

**REPORT TO:** Grants Advisory Committee

25 January 2019

**LEAD OFFICER:** Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services

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## **Farmland Museum: Proposed Funding Agreement 2019/20-2021/22**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Propose a new three-year funding agreement for the Farmland Museum for 2019/20 through to 2021/22.
2. This is not a key decision. However, it is subject to Council's decision on budgets in February 2019.

### **Recommendations**

That the Grants Advisory Committee

3. recommends to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance that, subject to agreement by Council annually on budget, he approves a three-year funding agreement providing £8,500 to the Farmland Museum for 2019/20 through to 2021/22.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. To support the continued development of the Farmland Museum's services and financial independence within the context of a continuing partnership with the Council.

### **Background**

5. The Farmland Museum was established in 1969 and has been located on the Denny Abbey site to the north of Waterbeach since 1997.
6. It is the only independent museum which is regularly open to the public in South Cambridgeshire. The Museum buildings - which include a Grade 2 listed 17<sup>th</sup> century threshing barn, an early Grain Store and a purpose built visitor centre – complement the story of the Abbey and the site tells the story of rural life locally from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards.
7. The Museum and the Abbey – which is managed by the Museum for English Heritage – are open Tuesday to Sunday plus bank holiday Mondays from April to October. Visitor numbers totalled 6,778 during 2018 with around 700 additional encounters during half-term activities in February and at talks and public events given by trustees, staff and volunteers. The Museum hosts visits from local schools and trustees and volunteers visit schools to give assemblies and run activities.
8. The Museum's services and the way it reinforces a sense of place and identity are of particular relevance in the context of the new development at Waterbeach. Consultation is currently in progress on a planning application for up to 6,500 new

homes and associated facilities on land to the north of Waterbeach in close proximity to the Farmland Museum.

9. The Museum is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Staffing has recently been restructured and the Museum currently employs two part-time staff members – a Museum Officer responsible for the collections, displays, events, school visits etc and a Commercial Officer with overall financial and site management responsibility and whose role will include developing new sources of income. The Museum has a six-strong Trustees Board and 15-20 active volunteers.
10. The Council has been a partner of the Museum since 1992 and has provided core funding support since that time. In 2011/12 annual funding from the Council was £30,500. This was progressively reduced to £16,875 in response to the financial constraints facing the Council over the period 2011/12 to 2013/14 (Leader's Portfolio meeting 15 September 2011). It was further progressively reduced to £8,500 in a two year agreement approved at the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio meeting 22 October 2013, and has remained at that level since 2015/16.
11. The Council's current representative on the Trustee Board is Cllr Anna Bradnam.
12. Services agreed under the current funding agreement are at Appendix 1. The current funding agreement covers the financial year 2018/9 and is due to expire at the end of March 2019.
13. Progress in delivering against measures specified in funding agreements is reported in the six monthly Grants to Voluntary and Community Sector updates, the most recent of which was to the Grants Advisory Committee meeting on 27 November 2018.

### **Considerations**

14. The current funding agreement with the Council requires the Farmland Museum develop a plan which will enable it to operate beyond a time when no further funding is provided by the Council. The Museum is in the process of developing its new business plan. The most recent draft of this plan is at Appendix 2. Slides from a Masterplanning Discussion held in November 2017 and giving an indication of the proposed vision for the Farmland Museum are at Appendix 3.

### **Options**

15. The Grants Advisory Committee may recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance, that, subject to agreement by Council annually on budget, he
  - a. approves a three year funding agreement providing £8,500 to the Farmland Museum for 2019/20 through to 2021/22, or
  - b. approves an alternative amount of funding, including zero funding (giving reasons).

### **Implications**

In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

### ***Financial***

16. The award recommended is within the Council's proposed budget for 2019/20. Agreements with the Farmland Museum will make clear that funding in Year 1 is subject to confirmation of the Council's budget in February 2019, and that funding in Years 2 and 3 is subject to the continued availability of funds and confirmation of annual budgets by Council.
17. Where the budget in future years allows an inflationary increase this will be passed on to the Farmland Museum.

### ***Legal***

18. The funding agreement with the Farmland Museum will allow variation or discontinuation of the grant in specified circumstances.

### ***Risk Management***

19. The main risks are that:
  - a) The Council is unable to give the funding contribution agreed because of unforeseen events
  - b) The future of the Museum is put a risk and it is unable to respond to future demands and opportunities.
20. The identified risks will be managed through the Museum and Council's risk management procedures.

### ***Equality and Diversity***

21. The operation and development of the Museum will take account of equality and diversity issues, for example, in providing appropriate access.

### ***Climate Change***

22. The Museum supports environmental education and the sustainable use of resources.

### **Consultation responses**

23. A statement in support of the Farmland Museum from Cllr Anna Bradnam, local ward member and the Council's nominee to the Trustees of the Farmland Museum, is at Appendix 4.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

24. Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents: the grant programmes promote a good quality of life for all residents, assisting directly or indirectly through voluntary organisations schemes which help overcome the challenges faced by residents imposed by age, infirmity, disability, low income or rurality.

## **Background Papers**

Leader's Portfolio Holder meeting 15 September, 2011: Agenda reports pack, decisions and minutes

<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=5494&Ver=4>

Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder meeting 22 October 2013: Agenda reports pack, decisions and minutes

<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=600&MId=6164&Ver=4>

Grants Advisory Committee meeting 27 November 2018: Agenda reports pack

<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1096&MId=7433&Ver=4>

## **Appendices**

- 1 - Services to be provided by the Farmland Museum under the current funding agreement
- 2 - Farmland Museum Business Plan
- 3 - Farmland Museum Masterplanning Discussion presentation slides
- 4 - Statement in support of the Farmland Museum from Cllr Bradnam

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