

## **Museums options summary**

As part of the budget planning process, we shall review the operation of Barnet Museum and Church Farmhouse Museum. In a challenging financial climate, we need to review the operation of both to establish options that would support service delivery in a difficult financial climate, and help public services in the borough establish a new relationship with citizens.

### **1. Background**

#### **1.1. Church Farmhouse Museum**

At present, London Borough of Barnet operates the Church Farmhouse Museum service, providing premises, premises expenditure, staffing, operational cost support, exhibitions and exhibition funding.

Church Farmhouse Museum's projected outturn (2010 – 2011) is £126,860.

#### **1.2. Barnet Museum**

At present, London Borough of Barnet provides premises, premises expenditure and operational support for Barnet Museum.

We will be presenting an options appraisal to Cabinet in December. Between October and December, we will work with the team to listen to different ideas and options for the museums

Spend in 2009 – 2010 was c.£28,000. (See below appendix 1 on spend/cost)

### **3. Objectives for museum provision in Barnet**

- Reduce cost of providing museums
- Set a clear direction for the services from coming years
- Encourage community use of all heritage services
- Support heritage services to operate independently

(Depending on the option chosen, we could also add in improve access)

### **4. Longer-term options**

#### **4.1. Barnet Museum**

- Lease Barnet Museum building at rental with a service level agreement (remove LBB costs and risks and set up Museum on more formal basis).
- Dispose Barnet Museum and offer alternative space for exhibitions
- C: Dispose Barnet Museum

#### **4.2. Church Farmhouse Museum**

- D. Pass operation of Church Farmhouse Museum to the community and subsidise
- E. Reduce opening hours for Church Farmhouse Museum
- F. Use Museum with a community and voluntary model
- G. Dispose Church Farm Museum

#### **4.3. Combined option**

- H. Dispose of both sites and provide a main exhibition site (Arts Depot, Friary House, a library), outreach – e.g. museum exploration service, and space in libraries

#### **5. Short-term options and process**

Budget planning has set a target of £40k saving in year 1. This could be delivered in several ways:

- Remove costs of Barnet Museum + reduce exhibitions and running costs at Church Farmhouse Museum
- Remove costs of Barnet Museum, reduce opening hours of Museum (requiring redundancy), and reduce running costs to fund set up of community model for museum
- Cessation of service(s), for closure or pending transfer. (Some savings could be used to fit an exhibition space – though this is harder to deliver owing to likely resistance)

#### **Initial options assessment discounted the following possibilities:**

1. Do nothing. This option has been discounted as unviable – it does not accord with the One Barnet ethos, nor does it fit with the Council's need to reduce costs.

2. Direct provision of Church Farmhouse Museum service by a commercial management company. This option has been discounted as unviable – there are no specialist commercial providers of such services and such an arrangement would be unlikely to generate any savings.

3. Establish a Trust for the provision of Church Farmhouse Museum. This option has been discounted as unviable – it is unlikely to provide significant cost savings and would necessitate considerable investment on the Council's part to create the Trust, neither is there any apparent will within the Museum's Friends Group to create such a Trust.

4. Co-location of both Museums into either site. This option is discounted for Church Farmhouse Museum as the majority part of the Museum's experience value lies in the building itself, and for Barnet Museum as BDLHS have stated they would only operate within the Barnet district.

5. Partnership with Adult's Social Services to convert the Museum into a support employment/social enterprise managed and operated by clients with Learning Disabilities has been discounted, owing to the limitations of the current building, time taken to create the function, and whether this is the right service model for the client group.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Barnet Museum spend in 2009 - 2010**

£13,000 building-related costs (with £9,000 business rates as the space is technically managed and supported by the council)

£3,440 grant payment

£450 keyholding/security contract

£810 telephone contract and calls

£2,600 building works costs

£150 insurance

£245 trade waste

**Total of c.£28,000**

### **Church Farmhouse Museum**

- £82,100 is allocated to salaries and related costs
- £32,280 allocated to building related costs – including £5,690 for rates
- £14,820 support costs

(£3,280 income target)

**Total planned spend of £126,860;** though about £20,000 is salary funding for local studies which would be excluded from the exercise.