
MEETING	DECISION SESSION - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE CULTURE & SOCIAL INCLUSION
DATE	8 MARCH 2011
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR AYRE (EXECUTIVE MEMBER)
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLOR CRISP

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Member was invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests he might have in the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

33. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Decision Session-Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion on 2 February 2011 be signed and approved as a correct record.

34. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - DECISION SESSION

It had been reported that there had been two registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Councillor Crisp spoke on Agenda Items 4 and 5 (Collecting Policy for Archives and Local History and Development of the Explore Vision in Libraries).

In relation to the Collecting Policy for Archives and Local History she highlighted how issues had arisen in relation to booking out documents and the delay that was often incurred by this. She informed the Executive Member that Archive documents would often lead on to further documents, which could not then be booked out at the same time as the original document.

On the Development of the Explore Vision in Libraries, Councillor Crisp spoke about concerns relating to the access at libraries and about how the data included in the report needed to be updated. She also suggested that this data could be acquired by further consultation with all communities in the city. She stated that it was unclear if Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) had been produced in relation to library employees.

A representative from Unison spoke on Agenda Item 5 (Development of the Explore Vision in Libraries). She stated that she was pleased that the Council wished to retain all of the libraries in the city but that she felt that the time for consultation with staff and customers had not been sufficient. She also stated that volunteers should only add value to the service delivered, they should not perform tasks that would normally be undertaken by paid staff. She added that the only difficulty that could be foreseen was that volunteers do not have to turn up, they are less accountable and that relationship building was crucial to retaining their enthusiasm and ensuring their contribution is of the right standard.

35. COLLECTING POLICY FOR ARCHIVES AND LOCAL HISTORY

The Executive Member considered a report, which sought approval for a new collecting policy for the Archives and Local History department.

In relation to comments from Councillor Crisp, Officers responded that a new cataloguing and archive system had recently been purchased and that this would reduce the problems that had been faced in obtaining extra documents.

The Executive Member commented that it was important to remember the number of archives across the city and that there had often not been a rationalised co-operative approach to archive collections across the city. He stated how he was pleased that the proposals in the report focused the role of archives in preserving the city's heritage and culture alongside improving their accessibility. He also stated that the report identified where gaps existed in representing the cultures and viewpoints of all residents in York and the importance of this work.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the report be noted.
 - (ii) That the new collecting policy be approved

REASON: To put in place an auditable and sustainable collecting policy which will move forward the Executive's Vision for the Archives Service.

36. DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXPLORE VISION IN LIBRARIES

The Executive Member considered a report, which detailed how the Explore Vision would be extended across all of the library service.

In response to comments from Councillor Crisp and the Unison representative, the Executive Member was informed that staff consultation on the new model for the city's libraries began in the New Year and that this was done in a variety of ways reflecting the complexity of communicating with staff spread over 14 locations and 2 vehicles across the city. They also spoke about how staff views had influenced the production of the proposals for example the proposal to continue circulation of stock between libraries.

Officers stressed that approval of the vision and the model would represent the start of a process of consultation and engagement with communities about how their local library should reflect their needs. This would cover all issues such as: stock, activities that take place at the library, and opening hours.

In relation to comments raised about accessibility issues at Rowntree Park café, officers responded that as part of the Heritage Lottery funded restoration project some of the steps had been removed and the ramp regraded to create an alternative access route to the café.

The Executive Member noted that the libraries in the city had experienced a radical transformation over previous years and that the first Explore Centres in Acomb and New Earswick had seen their visitor figures double. He also stated that other Authorities had noted the success of the Explore centres in the city and how this was sustainable when across the country libraries were being closed. The Executive Member underlined that the current proposals actually increased the number of libraries in the city, and believed that this could set a trend nationally for library provision.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the report be noted.
 - (ii) That the implementation of the innovative Explore Gateway model be agreed.
 - (iii) That the precise model for each Gateway to be developed as outlined in paragraphs 21-22 of the report.
 - (iv) That the EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) be updated to consider the affect on staff and customers.
 - (v) That the book stock in each Gateway be developed in consultation with staff and the community.
 - (vi) That the proposed extension to Rowntree Park Café be agreed.

REASON: So that the library service can continue to develop its Explore vision.