

CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 64

Brighton & Hove City Council

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00pm 7 FEBRUARY 2012

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Bowden (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillors Brown and Fitch

PART ONE

50. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

50(a) Declarations of Interests

50.1 There were none.

50(b) Exclusion of Press and Public

50.2 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Cabinet Member considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(I) of the Act).

50.3 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item on the agenda.

51. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

Royal Pavilion and Museum Services

- 51.1 It was noted that the Arts Council England was going to award the Royal Pavilion and Museums approx £2.5m for 2012-15 through the Renaissance Programme (exact figure subject to negotiation). A more detailed report would be brought to the next Cabinet Member meeting on 6 March with details of the work it would support.
- 51.2 It was noted that the DCMS/Wolfson Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund had awarded £100,000 for a gallery refurbishment in Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, which would allow for fast changing displays of the permanent collections.
- 51.3 The Cabinet Member explained that the Royal Pavilion and Museum & M) had successfully bid at auction for a Turner watercolour – which features the Pavilion, The Chain Pier at Brighton (1824/5). It had been purchased with a significant grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund who had helped secure the picture for the city and nation, plus an award from the Art Fund and a generous donation from an anonymous RP&M Foundation Patron. The painting had been in a private collection & unseen by public for a century and would go on show soon after it arrived in the city for a short time and would form the centrepiece of a new temporary exhibition at the Pavilion in 2013, which will explore the town's development in the early 19th century and the important relationship played by the Pavilion in Brighton's development. Whilst relatively small at 15.2cm by 22.9cm, the painting was delightful and it was wonderful that this opportunity had arisen to add a work of this significance to the city's public collections).

Sports and Leisure

King Alfred Leisure Centre

- 51.4 The Cabinet Member explained that work was progressing well on the full refurbishment of the swimming pool changing rooms at the King Alfred Leisure Centre. The changing rooms had been cleared and work had commenced on replacing the drains which are a key issue to assist with improving the cleanliness of the area. The refurbishment was scheduled to be completed by the end of April and would include full replacement of the cubicles, lockers and showers. The opportunity had also been taken to improve the accessibility of the changing facilities to benefit all users including those with a severe disability. Swimmers had welcomed the provision of temporary changing facilities which had enabled disruption to the service to be kept to a minimum.

Saltdean Lido

- 51.5 Further to the report on the Operation of Saltdean Lido at the December Cabinet Member Meeting a range of actions had been taken which had included:

1. Meeting with the lessee.
2. In response to a letter sent to the lessee urging the company to negotiate the terms of an agreed surrender of the lease, the lessee's solicitors have responded that they will actively consider this and a meeting is to be arranged in early course.
3. Appointment of an external valuer, who would produce a full valuation report regarding the likely surrender value of the leasehold interest and the value likely to be assessed if the local planning authority was to seek to make a compulsory purchase order.

4. Liaison with Saltdean Community Association, as actions undertaken by the council were intended not to prejudice the position of the SCA.

Related activity from the local planning authority included:

1. Appointment of a surveyor to see if there was any scope for the service of a Listed Building Repairs Notice.
2. There had been an inspection by the surveyor and a warning letter would be issued. If reasonable steps were not taken by the lessee the Planning Committee would consider what further action would be appropriate.
3. A meeting had been held with the lessee regarding a proposed development and the proposals had not been favourably received.
4. These actions will be referred to in the report coming to the next scheduled Cabinet Member Meeting to be held in March.

Culture

Brighton Festival

- 51.6 It was noted that the Brighton Festival would launch later that month with the programme due out February 22. Vanessa Redgrave had been appointed as artistic director which was exciting news for the city and would further increase the profile and reputation of the Brighton Festival. The Fringe would also launch in February and the programme would be available February 20.

Tourism

Works to the Brighton Centre

- 51.7 The Cabinet Member explained that works to the front elevation of the Brighton Centre were due to be completed in 2 weeks. Business continuity had been maintained throughout the build project. Highlights of the works had included the Installation of new efficient lighting system in the Auditorium which it had been projected could save up to 41K p.a. in electrical consumption. Also, a new efficient Ground Floor LED lighting system, saving £14Kp.a. and a semi waterless urinal system were being installed. Projected saving of 40 cubic meters of water per day which could give a potential saving of £15K p.a.

Conferencing news

- 51.8 It was noted that VisitBrighton had secured the Labour Party Conference for September 2013. It was estimated that this would bring an estimated £20m to the local economy attracting over 8000 delegates and visitors. The Convention Bureau had handled 122 conference enquiries in 2011, a 13% increase on 2010. Total conference bookings made by VisitBrighton in 2011 would bring £58 million to the economy in future years. In

addition, 28 major conferences or events booked for 2012 and were expected to attract more than 30,000 delegates. Most of these would be staying or using the Brighton Centre, with others at Brighton Dome, Hilton Brighton Metropole, The Grand, Thistle and the Holiday Inn. The biggest conference in 2012 would be the Liberal Democrats' party conference, in late September, which was expected to attract 8,000 people and bring in £15 million. Other bookings include the TUC Annual Congress in mid- September bringing 2,000 delegates and the Unison Health Conference in April, bringing 1,500 people.

VisitBrighton sign up 400th Partner

51.9 With 400 Partners, VisitBrighton's Partnership had grown by nearly 10% on 2012 and over 32% since 2009. Although not the largest membership scheme in the country, for a city of its size it was remarkably successful. Manchester, with a city population nearly double that of Brighton & Hove, (465,000), and with more than 2.5m living in the Greater Manchester area, only had around 350 members of their VisitManchester scheme. Even Liverpool, which was a similar size, only has just over 500 members. The Partnership scheme brought in around £117K in income which was ring-fenced for marketing activity.

Libraries

51.10 The Cabinet Member explained that he had attended an excellent workshop on the forthcoming Libraries Plan with his colleagues the previous month. He believed there would be a full report on that to the relevant Scrutiny Committee in March. He considered it was very productive to have round the table with colleagues in order to discuss in detail important plans such as this and would like to thank the Scrutiny Committee for proposing and holding this useful session.

51.11 **RESOLVED** – That the Cabinet Members Communications be received and noted.

52. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

52.1 RESOLVED – That all items be reserved for discussion.

53. PETITIONS

53.1 There were none.

54. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

54.1 There were none.

55. DEPUTATIONS

55.1 There were none.

56. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

56.1 There were none.

57. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

57.1 There were none.

58. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

58.1 There were none.

59. ECO TOURISM

59.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities outlining the council's commitment to developing, launching and delivering a successful strand of eco-tourism.

59.2 The Commissioner of Culture explained that Brighton and Hove was a successful tourist destination, the city had refreshed and renewed its visitor policy over a number of decades in order to create more jobs, to be competitive and to change the visitor profile. The development of a strand of eco-tourism as part of this strategy had been part of the city's aspiration to continually develop and refresh its offer. It also fell in line with the department's commitment to the Council's Corporate Plan. The report outlined the council's commitment to developing, launching and delivering a successful strand of eco-tourism.

59.3 In response to questions by Councillor Fitch the Strategic Director explained that camping and up market camp site options were being explored as much of the outer area of the city sat within the boundaries of the South Downs National Park which opened up a new range of opportunities for the city to explore in terms of its profile, identity and visitor offer. These potential opportunities were being pursued in concert with constant re-assessment of the city's offer overall. Councillor Fitch expressed concern however that statements appearing in the press appeared to indicate that the Council actively encouraged encampments within the city, this was unfortunate and residents in his ward had expressed concern in respect of this matter. The Cabinet Member stressed that a number of options were being explored to ensure that all possibilities of maximising the city's tourism offer were fully explored.

59.4 **RESOLVED** – That the Cabinet Member agrees to the launch, consultation around and implementation of an eco-tourism strand of activity for Brighton and Hove.

60. VISIT BRIGHTON CONVENTION BUREAU

60.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities seeking support of the Cabinet member to discontinue the fixed-fee conference partnership and to move to a commission-based model, with charges being levied on business placed in hotels and venues.

60.2 The Head of Recreation and Tourism explained that a consultation process had taken place with the effected business users and that they had supported this approach. Brighton and Hove had been one of very few, if not the only authority who had continued to operate a fixed fee model, this would bring them into line with other authorities. This

change would create a more equitable fee structure and would increase revenue to the service, which could also be off-set against savings targets.

60.3 Councillor Brown welcomed the report stating that it represented an appropriate way forward, as it was supported by partners it represented a “win win”. Councillor Fitch also supported the recommendations set out in the report, but sought clarification that fees were paid by hotels and others providing conference facilities not those using the facilities. It was confirmed that was the case.

60.4 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Cabinet Member agrees that the fixed-fee conference partnership ceases;

(2) That a commission-based conference partnership model is approved and introduced from 1 April 2012; and

(3) That approval is given to charge partners commission on room hire and pre-booked food and beverage at a rate of 10% (exc VAT)

61. GHOST TRAIN : PUBLIC ART

61.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities describing the history of the council’s commitment to the public art scheme and the implications for the council of entering into an agreement with the Ghost Train artist, Jon Mills and Quoin Estates and Developments Ltd.

61.2 The Commissioner for Culture, explained that as part of the New England Quarter development a programme of public art commissions had been designed and fabricated by a team of two artists and a landscape designer, funded by Section 106 contributions. All of these commissions had been successfully installed except one piece of sculpture which was due to be installed in the urban greenway where the path met the old railway bridge. This piece “The Ghost Train” had received planning permission and had been built by a local metal worker, Jon Mills and was awaiting installation. As the piece would overhang the Network Rail owned bridge, the council needed to enter into a licence with Network Rail.

61.3 A presentation was given showing photographs of the sculpture during various stages of its production once completed and its intended location once installed. It was explained that it would be more appropriate to refer to the piece as the ghost “of” a train as it represented an old fashioned steam locomotive, the “Jenny Lind” and that it was not a solid structure, in order to allow the wind to pass through it in view of its relatively exposed position. The concept was that the train appeared to be barely there, the lighting would fade in and out, appearing and disappearing, creating a ghostly presence. At night the sculpture would be lit from below.

61.4 Councillor Fitch whilst generally welcoming the proposals expressed concern that it could potentially give rise to accidents as it could represent a distraction to drivers. He asked whether consideration could be given to moving it if that proved to be the case. It was confirmed that it could, but that very careful consideration had been given to the proposed location and advice sought in respect of this matter. As the piece would be lit

from below it was considered it would be unobtrusive to vehicles passing underneath and would not be a hazard.

61.5 Councillor Brown welcomed the proposals noting that the process had been lengthy in view of the negotiations involved and enquired how much longer it would take for the project to come to fruition. The Commissioner for Culture explained that the piece had been made and that once all of the necessary permissions were in place the sculpture could be installed with 2-3 months.

61.6 **RESOLVED** – That the Cabinet Member gives delegated authority for the Strategic Director, Communities to:

(a) enter into an agreement with the artist and Quoin Estates and Developments Ltd to provide for:

(i) the ownership of the Ghost Train to be transferred for nil consideration to the Council and

(ii) the Council to be indemnified in relation to any costs it incurs as a result of entering into the Licence with Network Rail referred to in (b) below; and

(b) enter into a licence with Network Rail to enable The Ghost Train to be installed on the listed railway bridge over New England Road when he is satisfied with the detailed provisions of that licence.

The meeting concluded at 4.55pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

