

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Thursday 30 September 2021

at 10.00 am

in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Cranney, Falconer, Fleming, Little, Price, Prince and Richardson.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

3. **MINUTES**

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record in respect of the meeting held on 29 July 2021.

4. **BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

No items.

5. **KEY DECISIONS**

No items.

6. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

- 6.1 Heritage Strategy - Assistant Director (*Preventative and Community Based Services*)
6.2 Library Relocation - Assistant Director (*Preventative and Community Based Services*)

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Impact of Covid on Adult and Community Based Services - Update – *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Forthcoming meeting dates are set out below. All meetings will be held in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Thursday 21 October, 2021 at 10.00 am
Thursday 25 November, 2021 at 10.00 am
Thursday 20 January, 2022 at 10.00 am
Thursday 17 February, 2022 at 10.00 am
Thursday 17 March, 2022 at 10.00 am



ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

29 JULY 2021

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Tim Fleming (In the Chair)

Councillors: Gordon Cranney, Angela Falconer, Sue Little, Amy Prince and Carl Richardson.

Also present: Frank Harrison and Evelyn Leck.

Officers: Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services
Sarah Scarr, Heritage and Countryside Manager
Julian Heward, Communications and Marketing Team
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

6. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Darren Price.

7. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Prince declared a personal interest as an allotment holder.

8. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2021

Received.

7. Allotment Communication Strategy (*Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to provide details of the proposed Allotment Communication Strategy which will gather information to support the strategic Allotment Review.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services reported that the Committee on 12 March 2021 was informed of the need to develop a new Allotment Strategy to understand future priorities, identify service design and operations, and ensure access, inclusion and opportunity for all residents who are interested in being part of the allotment community. Communication with tenants would be a critical part of the ongoing process.

The overall aim of the proposed Allotment Strategy was to focus on the needs of the current user group and the wider community that the allotments serve. It will look to evolve service operations, encourage a wider demographic to access allotments within the Borough and to make the service more customer focused. It is hoped that by doing this, the service will be more inclusive and accessible, and create stronger links into communities.

The Communication Strategy has been developed to inform the process but also to enable effective two way communication with tenants, partners, associations and the wider community on a sustained basis. A copy of the strategy communication plan is provided as an appendix to the report.

Methods of consultation would include;

- Providing hard and electronic copies of questionnaires.
- Holding drop in sessions on allotment sites and at central locations to capture comments that don't fit within the pro-forma of a questionnaire.
- Direct approaches to voluntary and community groups, including Allotment Associations.

A social media campaign and series of press releases will inform people of the opportunity to take part in the discussions, along with information about events on site notice boards and via the e-newsletter. Individuals will be incentivised to take part with the offer of being entered into a prize draw.

The Assistant Director indicated that it was proposed that the consultation will take place from mid-August to the end of September with initial results shared in November. This consultation will feed into the review of the Allotment Service and be the starting point for the development of the Allotment Strategy.

Members indicated their support for the proposed strategy and welcomed the inclusive nature of the proposed consultation. A Member indicated that some sites had more than one association and was concerned that some could be missed. The Assistant Director assured Members that the aim of

the consultation would be to seek views from all allotment holders. Wherever associations existed the team would work with them. A Member also wished to see allotment holders involved in the decision making processes after the consultation. The Assistant Director stated that the strategy would be a two-way communication process with an aim of positive engagement. When that consultation had been carried out then officers would be able to look at the feedback and move on to develop the strategy and the governance arrangements.

A Member raised a question around the Briarfields Allotment Site and a proposed new road in the area. The Assistant Director stated that that scheme was not one in the control of this committee or department and she was not aware of anything related to the scheme that could be shared at this time.

There was some concern expressed by a Member of the public that the consultation should be based on two large open public events. The Assistant Director stated that such events would be significantly less inclusive than what was being proposed. The member of the public also highlighted that many allotment holders wouldn't have access to online consultation. The Assistant Director stated that the online consultation was only part of the proposed package of methods that were being used and all tenants would be directly sent a paper copy of the consultation document.

A recorded vote of the recommendations set out in the report was proposed by Councillor Little and seconded by Councillor Prince.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15 a recorded vote was taken as follows:

Those for: Councillors Cranney, Falconer, Fleming, Little, Prince and Richardson.

Those against: none.

Those abstaining: none.

The following decision was, therefore, approved unanimously.

Decision

That the Allotment Communication Strategy, as submitted, be approved.

8. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

A Member requested that the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee include a Covid-19 update setting out the current situation with a specific focus on the elderly and vulnerable whose services were managed by this Committee. The Director of Adult and Community Based Services indicated that the Health and Wellbeing Board had recently had a

presentation from the Director of Public Health on the current situation across Hartlepool which Members could refer to for information. The Director stated that she would submit a report to the next meeting which had, as requested, a focus on the services provided by the department.

The meeting concluded at 10.30 am.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 6 AUGUST 2021

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

30 September 2021



Report of: Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)

Subject: HERITAGE STRATEGY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with details of the proposed Heritage Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Heritage plays an important role in our town giving Hartlepool its identity, creating a unique sense of place, and contributing to our quality of life. It has an essential role in realising not only our town's economic potential and future growth, but also contributing to the wellbeing of residents as well as visitors to the area.

3.2 Defining heritage is difficult; it means different things to different people, spanning buildings, landscapes, objects, cultures, traditions and languages. No single service is responsible for heritage but it is dispersed across the department demonstrating the wide reaching influence that it has over our work. A strategy is required to draw together those strands of work with a heritage focus in order to acknowledge what has already been achieved, alongside setting the scene for future work programmes.

3.3 The impact of heritage is well researched. Each year Historic England publish 'Heritage Counts' on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum. The information drawn together provides evidence of the value of heritage to our economy, society and environment. This snapshot of information from the 2020 documents, is a pertinent reminder of the far reaching impact it has on us as a society.

- 3.4 Foremost, local heritage is an important source of pride amongst two-thirds of people in England. A YouGov survey of 1,731 adults found that 66% agree with the statement that ‘Historic buildings are a source of pride in the local area where I live’ (YouGov b, 2018).
- 3.5 It can also be a vehicle for successful place-based wellbeing policies in deprived and socially fragmented areas, shaping a common sense of belonging and collective identity. Studies on the effect of attachment (with the local neighbourhood and wider place of residence) on health, showed it has significant implications for psychological health, supporting identity reinforcement, which is particularly important for newcomers, migrants and young people in terms of emotional security (Bonaiuto et al., 2002, 2006).
- 3.6 Our surroundings can strongly influence our wellbeing and this has been more apparent than ever over the past year as restrictions have meant that people have spent more time in their local areas. Urban parks, including historic parks, are critical for the social lives of children and families. Urban parks build emotional wellbeing for children and families (Hordyk et al., 2015) and also facilitate belonging, social relationships and the creation of positive memories (Peters et al., 2016; Rishbeth and Powell, 2013).
- 3.7 Alongside the positive role heritage plays in our individual lives, it is increasingly understood that our heritage can bring significant economic benefits. In England for every £1 of gross value added (GVA) directly generated, an additional £1.50 of GVA is supported in the wider economy. This translates into a total heritage GVA of £36.6billion. The north east sees £1.6billion of this with heritage supporting 24,795 jobs and creating an environment which attracted 11million visitors in 2019.
- 3.8 Developing a strategy will ensure that all of the positive outcomes that heritage can support will be brought together in a positive way. This enables them to be monitored to ensure that the maximum value is being produced by those heritage assets across the town.

4. LOCAL POSITION

- 4.1 Hartlepool boasts 207 Listed Buildings, 182 Locally Listed Buildings, 8 Scheduled Monuments, 1 Registered Park and Garden, 1 Scheduled Wreck and 8 Conservation Areas.
- 4.2 Cultural spaces that form part of the local heritage include the Borough Hall, the Community Hubs and Archives, Elephant Rock Arena, Hartlepool Art Gallery, Heugh Gun Battery, Museum of Hartlepool, the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Sir William Gray House and the Town Hall Theatre, with many of these spaces having been redeveloped recently or having work planned for the coming years.

- 4.3 Hartlepool also has a wide range of sculptures and public works of art, numerous cemeteries, parks and open spaces, a significant museum collection and forms part of a number of heritage trails including the English Coastal Path and the recently developed Way of St Hild as well as hosting the Headland Heritage Trail.

5. PROPOSED STRATEGY

- 5.1 In formulating the Heritage Strategy it is helpful to consider three key issues,
1. Preservation – the current foundation of our work on heritage
 2. Priorities – what are the key events, activities and issues
 3. People – how we will acknowledge significant individuals from the past and engage people with our work now and in the future.

5.2 Preservation

A wealth of on-going work and individual projects highlight the rich heritage in Hartlepool. A starting point for the strategy will be to map some of that information, providing the basis on which the strategy will build.

Of particular interest are the ongoing projects which are actively engaging residents in heritage at this moment in time. These include,

5.2.1 Hartlepool Art Gallery

Hartlepool Art Gallery provides a space for regular exhibitions which both inform and challenge visitor's cultural perceptions. It regularly stages displays that provide an opportunity to consider the heritage of Hartlepool. For example in 2020 the 'Century' exhibition celebrated 100 years of Hartlepool's art, culture and history. Curated by multi award-winning artist Dr Narbi Price it presented the Museum Service's world-class collection of artworks, bringing together pieces from the 19th century, through the 20th, all the way up to 2020.

5.2.2 Hartlepool Museum

The Museum of Hartlepool tells the story of a past which is packed with exciting and interesting people. It covers 5,000 years of history, from the Bronze Age, to Hartlepool's oldest known man, to one of the darkest and most significant days in the town's history, The Bombardment of the Hartlepoons in 1914.

5.2.3 Borough Hall

Located in Middlegate Street in the historic Headland area of Hartlepool, the Borough Hall was opened in 1866. The central arch leads into what was formerly the Market Hall. In 1926 it was converted into a Council Chamber for Hartlepool and a dance hall with a capacity for 2,000 people. Over the last almost 100 years it has changed little in terms of its design but greatly in terms of its function currently being an entertainment venue with meeting rooms, offices, a library and a wedding venue.

5.2.4 Town Hall Theatre

Built in 1897, the Town Hall Theatre hosts a diverse range of professional and non-professional performing arts, including comedy, drama, children's theatre and music.

5.2.5 Church Street Revival

In October 2017 the National Lottery Heritage Fund gave the Council permission to start the Townscape Heritage Scheme in Church Street Conservation Area. The project was initially designed to run for three years but has been extended for a further two until October 2022.

The project has delivered a public realm scheme concentrated on Church Square creating a space which can be utilised for public events, enhancing the setting of the listed buildings in the area and improving connectivity with the surrounding streets.

The final year will see the implementation of a buildings grant scheme and the continued provision of a programme of activities which engage with residents and visitors, by celebrating the history of the street, and promoting traditional building skills.

5.2.6 Seascapes

SeaScapes covers the Magnesian Limestone Coast from South of the River Tyne to the River Tees. The boundary runs from the England Coast Path out to 6 nautical miles and is united by unique geology, the natural environment and a shared cultural heritage. The project aims to better protect and celebrate this heritage-rich and distinctive coastline. £5m of funding will be spent over four years to 2024 delivering a project which will see local people, communities and visitors to the area benefit from;

- improved access to the coast/sea,
- greater interpretation,
- volunteering and training opportunities,
- events and activities to deepen understanding of the natural environment,
- opportunities to take part in physical activities on the water or beneath the waves, and
- a community grants scheme to help invigorate local regeneration whilst supporting the vision of Seascapes.

5.2.7 Headland Heritage Strategy

The Headland Heritage Strategy will identify a plan to develop the key heritage assets of the area in a way that will make them self-sustaining so they can be safeguarded for the future.

The strategy is in two parts:

1. An initial document that considers the potential and opportunities for the heritage of the Headland, agreed by the Regeneration Committee in February 2020.
2. An Action Plan developed through partnership working that sets out a series of short, medium and long term actions that respond to the

opportunities identified in part one of the strategy. These will be developed and delivered over a one to ten year period.

The development and delivery of the Action Plan will see officers work closely with key community representatives on the Headland to draw together knowledge, experience and skills in order to produce a realistic and deliverable programme of work which will closely reflect and needs and the aspirations of residents and more widely visitors to the area.

5.2.8 Family and Local History Centre

Community Hub Central holds an extensive selection of Local and Family History resources which has been built up over the years through purchase, donations and gathering and binding of resources. Plans are underway to create a Local and Family History Centre in Sir William Gray House which will be launched in November 2021. This will be promoted across all of the local history centres in the North East letting people know about the resources that are held. Relationships will be developed with other centres and groups and it will be available for school visits.

This opportunity provides a chance to develop a programme including talks, exhibitions and classes responding to trends, events and anniversaries. The staff who will work in the centre will have had extensive training in the area of Family and Local History and will be up to date with the ever changing guidelines surrounding the resources.

5.3 Priorities

Looking to the future the calendar covers both events and the development of key sites and strategies which will showcase Hartlepool's heritage including:

- 5.3.1 Shades; work will be carried out in 2021 to make the building watertight and sound. This will lay the ground work for the eventual restoration of the property to its former glory.
- 5.3.2 Lindisfarne Gospels; linking to the display in Newcastle in 2022, this is a chance to celebrate the Anglo-Saxon history of Hartlepool.
- 5.3.3 Tall Ships; returning to Hartlepool in 2023, this is an opportunity to celebrate the maritime heritage of the area.
- 5.3.4 Borough Hall; the project will see the building restored and reimagined in 2022/23 to create a venue which meets the needs of today's residents and visitors.
- 5.3.5 Town Hall Theatre; a key space in the centre of Hartlepool, exploring investment as part of future regeneration plans will see the building renovated to cater for the current market.
- 5.3.6 Hartlepool Art Gallery; it is proposed that gallery spaces will be re-ordered and revitalised in future regeneration plans.

5.3.7 Museum of Hartlepool; an options appraisal will be carried out in 2021/22 in order to consider the future imagining of the museum offer.

5.3.8 Destination Management Strategy; the development of a Destination Management Strategy for Hartlepool will assist in building a brand and an identity for Hartlepool. This will be influenced by the tourism offer, much of which links to the heritage of the town.

5.4 **People**

People are central to the successful delivery of a heritage strategy. The connection between individuals and heritage assets can bring to life not just a place or a building, but objects and stories, which help us better understand the past. In developing a strategy it is important to include:

5.4.1 The opportunity for communities to speak. Listening to the voices of residents and visitors, and understanding what is important to them and will ensure the strategy is relevant and reflects our community as we know it today.

5.4.2 Acknowledge the role of volunteers and the voluntary sector. A key area of participation in heritage is volunteering. It is essential that we recognise and support the individuals and organisations who play such an important role in managing and facilitating access to heritage assets, particularly those in the voluntary sector.

5.4.3 Recognising significant individuals commemorates those who have contributed to building our town in the past. It is clear that a number of citizens of Hartlepool have not only shaped the town as it is known today, but also made a much wider contribution to society. Whilst a number are recognised through street names, statues, parks and buildings others have gone unsung.

5.4.4 The significance and symbolism of statues and other assets erected in the past may not reflect the values or perspectives of people today. It is, therefore, important to acknowledge this in any future work and carefully consider how individuals should be remembered, ensuring that this is done in a way which is open, accessible and viable. To this end the strategy will need to consider the most appropriate way to deliver such work, be it through a permanent scheme such as blue plaques or a heritage trail, or more flexible means such as exhibitions in the Museum of Hartlepool.

A request has been received from Cllr Riddle for the Committee to consider the implementation of a Hartlepool Blue Plaque Scheme. Advice from officers is that this cannot be delivered within existing financial or staffing resources although it should be noted that other means of commemorating significant individuals within Hartlepool's history and heritage are in place and opportunities to develop this work further are being explored. Further detail regarding a Blue Plaque Scheme is attached as Appendix 1. If members of the Committee wish to support the proposal for a Hartlepool

Blue Plaque Scheme, additional funding would need to be identified to enable this to proceed.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The development of a strategy will include widespread consultation with residents, visitors and key partner organisations to ensure that it fairly represents the heritage of Hartlepool.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal considerations.

8. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The consultation and subsequent Heritage Strategy will be delivered within existing budgets.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There is a risk for the Council that the proposed Heritage Strategy will not be reflective of the needs and aspirations of the community without the involvement of those parties in the process.

10. STAFFING

- 10.1 The consultation will be delivered within existing staffing resources, and the resulting Strategy will also need to be deliverable within existing resources unless further opportunities for investment in heritage are identified.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 A number of assets which would be included in the Heritage Strategy are in council ownership. Providing the context of how they interact with other heritage assets in Hartlepool will not only assist with understanding their significance but also can be used to support funding bids for further development.

12. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 12.1 Heritage assets provide benefits through increasing access to opportunities for all generations to learn and interact which has proven benefits to health and wellbeing. The Strategy will provide a chance for wider engagement

with the community to understand how the Department can be more responsive to their needs and consider opportunities for different ways in which the service can be accessed.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 Accessibility and inclusion will be a key consideration of the Strategy ensuring that it is available for all who wish to take part.

14. RECOMMENDATION

- 14.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the current work ongoing within this area and support the development of a Heritage Strategy.

15. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 15.1 A Heritage Strategy will provide a framework to better manage, interpret and acknowledge the rich and varied heritage found in Hartlepool.

16. CONTACT OFFICER

Gemma Ptak
Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)
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Blue Plaque Scheme

English Heritage has run the London blue plaque scheme since 1986, when it had already been in existence for over 120 years. Before that it was run by three bodies in succession - the (Royal) Society of Arts, the London County Council and the Greater London Council. Outside of London similar plaque schemes are run by local councils, civic societies and other organisations. These are often based on guidelines set by English Heritage. Such schemes primarily celebrate the lives of prominent individuals but can be used to acknowledge significant events, for example the National Transport Trust's Red Wheel heritage plaque scheme highlights the most important sites of transport heritage.

Background

Developing a scheme

English Heritage provide guidance for those considering developing their own blue plaque scheme. They note that, 'Effective plaques are the result of a process of involved and detailed work, which will often be time-consuming and may also be costly. This reflects the fact that they are the product of joint effort.' They go on to provide a list of parties who contribute to the process of erecting a plaque, these include:

- an individual or organisation who provides funding,
- an initial proposer of the person commemorated,
- a researcher or multiple researchers to find detailed information on the individual, find and select a building for the plaque and compose an inscription,
- a person who handles the administration,
- the owner of a building who provides consent for the works,
- a representative of the local planning authority, who is consulted, and in some instances processes approvals for the installation, and
- a designer, manufacturer, and a contractor responsible for the plaque's installation.

The choice of people or events to commemorate are usually informed by a selection criteria and/or guidelines. English Heritage suggest that these will,

- provide a framework for the fair and consistent consideration of nominations,
- set out the parameters of the plaque scheme,
- define what kind of proposals are eligible for consideration, what is and is not possible, and
- specify the requirements for commemoration.

Practical issues

The installation of a plaque on a structure may potentially require planning permission and should the property be listed, listed building consent. Further to this there would need to be an agreement in place with the owner regarding access for both the installation and upkeep of such a plaque.

It should be noted the guidance provided by English Heritage focuses particularly on the installation of plaques on buildings, this is particularly relevant where properties which individuals were strongly linked to have been lost. It notes that plaques placed in the ground or on other structures, such as posts are commemorative signs and should be guided by a separate set of principles.

Commemorating individuals in Hartlepool

Although no formal system is in place there are various ways in which the Council currently recognises significant individuals in Hartlepool. This falls within the English Heritage guidance which suggests that there are a number of alternative ways in which individuals can be commemorated such as pavement plaques, statues and other sculptural interpretation, the founding of historic house museums, the creation of trails, podcast tours and exhibitions, and the awarding of names to streets, and buildings.

It is worth noting that key individuals in the town's history, Ralph Ward Jackson and William Grey are commemorated with statues in Church Street and Church Square. In addition the names of buildings and streets across the town celebrate significant individuals. Further to this there are some discrete projects which also do this, including;

Local List

The Local List

(https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/download/30/listed_buildings) identifies buildings, structures, parks, gardens and open spaces in Hartlepool which are thought to be of special local architectural or historic interest. Members of the public and local groups were invited to nominate entries for the local list with officers completing research and putting forward other significant buildings. Initially compiled in 2012 the criteria for nomination includes,

- Historic interest: does it relate to an important aspect of local, social, economic, cultural, religious or political history; does it have an historic association with an important local feature?
- Historic association: does it have close associations with famous local people (must be well documented); does it relate closely to any statutorily protected structure or site?

This provides an opportunity to acknowledge individuals and events who have a close connection with a particular building or site.

Headland Story Trail

The Headland Story Trail is a series of information posts which recount events and historical information about the area. Some posts have information celebrating significant individuals, for example, the post on Cliff Terrace notes Christian Nielsen, the Mayor of Hartlepool from 1870 – 71 lived at 15 Cliff Terrace, and the one on Town Wall lists those individuals who have won life boat gallantry medals.

Church Street Trail

A walking trail for Church Street is currently under development and will be launched in September as part of the Heritage Open Days weekend. The website will provide information on properties and significant individuals in the street. Should this prove successful an extension of the site will be investigated to cover other parts of Hartlepool however this would be reliant on funding and staff resources to support such a project.

Local Studies Centre

The development of the Local Studies Centre in Sir William Gray House will provide an opportunities for residents to access further information on prominent individuals from the Borough and may offer a chance in the future to consider ways in which their lives can be acknowledge.

It is noted that there is not a single overarching point at which someone could access information on individuals and be directed to the above information however this may be something which is facilitated through the development of the Local Studies Centre.

Resources

The guidance notes that volunteers may be involved in both the nomination process and researching individuals however funding and resources would need to be sourced to support the administration and implementation of a scheme. This would not only include the initial start-up costs but the ongoing awareness raising and potential maintenance that would be required.

Risk

The lack of resources could prove a challenge in delivering any scheme, particularly should the number of nominations be more than anticipated. This may result in a challenge in delivering a comprehensive scheme which fairly represents all parts of society in Hartlepool.

It is the nature of such a scheme that it is likely that the building or spaces used would be in private ownership. There would be a need to secure this and then come to an agreement with the owners regarding on-going maintenance, which may include potential future access to repair or replace damaged plaques. Such works could prove difficult, particularly where owners change.

Conclusion

There are already a number of mechanisms in place which acknowledge both significant individuals in the history of Hartlepool and notable events. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is no single point to access this information it is considered that there is an opportunity in the medium term in developing the Local Studies Centre to consider raising the profile of and access to this information.

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

30 September 2021



Report of: Assistant Director - Preventative and Community Based Services

Subject: LIBRARY RELOCATION

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for the relocation of Throston Library to Throston Youth Centre.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Throston Library closed in March 2020 in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. As lockdown measures have eased it has not been possible to reopen Throston Library due to its size and the associated inability to manage safe COVID arrangements. During the most recent easing of lockdown measures the need to utilise the space for staff accommodation and children's services functions has meant there has been a delay in reopening.

3.2 Prior to the restrictions experienced as a result of COVID, Throston Library has been under ongoing review due to a budget shortfall of £25,000. This resulted from a decision of Finance and Policy Committee in December 2016 regarding branch library closures. The recurring revenue pressure has not been addressed as work has continued to identify an alternative solutions to manage the budget deficit without loss of the library offer in the area.

3.3 The most recent condition survey for Throston Library recommends an investment of £249,000 to ensure the building is maintained and able to operate safely. There is no available budget for this work to be progressed.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Throston Library had 426 active borrowers in 2020 (actively loaned a book within a 12 month period) which was a reduction of almost 20% compared to 520 active borrowers in 2015. 4% of active borrowers are over 65 years of age and the main users of Throston Library are junior members accessing the library from Springwell School during the school day and the Rhyme Time sessions for pre-school children.
- 4.2 Throston Library is currently open 18 hours per week across three days; Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. An average of 85 people per week access the library for programmed activity (e.g. Rhyme Time) and People's Network access (2 computers available) without actively borrowing books.
- 4.3 There has been an 800% increase in users of Borrowbox (online library) since COVID which is a significant shift in how some people use the library service, partly through necessity but for many people as a preference. The use of digital and audio books remains high and less people are returning to building based services to borrow books. In terms of access there has been an increase in vulnerable and older adults using the Home Library Service and the Mobile Library provides a click and collect service which has been operating at Throston whilst the library has been closed. There also remains a building based library offer in Community Hub Central, Community Hub South, Community Hub North (West View Advice and Resource Centre), Headland Branch Library and Seaton Branch Library providing a significant offer library for residents.
- 4.4 Throston Youth Centre is not actively used during the day with most engagement taking place on an evening. As a result there is space available to host a library offer with the same amount of stock that is currently available at Throston Library without other services being adversely affected. Throston Youth Centre is 0.7miles from the existing library and can accommodate the same hours of operation and existing programme of activity. There are also opportunities for a more collaborative and community focused way of working that will potentially increase and enhance the offer.
- 4.5 Catcote School are looking for premises to expand their offer. Throston has been identified as a potential solution and, pending approval of relocation of the library, a full feasibility study will be conducted providing an opportunity for the asset to be transferred to Catcote School on a long term arrangement.
- 4.6 It is proposed that the relocation of Throston is progressed as soon as possible. This will enable reopening to the community as well as management of ongoing risks in relation to the revenue budget, building maintenance and long term use of the building. As the library will not close under this proposal, but will instead be relocated within a close distance the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) do not require full public consultation to be conducted. However, user engagement is being undertaken to ensure the transition is well communicated and takes on board the views and aspirations of active borrowers / users.

- 4.7 Letters have been sent to all current users of the library explaining the proposal and inviting views. Two drop in sessions will take place on 16 and 17 September and there is also an online survey. A representative from Catcote School will attend both sessions to answer any questions regarding plans for the current building should the move proceed. A summary of the feedback received from users will be presented to the Committee.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is a risk that the public will have negative views about the proposed relocation of the library however this will be mitigated with a robust communication and engagement exercise providing opportunity for all active users to contribute and a like for like library offer being provided from the new location.
- 5.2 If a more sustainable model such as co-location with the Youth Centre is not progressed there is a risk to the longer term viability of a library provision in Throston.
- 5.3 The opportunity for Catcote School to take on the current building may be lost if the relocation cannot be progressed.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 If an alternative operating model is not progressed there remains an ongoing revenue pressure of £25,000 per year which is not sustainable in the context of the Council's financial position.
- 6.2 If an alternative operating model is not progressed there remains a £249,000 capital investment pressure to maintain the asset. If the asset was transfer to Catcote School it would be transferred in its current condition with a commitment from the school to invest.
- 6.3 There will be no addition financial pressures to accommodate Throston Library within Throston Youth Centre and resources will be shared / maximised.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 sets out a requirement for a 12 week public consultation before a library can be closed. This is not relevant for relocation and this has been confirmed through discussions with DCMS based on the distance of relocation site.

7.2 In the interests of ensuring a positive transition, reassuring users and preventing public concern, a plan of communication and engagement is in place as outlined in sections 4.6 and 4.7.

7.3 A further consultation and communication exercise will take place during the next six months as part of the Community Hub Strategy development, which is inclusive of the library offer. This will still consider the whole library offer, however the issue relating to Throston Library is in need of more urgent consideration.

7.4 Ward members have had an informal briefing regarding the proposed relocation and have been invited to view the proposed new premises.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 As outlined in 7.1 there are no legal considerations in relation to relocation.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

9.1 Libraries provide positive opportunities for children and families and provide services that aim to enhance people's lives and address inequality. Throston will continue to offer opportunities of this nature as part of the overall offer.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 Access and inclusion will be a critical consideration as part of the plan to relocate. Should the move have an impact on access for users we will discuss opportunities for them to continue to access the services they require and make any reasonable adjustments that are required.

10.2 There will be opportunities to attract new library users by working collaboratively with key stakeholders and communities.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 There are no implications for existing staff who will be relocated with the service.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 The current Throston Library building will be vacated if the relocation is approved, and work will be progressed to support Catcote School to utilise the asset on a long term arrangement.

12.2 There will be increased use of Throston Youth Centre.

13. RECOMMENDATION

- 13.1 It is recommended that the Adult & Community Based Services Committee:
- approve the proposal to relocate Throston Library to Throston Youth Centre; and
 - agree that officers can engage further with Catcote School so that more detailed feasibility work can be undertaken, which will secure to long term use of the current Throston Library building.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To provide a solution to the ongoing financial pressure associated with the continued operation of Throston Library whilst enabling a local library offer to be maintained for residents.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1 Community Hub Report, Finance and Policy Committee, December 2016
- 15.2 Schools Capital Work Programme Report, Children's Services Committee, March 2021

16. CONTACT OFFICER

- 16.1 Gemma Ptak
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ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

30 September 2021



Report of: DIRECTOR OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Subject: IMPACT OF COVID ON ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES - UPDATE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information; no decision required.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide members of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee with an update on the continued impact of the COVID pandemic within the Adult and Community Based Services department.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As reported to Adult and Community Based Services Committee in October 2020 the pandemic had a significant impact across all services delivered and commissioned by the Council.
- 3.2 A wide range of services were affected by the pandemic and associated lockdown, and although restrictions have eased, many services continue to be impacted.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 A presentation will be shared with members of the Committee to update on:
- current COVID case numbers;
 - how services continue to be impacted by the COVID pandemic; and
 - expected longer term implications / challenges.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are ongoing service risks in relation to COVID that are being managed through risk mitigation plans and business continuity plans. These will be covered in the presentation and include loss of income and workforce issues.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are significant financial considerations associated with the impact of COVID on Adult and Community Based Services, predominantly related to loss of income in Preventative and Community Based Services.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal considerations identified in relation to this report.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications specifically associated with this report.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity considerations specifically associated with this report.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no staffing considerations specifically associated with this report.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations specifically associated with this report.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 It is recommended that members of the Committee note the information presented regarding the continued impact of COVID19 within Adult and Community Based Services.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To ensure that members are kept informed about the impacts of COVID on services that fall within the remit of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

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