

AT A MEETING of the Culture and Communities Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday,
20th September, 2021

Chairman:

* Councillor Rob Mocatta

Councillor Jackie Branson	Councillor Hugh Lumby
Councillor Lulu Bowerman	* Councillor Lesley Meenaghan
* Councillor Ann Briggs	* Councillor Tanya Park
* Councillor Steven Broomfield	
Councillor Pamela Bryant	
* Councillor Peter Chegwyn	
* Councillor Rod Cooper	
* Councillor Alex Crawford	
* Councillor Barry Dunning	
* Councillor Dominic Hiscock	

*Present

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bowerman, Branson, Bryant and Lumby.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

4. **DEPUTATIONS**

No requests to make a deputation had been received.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and made a number of announcements relating to the Archives and Records Service, the Library Service, the Registration Service and Countryside.

6. SAVINGS PROGRAMME TO 2023 - REVENUE SAVINGS PROPOSALS

[In relation to this item, Councillor Crawford declared a personal interest as a member of the Basingstoke Canal Society. Councillor Broomfield declared a personal interest as a trustee of Fair Oak Community library.]

The Select Committee considered a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services and the Director of Corporate Operations regarding revenue savings proposals that had been developed as part of the Savings Programme to 2023.

Members were presented with details of the wider context in which the savings proposals had been developed. It was noted that this was the seventh savings programme since 2010/11 and therefore the challenge of meeting targets was increasing. The national context of uncertainty caused by single year budget settlements, the rising costs of Adult Social Care provision and Covid-19 was set out. It was confirmed that capacity had been diverted from previous savings programmes to support the Covid-19 response and this combined with several other factors meant there was no room for slippage on the proposed programme.

Members received further specific detail on how the proposals related to different areas of the Culture, Communities and Business Services department within the remit of the Select Committee. The emphasis on developing targeted commercial opportunities was explained and the breakdown of savings by service area set out. The proposals would retain staff within HCC and would involve making improvements to digital capabilities. It was noted that the reliance on income generation was the primary risk to the proposals and that no significant impact on equalities had been identified.

The Select Committee welcomed the report and a number of details relating to a range of specific service areas were clarified. Acknowledging the risk to achieving the proposals associated with the reliance on income generation, the Committee discussed how this could be monitored. It was agreed that a proposal for a Working Group to monitor income generation be developed and presented to the next meeting.

The recommendations were considered and it was proposed and seconded that: "The Select Committee support the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage and Rural Affairs in section 2 of the report."

A vote was held and 6 Members were in favour, 3 were against and 1 Member abstained. Accordingly the recommendation was resolved.

7. UPDATE ON OUR DEVELOPING CULTURAL STRATEGY

The Select Committee considered a verbal update from the Assistant Director for Culture and Information on the cultural strategy in Hampshire.

Through a presentation, the importance of culture both socially and economically was set out. In particular the role of culture and the creative industries in the recovery of high streets and town centres post Covid was highlighted. Different strands of the strategy relating to direct delivery, the role of the Hampshire Cultural Trust and the role of the County Council in supporting partners were detailed.

Members welcomed the presentation, in particular opportunities to support high street regeneration. It was confirmed that there would be greater promotion of grant funding opportunities in the future following internal changes. It was noted that many big suppliers to the events industry were based in Hampshire and agreed to take this in to account. It was also agreed that consideration would be given to how the strategy is presented in light of the very broad interpretation of “culture” and its meaning to different communities.

It was resolved that the content of the presentation be noted.

8. UPDATE ON HAMPSHIRE CULTURAL TRUST

Paul Sapwell, Chief Executive of the Hampshire Cultural Trust gave a presentation setting out the background to the Trust, the impact of and response to Covid-19, including the move to a digital offer, the re-opening of venues and continuing investment. In financial terms it was noted that £1 million reduction in funding had been absorbed, but that £3.5 million in surplus had been re-invested. The critical role of government support during Covid was recognised. A number of projects were highlighted, in particular a new project with the developers of the computer game “Assassins Creed”, which involved the digital re-creation of Winchester as it was in Anglo-Saxon times. It was explained that a non-violent version would be made available for education purposes, including an augmented reality phone app tour of the city.

The Select Committee thanked Paul for his presentation and were supportive of the opportunity to use game software development for education. The progress of the Southampton City of Culture bid was raised and Paul confirmed that he was involved as part of the bid group. It was confirmed that an application for the latest round of the government’s (Covid) cultural recovery fund had been made and that previous applications had been successful.

It was resolved that the content of the presentation be noted.

9. ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND OVERALL DELIVERY PLAN

The Select Committee received a verbal update from the Art Council England.

Simon Jutton from the Arts Council set out the organisation’s history and role in supporting arts and culture through long term and project funding with national

lottery money as well as distributing DCMS emergency funding. The Arts Council also acted as an advocate for culture in the areas of regeneration and skills. Simon gave details of the 10 year strategy to support cultural communities, connecting place with creative and cultural centres. He explained that decisions about revenue funding were made via a competitive process and that there were three priority areas in Hampshire: Gosport, Rushmoor and the New Forest. He gave details of the work in these areas and in other areas of the county.

Thanking Simon for his presentation, Members questioned the impact of ongoing support to organisations outside of the priority areas and it was confirmed that those areas had ringfenced money available. It was also confirmed that the Nepali community would be included in work underway in Rushmoor and that stronger links were being sought. Clarification was given as to the process of allocating DCMS emergency funding.

It was resolved that the content of the presentation be noted and that a further update would be included on the work programme.

10. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Select Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive setting out the proposed work programme.

In addition to the programme for formal meetings of the Select Committee, a schedule of proposed visits to sites around the county was shared and agreed.

It was noted that it had been agreed under the Savings Programme to 2023 item that a proposal for a Working Group should be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was resolved that the Work Programme for the Select Committee be agreed, with the addition detailed above.

Chairman,