

**Notice of a public meeting of**

**Decision Session - Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Tourism**

**To:** Councillor Crisp (Cabinet Member)

**Date:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014

**Time:** 1.00 pm

**Venue:** The Morrell Room - 2nd Floor, West Offices (S014)

**AGENDA**

**Notice to Members - Calling In:**

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item\* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by:

**4:00 pm on Thursday 27 February 2014** if an item is called in *after* a decision has been taken.

\*With the exception of matters that have been subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00 pm on Friday 21 February 2014**.

**1. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 3 - 4)

At this point in the meeting, the Cabinet Member is asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

**2. Minutes** (Pages 5 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2013.

**3. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak at the meeting can do so. The deadline for registering is **Monday 24 February 2014 at 5.00 pm**.

Members of the public may register to speak on :-

- an item on the agenda
- an issue within the Cabinet Member's remit;

**4. West Bank Park Heritage Centre and Community Café Project** (Pages 7 - 10)

This report asks the Cabinet Member to approve a bid to the Nesta *Rethinking Parks* programme for the West Bank Park. The project will look at future parks management using the community café and heritage centre project as a starting point.

**5. Any Other Business**

Any other business which the Cabinet Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name- Judith Betts

Telephone No.- 01904 551078

Email-judith.betts@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

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## About City of York Council Meetings

### Would you like to speak at this meeting?

If you would, you will need to:

- register by contacting the Democracy Officer (whose name and contact details can be found on the agenda for the meeting) **no later than 5.00 pm** on the last working day before the meeting;
- ensure that what you want to say relates to an item of business on the agenda or an issue which the committee has power to consider (speak to the Democracy Officer for advice on this);
- find out about the rules for public speaking from the Democracy Officer.

**A leaflet on public participation is available on the Council's website or from Democratic Services by telephoning York (01904) 551088**

### Further information about what's being discussed at this meeting

All the reports which Members will be considering are available for viewing online on the Council's website. Alternatively, copies of individual reports or the full agenda are available from Democratic Services. Contact the Democracy Officer whose name and contact details are given on the agenda for the meeting. **Please note a small charge may be made for full copies of the agenda requested to cover administration costs.**

### Access Arrangements

We will make every effort to make the meeting accessible to you. The meeting will usually be held in a wheelchair accessible venue with an induction hearing loop. We can provide the agenda or reports in large print, electronically (by email), in Braille or on audio tape. Some formats will take longer than others so please give as much notice as possible (at least 48 hours for Braille or audio tape).

If you have any further access requirements such as parking close-by or a sign language interpreter then please let us know. Contact the Democracy Officer whose name and contact details are given on the order of business for the meeting.

Every effort will also be made to make information available in another language, either by providing translated information or an interpreter providing sufficient advance notice is given. Telephone York (01904) 551550 for this service.

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## **Holding the Cabinet to Account**

The majority of councillors are not appointed to the Cabinet (39 out of 47). Any 3 non-Cabinet councillors can 'call-in' an item of business following a Cabinet meeting or publication of a Cabinet Member decision. A specially convened Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) will then make its recommendations to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting, where a final decision on the 'called-in' business will be made.

## **Scrutiny Committees**

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

## **Who Gets Agenda and Reports for our Meetings?**

- Councillors get copies of all agenda and reports for the committees to which they are appointed by the Council;
- Relevant Council Officers get copies of relevant agenda and reports for the committees which they report to;
- York Explore Library and the Press receive copies of **all** public agenda/reports;
- All public agenda/reports can also be accessed online at other public libraries using this link

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

**Cabinet Member Decision Session: Leisure, Culture & Tourism**

Agenda Item 1: Declarations of Interest

The Cabinet Member, Councillor Crisp, declared a personal interest as a retired member of UNISON.

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Decision Session - Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Tourism
Date	16 December 2013
Present	Councillor Crisp (Cabinet Member)

## 6. **Declarations of Interest**

The Cabinet Member was asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests other than her registered interests that she might have had in the business on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

## 7. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 15 July 2013 be signed and approved by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

## 8. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 9. **Fairness and Equalities - Progress Report**

The Cabinet Member considered a report which showed her outcomes achieved to improve fairness of opportunity the reduction of inequalities for York residents. It also focused on progress on equalities objectives, equalities improvement plan, and the implementation of York's Equality Scheme.

She complimented work that had been done by Officers already on Fairness and Equalities. However, she felt that more focus needed to be placed on how we develop and support initiatives on race, faith and cultural diversity.

Further comments made in respect of the report included:

- That a focus on York's growing cultural diversity needed to be added into the Equality Improvement Action plan.
- Further information was needed within the York Equality Scheme on what initiatives had been taken on respecting and celebrating diversity.
- That figures for Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) Claimants broken down by ethnicity should include which specific ethnic groups the claimants came from.

Regarding comments on faith initiatives, Officers reported that since the report had been written further evidence had been collected with regard to relevant actions. For instance, work had taken place with York's Muslim community with respect to planning permission for York's first purpose built mosque.

The Cabinet Member stressed the importance of proactive work with respect to faith, culture and race.

Resolved: (i) That the following be noted:

- The areas of achievements identified.
- The areas of continued focus from *Taking Stock* and initial findings of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which will be taken into account in the refresh of the York Equality Scheme.
- The areas of concern and how these concerns are to be addressed.

(ii) That a process to refresh the York Equality Scheme by April 2014 be agreed.

(iii) That the peer review under the Equality Framework for Local Government takes place in the week commencing 19 May 2014.

Reason: To meet our corporate commitments and provide a fair and equitable service to City of York residents and staff.

Councillor S Crisp, Cabinet Member

[The meeting started at 10.15 am and finished at 10.30 am].



**Decision Session: Cabinet Member for  
Leisure, Culture and Tourism**

25 February 2014

Report of the Assistant Director (Culture, Communities & Public Realm)

**West Bank Park Heritage Centre and Community Café Project**

**Summary**

1. This report asks the Cabinet Member to approve a bid to the Nesta *Rethinking Parks* programme for the West Bank Park. The project will look at future parks management using the heritage centre and community café project as a starting point.

**Background**

2. Nesta (National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts), in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund, have made available £1m to support between 8 and 15 exemplar projects. Projects must be capable of being used as role models for future parks management across the country and internationally through their *Rethinking Parks* programme. Specifically, Nesta are looking for bold and innovative ways to use, manage and make the most of the UK's public parks.
3. Nesta believe there will be four themes of innovation (these are not mutually exclusive):
  - Support changes to parks management and maintenance systems - including potential changes to maintenance regimes, restructuring contracts and maximising the productivity of particular landscapes.
  - Encourage new organisational structures and partnerships that can adopt more locally focused and collaborative approaches to the long-term care of parks.
  - Identify more diverse sources of funding and resources to supplement those from local councils and to increase the variety of uses and activities that parks may be used for.
  - Explore new uses and activities within parks from carbon capture to concerts and more.
4. The timetable for bidding for this fund is very tight; whilst this opportunity has been known about since November 2013 it was only in late January that the “rules” for bidding were announced.

The award is a 2 stage process. Stage 1 expressions of interested have to be in by 28<sup>th</sup> February. If successful, organisations will be invited to refine the bid and submit a stage 2 application in late March 2014.

5. Bids can be for up to £100k plus in kind professional support and mentoring. Between 8 and 15 bids are likely to be accepted. The funding will become available in July this year and has to be used within 18 months.

### **Why West Bank Park?**

6. In July 2013 a public meeting was held in Holgate with a view to forming a community group with the ambition of creating a heritage centre and community café to celebrate the work of James Backhouse and create a community space in West Bank Park. Following that meeting an informal group of local residents, businesses and interested parties was established and a period of further exploration of ideas and options took place. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3Ha1I7PBwE>. Throughout this period the Council has been supporting the group.
7. In January 2014 this group agreed to become a constituted body under the name of West Bank Park Heritage Project with the initial aims being to explore and develop the sustainability and progression of West Bank Park through its Backhouse heritage and amenities, to benefit park users, local residents and the wider community.
8. In order to take advantage of the opportunity that Nesta have created, the original thinking behind the reuse of 14 New Lane as a heritage centre / community café has been expanded. Discussions with the Chair of the group and the wider committee have confirmed support for a joint bid with the Council which includes:
  - looking at the management of the park as a whole entity including new community management structures,
  - exploited the Park's rich heritage through a series of products and programmes,
  - exploring relocating assets and the development of new attractions within the park,
  - exploring what community use and income generating possibilities 14 New Lane offers, either in its current form, or if rebuilt and extended, and,
  - using the above to fund the future care and development of the whole site.

9. West Bank Park was the family home of James Backhouse a 19<sup>th</sup> century botanist, nursery owner and Quaker missionary who travelled extensively throughout Australia, Mauritius and South Africa. Backhouse Nurseries, which stretched from the Park to Acomb, were at the time one of the most significant nursery sites in the north of England. They became renowned as suppliers of alpine plants, rock gardens and for the introduction of species new to English horticulture. James Backhouse is better known in Australia than England which has given rise to the opportunity for international cooperation on this project with the University of Tasmania.
10. The bid will be to seek funding and in kind professional support to develop a business and development plan through community consultation which utilises this heritage to generate the income to self-finance the running of the park. A successful bid would also create a template which could be used at other Council parks and open spaces where increased community management and care is beginning to materialise under the Council's "Smarter" agenda for example at Hull Road Park.

### **Council Plan**

11. The proposal responds to two Council Plan priorities:
  - Build strong communities - where active and self-reliant communities really have a say in local issues and where everyone feels they belong
  - Protect the environment - York has an outstanding built and natural environment and world class heritage. These star qualities need to be used to attract further investment and lasting growth, without compromising what makes the city such a beautiful place

### **Implications**

#### **Finance:**

12. If the project is accepted by Nesta as one of their national schemes it would close down other immediate options for reusing 14 New Lane e.g. redevelopment for social housing or realising a capital asset.
13. Subject to the outcome of the development plan exercise the ambition is to create new income streams which over a number of years would replace council funding for the site.

At present the site costs in the region of £70k per annum to upkeep. In addition there is ongoing capital required for the upkeep of paths, buildings, play grounds and such like.

14. A discussion paper on the bid has been presented to the Corporate Asset Board earlier in February which gave their backing to the bid.

**Equalities:**

15. A key objective of the bid will be to ensure that the site remains accessible to all and is more accessible to all communities of identity. The Friends of the West Bank Park have been updated on this proposal and are supportive of it.

**Property:**

16. If the bid is successful then a long term lease of 14 New Lane and surrounding areas of the park to a suitable community group or organisation will be necessary. Before this is agreed approval of the heads of terms will be sought from the Cabinet Member.
17. There are no Legal, Highways, Human Resources, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology implications arising from this report.

**Risk Management**

18. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

**Recommendations**

19. The Cabinet Member is asked to approve a bid to the Nesta *Rethinking Parks* programme for the West Bank Park based around the community café and heritage centre project.

Reason: To seek funding for business planning and development work to improve facilities and increase community management of the park.

**Annexes:** None

**Contact Details**

**Author:**

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Operations Manager  
Ext.3386

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Charlie Croft  
Assistant Director (Communities, Culture  
and Public Realm)

**Report Approved**  **Date** 12.2.14.

**Wards Affected – Holgate**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

<http://www.nesta.org.uk/project/rethinking-parks>