

# **Proposed changes to funding for Museums**

## **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

### **Museums consultation**

The Council proposes that funding to operate Church Farmhouse Museum and support Barnet Museum is withdrawn, taking effect from 1 April 2011.

### **Rationale**

The council is facing severe funding restrictions over coming years, with the overall reduction in government funding for local authorities equivalent to a spending reduction of 26% over a four year period. A number of services will be reviewed to help address the spending restrictions. The provision of Museums within the borough is a discretionary service and the council proposes to withdraw funding for Museums in the 2011 – 2012 financial year, ceasing provision of council-run and council-supported Museums. Both Museums have a relatively high cost per visit. For example, each visit to Church Farmhouse Museum costs an equivalent of c.£15 and both Museums would require additional investment over coming years to improve access, the quality of artefacts, exhibitions, buildings and infrastructure.

During the consultation process the council will also consider any alternative options or proposals for the future of each property, including considering different options for the relationship with existing inhabitants and services, or consider interest in running the service from local organisations, public partners, or private organisations. The council will also consider different options for the hosting of exhibitions, artefacts and materials presently housed within the Museums.

### **Consultation**

A full public consultation process with users, interest groups, and a customer profiling exercise will take place over 6 weeks from 6 December 2010 to 17 January 2011. This consultation sets out to:

- Take responses to this proposal.
- Listen to views of service users and local organisations, consider alternative ideas and proposals for future service delivery which present significant savings or income.
- Consider options for future service provision, exhibitions, housing relevant archives and management and display of artefacts.
- Consider options for future use and management of properties.

## **Alternatives**

A full options appraisal will be presented to Cabinet following the period of public consultation. The council will consider alternative ideas or proposals for the future of Museums arising from consultation: the buildings, the services, the artefacts and collections and the exhibitions.

Should an alternative option be taken forward following consultation, the effective start date would be reviewed with a target to have completed implementation by 1 October 2011 at the latest.

## **Consultation process**

Public consultation will take place through:

- Comments on proposal via council-wide budget consultation.
- Writing to user groups to invite responses.
- Short questionnaire available in Museums to collect responses.
- Discussions with Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

## **Evaluation and decision-making**

No decision has yet been made. All representations will be taken into account and proposals considered. A final recommendation is to be considered by the council's Cabinet in February 2011.

## **Responding to the consultation**

If you would like to make comments on the proposals, please respond to the address below. In addition, a survey will be available from Monday 13 December should you wish to use this to share your responses.

### **In writing:**

Museums Consultation  
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Oakleigh Road South,  
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### **E-mail :**

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You can also respond to other areas of the budget consultation via the [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk) website

**If you would like to discuss this please contact Libraries, Museums and Local Studies on 020 8359 3164.**