
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE & CULTURE AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	5 JUNE 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS CRISP (CHAIR), BENNETT (VICE-CHAIR), HOGG, KING AND VASSIE

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they may have had in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Hogg declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 9 (Museums' Trust Annual Performance Report) as he was a member of the Museums' Trust and in Agenda Item 6 (Lifelong Learning & Culture Plan) as he worked for the National Railway Museum.

Councillor King declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 6 (Lifelong Learning & Culture Plan) as he was a Member of the Theatre Board.

Councillor Vassie declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 5 (Discretionary Rate Relief 2007/8-2008/9: Appeals) as he was a member of the York Gymnastics Foundation (this appeal was withdrawn prior to the meeting)

2. **MINUTES**

There was a query regarding the minutes from the meeting held on 27 March 2007 as no one at the meeting had attended this. The Democracy Officer agreed to clarify this and include the minutes in the next agenda.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that Mr Houseman, Chair of York District Sports Foundation had registered to speak on Agenda Item 5 (Discretionary Rate Relief – Appeals).

Mr Houseman raised concerns regarding the changes to the Discretionary Rate Relief criteria and said that it singled out sports clubs. He claimed that the new changes made decisions first and consultations second. He asked that consultation took place before hand and said that obtaining Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) status was a significant problem for clubs that relied on volunteers.

4. **LOAN TO CUBE MEDIA**

Members considered a report that sought approval to make a loan to Accessible Arts. Accessible Arts will use this to undertake further

consultation and to prepare business and project plans in support of their bid to the Community Places programme of the Big Lottery Fund for funding to develop the Melbourne Centre.

Officers reported that in order to apply for Lottery funding there is a substantial amount of work and planning to do. They need to have a ten year business plan in place and they want the loan to enable them to prepare that plan.

Members said that they were not asking for a large sum of money and clarified with Officers that Accessible Arts could repay the loan. Officers said that they would.

Members then considered the following options:

- To grant the loan
- To refuse the loan

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- Approve a loan of £9k to Accessible Arts.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: So that the preparation and consultation work by Accessible Arts, on behalf of the Melbourne Centre Partnership, can go ahead and lead to an application to the Big Lottery Fund (and other appropriate funders).

5. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF - APPEALS

Members considered a report that asked the Executive Member to decide on the cases of particular organisations against the Officers' decision not to award them Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) for 2007/08 and 2008/9 and to agree an amendment to the DRR criteria.

The Officer responded to the comments made by Mr Houseman earlier in the meeting and he said that the changes in the Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) status were brought forward by the Government specifically to benefit sports clubs. The application process is not onerous and Officers are ready to assist clubs applying. CASC status guarantees 80% mandatory relief for clubs and also benefits the Council as it increases the Government contribution to the relief paid from 75% to 85%. He stated that although most eligible clubs had now obtained CASC status there remained 11 eligible clubs who had not completed the process.

Officers reported that there had been a mistake in the application of the criterion regarding reserves to the applications of the York Gymnastics Foundation and the 1st Huntington Scout Group. This had now been corrected and these two organisations had now been awarded Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR). Their appeals had, subsequently, been withdrawn.

Members said that they welcomed the change to the criteria but agreed that all the clubs involved should be consulted and help with paperwork should be available.

Members then considered the following options:

- To make the change to the criteria as set out in the report
- To retain the criteria unchanged

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Determine the Appeals as follows:
 - (a) Friends of Hopgrove Playing Fields Association – the appeal be upheld and the Association be granted Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) for 2007/08 and 2008/09;
 - (b) York Gymnastics Foundation – the appeal was withdrawn as a mistake was made in the calculations and therefore they were awarded DRR;
 - (c) 1st Huntington Scout Group – the appeal was withdrawn as a mistake was made in the calculations and therefore they were awarded DRR;
- (ii) Agree the revised criteria set out in paragraph 18 of the report with the caveat that clubs are helped and supported with form filling.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order to conclude the DRR process for 2007-9 and establish an amended procedure for 2009-11.

6. LIFELONG LEARNING AND LEISURE PLAN

Members considered a report that invited them to comment on the draft Learning and Culture Plan 2007-10.

Officers reported that this was one of two strategic plans that underpins the Lifelong Learning and Culture Plan 2007-2010. It is a working report that can be amended to reflect changes.

Members agreed that they were happy with the plan and said that they may adjust it at a later date if needed as there may be developments during the course of the year. They would like to have the opportunity to bring more events to York , exploit intellectual property and further promote the arts. encourage

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- Agree the Lifelong and Culture Plan subject to amendment to reflect feedback from the consultation
- Agree that the document be revisited by Members in a few months time (no fixed time agreed)

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To enable this strategic plan to be published and to guide the development of service plans.

7. HERITAGE LOTTERY BID FOR CYCLE OF MYSTERY PLAYS 2008-2012

Members considered a report that sought approval for the submission of an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) by the Council, as a lead partner within the Mystery Plays Co-ordinating Committee, to support the community and education programme of the York Cycle of Mystery Plays.

Officers reported that no permission was necessary to use the medieval scripts. They said that the Mystery Plays were very easy to promote and students were easily involved. The report asks the Council to be the lead partner for the bid as all the other possible partners already have bids in with this fund. Officers said that the plays would benefit the City as a whole and have strategic importance.

Members then considered the following options:

- approve submission of the bid
- refuse submission of the bid

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- agreed that a bid be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund by the Council, as the lead partner within the Mystery Plays Co-ordinating Committee.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To secure funds to develop an education and community programme for the next three productions of the York Cycle of Mystery Plays

8. 2006/07 CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT

Members considered a report that informed Members of the final outturn position of the 2006/07 Capital Programme.

Officers reported that the key item was the building of a new swimming pool on the Oaklands School site. This had been a significant change to the programme.

Members asked the Officer what was happening with the Danebury Drive Allotments and the Officer clarified that various improvements had been made to make the allotments more amenable and secure.

Members then asked the Officer to clarify whether there had been full consultation with users of Yearsley Pool regarding the timescales for closure for refurbishment and the Officer said that there had.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Note the updates to the scheme detailed in the report
- (ii) Agree the scheme slippage set out in the report and summarised in Annex 1
- (iii) Approve the revised capital programme as set out in Annex 1 of the report

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order to allow the effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

9. MUSEUM'S TRUST ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Members considered a report that updated Members on the current progress of the York Museums Trust (YMT) towards meeting the targets agreed in the Partnership Delivery Plan.

The Chief Executive of YMT updated that YMT had been working very closely with Council Officers with regard to cultural activities within the City. Yorkshire Museums had developed some strategically important partnerships with the Yorkshire Regional Museums' Hub and the British Museum Partnership UK and worked effectively with other organisations within the City and region. Some of the headline achievements of the Trust had been The Constantine exhibition and the Castle Museum Projects. Officers reported that there had been 41,000 more visitors at Kirkgate than last year and people had been spending more time there thus helping to re-establish York as a City that can provide high quality exhibitions.

It was reported that the Art Gallery had gone from strength to strength and visitor numbers had increased steadily and were now in the region of 160,000 which indicated a very large growth. The Chief Executive of YMT said that this was partly connected with the constantly changing programme of exhibitions.

Future projects included reinvesting in the Castle Museum and over the next three years the following exhibitions were planned:

- The 1960's – due to open in April 2008
- Big China Exhibition – in response to the Olympics
- Workrooms – an innovative project that will include several themed rooms including a kitchen, an armoury and a sewing room

The Chief Executive of YMT explained that they were also very proud of their Territories project which was aimed at 'hard to reach' groups.

Members congratulated YMT on the increase in visitor figures and asked for more information on the 'A Thousand Stories' project. The Chief Executive said that they had put in a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the refurbishment of the Yorkshire Museum and to open up St Mary's Abbey precinct to the public. 'A Thousand Stories' was basically a revamp of the Yorkshire Museum to give it flexibility and to create spaces for changing exhibitions. It was also to help with buildings maintenance and modernisation.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- Note the performance of the York Museums' Trust

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order to provide feedback to the Trust.

10. SERVICE PLAN YEAR END MONITORING REPORT

Members considered a report that analysed performance by reference to the service plan, the budget and the performance indicators for all of the services funded through the leisure and culture budget.

Members said that they were very pleased to see that York's Sports' Coaches Association was popular with young people and the Officer said that this has been set up to run relevant qualifications and also to provide support within schools on how to backfill coach's positions.

Members raised concerns that there has been underspends in several areas linked to sport and active leisure and Officers commented that there has been significant extra cost incurred in other sports' areas with the unexpected temporary closure of Edmund and Wilson Gymnasium and the provision of other facilities over this period and that it had been necessary to produce managed savings to balance these and overspends incurred elsewhere within the Learning, Culture and Children's Services Department.

Members said that there was a clear indication that better communication was needed regarding the School's Out Programme and Officers said that they were trying to communicate a broader programme for School's Out and increase the range and awareness of activities for young people to get involved in.

In response to Members questions regarding York's action plan for community sports engagement with London 2012 Officers said that they will now be drawing up an action plan. They said that the information and direction from both national and regional sources was arriving very slowly. They were conscious that York could miss out on opportunities if it waited further. Officers said that they were attending a Sport England workshop in July and they were hoping to have more information after this event. Officers also said that there was a need for a pro-active approach and it was important to look to the years after 2012 as well.

Officers said that the situation regarding the allotments was very good and they were very nearly full. There had been a lot of investment in the sites to encourage use including improvements to drainage and security. Members said that they had met many people from the allotments and they were very happy with the facilities provided.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- Note the performance of services within the directorate funded through the Leisure & Culture budget
- Approve the draft revenue outturn for 2006/07, noting that the underspend will be transferred to the Council's reserves.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To monitor and review performance in the Leisure and Culture portfolio area.

Cllr. C Vassie
Executive Member for Leisure and Culture

Cllr. S Crisp
Chair of Advisory Panel
The meeting started at 5.05 pm and finished at 6.50 pm.