

**Framework for Research into Demand for Extended
Opening Hours at Maidstone Museum**

Final Decision-Maker	Executive Member for Leisure and Arts
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Victoria Barlow, Museums' Director
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The Museum has been tasked to determine the potential audience among Secondary School pupils if opening hours were extended on one or more weekdays. The report lays out plans to carry out a survey of the potential audience to determine their appetite for the move.

Purpose of Report

For noting.

This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:

1. That the report is noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
ERL PAC	8/11/22

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1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>We do not expect the recommendation will by itself materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, it will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims.</p>	Victoria Barlow, Museums' Director
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendation supports the achievement of the Heritage is Respected cross cutting objective by investigating an opportunity to make the museum more accessible to young people.</p>	Victoria Barlow, Museums' Director
Risk Management	Refer to para 5	Victoria Barlow, Museums' Director
Financial	<p>The proposal set out in the recommendation is within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.</p>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendation with our current staffing.	Victoria Barlow, Museums' Director
Legal	Acting on the recommendation is within the Council's powers as set out in local authority legislation (including the general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011) and the Council's Constitution.	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendation will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The recommendation does not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendation will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	The recommendation will have no impact on Crime and Disorder.	Victoria Barlow, Museums' Director
Procurement	No procurement is anticipated.	Victoria Barlow, Museums Director
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and are: There are no implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A proposal to Full Council in September 2022 suggested that the Museum should open an extra hour for one evening a week to ensure access to those school pupils unable to reach the Museum before 4pm. It is desirable to offer the greatest possible access for this age range, as for all visitors,

and it is accepted that current opening hours leave only Saturday as easily accessible to pupils who may not finish until 3.30 or later. There may also be more particular requirements that the intended audience have, such as space to do homework or to wait safely for parents, carers or transport home.

- 2.2 However, there is no current evidence of what students would want, actually use or expect from the Museum. In order to ensure that any change offers a popular and effective solution, some work is needed to gather evidence before committing to extras hours and concomitant spend.
- 2.3 The Museum proposes to carry out a short survey of people between the ages of 11 and 18 in education. The survey will ask questions about:
- The current accessibility of the Museum in terms of opening hours, whether homework or coursework requires visiting the Museum and whether Saturday is a suitable day to visit for this age group
 - The appetite for extended hours and how many hours/which days would be desirable
 - What other offers (such as a dedicated workspace, wifi, access to refreshments?) would encourage use
- The survey and a link to an on-line survey will be disseminated via social media, directly to secondary schools and through other groups who may be willing to help, such as Maidstone Youth Forum, Hazlitt Institute etc.
- 2.4 The **timeline** for the completion of this work is as follows:
w/c 15 Nov – Questions written and consultation team briefed. Staff contact organisations to encourage participation
w/c 22 Nov – Survey goes live for one month and is promoted on social media regularly and on-site at the Museum
w/c 2 Jan Results analysed

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 That Members note this framework.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note this framework.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 This work arises from a motion considered by Members at Full Council 28/9/22.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 With the results of the survey, staff will be able to identify what is really wanted and needed. They will then implement a solution that meets the needs of this audience in consultation with the Executive Member, with a target date for implementation of February 2023.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.