

EASTLEIGH MUSEUM JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Friday, 11 December 2020

PRESENT:

Representing Eastleigh Borough Council - Councillors Bicknell, Campbell, Neubauer, Roberts-Jones, Riddoch and Banks

Representing Hampshire County Council – Councillors Thornton

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Judith Grajewski and Mrs Sutton

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th of February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

Cllr Bicknell noted that he should have been marked as an apology for the last meeting.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Chairmanship of the Joint Management Committee alternates annually between the two authorities. For the year 2020/2021 the Chairman should be appointed from the County Council members of the committee.

That Councillor Thornton be appointed Chair of the Joint Management Committee for the 2020/2021 municipal year.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Vice-Chairmanship alternates annually between the two authorities. For the year 2020/2021 the Vice-Chairmanship should be appointed from the Borough Council members of the Committee.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Irish be appointed Vice-Chair of the Joint Management Committee for the 2020/2021 municipal year.

4. CURATORS'S REPORT

Emma Banks, the Community Manager representing the Hampshire Cultural Trust, presented a report on activities at or relating to Eastleigh Museum, which covered the period January 2020 to November 2020.

Figures were down from 2018/19, but saw an increase in November through to January due to popular exhibitions being held.

Due to the pandemic, the financial year was cut short. One committee member remained on site to ensure that H&S checks were sorted. Before reopening some repairs and training occurred, as well as new safety measures being implemented for Covid-19.

Special exhibitions and events were able to occur throughout the year, in between lockdowns. Online engagement was improved due to the Culture on Call blog.

The Industrious Minds programme has continued to go ahead, and discussions are happening as to how this can be carried on in the event of future lockdowns.

Cllr Campbell commented on the dropping number of visitors to the museum, which was explained as being due to changes in the national curriculum. It was noted that the permanent museum displays need an update.

5. CURATOR'S FINANCE REPORT

Consideration was given to the finance report presented by Emma Banks. Due to the pandemic the budget for all venues looks different. This budget was reforecast to show it should be 25% of what was originally expected.

Work was done for online exhibitions, not just physical ones.

Industrious Minds will not show a spend until Q3/4, but the programme has already started.

An explanation of the Covid-19 grants was given, and it was noted that any grants from Hampshire Cultural Trust haven't been allocated per museum. Jean Robert-Jones noted that the museum has had no income whatsoever.

6. OPTIONS APPRAISAL UPDATE

A report and update from the Options Appraisal consultants was provided. This included an update of the work they have been doing, and how to encourage the residents of Eastleigh to interact with a redeveloped museum.

Three main areas were discussed:

-What is Eastleigh lacking when we talk about bringing people together? Discussions included the fact that EBC doesn't have an Events Officer or team, and that branding, and marketing of events could be more central and shared as a coherent programme for the year ahead. More physical signage is needed for events.

-What do Cllrs think of the cultural offer of Eastleigh? Discussed issues with getting a diverse range of people to take up cultural offerings. Pointed out that culture isn't something which happens in specific buildings but happens everywhere. Noted that the street theatre which occurred following road closures was a hit.

-What role can the museum play locally? This question invoked broader thinking about town centres and how the museum can play a pivotal part in providing a sense of place to Eastleigh. Retail cannot save the town centre, but cultural experiences can.

Further discussions were had on how to make the museum a central cultural hub. Suggestions were heard such as bringing the library out of the Swan Centre and developing the educational side of the Museum. Members agreed that they wanted the Museum to be a flexible, community led space.

7. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on the 25th of February 2021, on Microsoft Teams.