

CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 17 MAY 2016

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

Also in attendance: Councillor Gerry Clark

Officers: Angela Gallacher, Margaret Kirby, Shilpa Manek, Russell O'Keefe and Mark Taylor

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting would be recorded.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gilmore and Kevin Mist.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest were received.

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 30 March 2016 were unanimously agreed.

CONCLUDING PRESENTATION ON THE FOR KING & COUNTRY PROJECT

Margaret Kirby, Services Manager: Heritage and Arts, gave a presentation (attached) on the 'For King and I Project'.

The main points from the presentation included:

- Two dedicated staff members worked on this project and plenty of support from local groups.
- Great support from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- The Windsor and Royal Borough Museum supported by the RBWM Web development team, Windsor, Local History Group, Berkshire Family History Society, Maidenhead Heritage Centre and the Rifles Museum.
- Fifty copies of a carpet book were printed.
- World War I history was learnt about.
- Volunteers were trained to do research and add data to the system.
- The roadshows were very successful, 80 families came along with objects that were over 100 years old.
- Ascot Racecourse was converted to a trench where a local choir sang and local schools hand created large poppies.
- A heritage officer attended schools to give informative presentations and encourage children to encourage parents to bring old things in.
- There were more than ten talks and walks and there were a number of exhibitions.
- Volunteers are still adding information on the database and the final site is in place now.

- There were 28 volunteers and museum volunteers, 1800 hours of time was given by volunteers.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund received £93K.
- Thanks to Councillors Bateson and Quick as they were involved in the initial stages.
- The borough have future links with Heritage England and the Imperial War Museum have shown a great interest. The Maidenhead Advertiser have been interested too.
- There may be an opportunity to do a similar project for world war II.

The Chairman commented that it was an amazing project that had just grown. The project had had great success and a legacy too.

Councillor Stretton suggested that the brand be sent out to the end of the 100 years centenary.

Councillor Werner commented that it was a great project and asked if there had been any links to the twin town in France. Members agreed that this would be very interesting and was a great idea.

Mark Taylor suggested that community groups could still apply for grants and his team would be happy to advise if required. This could be suggested to Ward Community groups. Mark Taylor suggested that more needed to be done with the media.

REPORT ON PILOT AREAS OF SERVICE TRANSFER TO LIBRARIES FROM CSC

Angela Gallacher, Service Manager: Libraries, gave a progress on the report on pilot areas of service transfer to libraries from customer service centre.

Angela Gallacher explained that the five main strands of the transfers were as follows:

- More council services such as advantage cards and bus passes being offered over seven days and from Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot libraries rather than just the Town Hall and York House. One volunteer is helping with a couple of shifts a week and there were now two computers issuing advantage cards and bus passes instead of one. The staff morale is very high and one hour shifts work very well with the staff.
- Opportunities to pay council bills using chip and pin at Ascot Library.
- Face to face customer services to be delivered from Eton Wick.
- Residents' phone calls to the council to be answered for an additional hour between 6pm and 7pm, Monday to Friday.
- Residents' emails to the council to be responded to and assessed over 7 days.

Other points highlighted included:

- When the customer services emails were taken on two weeks prior, there was a two week delay which was now on track. All staff had been trained. There was a lot of nerves but with training and excellent support from the customer services centre staff, all was now on track. This service was available on Saturday and Sunday too.
- As of 14 June 2016, all phone calls would be answered between 5.00 – 7.00pm, an extra hour had been added. Training for this would begin the following week. The library staff will be travelling between libraries to offer support.
- The face to face aspect in libraries was to begin in June. Available staff would be covering over the next three months, then from September 2016, a rota would be in place.
- The facility to pay council tax and general bills as Ascot library kiosks would be live before the end of the year.

Angela Gallacher advised Members of the primary risks, they were as follows:

- Technology – solution – keep in touch with IT.
- Staff capacity/training and workloads – solution – currently measuring, could add additional volunteers.
- Complaints from residents, not enough time spent with customers – solution – offer training courses.

Angela Gallacher explained that a staff feedback survey had been carried out amongst 42 staff and 32 staff had responded.

Councillor Stretton commented that the issues with the advantage card had been ongoing at the same time but the team had managed it very well. It was now really working well.

Councillor Werner asked the officer about what was the balance between queues and helping people, how would this be managed? Which was more important?

This was answered by Councillor Stretton, this could be dealt with by dealing with most urgent queries first in the queue. Maybe considering a hour by hour operation.

Councillor Grey asked the following three questions:

1. How would customers give feedback?
Live feedback, all of the time and a quarterly snapshot survey carried out, generally rating of satisfactory was very high. End of pilot was December 2016. Customers and staff could give feedback at any time.
2. What was the cost of the pilot scheme?
There was no additional cost, it was all paid for from within the operational costs, directing staff resource to these activities rather than others.
3. Why was the advantage card offered for a longer term?
The advantage card is not a smart card and may not be the right card for the future. This is currently being investigated. In February 2016, a national survey was carried out and data was still being collated on what council services customers wanted. This should be published soon.

Councillor Werner raised concern that a future smart card may have costs associated with it, a charge for customers and this was not a great idea as customers were paying for the advantage card through their council tax.

Council Stretton advised that there were many new business models which do not carry extra charges.

The Chairman asked how the borough was advertising all these changes and was advised that through tweeting and 'Around the Royal Borough'. There was a communication representative on the project group.

INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT Q4 2015/16

This paper was 'to follow' by email.

WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel noted the work programme.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting is on Thursday 11th August 2016.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....