

---

Meeting	Children, Education & Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date	8 January 2019
Present	Councillors D Taylor (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Crawshaw, Wells and Steward (Substitute)
Apologies	Councillors Douglas and Jackson

---

### **35. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

Councillor Dave Taylor declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 4, Explore York Libraries & Archives Mutual Ltd Service Level Agreement: Bi-annual Update, as his employer, City Screen, was involved in the Big City Read.

### **36. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Children, Education & Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee held on 7 November 2018 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the chair, subject to:

- Councillor Steward's declaration of interest, in item 25, be noted as a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 6.
- That bullet point 4 in item 30, School Improvement and Ofsted Update on Schools Performance, includes the voice of primaries and Local Authority maintained schools.

### **37. Public Participation**

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

### **38. Explore York Libraries & Archives Mutual Ltd Service Level Agreement: Bi-annual Update**

Members considered a report that provided an update on Explore York Libraries and Archives activities over the last six months.

The Chief Executive of Explore York Libraries and Archives gave an update on their performance, achievements and cultural activities. Members noted that:

- The new Centre at Burnholme was offering a variety of activities, events and services to the local community.
- New Earswick Library was now located in the Folk Hall and provided longer opening hours.
- The Haxby and Wigginton mobile Library would be relocated to a static building that would be shared with the scouts, on Ethel Ward Playing Fields.
- Acomb Primary School won the Summer Reading Challenge Schools Cup for the third year in a row.
- The 2019 Summer Reading Challenge, Space Chase, would commemorate 50 years since the landing on the moon.
- The Reading Pictures Seeing Stories Festival was funded by the Arts Council and allowed local artists to hold various workshops to encourage children to engage with art and culture.
- 5000 copies of Matt Haig's book The Radleys was distributed for free at various venues throughout York and the events and activities held around the Big City Read theme were very popular.
- Funding from the Arts Council allowed York Explore to partner with the Riding Lights Theatre Company to deliver a piece of pop up participatory theatre in all of Explores premises and Askham Grange HMP. This was very popular and customers were impressed with the quality of the experience.
- In October 2018 all libraries became Fun Palaces for a weekend. This national event allowed local communities to work together to deliver a range of activities and due to its success in York, this would continue to run every year.

The Chief Executive answered Members questions regarding the refurbishment of the Reading Cafe in Rowntrees Park, the Big City Read and she confirmed that further statistical data

breakdowns could be provided to allow Members to gain a better understanding on the engagement of children at each event, particularly the Summer Reading Challenge.

Members were informed that officers were working with communities to better understand their requirements and following questions around the tender process for the running of the libraries, the Assistant Director of Communities and Culture informed Members that the procurement process had been extended slightly to utilize the Councils competitive procurement process with negotiation. Officers were currently working with the bidders to refine their bids and the tender period would close on 28 January 2019.

Members thanked the Chief Executive for her update

- Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That additional statistical data be provided in future reports, particularly around the Summer Reading Challenge.

Reason: To help monitor the service received under the contract.

### **39. York Museums Trust - Partnership Delivery Plan: Bi-annual Update**

Members considered a report that provided a bi annual update on York Museums Trust (YMT) objectives and activities from July 2018 to December 2018.

The Chief Executive of YMT and the Head of Strategy, Finance and Corporate Services were in attendance to provide an update on their performance and achievements. They highlighted their key activities and Members noted that:

- The redevelopment of the Castle Museum and the Castle Gateway continued in close collaboration with City of York Council and the Castle Gateway Masterplan. The project had been accelerated with help from the Leeds City Region pooled rates bid and a topographical survey of the site, a desktop archaeological survey and a conservation and condition survey had all taken place, including a costed options appraisal which had given the Trust a

realistic estimate of costs and scope. Members were invited to visit the site and view the plans.

- York St Mary's Church was used in the summer to consult with over 4,000 visitors and York residents on the future plans for the Castle Museum and officers were now in the process of appointing a lead design architect and building services leads to develop plans to Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stage 1 and an expected Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid in 2019.
- Yorkshire's Jurassic World exhibition won an excellence in media award and it continued to attract a significant number of visitors.
- The events held at the York Art Gallery had proved to be popular with a version of Strata – Rock – Dust – Stars shown in Panama, raising York's international profile and the Sea is the Limit exhibition received a column in the Yorkshire Post.

The Head of Strategy, Finance and Corporate Services tabled a document that highlighted the analysis of visitors to the Castle Museum, Yorkshire Museum and York Art Gallery between 2017/18 and 2018/19, (the visitor analysis can be found online in the January papers of this meeting). The visitor numbers were discussed and in response to Members questions the Chief Executive and Head of Strategy, Finance and Corporate Services confirmed:

- They were in negotiations with City of York Council and the Rose Theatre to ensure their concerns, particularly the height of the hoardings, were addressed and mitigated before it returned.
- Officers would be reviewing the learning and schools offer including the recording of statistical data around school visits and would provide an update at a future meeting.
- Officers would be working to reinvigorate the volunteering offer alongside the castle capital project to strategically target particular communities.
- The customer service and visitor experience scores could be benchmarked nationally.
- The capital works programme included funds to address the 'tired' state of the Yorkshire Museum building decor.

Members thanked the Chief Executive and the Head of Strategy, Finance and Corporate Services for their update and Members welcomed the continued free access to the Museum Gardens.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To help monitor the service received under the contract

#### **40. CVS Bi-annual Service Level Agreement Update**

Members considered a report that provided a bi annual update on York CVS activities between April 2018 and September 2018.

The new Chief Executive and the Chair of Trustees were in attendance to provide an update on their performance and achievements. They highlighted the key activities that had taken place and Members noted that York CVS was a social action organisation that took steps to make positive change, challenge issues and grow new ideas by supporting local charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises.

The Chief Executive highlighted York CVS' framework and gave examples of how they:

- Supported the sector to survive and thrive.
- Represented the sector and provided a voice.
- Delivered services with a social impact.

Members noted the range of services York CVS provided which included issuing a monthly newsletter to 1100 individuals to ensure communication continued throughout the sectors.

The Chief Executive confirmed she would be maintaining and developing relationships with all partners whilst understanding the challenges, opportunities and concerns of the voluntary and community sector in York.

In response to Members questions the Chief Executive and Chair of Trustees confirmed:

- 80 skilled volunteers were currently engaged and trained through the Ready for Anything arrangements. These arrangements were due to change and would be developed through the North Yorkshire forum.
- They were currently working with two medical groups and would be looking to increase this service.

The Chief Executive highlighted their main concerns, which included funding. Members thanked the Chief Executive and Chair of the Trustees for their update.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the committee on the activity of York CVS.

#### **41. Second Quarter Finance & Performance Monitoring Report**

Members considered a report that analysed the latest performance for 2018/19 and forecast the financial outturn position by reference to the service plans and budgets for all of the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate Director of Children, Education & Communities.

The Finance Manager gave an update and highlighted the finance and performance headlines and confirmed the projected overspend for the year at quarter two for the directorate was £869k. He brought to Members attention the significant pressures within children social care particularly around supporting the current cohort of looked after children, home to school transport within Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the estimated overspend on the high needs costs.

The Finance Manager and Assistant Director of Children's Services answered Members questions where it was noted that:

- The transition of healthy child services into the Local Area Teams had lead to vacancies which were currently being recruited to.
- The projected overspend of £30k within ward committees was administered from the double taxation budget and not from individual ward budgets.

Members raised their concerns around the Home to School Transport projected overspend of £651k and officers confirmed this was partly due to a significant increase of SEN pupils over the last two years that required transport. Members noted that there were some budget savings proposed but due to some challenges highlighted by neighbouring authorities, City of York's proposals were currently on hold.

Members thanked officers for their update.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the Committee on the latest financial and performance position for 2018/19.

#### **42. CYC Bi-annual Update on Safeguarding & Looked After Children**

Members considered a report regarding safeguarding children trends and activity of City of York Council.

The Assistant Director of Children's Specialist Services was in attendance to give an update and Members noted the senior manager staff changes that had taken place and that:

- The last Ofsted full inspection of City of York Children's Social Care took place in November 2016 and was graded good in most areas.
- City of York were likely to be subject to a short inspection and/or focused visit in 2019 under the new Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) Framework. The inspection would last a week and focused visits would consider a specific area of service.
- An inspection planning group met on a fortnightly basis to ensure service readiness.
- A Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi agency response to sexual abuse in the family setting took place between 24 September and 28 September 2018, where services in York were praised for their work to protect children and young people experiencing sexual abuse within their families.
- Following the JTAI officers were focussed on analysing and disseminating findings and incorporating areas for development into on going service improvement plans.
- Senior officers had their annual conversation with Ofsted in November which proved to be a very positive discussion.
- York was well advanced in the move to the new Safeguarding Partnership arrangements.
- There were positive improvements in the timelines of single assessments and the percentage of those completed within 45 days continued to increase.

- 95.8% of child protection case conferences were within 15 days, City of York's highest outturn in 6 years.
- The number of children in care remained stable.
- Officers remained committed to ensuring low manageable case loads of around 16 cases per Social Worker.
- The 2018 U Matter Survey was yet to be published but it had showed that the voice of a child continued to be notably strong.
- York foster carers were one of the highest paid in the country and officers were working to recruit and retain more foster carers.

Members noted the required ongoing improvements and that officers were working with partners to address key priority areas within the timeliness of health assessments, placement stability, domestic abuse and reasons for children being subject to child protection plans.

Members noted the service development priorities for the next six months which included demand management, strengthening permanence and developing strong and effective social work practice.

In answer to Members questions officers confirmed the challenges they faced to achieve permanence and placement sufficiency. Members noted the importance of partnership working and discussions took place around foster carers including the support and recruitment process.

Members thanked the Assistant Director for her update.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the committee on the latest work relating to Safeguarding and Looked After Children for City of York Council.

#### **43. Workplan 2018/19**

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year.



Following a discussion around Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) it was agreed that any KPI's that were discontinued should be removed from the list.

Cllr Crawshaw confirmed that he and Cllr Rawlings had met to identify where the gaps were around support for early help and that they would be discussing this further with the Scrutiny Officer.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that he had met with the Head of Housing and Head of Communities and Equalities to discuss resident involvement and an overview report on the topic would be brought to the March meeting.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved subject to the above amendments/additions.

Reason: To keep the Committee's work plan updated.

Councillor D Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.05 pm].