

COTSWOLDS DISCOVERY CENTRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Summary: To provide an update on the Cotswolds Discovery Centre Partnership Board.

Recommendation: That the latest progress report be noted.

Office Ref: Martin Lane, Director

General Update

1. The Partnership Board met on the 27th June and is scheduled to meet again on the 12th September. A sub group of the Partnership Board met on the 18th July and 20th August to discuss the details of the work programme associated with the Friends' successful application to the Growth Fund and options for the future operation of the Agency Area.
2. At the earlier 8th March meeting the Conservation Board gave verbal notice on the Agency Operational Agreement (the café and visitor facility) and emailed notice on the 9th March. The Friends later insisted that notice was given in writing via registered/recorded post. This was done in mid July, after initial discussions with the Friends over potential modifications to the Agency Operational Agreement and awaiting further details of the plans for works linked to the Growth bid.
3. As outlined in earlier reports it is a 12 month notice period. The Friends invited the Conservation Board to consider a new Agency Operational Agreement and invited suggestions as to how the current agreement might change. The initial response to the Board's suggestions was negative.
4. The sub group discussions in July and August have indicated that greater consideration will be given to the Board's suggestions, which are focussed around the following;
 - Friends to be responsible for the day to day maintenance and repair of Agency Agreement area.
 - Friends to meet the costs of any insurance linked to the operation of the Agency Agreement area.
 - Friends to pay business rates for the Agency Agreement area.
 - Friends to be responsible for the care, conservation and interpretation of the Collection, currently on a 20 year loan from Cotswold District Council.
5. The Friends confirmed that their bid to the Growth Fund had been successful at the end of June. The planned works should lead to:
 - Replacement of café and north gallery glazing with double glazed roof and wall panels.
 - Smaller day to day glass front and rear café doors and the rear north gallery door within new larger sliding or bi-fold doors – retaining greater warmth.
 - A new meeting room space within the north gallery.
 - New toilets and washrooms in the cafe – same location as now.
 - Repaired and refurbished slate roof to the main building.
 - Refurbished / new kitchen facility – location as it is now, but a refurbished / new facility – we await details of precise work.

6. The works scheduled for the above are due to commence on 6 November and run through to the end of January / beginning of February 2019. The schedule should not impact unduly on the operation of the Board's offices or Court Room meetings, but will have significant implications for the operation of the café, visitor facility and associated staffing levels.
7. The Friends are to advise on the provision of a temporary café facility for the site whilst the works are undertaken.
8. The Friends have confirmed that a team from Leyhill Prison plan to be on site the week of 24-28th September to replace and repair the woodwork in part of the wagon / cart sheds.
9. The Friends were considering the introduction of two electric car charge points on site, a separate agreement with a commercial company. However the private sector company has advised that Northleach will require an electricity supply upgrade before any charge points can be introduced.

Supporting paper(s):

None