

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 16 MAY 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. The Judicial Review has now been set for July 8th and 9th. We remain convinced that all the necessary steps needed to make a lawful decision were taken, along with extensive consultation and a thorough consideration of the impact on our residents. We have prepared the strongest possible case and are continuing to keep in close contact with the communities wanting to become involved in the development of community hubs.

By the deadline of 31 March 2014 we had received 40 community hub grant applications, with at least one for each of the existing Tier 3 libraries, plus seven for Tier 3 communities without a county council operated library. The new Public Health Community Advisor team is now in place and from early May the service's own Library Development Manager and four Library Development Officers will all be supporting these groups and organisations.

Business plans and applications for grant funding for new community hubs, including library facilities, in 30 locations across Lincolnshire have met the criteria agreed by the council's executive.

A further 7 groups have been asked to develop their plans further, as they expected, so that they too can meet the criteria for grant funding. They will be supported by the County Council's new team of community advisors and library development officers. Revised proposals from these groups are due to be submitted by 30th May 2014.

On 1 April 2014 reservation charges were removed and a charge for issuing guest cards to people who do not have a library card or PIN to access the People's Network computers was introduced. The new library opening times and mobile library routes have been published and came into effect on 6 May 2014. All communities have now had details of the new routes sent to them.

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 new electronic guide and augmented reality installations are now in place, and the official launch took place on 29 April. These 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.

The Collection

Recent exhibitions at The Collection, including Modern Masters, and Joseph Banks A Great Endeavour, have proved to be extremely popular, attracting over 19,500 visitors in February alone, making it the second busiest month since the new museum opened in 2005. The Modern Masters exhibition came to an end in March, and The Banks exhibition ran until 11 May.

Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Visitor Centre

A new locally run café is now in place at the Visitor Centre at RAF Coningsby offering a selection of hot food, drinks and snacks. It was officially opened on 28 April. In August, trade will no doubt be boosted by a visit of the Lancaster owned by the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. It is flying over from Canada to RAF Coningsby for a month long visit from 4 August 2014.

Registration & Celebratory

- March 2014 saw the national introduction of Same Sex Marriage allowing same sex couples equality in marriage. The first same sex marriage in Lincolnshire has now taken place and we have a number of ceremonies occurring in the next few months.
- Tell us Once notifications of key life events to central and local government continues to be well received by families. In the first quarter of 2014 the County Council took part in an NHS pensions information sharing pilot.
- 11 April – The Citizenship Ceremony in Boston was attended by the Chairman of the Council and also the Mayor of Boston, and subsequently covered in the Boston Standard newspaper which celebrated the benefits of Citizenship.
- 6 May celebrated the 10th anniversary of Citizenship ceremonies in Lincolnshire and there was a special commemorative ceremony.
- 26 June – the service hopes to welcome the Deputy Registrar General, Andrew Dent, to Lincolnshire for a visit.

Coroners

- The high profile inquest into the death of the Red Arrows pilot was completed and received national press interest.