

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 21 FEBRUARY 2014**

**Statement from: Councillor C N Worth, Executive Councillor for  
Libraries, Heritage, Culture, Registration and Coroners  
Service**

### **Library Needs Assessment**

Work to implement the Executive's decision on 3 December 2013 is now well under way. By the deadline of 31 January 2014 we had received Expressions of Interest for all thirty Tier 3 libraries, as well as offers from seven communities without a council run library.

The allocation of mobile library stops has been completed, and detailed route planning is now under way. This will retain over 220 mobile stops after 6 May 2014. All communities have been informed of the hours allocated to them, and the final details of the new routes will be sent to them in April.

Work to implement the staffing changes is nearing completion, and the recruitment of the Public Health Community Advisor team is due to commence shortly.

### **User Satisfaction**

The latest user satisfaction surveys in Libraries and Heritage show that 97.24% of visitors rated the services as Good or Very Good. The surveys relate to the period April to December 2013 and are based on the analysis of 5,454 library surveys and 3,086 heritage surveys.

### **Lincoln Castle Revealed**

Building work on Lincoln Castle Revealed is still on budget and on schedule. The South Curtain Wall and Observatory Tower are complete and scaffolding is being taken down on the East Curtain Wall. Restoration of the Bath House is complete with just the access path to be finished. Work on the Prison buildings is progressing well although the timetable is tight and this is a complex range of buildings. A re-design of the archaeology area has been undertaken to take advantage of the much greater range of finds than was originally expected. Changes can be accommodated within the existing budget. The preparation of all the interpretation is on schedule and we feel that the good range of stories that we have to tell will contribute to the quality experience that we are planning. Marketing is critical to ensure that having created a quality experience that visitors know about it. The marketing, PR, digital solutions and group travel arrangements are in place and activity will ratchet up during 2014. It is also vital that Lincolnshire's tourist industry is fully involved and a Countdown to Lincoln Castle Revealed event has been booked for 23 September, 2014 to start this work.

### **Museum of Lincolnshire Life**

The scheme to develop an electronic guide to the museum, similar to the ones developed in recent years at Gainsborough Old Hall and The Collection is nearing completion. By Easter 2014, the museum will also have a number of augmented reality installations which will enhance the visitor experience including: an interactive timeline in the Regimental Gallery; a Tank Officer talking about the tank; steam

engine "cut aways" to show how they work; and additional information on the Victorian School Room. There will also be three new projections: prisoners in the Gatehouse Gallery prison cell; getting the Bullnose Morris car to start; and even a Penny Farthing race in the Transport Gallery.

### **World War One Commemorations**

As 2014 marks the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, a programme of activities has been devised which features a series of major exhibitions and talks over the next four years at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life, a former barracks building and home to the Royal Lincolnshire Regimental Museum. There will also be smaller themed exhibitions at Lincolnshire Archives and in libraries across the county which draw on local studies material.

Similarly, Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire is working on centenary events for the next four years including the start of the aircraft industry and the creation of new airfields in the county. There will also be themed trails across the county which links to a Heritage Lottery Funded project with district councils to locate and document the county's war memorials, covered by the Historic Environment Record. The intention is that the end product of this work will be made available through the hugely popular [www.Lincstothepast.com](http://www.Lincstothepast.com) website.

This level of activity is significantly greater than that being planned in other parts of the region.

### **Registration & Celebratory**

Formal confirmation of the assessment for the Government's Customer Service Excellence Award has been received and the service has once again attained 100% compliance to the challenging criteria, and has been awarded two new Compliance Plus accreditations, making three in total:

1. 2.1.6: We empower and encourage all employees to actively promote and participate in the customer focused culture of our organisation.
2. 2.2.2: Our staff are polite and friendly to customers and have an understanding of customer needs.
3. 3.4.1: We have made arrangements with other providers and partners to offer and supply co-ordinated services and these arrangements have demonstrable benefits for our customers.

New legislation will allow same sex couples to give their notice of intention to marry from 13 March 2014, with ceremonies taking place from 29 March 2014. A review of literature and ceremonies is currently taking place to ensure there is an appropriate choice available for all couples.

The Registration Service is one of nine local authorities taking part in a pension pilot as part of the Tell us Once service. The sharing of pension information is through a legal gateway with the NHS Pensions Team.

Prevention of Sham Marriages is a high profile topic across the country and Lincolnshire continues to report cases of suspected sham marriage where appropriate.

## **Coroners**

The Coroners Service continues to move forward in line with the Coroners & Justice Act 2009, and further opportunities to embrace the modernisation agenda are in hand and will be further explored.

The complexity and related costs of investigations and subsequent Long Inquests continues to be a challenge. One new development in 2013 was the body removal contract and this has now been in place for nine months, with a continuing review of the arrangements.

The national consultation on Medical Examiners has still not been published, however, it is unlikely that national implementation will be in October 2014 as originally expected.

This page is intentionally left blank