

## **Report to Children, Education & Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee from the Executive Member for Culture, Leisure & Communities**

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Since being appointed to the Executive for this portfolio, I have been out across York visiting organisations from York Theatre Royal to Yearsley Pool, from the 68 Centre to Sanderson House Community Centre. It's a real privilege that a large number of organisations have opened their doors and taken the time to tell me about the work they do. I look forward to meeting and hearing about many more organisations in the coming months.

### **New Budget – Areas of Investment:**

The new budget proposals outline significant investment within or impacting the Culture, Leisure and Communities portfolio. The investment marks a shift in priorities at the Council and heralds an exciting time for the Culture, Leisure & Communities portfolio.

Some of the key proposals to be agreed include:

- £43K for new recycling, litter and dog waste bins;
- £250K to create a new Safer Communities Fund;
- £40K to create an additional Community Engagement Officer to enable faster action to create local area working, safer and inclusive communities
- £50K to facilitate the Purple Flag scheme, helping foster a safer, more family friendly and inclusive City Centre;
- £100K to develop connections with communities most impacted by EU exit to better understand their needs, and to take forward the community hubs work.

### **Community Venues**

Since taking on this portfolio, I have visited a number of community venues and met the wonderful volunteers who have taken on the responsibility of managing these buildings from the Council. These community venues are providing the backbone to some exciting development projects and activities across the city.

It is important to recognise the critical role of the voluntary management committees, as without these our community venues would sit empty. They ensure venues are safe, well maintained and welcoming to enable community activity to take place. This is why the Council continues to support them, in particular to ensure there is a network which enables people to share best practice and learn from each other. Our Community Venue's Coordinator post will continue to facilitate this network.

The sustainability of community venues is a key focus for us and I am pleased to see how effective the Council's small grants process is at empowering the management committees to make investments and deliver projects. This balanced with commercial lettings gives the venues a solid financial basis moving forward.

### **Human Rights and Equalities**

I attended my first meeting of the Human Rights Board in June. We received the draft final report on the board's first piece of work, on young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The report is important because it draws on the voice of young people, as well as employers and professionals who work in this area. The report makes a range of recommendations aimed at ensuring that all young people should be able to access suitable education, training and employment. Once finalised, this report will go to the council's Corporate Management Team and from there to the appropriate agencies to ensure implementation.

Going forward, the board will be focussing on homelessness and on hate crime in the city. We had the first meeting of the homelessness working group on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019, where we started exploring homelessness from a human rights perspective.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting Laura Mingins, Head of Stakeholder Engagement at Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Among many matters, we discussed how as a Council we are promoting human rights and how we can work more closely with EHRC on delivering projects and sharing best practice from York.

### **Leisure Facilities**

I have recently visited both Energise and Yearsley Swimming Pool and have been impressed with the outlook of staff, who have a clear understanding and desire to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents in York.

As part of the service contract, GLL work with officers to produce a Sport and Healthwise Development Plan, which sets out in the forthcoming year the actions to deliver the main aim of getting more people, more active, more often.

To date GLL's performance has been good, with some highlights being:

- 91% of actions completed in 2018/19 development plan
- Customer satisfaction was overall 93%
- Over 500,000 visits last year
- Growth in health and fitness membership from 1,868 to 2,524
- Growth in swimming lessons from 1,396 to 1,546

- Investment of over £340k in new fitness equipment and giant inflatables for fun family sessions

Looking to the year ahead, we will open two new public leisure facilities. Burnholme Leisure Centre and the Stadium Leisure Centre. Both will have impressive new facilities, managed by GLL and will provide public memberships as well as access on a play and pay basis.

**Burnholme Leisure Centre** will be opening a new fitness suite and dance studio with the latest fitness equipment, whilst complimenting the refurbished sports hall, studio and outdoor grass and synthetic pitches.

The **Stadium Leisure Centre** will boast three new pools, a large fitness suite, dance and fitness studios, sports hall with viewing gallery, indoor Clip and Climb course as well as outdoor activities and 3G artificial football pitches.

A big part of both centres will be to work with the NHS and GPs to ensure that the Healthwise exercise referral programme is successful helping to tackle obesity.

### **Explore Libraries**

This is a fantastic time to take on the responsibility for our cities libraries and archives service, with the appointment of the new 15-year service contract to Explore.

I have already visited many libraries and met with the CEO and Chair of Explore York Board to understand what their priorities are for the coming year.

I am very optimistic about the future of libraries in York with the focus on co-locating libraries at the heart of our communities to create hubs, which provide vital advice and information to those who need us most. The vision that was co-produced with residents is clear, simple and one that will see our library service become stronger in the future.

The Council has made commitments to improve the Library Learning Centre's at Acomb and Clifton. Similar to the Centre@Burnholme, this is likely to involve co-locating with other like-minded partners to provide centres with multiple services.

Looking ahead, I am excited to note that two new library facilities will be opening in the next 12 months;

**The York Community Stadium, Community Hub** - This will be an innovative type of library aimed at attracting individuals and groups who would not traditionally use libraries, and giving users access to books, IT equipment, free Wi-Fi and a range of learning opportunities, whilst enjoying a drink or snack from the community hub café.

It will be based alongside other community partners in the Community Hub, which is a large atrium in the East Stand that links the stadium to the new leisure centre entrance.

Explore have already started working closely with the York City Football Club Foundation and York City Knights Foundation and have secured a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund of £57,500. This will fund a one-year joint project based around the importance of sport to our communities.

**Haxby and Wigginton Library** - I understand that since the closure of the old library in Haxby, officers have been working hard to identify a co-location opportunity. I am pleased that we are close to securing a partnership with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Haxby and Wigginton Scout Group to develop and extend the scout headquarters building to include a new reading café, looking out onto Ethel Ward play park and playing fields. I feel this will provide residents with a fantastic new facility and be as successful as other reading cafés in York.

In terms of Explore's performance under the new contract, we have just had the first quarters (April-June 2019) report and I am very impressed by their performance in key areas, especially in:

- Visits were +8% up on previous April/May
- Archives researchers (people viewing original archives in the reading room) were +30% on previous April/May, thanks largely to all the collections which have been catalogued and made available
- Volunteer hours were up +9% on previous April/May, across a wide range of branches and roles

## **York Learning**

York Learning continues to deliver a range of learning programmes to support people into employment, to improve their skills and to support their personal development.

The service continues to be funded almost exclusively from external contract funding and fee income. For the academic year 2018/19 this is in the region £3.1m, an increase of about £300k on the previous year.

Partnership and sub-contractor working is strong and has good development routes for learners into and from the programmes, enabling the service to meet a wide range of learners interest and needs.

Over the past 12 months York Learning has been working with North Yorkshire County Council and East Riding County Council. This was formalised during the academic year with the Head of Service being seconded to North Yorkshire for 4 days a week, to support service developments and to enhance collaboration. Moving forward there are proposals to create a Joint Head of Service and developing closer

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working practices and sharing of resources. East Riding and York Learning also worked together in a project relating to tutor development. This was well received and the teams presented their project at a National Advanced Practitioners event due to its success and good practice.

The Family Learning team were invited to lead on the community strand in the Social Mobility project which is running in the west of the city. This is aimed specifically at closing “The Word Gap” between disadvantaged children’s outcomes and their peers at age 5, which has been a persistent problem in York. The service has been successful in securing a grant of £50,613 over three years from Shine, an education charity based in Leeds. York Learning propose to build capacity by identifying and training “Community Learning Champions” such as mid-day supervisors and TAs as well as “experienced” volunteers and Family Learning learners. The service will be providing them with networking opportunities and basic IAG (information, advice and guidance) training. This will promote engagement with families, recruiting them onto bespoke Family Learning provision and other appropriate learning paths.

I would like to direct members to the York Learning Strategic/Service Plan 2019/20 that will be coming to my Decision Session on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019.

### **Ward Committees**

A report will be coming to the Executive in August setting out, amongst other things, how the additional funding provided to wards is to be allocated.

The next four years will be an exciting period for ward committees. From the Safer Communities Fund to additional litter bins, I’m keen to see continued innovation in this area, learning from other authorities and ensuring greater power and decision making is devolved to communities.

I am pleased that you are looking at the issues to be covered in this paper on tonight’s agenda.

## **Sport and Active Leisure**

The City of York Council's Sport and Active Leisure team are now up to full strength with a manager and two sports development officers, following the recent transfer of officers from the Public Health YorWellbeing Service into the Early Intervention and Prevention team.

Sport England's latest Active Lives Survey published in April 2019 shows that York has one of the highest percentages of people who are achieving the Chief Medical Officers guidelines for 150 minutes physically active a week, with 73.1%, compared with the national 62.6% and regional 60.6% averages. In terms of ranking, this places York joint tenth highest local authority out of 326 local authorities.

York has only 14.4% of the York adult population doing less than 30 minutes of activity per week compared with the national 25.1% and regional 26.9% averages and ranks York as fourth lowest in the country.

This continues to show a steady increase in those becoming active and a reduction in those not participating. It also places us highest and lowest respectively in the Yorkshire Region which is a first!

The team have continued to manage the sports facilities at Burnholme Sports Centre, offering continued access in the evenings and at weekends throughout the year. Works to the sports centre started in March this year. The new sports centre is being developed around the former school sports hall and gym on the Burnholme site. This will complement the facilities at the new community stadium, Energise Leisure Centre and Yearsley swimming pool.

When complete in November 2019, it will have a new gym, fitness suites, upgraded changing for indoor and outdoor activities, and a refurbished sports hall. The multi-use games area (MUGA) and sports hall users have been maintained throughout the start of these works.

Last month, saw improvements to the grass pitches. The turf has been stripped off and the pitches levelled. They have also been re-seeded, new fencing is in place and the pitches will open in late summer 2020.

As well as improvements to the pitches and open space, the cycle track to neighbouring Derwenthorpe and the Sustrans cycle track beyond will reopen later this year with improved surfaces and lighting, which will also promote sustainable transport and a healthy lifestyle for local residents.

A highlight for last month, saw the start of the £1.3m works on the Ashfield Site developing a new home for Bishopthorpe White Rose Football Club with the installation of eight new football pitches and a pavilion on land opposite York College and Askham Bar Park and Ride site.

The service also continues to support community sports clubs to develop their facilities, assisting with project planning, writing funding applications and where funding is available, supporting the projects with Section 106 developer's outdoor sports contributions.

I attended the Active York Sports Awards on 26 June celebrating the sporting achievements of our active city. To be eligible for nomination for any Active York Sports Award you must have been born in, train or compete within City of York Council's boundaries. Nominees will have achieved significant success at city, county, regional, national or international level or made a significant contribution to the city.

Awards were presented in the following categories and the winners follow:

**Young Sportsperson** – Lucy Hadaway (City of York Athletics Club)

**Young Disabled Sportsperson** – Matthew Brough (York Disability Tennis Network)

**Junior Team/Club Award** - Huntington Primary Academy Football A Team

**Student Sportsperson** – Beth Moulam (Boccia and Race Running)

**Sportsperson** – Connor Robinson (York City Knights)

**Disabled Sportsperson** – Antonia Bunyan (Goalball)

**Team/Club Award** – University of York Women's Rugby Club

**Active School of the Year** – Hempland Primary School

**Active in York Award** – York Tandem Club

**Coach of the Year** – James Ford (York City Knights)

**Volunteer of the Year** – Jenni Fitton (City of York Hockey Club)

**Outstanding Contribution to Sport** - Rod Skelton (Groundsman at Heworth Amateur Rugby League Football Club)

**Active York's Services to Sport** – Geoff Barraclough (Athletics Coach and Active York Board Member).

The Sport and Active Leisure team continue to support the York Older People's Assembly 50+ Festival Programme. This year marks the 15th year of the festival (Friday 20 September - Sunday 6 October) and as a long standing contributor to the programme wanted to coordinate a physical activity and sporting activity every day of the festival. So this would be 17 days with at least 34 opportunities. We know that the population of the city of York is very physically active, although this is less so, as an individual gets older.

The service is continuing to target activities to those who participate the least and those who will get the most benefit from physical activity and sport. Some recent examples include the service has recently training seven volunteers in Nordic Walk Leader training after identifying these volunteers who attend weekly Nordic Walking sessions within the city. Six of the volunteers coming from referrals through the city's GP Exercise Referral Programme and are women recovering from breast cancer. The volunteers now continue to attend weekly giving invaluable support to the new referrals and keep the continuity of the sessions. These sessions have over 20 attendees each week. A further new sessions is in the planning to deliver a Nordic Walking group at Rawcliffe Country Park.

We are currently working towards activating more physical activity and sport in park and open spaces to increase the opportunities to get active. We are currently working with some local schools, consulting with families to find out what they would like to see more of in their local community. In order to see where the gaps are, and what we can do to create sustainable activities within each community moving forward.

### **Volunteering – People Helping People**

Members will be aware of *the People Helping People Strategy* launched in November 2017. This set out three areas of focus for developing volunteering in the city:

- Health and wellbeing
- Loneliness and social isolation
- Supporting children and young people to reach their potential.

York's decision to adopt the internationally recognised Cities of Service impact volunteering model has continued to help us to address shared city priorities including loneliness and social isolation, health and wellbeing and young people achieving their potential. The cross sector 'People Helping Partnership' is embedding social action across the city, through volunteers helping to augment the design and delivery of public services. Our city wide approach to catalyse greater levels of impact volunteering has in particular enabled us to address loneliness and is demonstrating measurable results.

Goodgym is an excellent example of this, reflecting a civil society response to a public problem. Goodgym offers committed runners the chance to do regular runs to make social visits to isolated older people who act as 'coaches' – motivating someone to run on a cold winter's day when they might not have otherwise.

Their outcomes are impressive:

- 93% of isolated older people feel more connected after being visited by a Goodgym runner,
- 92% of runners agree that Goodgym increases their motivation to exercise.

GoodGym attracts over 50 runners per week and is now fully self-sufficient and sustainable. To date, 2,767 good deeds have been done by 384 runners, including 215 coach visits to an older person, over 200 group runs to help community projects and 60 missions to help older people on household tasks. A walking GoodGym has recently been introduced to enable GoodGym to be more inclusive and we are currently working on an innovative home from hospital initiative, to further address the risk of loneliness on leaving hospital.



Building on the success of the pilot Community Health Champions project and funded through the Nesta Connected Communities Innovation Fund, we are now entering year two of the programme. So far we have trained and deployed 43 new Community Health Champions against our target of 65 volunteers by the end of March 2020.

The volunteers have healthy conversations as part of their everyday role helping individuals to improve their lifestyle behavior, their mental wellbeing and reduce social isolation. Some Champions also go on to develop 'Impact Volunteering' projects. Currently, we have 26 Community Health Champion initiatives ranging from 'Food of the Fortnight' at the Red Tower, to Tai Chi at various locations across the city, to providing one to one support for individuals looking to improve their mental health.

Finally, the recent Big Community Challenge during June Volunteers Week was an excellent example of the work and impact of York Cares 'employer supported volunteers' in the city. This year's challenge united over 200 volunteers from across businesses, schools and community to help transform Clarence Gardens near York Hospital and The Hut with a focus on promoting health, wellbeing and social inclusion. An impact volunteering analysis of this project is currently being conducted, but a conservative estimate would be over £200,000 of volunteer time and materials donated by business.

### **Make It York**

I am looking forward to working with Make It York on its new strategic priorities:

- City positioning and profile-raising to strengthen York's brand
- Attracting new business and inward investment
- Ensuring an exciting city-centre
- Delivering the cultural strategy

In the area of tourism, Make It York are currently producing a new destination management plan for the city, building on the successful initiatives taken last year, including the *Only in York* campaign. As the council undertakes a refresh of its economic strategy, I will be working with Make It York to develop this work into a full tourism strategy for the city.

I am aware of the city's successful events programme including the events that MIY are responsible for such as Bloom! and Mediale. I would like to build on this success through an events strategy for the city, sitting under the cultural strategy, which will guide us in attracting appropriate world-class events for York residents to enjoy, as well as boosting our current offer to visitors of York.

## **Tourism**

In terms of key tourism indicators, the Council's open data platform show a year on year increase in 2018/19, compared to 17/18, in:

- Visits to large attractions: from 2,562,582 to 3,125,153
- Visits to small attractions: from 294,107 to 299,597
- Parliament Street footfall: from 8,049,691 to 8,445,834

The latest Visit York analysis for May this year shows some sectors, like accommodation, reporting gains compared to May last year whilst footfall showed a slight decrease. Footfall through the city centre went down by 9% compared to May 2018 but the overall year to date footfall is on a par with the last year.

The number of hotel room nights sold grew by 8% compared to May 2018, with almost 6,000 additional room nights sold, exceeding the growth in supply since this time last year. The proportion of hotel rooms occupied has also gone up, by 5%, continuing the positive trend from April. Average room rate remained on par with May 2018, at £109.94.

For the year to date, all three measures are showing positive results with slight but steady increases. Continuing the trend of this year, small attractions continued to attract more visitors throughout 2019 with 17% increase in visits in May vs the same month in 2018. As in previous months, the results are very mixed with 12 attractions reporting growth and 10 reporting a decline.

Visits to attractions made with a York Pass increased (4%) compared to May 2018, continuing to show a positive trend after the launch of the re-branded York Pass on 2 April 2019. April 2019 results have shown a 60% increase in sessions on [visityork.org](http://visityork.org) compared to the previous year.

Myself and the new Liberal Democrat/Green administration are keen to listen to residents concerns in relation to how visitors contribute to the city, whilst acknowledging the benefits of a thriving tourism industry in York. From Purple Flag to exploring future consideration for a tourism levy/tax, this administration is taking an active lead in finding innovative ways to improve resident engagement, whilst also tackling the underlying challenges such as anti-social behaviour.

## **Cultural Strategy**

After a great deal of engagement and consultation, the cultural leaders group distilled down the "big ideas" for the cultural strategy. These were approved by the Executive in February on behalf of the city.

Implementation plans are now being drawn up and discussed more widely. I am pleased to see that work is forging ahead to progress the key ideas such as the cultural passport for York's young people.

I look forward to a full version of the strategy coming back to us in the autumn after which the strategy can be properly launched. I am keen to ensure that all residents can see tangible ways in which this work will benefit them, from the 'every child an artist' aspiration feeding into the cultural passport work, to looking at how resident's weekend might evolve in the future to ensure wider and broader engagement in York's culture and arts.

### **The Armed Forces Covenant**

I was pleased to attend the recent meeting of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Forum. Following detailed and careful research with our armed forces community, the Forum is putting in place an action plan to meet the community's needs. This will include a focus on:

- Improving our understanding of our armed forces community and their needs
- Improving the training of our staff in order to better meet those needs
- Working with employers to encourage them in their employment practices around reservists
- Working with our schools to better meet the needs of armed forces community families
- Working with health professionals and organisations to ensure suitable care packages are in place to meet the needs of the armed forces community
- Continuing to improve our response to the housing needs of the armed forces community
- Helping to improve the transition from military to civilian life

I am delighted that the city is continuing its close partnership with the armed forces.

This was evident in the events for Armed Forces Day where the programme included free activities for the armed forces community including tickets to attractions, a family film showing and a meal at the Mansion House hosted by the Lord Mayor. Free bus travel was provided and a range of discounts.

The Lord Mayor also hosted a reception at the start of the week at the Mansion House where we raised the AFD flag and presented the AFD standards to veterans.

### **Unesco**

The city recently submitted its four-yearly report on its achievements under the Unesco City of Media Arts designation (see: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/d0e99197->

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[8f5a-443a-9ca9-813d167b7f74](#) ). I am pleased that the report has been given the highest rating by Unesco.

One of the main planks of the designation so far has been the Mediale festival. You can see the evaluation of the first festival here: <https://yorkmediale.com/news/ym2018-festival-evaluation> .

I am pleased to note that, with audiences of 65k and a further 91 million online, York Mediale immediately became the UK's largest ever media arts festival. This success is reflected in an Arts Council grant to the 2020 festival of £284k.

I am pleased that Mediale is working with us on the Castle Gateway project and I intend to work ever more closely with the team to maximise the benefits to the city of the innovation and creativity that they bring.