

BURSLEDON WINDMILL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 October 2010 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm)

The meeting was held at the Civic Offices, Eastleigh Borough Council

PRESENT:

Representing Eastleigh Borough Council - Councillor O'Sullivan

Representing Hampshire County Council – Councillor Broadhurst

John Tickle, Assistant Director, Arts, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs, Hampshire County Council

Sue Wright, Assistant Service Manager, County Museums Service

Stephen Lowy, Community Museums Team Manager, County Museums Service

Jo Lawler, Acting Site Manager, Bursledon Windmill

Mr Jackson, Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust

Mrs Sutton, Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust

Diccon Bright, Local Area Co-ordinator, Eastleigh Borough Council

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Airey, County Councillor Davidovitz and Ian Douch, Museum Resources Manager, County Museums Service

In attendance: Councillor McNulty (deputising for Councillor Airey) and Councillor House

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That, in his absence, Councillor Airey be appointed Chairman of the Committee for the year 2010-2011.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That County Councillor Broadhurst be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the year 2010-2011.

Councillor Broadhurst took the Chair for this meeting in the absence of the newly-appointed Chair.

3. INTRODUCTION

John Tickle, Assistant Director, Arts, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs, Hampshire County Council firstly advised the Committee that the

Museums Service was facing challenging times at the moment, as the Service was likely to lose the £1.1m funding received from the government each year under the Renaissance programme, which was being reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review to be announced the following week. Renaissance funding accounted for 20% of the Service's budget and a Museums and Arts Service Review was currently being undertaken that would contain a number of key proposed changes to service delivery. The Head of Museums, Janet Owen, was trying to attend all the Joint Management Committees to discuss the proposals, but was unable to attend this meeting as she was in London trying to secure funding from the Renaissance programme. He was therefore attending the meeting in Janet's place and would report the Committee's views to her.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Public Access to the Woods: The Area Co-ordinator reported that, together with staff from the Tree Section, he had met with the owner of the woods to discuss coppicing and thinning of the trees in order to allow more wind through the trees and consequently more days for milling. The Tree staff had agreed to manage the trees to increase the flow of wind and Phase 1 of the works would address low-lying vegetation. The licence had also been secured to allow public access to the woods, which would add to the attraction of the whole Windmill site.

Maintenance of the windshaft: The Acting Visitor Services Manager reported that natural cracks had been found in the shaft during the annual check in 2009 and a watching brief had been kept on it. However, the severe weather of 2009/2010 had taken its toll and repair to the windshaft was now required, at a cost of approximately £15,000. The proposed work was detailed in the appendix to the Acting Visitor Services Manager's report later on the agenda for this meeting, which contained a letter from the company which carried out the inspection. The Chairman requested that he be provided with a copy of the follow-up report.

5. CURATOR'S REPORT

The Acting Visitor Services Manager (AVSM) introduced a report detailing activities and events at the Windmill during April to October 2010.

As discussed under the previous item on this agenda, the annual maintenance check carried out in June had revealed the increased levels of rot in the natural cracks of the pole end of the windshaft. A plan had been drawn up for repair in the next 12 – 18 months, keeping the sails in situ.

The sail canvasses also need to be taken down and small repairs performed. The AVSM and another member of staff had been trained in the use of climbing harnesses and it was hoped to acquire harnesses and carry out the work without the requirement for an access platform.

Further to the Museums and Arts Service Review, the staff at the Windmill had drawn up two suggestions for the future running of the site, which had been submitted for consideration: a) to run the Windmill combined with Eastleigh Museum; and b) to move the Windmill from the Museums Service to the Countryside section to be run as a satellite from Manor Farm. Details of the proposals were contained in Appendix 2 to the report.

The school holiday events programme provided a different family-friendly activity every week of the school holidays, throughout the year, and so far had attracted good numbers of children and adults. Three sites in the Bursledon area were taking part in the Big Draw events, which were aimed at both children and adults. Two sessions allowed for 16 year olds and above to draw the machinery at the Windmill and Brickworks sites, with a technical artist available to give assistance.

The Harry the Harvest Mouse education session had been trialled with a school and would soon be added to the Windmill's webpage. Seven free Bug Hunt school sessions had been very successful.

Visitor numbers had continued to increase, in part due to the Windmill being included in the Culture-All passport offer. Four passes had been sold at the Windmill, although sales had been lost due to the lack of credit card facilities.

Flour sales continued to increase, with approximately the same number of sales to date this year as in the whole of 2009/10. Suppliers included the Southern Co-op, Pickwells Farm Shop and a small biscuit producer who was using both fine and medium flours and ground malted barley. The potential to produce more flour was hampered by the wind being at the right direction and strength at times when staff were available, on Mondays and Tuesdays only. On a good day, 5-6 cwt could be produced. 35,000 copies of a local leaflet, Let's Cook, had been distributed to schools in Hampshire, which included a recipe from a schoolgirl using flour from the Windmill.

The Committee acknowledged that a balance was required between maximising income from the site and preserving the Windmill as a working mill. Publicity was important and the posting of information on the website was very important.

It was AGREED –

That the report be noted.

6. MUSEUMS & ARTS STRATEGIC REVIEW UPDATE: INCLUDING BUDGET FORECAST FOR 2011/12

The Community Museums Team Manager firstly presented a budget monitoring statement showing the 2009/10 outturn and progress against the 2010/11 budget.

The 2009/10 outturn had been slightly higher than the agreed cash limit and monitoring of the 2010/11 budget indicated that the outturn would be satisfactory.

The Deputy Head of Museums then provided an update on the Museums and Arts Service Review.

A report had been presented to the Executive Member for Culture and Education in July 2010 concerning the future of the Service. The report had focused on the likely loss of Renaissance funding from the government, which had made a significant difference to the development of the Service in recent years by providing funding of £1.1m per year for marketing, exhibitions, learning and outreach. The indications were that funding would continue, albeit in another form and with different ways of applying, but this would not be known until the Comprehensive Spending Review was published.

The Service Review was focusing on managing financial risk and would position the Service to take advantage of any future funding. Consultation with staff and unions had been taking place over the past few weeks and proposals for delivery included widening participation and engaging communities. A baseline structure was to be created, whilst building on the Renaissance legacy and Find Your Talent programme within the financial framework. It was intended to continue the learning and engagement programme, with museums being the focal point in a community and engagement with outside a crucial factor. The current high quality exhibition programme would be continued, together with marketing and advertising. It was also necessary to understand who the users of the Service were and to target the programme to specific users by going out into the community with talks and events.

With regard to the operation of sites, it was proposed that a curator for the South East be appointed instead a curator for each individual site. Changes would also be made to the front of house, and Visitor Service Managers would be changed to Visitor Service Assistants. Alterations would be made to the delivery model and some sites would see a reduction in opening hours. Budgets would be set formally in January 2011.

Overall, it was necessary to meet public expectation whilst managing financial risk.

The Deputy Head of Museums then circulated a provisional draft paper containing indicative budget implications of Phase 1 of the Museums and

Arts reorganisation. This showed a substantial reduction in expenditure on the Windmill, particularly in relation to Curator and front of house salaries. Provisional outputs had been reduced to 12 general public and milling days, between April and September.

A discussion took place regarding the proposals, during which the following points were made by Borough Council representatives:

- The management agreement between the County and Borough Councils pre-dated the provision of Renaissance funding, which had been a top-up to the original agreement. It seemed that a minimal amount of Renaissance funding had been used for the Windmill site and consequently there was an option for the County Council to cut back to the core structure originally in place. Hampshire County Council staff reiterated that outreach work was fundamental to the current service and that the remodelled service would also require staff to continue building on this work.
- The provisional figures did not show an equal amount of funding being provided by both authorities, with the Borough Council expected to provide a much larger share
- The proposals did not take account of the maintenance required on the Windmill on a daily basis and the need for trained staff to carry out maintenance and operational work.
- It was vital to agree the aims and objectives of both authorities with regard to the Windmill, which would necessitate a policy discussion, before budget proposals were put forward.

It was AGREED -

That the Chair of this Committee, and relevant County and Borough Members and officers, be requested to meet with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation at the earliest opportunity, before the Cabinet Member takes the decision on the future of the Service on 4 November.

7. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place in mid to late November 2010 (date to be arranged).

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