

Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for Communities

Report to:	Councillor E J Poll
Date:	17 June 2011
Subject:	Service Delivery Options for Stamford Museum
Decision Reference:	01899
Key decision?	No

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to consider a proposal from the Stamford Heritage Trust to take on the operation of Stamford Museum which will cease to be operated by the County Council on 30 June 2011. These proposals have been considered against the County Council's ongoing responsibility to make proper arrangements with respect to the collections and their associated documentation located at these sites.

Recommendation(s):

1. That the proposal from Stamford Heritage Trust is declined.
2. The County Council's proposals to develop a heritage offer in Stamford Library proceed as planned.

Alternatives Considered:

1. Accept the proposal from the Stamford Heritage Trust to take on the running of Stamford Museum and stop the development of a "heritage offer" in Stamford Library. The grant requested is £45,000.
2. Decline the proposal from the Stamford Heritage Trust to take on the running of Stamford Museum and proceed with plans to find locations in which to store and display the collections and develop a "heritage offer" in Stamford Library. The capital cost is £171,000.

Reasons for Recommendation:

1. The proposals lack detail and are very optimistic.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Executive Decision to reject Stamford Town Council's offer to run Stamford Museum in favour of the development of a heritage offer in the adjoining Stamford Library was taken on 10.12.2010.
- 1.2 Since then the following actions have been undertaken:
 - 1.2.1 Formal notice has been given to South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) of our intention to terminate our lease for the museum building effective from 1.10.2011 and a joint dilapidations survey has been undertaken.
 - 1.2.2 Work to separate the utility services to the County Council owned store building, which lies between the museum and library buildings, have been commissioned.
 - 1.2.3 A brief for the library works has been developed, 14 companies have expressed an interest in it and 7 are currently working up design proposals by 17.6.2011.
 - 1.2.4 The County Council will cease to open the museum to the public from 1.7.2010 when two members of staff are made redundant and the remainder are redeployed to posts within the library service.
 - 1.2.5 Negotiations have taken place with Stamford Town Council about the loan of some items from the collection for display in Stamford Town Hall.

2.0 STAMFORD HERITAGE TRUST

- 2.1 In February 2011 Town and District Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing held a public meeting in Stamford attended by 78 people to gauge interest in taking on the running of the museum. He subsequently approached the County Council with a view to taking on the running of the museum via a new organisation the Stamford Heritage Trust. This organisation formed a company in April 2011 and applied to become a Registered Charity.
- 2.2 In response to a 6.5.2011 deadline given by the County Council, he subsequently submitted a formal application and Business Plan to take on the running of the museum. In summary this proposal:
 - 2.2.1 Seeks a £45,000 payment from the County Council for "set up costs including internal alterations and decoration of the building, enhanced display costs" and the loan of the collections. In return the Trust:

- 2.2.2 Plan to take on the lease of the Museum Building owned by SKDC.
- 2.2.3 Create a management board of 12, use a volunteer coordinators and volunteers to operate the museum, guided by former curator.
- 2.2.4 Propose take over the museum from 1.10.2011 with public opening, up to seven days a week "if possible" commencing as soon as possible thereafter.
- 2.2.5 Propose to form a number of partnerships with local educational institutions as well as Burghley House and Rutland County Council.
- 2.2.6 Aspire to secure £2-5m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to create a link from the library with its High Street frontage to the museum.

3.0 ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The proposals recognise the County Council's continued desire to curate the collections and maintain their storage in the County Council owned storage building. However, the proposals lack detail on security, invigilation, fire and intruder alarms, emergency procedures, including salvage, care of collections, environmental monitoring etc. in the museum building.
- 3.2 The governance model seems broadly fit for purpose, although the belief that the Charity Commission will grant Trust Status by the end of May 2011 seems to be very optimistic and unrealistic.
- 3.3 The proposed opening hours are greater than those offered at present, but the exact timings and commencement date is unclear, with the most likely scenario being Easter 2012.
- 3.4 The financial model envisages income from Friends, donors, a corporate membership scheme, guided walks, the shop and suggests £1 per head, with £15k in donations in 9 months to 31.3.12 when the museum will not be open. High levels of gift aid recovery are envisaged, (100% for major donors, and 66% for ordinary visitors) which seems to be overly optimistic.
- 3.5 The financial model is based on the museum's real expenditure figures, but dating from 2007-8, although more recent data was supplied. This underestimates likely costs.
- 3.6 On balance it seems that the Trust will rely on the LCC donation to keep them afloat for a couple of years, even if the costs remain static and income increases at 10% year on year it is still going to take them about 8 years to break even.
- 3.7 Although much education work proposed by the Trust seeks to make use of the space currently used for education in the museum store, the Trust want

the County Council to retain all the rear storage area, but “we may wish to continue the partial use of the rear buildings...and we will be happy to liaise with the Council as to this”. This would complicate the operation of that building an undoubtedly increase its operating costs, at a time when we are trying to reduce them.

3. Legal Comments:

The report sets out the detail in relation to the application by Stamford Heritage Trust to run the Stamford Museum. Due to the reasons set out in the report the recommendation is that is application should not be supported. Therefore, the report also recommends the continued development of Stamford Library. This is a recommendation within the remit of the Executive Councillor.

4. Resource Comments:

Accepting the recommendation given above, will ensure the required reductions can be achieved in the service revenue budget. The capital investment required to achieve these changes can be meet from the service’s current capital programme.

5. CONSULTATION

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

Yes

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

n/a

d) South Kesteven District Council

Several conversations were held with senior officers at South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) in relation to the leasehold of the museum building, delapidations and the district council's use of it after the County Council's notice period has come to an end. These discussions established that SKDC had not received a formal approach from the Trust to lease the museum building, and were they to do so they would not be minded to

support such a proposal because they are already looking at alternative uses for the building.

e) Policy Proofing Actions Required

Third sector involvement is dependent upon significant County Council capital investment.

If the Stamford Heritage Trust proposal were supported the negative impact on the local economy, including volunteer engagement and community relations would be minimised. However, such impacts may be minimised through the investment in the library.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
E-mail correspondence between Jonathan Platt, Cllr Harrish Bisnauthsing 13-24.4.2011	Beech House, Waterside South, Lincoln
Letter from Cllr Harrish Bisnauthsing to Jonathan Platt 5.5.2011	Beech House, Waterside South, Lincoln
Stamford Heritage Trust Proposal and Business Plan	Beech House, Waterside South, Lincoln
Stamford Heritage Trust Charity Commission Application 8.4.2011	Beech House, Waterside South, Lincoln
Stamford Museum Receipts and Payments Account 2012-2014	Beech House, Waterside South, Lincoln
MLA New Model Museum Delivery Proposals - Appraisal Forms and emails 28.4.2011-25.5.2011	Beech House, Waterside South, Lincoln

This report was written by Jenny Gammon, Assistant Director, Economy and Culture, who can be contacted on 01522 550511 or jenny.gammonr@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW TABLE

Each element of the sites' performance was ranked from 1 to 9 based on 2009/10 data. For example Lincoln Castle received the highest number of Physical Visits in 2009/10 and was allocated a score of 9 for this criterion.

In the Owned/Leased column a score of 9 was given to sites owned by the County Council, with remaining scores allocated according to the length notice periods.

Site – Scores	Physical Visits 2009/10 Score	Usage 2009/10 Score	Cost Per User Score	Owned/Leased Score	Points Totals	Physical Visits 2009/10	Usage 2009/10*	Cost Per user	Net Cost to LCC 2009/10	Cumulative Saving (bottom to top)
Castle	9	8	8	9	34	142,529	307,612	£0.46	£141,340	£1,875,999
MLL	8	6	5	9	28	61,636	114,790	£2.03	£232,546	£1,734,659
Archives (& Conservation)	1	9	7	9	26	9,794	407,980	£1.10	£447,388	£1,502,113
The Collection	7	7	2	8	24	60,535	160,027	£3.98	£637,634	£1,054,725
BBMF	6	5	9	1	21	31,206	75,705	£0.44	£33,395	£417,091
Gainsborough	5	4	6	4	19	28,677	63,295	£1.56	£98,885	£383,696
Grantham	4	3	4	2	13	19,058	34,472	£2.64	£91,032	£284,811
CFM	2	2	3	1	8	15,178	29,184	£2.96	£86,341	£193,779
Stamford	3	1	1	2	7	15,303	25,490	£4.21	£107,438	£107,438
Total	45	45	45	45	180	383,906	*1,218,555		£1,875,999	

*Excludes Cultural Collections database 294,223 and Community Engagement outreach 25,934.