



Leicestershire
County Council



DD

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 3 MARCH 2010

LIGHT TOUCH REVIEW ON THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ARTS COLLECTION

BRIEFING PAPER

Purpose of Report

1. To advise the Commission of the outcome of discussions between the Commissioners, Lead and Support Members and officers in regard to the County Council's art collection.

Background

2. The Scrutiny Commissioners received the final version of the light touch review report prepared by Messrs Hunt and Lewis at their meeting on 11 January. The key recommendations of the report were as follows:-
 - The collection held by the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) should be merged with that the other two collections managed by the Heritage and Arts Service;
 - The storage of the CYPS collection (currently stored at Beaumanor Hall) was inadequate and new storage facilities should be found;
 - The Council should employ temporary staff to carry out documentation/cataloguing work;
 - The list of works in the CYPS collection required updating;
 - Public display of certain pieces required consideration.
4. The Commissioners welcomed the report and decided to explore with the newly appointed Cabinet Lead Member the future of these collections and how the recommendations in the report could be taken forward. They requested that a meeting be arranged to discuss what might be possible prior to the report being considered by the Commission on 3 March.
5. The Commission had previously considered an interim progress report from Mr. Hunt and Mr. Lewis at its meeting on 28 October 2009. The final version of the report appears elsewhere on the Commission's agenda.

Conclusions

6. A meeting was held between the Designated Lead Member and Support Member for Adults and Communities (Messrs Sprason and Houseman), Commissioners Galton and Feltham and officers on 16 February. At that meeting the following course of action was agreed:
 - (a) That there was merit in all the collections being managed by the Heritage and Arts Service and that the CYPS were happy with this approach;
 - (b) That a valuation be undertaken of the collections at Beaumanor Hall with a view to determining which pieces were worth retaining. It was estimated that this would cost in region of £5,000 and could be met from underspends in the 2009/10 budget;
 - (c) That once a valuation was complete, the way forward in regard to long-term storage (if required) be considered. This would require some curatorial and restoration work and would need to be funded from the sale of some works from the collection;
7. The Commissioners met again on 1 March to consider the matter further and have proposed an action plan (attached as Appendix 1) taking forward the recommendations in the light touch review report.

Recommendation

The Scrutiny Commission is asked to:

- (a) express its gratitude to Messrs Hunt and Lewis for the work undertaken on this review;
- (b) note the outcome of the deliberations of the Scrutiny Commissioners; and
- (c) recommend the proposed plan of action.

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List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed Plan of Action for Works at Beaumanor Hall