

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>5 February, 2013</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Heritage Services – Service Offer, 2013/14</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

**5. Summary**

Heritage Services has been asked to review its current service delivery model, whilst identifying any opportunities to release potential savings. The review has considered how the Service can most appropriately meet local need and deliver the best service possible in the current challenging environment.

Proposals for future service delivery have been based on an assessment of local need (including visitor surveys and current usage) and take into account the statutory requirements of the service and available resources. It is closely aligned with the Council's corporate priorities and will provide the most cost effective model for service delivery.

**6. Recommendations: -**

**That the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism agree to**

- 1) reduce the opening hours at Clifton Park Museum by 8 hours a week and to reduce opening hours at the Archives and Local Studies searchroom by 5 hours a week.**
  - 2) consult customers and stakeholders on the allocation of opening hours**
  - 3) change the opening days if the Registration and Marriages service is re-located to Clifton Park.**
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## **7. Proposals and Details**

An assessment of local need has been made by analysing the data from surveys of visitors (both to Clifton Park Museum and the Archives and Local Studies searchroom) and a variety of performance indicators (including current usage). This has allowed the Service to identify key areas where it could have the greatest impact whilst considering resources available, including staff, buildings and assets including collections.

Whilst continuing to meet its statutory duty with regard to public records and archives that fall under the Freedom of Information Act, the proposed new opening hours to be issued for consultation is summarised below.

### **Option 1**

- Close Clifton Park Museum and the Archives and Local Studies searchroom at 4:00 p.m. Monday to Thursday and on Saturdays (currently 5:00 p.m.).
- Close Clifton Park Museum on Sundays (currently open 1:30 p.m. – 4:30p.m.). This would not impact upon the Archives and Local Studies searchroom as it does not open on a Sunday.

### **Option 2**

- Close Clifton Park Museum and the Archives and Local Studies searchroom on one full day (currently open 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. except Fridays). This would probably lead to a realignment of which days the museum and the searchroom are open.

The Service will look to make use of its resources in a more efficient and effective manner and will focus on the following priorities:

- Continue to respond to enquiries as set out within the Customer Charter Service Standard
- Continue to deliver on the successful Heritage Lottery funded project to make Boston Castle accessible
- Complete relocation and redisplay of York and Lancaster Regimental Museum to Clifton Park Museum
- Deliver on imaginative, innovative and exciting new exhibitions and displays at Clifton Park Museum and at Riverside House
- Deliver on a programme of events (with limited school sessions) that will focus upon our most vulnerable communities including children, young people and families
- Continue to care for Rotherham's unique collections prioritising Social History, York & Lancaster Regiment, Fine & Decorative Arts, Industrial History and archives that fall under the Public Records Act and Freedom of Information Act
- Maintain our accreditation and Visitor Attraction status for Clifton Park Museum and gain accreditation status for Archives and Local Studies
- Continue to improve Service's website
- Develop and build upon the Service's work with key friends groups and volunteers

## **8. Finance**

The proposed future service delivery option recommended for consultation would deliver the following annual savings/efficiencies:

- Reduction in opening hours: £20,300
- South Yorkshire Joint Committee on Archives (budget agreement for 2013/14 is budget standstill -7.5%): £900
- Service support and development: £60,000
- Variety of non pay budgets: £800
- Care of collections and buildings: £20,000

The proposal would release savings to the Council of approximately £102,000.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Uninformed changes to opening hours could potentially affect the number of people visiting the museum and the archives and local studies searchroom. This will be minimised by taking into account local need and amending opening hours accordingly. In turn, this could also impact upon the retail and café elements of the service. It is not, however, anticipated that this will impact seriously upon these particular budgets.

Changes to opening hours may also damage the reputation of Heritage Services and Rotherham Council, although the Service will endeavour to widely publicise the changes in order to mitigate this and deal with any comments and complaints through the appropriate channels.

Changeovers to permanent exhibitions and temporary displays would not be as frequent (including the heritage cases at Riverside House), potentially affecting the impact on the Service's return visitors. It is possible that this will contribute to a decline in overall visitor numbers. One key strategy to minimise this impact would be to seek external funding in order continue developing the Service's exhibitions programme.

Education and outreach work would be scaled back but refocused upon priority groups. School sessions would be delivered through freelancers. Smaller events would continue, although would be reviewed to determine their impact and altered as appropriate.

The condition of the historic sites that the Service is responsible for will only be monitored with minimal intervention. No further work will be undertaken to develop these sites increasing the risks associated with their increasing dilapidated states.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Heritage Services contribute to the following priority outcomes:

- More people in our poorest communities are in work and training

- More people come to the Town Centre for work, shopping and for things to do and see
- More people are in work or training and less are living on benefits
- People enjoy parks, green spaces, sports, leisure and cultural activities
- More people have formal qualifications and skills

These proposals may also impact upon both the Service's accreditation and VAQAS status, although it is expected that these can be retained through scalability, i.e. standards can be adapted to the size of service.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Consultation on the proposed allocation of opening hours  
RMBC's Corporate Plan  
Survey of Visitors to UK Archives, 2012  
Clifton Park Museum, Visitor Survey, Sept 2010 – June 2011  
Service Planning Awayday – consultation with staff

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