

AT A MEETING of the Culture and Communities Select Committee of  
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held as a remote meeting on Tuesday, 12th  
January, 2021

Chairman:

\* Councillor Anna McNair Scott

- |                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| * Councillor Christopher Carter | * Councillor Pal Hayre       |
| * Councillor John Bennison      | * Councillor Dominic Hiscock |
| Councillor Fred Birkett         | * Councillor Rob Mocatta     |
| * Councillor Jackie Branson     | * Councillor Michael White   |
| * Councillor Ann Briggs         |                              |
| * Councillor Zilliah Brooks     |                              |
| * Councillor Peter Chegwyn      |                              |
| Councillor Daniel Clarke        |                              |
| * Councillor Rod Cooper         |                              |

\*Present

Also present with the invitation of the Chairman:

Councillor Edward Heron – Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage,  
Countryside and Rural Affairs

**110. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Daniel Clarke.

**111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

**112. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

113. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

114. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman was pleased to note that the staff consultation phase of the Library Service Transformation had been completed and that the savings requirement had been met without the need for any compulsory redundancies. Blackfield, Elson, Fair Oak, Horndean, Lee-on-the-Solent, Lyndhurst, Odiham and South Ham Libraries had all closed with negotiations underway with regards to transitions to Independent Community Libraries.

The Chairman announced that the Library Service had been awarded £34,000 to act as a Census Support Service and that this service would be operated from a number of libraries within Hampshire. Members heard that, in December 2020, the Library Service submitted an Expression of Interest to take part in the Reading Agency's 'Reading Friends' Scheme and that the scheme used volunteers to keep in touch with isolated or lonely residents.

The Chairman noted that the Registration Service had been at the forefront of the response to the Covid pandemic and that during the first lockdown staff had needed to register deaths by phone for the first time in history. During this period, staff had received many unsolicited compliments from the public. Furthermore, the Chairman was delighted to advise that the backlog of 1800 birth registrations and 400 Citizenship ceremonies had now been largely addressed.

The Committee heard that visits to Countryside Service sites and Country Parks had seen a significant increase this year, averaging 20% higher than last year and over 50% increase in visits during lockdowns. A new Covid-secure approach to events had enabled several Christmas activities to be available to visitors.

115. **2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS SERVICES**

The Committee considered the report and presentation of the Directors of Corporate Services – Corporate Resources and Culture, Communities and Business Services outlining the 2021/22 revenue budget for cultural and community services.

It was confirmed that there were no new savings proposals being brought forward within the report and that the 2021/22 budget formally removed the Transformation to 2021 (T21) savings as had previously been agreed. Members noted the range of services provided within the department and that the majority of these were largely dependent on income generation. A list of T21 savings targets was presented and it was noted that each CCBS target had been achieved on time and, in some cases, early.

In response to Members' questions it was confirmed that:

- The revised budget included some one-off additions where the cost of change was being used to support savings programmes (as referred to in paragraph 31 of the report).
- That financial loss as a result of the Covid pandemic was being managed corporately and not via departments.
- That the car parking income at Country Parks had seen a slight increase at times throughout the pandemic – at around 15%. Memberships and admissions generally were lower than under normal circumstances.

RESOLVED:

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee support the recommendations being made to the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs as below:

To approve for submission to the Leader and the Cabinet:

- i. The revised revenue budget for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 2.
- ii. The summary revenue budget for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 2.

#### 116. **CCBS CLIMATE CHANGE - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WORKSTREAM**

The Committee considered the presentation of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services outlining some of the climate change work that was progressing within the department.

The climate change objectives and programme workstreams were set out as were the sequential steps being taken within each area. Examples from ongoing site work was used to illustrate how climate change tools and processes were being implemented.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed that:

- The County Council was a member of farm cluster groups across Hampshire and that the groups offer a valuable opportunity to work with farmers, to raise awareness for issues and for education purposes as opposed to providing a direct advice based service for Hampshire farms.
- That there are no solar panels on buildings within Country Parks mostly because these sites are heritage/have listed status. Country Parks were considering other ways in which solar technology could be implemented.
- That the Countryside Service had made a significant contribution to the work of the Hampshire 2050 Commission which was reaching out to residents, school and stakeholders across the County regarding climate change initiatives.
- That the County Council were working with the Hampshire Wildlife Trust to develop collective strategies to specific climate issues such as nitrate run off.

RESOLVED:

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee notes the content of the presentation.

117. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Transformation and Governance which set out the Committee's upcoming work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the following items be added to the Work Programme:

- Covid update for cultural and community services (information update item) – 22 March 2021
- Footpath conditions (including Country Parks) (information update item) – 22 March 2021
- County Farms Policy (pre-scrutiny item) – 22 March 2021
- Country Parks Transformation Programme – 19 July 2021