Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 9 June 2026

PRESENT -

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Chair); Councillor Kim Spickett (Vice-Chair); Councillors Kate Chinn (as nominated substitute for Councillor Chris Watson), Alex Coley (as nominated substitute for Councillor Christine Howells), Rachel King, Bernie Muir and Phil Neale (as nominated substitute for Councillor Bernice Froud)

In Attendance: Councillor Chris Ames

Absent: Councillor Bernice Froud, Councillor Christine Howells, Councillor Graham Jones and Councillor Chris Watson

Officers present: Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Richard Appiah-Ampofo (Senior Accountant) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

---

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Options for the Future of the Museum

Councillor Alex Coley, Other Interest: Councillor Alex Coley declared that he was a Member of the Strategy & Resources Committee, which would be considering the matter in July, should the Community & Wellbeing Committee agree to option 2 of the report.

2 OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE MUSEUM

The Committee received a report presenting an appraisal of three strategic options for the future of Bourne Hall museum, drawing on findings from the Bourne Hall museum service review and the culture peer challenge report.

Prior to debate, Councillor Chris Ames, as a Councillor in attendance, provided a verbal statement to the Committee in relation to the agenda item.

The Committee considered the following matters:

a) **Accommodation Costs.** Members raised concerns that accommodation costs appeared high and sought clarification. It was noted that the costs were internal recharges rather than operational costs. Officers advised that the accommodation costs would be assessed and reviewed through the wider venues review. Members expressed concern that inflated accommodation costs could adversely affect future decisions by the incoming unitary authority and reduce the museum's ability to secure external funding. Officers stated that further examination would be conducted and stated that the business case to Strategy & Resources Committee ('S&R'), should the Committee agree to option 2, would cover how accommodation costs were allocated across Bourne Hall to present a more accurate financial picture.

b) **Financial Clarifications.** Members enquired why investment of £125,000 per annum was proposed for only the first two years and whether further investment was anticipated. Officers explained that the proposed funding was intended to deliver improvements, reinvigorate exhibits, increase visitor numbers and strengthen revenue, with future investment requirements dependent on progress and local government reorganisation. A Member sought clarification on the financial tables and the assumptions behind the projected costs – Officers explained the figures were indicative, based on current costs, and were intended to illustrate the long-term financial implications of each option.

c) **External Partnerships.** Members enquired whether discussions with potential partners could take place before the business case was considered by S&R. Officers agreed that engaging with potential partners and funding organisations could help to identify conditions necessary to secure external investment. Members suggested that current accommodation charges could potentially discourage partnership opportunities, and that a review of accommodation costs could improve the museum's attractiveness to partners. Officers confirmed that the wider venues review would also consider how council assets could be made more attractive for external investment and collaboration.

Following consideration, Councillor Kate Chinn proposed that a vote be taken on Option 2, as set out in the report's recommendation. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Phil Neale.

Subsequently, the Committee resolved (6 for, 1 abstaining) to:

(1) Option 2: Invest in improvement of the Museum (should option 2 be agreed a funding request and business case will be prepared to present to the Strategy and Resources Committee in July 2026 for consideration alongside the community asset review and future of Bourne Hall).

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.42 pm

COUNCILLOR CLIVE WOODBRIDGE (CHAIR)