

CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 25 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Samantha Rayner (Chairman), Clive Bullock (Vice-Chairman), Jesse Grey, Asghar Majeed and Simon Werner

Officers: Mark Lampard, Shilpa Manek, Kevin Mist, Russell O'Keefe, Gillian Richards, Mark Taylor and Julia White

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Gilmore.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rayner declared that she is the borough representative and is one of the Director's of the Windsor Festival.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 24 November 2015 be confirmed after adding Councillor Claire Stretton.

PRESENTATION FROM THE WINDSOR FESTIVAL AND FRINGE ORGANISATIONS

Martin Denny from the Windsor Festival gave a verbal presentation to the Panel. Points that were highlighted included:

- RBWM provides some annual grant fund and in addition two smaller funds, totalling in 4.6% of their income.
- The festival is a charity and aims to deliver a varied festival.
- Some of the income is generated from the ticket sales (27%) and the remaining is raised from sponsorships, grants and individuals support.
- Trustees are currently looking at improving the state of finances for future years.
- There are two major festivals, the Autumn Festival, held between August and October and the Spring Festival, which is bi-yearly. There are normally several units at the festivals. The Autumn Festival consists of fifty professional high quality events throughout the Borough. This is aimed at people who live and work in the borough, providing varied entertainment for all. The Spring Festival is mainly aimed at youth and community organisations. It's a great opportunity to engage with young people in the borough through colleges, schools, youth centres and churches. The Windsor Festival provides opportunities to work with all the state and private schools, nineteen in total are currently involved allowing children from years 10, 11 and 12 to be involved in creative activity. The children participate in a competition that is judged, toured in the borough and then prizes given to the winners. The process shows value to the individual and shows them the value of public exhibition and fosters creativity in the arts. During the festivals, a 'community stage' is erected in Royal Windsor Shopping Centre.

The Windsor Festival is also involved with:

- Singing in schools which is performed annually and this year all participating schools will be performing together at the opening ceremony of the Bandstand in Alexander Gardens.
- Berkshire Maestros who now hold a junior 'young musician' competition in association with the international string competition bi-annually, and for non string instruments in the intervening year. The international competition attracts applicants from over 35 countries, finals are held in the castle and prizes were significant.

The Windsor Festival are the only organisation that currently put on events in Windsor Castle. They aim to work closely with the Windsor Fringe Festival.

Mark Taylor, Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage Services, explained that there were two purposes of the presentations, to assure Members of what both the Windsor Festival and the Windsor Fringe Festival were doing for the borough residents and to ask Members how the borough would like to continue to support both festivals.

Councillor Grey had visited many events and commented that what was laid on for the residents was wonderful. Councillor Grey asked about what provisions were in place for people with special needs. Martin Denny advised that the Windsor Festival worked with a music school in Surrey and also organised events to be taken to where the people were, if they could not attend any of the venues. The organisers were looking more into using music therapy.

Councillor Werner was very impressed by all the events that were put on by the Windsor Festivals. He had attended many events and was surprised to hear that it was an umbrella organisation working with so many other organisations. Councillor Werner recommended that a long term plan be put into place. It was suggested that a three or five year SLA be put into place in order for the Windsor Festival to be able to plan for the long term.

Councillor Stretton informed Members that the funding of regular events was being reviewed. Councillor Stretton highlighted that the grants process would initiate new activity and assist organisations to be self funding in the future. Other methods were also being looked at.

Mark Taylor informed Members that the borough were looking at how it could make longer term commitments, for those arts organisations that it had funded for so many years, the same way as had been done for some other types of funded organisations. This would involve having SLAs in place for given terms of multiple years, rather than just one.

Mike Denny from the Windsor Fringe Festival informed Members that they had been in place since 1969. The festival took place in September/October for two weeks. The aim of the Windsor Fringe Festival was to provide extensive events. Mike Denny explained that over 8000 programmes had been annually distributed in the borough. A wide range of events were run working with the community, ranging from music, arts, drama, children's and many more. Mike Denny highlighted that local venues were mainly used such as libraries, churches and community halls. Mike Denny informed Members that he would love for the Windsor Fringe Festival to last more than two weeks each year.

Mike Denny continued to inform Members about the finances of the Windsor Fringe Festival. They receive £2,000.00 annually from Kenneth Branagh, £2,500.00 from the borough which was matched by other organisations. The Windsor Fringe Festival would like to encourage arts and heritage priorities, support in using more borough venues particularly in Central Windsor and help with advertising. Windsor Fringe Festival would like to work closer with the Windsor Festival, local schools and colleges.

Councillor Bullock commented that the presentation was very comprehensive.

Councillor Stretton commented on the venue issues and suggested that they meet at some point to discuss the venues such as the fire station and theatre royal.

The Chairman thanked all the organisers for both festivals for attending and giving such informative presentations.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARKWOOD (LL) PRESENTATION

Mark Camp-Overy, general manager, gave a presentation on the key data that had been given to all Members. He reported that it was business as usual. There was a growth of 5% in overall attendance and an addition of 310 visits per day. The leisure centre attendance was up as follows:

- Windsor by 27%
- Magnet by 18%
- Charters by 43%
- Cox Green by 30%
- Furze Platt by 100%
- Braywick by 35%
- Swimming was up by 22%.

Mark Camp-Overy reported that there had been an increase in channels of customer feedback including external monitoring.

From September 2016, employees would be able to train on the job and there would be two apprentice days. There were currently two local residents in employment at the leisure centres.

Councillor Rayner asked about the number of complaints and how it had changed and how complaints were dealt with. Councillor Rayner also asked about the effect of private gyms on the leisure centres. Mark Camp-Overy explained that initially there were many complaints due to the change of management but that has now tailed off. Mark Camp-Overy explained that each complaint is dealt with on its own merit. He explained that there were a lot of competition with private gyms but our centres were offering more classes and member attention, smaller sizes of sessions and a sense of belonging for customers encouraging them to stay with our leisure centres.

Councillor Grey commented that this was a very good news story. Councillor Grey stated that he had received a number of complaints from residents initially, however, he had not received any complaints since the initial months. Councillor Grey thought it was a great initiative for staff to be able to progress at work.

Kevin Mist highlighted that it had been an interesting and satisfying journey. There had been a great impact from the significant investment that had been put in. The borough leisure centres were busy all the time. The borough had a great partnership with Parkwood Leisure.

Councillor Stretton commented that there had been a handful of concerns from residents, these were raised with Parkwood and there was a proactive regime to deal with them. Councillor Stretton highlighted that change was difficult for people and even though there were teething problems, these had all been sorted. Councillor Stretton thanked Parkwood.

BUDGET REPORT 2016/17

Mark Lampard, Finance Partner, talked Members through the budget report, highlighting relevant points.

Councillor Grey asked if the Environment Agency were intending to start charging for certain services that they were providing free to date. The Environment Agency were increasing the levy. Were there reasons for this being done? And could they do this?

Councillor Majeed asked about the retention of business rates being gradual. Russell O'Keefe informed the Panel that a lot more detail was going to be published so that would be circulated to Members. Members were happy to see the detail.

Members discussed the items at appendix D and highlighted six items to be prioritised.

Members Unanimously Agreed that the following capital schemes be prioritised and moved up on the overall list.

No.	Ref. No.	Scheme Name
6	CB001714	Superfast broadband in Berkshire (2016/17)
8	CB001474	Improve internet connectivity at the Guildhall
13	CB001625	Digital advertising boards
21	CB001456	Social enterprise grant
22	CB001435	Eton Wick outdoor gym in Hayward Mead Park
30	CB001508	Improvements for Windsor Visitor Information Centre

Mark Taylor informed Members that within his work area, there were a couple of joint responsibility funded schemes one with the Maidenhead Heritage Trust. A sculpture by Danny Lane had been donated to the borough, Old Windsor Parish Council were looking into provision of a heritage education space with allocated S106 funding. There was a proposal to document the musical history of the royal borough and the paintings at the Guildhall were proposed to be assessed for conservation then refurbished and restored on what is hoped to be the start of a rolling programme.

Councillor Grey asked about whether the borough had to still provide dog bins. Kevin Mist informed Members that we do not need to but we still do provide them as research shows that it would cost more if only one bin was provided and all waste was mixed contaminating material that could otherwise be recycled.

GUILDHALL PROGRESS REPORT - VERBAL UPDATE

Gillian Richards, Meeting and Events Executive, gave a verbal update on the refurbishments that were ongoing at the Guildhall, Windsor. Gillian Richards explained that there had been extensive engagement with the conservation officer, Gillian Butter, in the restoration of many things. All work had been carried out by the RBWM contractors and for the external work to the Corn Exchange, they were liaising with property services. Many adjustments had to be made as a result of the Guildhall being a grade II listed building and health and safety concerns were kept at the forefront. Since the lights were being changed at all RBWM premises, they were being updated at the Guildhall too, including the external Corn Exchange lights.

Councillor Majeed enquired about the external statues and was advised that these were being redecorated too.

Councillor Stretton asked if the leak from the roof had been fixed and was advised that it had. Councillor Stretton informed the Panel that the potential of a lift being added to the Guildhall was being investigated. It was not acceptable that the Guildhall was not accessible to all.

Agenda item 11 was also considered at this point. Kevin Mist, Head of Communications and Economic Development, informed the Panel that it had been suggested that a glass and steel lift be added to the Guildhall at the rear fire exit by the Mayor's Parlour where access to the

top level of the Guildhall would be through the Mayor's Parlour. The estimated cost would be £300,000. The lift would specifically be built for the Guildhall and to fit in with its character.

Kevin Mist informed the Panel that there had been comments from the public and also it had been an issue when new bookings for events were being made due to access. Councillor Majeed informed the Panel that there had been a complaint in the local press.

The current stair lift was about twenty years old and didn't fit the character of the building and was very slow.

Councillors discussed options for a new stair lift or external lift.

ACTION: Kevin Mist to consider all options of a lift and a new stair lift and report back at future meeting.

Councillor Grey asked if there was a target finish date for all the work that was being carried out. Kevin Mist informed the Panel that the internal work was due for completion by the end of January and the new furniture was due in February. The external work was a longterm project and needed to work around other planned work, major events, weather and other circumstances so was still being agreed.

Gillian Richards reported on all the marketing that she was currently involved with. This included:

- Joined Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce.
- Windsor Guildhall features on two of the largest venue finder websites, Squaremeal and Venuefinder.
- Providing private castle guides and dinner at the Guildhall.
- Advertised in the leisure magazine.
- Castle hotel advertising.
- Tourism day.

There had been an increase in enquiries a week, however the competition is fierce. Currently the issues that have been highlighted at the Guildhall are access issues, parking, wifi, lack of syndicate rooms and on site catering. Also the Guildhall has no historical bookings since it's seen as a new venue. The greatest income of the Guildhall is weddings and to date, 125 weddings have been booked which is more than last year. An open day will be formally arranged soon to advertise more.

MEMORIAL FOR SIR NICHOLAS WINTON

Kevin Mist and Councillor Rayner had met with Sir Nicholas Winton's family, who were very happy that the borough wanted to do something to remember him and his achievements. Lots of ideas were discussed and finally they agreed that a garden be constructed in the Oaken Grove which was the nearest largest park near where Sir Winton lived.

Kevin Mist shared a briefing note to Members to give them an idea of what the garden may look like, a suggestion put forward by Jonathan Howes. Councillor Rayner informed the Panel that the park would have community ownership which would involve young people to understand celebrate this amazing Maidenhead resident's contribution.

ADDITIONAL LIBRARY - PART II

Agenda item withdrawn.

Verbal update given in part II - To consider passing the following resolution:-

“That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the remaining items on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act”

ACCESS AT GUILDHALL, WINDSOR - VERBAL UPDATE

See Guildhall Progress Report.

RENEWAL OF LIBRARY STOCK FOR TWO YEARS (2016-2018)

Agenda item withdrawn.

WORK PROGRAMME

No items added to the work programme.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of next meeting is Wednesday 30 March 2016.

PART II

ADDITIONAL LIBRARY

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The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 9.00 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....