

CULTURE RECREATION & TOURISM CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 59

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Petitions
Date of Meeting: 23 March 2010
Report of: Director of Strategy & Governance
Contact Officer: Name: Caroline De Marco Tel: 29-1063
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Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: Various

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 To receive the following petitions presented at Council, any petitions presented directly to the Culture, Recreation & Tourism Cabinet Member Meeting or any e-Petition submitted via the council's website.

59. (i) To receive the following e-petition submitted via the council's website and signed by 160 people:

We the undersigned petition the council to give financial support to The Old Market and retain the building as an Arts and Cultural venue for the City.

The Old Market opened its doors in 1998 with a capital debt of £2.3m. That debt has steadily been reduced over the last ten years and now stands at £1.4m. The debt is financed through borrowing with Barclays Bank against the value of the building.

The Old Market Trust has never received any revenue funding for its activities despite regular request to both Brighton & Hove City Council and The Arts Council of England. These requests have been met continually by both organisations stating that although they are supportive of the arts and community use of the building, they cannot support a project with such a capital deficit.

As a consequence of the pressures consistent with the present economic climate the Trust finds itself in a situation where the value of the building does not support the borrowing and thus it has had to look at other avenues to mitigate the historical debt position.

In spring 2008 the Trust embarked on a Planning Application to build two substantial flats on the roof of The Old Market. With the recommendation of the Planning Officers the scheme was put to the Planning Committee in April 2009, but was rejected. A revised

application taking into consideration the concerns of the Planning Committee was also presented in a meeting in October 2009, but that scheme was also declined, despite recommendation from the officers.

The scheme presented would have enabled the Trust to significantly reduce its capital borrowing, however now the position is that the Trust are in need of substantial financial support to enable it to continue running the project.

- 59. (ii)** To receive the following petition presented at Council on 10 December 2009 by Councillor Watkins and signed by 2500 people:

We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove City Council to give financial support to the Old Market and retain the building as an arts and cultural venue for the city.

- 59. (iii)** To receive the following e-Petition submitted via the council's website and signed by 458 people:

*There is currently no permanent ice rink in the whole of Sussex!
Ice skating is a great way for people of all ages to have fun, meet new friends and keep active and healthy.
Sussex has a long and colourful history with ice skating and many ice hockey players, figure skaters and people who just love to skate desperately need a permanent local ice rink."*

- 59. (iv)** To receive the following petition presented at Council on 10 December 2009 by Councillor Oxley and signed by 112 people:

We the undersigned, call upon the Council to bring back ten-pin bowling at the King Alfred..