

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

| | | |
|----|--------------|---|
| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism |
| 2. | Date: | 18th February, 2014 |
| 3. | Title: | Heritage Services – Service Offer 2014/15 |
| 4. | Directorate: | Environment and Development Services |

5. Summary

The report identifies opportunities to review the current service delivery model for Heritage Services whilst reducing existing budget pressures.

6. Recommendations

That the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism agree to:

- 1) Implement Option 1 - reduce the opening hours at Clifton Park Museum by 3 hours a week on a seasonal basis (Oct-Mar) and to reduce the opening hours of the Archives and Local Studies searchroom by 4 hours a week
- 2) consult ation with customers and stakeholders on the allocation of the Archives and Local Studies opening hours

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

This review will consider the following:

- how the service can most appropriately meet local need focussing on target audiences
- deliver the best service possible in current challenging environment and
- minimise the impact upon customers.

These aims will be underpinned by the drive to be less reliant upon core funding and increase revenue streams.

Proposals for future service delivery have been based on an assessment of local need (including visitor surveys, current usage and a report produced on behalf of the Service by Museum Development Yorkshire 'Understanding Potential Audiences'), a variety of performance indicators and consideration of the impact of the recent relocation of celebratory services to Clifton Park Museum. It has also taken into account the statutory requirements of the Service and available resources.

It is closely aligned with the Council's priorities and will be supported by the Service's guiding principle; 'To utilise its heritage assets to support the local economy'. It will also provide the most cost effective model for service delivery. Overall it has been possible to identify particular key areas where the Service could have the greatest impact whilst taking into account the resources available, including staff, buildings and assets including collections. It will continue to meet its statutory duty with regard to public records and archives that fall under the remit of the Public Records Acts, 1958, 1967 and the Freedom of Information Act, 2000. Clifton Park Museum is also the venue at which Rotherham Registration Services offers statutory ceremonies supported by Heritage Services staff.

7.2 Options

Option 1

Close Clifton Park Museum on Sundays (1.30-4.30pm) on a seasonal basis (Oct-Mar)

Close the Archives and Local Studies searchroom on Mondays (currently open 1pm-5pm) with option of closing searchroom on Tuesdays rather than Fridays. E.g.

| | Current | Option 1a | Option 1b |
|------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Mondays | 1-5pm | Closed | Closed |
| Tuesdays | 10-5pm | 10-5pm | Closed |
| Wednesdays | 10-5pm | 10-5pm | 10-5pm |
| Thursdays | 10-5pm | 10-5pm | 10-5pm |
| Fridays | Closed | Closed | 10-5pm |
| Saturdays | 10-1pm, 2-5pm | 10-1pm, 2-5pm | 10-1pm, 2-5pm |

Please note that Clifton Park Museum is now open on Fridays following the relocation of celebratory services from the Town Hall at the beginning of December 2013.

Option 2

Close Clifton Park Museum on Sundays (1.30-4.30pm)

Close the Archives and Local Studies searchroom at 4pm, Monday to Thursday (currently 5pm).

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

- Increase income (and reduce reliance on core budgets) through it's catering, retail, room hire and schools offers
- Increase visitor numbers through a well planned, rolling programme of externally funded exhibitions, events, activities and school sessions (unless self financing)
- Develop and build upon the Service's work with key friends groups and create a vibrant and innovative volunteer programme
- Continue to deliver on the successful Heritage Lottery funded project to make Boston Castle accessible
- Continue to work with Rotherham Registration Services to deliver celebratory services at Clifton Park Museum
- Complete relocation and redisplay of York and Lancaster Regimental Museum to Clifton Park Museum
- Make the York and Lancaster Regimental archive accessible to members of the public through the searchroom
- Continue to respond to enquiries as set out within corporate guidelines
- Deliver an up to date, relevant website
- Maintain the Service's accreditation and Visitor Attraction status for Clifton Park Museum and gain accreditation status for Archives and Local Studies

8. Finance

Either of the proposed future service delivery options recommended for consultation would deliver the following annual savings/efficiencies:

- Reduction in opening hours: £8,278
- Service support and development: £46,500
- Variety of non pay budgets: £3,564
- Care of collections and buildings: £10,997

The proposal would balance the budget due to the additional budget pressure incurred following the relocation of celebratory services from the Town Hall, as well as accommodating the need to open Clifton Museum Park on Fridays in order to offer these statutory services.

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 as appropriate and where feasible. 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 become reliant upon external funding/sponsorship (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. It is, therefore, critical that the Service plans ahead and identify appropriate funding streams that can support this area of work.

Education and outreach work will need to in the main become self financing and the delivery model will be reviewed as part of the overall Service review. Smaller events would continue but will be reviewed to determine their impact although it is likely that a nominal fee would be levied in the future.

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 Rotherham Community Strategy as follows:

- Help local people and businesses to benefit from a growing economy through its volunteer programme and local spend;
- Create an improved town centre environment as a complementary attraction, as well as
- Ensuring the best start in life for children and families through it's pre-school activities and events, as well as being a learning destination for school children

The Service also contributes to the following priority outcomes within the Corporate Plan:

- Stimulating the local economy and helping local people into work

Lastly, the Service also contributes to the Economic Plan, which strives for a well-used, vibrant and successful town centre, as well as portraying a positive image and identity of Rotherham.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

RMBC's Corporate Plan, Rotherham Community Strategy and Economic Plan
Survey of Visitors to UK Archives, 2012

Clifton Park Museum, Visitor Survey, Sept 2010-June 2011

Understanding Potential Audiences, Museum Development Yorkshire

Market research analysis for Clifton Park Museum undertaken by Market Measures, Aug 2013

Contact Name:

Lisa Broadest, Manager, Heritage Services

Tel: (01709) 336623

Email: lisa.broadest@rotherham.gov.uk