

PUBLIC

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the **CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE AND TOURISM** held on 15 May 2020.

**PRESENT**

Cabinet Member – Councillor B Lewis

Also in attendance – Councillors R Flatley and P Smith

**18/20** **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Cabinet Member.

**19/20** **CHANGES TO LIBRARY OPENING HOURS** At its meeting on 20 December 2018, Cabinet gave approval to implement the Derbyshire Public Library Service Strategy. Included in the strategy were proposals to transfer 20 libraries, and the mobile library service, to community management.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the process for transferring 20 libraries to a community managed model was progressing in nine locations, where a formal expression of interest had been received, including at Borrowash. However, the initial expression of interest at Borrowash was subsequently withdrawn. In approving the Strategy, Cabinet had agreed that where there were no expressions of interest from communities, the opening hours in those libraries would be standardised at 18 hours per week. This proposal would be subject to a further period of public consultation.

A period of public consultation about the proposed changes to opening hours at Borrowash Library, began on Monday 10 February 2020 and concluded on Sunday 22 March 2020. The consultation sought to obtain responses on two proposed options to change opening hours, together with any other alternative suggestions that consultees wished to make. A total of 82 responses had been received to the consultation, while the proposed reductions to opening hours elicited positive comments about the value of the library service, unsurprisingly a number of respondents were opposed to the proposed changes. However, there were no practical proposals put forward about how savings could be made from the library service budget without making changes to library opening hours. It was therefore proposed that when Borrowash Library reopened, following the current period of closure, it had the following opening hours:

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday   | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------|---------|-------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| 2-5    | Closed  | 9.30-1, 2-7 | Closed   | 9.30-1 | 10-1     | Closed |

**RESOLVED** to approve the implementation of the proposed changes to the opening hours at Borrowash Library, as outlined in the report.

**20/20      FEEDBACK ON THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE OPENING HOURS AT THE DERBYSHIRE**

**RECORD OFFICE** At its meeting on 11 September 2019, Cabinet had approved the council's Five Year Financial Plan, which included a reduction to the Derbyshire Record Office (DRO) budget of £60,000. In order to achieve the required savings, a period of public consultation about proposed changes to opening hours began on 11 November and concluded on 22 December.

The consultation sought to obtain responses on reducing the opening hours by one day per week, allowing respondents to select their preferred opening pattern. A total of 300 responses had been received to the consultation. The proposed reduction to opening hours elicited positive comments about the value of the DRO and the importance of access to its collections but the majority of respondents did not support the proposed changes. For example, despite an increase in provision of records online, use of original records had not decreased and many respondents felt that the DRO would become congested on the days it was open, if the opening hours were reduced.

The County Council had a duty to consult with The National Archives on any significant change to its archive service. The National Archives had confirmed that reducing the opening hours as proposed would meet the legal minimum requirements for access but that any impact on the ability of the service to carry out its statutory duties in terms of managing its collections would potentially threaten its status as an Accredited Archive Service.

In parallel with the public consultation, staff from the Record Office were also investigating alternative ways to address the budget reduction and mitigate against the potential impacts. As a consequence the DRO had negotiated with Ancestry.com and depositors to add further content to the Ancestry website, e.g. non-conformist registers, school records, post 1900 electoral registers, enabling the Record Office to increase the amount of income generated to support the service. This was in line with the overall Enterprising Council approach, which sought to fund and deliver services in new and innovative ways. Having secured this funding it was proposed that the additional income received from Ancestry coupled with the existing income already received and held in reserve, would be utilised by the DRO to maintain its existing opening hours until the end of the 2022-23 financial year. (Subject to no further budget reductions being allocated to the DRO). It was also anticipated that further additional income may be generated over this period.

The DRO would use income for the period April 2020 to March 2023 to offset the £60,000 reduction from its revenue budget and maintain its existing opening hours.

**RESOLVED** to note the results of the public consultation about the proposed change to opening hours at the Derbyshire Record Office and approves the proposed response to the results of the consultation.

**21/20 CANCELLATION OF THE DERBYSHIRE WOODLAND FESTIVAL AT ELVASTON CASTLE 19 AND 20 SEPTEMBER 2020** (The Cabinet Member agreed to consider this item as an urgent report due to Covid-19 emergency and Government guidance and statements around recovery and future restrictions). The Derbyshire Woodland festival is a large, successful, annual event celebrating traditional and contemporary woodland crafts held at Elvaston Castle Country Park. It attracts in excess of 10,000 visitors over the two days and this year's event was planned for Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September 2020.

The normal process of organising the Woodland Festival had been on hold during April 2020, as staff had dealt with issues arising from the COVID-19 emergency. However, it was no longer possible to defer the preparatory work for the Festival as many of the actions were time critical.

Details of the areas and levels of risk and any financial implications of proceeding with the Woodland Festival in 2020 were presented. Having considered the many different components of the Festival e.g. supply chain; contracts; event management, promotion etc. and the risks and financial implications associated with these, officers had reluctantly concluded that proceeding with the Woodland Festival in 2020 was not feasible and presented too many risks. The cancellation of the festival would be publicised through normal media channels and all stakeholders would be informed. Importantly a new date in 2021 for the festival will be selected and all planning work would concentrate on delivering that event.

**RESOLVED** that (1) the Woodland Festival 2020, scheduled to be held on 19 and 20 September 2020 at Elvaston Castle and Country Park, be cancelled; and

(2) the cancellation of the Festival is publicised through normal media channels and all stakeholders are informed.