

Subject:	Contract Review – Whitaker Park Museum	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	5 th September 2012
Report of:	Head of Health Housing & Regeneration	Portfolio Holder:	Regeneration Tourism & Leisure
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Community Impact Assessment:	Required: Yes	Attached:	Yes
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required: No	Attached:	No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That the contents of this report be noted.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To update Members on the progress of the Council's Corporate Projects.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- **A clean and green Rossendale** – creating a better environment for all.
- **A healthy and successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy.
- **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 In June 2012 Cabinet approved a process to begin work to consider the current management arrangements for Rossendale Museum and to develop options for potential cost savings.

5.2 Whitaker Park Museum currently opens to the public for 17.5 hours per week Tues-Thurs, Sat, Sun 1300-1630 and is managed by Lancashire County Council's Museum Service and is budgeted at an annual cost of £106,930.

5.3 Officers have met with both officers from Lancashire County Council who provide the services on behalf of Rossendale Borough Council and members of the Friends of Whitaker Park Museum to begin discussions about potential areas for cost savings, how the future options may be developed, who would be included in the consultation stages and how the consultation would be undertaken.

5.4 Following these discussions it has been suggested that the consultation should include Lancashire County Council, the Friends of Whitaker Park Museum, local schools, the Rossendale Tourism & Heritage Group, other local museums alongside members of the wider general public.

5.5 Consultation will be in the form of meetings and information provided to the organisations in

5.4 and information directly available at the Museum and at the local library, information on the Council's website, information through Rossendale Free Press and through Rossendale's Citizens Panel.

5.6 The range of options is still being developed but Lancashire County Council have been clear that any funding reduction would result in the Museum being closed to the public for longer periods and have indicated that they would be unable to continue opening the Museum if the funding reduced below £52,000.

5.7 Other options under consideration are offering the opportunity for community groups, voluntary groups and social enterprise organisations to become involved in providing or assisting with the operational management of the Museum.

5.8 A report on the outcomes of the consultation and options will be presented to the November meeting of this Cabinet.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 Financial matters are noted in the report. Members will also be aware of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy target of savings in excess of £1m pa.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 Any legal implications are commented on in the body of the report.

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard in the exercising of its functions to three considerations. The need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The amount of regard that is "due" is set out in the Act and will depend on the circumstances of the case.

8.2 Under the general equality duty there is a requirement to engage with people with protected characteristics and to have an adequate evidence base for Council decision-making. The Council is under a Duty to consult representatives of a wide range of local people, this should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

9.1 Lancashire County Council, Friends of Whitaker Park Museum

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Whilst the museum is a valued asset for the Borough there remains scope to review the operational costs to achieve savings to contribute to the requirements of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.