

Agenda Item No. 7(g)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

14 March 2017

Report of the Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Communities

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO OPENING HOURS AT BUXTON MUSEUM
AND ART GALLERY (HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES)**

- (1) **Purpose of Report** To seek Cabinet approval to undertake a six week public consultation on a proposal for reduced opening hours at Buxton Museum and Art Gallery. Dependent on the outcome of the consultation and further Cabinet consideration, it may be appropriate, in due course, to consider proposals for a revised staffing structure reflecting any changes in hours that are agreed.
- (2) **Information and Analysis** At its meeting on 24 January 2017, Cabinet agreed the Revenue Budget for 2017-18 and the Five Year Financial Plan for the period 2017-18 to 2021-22, which identified a range of budget reductions through to 2022. Libraries and Heritage services were one of the areas identified for significant savings and in order to achieve part of these savings it is proposed to consult with the public about possible changes to the opening hours at Buxton Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG). Once the consultation process has been concluded a further report will be presented to Cabinet to consider the outcome of the consultation and, potentially, to consider proposals for revised opening hours and a proposed staffing structure, which may realise a saving of up to £30,000 from the BMAG budget.

Currently, BMAG is open five days a week for a total of 39.5 hours, it is also open between 10.30am to 5pm every Sunday and bank holidays from Easter to the end of September to enable greater access to local residents and visitors to Buxton.

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9.30am to 5.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am to 5.30pm
Thursday	9.30am to 5.30pm
Friday	9.30am to 5.30pm
Saturday	9.30am to 5pm

It is proposed to undertake a public consultation exercise over a proposed reduction to the normal opening hours at BMAG from 39.5 to 35 hours a week, with later opening and earlier closures, a reduction of approximately 12%. It is proposed to maintain Sunday and bank holiday opening from Easter to the end of September but to reduce the number of hours from six and a half to four with the museum opening 12pm to 4pm. If alternative opening hours proposals arise as part of the consultation process they will also be considered.

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	10am to 5pm
Wednesday	10am to 5pm
Thursday	10am to 5pm
Friday	10am to 5pm
Saturday	10am to 5pm

The proposed reduction in opening hours is mitigated by the significant improvements that have been and continue to be made as part of the Collections in the Landscape (CITL) programme, supported by Heritage Lottery Funding, this will increase access to a wide range of the museum's collections. The improved exhibitions will include 15% more objects on display with more information available about them. These and even more items in the collection will also be available through the development of innovative digital access, available through smart phones, tablets and computers. The CITL programme will increase the accessibility of the collections held at BMAG to a worldwide audience and, even when the building is closed, the digital access remains available 24/7. BMAG aspires to provide an online service that maximises the resources available and will continue to digitise material relating to its collections and make them accessible.

In line with the Council's commitment to transparent decision making and to ensure that all those affected have the opportunity to comment on any proposed change, it is proposed that the Council undertakes a period of consultation to:

- Set out the financial context and challenges within which decisions on future service delivery need to be made.
- Share and explore the opening hours options outlined above.
- Receive feedback on the proposed reduction and the potential impact of the options.

The Council's existing engagement mechanisms will be used to support the process to ensure that input from service users and non-users is secured as far as possible and that all groups are provided with the best opportunities for input. On-line surveys, social media and face to face meetings may also form part of this process.

The feedback received will then be analysed as to the proposed reduction in hours. The consultation, and the impact analysis referred to below, will help to identify affected individuals, stakeholders and communities, to explore issues in more detail, potential impact, scope for refinement, and opportunities for mitigation of impact, etc. If alternative proposals arise as part of the consultation process they will also be considered as part of the analysis.

An Equality Impact Analysis will be undertaken in parallel with the above engagement process and the conclusions reported to Cabinet alongside the consultation analysis.

An outline timetable for the above process is set out below:

- April to June 2017 consultation with the public.
- July to August 2017 evaluation of the results and preparation of options.
- September 2017 Cabinet report.

The September 2017 Cabinet report will further consider any changes to the opening hours at BMAG and, subject to the outcome of consultation, may also include proposals for a revised staffing structure were any changes to be agreed. The potential staffing implications of any reduction in opening hours would then also be the subject of formal consultations with individual employees and the Trade Unions in accordance with the Council's policies and statutory requirements.

(3) **Financial Considerations** Changes to opening hours and the anticipated staffing changes are intended to achieve savings of approximately £30,000 but a full year's saving will not be made until 2018-19.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The Council has specific duty in relation to the Equality Act 2010 which states the Council should give 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and fostering good relations, in the exercising of its functions. This need for 'due regard' specifically applies to nine protected characteristics set out in the Act, including age and disability. An Equality Impact Analysis will consider these issues and will form part of the final report to Cabinet.

(5) **Human Resources Considerations** Staff will be consulted as stakeholders in relation to the provision of services at BMAG and subject to the outcome of the public consultation, any staffing implications will be the subject of a separate consultation with the staff and the Trade Unions.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

- (6) **Key Decision** No.
- (7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? No.
- (8) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Communities Department. Officer contact details – Don Gibbs, extension 36572.
- (9) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That Cabinet approves that:
- 9.1 A six week public consultation on options for revised opening hours at Buxton Museum and Art Gallery is undertaken.
- 9.2 The results of the consultation and an Equality Impact Analysis are presented to a future meeting of Cabinet prior to any decision being made as to changes to the opening hours at Buxton Museum and Art Gallery.
- 9.3 Subject to the outcome of the consultation and Cabinet's decision, proposals for a revised staffing structure at Buxton Museum and Art Gallery are developed and reported to Cabinet for consideration.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Communities