



Communities Select Committee
Thursday 19 March 2015

Magna Carta Programme - Update

Purpose of the report:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Magna Carta Programme, the art commission and the work being undertaken to deliver the official event to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta.

In response to matters raised at Communities Select Committee of 14 January 2015, this paper principally reports on the planning arrangements / budget to deliver the 15th June 2015 event. Due to the high profile nature of the event – and security provisions – this will be a verbal report to the meeting.

In response to the request for a more detailed briefing about the art commission to mark the 800th anniversary, the artist and producer will be making a presentation to the meeting about the design of the artwork.

Introduction:

1. The 15th June 2015 will mark the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta by King John in Runnymede.
2. Surrey County Council is providing strategic leadership to the project and is working closely with a wide range of partners to ensure appropriate commemoration activities and events are programmed for residents and visitors alike.
3. Surrey County Council is supporting this scheme because of the tremendous importance of Magna Carta in terms of heritage education, economic development, tourism and civic pride in our county. Through the events in 2015 and the legacy of an enhanced visitor offer, the profile of the area will be improved both nationally and internationally which will benefit the economy of the area.

4. Plans include :-
 - 4.1 A Magna Carta art commission to celebrate the 800th anniversary.
 - 4.2 Celebration events – creating an event programme that will raise the profile of the area, bring the community together to participate in a variety of cultural, healthy and educational pursuits, and provide an international celebration worthy of the occasion.
 - 4.3 A lasting legacy – one of the key ambitions of local stakeholders for the 2015 anniversary is to provide improved visitor facilities and interpretation arrangements at the historically important site in Runnymede with minimal impact on the natural environment.

Budget

5. Cabinet approved a budget of £1,000,000 to support the Magna Carta anniversary.
 - 5.1 £300,000 allocated for events currently:-
 - £180,000 has been committed to the general programme of events
 - £100,000 has been committed towards the Official Event
 - 5.2 £700,000 allocated to the cost of the art commission to commemorate the 800th anniversary
 - The cost of the selected artwork by Hew Locke £405,000
 - 5.3 As the art commission is now costing less than originally allocated, £300,000 of the budget allocated for this has been added to the budget for the official event.

Official Event – 15th June 2015

6. Arrangements continue on the planning of the Official Event. Due to high profile nature of the event – and strict security provisions that apply - a verbal update on the ceremonial occasion will be given at the meeting.
 - 6.1 The Common Land application has been submitted.

Magna Carta Art Commission

7. The latest Project Management situation report is that the Hew Locke commission to commemorate the 800th anniversary is on time and to budget.

- 7.1 The artist and producer have been invited to attend the meeting and will make a presentation outlining the concept and design of the commission.
- 7.2 The dedication of this new commission will be one of the main features of the official Magna Carta 800th anniversary event on 15th June 2015.
- 7.3 Planning consent has been granted by Runnymede Borough Council. There will be a verbal update at the meeting regarding the Common Land application – this has been submitted and the consultation process has been completed.

Event Programme

8. New developments to the previously reported events programme supported from the SCC budget include:
- The Library Service have successfully booked David Starkey to give a lecture - 22 April. To accommodate a large audience the venue is Guildford Cathedral as this will also help promote the summer programme of events/activities based on its exhibition of the Salisbury Cathedral facsimile Magna Carta. In addition there will be an author book signing event in the town earlier in the day.
 - An exhibition titled Magna Carta Chronicle (showing an 8 centuries timeline of the historical relevance of Magna Carta) has been purchased for permanent display at Egham Library.
 - The partnership programme of activities at Guildford Cathedral is developing well – and will now also include opportunities to show the Magna Carta Quilts and the Magna Carta Tapestry project.
 - The Surrey Ethnic Minority Forum has been commissioned to do youth project and the theme of Magna Carta will connect with over 300 people during its development. The resulting mosaic will be on display in Guildford Cathedral for 3 days in early June.
 - There will be a Runnymede / Surrey Magna Carta 800 anniversary themed garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Financially supported by SCC and the Runnymede Hotel, Egham the garden will be subsequently relocated to the hotel grounds and will accessible to the public. Negotiations are in hand with a commercial sponsor to offset the costs of the SCC contribution.

- The Houses of Parliament community theatre project touring Magna Carta towns is still subject to final confirmation of partnership funds.
- 8.1 The cost of these additional activities is included within the £180,000 expenditure on events previously reported to Select Committee.
 - 8.2 SCC, in partnership with Royal Holloway London University - have made significant progress on the arrangements for the Great Charter Festival; a major free event commemorating Magna Carta on the 14th June.
 - 8.3 The Runnymede Explored App developed by Royal Holloway for Magna Carta Country on behalf of the local partnership is subject to final technical trials by local users and due for formal launch in early April.
 - 8.4 Information on these events will be promoted at www.visitsurrey.com/magna-carta and the 2015 Visit Surrey Guide will include two pages on Magna Carta.

<p>World Premier of 'The Freedom Game' – Magna Carta Concert at the Royal Albert Hall 12th May 2015</p>

9. Musicians, singers and dancers from the age of five to adult from all over Surrey have now been recruited and an intensive rehearsal schedule is now underway.
 - 9.1 Ticket sales are selling well at <http://www.royalalberthall.com/>

<p>Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Legacy Bid</p>
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10. A decision by the Heritage Lottery Fund on the Magna Carta 'Legacy' Bid (as detailed in previous report to Select) is expected on 25th March - but will be subject to a 2 week embargo.
 - 10.1 At the previous meeting members commented about improvement to the site and visitor offer in time for 2015.
 - 10.2 The National Trust own and manage the Meadows site - and have recently taken the tea rooms 'in house' and improved the catering offer. With due regard to the scope of the HLF bid they are also undertaking local improvement works to the landscape and local network of paths and trails in time for this summer. They have refreshed the current visitor information / site notice boards and there will be a new site map / visitor leaflet and guide book published for the 2015 season.

A308 Highway Improvements

11. The final traffic calming measures - the site gateway features (that also promote the identity of the site) - are being agreed with Highways for installation before June. This will be funded through the Highways budget.

11.1 As part of the Major Schemes bid to the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership by Highways detailed design is ongoing for the major improvement of the Runnymede roundabout. It will be out to tender in June and the anticipated start date is mid October.

Recommendations:

12. To note the content of the report and to request a further update at the next Communities Select Committee.

Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.



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Sources/background papers: [List of all documents used in compiling the report, for example previous reports/minutes, letters, legislation, etc.]

None applicable

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