

CABINET

Storey Creative Industries Centre: Progress Update 04 December 2012

Report of the Head of Resources

PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To provide Cabinet with an update on the position regarding the Storey Creative Industries Centre (CIC).			
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key Decision	Referral from Officer
Date Included in Forthcoming Key Decision Notice			N/A
This report is public.			

RECOMMENDATION OF THE HEAD OF RESOURCES:

- (1) That Cabinet notes the report and makes any further recommendations as it considers appropriate.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting in October Cabinet requested a regular update on the position regarding the Storey. This report outlines progress and matters arising up to Tuesday 21 November; any later events will be reported at the meeting.

2 GENERAL PROGRESS

- 2.1 Cabinet Members and various Officers visited the Storey on Wednesday 14 November and had an informal meeting with tenants. The visit and meeting went well; a broad appreciation of what the building and gardens could offer was gained, as well as their current condition.
- 2.2 Views were shared on the current operation and the way forward. Points to note are as follows:
- Even though there is still much to sort out, tenants have appreciated improvements made to date and the efforts of staff involved.
 - The need for the operation to be financially viable and sustainable was recognised. – as is the need to clarify what the objective is, e.g. to break even.
 - Balancing the arts and cultural side, the managed workspace side, and the events / public rooms side is crucial – but a tricky balance, especially

- in context of financial objectives.
 - Nonetheless, the place is getting its 'buzz' back.
 - There is a need to have regular liaison with tenant representatives, covering the various interests.
 - Visit to/from other similar venues would be useful for development and learning.
 - Encouragement was given to joint media communications and tenant input into marketing.
- 2.3 Regeneration and Planning are working on a brief for how to develop the Storey operation in the medium to long term which will take account of future developments such as Lancaster Castle. This will lead to a new business plan. It is hoped that a draft of this will be ready for reporting to Cabinet early in the new year.
- 2.4 Communications have drafted a Marketing and Communications plan.
- 2.5 ICT have overhauled the Storey's local area network and internet connections, which now provide a much faster service.
- 2.6 Property Group are working with the tenants with regard to longer term letting arrangements; room bookings within the building and showing a number of prospective tenants vacant accommodation within the building. A potential larger occupier has showed interest in moving in before Christmas.
- 2.7 Property Group have also applied for a premises licence to cover the public entertainment for the public space. The notice period ends on 23 November.
- 2.8 The building conditions survey has been completed and the report is awaited. A number of other management issues within the building are being dealt with on a daily basis.
- 2.9 A separate visit to the Storey Institute Gardens was to take place on 21 November.
- 2.10 The draft budget will be updated over the coming months, drawing on how plans develop.
- 2.11 A report elsewhere on the agenda covers the Storey Gallery company's position.
- 2.12 Information has been passed to the Liquidator further to the recent meeting of Budget and Performance Panel. Other SCIC company related information has been passed on or collection arrangements made. The Liquidator is in the process of confirming any amounts owed by/owing to the company.
- 2.13 Any operational decisions continue to be made using either existing Officer delegations or on the assumption that ultimately, charges for services should be recovered in full from tenants, whilst still seeking to keep those charges to a minimum.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Given the short space of time elapsed and the many other work demands, progress may seem limited but this is inevitable. Time is needed to develop a clear strategy and supporting proposals to take the Storey forward.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Storey operation will need to support Council's priorities and be sustainable, to fit with the Council's theme of managing the Council's resources to deliver value for money.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable at this stage – this report is for information only.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly as a result of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As referred to in the report. The draft operating budget will continue to be updated and reported through to Members.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources / Information Services / Property / Open Spaces:

As reflected in the report. Again, one of the biggest concerns to appreciate is the amount of Officer time being spent on the Storey and that this has an adverse impact on other workloads.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has produced this report, in her capacity as Head of Resources.

DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Contact Officer: Nadine Muschamp

Telephone: 01524 (58)2140

E-mail: nmuschamp@lancaster.gov.uk

Ref: NM/ES/Cttees/Cabinet/09.10.12