

Meeting	Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	18 March 2015
Present	Councillors Taylor (Chair), Fitzpatrick (Vice-Chair), Reid, Potter, Brooks and Wiseman and Mr Thomas (Co-opted Statutory Member)
Apologies	Councillor Gunnell and Mr Pennington (Co-opted Statutory Member)

57. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

58. Minutes

Resolved: That the following minutes be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record:

- Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes of 24 February 2015
- Entrepreneurship in York Schools Task Group minutes of 14 January 2015
- Disabled Access Scrutiny Task Group minutes of 12 February 2015
- Narrowing the Gap Scrutiny Review Task Group minutes of 12 February 2015

59. Public Participation

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

60. Attendance of Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Young People's Services

The Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People's Services was in attendance to provide a progress update on her priorities and challenges for this municipal year. A copy of her written report had been circulated.

Members questioned the Cabinet Member on the following issues:

(i) School Place Planning

The Cabinet Member was asked about the action that was being taken to ensure that there were sufficient school places. The Cabinet Member stated that this issue was being taken very seriously. Although there had been an increase in the birth rate, the increased pupil numbers were not spread evenly throughout the authority. There were particular pressures on village schools and in the Southbank area of the city. Cabinet had recently approved funding to provide additional places at St Barnabas School and officers were working hard to address long term pressures on places.

Members were informed that this year there had been an increase in the number of parents who had been allocated a place for their child at their first or second preference of school. Officers gave details of how the Local Authority was working with school clusters in the planning of school places. Currently efforts were being made to utilise existing accommodation but this was becoming increasingly difficult and costly.

Members queried whether the uncertainty surrounding the Local Plan was causing difficulties for school place planning. The Cabinet Member stated that the current focus was on children already in the system but the Local Plan would have significant implications and may necessitate additional school building.

(ii) Academies

An update was given on the number of schools within the city which had converted to academies. Members were

informed that these schools were still contributing as part of the York family of schools.

(iii) Narrowing the Gap Scrutiny Review

The Cabinet Member expressed her support for the Narrowing the Gap Scrutiny Review Report and stated that this was a hugely important piece of work.

(iv) Castlegate

Referring to the reference in her report to the Castlegate Centre, the Cabinet Member was asked if it was her expectation that funding would be found from other sources to support these services. She stated that she hoped that this would be the case.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is kept updated on the Cabinet Member's priorities and challenges.

The Cabinet Member was thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

61. Attendance of Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Tourism

The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism was in attendance to provide a progress update on her priorities and challenges for this municipal year.

The Cabinet Member detailed some of the key achievements including:

- The Tour de France – The Cabinet Member stated that this had been a huge success and had captured the imagination of the city as well as bringing economic benefits.
- The stadium project – details were given of the new contract for the operation of the city's leisure facilities. The new community stadium was due to open in late summer 2016.
- Diversity and equalities – the Council had been assessed at Excellence level. Tribute was paid to the work that the

Equalities Leadership Group had carried out and the contribution that Councillor Fitzpatrick had made as Diversity Champion.

- City Centre – the market refurbishment was nearing completion. Details were given of the tendering process that was taking place in respect of new and more accessible chalets for the Christmas market. The Cabinet Member was asked if the planned occasional markets in Newgate would impact on the existing traders. The Cabinet Member gave details of the arrangements that would be in place and stated that these were supported by the existing traders.
- Sport and active leisure – details were given of the wide range of programmes which were available.
- Illuminating York – details were given of the 2014 event and of suggested future developments, including the possibility of having fixed installations on buildings over the winter period.
- Make it York – preparations had been ongoing to establish Make it York which would begin operating on 1 April 2015. The Cabinet Member was asked which committee would have responsibility for the Make it York Service Level Agreement. She stated that this would be Cabinet but that the information could also be made available to the scrutiny committee. The shareholders group would monitor performance against the service level agreement. Members agreed on the importance of ensuring that the Committee was kept updated on this issue.
- Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual – Explore York had now been operating as a mutual for almost a year and had made rapid strides forward. Because York Explore had to be closed to the public for longer than had been anticipated when the business plan was prepared, this had impacted on their finances and the Council would be compensating them for loss of income.
- Parks and Open Spaces – an update was given on the community projects that were being supported.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is kept updated on the Cabinet Member's priorities and challenges.

The Cabinet Member was thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

62. Attendance of Chair of Safeguarding Children Board

Members considered a report from the Chair of York Safeguarding Children Board for the period August 2014 to February 2014.

Mr Simon Westwood, Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board, was in attendance and responded to Members' questions.

Members' attention was drawn to the key priorities for 2014/15. Members expressed their support for the proposed areas of work and made particular reference to the importance of ensuring that problems were identified early and appropriate support provided. They also agreed that there was a need to ensure that agencies were better able to respond to situations when children went missing from home, care and education.

Members sought assurances that effective safeguarding arrangements were in place for all children and young people. Details were given of the policies that each agency had in place and of the opportunities for the Cabinet Member, other Elected Members and senior officers to challenge and scrutinise safeguarding arrangements.

At the request of Members, details were given of the case file audits that were taking place.

- Resolved: (i) That the update report be noted.
- (ii) That Members supported the continuation of priorities for the City of York Safeguarding Children Board for 2015/16, as detailed in the report.

Reason: To ensure that Members are kept updated on the work of the York Safeguarding Children Board and can inform its priorities.

63. Third Quarter Finance & Performance Monitoring Report

Members considered a report that analysed the latest performance for 2014/15 and which forecast the financial outturn position by reference to the service plan and budgets for

all of the relevant services falling under the responsibility of the Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods (CANS) and the Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills (CSES).

Officers drew Members' attention to the projected outturn variations, as detailed in the report.

Members gave consideration to the performance information detailed in Annex 1 of the report and were pleased to note that overall this was a positive picture. They were, however, concerned to note that the statistics on bullying in schools appeared to show an increase in the number of reported incidents. Officers gave details of the key issues which young people had identified as being of concern and of a pilot project that would be carried out in two cluster areas of the city to address this. Members agreed that the committee would wish to receive the full report on the "Someone to Turn To" – pupil survey.¹

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is updated on the latest financial and performance position for 2014/15.

Action Required

1. Include on workplan

MC

64. Draft Final Report - Entrepreneurship in York Schools Scrutiny Review

Councillor Scott, Chair of the task group, presented the Entrepreneurship in York Schools Final Report. He commended the other members of the task group and officers on the work they had carried out.

Members' attention was drawn to the recommendations arising from the review, as detailed in paragraph 20 of the cover report.

Consideration was given as to how schools could be encouraged to take part in the proposed annual "Tenner" challenge. It was agreed that the Enterprise Governors could play a useful role in promoting this initiative. For this reason it was agreed that it would be useful to reorder the

recommendations so that recommendation (v) was moved to recommendation (i) and vice-versa.

It was also agreed that a copy of the scrutiny report should be forwarded to all schools.

Resolved: That, subject to the agreed amendments, the Entrepreneurship in York Schools Final Report be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

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

65. Draft Final Report -Disabled Access To York's Heritage & Cultural Offer Scrutiny Review

Members noted that, at the last meeting, the Committee had received the draft final report arising from the Disabled Access Scrutiny Review. A number of issues had been raised and the Chair of the Task Group had agreed to seek clarification on proposed amendments. Details of the proposed amendments had subsequently been circulated via email and the Chair and Vice-Chair had signed-off the revisions.

Resolved: That the Committee endorsed the action that had been taken and that the Disabled Access Scrutiny Review report be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

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

66. Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee Workplan 2014/15

Members were informed that the draft work plan for the new municipal year had been circulated to lead officers for input. It was noted that the scrutiny review in respect of the Tour de France had been factored into the programme of work.

Members were asked to put forward suggested items for inclusion in the plan.

Resolved: That the following items be included in the new work plan:

- SACRE Annual Report
- Chief Executive/Chair of Make it York to be invited to attend the July meeting

Reason: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place.

67. Urgent Business - Chair's Comments

As this was the final meeting of the Learning and Culture Committee in the current municipal year, the Chair thanked Members and officers for the work that they had carried out. Members thanked the Chair and Vice-Chair for their support.

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.20 pm].