

**EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF CULTURE, TOURISM & ENTERPRISE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26 JANUARY 2011**

Present: Councillors Kennedy (Chair); Davis, Harmer-Strange, Allen and Randall

Also Present: Councillors Smith and Fallon-Khan

PART ONE

48. SCRUTINY OF BUDGET PROPOSALS

48.1 The Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Councillor Smith introduced the report, noting that Brighton & Hove had once been a seaside resort, then became a City and is now a world-class City for Culture and Tourism. Despite the current economic position the City is still faring well. The report sets out a strategy to deal with current service pressures and would be revisited as more information was available.

48.2 Councillor Smith was pleased at the good relationship between Cabinet and Scrutiny. This was a testimony to Members and officers working well in co-operation. This close working with officers was key to getting the best outcomes possible for residents of the city and people who work and study here.

48.3 The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects, Councillor Fallon-Khan said he was focussing on boosting the City's economy and attracting inward investment. He referred in particular to the development of New England House, to closer working with the Universities for example, who were changing courses to better support new businesses and retain the finest students, and working to help smaller businesses find office accommodation. As part of the Business Retention and Inward Investment work, they were approaching those who had unused land in the city to explore its use through improved flexibility around planning.

48.4 There were relatively high levels of inward investment and the City was 'punching above its weight.' He was working to accelerate a number of major projects and the officers were to be congratulated for bringing together Amex with the Community Stadium.

48.5 Councillor Fallon-Khan said he was looking at creative ways to bring in from outside the council, more investment into local organisations. Social enterprises were welcome and businesses needing help were encouraged to write to him.

48.6 The Strategic Director Communities outlined the three key principles underlying the budget proposals: protecting frontline services as far as possible; looking how to trim budgets and make efficiencies across the Council without affecting services; and creating the new Delivery Unit – how to deliver services such as library services in different ways.

48.7 The proposals contained no changes in the Library pfi, other than to maximise its value, and no library closures. This was probably unique for any Local Authority under the present conditions, he said.

48.8 The Chair was pleased that many of the service areas did not appear to be facing significant cuts but asked for more information on the proposed changes to the Renaissance programme and Supported Employment.

48.9 Janita Bagshawe, Head of Royal Pavilion & Museums explained that nationally there had been a 15.04% cut for 2011/12 compared with the previous year. However the dismantling of the central team of the SouthEast region Renaissance Strategic Group, hosted by Hampshire had in fact led to a minor increase in the budget for Brighton & Hove compared with last year. But this was a transition year and there would be competitive rounds in future, leading to fewer museums in receipt of this funding. Officers were considering how to deliver good practice on a core budget and draw in further funding.

48.10 Asked about boosting visitor donations to museums, Ms Bagshawe explained that a recent scheme to encourage visitors to donate more had met its income target, albeit a fairly modest one. The charitable arm of the Royal Pavilion had now moved from the status of Friend to Foundation and membership had risen from 1,000 to 1,400. Membership target for 2011 was 2000 rising in future years to 6,000 which would provide a sounder infrastructure for further fundraising.

48.11 Regarding the use of Renaissance funding for 'additional' Ms Bagshawe referred to examples such as website development, digitisation of collections to meet museum accreditation standards which could not be done on core capacity of staff; bringing in external staff and expertise on archaeology and natural history; micro-museums in libraries, and work in Children's Centres. She highlighted the fact that programmes starting out as 'additional' could quickly develop into 'core' provision. This can be challenging in terms of staffing levels.

48.12 If the challenge of tackling staff roles, responsibilities and work emphasis would allow it, Ms Bagshawe said she would like to do more educational work.

48.13 With reference to the Booth Museum and Preston Manor, Ms Bagshawe told Members that the original focus of the Renaissance funding was on Brighton Museum and Arts Facility. In recent years smaller museums were being included. Preston Manor now had more interpretation and sound, and they were working with Sussex Museums who had formerly decanted natural history collections to Brighton and Hove. There had been cataloguing and a thorough review of the social and scholarly value of the Booth Museum collection. Special evening events there had also been successful.

48.14 The Libraries and Museum service had good relations with the universities. Cataloguing and other projects by students and other working as volunteers supervised by expert curatorial staff were of mutual value. This area was worth developing further.

48.15 The Museums Service does loan both abroad and in the UK. It also borrows temporary exhibitions from elsewhere but transport and specialist staff are costly. Costs are paid by the host organisation.

48.16 Replying to a question on potential staff reductions the Strategic Director David Murray pointed out that in shaping the Delivery Unit structure Adam Bates, Head of Tourism and Leisure was now setting out roles and responsibilities, looking at spans of control, numbers of staff reporting to one manager, and dealing with seasonal work. Mr Bates was combining the

different ways of working to build on positive experiences such as the customer approach, and to tackle other areas to be identified for improvement.

48.17 It would take time to meet the challenge of setting a structure that would be fit for purpose not only for 2011/2012 but also for several years hence. There had been early conversations with the Unions but it was early stages as yet and there were no firm proposals. Draft structure charts would be drawn up in around a month. The Chairman asked for further information for the Committee in 31 March 2011 on DLU staffing structure and arrangements

48.18 The Committee asked about supported employment and Castleham Industries. Councillor Fallon-Khan (Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects) stated that the Council's main consideration was the 22 vulnerable employees and a number of options were being considered. The Strategic Director said an action plan would be produced by the end of the financial year.

48.19 Paula Murray, Commissioner for Culture, explained that the Work Step funding had ended and the Government had brought in Workchoice funding which was contracted nationally to Working Links and subcontracted to Scope. At a local level, Castleham had become a subcontractor to Scope and 22 Castleham employees had transferred onto the new funding scheme. She clarified that the additional 180 people using the supported employment scheme outside of Castleham had also been offered the option to transfer to the new funding scheme.

48.20 Discussions with the Third Sector were in hand. Options concerning the building were being considered as part of the Property Strategy undertaken by the Strategic Director of People, and the Strategic Director of Resources. An answer about ownership of the Castleham building and assets would be provided to the Committee.

48.21 .Responding to other questions, the Strategic Director was comfortable with the Council's partnerships, especially within the Community Safety partnership and in other areas such as with the Dome and Festival. The Library pfi had the advantage that the Council could spend more on stock at a time when other local authorities were cutting their book funds.

48.22 The Strategic Director updated the Committee on the Freedom sports contract. The new contract with Freedom produced big potential savings and was one reason that savings did not have to be made in other areas. Detailed legal advice was being sought on continuity of service for transferred staff and they were close to completion with the unions. Officers would be meeting with Freedom and closely monitoring delivery of the contract.

48.23 The Cabinet Member Councillor Smith answered a query about Whitehawk FC. He said this club, the second largest football club after Albion in the City, was in pre-planning development regarding the ground in East Brighton and were likely to play two seasons at the Withdean Stadium.

48.24 Ian Shurrock, Commissioner for Sport & Leisure, said ongoing talks with Whitehawk FC were positive, as well as with Brighton & Hove Albion. There was a good dialogue on the use of seating and some buildings at Withdean Stadium. The hospitality suite was not to be retained at Withdean.

48.25 The Head of Finance, Anne Silley, stated that the inflation element of the budget proposals was low, assumed to be around 1% which is in line with general inflation and reflects current rates around staff costs and supplies and services.

48.26 The Committee especially congratulated the officers on work on the budget so far, though in the knowledge that further challenges were still to be met. Members thanked the officers for giving their information.

48.27 The Chairman welcomed the fact that frontline services including in Libraries, appeared to have been protected and without loss of staff. Councillor Kennedy asked for regular updates on Renaissance funding, and an update on the Library pfi to the next meeting.

48.28 RESOLVED that (a) the minutes of the meeting be referred to 1 February Overview and Scrutiny Commission and (b) the committee receive updates on staffing and structure changes and on Renaissance funding and the library pfi at the next meeting.