
Meeting	Children, Education & Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date	22 May 2018
Present	Councillors Taylor (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Brooks, Crawshaw, Rawlings, Wells and Mason
Apologies	Mr Hagon

45. 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.

Cllr Brooks declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Explore York Libraries & Archives Mutual Ltd, Bi-Annual Update) that she was a member of Friends of Dunnington Library and in agenda item 6 (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report), as a Council appointed representative on SACRE.

Cllr Mason declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 7 (Make it York), as a Council appointee to the Make it York Board.

46. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 28 March 2018 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

47. Public Participation

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

48. Explore York Libraries & Archives Mutual Ltd, Bi-Annual Update

Members considered a report that updated them on the performance of Explore York Libraries & Archive Mutual Ltd.

The Chief Executive of Explore York Libraries and Archives was in attendance to give an update on their performance and achievements. She highlighted the key activities taking place including the opening of a new Explore centre and Gateway library, which would represent significant change for Explore as an organisation and would allow the cultural business to grow. She presented her report and Members noted that:

- Book issues were above average, with ebooks also doing extremely well.
- Visits to libraries were in the upper quartile.
- Volunteers provided invaluable support to paid staff.
- Archives Accreditation had been achieved which was a recognised national quality standard for archive service and was administered by The UK Archive Service Accreditation Partnership.
- The Past Caring project had now been catalogued and conserved and was available to the public.
- The 2018 summer reading challenge for children would be 'Mischievous Makers,' to celebrate 80 years of the Beano.
- The Big City Read would launch on Thursday 20 September where 5000 free copies of Matt Haig's book, The Radleys, set in Bishopthorpe, would be available.
- Acomb Explore were celebrating their 10th birthday.
- The new Explore centre at Burnholme would be opening to the public on 23 June 2018 and thanks were expressed to CYC officers for their help and support during the development.
- The Gateway library in New Earswick was relocating from the primary school to the Folk Hall and opening on 26 May 2018, allowing a partnership with Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust to develop and the local community to use the library until 10pm.
- Officers were working on a 20 year plan and the renewal of the 5 year contract with City of York Council.

In response to Members questions the Chief Executive confirmed:

- 87 school visits had taken place between January and March 2018 and she would ensure Committee Members received a breakdown of these visits, including the trends over the years.¹
- The cafe infrastructure had become an essential part that brought people and books together, which had helped with library growth.
- Key performance indicators for New Earswick Gateway library were being developed and officers would work with Folk Hall staff to monitor the usage during the extended opening hours.
- Paid staff and volunteers had a clear understanding of their roles and worked very well together.

Following further discussions around reading cafes and the use of the lawn at York Explore, Members were informed that:

- The cafe at York Explore was 'breaking even' and staff were working hard to compete with the city centre competition to improve their figures.
- The New Earswick cafe would be managed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- The cafe at Burnholme Explore would run similar to Acomb Explore.
- Officers would be considering the cafe configurations over the next 20 years.

Members thanked the Chief Executive for her update and noted that the book issues had been consistent over the 5 year contract.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.
(ii) That Members receive comprehensive and accurate figures on school visits.

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

Action Required

<1> That Members receive comprehensive and accurate figures on school visits.

<1>
FW

49. Library Service: Comprehensive Statement of Need

Members considered a report that presented the Comprehensive Statement of Need for Library Services for York that would form the basis of the council's service specification in the forthcoming retendering exercise.

The Assistant Director of Communities & Equalities gave an update and confirmed after a 5 year deal with Explore York a new contract was due. He invited the Committee to comment on the city's needs for library services as set out in the Statement of Need, (Annex 1 to the report). Members were informed that their comments would be reported to the Executive as part of the report to the 21 June meeting.

Following discussion the following comments were made:

- Dunnington should not be included in the 'barriers to services' highlighted on page 31 of the agenda, as a vast majority of residents could walk to local amenities.
- It should be noted, on page 41 of the agenda, that Fulford library was attached to St Oswald's Primary School, which would have an effect on the visitor numbers.
- Hob Moor Children's Centre and primary school was in Westfield Ward.
- Ways to develop a collaboration between primary schools and library services, to support children's reading, should be explored and considered.
- Community Liaison Officers could help develop and support the home library service.

Following further discussion around the need for a premises strategy that would address the £3m worth of repairs over the next 20 years, it was agreed that the following sentence, on page 45 of the agenda, '*It will be essential to secure new premises that are more fit for purpose and which reduce this significant financial liability on the council*' should be redrafted to ensure it clearly stated that the council would provide more fit for purpose buildings and not necessarily to find new premises.

In answer to Members questions, it was noted that:

- The Stakeholders consultations would be hard to deliver in house and officers felt they had offered

good value for money that helped increase confidence in the process and generated enthusiasm.

- Wireless printing was available for customers to print from their own technology and PC rooms would start to include cutting edge technology such as 3D printing.
- There was a planned replacement of IT equipment in process and the Internet access would be provided throughout the contract and the broadband would be supplied by City of York Council.
- Explore works closely with York Learning to support customers with job seeking and Universal Credit.

The Committee agreed that each library was unique in the services it offered and following discussions around new library cafes competing with existing independent businesses, Members were informed that consultation and collaboration within communities takes place to ensure each library Gateway offered the right service for each community.

Members thanked officers for their update.

Resolved: That the Committees comments on the city's needs for library services, as set out in the document attached at Annex 1, be noted.

Reason: To allow the committees comments to be reported to the Executive as part of the report to the 21 June meeting.

50. SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) Annual Report

Members considered a report that provided them with details of the work of the City of York Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) from January to December 2017.

The Chair of SACRE attended the meeting to provide additional information on their annual report and during discussion it was noted that:

- It was a statutory requirement for every Local Authority to have a SACRE and currently the membership was healthy.

- The Church of England schools in York, that had been SIAMS inspected, were incredibly successful.
- Collective worship guidance for York schools was now published on their website and was included in the weekly Heads newsletter
- There was no national agreed syllabus for RE so each Local Authority SACRE had to produce its own syllabus for its schools.
- RE does not form part of the 'EBacc' measure for GCSEs, which could be a reason for a decrease in pupils taking RE. Although it was in a stronger position than some arts subjects, when included in the Progress 8 measures for schools, it did not carry as many points as other subjects.
- Despite a growing national movement of parents removing their children from elements of RE, which was usually due to a misunderstanding, York had seen minimal requests.

In answer to Members questions it was noted that:

- The complaint raised at a Local Authority maintained secondary school was due to a misunderstanding of some words used in an RE lesson. It had been addressed and had reminded staff to be more careful about the wording used when teaching young children who were impressionable.
- Tougher assessments for schools were putting them under pressure meaning some schools were narrowing the curriculum in RE.
- All stakeholders in RE were continuing to lobby the importance of this subject.

Members thanked officers for their report.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the committee on the work of SACRE and the outcomes in religious education in York's schools, in line with the statutory requirement to report annually to elected members.

51. Make it York Annual Report

Members considered a report from Make It York (MIY) that provided an update on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) activity from April 2017 to March 2018.

The Assistant Director of Communities & Equalities presented the report. He welcomed Members thoughts on any particular areas or priorities of interests they would like the Managing Director of Make it York to engage on.

Following discussion around Make it York's involvement in the cultural offer at Castle Gateway and the inward investment cultural offer for York Central, officers stated that Make it York had not yet engaged but that a Cultural Strategy was being considered. The Committee agreed that they would like to participate in the development of the strategy and officers confirmed there would be opportunities for them to be involved and a report on this would be presented at a future meeting.

Members questioned Make it York's involvement in the Channel 4 Bid for York and officers confirmed that MIY were not involved in this.

Following discussion around tourism, Members felt that the offer to visitors when they arrived, in particular at Union Terrace car park, was poor. Officers confirmed this was part of Make it York's remit and that the Tourism Strategy for York was due to be updated.

Some Members questioned the use of a permitted area in the city centre where local events could be advertised and the diversity of the judging panel used for the Cultural Awards was raised. The Assistant Director agreed to consult with the Managing Director to provide an update.

Members thanked The Assistant Director of Communities & Equalities for his update.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To fulfil the Council's role under the agreed partnership arrangements.

52. Children, Education & Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee Draft Work Plan for 2018/19 & Discussion re Potential Scrutiny Topics for 2018/19

Members considered the committee's work plan and potential scrutiny topics for the 2018-19 municipal year. The Scrutiny Officer explained that this was a basic work plan based on the previous year's work plan.

Following discussion it was agreed that Members would:

- Be involved in the development of the Cultural Strategy for the city, with a report being presented at a future meeting.
- Engage with the development of a revised Tourism Strategy
- Identify specific issues the Managing Director of Make it York could present to the Committee.

The Assistant Director of Communities & Equalities agreed to keep Committee Members updated on future events associated with the development of the Cultural Strategy.

To allow them to consider the cultural offer put forward for York, Members questioned if they could view the reports submitted for the Channel 4 Bid. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to investigate this further.

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

Reason: To keep the committee's work plan updated

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.15 pm].