

**COUNCIL 26<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023****Cabinet 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023****31 THE PIECE HALL FUNDING REPORT - EXEMPT**

Councillor Dacre, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources, presented a written report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer seeking consideration of the Piece Hall Funding. The report set out a recommendation for the Calderdale Council funding contribution to the Piece Hall over the next two years. The Appendices attached were the investment request received from the Piece Hall Trust and detailed the reasoning behind the initial request. Under the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, the additional funding requirement would need to be added and considered within the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning process. This process would commence during the summer so agreement of this additional funding would need to be factored into the overall budget for future years.

The Piece Hall was an integral part of Calderdale's cultural offering especially as we head into the 2024 Year of Culture, and this was recognised in the level of support the Council was intending to provide. The recent Local Government Association Peer Review raised the impact of culture as a driver for economic change and considered it as a lever for longer term investment in the surrounding area. The Piece Hall attracted visitors locally, regionally, and nationally and this all provided a positive impact on the economic viability of the town.

Details of the business case evidence and the original request were attached at Appendix A. The uncertainty of Local Government funding in recent years had led to a prudent approach to this funding, ensuring that resources within the Council were managed and used in a robust way taking account of the outcomes delivered by such an investment.

The report outlined background information, options considered, financial, legal, human resources and organisational development, environmental, health and economic implications.

During discussions Members understood that there had been some challenges following the opening of the Piece Hall and commented on the positive effect the Piece Hall has had on Calderdale. It was recognised nationally as a heritage site, and the Piece Hall would play a key part in the 2024 Year of Culture.

Members explained that there needed to be continue free access to the Piece Hall to allow the public access to the library which was a state of the art library and hosted many exhibitions.

**\*RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that:**

**(a) the contributions detailed within the report to the Piece Hall be added to the budget for 2024-25 and 2025-26; and**

**(b) the contributions be included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.**