

CULTURE, LEISURE & TOURISM PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

21 September 2010

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Hilary Thompson (Culture, Leisure & Tourism Portfolio Holder)

Officers: John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)
Graham Jarritt, Library and Community Manager
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

6. Participation of Community Resources Staff in Training Awayday 2010 – *Library and Community Manager*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To request the approval of the Portfolio Holder for Community Resources staff to take part in the previously approved Library Staff Training Awayday in 2010.

Issues for Consideration

The Libraries Transformation Plan agreed by Cabinet in June 2008 approved the holding of an annual library staff awayday. This requires closure of normal library services for one day in the year in order that all staff are able to attend. This year the date proposed for the awayday is Thursday, 18 November 2010.

In February 2010 as part of Business Transformation, Library Services and Community Resources were joined as one section known as Libraries and Community. In the interest of cohesion and equality it was proposed that Community Resources staff should also attend the awayday. This would involve closure of Community Centres during the day time on Thursday, November 18 with the exception of Owton Manor Community Centre after 2.30 pm due to the provision of OSCARS after school service there. The cost of holding this event was in the region of £1,000, however due to the numbers of staff attending this event, this would equate to a cost of approximately £10 per staff member. The event would as usual,

take place at a Council community building.

The Portfolio Holder asked whether a full day was necessary for the event and was informed that for this session only, a half day would suffice although this may not be the case in future years. She was informed that £860 of the estimated cost was that of hiring an external facilitator. The Library and Community Manager confirmed that for the planned session this could be provided internally thereby making a cost saving, although in future years an external facilitator may be more appropriate.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder agreed:-

- to Community Resources staff taking part in awaydays with Library staff
- to the choice of November 18 2010 as the date for this years training awayday
- that library and community centre services (apart from the exception described in the report) to be closed on that day

7. Annual Complaints Report 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010 *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To present the fifth Annual Complaints Report of the former Adult & Community Services Department on complaints and representations for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

The Annual Report was attached as Appendix A to the report.

The Annual Report is a means by which information is provided on the complaints framework. It draws together information in relation to complaints that have been received and dealt with during the reporting period.

Complaints relating to Community Services come within the Authority's Corporate Complaints Framework which is also reported to the Performance Management Portfolio.

Issues for Consideration

The report offered an opportunity to demonstrate learning that had occurred from complaints and also consideration of trends emerging

through the year's activity within the Complaints Framework. The report included the types of complaints and representations received in 2009/10, outcomes of complaints, compliance with timescales, learning lessons and service improvement, overview of the effectiveness of the framework. The report provided an analysis of recorded complaints and representations and drew comparisons with the previous year. Performance was highlighted in a range of areas and practice issues were considered.

The report highlighted that 10 compliments had been recorded although it was pointed out that other favourable comments received were also kept on file. The report gave a summary of the 7 complaints received, which was fewer than received in the previous year. A number of these complaints related to the Parks and Countryside department, which in future years would be reported via the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods department. Appendix 4 to the report outlined the nature of the complaints received and explained the course of action taken to investigate these. One complainant had asked for a review by the Portfolio Holder and this had been undertaken by the previous Portfolio Holder.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased that the number of complaints had decreased and also to learn that favourable comments were also recorded in visitor books in the libraries, museums and art gallery.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder received the report.

8. Christmas and New Year Opening Arrangements 2010/11 – Libraries *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To request the approval of the Portfolio Holder for the proposed opening hours for the public library service over the Christmas/New Year period 2010/11.

Issues for Consideration

The single status agreement introduced within Hartlepool Council from April 2007 requires staff to normally take holiday over the period between Christmas and New Year. Library Services have previously remained open over this period. However following public consultation some adjustments to opening on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve were

made in 2009/10. Due to the days of the statutory holidays, the holiday calendar for 2010/11 is unusual and there are grounds for proposing libraries should close for the period between Christmas and New Year on this occasion.

The Portfolio Holder commented that closure of the libraries over the Christmas and New Year period would save money. She was assured that staff would have retained sufficient annual leave to comply with the closure of the premises.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the proposed opening and closure hours for the Christmas and New Year holiday period 2010/11.

The meeting concluded at 10.28 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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