
Meeting of the Executive Member for Leisure and Culture and Advisory Panel

27 March 2007

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Service Plans: 2007/2008

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Service Plans for council services that are wholly or partially funded from the Leisure and Culture budget.

Background

2. The planning process this year for Learning, Culture and Children's Services is broadly similar to the arrangements in previous years. The main change is in response to concerns about the length and complexity of some of the service plans that were submitted to the Executive Members for 2006/07 and the difficulties that this presented in monitoring progress during the year.
3. Members of EMAP will be aware that monitoring reports focus on three things: the key strategic actions identified in the service plan, financial performance and performance against performance indicators. This year, service managers have been asked to provide a much simplified account of the key strategic actions in their service plans. In practice this means that Section 4 of the planning template has been reduced to a single side of A4. This has advantages and disadvantages. Members of EMAP will find that this year's plans are more concise, more focused and more strategic. What is missing, however, is the detail about where responsibility lies for particular actions, including the deadlines for action, and the explicit links with corporate plans. More detailed action plans are available to members on request and will be submitted to inspectors during the forthcoming Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).
4. Approval for an up-dated Lifelong Learning and Culture Plan: 2007 - 2010 will be sought at a meeting of the EMAP in June. The priorities in the Plan are fully reflected in the service plans.
5. The planning cycle starts in September when the Departmental Management Team (DMT) begins the process of building a budget for the following year on the basis of priorities identified in the strategic plans. Between September and December, strategic priorities are finalised for the following year. Following agreement about the budget in January, service and group managers are required to review their performance as part of the annual service planning exercise and to produce plans for the year ahead.

6. The planning system that has evolved from this is significantly more detailed than in previous years. An annual review statement has been incorporated in the service plan itself, and the number of sections in the plan has increased to take account of corporate requirements.
7. The Service Plans recommended for approval at this meeting are based on the current management structure for the department. Proposals are being developed for a revised management structure in response to the departure of a number of senior officers in the directorate. It was felt that it would be premature to anticipate changes that might be made during the course of the year. For this reason, the service plans included in this report are as follows:
 - Arts and Culture
 - Early Years and Extended Schools
 - Libraries and Heritage
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Sport and Active Learning

Options

8. These plans have been produced by service managers in response to the strategic plans for the authority. The Executive Members can modify service plans within the planning framework for the authority.

Consultation

9. Service Plans are produced in line with the Lifelong Learning and Culture Plan and the budget process both of which are subject to wide consultation.

Analysis

10. Not applicable.

Corporate Priorities

11. The service plans reflect the national and local planning framework, including the Local Area Agreement and the Children and Young People's Plan. In particular they take account of the need:
 - To increase people's knowledge and skills to improve future employment prospects',
 - To improve the health and lifestyles of people in York, in particular among people whose levels of health are the poorest',
 - To improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in York.

Implications

Financial

12. Service Plans have been produced on a timescale that ensures they reflect the budget settlement for 2007/08.

Human Resources (HR)

13. Whilst there are no direct implications for HR arising from this report, it should be noted that the planning demands on Assistant Directors and Service Managers are increasing.

Equalities

14. There are no equalities implications.

Legal

15. There is no statutory requirement for the production of service plans, though there is a strong expectation by District Audit and by inspection regimes such as Ofsted that they will be produced in order to support effective Performance Management.

Crime and Disorder

16. There are no implications.

Information Technology (IT)

17. There are no implications.

Property

18. There are no implications.

Other

19. There are no implications.

Risk Management

20. The risk to the authority of not maintaining service plans is that there will be no appropriate mechanism for Performance Management of the work of the directorate.

Recommendations

21. The Executive Member is recommended to approve the Service Plans attached to this report:

Reason: In order to ensure that service and group managers are in a position to implement the strategic priorities of the directorate.

Contact Details

Author and Chief Officer responsible for the report:

Patrick Scott, Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services
Ext: 4200

Report Approved



Date 12.3.07.

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Richard Hartle
LCCS Finance Manager
554225

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None