

22 June 2017

Agenda Item: 6

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING, RESOURCES
AND CULTURE**

CULTURAL SERVICES – SERVICE UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Committee with a high level update on key operational matters across the cultural services portfolio for the period April – June 2017.

Information and Advice

Rufford Abbey Country Park

2. The County Council's contract with Parkwood Leisure for the operation and management of commercial and visitor services at Rufford Abbey Country Park commenced in February 2017. As part of the contract, the Council is investing £1million into the redevelopment of the commercial and visitor offer at the Park. Thus far, the following redevelopment projects have been completed:
 - transfer of the Outdoor Living shop from Rufford Mill to a new site in the main Abbey Courtyard, creating a Courtyard retail hub
 - opening of a new Rufford delicatessen/farm shop, stocking locally produced goods
 - refurbishment of the Coach House Café, Rufford's main catering facility, and the introduction of new food/beverage menus
 - introduction of a new "vintage" coffee van in the Courtyard area, to provide an additional "grab and go" food and drink selling point.
3. In addition, preparatory work is proceeding for the introduction of the following developments over the summer and autumn period, subject to final scheduling and planning approval/conditions
 - new "mini-golf" and outdoor/adventure play facilities
 - new plant sale facilities in the Orangery area (seasonal)
 - new boating facilities on the Lake (seasonal)
 - new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems to manage car parking arrangements
 - extended car parking facilities to increase the volume of customer car parking facilities at the Park.

4. The capital developments are supporting the continuing financial viability of the Park, as well as significantly improving the overall customer offer.
5. In performance terms, the new arrangements with Parkwood are proceeding well, with both financial and visitor number targets being achieved.
6. The contract with Parkwood has reduced the cost of operating Rufford Country Park to the Council by approximately £300,000 per annum.

Sherwood Forest Country Park

7. The Council has contracted with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) to develop a new Sherwood Forest Country Park Visitor Centre, and subsequently manage Sherwood Forest Country Park.
8. Groundworks for the new Centre, which will be located in the Forest Corner area of the Park, began in May. Main construction will commence in July/August, with completion due in Spring 2018.
9. Upon completion, Sherwood Forest Country Park will be operated at no cost to the County Council. Current costs are in the region of £400,000 per annum.

Bestwood Country Park

10. The Council is contracting with Gedling Borough Council for the future management of Bestwood Country Park. Final arrangements for the establishment of the contract are underway, and it is anticipated that the contract will commence from 1 July 2017. The new arrangement will save the County Council approximately £50,000 per annum.

Other Options Considered

11. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

12. To ensure Committee is aware of key operational developments across the cultural services portfolio.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

14. These are detailed in the main body of the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That Committee notes the key operational developments across the cultural services portfolio in the period from April to June 2017.

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Constitutional Comments

15. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SAS 09/06/17)

16. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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