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MEETING	LEARNING & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	18 JULY 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS REID (CHAIR), FITZPATRICK (VICE-CHAIR), SCOTT, CUNNINGHAM-CROSS, LEVENE, JEFFRIES, BROOKS AND TAYLOR
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLORS CRISP AND WATSON

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## 6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the Committee, other than those listed on the agenda.

Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest in the remit of the Committee as due to his employment, he had been involved in the marketing of York Mystery Play's "Gospel of Us" which would be shown at City Screen.

No other interests were declared.

## 7. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June 2012 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

**9. YORK MUSEUMS TRUST PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY PLAN:  
2011/12 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

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

A representative from York Museums Trust was in attendance at the meeting in order to answer any questions that Members had in relation to the report.

Members were informed that YMT had secured two funding streams from the Arts Council, firstly as a regional heritage centre and secondly a £3.5 million grant in order to help with refurbishment of York Art Gallery.

It was noted that the money for the regional heritage centres had to be spent for the benefit of the Yorkshire region but that York would play a key role in administering the funds for other museums.

The representative from the Trust reported that staffing levels had been reduced as part of a restructure in response to an expected reduction in funding this financial year. However, additional Arts Council funding had since been received, and therefore YMT had created a number of 'Collections Facilitators' posts which would play a key role in allowing public access to Museum archives across the city.

It was reported that the YMT draft business plan which included the YMT development plan, had been approved by the Trustees and would be received by the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism. Members expressed an interest in considering the approved plan and were reassured that it would feed into future monitoring reports produced for the Scrutiny Committee. In addition, as a public document, the Committee could choose to consider it in full at a future meeting.

Some Members highlighted that in their view a disparity existed between visitor figures in the Officer's report and the associated annex. In response, Officers stated that visitor figures had stabilised and further growth was anticipated. Additionally, Members accepted there would be a drop in visitor figures to York Art Gallery during its refurbishment.

Members requested figures on resident participation in York Museums and the Art Gallery over the past five years for a future meeting. Members were informed that this data was collected through the use of the York Card, but that the available data was not complete as not all York residents had a card.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the report be noted.
  - (ii) That the YMT draft business plan for 2013-2018 be received by the Committee.<sup>1</sup>
  - (iii) That the Committee receive information on resident participation figures over the past five years at a future meeting.<sup>2</sup>

REASON: To fulfil the Council's role under the Partnership Delivery Plan.

Action Required

- 1. To circulate information to Members on the YMT Draft Business Plan. GC
- 2. To circulate information on resident participation figures to Members. GC

**10. PROPOSED SCRUTINY REVIEW ON PUBLIC PARKS - SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Members considered a report which asked them to consider whether a review of the disparity between the city's public parks was required. It presented them with feedback information on the work of some Young Inspectors who earlier in 2010/11 had carried out a review of several of City of York Council's Public Parks.

The Committee were informed that the relevant Young Inspectors were no longer in post, however some new recruits would be in place by August 2012. Also, that the new Inspectors would initially be focusing on buses but later may continue with the work on reviewing public parks.

It was also noted that the inspection which had been carried out at Acomb Green park, had been part of a large consultation process in support of a successful funding bid for improvements to the park.

Members confirmed that if there were future inspections by the Young Inspectors into areas that fell into the Committee's remit, they would welcome the opportunity to meet with them and hear their views.

The Committee were also informed of an ongoing Young Researchers project, examining provision for older children across the city, and as a result, requested that Officers provide them with information on the project's findings.

Discussion took place on the Committee's visit to Hull Road Park, due to take place before the next Committee meeting in September 2012. The Chair suggested the visit be conducted on 18 September. It was agreed that those Members who were available to attend, meet at 10 am at the main park entrance on Melrosegate.

For the visit to Rowntree Park, Members agreed to carry out their tour before the start of the formal meeting on 19 September 2012, meeting at 3.30pm outside the park cafe.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the information provided in the report and associated annexes be noted.
  - (ii) That information on the findings from the Young Researchers Project be received by the Committee at a future meeting.<sup>1</sup>
  - (iii) The arrangements for the planned tours of Hull Road and Rowntree Park.

REASON: To support their future consideration of whether a scrutiny review is required of 'The disparity in public parks across the city'.

Action Required

1. To provide Members with information relating to the findings of the Young Researchers Project at a future meeting. MB

**11. 2011/12 YEAR END FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT -  
LIFELONG LEARNING & CULTURE AND CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

Members considered the financial and performance outturn for 2011/12 for all of the relevant services falling under the terms of the Committee's remit.

Members queried why;

The attainment gap for children on Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 2 had increased and were informed that a bigger gap now existed in York between those children who did well, and those who did exceptionally well. They added that those on Free School Meals now attracted additional "Pupil Premium" funding, which needed monitoring to ensure it was used solely to support the applicable child, rather than being used elsewhere.

Members also queried the number of out of authority area placements for Looked After Children in York, and were informed that the number had reduced to approximately 25, resulting in savings. For example, in comparison to other Local Authorities, York had good provision for deaf and blind children within the city, and so did not need for children to be located elsewhere. Those children who were placed outside of the authority were not at a great distance.

In response to a question from a Member that related to posts being held vacant across teams in the Directorates, Officers confirmed that no vacant posts were being held in the frontline delivery of services. Additionally, it was noted that those children in care who had access to a social worker would not be affected by vacant posts.

It was suggested that if Members identified specific questions in relation to future monitoring reports, it would be beneficial for Officers to receive them before the relevant meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**REASON:** To update the Committee on the final financial and performance position for 2011/12.

**12. UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED SCRUTINY REVIEW ON LIBRARIES**

In order to inform Members consideration of a proposed scrutiny topic on 'Making Local Libraries work for Communities', Members received a report which provided them with an update on the implementation of recommendations arising from a previous scrutiny review on Libraries carried out in 2005, and information on the forthcoming public Explore Vision and Community Consultation.

However as the Head of Libraries & Heritage could not attend the meeting, the Chair suggested that that consideration of the report be postponed until the following committee meeting in September 2012.

Members also requested that the bar charts included within the report be hatched rather than in colour, as it would be easier to understand when printed in black and white.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the report be postponed to the next meeting in September 2012.

**REASON:** To allow for the attendance of the Head of Libraries & Heritage to answer any questions arising.

**13. OFSTED FEEDBACK REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SERVICES**

Members received and considered the recent OFSTED report on Safeguarding and Looked After Children in the city.

The Independent Chair of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) attended the meeting and informed Members of CYSCB's role in holding all agencies involved with children in the city to account. He also provided Members with a background to the safeguarding issues in the city. The issues that were currently being focused on were:

- Neglect
- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Exploitation

Some Members asked about the numbers of child runaways, recognising that running away was a symptom of other issues. It was reported that the small number of children who did run away, were often repeat runaways and as a result that inflated the figures. It was also noted that the figures only included runaways reported to the Police.

Members praised the inter-agency work of the Children's Safeguarding Board. In response to the areas of improvement identified within the Ofsted report regarding scrutiny arrangements, the Committee agreed that they would like to receive future six monthly monitoring reports on:

- The work of the Safeguarding Children Board
- Corporate Parenting
- Placements Out of Authority
- Attainment of Looked After Children
- Sexual exploitation-e-safety etc
- Care Leavers
- Schools Ofsted Safeguarding ratings
- Any other prominent issues being addressed at the time each 6 monthly report was due.

Officers also informed the Committee that recent collaborative work had taken place with York St John University on bullying, and agreed to bring a report on the findings to a future meeting.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the report be noted.
  - (ii) That six monthly monitoring reports on Safeguarding and Looked After Children be provided to the Committee, starting in January 2013.<sup>1</sup>
  - (iii) That a report including findings from work completed by the Council and York St John University on bullying be considered by the Committee at a future meeting.<sup>2</sup>

REASON: In order to keep the Committee up to date on issues of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services in York

### Action Required

1. To provide six monthly monitoring reports on Safeguarding and Looked After Children. ER
2. To provide a report on the findings from the study undertaken by the Council and York St John University on bullying. PD

## 14. **LEARNING AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN FOR 2012/13**

Members considered the Committee's workplan for 2012-13, and agreed a number of revisions.

In relation to future scrutiny topics that the Committee might wish to review, the Scrutiny Officer informed Members that several topic areas had been proposed including; Careers Advice, Learning Disabilities and Parks. It was noted that Members would agree which topic they wanted to conduct a review on at their next meeting in September.

In response to the OFSTED report on Safeguarding, Officers suggested that an update report could be considered at the Committee's January meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the workplan be agreed subject to the following amendments;

- (i) That the York Museums Trust Collections Scrutiny Review Draft Final Report be moved to the meeting on 21 November 2012.
- (ii) That the postponed update report on the Previous Libraries Scrutiny Review and Forthcoming Public Consultation be received by the Committee at their meeting on 19 September 2012.
- (iii) That six monthly progress reports on Safeguarding and Looked After Children be added to the workplan as from January 2013.



REASON:

To keep the Committee's work plan up to date.

Councillor A Reid, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.30 pm].

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