



THE LONDON BOROUGH

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Environment and Community Services

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Mrs G Hughes
Perry Hall Primary School
Perry Hall Road
Orpington
Kent
BR6 0EF

21st January 2015

Dear Mrs Hughes

RE: The Priory Museum – Petition

Thank you for your letter of the 4th December 2014 and the accompanying petition.

I should start my response by saying that the Council remains committed to protecting and conserving heritage across the borough and no formal proposals or decisions have yet been taken over the future of the museum. Consultation has only recently just concluded on the Council's budget, with more than £60 million needing to be saved from a net budget of £206 million, with difficult decisions still to be made. The Council has been consulting residents on their views and priorities via an on line survey, the results of which now need to be considered against the competing service priorities that the Council has to deliver.

The Council must look at the future of every Council service as part of this, which includes the museum service. Decisions are likely to be taken in the New Year, and we will continue to keep residents and interested parties informed.

In 2013 extensive public consultation was undertaken to inform both the development of the Heritage Lottery Fund museum bid, and to assess the quality of the existing museum. The public response showed that the current museum offer is unsatisfactory. Common complaints were the lack of public toilets, the difficult to access location, the lack of welcome and way finding, and the poor standard of exhibitions. The number of visits has been consistently low

One Idea arising from this work is to move the Museum to Bromley Central Library where it can more easily be accessed by residents, and benefit from the library's public facilities and resources. The Central Library currently receives 200,000



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Executive Director of Environment and Community Services, Nigel Davies.



The Government Standard

visitors each year, ten times more than the museum. Additionally, moving the museum to the library will complement the local studies and archives service located there. A design scheme has been developed for high quality museum exhibitions in Central Library should the decision be taken to move the museum from its current location. This will enable more museum artefact's to be viewed by a greater number of people. I am anticipating that this option will be considered at the Renewal and Recreation Committee on the 29th January 2015.

I hope that you will accept that we have spent some considerable time on discussing with interested parties the options around the future of the Museum in conjunction with the more generic survey on service preferences, all of which have been designed to assist in the decision making process around service priorities that we are having to engage in at this time. For the time being the future of the Priory building remains open to suggestion.

If you are not satisfied with this response, and as there are more than 500 validated signatures on your petition, under the Council's Petition Scheme you can request to address a meeting of full Council for five minutes in support of your case. The next meeting of full Council will be held on 23rd February 2015 starting at 7pm and Graham Walton, Democratic Services Manager, is the lead officer to contact (020 8461 7743) if you would like the opportunity to address this meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nigel Davies
Executive Director of Environment and Community Services