

Adults, Leisure & Culture Select Committee

A meeting of Adults, Leisure & Culture Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 7th June, 2006.

Present: Councillor Fletcher (Chairman), Councillors Faulks, Frankland, Miss Inman, Laing, Lynch, Mrs Norton, Perry, Rix, Smith and Womphrey

Officers: R Kench and Mrs J Hubbard (CESC); Miss S Connolly, Mrs T Harrison, P Mennear and Mrs J Trainer (LD).

Also in attendance: Mr A Maxwell (Diocesan Representative) and Councillor Mrs Nesbitt

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cherrett and Dixon; Mr P Beach and Ms S Moloney (Parent Governor Representatives).

328 Draft minutes of meeting held on 26th April 2006

Draft Minutes of meeting held on 26th April 2006

Members considered the draft minutes of the meeting held 26th April 2006.

CONCLUDED that the minutes be approved for submission to Council with the addition of the apologies for absence by Councillor Smith.

329 Possible Performance Review items

Members considered whether there were any performance issues to discuss.

CONCLUDED that there were no performance review issues to discuss.

330 Update on future scrutiny reviews and work programming issues

Update on future scrutiny reviews and work programming issues

The Chair advised that he hoped to speak with Mari Rose shortly regarding protecting vulnerable adults and requested that members bore the river in mind when considering the Preston Park and Hall review.

The Chair and Scrutiny Officer would bring the list for approval to the next meeting.

CONCLUDED that:

- 1.The Chair will speak with Mari Rose regarding protecting vulnerable adults
- 2.The Chair and Scrutiny officer will bring the list for approval to the next meeting.

331 Update Project Plan for scrutiny review of Preston

Updated Project Plan for scrutiny review of Preston Park

Members were advised that extra meetings had been scheduled to facilitate

evidence collection. Some of the meetings would consist of smaller groups to individually address the various aspects of the Park and Hall such as the model railway.

The press release was now on the web site but Preston Parish Council and Sir John Ropner had not responded and members were advised that Friends of Preston Park were no longer in existence so their input could not be utilised.

The Chair and Scrutiny Officer had spoken with consultation unit and they would carry out a set of focus groups.

Members were advised that an application had been submitted for a creation centre within Preston Park.

The Scrutiny Officer had compiled a pack of relevant papers which members could bring to every meeting which would aid them in the review.

Members were requested to observe leaflets advertising Preston Park and Hall when visiting other areas and tourist attractions.

The Committee could hold a stall during events in Preston Park to gather evidence for the review.

The Chair queried whether members would like to look at how other museums were run.

The Scrutiny Officer would contact the museum in Leeds to find out what they had done as it was a similar building to Preston Hall.

A finance officer would be attending the committee meeting at a future date to advise members about the budgets of parks and museums.

CONCLUDED that the Scrutiny Officer will research possible comparative work with other museums.

332 Volunteer for Scrutiny Training

Volunteer for Scrutiny Training

The Chair informed Members of an Overview and Scrutiny training session for Chairs and Vice Chairs with the additional invite of one other member of the committee.

The Chair enquired as to whether any members were interested however members declined the invitation.

CONCLUDED that the invite be noted but declined.

333 Review of Preston Park and Hall (Introductory presentation and site visit)

Review of Preston Park and Hall

A site visit of areas within the Park and Hall took place.

The following issues were outlined by the Head of Arts and Culture and the Museum Manager and were considered as part of the background and strategic context:

- Community Strategy
- Cultural Strategy
- Cassella Stanger Study
- Navigation Strategy
- Museums Strategy

•Officers also discussed the reasons for creating a strategy and advised that the following issues were contributory factors:

- Lack of direction
- Lack of responsiveness to public
- Preoccupation with operating sites
- Legacy of inappropriate collections
- Low standards & under-performance
- Diminishing resources

It was advised that the Egeria Strategy 2005-2010 be considered as a key document. The Egeria Strategy outlined the following proposals:

- Create Borough-wide Service
- Develop Preston Hall Museum
- Improve the collections
- Ensure adequate resources

Officers advised the committee that the Council had approved a museum strategy in August 2005 and that some of the main conclusions included possible other, cultural uses of Billingham Arts Gallery and Green Dragon Studio and the concentration of collection with accepted guidelines.

Other issues discussed included possible improvements to the Hall and Museum such as building improvements, winter garden and new displays. Improving and rationalizing the collections by asking such questions as: Were they relevant to the history of Stockton? Could they be cared for by Stockton Borough Council?, Would they be more appropriate elsewhere?; Issues relevant to funding were also discussed.

Officers suggested some possible questions for Members to consider as part of the review:

- Do members agree with the collections rationalisation framework?
- What key aspects of our heritage and history should we concentrate on?
- What sort of Museums programme should we aim to develop in community settings across the Borough?
- What is the vision for Preston Park and how should it be branded?
- What should we try to add to the Park attractions?

CONCLUDED that the Chair and Scrutiny Officer will organise witnesses for further meetings.

