
MEETING	LEARNING & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	3 AUGUST 2011
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS REID (CHAIR), CUNNINGHAM-CROSS (VICE-CHAIR), FITZPATRICK, JEFFRIES, LEVENE, TAYLOR, WATSON AND STEWARD (SUBSTITUTE FOR COUNCILLOR BROOKS)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR BROOKS

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. Councillor Fitzpatrick declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – “York Theatre Royal Service Agreement” (minute 12 refers), as a member of York Theatre Royal Board.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 June 2011 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

10. ATTENDANCE OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People’s Services was in attendance to report on her priorities and challenges for this municipal year. The following priorities and issues were brought to Members’ attention:

- Disabled Children Services – a key priority to ensure that the needs of disabled children are met, including providing respite and support for parents/carers. Details were given of the opening of the Transition Zone at Applefields.

- Safeguarding and Looked After Children – including responding to the Munro Review into Child Protection.
- Front Door – the need to ensure that this becomes embedded and that resources are in place to ensure effective early intervention.
- Looked After Children – the Cabinet Member stated that she welcomed scrutiny of the provision for Looked After Children.
- Children’s Centres – a review had been carried out and all nine centres had been kept open. They would, however, provide targeted rather than universal services.
- Young People’s Services – a restructure of the service had been agreed although some challenges remained, for example in addressing issues resulting from differences in staff terms and conditions.
- Education partnerships – arrangements were in place to encourage schools to continue to work co-operatively in the delivery of education within their communities.
- Schools graded “Satisfactory” by Ofsted – details were given of the approach that was being taken to support schools in removing barriers to learning.
- Budget – work was ongoing to ensure that expenditure was within the budget that had been set.

In response to questions raised, the Cabinet Member explained the provision that was in place in respect of adult education. It was noted that the service had received a good Ofsted report. Although cuts to the budget from central government had had an impact, the service was working in partnership to provide a range of courses. Details were given of the targeted support that the Children’s Centres were offering to support adults who needed to re-skill.

Members were pleased to note the Key Stage 2 results that had recently been published and congratulated all concerned.

The Cabinet Member was thanked for her report and for her attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the information provided by the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People’s Services be noted.

REASON: To ensure that Members are kept informed of work within the remit of the Committee.

11. REPORT FROM THE CABINET MEMBER OF LEISURE, CULTURE & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Members considered a report from the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion regarding her priorities for the municipal year. The Cabinet Member had been invited to attend the meeting but was unable to be present due to a prior commitment.

Members were pleased to note that, since the report had been written, the council had been designated as “achieving” following the assessment by the Equality Framework for Local Government. Whilst some Members welcomed the changes that had been implemented to make council reports and documentation more accessible, other Members expressed concerns about some of the changes.

In respect of the reference in the report to the community stadium, some concerns were expressed regarding the location of the facility and the implications in terms of sustaining retail development.

RESOLVED: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the Cabinet Member be thanked for the report and made aware of the committee’s comments, as detailed above.

REASON: To ensure that Members are kept informed of work within the remit of the Committee.

12. YORK THEATRE ROYAL SERVICE AGREEMENT: 2010/11 END OF YEAR REPORT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Members received a report that informed them of the progress and performance of the York Theatre Royal under the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) which runs to March 2012.

The Chief Executive of York Theatre Royal gave details of the theatre’s performance in 2010/2011, as outlined in Annex 1 of the report.

At the request of Members, details were given of the arrangements that were in place and the work that had been

carried out to improve access to the theatre and the De Grey Rooms. Members were also pleased to note that the breadth of the programme ensured that the theatre attracted audiences from across the social spectrum.

Members' views were sought as to priorities that should be taken into account when the new SLA was prepared. It was agreed that it was important that the SLA was linked to the council's priorities and the changing demographic of the city. Members were invited to forward any further comments and suggestions to the Head of Arts, Heritage and Culture.

Officers agreed to make the necessary arrangements for Members to have a guided tour of the theatre.

RESOLVED: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the committee's comments in respect of potential priorities they would like to see included in the Service Level Agreement with the theatre from March 2012 be noted.

REASON: To fulfil the Council's role under the Service Level Agreement.

13. LEARNING AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2011-12

Members considered the committee's workplan for 2011-12 and were asked to consider any additions or amendments they may wish to make.

The following amendments to the plan were agreed:

- Item on the York Museums Trust SLA to be moved to the September meeting.
- The Update Report on the implementation of recommendations arising from previously completed reviews to be removed from the agenda for the September meeting and forwarded to Members by email instead.
- A presentation on school admissions in the city, including the changing demographics, to be included on the agenda for the September meeting.
- An item on Corporate Parenting to be included on the agenda for the December meeting.

- An item on parks to be included on the agenda for the March 2012 meeting.

It was noted that it was likely that there would be a need to convene an additional meeting in the autumn, in view of the committee's workload.

RESOLVED: That the workplan be updated and circulated to Members via email.

REASON: In order to provide the Committee with a work programme for future meetings.

Councillor Reid, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.35 pm].