

## **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, 10 February 2023 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Steve Pitt (in the Chair)

Councillors George Fielding  
Russell Simpson

### **Apologies for Absence**

Linda Symes

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Symes.

#### **2. Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. Hotwalls Studios Update**

Claire Looney, Commissioning & Partnership Manager presented the report on behalf of Harry Scott, Hotwalls Studio Development Officer as he was unable to attend.

Councillor Pitt said that the move on spaces for artists were essential. He was aware that there is low-cost art space available in the city, although more was needed, and the Council's asset management team were looking at other potential studio spaces in the city. He was hopeful to have some positive news on this soon and the team would continue to work with artists over the coming months to keep them informed.

The opposition spokespeople were in agreement with this and were in support of the three-year lease with the two-year transition period as well as the shared space to support artists.

### **DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member**

**(1) Noted the achievements of 2022/23**

**(2) Agreed that some work to support the tenants at the end of their maximum tenancy continues, but the focus will now turn to recruiting a diverse selection of new creative tenants for those spaces.**

**(3) Approved a reduction to the length of studio leases and changes to the rate model.**

#### **4. Disposal of Union Jack Flag from Landing Ship Tank (LST) 157**

Andrew Whitmarsh, D Day Museum Development Officer, introduced the report. Councillor Pitt said it would be good to see some photographs of the flag once it was in place at the LST memorial in the USA.

**DECISION: The Cabinet Member approved the disposal of the flag so that it can be transferred to the LST Ship Memorial, Evansville, Indiana, USA.**

#### **5. Parks Fees and Charges**

Adrian Rozier, Parks Development Manager, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt said it was important to remember that the money from the increases in fees and charges is re-invested into supporting parks and open spaces to maintain the high standards across the city.

Members said it was encouraging that the Council is keeping the rises to CPI levels as the costs of maintaining the facilities are rising. Councillor Pitt added that the fees and charges were not increasing above inflation; some other local authorities had been forced to do this, so this was very positive.

**DECISION: The fees and charges were approved in accordance with the attached schedules (Appendix A).**

#### **6. Museums and Visitor Services Fees and Charges**

Jane Singh, Visit Portsmouth Tourism and Marketing Manager, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt said that with museums and visitor services you must charge what the market reflects and officers will keep a watching brief on this to ensure that these remain competitive.

Opposition spokespeople felt it was good to be able to keep prices competitive and noted that museums need an income stream to maintain the existing facilities and expand. It was also noted that the Charles Dickens Birthplace Museum, Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery and Cumberland House Natural History Museum remain free for Portsmouth residents which are being highlighted through Flagship magazine and social media.

#### **DECISIONS:**

- (1) The charges as referred to in this report and as listed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 were approved.**

**(2) The Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services was given the authority to offer pricing in line with these fees and charges for bespoke requests.**

**7. Economic Impact of Museums (information report)**

Jane Singh, Visit Portsmouth Tourism and Marketing Manager introduced the report.

Members noted that Easney Beam Engine House was open the last Sunday of every month except August and December. Councillor Pitt said it was important to remember the positive economic impact of culture and creative activity in the city.

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

**8. Seafront accessibility (information report)**

Claire Looney, Commissioning & Partnership Manager, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt said it was important to note that the coastal defence works will affect the profiling of the beach over the next few years, so to do anything permanent at this time would be unwise. He meets with the coastal defence team manager every six weeks, and this is always on the agenda

Members said that there is a large community wanting to have access to the sea and it was hoped that a solution could be found once the sea defence works had been completed. It was noted that in terms of accessibility, the changing places toilet in the D Day Story car park is now open and work is underway on the accessible toilet in the Central Library. There is also a bid for three more accessible toilets in the city which if successful would be very welcomed.

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

**9. D-Day Story Marketing Activity (information report)**

Ross Fairbrother, D Day Story Manager, introduced the report.

Members thanked Ross and his team for raising the profile of the museum and that this was an important and unique asset to the city.

Councillor Pitt advised members that Dr Jane Mee had recently retired from her role as Museums & Visitor Services Manager. He wished to record his thanks for her enthusiasm and hard work, particularly on the LCT project and making the D Day Story a success.

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

**10. Update on Bransbury Park new Leisure Centre (information report)**

David Moorman, Sports & Leisure Development Manager, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt said that the rise in interest rates and the crash in markets in September last year had affected this project. Local authorities are trying to deliver important infrastructure for residents and local jobs to help rebuild the economy. The rise in raw material costs has also had a significant impact on infrastructure projects so the fact that the authority is in a position where we are able to move forward with reasonable confidence is pleasing. A contribution from Sport England would be sought and also a small contribution from the youth investment fund towards the cost of this project. Councillor Pitt added that there are a couple of costs within the £16.9 million that officers continue to interrogate regularly to try to bring down.

Members echoed these comments regarding the pressures affecting the project. They were conscious that there is a shortfall on the project subject to successful funding from Sports England and the Youth Investment Fund, so it was imperative that these criteria are met to secure this funding. It was also felt that the potential of a new GP surgery on the site would be welcomed as there is a shortfall in the city. Councillor Pitt said that early conversations had taken place with GPs services in the area and a decision would need to be made soon on whether this is something the NHS want to proceed with.

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

The Chair thanked officers for their reports and members for their comments.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 am.

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Councillor Steve Pitt  
Chair