

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Executive on 8th December 2010
Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder
For pre-decision scrutiny by the Renewal and Recreation
PDS Committee on 7th December 2010

Date: 7th December 2010

Decision Type: Non-urgent Executive Key

Title: BROMLEY MUSEUM AT THE PRIORY, ORPINGTON

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Chief Officer: Marc Hume, Director of Renewal and Recreation

Ward: Orpington

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 Further to the report to the Executive on 29th June 2010, this report sets out the results of the consultation around Option 3: the extension of the borough's museum service into part of the vacated library building. In addition this report advises Members on potential funding for this proposal as a result of a 'pre-application' submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Renewal and Recreation Policy and Development Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 considers the results of the consultation undertaken and provide the Portfolio Holder with their comments;

That the Portfolio holder for Renewal and Recreation:

- 2.2 considers the comments provided by the Renewal and Recreation Policy and Development Scrutiny Committee and the results of the consultation undertaken on Option 3 and the potential funding available from the Heritage Lottery Fund to implement the works;

That the Executive:

- 2.3 approve the submission of a first stage application to the Heritage Lottery Fund with a further report brought back to a future meeting of the Executive on the outcome of this application.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Vibrant and Thriving Town Centres
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: The cost of Option 3 is £3m, of which a possible grant of up to 90% (£2.7 m) could be secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This would leave a maximum Council Capital Contribution of £300k, of which a proportion can be 'in kind' such as staff salaries and volunteer time.
 2. Ongoing costs: Increasing the scale and appeal of the museum will lead to an increase in revenue costs. The scheme at present allows for income generating options to off set the resulting increased running costs.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Museum Budget
 4. Total current budget for this head: £ 98,280
 5. Source of funding: Revenue/Capital
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 3fte's
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: No statutory requirement of Government guidance. The museum service is discretionary. However The Priory is a Grade II* listed building which the Council has statutory obligations to maintain.
 2. Call-in: call in is applicable.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Current 2009/10 visitor numbers are 25,000 per annum. It is expected that, if these works proceed, visitor numbers will increase to between 75,000 – 100,000 per annum.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments: Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

Cllr Lydia Buttinger:

“Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment. I am very supportive of this proposal and I know a lot of hard work has gone into preparing it. This is an excellent opportunity to restore and enhance a historically significant building, expand a valuable educational facility for the local community and to really help drive forward the regeneration of Orpington Town Centre. I note there has been wide consultation of interested parties and has wide spread support. If the HLF bid were successful this would provide a valuable resource for local people at very little expense to the local council tax payers.”

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The Executive on 29th June was presented with three options for the future of The Bromley Museum at The Priory, Orpington having agreed to relocate Orpington public library. Having considered the three options the Executive chose to investigate Option 3 resolving that:

3.1.1 Further work be undertaken to explore funding and approval be given for a formal consultation process to be undertaken; and

3.1.2 A further report, with full evaluation and the outcome of discussions to seek external funding, be submitted the Executive in six months time, or earlier if possible.

3.2 Option 3 involves substantially enhancing the museum space with internal high quality visitor facilities that would include a café area. The aim would be to create an 'arts and heritage hub' in the conservation area located at the southern end of Orpington High Street that sits within a fully-restored landscape to the front of the building. These enhanced services would support the aims and objectives of the Orpington Master Plan and compliment the various capital schemes that have been successfully completed over the last two years. The overall aims of the project would be:

3.2.1 To preserve one of the most historic buildings in the borough and improve public access by:

- undertaking heritage repairs to the building
- reinstating the 'green court' in front of the property
- creating and improving access to all areas through new and contemporary inter-connecting spaces in order to open up more heritage rooms within the building to people of all abilities
- extending and improving visitor facilities (to include a multi-purpose space, cafe, landscape viewing platform, atrium, lift to first floor, visitor reception, toilet facilities and disabled access)
- employing green building practices with regard to energy efficiency, building materials, construction waste, biodiversity and timber.

3.2.2 To increase the use and profile of The Priory, Orpington, making it an important and sustainable creative hub in the borough's second largest town centre and an 'attraction of choice' for local people and visitors.

3.2.3 To improve and expand the borough's museum service offer.

3.3 The second and third aims will be achieved by forming a steering group with stakeholders and local residents that will work towards improving learning opportunities, conservation and participation as follows.

3.3.1 Help people learn about The Priory and the borough's history by:

- creating a new permanent interactive display of 'lives and times at The Priory' from 1032 to date
- improving and increasing exhibition spaces for the display of artefacts
- extending the variety of activities on offer from the museum service both on site and on an outreach basis

- extending the media used to interpret local history
- providing an improved environment in which to learn and study both formally and informally
- extending opening hours

3.3.2 Contribute to the conservation of The Priory hall and its immediate grounds by:

- recording the project's progress using visual and written materials for posterity
- creating a long-term conservation and management plan for the site
- ensuring appropriate training is available to staff/volunteers and steering committee where required.

3.3.3 Help more local people, and a wider range of people, participate in and make decisions about The Priory's heritage and the borough's museum service by:

- encouraging stakeholders and local residents to sit on the project steering committee
- providing opportunities for volunteers to take part in research, and preparation for, the permanent display
- the reinstatement of the green court at the front of the building and the development of the borough's museum service
- entering into new partnerships with historical organisations, interested parties and key stakeholders
- providing access to training opportunities for staff, volunteers, teachers, work placements and representatives from local history organisations
- working on the development of new audiences
- delivering extended services through partner organisations such as local historical societies and trusts
- improving and extending physical access to, and within, the site
- increasing the range of media used to engage people of different ages and with different abilities
- extending the outreach service and site opening hours

3.4 This scheme would also involve renting out part of the now vacant public library as offices which would contribute an important revenue stream into the extended museum.

3.5 Following on from the Executive's decision in June officers, in conjunction with Ward members, drew up a list of organisations and individuals to consult with, as listed at Appendix 1. Officers have met with these organisations and individuals over the last few months. In addition an open consultation session was held during the afternoon of the 9th November at The Priory. This was promoted to those on the list at Appendix 1 and to existing museum and library users. As a result of the consultation process a number of formal responses were received from groups and individuals. These are attached at Appendix 2.

3.6 In summary, the main conclusion of the consultation is that the majority of people welcome and support the concept of

- expanding the museum service into part of the vacated public library

- improving the visitor facilities; and
 - broadening the scope of the museum offer.
- 3.7 Many of those who were consulted felt that the proposals would have a positive impact on Orpington town centre. Similarly the concept of seeking funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund was well supported.
- 3.8 A number of alternative comments were received, in particular one individual felt strongly that a museum should be built in a more centrally located site within the borough and another felt that The Priory should be sold to fund the creation of a new museum on farm land, or elsewhere within Priory Gardens, as the conversion of a historic building into a larger museum would be problematic. Neither of these two views is supported by either English Heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund both of which consider that Option 3 provides a unique opportunity to transform The Priory into a museum and community resource of significant merit.
- 3.9 With regard to potential funding options officers, following advice from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund, made a 'pre-application' to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Grants Programme. This approach is necessary in order for officers and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to begin a dialogue around project proposals and grant funding. Following submission of the pre-application representatives from HLF asked to meet officers on site to discuss the matter further and consider the merits of the local authority submitting the first stage of a two-stage application process to upgrade the building and extend the museum service into part of the vacated library space. As a result of this meeting the HLF wrote on the 8th October 'Due to the clear heritage importance of the building and the Bromley Museum collection, and your initial thoughts on audience development and learning, the project appears to be an attractive one which the HLF would strongly encourage Bromley Council to pursue'. The full response from the HLF is shown at Appendix 3. Whilst there can be no guarantee of securing lottery funding, the response from the HLF is a clear indication that it seeks to work with Bromley and would support a bid. Furthermore the HLF have asked to meet with officers prior to the submission of the first stage application, another indication of the level of support that they intend to provide.
- 3.10 The HLF have recently amended their funding criteria to assist organisations in coping with the current and forth coming economic challenges. Previously the HLF, for grants above £1m operated on 75% funding to 25% match funding basis. The HLF now funds up to 90% of a project costs, expecting the recipient to provide the remaining 10%. This project is estimated to cost £3m including fees. Based on the above funding formula a grant of £2.7 m could be obtained from the HLF, if Bromley Council will provide £300,000 towards the total project costs (a proportion of which can be 'in kind' such as officers salaries or volunteer time).
- 3.11 If Members are minded to support a funding application to the HLF more detailed work will need to be undertaken on the precise breakdown of costs. This would be required as part of the first stage application. Officers would undertake the first stage application however specialist advice would be required in order to meet the HLF's first stage criteria. The cost of this advice is £22,500. This figure can be included in the Council's 10% match funding as required by the HLF.
- 3.12 In order to progress the scheme to the final phase, culminating in a Stage 2 application to the HLF, detailed design work and conservation reports will be required. The HLF operate a 'Development Grant' process which officers would make a bid to, in order to fund this detailed design work. The estimated costs of these works are £185,000. The HLF operate the same 90%/10% split for Development Grants, it is therefore possible to make an application for a development grant of £166,500, with the Council contributing the balance of £18,500. If this application was successful, these costs could be included as part of the Councils broader contribution to the overall project costs.

3.13 The following indicative programme could be considered as representing the key milestones:

Executive Committee 8 th December 2010	Decision to proceed with HLF funding bid
January 2011 to April 2011	Compilation of first stage funding application to HLF including request for a development grant to contribute towards costs of taking the application from the first stage to the second stage
April 2011	HLF first stage application submitted
July 2011	HLF informs LBB if it has secured a development grant and is invited to apply to the second stage of the application process. Report presented to Executive on outcome of HLF first stage bid, asking for a decision to progress to the second stage.
July 2011 to December 2011	Detailed information prepared regarding finance, activities, outputs, timetables, risk assessments, works required, planning application, tendering of works
December 2011	HLF second stage application submitted
March 2012	HLF informs LBB if it has been successful in its second stage application
June 2012 to December 2012	Tendering of works process takes place
January 2013 to March 2013	Works contracts awarded
April 2013 to March 2014	Works commence
March 2014	Works completed, new museum service opens

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The proposed relocation of Orpington Library arose out of the 2006 review of the borough's library service. It was first endorsed at the Local Economy Portfolio Holder meeting on the 12th April 2007 when it was agreed that the relocation of Orpington Library should be included within the Master Plan for Orpington - supporting the Council's broader objectives around vibrant and thriving town centres.

The Council's Building a Better Bromley 2010 – 2012 commitment states that it will finalise proposals for the Bromley Museum and old library site.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The project concept and public consultation work undertaken to date has been funded from within existing budgets and has involved staff time; no other costs have been incurred. Should the Executive support the proposal to progress Option 3 by applying for funding from the

Heritage Lottery Fund, then costs of £22,500 will be incurred to comply with the HLF's first stage criteria. Should the first stage application be successful and the Council is invited to progress to the second stage there will, at this point, be no contractual obligation to proceed any further. The £22,500 costs can be funded from the recreation revenue budget for 2010/11 as a balance of a provision has recently been returned to the revenue budget as it is no longer required as the works for the re-surfacing of the tennis courts at Newstead Woods has now been completed.

- 5.2 The cost involved in preparing the second stage application is £185,000. As the HLF permits applicants to ask for a planning and development grant in its first stage application officers recommend that this should be pursued in order to contribute up to £166,500 towards this figure of £185,000. However should the Council not wish to progress to the second stage of the application process any funds provided by the HLF up to this point, such as the planning and development grant, would have to be reimbursed. It should be noted that the results of the first stage application will be reported back to Members for a decision as to whether to continue to the second stage application and therefore commit to the full scheme or not.
- 5.3 The total estimated cost of the scheme is £3m inclusive of fees. The HLF would potentially fund up to 90% of these costs, £2.7m. The borough therefore would be expected to fund the balance of £300,000. A recent survey of the Priory building has identified that approximately £100,000 of works needs to be undertaken to stabilise the walls. These works would be incorporated into the broader HLF scheme therefore the Council would only have to find an additional £200,000 in order to draw down £2.7 million.
- 5.4 From the revenue side, it is expected that the scheme will generate an additional £70k from the café and rental income. This will be used to offset the extra premises costs of extending the museum service into the old library building.

6 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report. The initial first stage application would be compiled by officers with some technical support. Existing staff at the Museum would be involved in this process and

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Local Economy Portfolio Holder – 25 th January 2007 Local Economy Portfolio Holder – 12 th April 2007 Orpington Master Plan Document Executive 4 th November 2009 Executive 9 th December 2009 Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder – 29 th June 2010 Executive 21 st July 2010