

AT A MEETING of the Culture and Communities Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Monday,
25th February, 2019:

Chairman:

p. Councillor Anna McNair Scott

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

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Birkett and Hayre.

68. 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 Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 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.

69. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

70. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

71. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that library refurbishments across the county had been progressing well and that both Lockswold and Andover libraries had recently re-opened. Members heard that Bridgemary Library had been closed for significant repairs following an incident of vandalism but had re-opened ahead of schedule on 18 February.

The Chairman updated the Committee on the range of events which had been supported by the Library Service including LGBT History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day and Hampshire Pride. Members heard that throughout 2019, the 30th anniversary of the literary character Elmer would be celebrated by the Service.

The Committee were informed that the Lookout building at Lepe Country Park had won a New Forest National Park Design Award. Members were also pleased to hear how the same project had been shortlisted for a prestigious Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) award in both the Tourism and Leisure and in the Community Benefit categories. The Chairman and Members congratulated all County Council teams who had been involved.

72. BASINGSTOKE CANAL FUTURE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

The Committee considered a report and presentation from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services regarding the options for the future management of the Basingstoke Canal.

Members were informed that the Canal was jointly owned by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Surrey County Council (SCC) and spanned 32 miles across both counties. It was noted that, since 1990, the Canal had been managed by local authority partnership (namely 6 local borough and district councils, local parishes and a town council).

The item sought Members' support in producing a future investment strategy, with SCC, to explore options for the upkeep of the Canal and generating income to fund maintenance responsibilities.

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

- Out of the partner authorities, Surrey Heath Borough Council and Runnymede Borough Council did not contribute financially in full according to the funding formula in contrast to all other partners.
- That Option 1 – the transfer of the Canal to the Canal and River Trust was not a financially viable option for either landowning authority.
- The Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee, including elected Councillors from both HCC and SCC, had established a working group to begin exploring future management alternatives.
- The amount of power boat movements allowed on the Canal annually (1300 boat movements) could not be increased. This was due to the designation of the Canal as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and that power boat movements would negatively impact the population of aquatic species.

- SCC had planned capital contributions of £150,000 per annum from 2017-2020. This contrasted with £500,000 from HCC for the next 3 years. The mismatch in capital investment in the Canal assets would be addressed as part of the future discussions with SCC.

RESOLVED:

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee recommends to the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage that he:

- i. Supports the decision not to pursue an asset transfer to the Canal and River Trust at this time.
- ii. Supports the proposal to produce a strategy for investment in partnership with Surrey County Council and to consider potential investments for the benefit of the Canal operation beyond the Hampshire county boundary.
- iii. Approves the continuation of revenue funding contributions at the same level, as set out in section 3.8 of this report, for the next three years.
- iv. Fully endorses the ongoing 3 year capital investment programme orientated at tackling the asset maintenance backlog and managing associated risks in a prioritised manner.

73. **COUNTRY PARK TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services with an update on the progress to date with the Country Parks Transformation Programme.

Members noted the ongoing aim for the programme in producing a suite of 21st century Country Parks which were operationally self financing. The Committee received an overview of the recent progress from site to site and also were pleased to hear of the work which was still to take place. An update was provided on the recent successful developments at the Country Parks, including the opening of The Lookout at Lepe Country Park, the Chapel at Royal Victoria Country Park and 'Forts and Fleets' at Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed that the marketing opportunities for Titchfield Haven were being explored, including better links between Haven House and the reserve, and ways in which additional income could be generated at the site were also being considered.

RESOLVED:

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

74. **HAMPSHIRE CULTURAL TRUST UPDATE**

The Committee received an update from Alan Lovell (Chairman) and Paul Sapwell (Chief Executive) of the Hampshire Cultural Trust.

Members heard how the Trust had evolved since its beginnings in 2014, receiving international recognition for some of the exhibitions and themes such as Jane Austen 200 and Turner and the Sun at Winchester Gallery. The Committee noted how the Trust were relying less upon local authority grant funding and how visitor donations and fund raising equated to almost 50% of the Trust's overall income. The social impact of the work of the Trust was praised including the Child Adolescent and Mental Health programmes. Members were shown an example of the new digital platforms – new websites, ticketing software and point of sale (EPOS) – which had recently launched.

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

- A £50,000 grant had recently been awarded to the Trust for work at Red House Museum in Christchurch to implement a project specifically aimed at working with people with dementia and similar conditions.
- Due to ongoing financial pressures, the Trust were not looking to grow their portfolio of sites at the current time and that the focus was on income generation.

RESOLVED:

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

75. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received and noted the Work Programme. There were no suggested amendments.