



NOTICE OF MEETING

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE AND LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL

WEDNESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 1.00 PM

**THE EXECUTIVE MEETING ROOM - THIRD FLOOR, THE GUILDHALL,
PORTSMOUTH**

Telephone enquiries to Allison Harper 023 9268 8014

Email: Allison.harper@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

If any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting has access requirements, please notify the contact named above.

Membership:

Councillor Russell Simpson (Chair)

Councillor John Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Yinka Adeniran

Councillor Peter Candlish

Councillor Leo Madden

Councillor George Madgwick

Standing Deputies

Councillor Matthew Atkins

Councillor Stuart Brown

Councillor George Fielding

Councillor Mark Jeffery

Councillor Emily Strudwick

Councillor Benedict Swann

(NB This Agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting.)

Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence**
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests**
- 3 Minutes of Previous Meetings (Pages 3 - 8)**

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of 29 September 2023 and 26 October 2023 be approved.

4 Licensing Busking Report (Pages 9 - 20)

The Scrutiny Panel to consider the report on Busking in the City.

5 Briefing Paper - Economic Development. (Pages 21 - 28)

The Scrutiny Panel to consider the report on the Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy.

6 Briefing Paper - Culture and Leisure Services (Pages 29 - 38)

The Scrutiny Panel to consider the briefing report from the Culture and Leisure Services in relation to the high street.

7 Scrutiny Review of the Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy focusing on High Street Direction

The Panel will hear evidence from the following witnesses:

1. Cascades Centre Manager.
2. H&M Representative
3. Primark Manager
4. PCC Licensing Manager
5. Port Solent Manager.

Members of the public are now permitted to use both audio visual recording devices and social media during this meeting, on the understanding that it neither disrupts the meeting or records those stating explicitly that they do not wish to be recorded. Guidance on the use of devices at meetings open to the public is available on the Council's website and posters on the wall of the meeting's venue.

Agenda Item 3

Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Panel - informal meeting **Friday 29 September 2023 at 11 am, Executive Meeting Room**

Present

Councillors Russell Simpson (Chair), John Smith (Vice-Chair), Yinka Adeniran, Peter Candlish, Leo Madden, Emily Strudwick

Councillor George Madgwick - observer

Becky Alexander - Places & Markets Manager
James Daly - Culture Development & Projects Officer
Jane Lamer - Head of Economic Growth & Skills
Claire Looney - Commissioning & Partnerships Manager
Claire Watkins - Business Development & Projects Manager
Isla - intern with Claire Watkins

Cllr Madgwick was attending as an observer as at the next Full Council there would be a request for him to replace Cllr Strudwick on the panel.

Cllr Candlish referred to the email he sent the panel on 18 September and the officers' report. He asked where the panel wanted to go and what exactly they wanted to narrow down. If PCC did not own many of the properties that would not be a very productive line of enquiry. The report showed the nature of the high street was changing towards health, wellbeing, and socialising but residents (in his experience) wanted to fight against the tide, for example, the closure of large department stores. He was interested if the report reflected long or short-term trends. Claire Watkins said the data came from the Arts Council England so was based on national not Portsmouth trends. Jane Lamer said Covid had escalated what was already happening and compared with other cities Portsmouth's footfall was quite good.

Cllr Candlish made three points:

- PCC had to understand residents' views and needs while seeing what was commercially viable.
- The panel could step back to see how different high streets in Portsmouth fight back, for example, Palmerston Road seemed to be in a transition stage compared with Fratton Road, or the panel could compare Portsmouth with another city.
- Perhaps the high street needs defining - what is it? Where is it in Portsmouth? It was not just Commercial Road but other areas like Highland Road. Perhaps areas threatened by change could be mapped.

Cllr Simpson said it could be a good opportunity to look at high streets holistically and speak to residents. Will the topic be impactful? Will it be useful? High streets in Portsmouth were all different, for example, Cosham felt more like a market.

Cllr Candlish asked if there was an economic development map. Jane Lamer said there was significant work taking place with high streets with support from a national consultant. Other areas as well as Commercial Road were recognised as important, including in the Local Plan; there would be a map. Then there were very specific projects like the Bridge Centre. Extensive reports and considerable documentation

were available because of the Local Plan but it might be possible to provide summaries or share a draft. The Hednor (?) report looked at employment space. She acknowledged the panel did not want to step on officers' toes but they welcomed a challenge. Becky Alexander's role was to look at how PCC worked with businesses. A new market strategy was coming soon.

Cllr Simpson had met Stephen Baily about high streets and mentioned the busking spots in Chichester. There was only one in the north of Portsmouth but there could be more, for example, by McDonalds. The panel could look at cultural opportunities in the high street. Claire Looney noted there had been much focus on libraries though that was not a direct comparison with shops. PCC not owning properties was an issue as it limited the council's influence. She mentioned an art shop in Cosham that ran workshops but had closed as it was not viable. There was a balance between business rates and running a successful shop. Cllr Simpson mentioned buildings being empty due to high rates, including the KwikSave on Stubbington Avenue whose landlord lived on Guernsey. Perhaps landlords could be brought together in a forum.

Cllr Smith thought the report showed good work but it was not all joined up; sometimes work was done in isolation. It needed pulling together to show people where they could go. There was no golden bullet to resolving the high street's problems. Some shops or events were niche and not available to all. The look and feel of the high street needed to change. He was interested in the principles behind the purchase of Fratton Bridge. Artists etc could help regenerate run-down areas.

Jane Lamer agreed with the viewpoint so they were revisiting the economic development strategy this year, for example, Small Business Saturday. Claire Looney mentioned Let's Create in the former Dorothy Perkins shop for Christmas and other possible pop-up shops in the Cascades. It was difficult to find space in Cosham. Oliver Willcocks (Senior Project Manager, Property Development) could talk to the panel. It was about providing spaces for businesses to move and grow. Economic Development worked with the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chamber of Commerce; it always welcomed new ideas. The Island event in June and the Food Festival in July were good but what else could they do? Island was soft launched with the Festival. More sector integration was needed, especially with SMEs and start-ups; the latter started OK but had problems around year three.

Cllr Simpson asked if there was room for a roadmap or business forum. The panel could consider the issue from a different angle but without stepping on officers' toes. Jane Lamer mentioned how to keep businesses going in areas like Drayton or prevent disruption in areas like Cosham where a lot of regeneration was happening. It would take the team about two weeks to compile a summary of reports (which were quite big); the team was very small with limited resources.

Cllr Madgwick suggested the panel could make a recommendation for a compulsory purchase order on KwikSave. Private and PCC properties could be kept separate. He mentioned a PCC-owned property that had been empty for three years but PCC had refused an offer of £30,000 per annum rent which was better than nothing. A property on Allaway Avenue had been empty for four years and when someone was interested asbestos was discovered; why was it not found earlier?

Cllr Simpson thanked him for the suggestion but said it was better to focus on one topic at a time. [He distributed an audit report - single page - that the panel had seen at a previous item]. He was happy with Cllr Smith's suggestion. The chosen subject should add value and not duplicate other work; the panel needed to agree the principles and framework of their approach. He was not sure if the 26 October meeting would be formal to sign off the scoping document; he said more data was needed before agreeing the scoping document.

The meeting ended at 11.45 am.

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Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Panel - informal meeting
Thursday 26 October 2023 at 1pm, Executive Meeting Room

Present

Councillors Russell Simpson (Chair), John Smith (Vice-Chair), Yinka Adeniran, Peter Candlish, Leo Madden, George Madgwick

James Daly - Culture, Development and Projects Officer

Claire Watkins - Business Development and Projects Manager

Jane Lamer - Head of Economic Growth and Skills

Rebecca Alexander - Places and Markets Manager

Allison Harper - Democratic Services

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

The Chair advised that, following panel discussions and discussions with Jane Lamer in Economic Development the suggestion was to refine the scrutiny topic to a review of the Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy focusing on the High Street element. The strategy contains a key objectives box which was quite vague and was compiled in 2019, pre Covid-19 since when a lot of things have fast forwarded, and a lot of retail habits have changed including on-line shopping. He suggested it would be useful to deep dive further and 'pick apart' this element.

There was a discussion about the contention that it was 'not fit for purpose' with Jane Lamer explaining why she had used this phrase. Working with the strategy unit and Councillor Pitt, the portfolio holder, it was decided to go for a refresh of the strategy in relation to the fundamental changes that have come across since the Pandemic and the now different economic climate. Some of the actions were very specific in the strategy and the plan is now to have more overarching priorities and then have a plan that is something more practical that can be adjusted without having to revisit the whole strategy. It is about making sure the strategy feels current and with longevity.

The Chair stressed that he considered the part concerning high streets was not fit for purpose not the whole strategy and that was the element that the panel could scrutinise. Shopping habits have changed so much since the implementation of the strategy.

Councillor Madden suggested using the terminology 'refresh' or 'renew'.

Councillor Candlish considered that the change in shopping habits is not so different from 2019 as the trends had been there for a long time and it was not really known by how much the Pandemic had really changed habits. High streets had been changing for a long time prior to the Pandemic and they were likely to continue changing.

The unanimous decision was taken to change the Scrutiny title to 'Since the Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy was written pre Covid-19 the Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy concerning High Streets needs

to be reviewed. The Panel suggests a review of the Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy focusing on High Street direction'.

Jane Lamer advised she would be able to bring a draft report to the November meeting providing a summary of the current position and where the service would suggest the focus is around High Streets in the updated strategy.

The Panel then discussed timescales to ensure the review was completed in time by the end of this municipal year. Timescales were tight. A decision was made to schedule an extra meeting in December to help with this.

The Panel then had a thorough discussion on suggested witnesses to be invited to include rental estate agents, market traders, retailers, cultural witnesses, licensing, retail centre managers and the High Street Taskforce. Witnesses could attend in person or provide a written submission. Direction would be given to witnesses on the evidence requested from them to ensure there was focused discussions and that witnesses were clear what the panel meant by 'the high street'.

The meeting ended at 14:15

Agenda Item 4

Information on Busking

Nickii Humphreys, Licensing Manager

- **How much money is generated from busking licences per annum?**

There is no income associated with these permits as they are processed and issued free of charge with no expiry date.

- **How much money is generated per area - North End / Southsea / Commercial Rd (every main area we currently have a busking licence)?**

Not applicable as per comment above

- **Could we scrap busking fees for a year to encourage people to busk?**

See comments above.

- **How can we make it easier for people to busk?**

The process for applying for a permit is fairly simple (see link to the licensing webpage for street entertainment - [Street entertainment authorisations - Portsmouth City Council](#))

Applicants can apply electronically for the permit and following issue of the permit, they only need to telephone/email to make a booking for a pitch.

The conditions attached to such permits are available [here](#)

- **Do we have a map of busking sites?**

We do have maps which are available for buskers:

Appendix A - Arundel Street

Appendix B - Commercial Road

Appendix C - High Street, Cosham

Appendix D - London Road, North End

Appendix E - Palmerston Road

- **What was the income from busking when chargeable?**

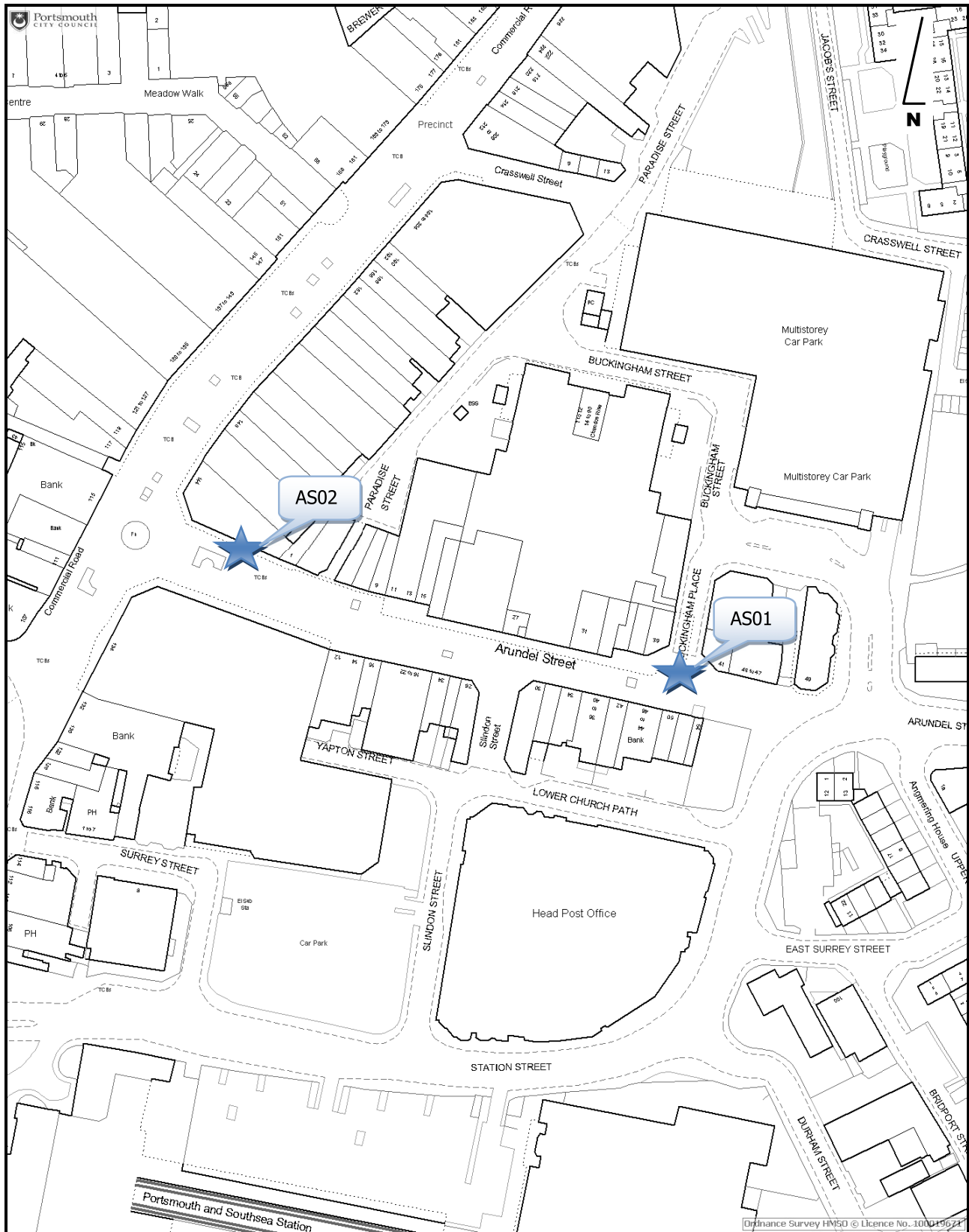
From recollection and checking on our database, the fee was removed sometime around 2010/11 but unfortunately, I do not have those records anymore due to "cleaning up" our records when we moved over to SharePoint.

To look at each individual busking site for numbers to establish use would mean checking our booking diary for each individual entry but I can say that Commercial Road and Palmerston Road are the most requested locations. There is very little, if any, interest in the North End site but we have seen in the past use of the Cosham area.

The fee back then for an annual permit was £20 and in 2010 we had a total of 39 buskers registered in that year, so we are looking at income of under £1,000.

As there is no expiry date for these types of permits, our records show we have issued, to date, a total of 505 permits but this is obviously not a reflection of how many buskers are

currently using their permits in Portsmouth. I would look to the records in 2010 for a more accurate number of "active" buskers at any one time.



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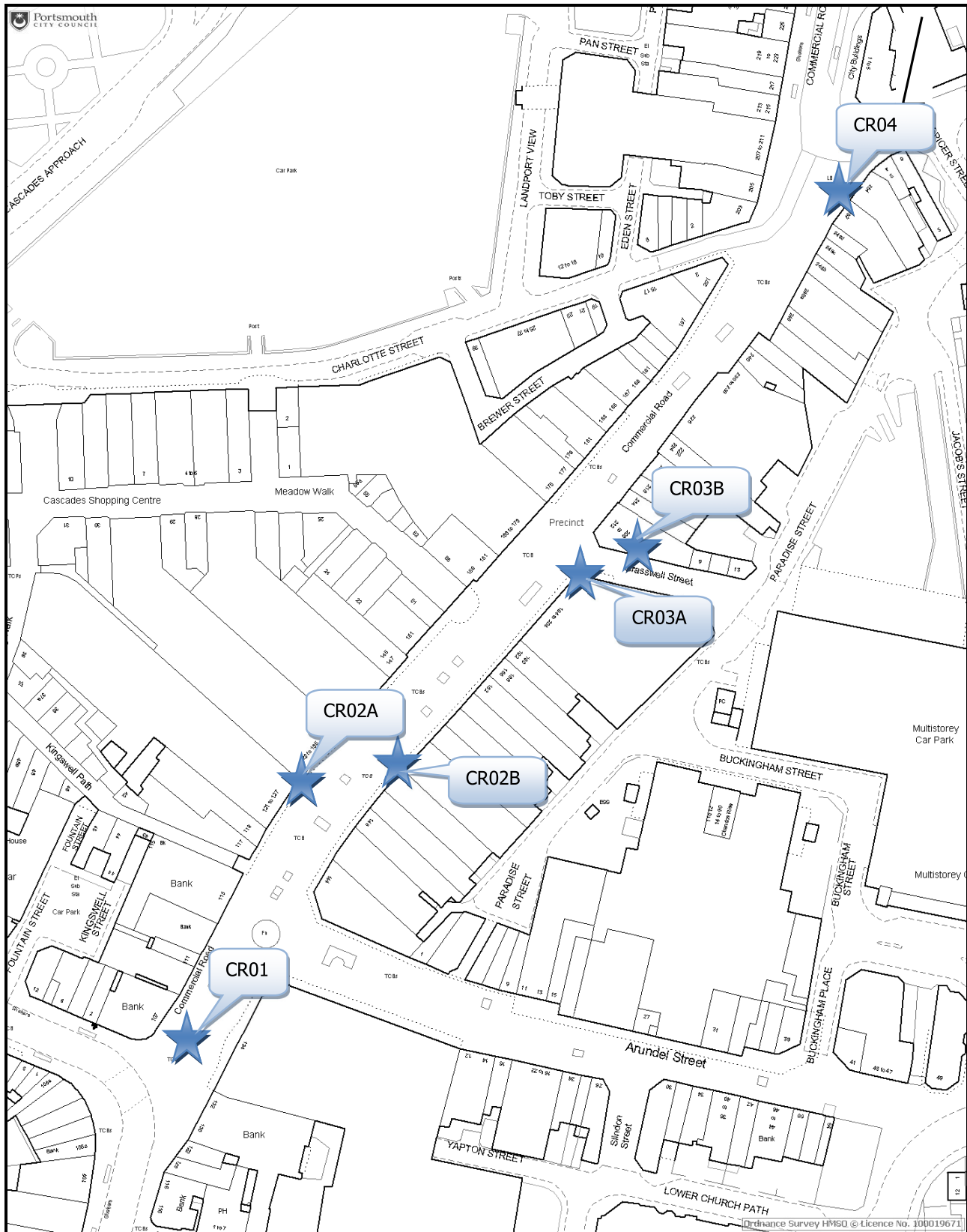
Title:

Street Entertainment Sites - Arundel Street

Additionally if exhibition areas are free, these can be booked with Town Centre Management on 023 9284 1068

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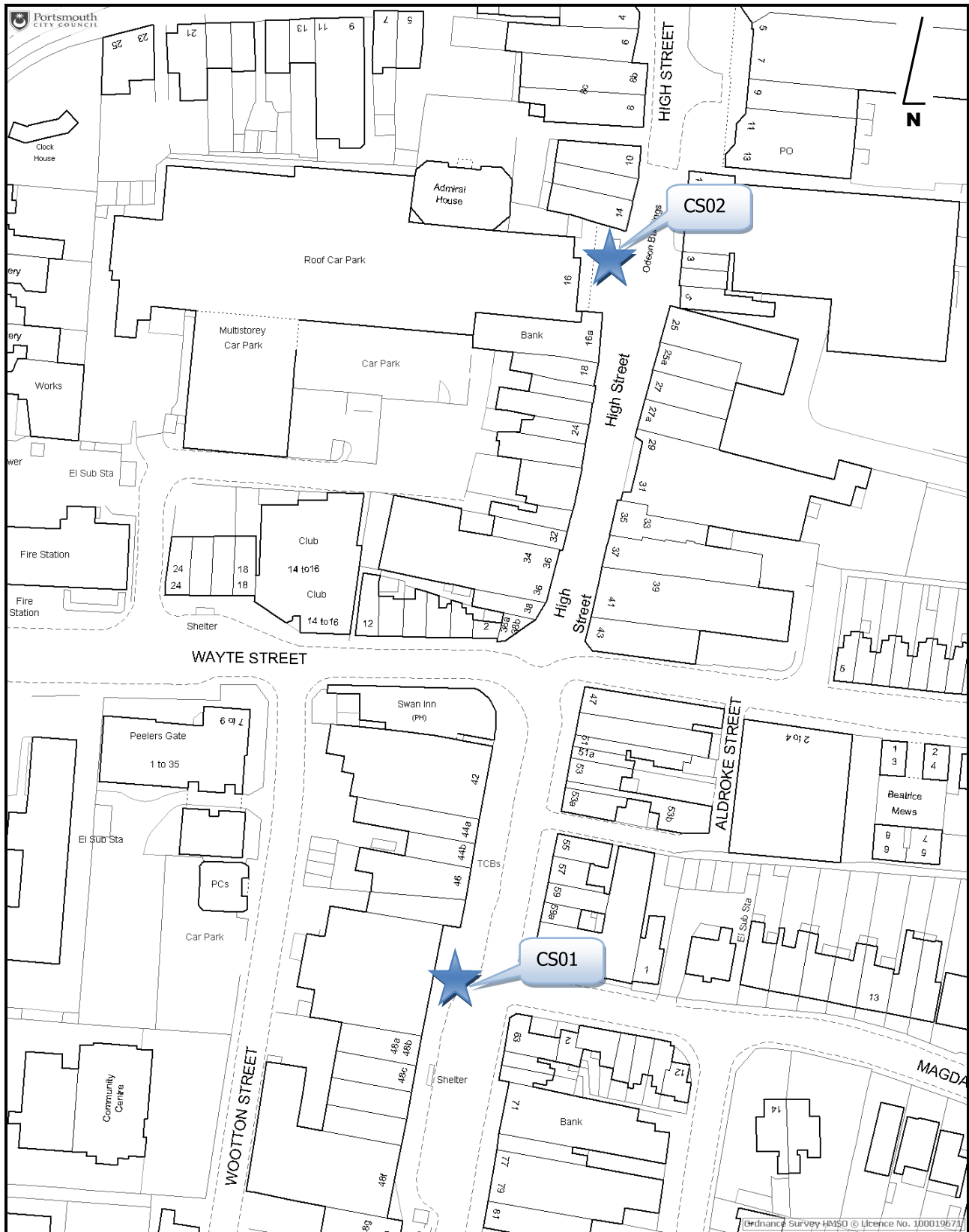


Title: **Street Entertainment Sites - Commercial Road**

Note: Where sites are marked as A or B - Only one of those sites will be able to be booked for use at any one time
 CR04 site will only be available on non-market days.

Additionally if exhibition areas are free, these can be booked with Town Centre Management on 023 9284 1068

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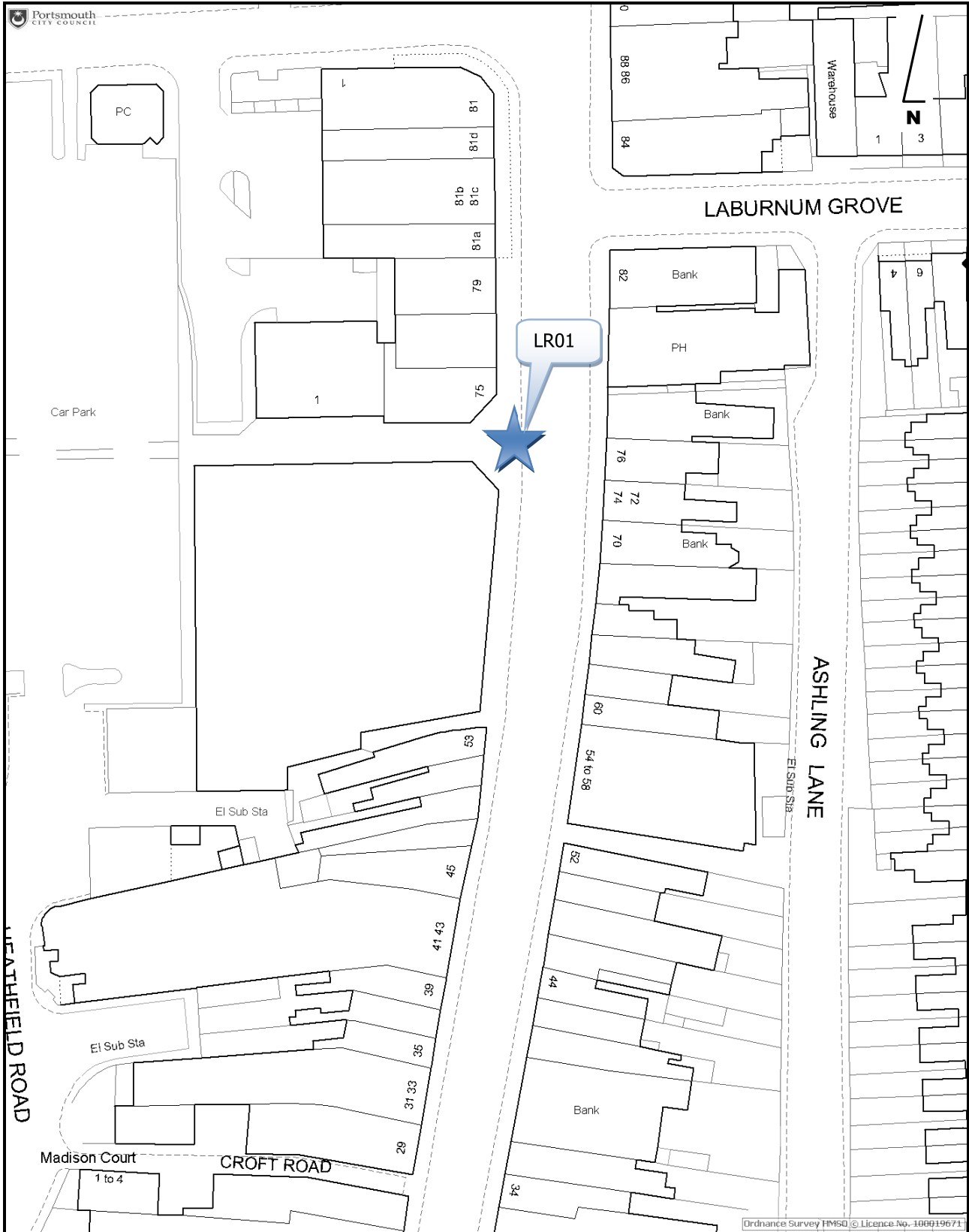


Title: **Street Entertainment Sites - Cosham High Street**

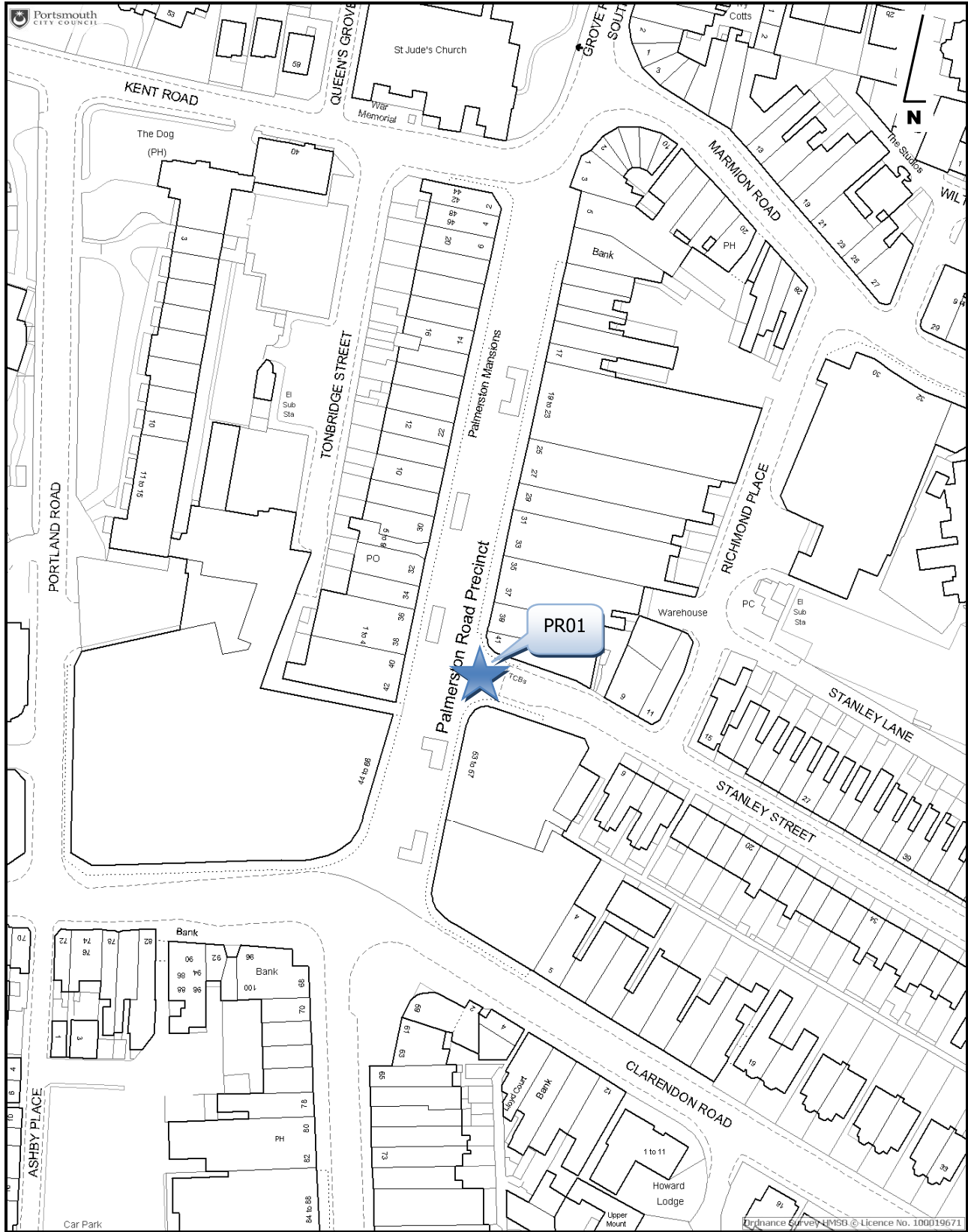


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Title: **Street Entertainment Sites - Palmerston Road**



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Agenda Item 5

Portsmouth City Council

Internal Report

Subject	Culture Leisure & Economic Development (CLED) Scrutiny Panel - Looking at the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy, what recommendations can be made to further support the high street in its refresh in 2024.
Date	16 th Nov 23
Authors	Rebecca Alexander - Place & Markets Manager Jane Lamer - Head of Economic and Skills Claire Watkins - Business Manager (Culture)

Purpose

The CLED Scrutiny panel set the challenge of:

“Review the focus on High Streets within the current Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy and how can we recommend actions which better supports the reinvigoration of the High Street, recognising retailing and the need for a mixed-use approach to better support this vital industry”

The CLED Scrutiny panel seeks to review the current Strategy, and supporting work, and make recommendations for focus under the planned review.

Summary

Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy

The Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy was produced and consulted on in 2018/19 and implemented. In the light of significant economic constraints and positioning escalation due to Covid and the subsequent cost of living crisis which have added different challenges which drive Portsmouth’s economy.

The planned review of the strategy is designed to ensure that key themes and data remain in use, but that the strategy is refreshed to reflect the significant changes in economic challenges and links the work more strategically to other key work (for example the Social Value Policy, Imagine Portsmouth etc) to ensure it works with other policy drivers and is more simplified in its delivery plan to show clear measurable targets.

The Strategy Unit will lead this work to provide a cohesive thread.

[Portsmouths economic development and regeneration strategy 2019-2026](#)

Despite retailing representing the 2nd biggest employment sector in the city (source NOMIS 2022 data *), it has limited representation in the current strategy. In the refresh officers are seeking to rebalance and provide a more focused update on retailing.

Key objective 5.3 Revitalise the city centre, and high streets across the city

The strategy will drive the transformation of the city centre and all high streets such as those in Southsea, Fratton, North End and Cosham. It will make the digital high street a reality. It will embrace bold architecture. Our city centre and high streets will be re-purposed with more high-quality city living, leisure, restaurants, hotels, and co-working spaces.

The current action plan shows 3 key targets related to high streets

- Obtain maximum funding from the Future High Streets Fund (City Centre and Fratton bids)
- Deliver the new Portsmouth Markets strategy
- Specific action plans for each retail area of the city

Future High Streets

Secured in December 2020 and evidenced in the City Centre Regeneration work (including procurement of City Buildings on Commercial Road – moving to live meanwhile use for Enterprise Centres opening shortly) and Fratton Bridge Centre procurement

Portsmouth Markets Strategy

Approved at CLED 17th Nov 23 to provide a detailed action plan of activities and links to other economic development work including Pop Up Shops and business support measures

Specific Action Plans

Local Plan reflects the aspirations for different retailing space across the city (including shopping districts). Planning legislation to cat E precludes more direction within local plan work. No additional funding has been identified to support targeted interventions

Current information sources

The proposed refresh of the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy in 2024 will relook and expand on this focus to provide clear tracking of progress against Shopping Centres and districts within the current budget.

In the original paper to Scrutiny Panel, extensive background research supporting the current work of the teams was provided (Economic Development and Culture) but the focus for 2023/24 Scrutiny highlights:

LGA (Local Government Association) report

Local Government Association general report reflecting on national trends.

[Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal' | Local Government Association](#)

Summary of FHS (Future High Streets) report

Specific to Portsmouth as part of the Future High Street Taskforce. This includes recognising key challenges around:

Collaborative working identified as the main barrier to transformation in Portsmouth

Better use of data to formulate strategies and action plans

Rebranding/reformulating communication internally/externally

Capacity build through effective relationships to deliver change

Facilitate a team approach to transformation with PCC (Portsmouth City Council), business and the community working together to create and achieve the vision

This work continues under both Property (development) and High Street Taskforce (Economic Development) with cross department working

Future High Streets (City Centre)

Future High Streets City Centre funding was secured in December 2020 and is subject to DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) monitoring. The purpose of the project has developed, following the council's inability to purchase the original commercial property on the high street following a vibrant private market and our commitment to not compete with business.

Future High Streets City Centre funded the purchase, and meanwhile refurbishment of the City Buildings project. Part of the wider regeneration in the north of Commercial Road, the building is moving into meanwhile use as an enterprise centre and has already secured 2 tenants ahead of its opening December 2023/January 2024. It is anticipated that the site will run for around 5 years ahead of the demolition and development work.

Most recent updates are focused on the delivery of public realm improvements to the north end of Commercial Road. Activities are funded by Future High Streets. Further information can be found in public realm development.

City Centre North regeneration has planning for phase 1 submitted and this will go to committee in October 23. Further information can be found at www.portsmouthcitycentre.co.uk

High Street Taskforce – Unlocking your Place Potential (UYPP)

PCC have a Mentor assigned (Neil Wild) and work done to SWOT assess the city centre and current approaches. Some traction lost due to a temporary withdrawal of our mention due to personal circumstances, work picking up again with a follow up session on 12th October 2023 and further sessions booked in. The funding for Future High Streets and the High Streets task force come from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities DLUHC

Further information can be found in High Street Taskforce report 'Unlocking Your Place Potential' UYPP

Safer streets

Economic Development focus in high streets connects with the Safer Streets Bid team, now on its 5th round of funding. Safer Streets projects focus on interventions to address violence against women and girls in public spaces and sit alongside interventions from the Police and Community safety in a 'task force' approach to high streets addressing anti-social behaviour and criminal activity. Safer Street funding unlocks projects with a focus on designing out crime, creation of 'safe spaces' and training for staff in licenced venues to recognise vulnerable individuals and offer support. Exploration of business needs uncovers that alongside business support, there is a need for support from community wardens and the police to manage high streets with a 'place' perspective, rather than a focus on one area of support.

BID (Business Improvement District)

Exploration underway. At the very least will unlock key stakeholders and facilitate better relationships to enable visioning and better partnership approaches.

Encourage buy in and a pro-active approach from businesses.

Decision on 'where' and potential (noting this must be business led)

Share learning across high streets/places in Portsmouth

Encourage traders/business associations formation to enable pro-active engagement with PCC and regular communication flow.

Rediscover website use to boost online support for high streets.

Evolutionary CRM (Customer Relationship Management) use to share information and enable better CRM.

Market strategy

The market strategy has CLED approval and support as of 17 November 2023.

The strategy sets out a 5-year action plan for markets, placing them at the heart of 'ground up' regeneration, supporting bricks and mortar businesses across the high streets. The Place & Markets team is undergoing a restructure to allow a more flexible and business friendly model working closely with SME (Small and Medium Enterprise) development advisor to support business growth across the city with a focus on high streets. The restructure has the same delivery costs but will position the service for growth and innovation after significant downturn seen over the last 5 years (exasperated by Covid) and is designed to support new business startup work. This work includes specific actions around Pop Up Retail outlets (under negotiation for Cascades) and Small Business Saturday event work in the market areas.

Market Strategy Recommendations

'Task force' and place-based, strategic approaches to the high street (not limited to the city centre) engaging with both internal and external partners e.g. Economic Development and Culture) to effectively formulate approaches and maximise potential schemes through shared resources and planning.

Map key stakeholders - internal/external.

Better use and sharing of data and evidence to inform action planning/strategies.

Set out vision, strategy, and action plan for high streets to encourage 'buy in' from internal and external partners.

develop internal/ external comms plans.

Internal/external partners fully engaged with high street vision, strategy, and action plan.

Exploration of BID/s subject to business interest

City Centre Projects and Programmes Review group

Led by Assistant Director for Regeneration (Property) and held monthly, this brings together the diverse project managers delivering across the City Centre to support better communication between projects. This is attended by the Place and Markets Manager. Governance and information sharing being worked up by Anna Limburn to

Attendance includes:

PMO

Strategic PM City Centre

PM for Future High Streets

Strategy Unit

Enterprise Centres

Transport

Traffic and network

Data sources

*[Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](http://nomisweb.co.uk)

Appendix 1

Invitation list for open committee meetings (ED (Economic Development)) has been issued with all participants are being asked to prepare a simple form ahead of attendance covering

- Name and business details
- Key concerns for the High Street
- What is working well in our high streets
- What can PCC do to support this further

29th November 2023 attendees

Andrew Philip – Cascades centre manager (potential BID)

Julie Carolan – H&M (potential BID)

Al Lye - Primark Manager

Nickii Humphries – Licencing Manager (PCC)

Tim Keeping – Port Solent Management

14th December attendees

Flude - Alice Masterman and Sebastian Martin

Phil Salmon and Les Pink - Planning Consultants - Jubilee Place (Debenhams site)

Lauren Taylor – Head of Community Safety (PCC)

Additional invites awaiting confirmation of attendance / written submissions for first two session include:

Peter Tisdale, THAT Group, Knight & Lee building developer

Gemma Nichols – CEO Portsmouth Creates

City centre/Cosham market traders

Tim Clark, Vail Williams property management

Sebastian Martin, Alice Masterman, Flude property management

Neil Wild, High Street Task Force mentor

Next Store Management

Proposed witnesses to call to CLED (Culture Leisure and Economic Development) Scrutiny Panel from Culture and Leisure (attendance in Jan/Feb meetings)

Cathy Hakes, Head of Museums (PCC)
Dave Percival, Head of Libraries & Archives (PCC)
Angela Gonzalez, Library Supervisor, Southsea Library (PCC)
Christine Taylor, Natural History Curator (PCC)
Grace Scott, Engagement Officer (PCC)
Katherine Webber, Museum, Heritage and Education Professional (external)
Ross Fairbrother, Manager, D Day Story (PCC)
Catherine Ramsay, Business Manager, HIVE (PCC)
Laura Weston, Education & Learning Officer, Conan Doyle (PCC)

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Agenda Item 6

Economic Development Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Panel

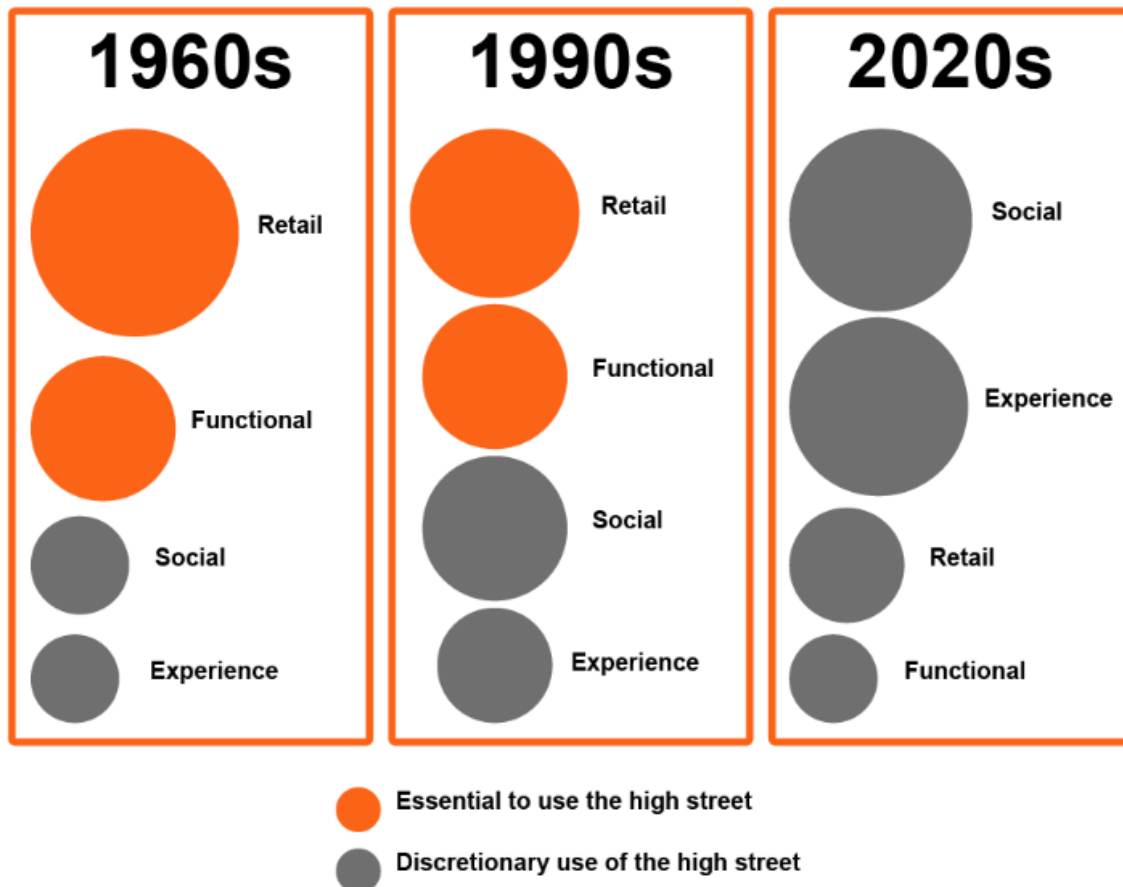
November 2023

Briefing paper from Culture & Leisure services

"Since the Economic Development & Regeneration strategy 2019-36 was written pre covid 19, the Economic Development & Regeneration strategy concerning high streets needs to be reviewed. The panel suggests a review of the Economic Development & Regeneration strategy focusing on high street direction."

The Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy was approved by Full Council on 15 October 2019.¹ It is well established that since that time, the Covid pandemic has caused considerable economic distress to the high street, with many store closures and significant changing patterns of behaviour in relation to high street demand. The development of the high street offer therefore needs to change to reflect these changing behaviours and priorities.²

Research by the Local Government Association 'Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal'', published in January 2022, identifies the main usages of the high streets in the 2020s:



¹ [Economic development and regeneration strategy - Portsmouth City Council](#)

² [Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal' | Local Government Association](#)

In this model, 'functional' uses of the high street refer to activities such as banking, postal and medical services (e.g. pharmacies). The model clearly demonstrates that the future of the high streets in the UK is focussed on social and experiential uses. Culture has a key role to play in this arena as will be demonstrated by this briefing paper.

As instructed by the Scrutiny Panel Members at the meeting on 26 October 2023, the type of high streets that this paper is concerned with are any high streets within the Portsmouth city boundary, excluding commercial outlet centres (e.g. Gunwharf) and also excluding local small parades. The model proposed in this paper could therefore be applied to:

- Commercial Road, Portsmouth city centre
- London Road, North End
- Fratton Road, Fratton
- Tangier Road, Baffins
- High Street, Cosham
- Albert Road, Palmerston Road, Elm Grove, Southsea.

Culture is a key driver to support the growing social and experiential uses of the high street. Moreover, culture, based on a sense of place and ownership, builds civic pride in a local area and cultural activities require in-person settings, which drive secondary spending³. As such, culture helps to build the social fabric of the community, thus having the potential to combat issues such as anti-social behaviour and vandalism.⁴

This briefing paper will consider the potential offer to the high streets from Libraries Service, Museums Service and HIVE Portsmouth. It will then consider a potential pop-up collaborative project model which could comprise all three services.

Libraries and Archives Service

The service has a total of nine library centres, with three of these in key high street locations:

Southsea Library sits in the pedestrian precinct corridor between Palmerston and Marmion Roads. It supports the retailers in the area by opening seven days a week - within six months of the library opening, footfall in the area increased by 5%. Activities at this library include Scrabble Club, Slow Sew and Create and Chatter Craft and the library has an active Friends Group.

Cosham Library is located adjacent to Cosham High Street. The library is open six days a week and in July 2021 re-opened following a major refurbishment, including new IT suite.

North End Library is sited at Gladys Avenue, at the main roundabout in the commercial thoroughfare. This is the most successful library in the north of the city, in terms of numbers of children participating in and completing the Summer Reading Challenge. It is open six days a week and is a key community resource in the area.

It is worth noting that the Mobile Library has a timetable of stops prioritising in the north of the city, including two supermarket car parks. Following Arts Council England funding, the Library Service also have two tuk-tuks to add to this provision to bring library provision and community engagement activity to the north and south of the city.

³ [A High Street Renaissance | Arts Council England](#)

⁴ [Arts activities may improve self-control and reduce antisocial behaviour among teenagers | UCL News - UCL – University College London](#)

Currently the Library Service offers mini book collections in the foyers of the library and these are often also promoted on its social media pages. For example, Cosham Library currently has a 'Cuffing Season' display to appeal to young adult audiences. Other mini library collections have included Black History month and Pride, together with local history collections.

Mini library pop ups can also centre around wellbeing, via the Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme, which is delivered by the Reading Agency in partnership with Libraries Connected and Arts Council England. This promotes health and wellbeing and can be used to develop social reading activity and communities based around shared reading.⁵



There is also opportunity to develop pop-ups in relation to the **Archive Service**. The service has recently recruited an Outreach Officer for the Portsmouth History Centre, this will enable archives to be taken out into the community. In addition, one of the Arts Council England funded Doyle Detectives undertook some research into the Conan Doyle collection regarding racing cars earlier this year and developed his own mini exhibition, which was on display at the Portsmouth History Centre until the end of October 2023.

Museums Service

Temporary museum exhibitions have a key role to play to generate audience and publicity for the museum service itself. The Museums Association paper, *Empowering Collections 2030*⁶, makes several recommendations that can be applied to temporary 'pop-up' exhibitions:

⁵ [Reading Well | Reading Agency](#)

⁶ [Empowering Collections - Museums Association](#)

- A proactive approach to democratisation of collections, i.e. 'getting them out there'
- Support partnerships and knowledge sharing
- Collecting in partnership with communities
- Use collections/ projects to create social impact
- Improve transparency and accessibility of collections - including online

Museum pop up exhibitions reflect the move away from traditional exhibitions towards creating social, recreational and participatory experiences; the direction in which the high street is moving.⁷

The Museums Strategy, adopted by the Council in March 2022⁸ identifies a new story for Portsmouth Museums, one that identifies '*Portsmouthness*': the qualities, characteristics and distinctiveness of the city. This will engage residents in the history of Portsmouth as *their* history and provide an opportunity for co-production, working with communities, going forward. The Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery cares for over 10,000 pieces of art, many of national significance and there is an aspiration to create spaces where these artworks can be effectively displayed and engaged with.

Cascades: World of Wonder pop-up

During the covid pandemic, Portsmouth Museums needed to find a way to support the community and develop a new audience through new avenues of engagement. An opportunity arose to use an empty shop window in Cascades which featured a mix of unusual objects, to capture the attention of passers-by, and those who would not normally visit museums.

A community artist was commissioned for a shop window display, 'A World of Wonder', which opened two weeks before the second lockdown (November 2020). CCTV captured 66,000 passing footfall by February 2021 and remained occupied until September 2021. A QR code as part of the display led to 202 page views, with visitors spending 65% more time on the page than other Portsmouth Museum pages. There was also an opportunity for members of the public to send in paper butterflies and moths which were added to the display and led to further invitations for the Natural History team to engage at other events. Between April and August 2021, 700 information sheets were taken away by visitors to the window.



In addition to World of Wonder, Beaulieu Motor Museum have been making use of one of the empty units in Cascades for pop-up exhibitions over the past 2 years.

⁷ Museum Management and Curatorship, *New Ways of Experiencing Culture: The Role of Museums and Marketing Implications* (Neil Kotler, 2001).

⁸ [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 8th March, 2022, 1.00 pm Portsmouth City Council](#)

Further pop-up 'mini' museums are planned; the ambition is for these to go into all our libraries (including our high street libraries) on a yearly exhibition cycle. The pop-up exhibition theme for 2024 will be D Day 80, which to date is confirmed for Cosham Library to launch in January, 2024. Community engagement will take place to plan what the mini-installation includes. The service are currently looking for sponsorship to fund the pop-ups for the remaining libraries.

Pop-up spaces involving the Libraries and Museum Services could also include representation from our Parks Countryside Team. One of our Countryside Officers has been working collaboratively with both Libraries and Museums Service over the past year. The officer has, under a gazebo, held mini pop-up family friendly events at natural history events (jointly with Cumberland House) and also had a stall at the Summer Reading Challenge winners event at Southsea Castle, with child friendly activities to promote pollination, including making seed bombs.

The HIVE Portsmouth

The HIVE works in partnership across the city with voluntary, private and public sector groups to connect local people, groups and organisations to nurture individuals and communities to build a healthier and happier city.⁹ The HIVE is not a statutory service and its primary location is situated in Central Library, a warm and safe community space in the city centre.

Subject to resourcing, HIVE Portsmouth could have small pop-up venues in other libraries across the city, where these sit in high street locations. Such pop-up desks could be around themes such as health and wellbeing, volunteering opportunities or digital inclusion. There would also be the potential to recruit volunteers via the HIVE Volunteer Bureau, to manage such pop-up spaces.

Current high street or community locations where HIVE has supported include:

- Baffins Pantry, Tangier Road
- Portsea Pantry, John Pounds Centre
- Paulsgrove Food Pantry, Paulsgrove Community Centre

With the Council's purchase of the Fratton Bridge Centre, there is opportunity to have HIVE support on Fratton Road.

Examples of Cultural Services pop ups in the UK

The following include some examples of successful pop-up models from across the UK.

Exeter: Libraries Unlimited reutilised a former GAP retail unit into an art studio workshop hosted by a local professional artist/creative. Shoppers were invited in to partake in workshops, view exhibitions and had opportunity to browse a mini library and find out about library activities.¹⁰

Leicester: the Museums service have pop-up stalls at community events across the city. This enables promotion of the museums and forthcoming exhibitions. This can include objects to handle and family friendly activities. This has included a pop-up in the local shopping centre.¹¹

Aberdeenshire Council: mini pop-up museum displays are available in several libraries to share museum collections with the community.¹²

⁹ [Portsmouth City Councils strategic relationship with The HIVE Portsmouth.pdf](#)

¹⁰ [Pop up library on Exeter high street - Libraries Unlimited](#)

¹¹ [Pop-Up Museums – Leicester Museums](#)

¹² [Pop-up Museums - Live, Life Aberdeenshire \(lifelifeaberdeenshire.org.uk\)](#)

Museum of Homelessness 'Secret Museum' (London) was available for 11 days only. Stories and objects were hidden in central London locations, with clues for participants to find the museum. The museum included both outdoor and indoor locations.¹³

The Mary Rose Museum operated as a pop-up museum at festivals and events, taking artefacts, replicas, activities and a small shop around the UK, whilst the museum was undergoing renovation.¹⁴



Youth Engagement model, D Day Story - opportunity for High Street pop-up

In the past year the Museums Service have worked with local creatives / professional artists and the Council's Youth and Community Service to engage young people in a project opportunity.¹⁵ The Youth Clubs involved included Portsea, Buckland, Brook (Somerstown) and Hillside (Paulsgrove). Outcomes of the project included:

- Increased confidence
- Development of life skills / CV development
- Positive mental health and wellbeing
- Challenging perceptions of access and ownership to the city's heritage

'It [the project] is a great achievement and definitely something they [young people] can mention on a CV to show commitment and dedication' - Youth Centre Manager.

Consideration of this project indicates the potential to incorporate a youth engagement strand into a possible future High Street pop-up model. The model would be a joint venture between Culture Services and Youth Services, with a community pop-up venue as the outcome.



¹³ [Secret Museum — Museum of Homelessness](#)

¹⁴ [The Mary Rose Museum: Touring the UK with a pop-up museum \(museumsandheritage.com\)](#)

¹⁵ [Agenda for Cabinet Member - The Leader \(Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Portfolio\) on Friday, 17th November, 2023, 10.00 am Portsmouth City Council](#)

Opportunities for young people regarding the cultural pop-up could include the following:

- Co-production / co-curation - this could involve artefacts, replicas or art work based on a particular museum collection.
- Design and graphic art
- Mini- events / exhibitions held at the pop-up
- Social media promotion.

The pop-up space could include the following activity areas:



The pop-up programme, once established via an initial pilot, could engage youth centres across the city and 'pop-up' in different high street areas, depending where Council owned property was available (or a smaller version could 'pop-up' using a gazebo/market stall style). The Council's purchase of the Bridge Centre in Fratton offers opportunity in the upcoming future.

The pop-up would not only have the opportunity to engage young people but there would be potential for cross-generational work, if there was appetite in the community for adult volunteering and engagement at the pop-up. Creative workshops at the pop up would not just engage young people but the community as a whole.

The development of the Culture community pop-up would comprise 3 stages:

1. Outreach work at identified youth and community centres in the city
2. Engagement of young people to chosen Museum and Library venues
3. Development of pop-up e.g. professional oversight of art work display / curated library.

The activity area of the pop-up might include arts workshop or 'escape room' style challenges based on the Conan Doyle collection leveraging its unique connection to the city.

The alternative to an empty shop pop-up could include the utilising of front facing library window displays at key locations, or a display in Cascades.

Outcomes

The potential outcomes for a Culture community pop up in the high street include:

- Improvement of the high street environment - active, occupied, engaged units
- Breaking down of perceived barriers of access to culture

- Display of authentic project outcomes for the community - community owned curated displays of produced artwork
- Development of the social fabric of the community
- Improved inter-generational and cross-community relationships
- Development of life / work skills and confidence
- Positive mental health and wellbeing

Engaging High Street businesses with the city's culture

The Council may consider asking High Street businesses to display themed copies/ replicas of objects from the Council's collections. This could form a trail across the high streets of the city and could utilise QR codes to discover more information about the collection and the Council's cultural services. The objects would enable a talking point between the businesses and customers, could drive footfall to different areas of the city and raise awareness of the city's culture in the community.

Potential project funders

The following funding bodies may be appropriate regarding the development of a Culture pop-up project. Funding is criteria based, depending on the funding stream applied for.

National Lottery Heritage Fund look to fund projects in line with their new ten year strategy, Heritage 2033.¹⁶ Their funding priorities include:

- Promotion of inclusion and involvement of a wide range of people
- Boost to the local economy
- Encourage skills development and job creation
- Support wellbeing
- Create a better place to live, work and visit
- Improve the resilience of organisations working in heritage

Arts Council England's ten year strategy 2020-2030, 'Let's Create' is focussed around three outcomes and four investment principles:

<i>Let's Create: Outcomes</i>	<i>Let's Create: Investment Principles</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative People (everyone included) • Cultural Communities (collaborative approaches) • Creative Cultural Country (innovative & international) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambition & quality • Inclusivity & relevance (diversity) • Dynamism (responding to upcoming challenges) • Environmental responsibility

The Dulverton Trust is an independent grant awarding charity.¹⁷ It supports organisations addressing social issues, protecting heritage and the natural environment. It has previously provided small grants to The Portsmouth D Day Museum Trust.¹⁸

Proposed witnesses to call to EDCL Scrutiny Panel

Cathy Hakes, Head of Museums (PCC)
 Dave Percival, Head of Libraries & Archives (PCC)

¹⁶ [National Lottery Grants for Heritage – £3,000 to £10,000 | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

¹⁷ [The Dulverton Trust](#)

¹⁸ [Portsmouth D-Day Museum Trust – The D-Day Story, Portsmouth \(theddaystory.com\)](#)

Angela Gonzalez, Library Supervisor, Southsea Library (PCC)

Christine Taylor, Natural History Curator (PCC)

Grace Scott, Engagement Officer (PCC)

Katherine Webber, Museum, Heritage and Education Professional (external)

Ross Fairbrother, Manager, D Day Story (PCC)

Catherine Ramsay, Business Manager, HIVE (PCC)

Laura Weston, Education & Learning Officer, Conan Doyle (PCC)

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