STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 9 December 2014
Time: 18.00 hrs.
Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair), R Broom,
E Harrington, A McGuinness and J Mead.

Start/End Time: Start Time: 18.00 hrs.
End Time: 18:40 hrs.

1.   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Bell, E Connolly
and P Stuart.

There were no declarations of interests.

2.   **MINUTES – 19 NOVEMBER 2014**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2014 be
agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3.   **UPDATE ON EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSE TO MUSEUM
REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee received an officer update to the Executive Portfolio Holder
response to the Museum Review carried out by the Children, Young People,
Culture, Sport & Leisure Development and Scrutiny Committee in November 2012.

In reply to comments about the availability of WiFi in the Museum the Committee
was advised that the Council's review of WiFi provision in its buildings would be
extended to the Museum. It was noted that the construction of the building was a
factor behind the current issues and that a full survey would be required to
determine a solution. The Committee was further advised that the IT roll-out of
hosted desk-top computers would take place in the new year.

It was noted that there was no link from the Museums' page on the Hertfordshire
County Council website to the Stevenage Museum pages on the Council's website.
In addition it was believed the corporate nature of the Council's website inhibited a
more creative approach to publicising the Museum.

A Member complimented the Museum staff for the Facebook page that had been created and the Committee was advised that the page had recently been linked to the Museum's blog. The Committee was further advised that both the Facebook page and the blog had links to the Talking New Towns website.

The Committee was informed that the Museum entertained regular visits from schools and that communication links with schools were generally good. In the absence of a 'link' teacher, use of the school's admin email address was usually sufficient to secure contact.

In reply to a question the Committee was advised that a large number of photographs had been digitised by Museum staff and volunteers. It was noted that these photographs had been converted at 200 dpi whereas the industry standard was 300+ dpi.

In reply to a further question the Committee was advised that the audio records gathered for the Talking New Towns initiative had also been digitised.

Members then made two suggestions to improve the financial viability and attractiveness of the museum as a destination and officers undertook to investigate the possibility of:

• contracting with a third party to facilitate the sale of digitised photographs from the museum's collection.
• providing a 'pop-up' coffee shop with an outdoor area for special events or offering a franchise opportunity to a third party on an on-going basis.

A Member asked if the issues with the internal door had been resolved. In reply the Committee was advised that two specialised providers had been approached but a solution was, as yet, not forthcoming.

A Member commented that in many respects the current site was inappropriate given the risk of damp or flood damage. In reply the Committee was advised that it was an ambition of the Council to site the museum in more suitable premises.

With regard to staffing issues the Committee was advised that the post of Volunteer Development Officer remained vacant. A bid for funding for the post had been made and a result would be known in March.

It was **RESOLVED** that the updates to the Executive Portfolio Response be noted.

4.   **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

5.   **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

PART II

6. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

Chair