

Ref:

Called in

Yes/No

**THE THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION OF CABINET**

Name of Cabinet Member:

Councillor Lin Fairbrass

Relevant Portfolio:

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Services

Date of Decision:

08 September 2016

Subject:

Creating a Resilient Future for Thanet's Museums

Key Decision

Yes

In Forward Plan

Yes

Brief summary of matter:

To update the Council about the current situation of the Council's Museums and recommend applying for funding to undertake a strategic review.

Decision made:

Cabinet agreed the following:

1. To complete an initial, and any necessary subsequent applications, for up to £250,000 funding from Heritage Lottery Fund through the Resilient Heritage programme in order to undertake a full strategic review of museums, including feasibility studies, business planning, legal advice, and governance reviews;
2. To pursue the potential of establishing a new museum on the Tudor House site incorporating the collections from both current sites of the Margate Museum, and subject to a fully costed business case agrees to the establishment of the same;
3. To establish the Dickens House Museum as a formal Trust and register this with the Charity Commission;
4. To seek the transfer of the Joyce Smith bequest into the new Trust, and seek agreement with the Dickens House Fellowship to utilise the funds in line with the bequest to support the full costs of operating the museum, backlog maintenance, and any necessary feasibility work;
5. To take this opportunity to formally acknowledge and thank volunteers across Thanet whose hard work and dedication are continuing to support the museums.

Reasons for decision:

Applying for this funding will allow the Council to:

- Develop a clear vision for the museums and to ensure that the Council's museum collections are best protected in the future, and that museums contribute to strategies

and plans in the areas of regeneration, tourism, community development, and economic development.

- Undertake a full governance review of each of the museum organisations to reduce ongoing liabilities.
- Cover the Council's costs for undertaking a strategic review by funding the project management post and a wide range of consultancy fees including feasibility studies, structural engineering surveys, legal advice, and training for staff and volunteers.

The only disadvantage is the requirement of 5% match funding. However this can be sourced from within the museums and Community Services budget.

Alternatives considered and why rejected:

Not to apply for funding and carry on as at present. This was rejected as there are no internal resources to undertake this review, and the Council would continue to be open to the liabilities of its current situation.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive Member who has been consulted and of any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee:

None

Author and date of Officer report:

Abigail Raymond, Head of Built Environment

Background papers

Creating a Resilient Future for Thanet's Museums

Statement if decision is an urgent one and therefore not subject to call-in:

None

Last date for call in: 19 September 2016