

Meeting	Children, Education & Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date	28 March 2018
Present	Councillors Taylor (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Rawlings, Flinders (as a Substitute for Cllr Wells), Funnell (as a Substitute for Cllr Crawshaw), Steward (as a Substitute for Cllr Brooks) and Reid (as a Substitute for Cllr Jackson)
Apologies	Councillors Brooks, Crawshaw, Jackson and Wells and Mr A Hagon

36. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

Councillor Dave Taylor declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (The Work of York@Large since April 2017) as his line manager at City Screen was a member of the Cultural Leaders Group.

37. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 10 January 2018 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the chair.

38. Public Participation

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

39. The work of York@Large since April 2017

The Chair of York @ Large attended the meeting to present a update on how the organisation had been working with the Council and other partners to deliver joint services during the past 12 months. It covered an update on the membership of York@Large and its changing role, its organisation and the operation of its committees and groups. The Chair drew Members attention to the position of York in national reports and the designations and awards it had received. He also referred to the recent report on the Impact of Arts and Culture in York, and the use of culture to reduce health and wellbeing inequalities, and cultural wellbeing in relation to the Local Plan.

He responded to particular issues raised by Members during discussion of the report and provided further relevant information on:

- the structure of the organisation and use of task and finish groups
- the Annual Heritage Index ranking
- difficulties faced in navigating around many different organisations and the need to ensure transparency to enable people to direct their queries to the correct body.
- the need for the council to be clear on its role in supporting York@Large
- hope for continued support for the Cultural Commissioning Pilot

Resolved: That the report and update be noted.

Reason: To ensure that Members are kept updated on the work of York@Large

40. 2017/18 Finance and Performance Third Quarter Report

Members considered a report which analysed the latest performance for 2017-18 and forecasted the financial outturn position by reference to the service plans and budgets for all of the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Communities.

The Finance Manager drew Members attention to the projected net overspend of around 250k, a significant improvement of the 400k reported at Quarter 1, which included an improvement in

projections in relation to home to school transport and also a reduction in the level of projected staff redundancy costs.

The Corporate Director of Children, Education and Communities provided an update on performance noting:

- the number of children in care had remained constant around 200 mark for the last 2 years.
- the outcome for children and young people had continued to improve and strengthen.
- the Regional Adoption Agency, One Adoption North and Humber, hosted by City of York Council was now working to increase number of potential adopters.
- the Progress 8 Score from KS2 to KS4 showed an improved picture in comparison with previous year's performance
- a successful bid for funding to DfE Strategic School Improvement Fund – the council had moved to more of a commissioning role around school improvement
- progress made around narrowing the gap but still more to do.

In response to a number of queries, officers provided further information to Members in relation to the following issues:

- Budget around disability short breaks
- Difficulties recruiting to some Educational Psychologists posts
- Attainment Gap between Free School Meals (FSM) and non FSM pupils – small cohorts caused fluctuations from year to year and there was a need for consistency in attainment year on year to be confident the gap was closing.
- Building provision in York that better met children and young people's needs of increasing complexity, which has reduced the need for out of city placements.
- Information provided to young people coming into care was kept under review and informed by children and young people's experiences

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the committee on the latest financial and performance position for 2017-18

41. York Safeguarding Board Bi-annual Update

Members received an update on the progress of City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB), which highlighted the consultation on the Draft Working Together 2018 Guidance and the new arrangements resulting from the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The Corporate Director of Children, Education and Communities updated members on changes which would be taking place in relation to future safeguarding partnership arrangements to replace what was currently known as the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

He confirmed that York had responded to the government consultation, and that the current independent chair of York's LSCB had drafted a proposed set of new arrangements as a consultation document which the current Board had started to consider. Although central government was being less prescriptive in terms of what those arrangements would need to look like in the future, they did not plan to move too far away from the existing arrangements as the outcome from previous Ofsted tests had showed that they worked well. However the Board had acknowledged the need to make the most efficient use of partners' time and that this process would provide the opportunity to rationalise the way the current partnership arrangements worked.

He explained that under the new arrangements there would be no requirement to have an independent chair but there was a need to be able to objectively test arrangements on a regular basis. It was noted that the new arrangements would not be in place until September 2019 and it was agreed that the committee would receive a further more detailed update on the proposed new arrangements in six months time.

The Corporate Director of Children, Education and Communities then drew Members attention to the Young People's version of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) Annual Report. This was a shorter, accessible, easily readable version of the annual report and was available to read online. He went on to advise Members that the voluntary sector was currently doing some good work led by the Chief Executive of Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) and a survey for voluntary organisations around their response to children's safeguarding issues was currently being undertaken. Lastly he updated

Members on a new multi agency Neglect Strategy which the Board had been working on over the last year and advised them that there was a One Minute Guide to Neglect available online which outlined the main issues around neglect of children.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That representatives of the Police and CCG and the independent Chair of the LSCB be invited to attend the meeting when the next update from York's Safeguarding Board is due in order to update Members on Safeguarding Board arrangements going forward.

Reason: To update the committee on the progress of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board over the past 6 months and going forward.

42. York Learning - Strategic Plan Progress Report 2017/18

Members considered a report which presented the mid-year performance data for York Learning and updated members on significant service issues.

The Curriculum Manager ICT, E-Learning and Quality Assurance and Head of Functional Skills and Targeted Learning were in attendance to present the report. They provided more information in relation to issues covered in the report and drew Members attention to the York Learning Strategic Service Plan Actions for 2017-18 Academic Year (annex 1) and information on performance targets for 2017-18 (annex 2).

The Chair congratulated officers on retaining York's Matrix accreditation, a national quality framework which measured how well the service provided information, advice and guidance to learners and how well the services promoted these services.

In response to a query in relation to the increase in demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages, officers advised that there was demand from people from a high number of different ethnic groups, many looking for employment and needing to improve their qualifications.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To help monitor the service and guide managers and ensure robust and accountable governance arrangements.

43. Library Consultation Feedback

Members considered a report which presented the background to the Council's consultation on its vision for the future of its library services and explained the approach taken. A document setting out the main consultation findings had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting and copies of the detailed analysis of each of the consultation components set out in the cover report were circulated (and added to the online agenda following the meeting). This comprised the online library survey, the on-street library survey, a write up of the views of the stakeholder groups and the results of the budget consultation 2018-19 on library services. Members were asked to consider whether they felt any amendments were required to the revised vision to reflect the views expressed in the consultation.

The Assistant Director (Communities and Equalities) reported on the findings contained in each of the four documents. He and the Chief Executive of York Explore, responded to and provided further information in relation to particular issues raised during discussion and the following comments were noted:

- Overall the consultation showed very positive results
- Concern was expressed that "longer/more improved" opening hours were grouped together in the consultation and précis of results – however it was clear that users would benefit from more flexible library opening hours
- Need to consider ways to build on customer base – noting difficulties getting young people/teenagers to engage with the services offered by libraries.
- Need to ensure services are available for all residents and that they reflect their needs
- Need to consider flexible operation of buildings – so they can remain open longer so that people can have access through self issue.
- Opening hours have already been changed (without reducing total number of hours open) in some libraries to meet local demand – Discussion is ongoing with communities about when they want libraries to be open.

- There is a solid base of volunteering offers – volunteers are key to driving libraries forward
- Better information needs to be available about what libraries offer – there is a need to get this message across better.
- The vision needs to reflect the fact that there will be different needs at different locations around York.
- The report on discussions at stake holder meetings showed strong support for bringing other community activities together with libraries.

It was noted that under the Explore Gateways heading of the revised draft vision it read “*Offered in a variety of venues, preferably with cafe facilities, these libraries **should** be co-located with other community activities*” where previously the word “should” read “**could**”. In order to acknowledge the differences in options for configuration of suburban and village libraries and the challenges around this, it was suggested that it would be more sensible if this were to read “.... these libraries **should** be co-located with other community activities **wherever possible**.....”

The Assistant Director advised Members that officers would now put together the draft Comprehensive Assessment of Need and would bring this to the May meeting for Members consideration. This document would comprise the following component parts, all of which Members had now seen: the agreed vision; a clear setting out of the demographic needs of York; a résumé of key policy drivers, a résumé of performance of current service; and a résumé of expressed views of its residents (as discussed at this meeting). This document would become a statement of what the council wished to see from its library service (i.e. intent of what the council would want the provider of the new contract to carry forward) and would then be presented to the Executive in June for approval, in order that the Council could begin its procurement process.

- Resolved: (i) That the results of the consultation be noted.
- (ii) That members’ comments on the vision for the future of the Council’s library services made so far be noted.

- (ii) That the draft Comprehensive Assessment of Need be provided to Members at the May meeting for comments before it is considered by Executive.

Reason: To inform the forthcoming procurement of the Council's Library Services.

44. Work Plan 2017/18

Members considered the committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2017-18 municipal year.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that a further report in relation to the forthcoming procurement of the Council's Library Services would be provided to Members at the next meeting on 22 May 2018. As there were already a large number of items scheduled for consideration at that meeting, to prevent the meeting from being too lengthy, it was agreed that the following items scheduled for that meeting would be deferred to the beginning of the next municipal year:

- Update on School Meals Take-Up
- York Theatre Royal Bi-annual Performance Update

Resolved: That the work plan be agreed subject to the above amendments.

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

Councillor D Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.45 pm and finished at 7.45 pm].