

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 13 DECEMBER 2013**

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

### **Library Needs Assessment**

Following on from extensive public consultation and scrutiny from the Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee, the Executive made their final decision on the Library Needs Assessment on 3 December. This gives Lincolnshire a comprehensive and affordable library service, with a statutory library service covering 15 core libraries (10 tier 1 and 5 tier 2), universal services open to all via the Internet and a targeted Home Delivery Service for those unable to access core libraries within 30 minutes by public transport.

In addition, the Executive acknowledged receipt of 41 expressions of interest to run Community Libraries (tier 3) and a further 7 to set up brand new libraries and allowed an extension to the deadline for expressions of interest to the end of January 2014. This will mean there is the strong likelihood of having more static libraries than the county originally started with and still saving £1.734m.

The decision also allows for considerable extra support for community run libraries (equivalent of £250,000 from the LCC Community Engagement Team) in terms of officer support, additional Library Development Officers, a fully managed IT provision and a 10 year lease setting out in detail what the community and LCC will be responsible for. In order for communities to bring forward their proposals and to minimise disruption to customers, transition arrangements have been agreed up until March 2015, where there will be reduced opening hours of approximately 40% until the communities concerned are ready to take them over. Those communities that are ready to take them over on 6 May 2014 will not be affected.

The Executive also agreed 212 mobile stops (tier 4) to be retained around the county.

### **Summer Reading Challenge 2013**

The "Creepy House" themed summer reading challenge proved a great success this year. A report on the initiative shows the number of children participating increased by 17% over the previous, with those completing the challenge also increasing by 23%, suggesting the subject really captured the imagination. The Challenge also encouraged new library memberships.

### **House of Mystery Roadshow**

Award-winning international artists Me and The Machine were commissioned to work with local artists, communities and the library service to create original interactive dance and performance events inspired by Lincolnshire Libraries Creepy House Summer Reading Challenge. With storytelling, arts and crafts sessions, dance performances and digitally enhanced reality experiences with Me and The Machine the Roadshow events had something for everyone. The artists also presented their widely acclaimed previous work When We Meet Again - using video goggles and 3D sound that transports audiences into a new reality. The Roadshow culminated in the

premiere of a new work The Show of Your Life at Frequency Festival 2013 in Lincoln City Centre which was extremely popular with all those visiting and taking part in the Frequency Festival.

### **Doctor Who Family Fun Day Saturday 24 October**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Doctor Who anniversary celebrations proved to be popular at The Collection. Daleks, craft activities and a Doctor Who film attracted over 750 fans to The Collection. Fans used it as an opportunity to dress up and bring in their own Doctor Who characters and models.

### **Lincoln Castle Revealed**

All of the main contracts on Lincoln Castle Revealed are now let and building work is on schedule and on budget, with the repair of the Castle walls being slightly ahead of schedule which is a comfortable position to be in as we go into the winter period. The Saxon sarcophagus which was found during archaeological excavations was lifted on November 14 and created much positive PR. As further research is done on the skeleton over the coming months we can add to the story.

### **Registration & Celebratory**

The results from the customer satisfaction survey indicated 100% satisfaction with the service and a rise in the number of people rating the appointment service as 'Excellent' from 58% (2012) to 62% (2013). The percentage of 'Excellent' results for staff professionalism, knowledge, helpfulness and friendliness have all increased year on year. In addition, the team are awaiting formal confirmation of the assessment for the Government's Customer Service Excellence Award where the initial feedback given indicates the service has once again attained 100% compliance to the challenging criteria, and has been recommended to receive two Compliance Plus accreditations. The service continues to await details of the new legislation to allow for equal marriage for same sex couples. This is anticipated to be implemented in Spring 2014. Lincolnshire were also actively involved in the revision and updating of the Proper Officer's Guide to Registration Service Delivery, which has been issued to all registration services across the country.

### **Coroners**

There continues to be further service adjustment to meet the needs of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. In some cases the new type of 'investigation' allows natural deaths to be concluded more quickly. However, there are a number of long inquests scheduled for 2013/14 and this is having a significant impact on the budget. The body removal contract has now been in place for six months and a review of the new arrangements will take place shortly. The national consultation on Medical Examiners has still not been published.