



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Cultural & Community Services Monday, 28 July 2014

ADDENDA

2. Questions from County Councillors (Pages 1 - 2)

Question received from the following Member:

From Councillor Susanna Pressel to Cabinet Member

'We can all be very proud of the fantastic work that our Museums Service does in Oxfordshire, and this "Forward Plan" is full of good things.

I do, however, have a concern about the fact that Woodstock is quite a difficult place to get to from some parts of the County. Because of this, I would like to see even more emphasis given to touring exhibitions, loans and above all outreach, especially to schools. We do need to collaborate with our partners to find out if there are schools, particularly in areas of deprivation, where some of the children are not yet "enjoying the museum experience", so please can you ensure that this data is collected, collated and reviewed on an annual basis? If there are schools that are missing out, we would need to discuss how to tackle this.'

Answer

I am grateful to Councillor Pressel for her question and for her praise of the Museum Service. The Service aims to make its collections accessible to as wide an audience as possible, through publishing information about our collections on the web; by lending material to be displayed at museums and other venues across the County; and through the delivery of learning sessions and object loans to schools and community groups county-wide. These activities are undertaken in partnership with the University Museums and other museums across the county to ensure the most effective use of finite resources and maximise countywide access to museum collections.

Through the Arts Council England (ACE) funded County Collections Project the museums service has been able to continue to produce a high quality annual exhibition which is available to tour to other museums in the County. Loans are also regularly provided to museums across the county to create or compliment locally generated exhibitions of material with a particular relevance to that locality. I would

like to reassure Councillor Pressell that the Service is alert to any funding opportunities which would allow it to extend the number and range of touring exhibitions.

We will confirm what data, in addition to that collected by the Museums service, is currently available through our ASPIRE partnership with Oxford University Museums in respect of schools use of museums and their resources. We will review how that might be used to ensure that all Oxfordshire schools are being offered an opportunity to give their pupils access to museum collections. I will ask Carol Anderson, the Museum Service Manager to make sure that the outcomes from this exercise are reported back to you and that any actions that we can take will be incorporated into the work of the Learning and Access team.
