

EXECUTIVE

10th June 2015

(A) QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FOR ORAL REPLY

1. From Michael Meekums, Bromley Museum Volunteer Co-ordinator

Bromley Museum staff have opened the Poverest Roman Bath House to the public every year since it was excavated in the 1970s, and it will be open to the public on 25th July this year. Will the Bath House be open to the public every year in the future?

Reply –

The Council is currently committed to enabling the opening of the bath house once a year by having a member of staff present at the opening which we have to do for insurance purposes.

2. From Gill Hughes

The Bromley Museum report refers in some places to “moving the museum”, but in others to “new museum exhibitions”. Which is being proposed – moving the museum from the Priors to the Central Library, or closing the museum and putting in its place museum exhibitions?

Reply -

The museum exhibitions are proposed to move to Central Library, where they will be overseen by Local Studies staff, who will also commission temporary exhibitions and take over the care of the collection.

Supplementary Question -

As a supplementary question, Ms Hughes read out a definition of a museum. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the Council would look to have the new Museum accredited with the Museums Association.

3. From Gill Hughes

What expertise do the Local Studies and Archives staff have in commissioning temporary exhibitions and caring for the collection?

Reply –

Local Studies has experience in exhibitions, for example the Caring for Casualties exhibition this year, and they are experienced in caring for collections. The local studies archive is currently in their care.

Supplementary Question –

Ms Hughes asked whether Local Studies staff had experience with artefacts. The Portfolio Holder responded that the service already had a number of artefacts which it looked after very well.

4. From Gill Hughes

What will happen to all the history boxes currently used for outreach work?

Reply –

Local Studies may decide to keep the boxes so they are available to groups visiting the new exhibitions. If the boxes are considered to no longer be required they will be given to schools or other non-profit community groups to use.

Supplementary Question –

Ms Hughes asked the Portfolio Holder to ensure that this was done. The Portfolio Holder responded that he would.

5. From Margot Rohan

Have Councillors, particularly members of the Executive, read the Outline Proposal submitted to Colin Brand by the Save The Orpington Priory campaign group? Will the Council consider a Community Asset Transfer when a detailed business plan is submitted, based on the Outline Proposal and, if so, on what terms?

Reply -

Councillors have received a copy of the proposal. The Council will consider all options including a Community Asset Transfer when we have a detailed sustainable business plan.

Supplementary Question –

Ms Rohan asked how long the Council would allow for a detailed business plan to be drawn up. In response the Portfolio Holder stated that there was the statutory period of six months, but if towards the end of this more time was required then this could be discussed.

6. From Margot Rohan

Croydon Council encourages creative and cultural industries, a growing demand. A proposal for artists' studios in Eurocrown House and Marmi Works is likely to be approved at Planning Committee on 4 June. Why does not Bromley Council consider this an appropriate use and revenue generator for part of The Priory?

Reply -

This may be a good use for the Priory and generate the revenue required to manage and maintain the building, this type of use was identified in the Historic England commissioned report. However, the work that officers have done has shown that this

type of use in part of the building would not generate enough income to offset the costs if a museum is the majority user of the building.

7. From Mr Richard Gibbons

How you will achieve 10-fold increase in visitors to 200,000 (43% of 468,096 Central Library visitors in 2013/14) to proposed Bromley Revisited and Lubbock Gallery displays stated as “a fair assumption” to Executive on 11 February, compared to 19,000 to Bromley Museum (6% of 308,966 Orpington Library visitors)?

Reply -

The proposed exhibition spaces are located in spaces that are used by many library users, and are very visible, therefore the potential to attract visitors is high. The Bromley town centre location is easy for visitors across the borough to get to, and the exhibitions proposed are of a much higher quality and will be developed with community input and using advice received from the British Museum and others.

Supplementary Question –

Mr Gibbons asked how, given that the new Museum would be spread over two floors, the Council would monitor visitor numbers. The Portfolio Holder responded that details had not been sorted out as yet, but the technology was available to do this.

8. From Mr Richard Gibbons

Given that Bromley Museum is being systematically run down in preparation for proposed closure, would the Council actively assist the ‘Save The Orpington Priory’ Community Group in its efforts to support “key priority” bullet points 1, 2, 3 on page 2 of the published Renewal & Recreation Portfolio Business Plan?

Reply -

The museum is not being systematically run down, additional efforts have been made to ensure that the museum is open as normal during this period of uncertainty. The community group would need to specify what assistance it wants from the Council before a definitive answer could be given.

9. From Mr Richard Gibbons

To assist the Council in reducing costs whilst maintaining a key theme of Renewal & Recreation “aspirations around our town centres and the borough’s cultural and leisure offer” would the Council consider offering items in the museum collection of specific relevance to Orpington to a local Community Group to manage?

Reply -

Consideration can be given during this process to this request. However, the Council will be restricted by the terms of each acquisition and will be following Museum Association guidelines.

10. From Mrs Andrea Stevens, PWDRA Committee member

Have you run any projections on how many students the aviation college would attract and, considering that the Airport has stated that Bromley Council will be financing the college, how many places would be reserved for students whose families live in Bromley?

Reply -

As no proposal has been submitted, it is not possible to speculate on funding requirements or student profiles.

Supplementary Question –

What amount of funding would the Department for Education be allocating to the new college? The Portfolio Holder responded that this would be a matter for the Department for Education to consider.

11. From Mrs Andrea Stevens, PWDRA Committee member

What type of courses will be offered at the new college and what NVQ level would these be?

Reply -

No proposal has been submitted to the Council.

Supplementary question –

Would courses at the college be private and paid for by the students or are they going to be financed by state grants? If private, who would receive the income? Ms Stevens also asked if the Portfolio Holder had any idea of the time-frame. The Portfolio Holder responded no proposal has been submitted to the Council and that he had no idea what the time-frame would be.

12. From Penny Denby

As the NAP is based on noise measurements over a 16-hour period, why do you believe that the NAP is more beneficial to residents during the requested unsocial hours than the provisions in the Lease, which ask for 'individual flight' measures?

Reply -

The Council is very keen to see better, more reliable flight path and noise monitoring arrangements which are transparent to everyone, including residents, to ensure that local residents are less bothered by flight movements. The provisions in the Lease remain unaltered and will stay in force: the provisions in the NAP seek to impose more stringent noise limits than those contained in the Lease. The Airport's proposals would serve to strengthen not dilute current management arrangements to achieve this aim. In considering the Airport's proposals, the Council must seek to achieve a reasonable balance between the needs of residents and the Airport, and this will be the subject of a further report to Members in due course.

Supplementary Question –

Ms Denby suggested that the terms being proposed were less beneficial than in the lease and this was unacceptable. The Portfolio Holder disagreed.

13. From Penny Denby

The Airport have stated that their clients do not necessarily want to fly late at night or early in the morning but they want to know that they can, then why are flights in the first half hour between 6.30 and 7.00 increasing from 31 in 2014 to 730 by 2030?

Reply -

The Airport's proposal is based on the need for greater flexibility in hours to attract new investment and jobs (730 flights being an annual figure.) The proposed flights in the extended hours are intended to achieve this. The proposal amounts to an annual average of not more than 2 flights in each early morning 30 minute period.

Supplementary Question -

As a supplementary question Ms Denby stated that business clients would need some certainty about knowing that they could fly when they wanted.

14. From Dr Nicola Stevens

Given that BHAL have stated that the planes arriving and departing are now larger, compared to 10-15 years ago, what revised emergency procedures are in place to cope with any incident at Biggin Hill airport and the nearby locality?

Reply -

All aircraft are categorised as requiring specific levels of Rescue and Firefighting Capability (RFF) at any aerodromes they use. Categories range from Category 1 (a light aircraft) to Category 10. The maximum RFF required at Biggin Hill is RFF Category 4 but can, with 1 hours advance notice, provide RFF Category 6. The equipment, staffing and training required to meet this level of RFF cover is laid out in regulatory documentation and BHAL is audited regularly by the CAA to ensure that they meet the required standards. Their Task and Resource Analysis is reviewed annually and includes liaison with the emergency services. Responses to all potential scenarios, both on and off airfield, are considered and agreed where necessary with relevant emergency services. Periodic exercises are held to test that response. The last major "all services" exercise was held in late 2013 which involved some 200 personnel and which was widely reported in the local press. There have been numerous smaller exercises since. The major exercise is normally bi-annual.

BHAL's emergency response requirements follow the same protocols and regulation as is employed at all major UK and EU airports, subject to European Aviation Safety Agency regulations.

Any changes in aerodrome operation or aircraft type or size drive review of the RFF response and resource. For instance, any new operating hours will necessarily require a review and doubtless an increase in resources.

Supplementary Question -

Dr Stevens asked whether the Princess royal University Hospital (PRUH) had been involved in any discussions about the airport. The Portfolio Holder was not aware, but offered to find out.

15. From Dr Nicola Stevens

What will the £3.5 million allocated to the airport be used for?

Reply -

The Portfolio Holder stated that he was not sure what the £3.5m figure referred to. It was suggested that this could be money set aside in the Growth Fund for development in the Biggin Hill Area – i.e. not for the airport.

Supplementary Question –

Dr Stevens asked what the impact of this investment would be. The Portfolio Holder clarified that rateable income would increase, but it was not possible to quantify this at present.

(B) QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FOR WRITTEN REPLY

1. From Richard Barnes

Could the Director for Finance please list how much Bromley Council has paid in connection with the Airport since the signing of the lease, including but not limited to the provision of reports by consultants?

Reply –

Since the lease was signed on 6th May 1994, the Council has spent a total of £1,768k in connection with Biggin Hill Airport. This comprises £185k revenue expenditure, and £1,583k capital expenditure, a breakdown of which is provided in the table below.

	1994/95- 1998/99	1999/00- 2003/04	2004/05- 2008/09	2009/10- 2013/14	2014/15-	Total
Revenue Expenditure						
Pumping Station Repairs	10,462	0	0	0	0	10,462
Minor Grounds Improvements	0	0	0	7,980	0	7,980
Insurances	636	0	0	0	0	636
Legal Expenses	363	12,820	0	0	0	13,183
Noise Monitoring	34,590	24,220	17,632	15,088	1,635	93,165
Noise Survey	8,214	0	0	0	0	8,214
Consultancy Fees	16,486	169	0	0	9,000	25,655
Survey/Consultation Costs	0	0	0	0	25,500	25,500
Capital Expenditure						
Runway Resurfacing	1,500,850	0	0	0	0	1,500,850
Lighting Improvements	82,619	0	0	0	0	82,619
Total	1,654,221	37,209	17,632	23,068	36,135	1,768,264

2. From Richard Barnes

As the Airport is pledging to ban the noisiest aeroplanes during the requested unsocial hours, will the Council ask that helicopters are also banned during those hours (with the exception of medical emergencies)?

Reply -

The lease does not require that helicopter movements are treated differently to any other aircraft movements. In considering the Council's response to the proposed increase in operating hours, we will need to ensure that we are acting reasonably in the interests of both residents and the Airport. It is recognised that the subject of helicopters is sensitive and was specifically referred at the meeting of the Executive in March 2015. Noise mitigation to be applied to all types of aircraft movements are matters currently under consideration in further discussions with the Airport, the outcome of which will be reported to a further meeting of Members.

3. From Susan Sulis, Secretary, Community Care Protection Group

Council's proposals to close Bromley Museum, and sell off the historic Priory building. The report (DRR15/046, p.117) states that Ward Councillors have been asked for their views.

- (a) Which Ward Councillors have been approached, and in which wards?
- (b) What are the responses received from all Councillors (apart from Cllr Michael Rutherford)?
- (c) What were the views of the Members of the Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee?

Reply –

- (a) All ward Councillors for Orpington and Bromley Town were asked for their views for the report.
- (b) No other responses for publishing in the report were received, however Cllr Huntington-Thresher had previously provided his view which was included in the February report, and he said that his view had not changed since this time.
- (c) The minutes for the E&R PDS will be published and available to the public.

4. From Susan Sulis, Secretary, Community Care Protection Group

Consultation on Council's proposals with regard to the Museum and the Priory.

- (a) Was this a 'Public Consultation'? Was it:-
- (b) prominently advertised on the home page of the Council's website?
- (c) Advertised in all Council Libraries and at the Bromley Museum?
- (d) Advertised in the local press?
- (e) Were non-internet users excluded?
- (f) Did it comply with the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct on Public Consultations?

Reply –

- (a) Yes
- (b) Yes it was advertised prominently on the home page.
- (c) It was advertised in Central Library and at Bromley Museum. Additionally information about the consultation was circulated by email and by local people.
- (d) Details of the consultation and how to take part were written up in the News Shopper on 22nd April.
- (e) No, paper copies of the survey were provided on request, and officers attended 16 meetings during spring 2015 alone.
- (f) The Local Authority has relatively few statutory duties to consult. This is not one of those occasions. There has been consultation on Bromley Museum at the Priory since 2009. The Cabinet Office's consultation criterion is reflective of good practice, and the Council's consultation on Bromley Museum at the Priory has been in line with good practice.