
Meeting	Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	19 November 2014
Present	Councillors Taylor (Chair), Fitzpatrick (Vice-Chair), Reid, Potter, Brooks, Wiseman and Hodgson (as a substitute for Cllr Gunnell). Mr A Pennington (Co-opted Statutory Member)
Apologies	Councillor Gunnell and Mr E Thomas (Co-opted Statutory Member)

29. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the register of interests, any prejudicial interests or disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda or any other general interest they might have within the remit of the committee.

Councillor Taylor declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (York Museums Trust Partnership Delivery Plan: Performance Update 2014-15) as he had been involved with the promotion of the “Big Read”, and agenda item 9 (Work Plan, update on Ongoing Reviews and proposed new review) as the City Screen (his employer) were involved in showing four films as part of the Tour de France Cultural Festival.

30. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 September 2014 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

31. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme but that Councillor Brian Watson

had requested to speak in relation to the update from York Museums Trust (YMT).

Councillor Watson raised concerns that implementation of recommendations (v) (vi) and (vii) which had been agreed by the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism and Culture on 23 February 2013 arising from the previously completed York Museums Trust Scrutiny review appeared to be still outstanding. He expressed worries that some perishable items of the YMT collections were still being stored in unsuitable out of date storage facilities.

32. York Museums Trust Partnership Delivery Plan: Performance Update 2014/15

Members considered a report which updated them on the current progress of the York Museum's Trust (YMT) towards meeting the targets agreed in the Partnership Delivery Plan, and provided them with an update on the implementation of the approved recommendations arising from the previously completed York Museums Trust Scrutiny Review.

York Museums Trust's Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer presented the information contained in the York Museums Trust Performance Report which covered the period April to September 2014 including the following information:

- Art Gallery project proceeding well after structural problem with gable wall – now working towards opening date in summer 2015
- Planning permission submitted for new gardens to connect Museum Gardens with area behind Art Gallery.
- Opening of new exhibition at the Castle Museum 1914 When the world changed forever, on 28 June 2014
- YMT has successfully applied for funding from Arts Council Major Partners Museum Funding till 2018 and the Museums Development Yorkshire has successfully applied for funding for 2015-18. Enables YMT to continue working with smaller and medium sized accredited museums across the region which will increase YMTs profile and influence in the region and beyond.
- Progress made in provision of information online – now 50,000 images online – further progress will be made over next few years.
- Due to reduction in funding from the council, now looking at other business models to enable us to become more resilient and sustainable.

Members praised YMT staff for the work which had been undertaken with regard to cataloguing the collection noting that 12,000 records had been added since the last report was received by the committee. The Chair expressed an interest in viewing the Trust's image policy. In view of YMT's successful application for Arts Council Major Partners Museum Funding, Members queried whether their work with other museums across Yorkshire and Humberside would take their focus away from York. Officers advised that this was a strategic decision but was only a small aspect of their work and that supporting other museums would help increase their profile and make them more sustainable. Members asked that an update be provided at a future meeting on how this work has impacted on their work in York itself.

Members discussed the information provided in the report on formal learning through visits from schools and higher and further education establishments. One Member asked for the data for York schools to be broken down into individual schools.

Members considered the table at annex 2 to the report which provided information on the implementation of recommendations of the previously completed YMT review. In response to the queries raised by Councillor Watson under public participation, YMT officers advised that the first paragraph in the update column confirmed what work had been done with regard to the recommendation and the second paragraph was a general comment to provide members with further information. With regard to the Trust's intention to dispose of an item in one of their collections, YMT advised that they would notify the council to give officers time to object to any proposed disposal. The Assistant Director confirmed that future update reports could include information on disposals.

In response to concerns raised by members over the continued storage of items at the Fulford Store, Officers confirmed that a new store was being purchased which the council hoped to take possession of in January 2015 although this would then need some work and investment.

Resolved: (i) That the performance of the York Museums Trust as detailed in Annex 1 be noted and members comments be taken into account.

(ii) That recommendations (i) to (vi) be agreed as being fully implemented.

Reason: To conclude the work on the review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

33. Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual: Bi-annual Performance Update 2014/15

Members received a report which updated them on the performance of Explore York, Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd (Explore) during the first six months of 2014-15.

Fiona Williams and James Henderson introduced themselves as the new Chief Executive and Chair respectively of Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual. The Chief Executive confirmed that the libraries had retained a strong partnership with the council and, although it was a steep learning curve, the organisation was developing well with community members being recruited. They advised that the main difficulty had been that the York Explore building had been closed since May for the planned refurbishment.

The Chief Executive gave an update on the services they provided advising Members that they had had a very successful summer with the Summer Reading Challenge and Big Read both proving very popular. Rowntree's Park Cafe had been very popular. She advised that York was increasing its contribution to Cultural Life of the City and planning a £100k+ bid to Arts Council to its Libraries Fund by March 2015. York was the 100th public service mutual and was being held up by the Cabinet Office as providing best practice.

Members acknowledged the exciting developments taking place and praised staff for continuing to provide a good service to residents even though the city centre building had been closed. Members expressed their interest in being community members and it was agreed that the Chief Executive would email all Members information on this. Members thanked the Chief Executive and Chair for an interesting and comprehensive report and verbal update.

The Assistant Director (Communities, Culture and Public Realm) warned Members that the longer than expected closure of York Explore presented a significant financial challenge. He explained the reasons for the increased length of closure and advised that Explore may be putting in a claim to the council for the loss of income.

It was agreed that in future the report would be structured to be more inline with the schedule and it was requested that it included further information on the business plan and targets.

Resolved: That the report be noted and Members comments be taken into consideration.

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

34. Schools Outturn Data 2014

Members considered a report which provided information about school performance in 2014 and the position of schools according to Ofsted judgements as of 4 November 2014.

The Assistant Director, Education and Skills, updated Members on the outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), the phonics screening check and performance at Key Stage 1, 2 and 4. In response to concerns raised regarding a widening of the gap at key stage 4, Members were advised that this was due to changes in KS4 assessment which included the move away from modular to linear end of course examinations, and changes to the performance tables meaning the tariff for GCSE equiv courses such as BTEC has been reduced so that they counted as one GCSE grade rather than as multiple grades as in previous years. This had caused some turbulence in the reporting of data both locally and nationally. Members noted that the performance tables which would be published in January 2015 would be based on results of first entry for examinations rather than the best entries following retakes.

Members praised officers for a very positive set of results and acknowledged the hard work of head teachers and teachers in schools across York.

Resolved: That the update on school performance in 2013-14 and the outcomes of Ofsted inspections since September 2014 be noted.

Reason: In order to provide the Committee with an update on developments in the city.

35. Scoping Report on Proposed Scrutiny Review of Narrowing the Gap in York

Members considered a report which explored the feasibility of the committee undertaking a scrutiny review of actions taken to narrow the

gaps in attainment and progress in York. The report put forward the proposed remit for the review as follows:

Aim:

To identify and disseminate best practice guidance on narrowing the gap to York schools.

Objectives:

(i) To examine:

- The actions taken by identified schools whose outturn data shows an established trend of narrowing the gap
- The use of the pupil premium to narrow gaps in attainment and progress in those schools which are consistently narrowing the gap.
- Good practice from other Local Authorities achieving narrower gaps, including early years.

(ii) To draft some guidance proposals for dissemination through York schools.

The Assistant Director, Education and Skills, advised the committee that, since the July meeting, additional analysis of the York 300 cohort had taken place which compared the performance of the York 300 against that of their peers and the results had been appended at Annex 1. Concern was raised that many schools were unable to attain a consistent narrowing of the gap and it was acknowledged this was very cohort driven with the characteristics of cohorts varying year to year especially in very small schools. It was noted that in some parts of the city, schools with very few pupils eligible for the pupil premium seemed to find it very hard to narrow the gap and that these schools could learn from best practice from other schools with narrower gaps in order to ensure they make best use of their resources. Members felt it would be useful to look at which schools were consistently narrowing the gap year on year to assess how they were achieving this.

Members were advised that on 9 December the National Pupil Premium Champion was due to lead on a conference in York which would provide the opportunity to showcase some of other work done in York schools to successfully narrow the gap. Members were also pleased to note the number of York clusters which had included narrowing the gap in their action plans for 2015.

Members expressed their support for undertaking the review but stressed the need to be able to add further value to the work already being undertaken by officers. Officers suggested that the involvement of the

scrutiny committee would help evidence elected member support for school improvement. It was acknowledged that the review would need to be turned around fairly quickly taking into account other ongoing scrutiny reviews and the need to complete review work before the start of the forthcoming purdah period. It was agreed that the review should ideally be completed in time to allow the draft final report to be presented to the January 2015 meeting of the full committee.

It was agreed that a task group be established to undertake the review comprising Councillors Fitzpatrick, Wiseman and Brooks and co-opted statutory member Mr Andrew Pennington.

Resolved: (a) That the review be undertaken and the above remit be agreed.

(b) That a Task Group comprising Councillor Fitzpatrick, Wiseman, Brooks and Mr Andrew Pennington (Co-opted Statutory Member) be set up to carry out the review.

Reason: To carry out the review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols and conclude the review before the start of the forthcoming purdah period.

36. Update Report on the Membership of Entrepreneurship Scrutiny Review Task Group

Members considered a report which sought a minor amendment to the membership of the Entrepreneurship in York Schools Task Group in light of changes to the composition of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee made at a recent Extraordinary Council meeting on 23 October 2014 which resulted in Councillor Scott no longer remaining a member of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Prior to the changes agreed by Council, Councillor Scott had been appointed to and chaired the Task Group and Members were asked to consider appointing him to the task group as a co-opted member for the remainder of the review. All Members confirmed they were happy with this arrangement.

Resolved: That Councillor Scott be appointed onto the Entrepreneurship in York Schools Task Group as a co-opted member.

Reason: To enable the Task Group to progress the work needed to complete the review.

37. Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee Workplan 2014/15 including a verbal update on ongoing reviews

Members considered a feasibility report on a scrutiny topic submitted by Councillor Cuthbertson which proposed a review of the planning, promotion and delivery of the Council's programme of activities which accompanied the Tour de France. Councillor Cuthbertson presented his topic submission and stressed the need to deal with this issue urgently in order to allay public fears regarding the financial loss of the event and to ensure that lessons were learnt so that any future events were properly planned and managed within budget, particularly as the council was beginning to plan the Tour of Yorkshire. In addition to the financial losses from the event, he also expressed the need to investigate the health and safety aspects of the Grand Depart in response to press headlines that the event had incurred risks to public safety.

The Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised Members of a Cabinet report expected in January 2015 which would set out against each workstream which aspects had gone well and which had not. The full economic data for that report would not be until mid December after which the report would be finalised. She confirmed that the Grand Depart was not an unsafe event and the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) had not raised any concerns in this respect.

Members were advised that the Grand Depart was not part of the commercial programme but added as a supplement to the weekend programme of events organised to encourage families into York a day early. Members were briefed on the challenges of the organisation of the concert which they were advised would be detailed in full in the Cabinet report.

Members were asked to bear in mind a number of issues when considering whether or not to carry out this review including the fact that all reviews would have to be completed by the start of the forthcoming Purdah period. The committee already had two ongoing reviews and had already agreed another new review which raised a resource issue. Some Members felt it would be better to wait until the Cabinet report had been published before making a decision on the review but others felt that it was important not to delay the decision on whether or not to conduct the review to ensure that it could be completed within the current municipal year.

It was agreed that the review be undertaken before the end of the municipal year by a task group comprising Councillors Taylor, Wiseman and Fitzpatrick (or an alternative Labour member). Councillor Cuthbertson confirmed that he was happy to be called as a witness in the review rather than be co-opted onto the task group. It was agreed that scrutiny officer would email a suggested wording of the remit of the review to the committee.

Members considered the committee's work plan for the 2014-15 municipal year and received a verbal update on the two ongoing reviews. They were informed that the Entrepreneurship in York Schools Task Group had recently had a useful and informative meeting with representatives from North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership (NYBEP), York Children's University, York's Federation of Small Businesses, Aviva and Natwest as well as two primary schools. With regard to the work of the Disabled Access Scrutiny Task Group, the Committee was advised that the task group had met with representatives of Visit York in November and would meet again on 2 December to consider an interim report which would present the large amount of information gathered to date so that the Task Group could agree an appropriate way forward.

Resolved: (i) That a review of the Tour de France be carried out by a task group comprising Councillors Taylor, Wiseman and Fitzpatrick (or an alternative Labour member) during the current municipal year.

(ii) That the work plan be agreed.

(iii) That the updates on the ongoing scrutiny reviews be noted.

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

Councillor Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.00 pm].

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