

## **Petition – Whitehaven Civic Hall**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Councillor Hugh Branney  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Tim Capper  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Tim Capper

### **WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?**

The report is presented as a requirement of the Council's constitution, supporting public engagement in the democratic process

A petition has been received relating to the Council's recent decision to close Whitehaven Civic Hall.

### **WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?**

**(eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council,etc.)**

To follow the Councils Constitution Rule 19 which specifies at 19.1 All petitions addressed to the Council shall be considered by the Executive or relevant committee at its next meeting.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** That Executive note the petition submitted regarding the closure of Whitehaven Civic Hall, confirms the Council's previous decision on provision of subsidies to support the running of the Civic Hall, with an indication of our willingness to discuss future operating options with potential partners should they arise.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 A petition of has been received asking the Council to reconsider the recent decision to close Whitehaven Civic Hall. The petition is signed by 1,380 people (not all Copeland residents).
- 1.2 The letter accompanying the petition from the Whitehaven Civic Hall User Forum States, among other things that "Obviously the current users do not want the Civic Hall to close and would actively support any initiative to keep the venue open. All the user groups have had to undertake a lot of time this summer trying to find alternative venues where they can continue their activities."

## **2. DISCUSSION**

- 2.1 As Members will recall, decisions were made as part of the service change options process earlier in 2013 to reduce the revenue subsidy to the Civic Hall, in the context of the Council's continuing diminishing revenue budget in 2013/14 and 2014/15 onwards. This in turn has led to the necessity of closing the Civic Hall in October 2013.
- 2.2 It is suggested that the response to the petitioners should be a confirmation of the Council's previous decision on provision of subsidies to support the running of the Civic Hall, but with an indication of our willingness to discuss future operating options with potential partners should they arise.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The Council's Constitution requires reporting of petitions relating to Executive functions to Executive. The proposals set out above are a proportionate and appropriate response.

## **5. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS**

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are: : Council Procedure Rules require petitions to be reported to next available meeting of Executive or relevant committee.
- 5.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are: No comment
- 5.3 EIA Comments – There are no specific equality or diversity issues relating to this issue
- 5.4 Policy Framework - The report's proposals are in line with the Corporate Policy Framework and support the overall delivery of the Corporate Plan 2013-15.

### **List of Background Documents:**

**None**