

STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report of the Director of Operations

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CULTURE AND LEISURE TRUST

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an update to Members on the work undertaken to prepare for the creation of a Culture and Leisure Trust.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This paper updates information provided to Members of the Community Development Scrutiny Panel on the 11 February 2009 and the Strong and Supportive Communities Committee of the 10 September 2009.
- 2.2 The range of services to be potentially transferred to a culture and leisure trust was determined by Cabinet at its meeting on the 12 October 2009, namely: Arts Services; Museum Services; Library Services and Sports Services. The delivery of major events, while not outside of this work is also being looked at and will be explored through a separate paper at a future date. Bereavement Services will *not* be included in any transfer.
- 2.3 The main decisions taken by Cabinet were to commence the process of establishing a not-for-profit distributing organisation (a ‘trust’), subject to appropriate consultation with staff and the agreement of a detailed business plan.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 There are a number of issues that are pertinent for consideration by Members of the Committee these are:
- A reminder of why the Council is considering the formation of a Trust
 - The production of a Business Plan for the Trust
 - The formation of a Shadow Board for the Trust
 - Human resource implications in particular pension consideration
 - Procurement issues (this work is governed by European Legislation)
 - Property matters; in relation to leases and licences for the buildings the Trust will operate
 - The Council forming a Commissioning Team to take an overview of this work in the longer term.
- 3.2 All of these issues will be explored through a presentation to Members of the Committee at its meeting.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The majority of funding for the Trust will come through a grant provided by the Council. The Trust will also be able to generate income through fees and charges, as well as having the ability to seek other forms of external funding and grants. Trust status is likely to enhance its ability to do so.
- 4.2 It should be noted that financial consideration for the Trust has been included within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Two rounds of meetings have been held with staff. The first, a series of eight meetings in September 2009 was aimed at providing staff with early background information and noted Members' desire to undertake a strategic review of the optimum structures for supporting the delivery of cultural services. The second round which was made up of eleven meetings was held in October 2009 were focused on gauging the opinions of staff on the proposal to establish a Culture and Leisure Trust.
- 5.2 The main 'feelings' emerging from the first series of meetings were apprehension, doubt that the process would take place at all, and, for some, a touch of optimism. By the second series of meetings the overall picture was much more positive with many staff stating they were excited at the potential for new freedoms and the ability to be agile in meeting customer needs. The 'straw pole' question of 'how are you feeling about the process?' was, for a significant majority of people answered positively.
- 5.3 Consultation with Trade Unions on the proposed formation of the Trust has commenced and is proceeding in line with expectations. Three meetings have already been held with Trade Union representatives, including a "pre-issue" briefing on the recently issued question and answer document arising from staff communication meetings. Further consultation meetings are planned over the next few months in order to comply with our obligations under TUPE.
- 5.4 This paper builds on the formal consultation already undertaken through presentations to Members of the Community Development Scrutiny Panel on the principles of the establishment of a Trust.

6. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 That the Committee will explore and comment on the proposals within this paper.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 A paper will be presented to Cabinet on the 8 February for it to determine whether or not it wishes to approve the transfer of the operation of culture and leisure services to the Culture and Leisure Trust.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- i) 2006 Audit Commission report entitled "Public Sport and Recreation Services"
- ii) Lawrence Graham LLP report entitled "Culture in Trust"
- iii) 2005 Best Value Review of Culture and Recreation Services

9. APPENDICES

None