

---

MEETING	LEARNING & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	10 DECEMBER 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS LOOKER (CHAIR), BROOKS (VICE-CHAIR), ASPDEN, HOGG, TAYLOR, WAUDBY, MERRETT (AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CLLR DOUGLAS) AND B WATSON (AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CLLR CRISP)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS CRISP, DOUGLAS AND MR W SCHOFIELD

---

## **22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At this point in the meeting Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on this agenda or any general interests they might have within the remit of the Committee, other than those standing interests listed in the agenda.

Councillor Merrett declared the following personal interests

- parent of a child who attends St Paul's Church of England Primary School
- Governor at St Paul's Church of England Primary School
- Parent of child who uses the Schools Music Service
- Treasurer of York Chinese Cultural Organisation.

The list of standing interests was updated accordingly.

## **23. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

## **24. YORK THEATRE ROYAL SERVICE AGREEMENT: 2009/10 HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Members considered a report which informed them of the progress and performance of the York Theatre Royal under the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) which runs to March 2012.

The Head of Arts and Culture introduced the new Chief Executive of York Theatre Royal to Members. The General Manager of the York Theatre Royal was also in attendance to answer questions.

In response to a query on what action the theatre was taking to tackle its carbon footprint, York Theatre Royal's General Manager advised Members

that this had been identified as an organisational objective for 2009-10 and they were just starting to look at it and that she would provide further information on this during their next update.

In regard to the Takeover Festival, she reported that this year's festival had been hugely successful and confirmed that funding was available from the Arts Council for the festival to take place again the following year. She also reported success with the initiative which offers free theatre tickets for under 26 year olds. She advised that the target for the take up of free tickets had been significantly exceeded and that the initiative would continue until March 2011.

The Head of Arts and Culture announced that the City had been awarded Pathfinder status for volunteering opportunities for 14-19 year olds and the Chief Executive explained that the next step was to reach people not yet reached, in particular through peer to peer engagement.

Members agreed that the report was very positive and congratulated the York Theatre Royal on an excellent set of results and some ambitious and exciting initiatives.

RESOLVED: (i) That the performance of the Theatre Royal be noted.

(ii) That Members comments be noted.

REASON: To fulfil the Council's role under the Service Level Agreement.

## **25. YORK MUSEUMS TRUST PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY PLAN: 2009/10 HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Members considered a report which updated them on the current progress of the York Museums Trust (YMT) towards meeting the targets agreed in the Partnership Delivery Plan (PDP).

The Director of Finance and Business Development provided Members with an update on progress during the past six months towards meeting the seven key target areas set out in the PDP.

He reported record visitor numbers which, during the first part of the financial year, were 9% higher than the same period last year and had improved further since. He explained that this improvement was due largely to increased investment in products and collections.

He reported that the Yorkshire Museum's "Letting in the Light" refurbishment project was proceeding well and suggested Members may find it beneficial to visit the Museum to see the work that was taking place.

Members congratulated the York Museums Trust on an excellent set of results and voiced their support towards the investment in the Yorkshire Museum.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the report be noted
  - (ii) That members comments be noted.
  - (iii) That a visit be arranged to the Yorkshire Museum in order that Members of the Committee can undertake a tour of the museum during its refurbishment.

REASON: To fulfil the Council's role under the Partnership Delivery Plan.

Action Required

Scrutiny Officer to liaise with York Museums' Trust to MC  
organise visit for Members to see refurbishment of Yorkshire  
Museum.

**26. 2009/10 SECOND QUARTER MONITORING REPORT - FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE**

Members received a report which analysed the latest performance for 2009/10 and forecasting the outturn position by reference to the service plan, the budget and the performance indicators for all of the services falling under the responsibility of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services.

The Head of Finance updated Members on the financial position for the second quarter of 2009-10 and reported an overall improvement in the projected significant expected overspend which he had reported the previous quarter. However he advised Members of a slight increase in the projected overspend in Children's Care which is mainly due to the increase in the included Looked After Children (LAC) population.

The Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services updated Members on performance in the directorate and responded to questions in relation to specific issues raised in the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

REASON: To update the Committee on the latest finance and performance position for 2009-10.

**27. LEARNING AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2009-2010**

Members considered a workplan for the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Civic Year 2009-10, a summary of items which were listed on the Executive Forward Plan for decision by the Executive, the Executive Member for Children and Young People's

Services and the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion. The Scrutiny Officer advised Members of changes to the work plan for forthcoming meetings.

Members noted that the updates from outside bodies such as the Theatre Royal and York Museums Trust, with whom the Council has a Service Level Agreement, were very informative and interesting, however they raised concerns that the meeting time dedicated to receiving these updates impacted on the available time left to deal with the remainder of the Committee's work.

In response to a suggestion that the Committee may wish to examine how York attracts big events such as the Ice Factor and The Wheel, the Head of Arts and Culture advised Members that the existing Events Protocol was currently being reviewed and that she would welcome the opportunity to consult the Committee on the suggested revisions to the protocol.

The Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services advised that a report on 14 -19 Reforms was due to be presented to the Executive on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Members raised concerns that this report would not address the issue of the need to encourage young people from less affluent families into higher education and asked that this topic be considered for discussion by the Committee at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:           (i)    That the changes to the workplan be noted  
                             (ii)    That the draft Events Protocol be presented to Members at a future meeting for their comments.

REASON:             To progress the work of the Committee.

**28.     UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED SCRUTINY REVIEW ON THE CULTURAL QUARTER**

Members considered a report which provided them with an update on the implementation of recommendations made as a result of the completed Cultural Quarter Scrutiny Review.

The Head of Arts and Culture advised Members of the appointment of a Renaissance Team in City Strategy and that one of their key areas of interest was the Cultural Quarter. She advised that they had presented a report to York @ Large on this team's work and would be happy to provide this information to Members of the Committee.

She reported that York had taken the decision not to put in a bid for "City of Culture" status as they did not meet the very strict criteria laid down. However, she announced that the city had been identified by York @ Large as a suitable city to apply for endorsement by the "UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) Creative Cities Network" under the category of Media Arts and advised that they would be

putting together a small working team to prepare a bid for this (at no cost to the Council).

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
  - (ii) That recommendations 4, 6 and 8 be written off as fully implemented.
  - (iii) That an update on the implementation of recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 be provided to a future meeting.
  - (iv) That the Committee receive an information only report on the Renaissance Team.

- REASON:
- (i) to (iii) In order that Members are aware of those recommendations which have been implemented and those which have still to be implemented.
  - (iv) To update them on the role of the Team

Action Required

Head of Arts and Culture to provide report on the Renaissance Team for the next meeting of the Committee. MC

**29. REVIEW OF CASUAL PLAY OPPORTUNITIES - SCOPING REPORT**

Members considered a report which presented information in support of a proposed review of the available provision of casual play opportunities across the city and asked them to agree how they would like to proceed with the review.

A copy of Annex D "List of areas with gaps in provision not included in the Playbuilder Initiative" was circulated to Members of the Committee at the meeting.

With regard to the remit, Members agreed that the age range for the review should be widened from 5-11 to 5-13 years old to coincide with the Government's "Playbuilder" Initiative. Members also agreed some minor changes to the objectives.

Members briefly discussed some potential areas which the review could focus on and decided that in order to assist them in making this decision, it would be beneficial to meet with the Head of Parks and Open Spaces again to look, with the aid of maps, at where play facilities currently exist and those areas currently without facilities.

In terms of a timeframe for completion, Members agreed that the review should be completed by the end of the Civic Year in May 2010. They agreed that the following groups could be approached and sources of information examined in order to progress the review.

- Bell Farm Adventure Playground
- York Playspace
- the Chair of the Groves Residents' Association
- Visit York (comments from visitors to city on play issues)
- Children and Young People's Plan (search database of consultation responses for comments on play issues)
- National Childbirth Trust (NCT) book titled "Child Friendly York" (includes information on indoor and outdoor play areas and other play opportunities in York)

It was suggested that Members familiarise themselves with the Play Strategy for York "Taking Play Forward", which was included with the agenda as annex B, before the next meeting.

#### RESOVLED

- (i) That the remit and objectives as stated in the report (with the amendments discussed) be agreed.
- (ii) That Members aim to complete the review by the end of the current civic year.
- (iii) That a suitable date be arranged in January 2010 and the Head of Parks and Open Spaces be invited to present further information on play opportunities in York, in order to assist Members in deciding which areas to focus the review on.

#### REASON:

To ensure compliance with the Committee's workplan and with scrutiny procedure and protocols and to progress the work of the Committee.

### **30. EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

Members received an update from the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services on the work taking place within her remit.

The Chair noted that in order for the Committee to be able to contribute to new policies and plans in the early stages of development, it would be beneficial to have more information on long-term plans.

The Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services provided Members with a brief presentation on the following areas of work which she explained were current priorities within her portfolio area:-

- Capital Investment in Schools
- 14-19 Delegation
- Increase in Looked after Children Population
- Changes in "More for York"

The Chair thanked the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services for attending the meeting and providing an update.

RESOLVED: That the update from the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services be noted.

REASON: In order that the Committee is kept informed on work within the remit of the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services and that Members can make a contribution to this portfolio area.

Councillor J Looker, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.50 pm].