

## **CABINET MEMBER - THE LEADER (CULTURE, LEISURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO)**

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member - The Leader (Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Portfolio) held on Friday, 16 February 2024 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Steve Pitt (in the Chair)

Councillors John Smith  
Mary Vallely

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

There were no apologies for absence although Councillor Pitt noted that Councillor Russell Simpson had resigned from his role as opposition spokesperson for the Portsmouth Independents Party with effect from 14 February.

#### **2. Declarations of members' interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. D Day 80 Portsmouth Events & Museum Service Activities**

Cathy Hakes, Head of Museums, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt noted that sponsorship for school visits had increased from £21,000 to £78,000 and would enable more than double the number of children to visit the D Day Story. He had recently attended the pop-up D Day 80 museum at Cosham Library with Councillors Vallely and Shah. They were very impressed and it was a fascinating meeting with people who had been there at the time, for example, at Bletchley Park. It showed the strong local connection which the Portsmouth Naval Base Commander was keen to highlight as well as the event's national importance. There was contingency in the budget to ensure it would be commemorated properly. Councillor Vallely said the excellent work was beyond anything she could imagine.

Councillor Smith said the programme was great and was pleased to note the budget contingency and increased sponsorship. In response to his questions, Ms Hakes said there were talks with Goodwood about sponsorship. There had not been an opportunity yet to discuss the link up with the Spitfires but she would raise it and pass on any updates. Councillor Pitt said that national television was fully engaged and Portsmouth would be the focus of attention on 5 June.

**DECISION: The Leader (Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development) agreed the outline programme of events and**

**activity for the D-Day 80 Portsmouth events and activities and authorised officers to continue to work with external partners such as the MOD to deliver, support and publicise the commemorative events and activities.**

#### **4. Economic Development and Skills service update 2023**

Jane Lamer, Head of Economic Growth & Skills, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt requested that thanks be passed on to the team as he knew how hard they worked. How much they delivered was not always realised so it was important to show the full breadth of what they did. He was looking forward to the new business support package as if people were triaged better they could be supported more than if they were kept in silos. Crowdfunder was good but had reached a natural conclusion. The South Coast Business Week launched on Monday.

In response to members' questions, Ms Lamer said although Crowdfunder was good it was a lot of work and the actual platform was very expensive at around £30,000 pa. It was better to focus on strategic grants and support businesses with other sources of fundraising rather than running a platform. Other crowdfunding platforms still existed. Feedback about the team's services was very positive and included testimonials from people whose lives had changed. There was much free support from organisations like the University as well as Shaping Portsmouth. The council was looking to collate a wider offer of services, for example, feedback showed a need for more social media support in the face of increased competition. It was very much about listening to businesses. The team could help businesses access more expensive support. The work showed that mentoring was important, for example, helping smaller companies address significant issues or help with exports.

With regard to providing a power supply at Cosham market, it would be a priority for the new Markets Co-ordinator who was starting on Monday. The electricity supply was a significant issue in Cosham with retailers being relied on to provide power, for example, for the Christmas lights. Officers were looking to find a solution as soon as possible and increase the market's offer. Councillor Pitt said Community Infrastructure Levy or top-up money could be used as it was important.

With regard to the Bridge Centre, Councillor Pitt explained the Future High Streets funding secured a few years ago was divided between Commercial Road and the Bridge Centre. The work on the high street was one step among many and progress was incremental. There were plans for more regular road closures of a section of Fratton Road to hold events. The purchase of the Bridge Centre had taken a long time. Long-term plans were for mixed use, including housing. Organisations such as the Fratton pantry, Parenting Network baby bank, Rainbow Trust and a STEM Centre (computer development) were moving in. The council was working with the bookshop to help them relocate. It was a great project and just needed a couple of steps to

try to co-locate social value organisations on the site. The team was doing a good job.

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

## **5. Large Scale Events - Economic Impact on Portsmouth**

Claire Looney, Commissioning and Partnerships Manager, introduced the report.

Members thought the report showed good and useful evidence of the impact of large scale events. They noted the effect on health and wellbeing. Showing events on television helped promote the city. The Events team was small but did a fantastic job.

In response to members' questions, Ms Looney said local businesses could trade on the sites of large scale events with pop-up stalls. Very large screens could promote businesses and as a local authority the council took advantage of them to highlight initiatives such as foster care. The running total of support from Victorious for local good causes was well over £250,000. Local residents could nominate causes and those which have benefitted include nature, sport, mental health as well as loans of equipment for organising events.

Councillor Pitt noted the number of people with more positive perceptions of Portsmouth had increased from 32% to 38% and more used the Park & Ride. Together with D Day 80 Portsmouth was seen as an international destination for events. He had had feedback that officers' skillsets were of national importance.

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

## **6. Volunteer Futures**

Catherine Burland, Volunteer Futures Project Officer, introduced the report and gave a presentation showing the achievements of the volunteer projects.

Members said the outcomes were brilliant. The profile of the projects should be raised and they suggested having stickers with logos.

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

The meeting concluded at 10.45 am.

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Councillor Steve Pitt  
Chair