

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Culture, Leisure & Communities
Date	16 March 2020
Present	Councillor Smalley (Executive Member)

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member confirmed he had no personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, nor any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest, to declare in the business of the agenda.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 22 November 2019 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

3. Public Participation

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

4. York Theatre Royal Capital Funding

The Executive Member considered a report that set out how capital funding allocated by the Council was to be used by York Theatre Royal.

The Assistant Director of Communities and Culture was in attendance to provide an update. He informed the Executive Member that the decision to allocate £500k of capital funding to York Theatre Royal was agreed at Budget Council on 27 February 2020, subject to a report to this Decision Session with regard to how this funding would be used. He stated that the funding would cover a four year period and that by making the grant this way it enabled the Council to make an annual revenue saving.

The Executive Member noted the partnership aims, as highlighted within the report and the Executive Director of York Theatre Royal was also in attendance to confirm the application of the funding. It was noted that the grant would provide sustainability for the theatre and allow for:

- Green initiatives in respect of theatre lighting.
- Improvements to the energy efficiency.
- Investment in box office software and equipment.
- Disabled access improvements across the site, including rehearsal space in De Grey House.
- New studio space to expand the youth theatre.

The Executive Director answered the Executive Members questions regarding the impact of the coronavirus, where it was noted that the theatre was open and was following national advice and guidance in respect of Covid-19. Ticket sales had declined but customers who had tickets were still attending.

The Executive Director thanked the Council for their continued support, which contributed to the cultural life of the city and the wellbeing of York's citizens and young people.

The Executive Member thanked the Executive Director and Assistant Director for their update.

Resolved:

- i. That the partnership aims, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report, be approved.
- ii. That the application of the funding, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report, be approved.

Reason: To ensure that York Theatre Royal continued to play a significant role in York's vibrant cultural offer.

5. York Learning - Self-Assessment Report 2018/19

The Executive Member considered a report that presented York Learning's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for the academic year 18/19.

The Acting Head of York Learning was in attendance to provide an update and she highlighted the key issues within the report. The Executive Member noted that:

- The achievement for apprenticeship programmes for 18/19 had not shown any increase from last year due to anticipated legacy issues from 17/18. (Apprenticeships often ran for 2 years and it could take over 2 years to show improvement from actions taken).
- Achievements for 19/20 were on course to show a positive increase.
- A Good Provider rating from Ofsted was successfully maintained in November 2019 and the challenges raised and areas of improvements were being addressed and considered in the improvement plan.
- York Learning were prioritising options for new premises, especially in the city centre, in its 20/21 strategic plan.
- Investment in new IT systems had helped to drive improvements, which would support the service moving forward.

In answer to the Executive Members questions, the Acting Head confirmed that:

- The new MiS system should be fully integrated within 4 to 6 months.
- The 16-18 program was working well at Winterscale House and it was meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable young people in the city.
- The coronavirus had resulted in some courses being cancelled due to tutors self-isolating or venues closing. A full lockdown would have cost implications and affect the wellbeing of some learners.

The Assistant Director of Communities and Culture confirmed that the service's strategic plan for the academic year 20/21 would be brought to the Executive Member in August.

The Executive Member thanked officers for their report and congratulated York Learning on achieving a Good Provider rating from Ofsted. He also requested that officers confirm if they require assistance to mitigate any impact from the coronavirus.

Resolved: That the findings of the service's self-assessment report be considered and the production and publication of the final report be noted.

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

Cllr Smalley, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 4.48 pm].