approval in October 2013 to the refurbishment of the Fareham Leisure Centre swimming pool, it is proposed that details of the refurbishment plans will be presented to members in due course; and
- (ii) It is expected that a decision, in principle, will be made within the next few months regarding the future of the Western Wards swimming pool and the Panel will be involved in the decision making process.

Reference was made to the consultation with the Council on the detailed proposals concerning Westbury Manor Museum, referred to in minute 6 above. It was stated that timescales may not allow the officer's response to the consultation documents to be reported back to the Panel before the matter is considered by the Executive. Overall, members were of the view that the Panel should have the opportunity to have some input into the consultation process and comment on the proposals. It was therefore suggested that officers prepare a draft response to be discussed at a dedicated workshop/seminar to which all Panel members would be invited.

It was AGREED that the Panel's work programme for 2013/14, as set out in Appendix A attached to the report, be endorsed.

8. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Panel considered whether it was in the public interest to exclude the public and representatives of the Press from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following matter to be dealt with involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

It was AGREED that the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

9. FERNEHAM HALL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2012/13

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Community which provided a summary of the financial performance of Ferneham Hall for the financial year 2012/2013. Members were also provided with information about the financial performance for the first six months of 2013/14 and were requested to note the new initiatives proposed for 2013/14.

Particular reference was made to the key questions set out in paragraph 27 of the report. Members discussed and endorsed the proposal that three members of the Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel be appointed to participate in a Member and Officer Working Group whose purpose was to consider each of the key questions more fully and report the Group's findings back to a future Panel meeting. The Chairman invited nominations from Panel members.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) the information contained in the report regarding the financial performance of Ferneham Hall in 2012/13 be noted; and
- (b) the following three members of the Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel be appointed to a Ferneham Hall Member and Officer Working Group:-

Councillor Miss S M Bell
Councillor Mrs S Pankhurst
Councillor R H Price, JP

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.37 pm).