

CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 27

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Foredown Tower – Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CTEOSC) comments.
Date of Meeting:	16 September 2008
Report of:	The Director of Strategy and Governance
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Wards Affected:	Portslade North and Hangelton & Knoll

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 At its meeting of 19 June 2008 the Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CTEOSC) resolved that a special meeting would be held to consider the Foredown Tower proposals prior to the Cabinet Member Meeting on 16 September.
- 1.2 CTEOSC met on 10 September 2008 and this report details the discussions and recommendations of that Scrutiny Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 (1) To note the discussion by the Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CTEOSC) on the Foredown Tower report; and

(2) To agree the amendments to the recommendations to the Foredown Tower report (Item number 28 on this agenda) as detailed in bold italics below.

Recommendations (1) and (2) below were supported by the Committee

Recommendation (1) To keep the Tower open until October 2009 on the current public opening times.

Recommendation (2) To make an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a Your Heritage grant to mark the 100th anniversary of the Tower in 2009.

Recommendations (3) and (4) were supported with the amendments below:

Recommendation (3) To instruct the Director of Cultural Services and Director of Finance and Resources to enter into discussions and negotiations with Hove and Adur Sea Cadets for a full repairing 25 year lease on a peppercorn rent for the Tower for community usage, in order to provide new opportunities for young people in Portslade and to ensure the long term future of the Tower as a ***mixed use*** community facility and ***to ensure access by the public and community groups to South Downs National Park.***

New Recommendation (4) To explore the possibility of setting up a community development trust to manage the Foredown Tower and, in the longer term, to pass the building into community ownership. This option should be discussed with Hove & Adure Sea Cadets and other interested community organisations.

Recommendation (4) ***to become recommendation (5)*** was supported by the Committee:

(5) To instruct that the lease agreement includes clauses that will ensure camera obscura demonstrations, educational opportunities for schools and opportunities for the use of the Tower by other community and interest groups including the Astronomers, as well as the caveat that the Cadets cannot use the Tower for band practice .

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The CTEOSC committee received a presentation from the Head of Museums and Royal Pavilion on the history of the Foredown Tower and the plans for its future.
- 3.2 Committee Members asked a number of questions about the future plans. In response to a question on how the Sea Cadets came to make an expression of interest, the committee was told that the expression of interest originated in February through two Ward Councillors.
- 3.3 Following the Culture, Recreation and Tourism Committee's request for further information, a tender was put out to three organisations and the destination and marketing analysts Blue Sail were subsequently

appointed. The Sea Cadets were not aware of the recommendations of the analysts' report when they came forward with their plans.

- 3.3 Members asked what is known about the financial viability of the Sea Cadets and were told that this would be fully explored, if the report was subsequently agreed at the Cabinet Member meeting. If the report was agreed, the Foredown Tower would remain open under the current arrangements until October 2009. This would give Officers a year to complete the detailed arrangements and ensure due diligence.
- 3.4 Following a question on advertising and marketing, the Director of Cultural Services explained that the Hove and Adur Sea Cadets were the only organisation to express an interest, despite Officers contacting a range of other organisations.
- 3.5 Members discussed the current visitor numbers and were informed that the admission costs were low (£3 adult, £1.70 children, concessions £2.10 - with family tickets available and free entry to schools).
- 3.6 The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid is to celebrate the centenary of the Foredown Tower and would not be a capital bid. There has been an early positive response from the HLF.
- 3.7 The CTEOSC affirmed that they would wish to be informed of the progress of the negotiations with the Sea Cadets, in particular if these negotiations should fail.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 In 2008/09 the budget relating to Foredown Tower, within the Royal Pavilion & Museums division is approximately £38k. The required repairs costs to the building estimated at £91k and DDA at £133k, The financial implications for options for a full repairing lease or the formation of a community development trust will be assessed along with associated tests of financial viability.

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 It should be noted that the Committee has referred to the possibility of a Trust becoming the owner of the Tower. Such a body could be a special purpose vehicle set up specifically for this purpose or an existing body.

Equalities Implications:

5.3 None in relation to this report.

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 None in relation to this report.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 None in relation to this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 None in relation to this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7 None in relation to this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1.

Documents in Members' Rooms:

Background Documents:

1. See Foredown Tower Report – item number 28 on this agenda.