

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities and Culture)

## **Renewal of the YorkCard**

### **Summary**

1. This paper seeks approval for a re-launch of the *YorkCard* in April 2013.

### **Background**

2. The current card was issued in 2011 and has been bought by 64,500 residents. It is a combined *YorkCard* and Library Card and costs £2 for adults, free for children. (Anyone who doesn't want a *YorkCard* can have a free library card only version as can people living outside the authority but working in York).
3. The *YorkCard* gives free entry to the Council's museums as well as discounts for cultural and sports activities. Other organisations also provide discounts for *YorkCard* holders from time to time, without reference to the Council, and it is widely accepted during the Residents Festival.
4. The current card expires on 28 February 2013 and now needs to be renewed.

### **Proposals**

5. In view of the success of the card and the wide range of benefits offered it is proposed that the new *YorkCard* will cost £3, remaining free for under 18s. To make the card more convenient for users it is proposed that the card will now be renewable annually on an individual basis rather than at a fixed time, i.e. on the anniversary of its issue.
6. The card will be accompanied by a leaflet promoting the discounts associated with the *YorkCard* as it is clear that some residents are still unaware of these.

The leaflet will provide details of free entry to the Castle Museum and Yorkshire Museum and the exhibitions at St Mary's Castlegate, the significant discounts available in the Council's sports facilities, and the reductions currently available at partner organisations, for example York's Chocolate Story.

7. The new *YorkCard* will now be free to anyone on any means tested benefit (on presentation of their award letter as proof). By introducing this new concession we will be able to track the take up of the *YorkCard* and take any necessary measures in the future to ensure that it is reaching all parts of the community.
8. Although the current card expires on 28 February it is proposed to allow residents up to the end of June to renew their cards in order to make it more convenient for them.

### **Options**

9. The principal options are:
  - To keep the *YorkCard* as now
  - To introduce the new arrangements proposed

### **Analysis**

10. The new card will represent excellent value for money for residents. Savings with a *YorkCard* include:
  - a) A joint ticket for both Yorkshire and Castle museums currently costs £12 per adult. The £3 cost for the *YorkCard* would be recouped by the first visit and generates a further saving of £9.
  - b) York Chocolate Story costs £9.50 for full adult admission. The *YorkCard* provides a 30% discount generating a saving of £3.20
  - c) A session for an adult swim at Energise would cost £4.55 for an adult. This reduces to £3.65 with a *YorkCard* generating a saving of £0.90

### **Council Plan**

11. Under Building stronger communities the *YorkCard* increases access to cultural facilities and activities.

### **Implications**

12. **Financial:** There are 165k library members of whom 64,500 are current adult *YorkCard* holders.

If all current holders renew their card this would recoup around £193k (less any free cards) which will be used to reinvest in the Library Service.

13. **Equalities:** The YorkCard provides free access to museums and to concessions (where a charge is payable) for people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, Carers Allowance, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Employment Support Allowance, Job Seekers Allowance, Widowed Parents Allowance, and Working Tax Credit, and pensioners, full-time students, and York Carers Card holders.
14. There are no Human Resources, Legal, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology, Property of other implications.

### **Risk Management**

15. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of the report.

### **Recommendations**

16. The Cabinet Member is asked to agree to:
  - i. the re-launch of the YorkCard
  - ii. the promotion of existing and new offers as set out above

Reason: To increase access by York residents to cultural provision and facilities.

### **Contact Details**

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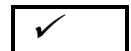
#### **Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Charlie Croft  
Assistant Director (Communities, Culture  
and Public Realm)

**Report Approved**  **Date** 13.2.13.

#### **Wards Affected**

**All**



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** *Renewal of the YorkCard and Library Card*, Report to the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion, January, 2011