

Meeting	Learning & Culture Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	9 November 2016
Present	Councillors Craghill (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Brooks, Wells and Reid (as a Substitute for Cllr Jackson) Mr A Hagon (Co-opted Statutory Member)
Apologies	Councillors Dew and Jackson Dr J Dickinson (Co-opted Statutory Member)

22. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda. Councillor Reid declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (York Theatre Royal: 2016-17 Half Year Performance Update) as she was a City of York Council representative (with observer status) on the York Theatre Royal Board.

23. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016 be approved and then signed by the chair as a correct record.

24. Public Participation

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

25. York Theatre Royal: 2016/17 Half Year Performance Update

Members considered a report which informed them of the progress and performance of the York Theatre Royal under the current service level agreement (SLA).

The Chief Executive of York Citizens Theatre Trust reminded Members that the theatre had only re-opened on 22 April after being closed for a year for a major refurbishment. She advised that it had been a great reopening with a mixed programme of work which included their own productions, including three world premieres, and a combination of productions by other companies and special events and she provided an update on the theatre's participatory programme and community projects.

With regard to funding, the Chief Executive confirmed that the revenue funding from City of York Council had ended on 31 March 2016. She confirmed that this loss was already being felt and had affected many aspects of what they did requiring them to scrutinise everything to reduce costs and ensure they did not overreach themselves in the opening year in terms of expenditure. For that reason she explained that they had decided not to target for growth in terms of audiences during the opening year. As a result of the loss of City of York Council revenue funding, and the loss of 3-4 weeks trading income (having reopened towards the end of April), they had to budget in their first year of operation to produce a deficit at the year end and therefore would have to draw on reserves to balance the budget.

She advised Members that they were currently working on both the 2017 - 2018 budget and the 2018 - 2022 business plan. At the same time, they were also in the middle of the application process to the Arts Council for the 2018- 22 period.

Members expressed the view that it would be useful if future reports could include some financial data and trends. Members noted that it had already been agreed that the City of York Council, in consultation with the theatre, would need to produce a new service level agreement (SLA) and acknowledged that, as part of that process, the request to provide some financial data could be looked at.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To fulfil the Council's role under the service level agreement.

26. Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual: Performance Update, 2016/17 half year report

Members considered a report which updated them on the performance of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd (Explore) during the first six months of 2016-17.

The report updated Members on the achievements and developments which had taken place during the previous six months as detailed in the report.

The Chief Executive of York Explore responded to and provided further information on particular aspects of the report raised by Members during discussion. Members welcomed the update on the toy library which they agreed was a good resource but one which some Members might have forgotten about. They suggested that all Members be provided with details of the toy library (either by email or by way of the Members newsletter) so that they could pass details onto interested residents.¹

Following a request from the Chair, the Chief Executive agreed to provide some financial data in Explore's future bi-annual updates.

Resolved: That the report be noted and Members comments on the performance of Explore be taken into account.

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

Action Required

1. Provide Councillors with up to date information on the toy library

CC

27. York Learning - Strategic Plan Update & Progress Report 2016/17

Members considered a report which presented performance data for York Learning and provided an update on progress against the service's strategic plan. The report focused on the initial performance since August 2016 and also presented the service's initial findings for its annual self assessment report, prior to it being presented to the Executive Member in December 2016.

The Head of York Learning acknowledged that as it was an academic year plan and they were only a few months into it, Members may find it difficult to make any valid judgments at this stage. He provided additional information to Members on a number of particular issues raised and drew Members' attention to annex C which provided information on income streams, which they had previously requested. The Chair confirmed that the inclusion of that information was useful but asked that in the future it be broken down further to show both income and expenditure.

The Head of York Learning confirmed that there were between 50 and 55 volunteers, including former teachers, who mainly supported individuals in classrooms alongside paid support roles and agreed to provide more information on their range of duties in a future report to the committee.

Resolved: That the report be noted and Members comments on the performance of York Learning and the initial findings of the service's self assessment report be taken into account.

Reason: To help monitor the service and ensure robust governance arrangements.

28. Draft Skills Strategy

Officers provided an update on the draft York Skills Plan 2017-20 "Developing and Retaining Talent – Making Sure 'No-one' is left Behind".

The Corporate Director, Children, Education and Communities and the Assistant Director, Education and Skills explained that the plan had intentionally been kept at a strategic level with five essential "To-Dos", covering four different areas, all impacting on the fifth, as follows:

- Great Education connected to Business
- Better Connect People to Jobs and Progression
- Growing Apprenticeships in York
- Grow the Graduate/Higher Learning Offer for local employees & residents

- Harness the employment and career opportunities for the benefit of all people across all sectors with a focus on addressing existing skills gaps and shortages

They advised that the format of the York Skills Plan mirrored York's Economic Strategy and that it was very much a partnership plan with its headline priorities aligning well with the local enterprise partnerships which York was part of.

Members welcomed the reference to young people eligible for free school meals and noted that that it would reference One Planet York and other links. It was acknowledged that there were skills shortages in other areas in addition to those shown under point 5 and that there were also high level skills jobs which were difficult to recruit to in those areas.

Resolved: That the update be noted and Members comments be taken into account when progressing the plan.

Reason: To keep Members up to date on progress towards the development of York's Skills Plan 2017-20.

29. School Improvement and Ofsted Update on Schools Performance

Members considered a report which provided them with information on school performance during the academic year 2015-16 and about the position of schools according to Ofsted inspection judgements as of 1 November 2016.

The Assistant Director, Education and Skills, advised Members that the data provided in the report was unvalidated data and currently provisional and subject to change prior to publication of the Department for Education Performance tables in January 2017. She provided an update on performance across all key stages confirming that York had maintained a healthy position compared to the national picture. She explained that changes to the curriculum and new performance indicators at Key Stage 1, 2 and 4 had presented challenges, and meant there were no comparable benchmarks for the 2016 data except in the early years foundation stage. Early Years foundation stage results showed an increase in performance in headline indicators and York maintained a position above national average but with the adverse effect of widening the pupil premium gap in York after successfully seeing it start to narrow in previous

years. She explained the priorities and work being undertaken to address areas of concern in individual key stage areas including work towards narrowing the gap and provided further information in relation to other areas raised by Members.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To provide the committee with an update on school performance in the academic year 2015-16.

30. Update on Schools Response to the Government's White Paper: Educational Excellence Everywhere

Members received a report which provided them with an update on the Government's White Paper and proposed Education Bill: 'Education for All' and the implications for the school system in York. Officers provided information to Members and discussion took place around the following issues.

- The Technical and Further Education Bill would be brought forward in this parliament instead of the Education Bill.
- The new Secretary of State had confirmed that it was the government's intention that schools would take up academy status, but that there would be no compulsion to do so.
- The Education and Adoption Act had come in force making provision about schools in England that were causing concern, including provision about their conversion into academies and about intervention powers. It also included a new category of schools known as "coasting" schools, which were not subject to a mandated route towards academisation but who would be required to work with local authorities around making improvements.
- Open consultation "Schools that work for everyone" (ends 12 Dec) - consulting on proposals to create more good school places.
- York schools were disadvantaged financially by national funding formula – schools were looking at whether they could get more assistance by coming together in formal, collaborative groups as part of multi academy trusts in order to be able to maintain high performance.
- Free schools in York – there had been delays with the creation of a Creative Arts Academy in York due to constraints around

available land in York. There was a recognised need for additional school places in York in future years and the need to open free schools in line with government provision. There was a need to work with existing providers to increase provision and ensure that new places were added at right time so as not to destabilise good existing provision.

- 3 Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) had already been established in York including 3 mixed MATs with both faith and non faith schools.
- With regard to potential removal of 50% cap on admission of faith pupils to faith schools and potential effect on demand, initial discussions with York Church of England secondary school leaders suggested they were not particularly in favour of it.
- As academisation progressed, the local authority was actively talking to school leaders, as they formed groups, to ensure they thought about the longevity of structures to ensure that no child or school was left behind.

It was agreed that officers would provide information at future meetings on planning for additional school places and an update on academisation progress.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted and Members comments/concerns be taking into account.

(ii) That further updates be provided to the committee at future meetings with regard to planning for additional school places (place planning) and academisation progress.

Reason: To update the committee on changes to national education policy and the implications for schools in York.

31. Work Plan 2016-17

Members considered the committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2016-17 municipal year. They noted that:

- The SACRE (Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education) Annual report and Review of York Schools Agreed Syllabus item would be moved from the January to March

meeting as the Chair of SACRE was unable to attend the January meeting.

- The committee would receive reports on place planning and academisation at future meetings – the Corporate Director, Children, Education and Communities advised that he would liaise with colleagues about the most suitable timing of these reports.
- The Tour de France Scrutiny Review Task Group and Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review Task Group were progressing work on their respective reviews.

Resolved: That the work plan be agreed subject to the amendments detailed above.

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

Councillor D Craghill, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.55 pm].