

STOCKPORT COUNCIL
REPORT TO EXECUTIVE MEETING – SUMMARY SHEET

Subject: Vernon Park Museum

Report to Executive Meeting

Date: 12 November 2012

Report of: (a) Executive Councillor (Governance & Corporate Services)

Key Decision: (b) **NO/ YES** (Please circle)

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency (Tick box)

Summary:

This report considers the capital funding and the proposed accommodation option for Vernon Park Museum to accommodate Pure Innovations services (Pure) displaced from Millbrook Centre

Comments/Views of the Executive Councillor: (c)

The relocation of Pure Innovations services from Millbrook Centre to Vernon Park will, subject to modifications to improve DDA accessibility, provide a suitable venue for the service and would consolidate operational management of the facility and improve delivery of services to users. It will be possible to preserve the café and operate this and public toilet provision. The catering arrangements at Vernon Museum are currently delivered through staff and clients of Pure.

Recommendation(s) of Executive Councillor: (d)

It is recommended to approve the allocation of funding to enable the capital works to be undertaken to accommodate Pure Innovations service at Vernon Park.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee (if decision called in): (e)

Corporate, Resource Management & Governance

Background Papers (if report for publication): (f)

None

Contact person for accessing background papers and discussing the report

Officer: Murray Carr

Tel:0161 474 3649

'Urgent Business': (g) **NO**

Certification (if applicable)

This report should be considered as 'urgent business' and the decision exempted from 'call-in' for the following reason(s):

The written consent of Councillor _____ and the Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer/Corporate Director for Corporate and Support Services for the decision to be treated as 'urgent business' was obtained on _____ /will be obtained before the decision is implemented.

VERNON PARK MUSEUM**Report of the Corporate Director of Corporate and Support Services****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report considers the capital funding and the proposed accommodation option for Vernon Park Museum to accommodate Pure Innovations services (Pure) displaced from Millbrook Centre.
- 1.2 This report considers:
- Background to the proposal to relocate Pure from Millbrook Centre to Vernon Park Museum
 - Proposed arrangements for the provision of additional accommodation for Pure at Vernon Park Museum
 - Financial implications of the proposals.

2. Background

- 2.1 Until September 2012, Pure occupied part of the Millbrook Centre to provide day care services to users of the service. The Centre was identified by Services to People (Schools Organisation) as a suitable town centre new base for 14-16 year olds at Windlehurst Special School. The centre was used by Pure to deliver a programme to support vulnerable adults, as well as the venue for a number of community groups meetings. Following discussions with Pure they agreed to relocate their service to alternative premises to enable the Millbrook to be transferred to the school to meet their urgent requirements. Alternative suitable accommodation for the community groups needs was identified and agreed with them.
- 2.2 Pure have relocated its service temporarily to accommodation at Bird Hall Lane depot. The accommodation is the former Solutions SK mess room at the rear of Sanderling House.
- 2.4 Though usable, the large room does not provide a long term solution for the adequate operation of the services that were accommodated at Millbrook Centre.
- 2.5 Pure currently operate a small service from Vernon Park Museum including the operation of the Park café and provision of park ranger services. Pure have considered the potential to relocate the service delivered at Millbrook to Vernon Park Museum and believes that it fits with its values for the people they are offering services to. They consider that the premises with modifications would provide a suitable venue for the service and would consolidate operational management of the facility and improve delivery of services to users.

3 Vernon Park Museum Building - Current & Proposed Arrangements

- 3.1 Vernon Park Museum opened in 1860 as Stockport's first museum and art gallery. It served as the municipal museum until 2005 when the local history collections were moved to the new Stockport Story Museum in the Market Place. At the time it was not possible to immediately relocate the remaining collections from Vernon Park Museum. These consisted of miscellaneous display collections in the basement and some natural history collections on the ground floor. There was also clear desire to preserve public access to the café facility which had been opened in 2000 with Heritage Lottery funding as part of the park refurbishment project.
- 3.4 Pure Innovations who had worked with the Parks & Recreation and Heritage services at other locations agreed to keep the café and museum open whilst an alternative use was found for the building. This has provided an opportunity for their service users to gain valuable work experience. Some of the former museum areas were redecorated to provide lettable meeting room and display space. The lack of DDA access to the upper floor and poor toilet provision has restricted the possible use of the building. This arrangement has continued to the present, though the museum is no longer actively promoted because of concerns about the quality of the visitor experience, which has been highlighted by a number of complaints. Nevertheless, a number of objects in the museum have popular local appeal and the building retains accredited museum status.
- 3.5 If the building is to be used as a new location for Pure Innovation services, it will be possible to preserve the café and operate this and public toilet provision. The catering arrangements at Vernon Museum are currently delivered through staff and clients of Pure Innovations. They consider the premises would be suitable for their requirements subject to some modifications to improve DDA accessibility.
- 3.6 The majority of the collections currently at Vernon Park Museum would be redisplayed in a newly-created Stockport Curiosities section at the Stockport Story Museum. This would have the advantages of providing a new offer in an underutilised temporary exhibition area and housing the miscellaneous municipal collections under one roof. This would improve access to some of the more popular items currently at Vernon Park Museum and give an interesting new dimension to Stockport Story Museum.
- 3.7 Vernon Park has a public car park and is accessible by public transport. Public transport is available with buses running hourly in both directions from the town centre bus station. A bus stop is situated on the road close to the main entrance to the Museum.

4 Financial Summary of Vernon Park Museum

4.1 Set out below is a financial summary of the Vernon Park Museum proposal:

	Pure Vernon Park £000
Estimated Capital Cost	300
Contribution from PIF*	(150)
Sub Total	150
Contribution from People (Adult Social Care)	(150)
Balance to be funded	0

4.4 The capital costs of providing the accommodation for Pure Innovation services is estimated at £0.300m including fees. This will be funded from:

- £0.150m Priority Initiative Funding (PIF) within the existing finance capital programme approved in 2011/12 financial year and;
- £0.150m from resources within the Adult Care Services Portfolio that has been provided by the Department for Health as a capital grant to support Adult Social Care.

4.5 *£0.250m PIF was approved at the 3 October 2011 Executive Meeting and was to support the accommodation capital costs for the Coroner service and to support the important heritage building of Vernon Park Museum. Due to the additional accommodation requirements of the Coroner service, Vernon Park Museum is no longer suitable. Therefore, it is proposed that £0.150m of the PIF is used to contribute towards the capital cost of the Pure Innovation service at Vernon Park Museum and the balance of £0.100m contributes towards the capital cost of the Coroner service at Mount Tabor.

5. Consultation Process

5.1 As noted above, consultation with Pure Innovations has already begun.

5.2 Discussions with Planning & Conservation officers have already taken place on modifications required to the buildings. Planning applications will be required as appropriate.

5.3 As part of the planning process for Vernon Park Museum, the following parties will be consulted at the appropriate time to ensure that the project progresses satisfactorily:

Friends of Vernon and Woodbank Park
Conservation and Heritage Forum
Stockport Heritage Trust
English Heritage

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 It is recommended to approve the allocation of funding to enable the capital works to be undertaken to accommodate Pure Innovations service.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Murray Carr on telephone number 0161 474 3649 or alternatively email murray.carr@stockport.gov.uk