

CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 15

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Annual Maintenance Programme for the Royal Pavilion and Museums		
Date of Meeting:	10 June 2008		
Report of:	Acting Director Cultural Services		
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Key Decision:	No	CRT002	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

To agree to a rolling programme of maintenance closures at the Royal Pavilion and Museums.

- 1.2 The Royal Pavilion is open daily throughout the year from 9.30-6.00pm in the summer and 10.00-5.00pm in the winter. The museums only close for one full day a week. The buildings are also used out of hours for functions and events. Some types of maintenance work and improvements are carried out whilst the buildings are open to visitors, or prior to opening hours, or overnight. However there is work, which cannot be carried out during these time frames either because the work will take a considerable period or because it needs the closure of public routes for a number of days. This in effect means that the work cannot be carried out effectively. A closed period would mean that essential maintenance and improvement works could be carried out.
- 1.3 The programme will be carried out on a rolling basis so that only one site at a time is closed. The timing of closures will be based on minimising the impact on visitors and income. Closures will be for no more than two weeks. Closures will be advertised in advance through press and publicity to minimise disruption to the public.
- 1.4 It is proposed that the closure of the Royal Pavilion will take place in January and that, whilst the Royal Pavilion is closed Brighton Museum will open seven days a week (rather than its normal six days with a closure on Monday). The museum closures will be scheduled to take into account temporary exhibitions and will take place at times to minimise impact.
- 1.5 It should be noted that as Preston Manor is closed to the general public in the winter months, there is no requirement for any additional closed periods.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) To agree the maintenance programme for 2008/09 and give delegated authority to the Acting Director of Cultural Services for the implementation of necessary works.
- (2) To agree the temporary closures of the Royal Pavilion and Museums on a rolling basis to carry out the works.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 A pilot closure of ten days at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery in January 2008 meant that essential maintenance works including the redecoration of public facilities and major improvements to the entrance hall and shop were carried out. The improvements to the entrance hall and the general improvements to the decorative repair of the Museum have been welcomed and noted by visitors.
- 3.2 Building on the success of the pilot, the Division has assessed other works that need to be carried out and could be achieved more effectively during a closed period. With no period of closure some maintenance and improvements do not take place and as a result there are areas of the buildings that are worn and shabby. A pressing example of this is the carpet in the Long Gallery (the room that leads off the entrance hall and links the Music Room and Banqueting Hall) which is now threadbare and if not replaced within the next year will require gaffer tape patching to prevent trip hazards. It is estimated that the work will take a week to ten days.
- 3.3 The programme of maintenance that the Division plans to undertake is attached in appendix one.

4. CONSULTATION

We will be promoting the closure in advance to the general public, schools, group organisers and Friends of the Royal Pavilion etc through our existing leaflets and communication channels and presswork.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Financial Implications:

Locally collected figures show a possible loss of income from closing the Royal Pavilion for two weeks in January of £27.5k. This takes into account all income streams of admissions, guiding, room hire, retail and catering and equates to 0.95% of the total income target for the division of £2.884m in 2008/09. Similarly by closing the Brighton, Booth and Hove Museums for a week may lose approximately £6.7k in retail and catering income, and overall the loss of income due to the proposed building closures is approximately £34.2k or 1.19% of the museums income targets for 2008/09.

This shortfall would need to be met within the existing budget of the division.

It is expected that the costs of opening the Brighton Museum for an extra day during the Royal Pavilion closure would be offset by the savings made while the Pavilion is closed, and utilising for example the flexibility within the rostering of the security staff. The costs of the programme of works shown in Appendix 1 have not yet been costed. This is to be met from existing day-to-day maintenance budgets (£54.2k) for the division or from the Pavilion Renewals Reserve (current balance £99.2k) where appropriate.

Finance Officer consulted: Peter Francis – 13 May

5.2 **Legal Implications:**

As indicated at 5.5, in the event of staff or visitors to the Pavilion and museums being injured or suffering loss as a result of disrepair the council may be liable for such loss or injury. Lawyer consulted: Bob Bruce – 13 May

5.3 **Equalities Implications:**

Any negative equalities impact will be on staff in terms of changes in work patterns and intensive working, potential problems for staff with physical disabilities, health problems –will be controlled through health & safety risk assessment process, effective staff briefings and management of contractors.

5.4 **Sustainability Implications:**

Carrying out the work in this way is a better use of resources than by a piecemeal approach.

Proper planned maintenance is essential to ensure that repairs and damage to the buildings doesn't become worse and result in greater damage or costs or even loss of important artefacts

Reusing sales fittings from Brighton Museum at the Booth Museum.

5.5 **Crime & Disorder Implications:**

There are none.

5.6 **Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:**

Poor repair of the buildings can result in health and safety issues for the public. The service needs to compete with historic attractions throughout the UK where there is an expectation that care of the buildings and visitor facilities are of a high standard. Where it fails to, this can damage the reputation of the City Council.

VFM has highlighted the need for the service to maximise its income potential, the refitting of sales points is essential to ensure that the retail income is maximised.

5.7 **Corporate / Citywide Implications:**

Better use of public money

By taking this approach the visitor experience will be less interrupted and important improvements to facilities will be undertaken to ensure that the visitor experience is improved and income maximised.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Overnight working. This is unsuitable for some work as the work cannot be completed in time for opening to the public in the morning and where this method is used it entails removing and taking down equipment so that it is safe to allow visitors into the building. Costs of overnight working can be considerably more.
- 6.2 Carrying out work whilst the building is open to the public. Where possible this is done, for example restoration work on the Saloon in the Royal Pavilion at present. However, work that affects the visitor exit and entry routes can't be carried out under these circumstances, as scaffolding and other equipment can block exit routes and become hazards to the visitor. Furthermore, the work can be detrimental to the visitor experience.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The proposed maintenance programme and improvements is best achieved through temporary closures of the buildings.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. List of works to be carried out.

Documents In Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

None.

LIST OF WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT

Site	Room	Work
Royal Pavilion	Tea Room	Redecoration
	Long Gallery	Replacement of carpet
	Throughout	High level clean
	Throughout	Redecoration in some areas including retouching damage to skirting boards, doors and general paint work
	William IV Lobby	Redecoration/improve lighting
	Front entrance - cashiers' area	Redecoration
	Throughout	Improvements for fire safety and security
Booth Museum of Natural History	Throughout	High level clean
	Shop	Replace fittings (reuse fittings from Brighton Museum) to improve retail offer
	Foyer	Improvements to layout
	Throughout	Repairs/replacement of some inter-actives
	Throughout	Redecoration to some gallery areas
Hove Museum and Art Gallery	Throughout	High level clean
	Throughout	Some gallery redecoration
	Public toilet facilities	Refurbishment
Brighton Museum and Art Gallery	Throughout	High level clean
	Throughout	Some gallery redecoration
	20 th Century Gallery	Strip & reseal gallery floor

