

CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development held on Friday, 29 July 2022 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Steve Pitt (in the Chair)

Councillors George Fielding
Russell Simpson

14. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Linda Symes sent apologies.

15. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

16. Library Stock Policy

Mark Zumpe, Information Stock Librarian, introduced the report.

Mark advised that it has been several years since the last report on stock policy and noted that the pandemic and lockdown had a significant effect on stock usage. The physical use of books remains at a level lower than pre-pandemic whilst digital issues have increased particularly for Borrowbox and Pressreader. Stock budgets have been adjusted accordingly. Mark emphasised the library's commitment to continue to provide free access to a range of books and content.

The policy on donations had been updated due to the significant increase in donations over the last two to three years.

There was a desire to make the library service more visible to Portsmouth customers so there is a plan to publish parts of the stock policy report on the library website, so it is widely available to readers and writers.

The Chair stated he was aware of a couple of local authors introduced to the library in the past couple of weeks, both of whom have written very successful novels that are doing quite well, within the children and young adults market. Libraries supporting home grown talent is to be welcomed.

DECISION

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development:

1. **Noted that the library and Archive Service publishes its Stock Policy and collection management policy on the Library and Archive Service website to inform the public on how the service seeks best value and that stock is acquired according to current legal guidance;**
2. **Noted that the Library and Archive Service will purchase stock within the current legislation pertaining to libraries and publications;**
3. **Noted that the service continues to invest in digital offers - e-books, e-audiobooks, e-newspapers and magazines and e-music as demand for these services continues to grow;**
4. **Noted that, of the unsolicited, self-published titles donated to the Library and Archive Service, only those that are by local authors or about Portsmouth will be taken on for stock;**
5. **Noted that the Library and Archive Service continues to purchase reference books that develop the Portsmouth History Centre collection;**
6. **Noted that a continuing programme of stock disposal is carried out.**

17. Museums Annual Review & Plan 2022-2023

Jane Mee, Museums & Visitor Services Manager, introduced the report.

The purpose of the report is to review the achievements of Portsmouth Museums in 2021/22 and to present the service priorities for the current financial year.

Jane Mee noted:

- The purpose of Portsmouth Museums as set out in the report.
- The achievements over the last year;
 - The opening of the majority of council's museums in May and June.
 - Completed the Museum Strategy 2022 - 2026
 - Prepared the application for accreditation.
 - Prepared and submitted the application for National Portfolio Organisation status.
 - Continued to develop the Silver City Exhibition.
 - Giving young people the opportunity to join the museum team through the Government funded Kickstart scheme and employed 20 young people through this initiative.
 - Recruited and trained new volunteers to join the D-Day team working on the Landing Craft Tank 7074.
- The flooding of the basement at Eastney Beam Engine House despite the recent investment in this site. The cause is under investigation.
- The plans for the year ahead;
 - To reapply for Accreditation (the national benchmark for museums in England) - expected in July 2022.
 - Renewal of the Zoo License for the Butterfly House.
 - An audit of the Historic Environment Record

- A commitment to Welcome Host training and the VAQAS assessment.
- Investment of time and effort continues in supporting volunteers. The service is hoping to submit an application to look at increased volunteer roles for the operation of the Eastney Beam Engine House .
- Support to the library led projects that are Arts Council funded

Jane Mee flagged the partnerships and the people the service works with:

- University of Portsmouth
- Dulverton Trust
- Headley Trust
- The HAF programme
- Freelance specialists and creatives across the city
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- National Museum of the Royal Navy.

The plan this year is to focus on commercial activity for the D-Day story, to look at the exhibition that follows Silver City in February 2023 and to consider forward plans for subsequent exhibitions

The Chair noted the wider work across the council on the Kickstarter scheme which has resulted in a number of young people moving into permanent employment.

Officers clarified that work is being done to encourage people to take ownership of museums, including the large city museum, with activity taking place in the community, including the north of the city. Members welcomed this. Officers noted that the NPO work encompasses much of this.

Decision

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development:

- 1. Noted the achievements of 2021/20**
- 2. Noted the activity to achieve museum sector and other standards.**
- 3. Noted that funding is being sought to establish a robust and sustainable model for the operation of the Eastney Beam Engine House.**
- 4. Noted the range of partners including funders contributing to museum activity.**
- 5. Noted The D-Day Story group offer, building on the investment in the museum and the arrival of the Landing Craft Tank 7074.**
- 6. Noted the proposals for the exhibitions at Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery, including what follows Silver City - on the themes of the seashore (opening 2023) and costume (opening 2024).**
- 7. Noted the proposals for the development of the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) Advisory Board and the need to improve provision for users at the museum store in support of the NPO.**

18. Musuems - National Portfolio Organisation bid

Jane Mee, Museums & Visitor Services Manager, introduced the information only report and updated on the recent application to Arts Council England (ACE) for National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding.

The aim of the bid is to involve and engage people in community settings and to develop relationships with people resulting in increased engagement and attendance at museums. To work in genuine partnership with residents and focus on the north of the city. The funding can make a real difference in the interests of the community.

Jane noted the demanding application process with the bid submitted in May 2022. There is no guarantee of success as the applications are oversubscribed and it is very competitive.

Members welcomed the thorough and well thought through bid and suggested that, should it not be successful this time, Portsmouth continue to apply in future years.

The Chair welcomed the NPO bid noting that it sets the tone of Portsmouth's aspirations for the service development. He observed it may be useful to go out and about engaging with residents to consider how to develop the relationship with them in a more modern and interactive way.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

19. Bookfest

Claire Liddell, Service Development Manager, introduced the information only report and updated on the success of the 2022 Festival and the return to in person events following the Pandemic.

The Bookfest was launched in 2010, is a 3-week programme to promote reading for pleasure and to support local writing talent and creativity.

2022 was the 11th festival and the first in person since the pandemic. 2021 was entirely online and was very successful.

Claire outlined the demographics of those attending and noted the work to make the festival more accessible and diverse.

The Chair welcomed the return of the Bookfest in person and observed that the Bookfest doesn't work in isolation as a standalone event but has a range of activities ongoing throughout the year.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

20. Portsmouth Visitor Economy update

Jane Singh, Visitor Services and Development Manager, introduced the information only report and updated on the Visit Portsmouth team's marketing activity, partnership working and research from January to June 2022.

Members thanked the team for their hard work, observing they do the same amount of work as in previous years with a hugely reduced staff team.

Officers clarified the engagement work they are carrying out with the Cruise lines to encourage passengers to consider visiting the city rather than heading to London or Salisbury for instance. A service to greet customers has worked really well. An event is being held in the autumn with agents to boost engagement.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

The meeting concluded at 10.35 am.

Councillor Steve Pitt
Chair