

Meeting	Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	22 January 2014
Present	Councillors Reid (Chair), Fitzpatrick (Vice-Chair), Barnes, Brooks, Potter, Taylor and Scott
Apologies	Mr A Pennington

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### **34. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included in the register of interests, any prejudicial interests or disclosable interests which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the committee other than those listed within the agenda. No interests were declared.

### **35. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 November 2013 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

### **36. Public Participation**

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

### **37. York Theatre Royal: 2013/14 Part 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) and the plans in development for the future.

The Chief Executive of York Theatre Royal drew Members attention to Annex 1 of the report which provided details of the theatre's performance during the last six months (July to December 2013) and included cumulative quantitative measures from April 2013 to December 2013.

Members noted how the theatre had been working to achieve the SLA conditions and further discussion took place around some of the areas covered by the SLA.

Members acknowledged that a total audience attendance from April to December 2013 of just over 85 thousand put the theatre on track to meet the end of year target. However in terms of financial performance, Members noted that a deficit was forecasted at the end of the year following a tough year but were assured that the Theatre would continue to reduce its expenditure in order to bring down the deficit.

With regard to the SLA condition in relation to the provision of sign language interpreted and audio described performances and touch tours, Members acknowledged that a range of sign interpreted and audio-described performances were available. However concerns were raised that captioned performances were normally limited to afternoon performances and Members asked that further consideration was given to improving provision of captioned performances in order to allow full inclusivity. The Theatre Royal's Chief Executive explained that the equipment required for captioned performances, which were much more liberating than signed or audio described performances, was shared with about seven other theatres She agreed to pursue the provision of captioned performances with the main touring companies the theatre worked with.

With regard to the unsuccessful bid to York Consortium to improve the evening economy, the Chair asked what the Theatre could do to take their part forward without the funding. The Chief Executive assured Members that they could continue to work with partners who knew each other well through Visit York in order to consider a programme of work and to look at creating new partnerships which didn't currently exist.

Resolved: That the report be noted and Members comments be taken into account.

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

### **38. Bi-Annual Safeguarding Update**

Members considered a report which provided them with a six monthly update on key children's safeguarding issues, in particular key local and national safeguarding developments since July 2013.

The Assistant Director (Children's Specialist Services) explained that the report was normally co-produced with the Chair of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB). He advised Members that Roger Thompson, the Board's former independent Chair, had resigned from the role in August 2013 and in November 2013 Mr Simon Westwood had been appointed as new independent Chair of the Board. Members noted that Mr Westwood was currently in his induction period but would chair the meeting of the CYSCB later that month and would co-produce this report in future and attend the next meeting of this committee.

The Assistant Director updated Members on the results of the peer review which had been commissioned by the local authority and its partners to consider the effectiveness of local board arrangements. He advised Members that the review had confirmed some key strengths and also found some areas for further development and improvement which he explained to Members. He advised that a detailed improvement plan had been agreed by the Board and had achieved rapid and significant progress against all the areas identified for improvement, including the development of a new qualitative performance management framework and the introduction of an involvement strategy for the Board.

Members were advised that a regional challenge event which looked at the outcomes of the biennial multi agency audit of local safeguarding arrangements had taken place the previous week and it was agreed that the results of this event would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in March.

Members commented on the results of the Stand Up For Us 2013 survey which has been running since 2011 with the aim of monitoring the prevalence and nature of bullying in schools. They raised concern that only 84.6% of secondary school pupils felt safe while travelling on public transport. They were informed that over last 10 years, there had been a pattern of bullying moving out of schools but learnt that Danesgate Community had been carrying out some good work to tackle bullying and their young people had produced a DVD on bullying which had won an award. Members were advised that Danesgate Community and First York had put together an action plan looking at working to promote safe travelling to and from school.

Members raised concerns that it was not clear how matters were escalated onto the Practice Improvement Plan (PIP) (1 Dec 2013 to 28 Feb 2014) which was appended to the report at Annex D and who took responsibility for identifying something as requiring practice improvement. The Assistant Director advised Members that the Practice Improvement Plan was not a

stand alone document but was intended to demonstrate how to take lessons from serious case reviews and turn them into practice improvements. He explained that it was a document which fed other tools and he offered to present the plan in its full context at a future meeting to make it easier for Members to understand.

Resolved:

- (i) That the long standing contribution of Mr Roger Thompson as the Chair of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) be acknowledged by the committee.
- (ii) That an update on the outcome of the Section 11 audit regional challenge event be presented to the next meeting of the committee on 19 March 2014.<sup>1</sup>
- (iii) That the following information be included in an update to be presented to the committee at its meeting in July 2014:-
  - a more detailed report on progress against the Board's improvement plan
  - a report on the outcome of the thematic inspection.
  - A detailed update on developments within children's social care
  - A further update on the progress of the Keeping Families Together strategy.
  - The Practice Improvement Plan (PIP).<sup>2</sup>

Reason: To allow Members to be fully informed on key children's safeguarding issues in York.

#### Action Required

1. Present update on the outcome of the Section 11 audit regional challenge event at next meeting on 19 March 2014. ER

2. Present Practice Improvement Plan (PIP) at meeting in July 2014. ER

### **39. Work Plan including a verbal update on ongoing Reviews**

Members received a verbal update on the two ongoing reviews currently being carried out by the School Meals Scrutiny Review Task Group and the

## Night Time Economy (Improving Evening Cultural Offer) Scrutiny Review Task Group.

Councillor Fitzpatrick, chair of the School Meals Scrutiny Review Task Group advised the committee that the task group was due to meet again the following Monday to consider the final information gathered in support of the review and identify their review conclusions and draft recommendations. She explained that the task group had been asked to delay seeking parents views on school meals as the Communications Team planned to publish an article on school meals in February. She expressed concern that if the review was concluded in line with intended timescales, this would not give them sufficient time to be able to consider parents' views, which they agreed were important, when drawing together their review conclusions. It was agreed that the Task Group chair would liaise with the Interim Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills and Communications Team to discuss the best way forward.

Councillor Reid advised the committee that the first meeting of the Night Time Economy (Improving Evening Cultural Offer) Scrutiny Review Task Group had taken place on 20<sup>th</sup> January as the group had been waiting for the result of the York Consortium bid. She reported that unfortunately this bid had been unsuccessful but the task group had agreed to look at the bid to see what aspects could be pursued without funding. She advised that the task group would hopefully be able to attend the York Consortium Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February to talk with Consortium members.

Members then considered the work plan for the remainder of the 2013-14 municipal year and noted that with regard to Agenda Item 5 (Bi-Annual Safeguarding Update), it had been agreed that the Assistant Director (Children's Specialist Services) would provide an update on the outcome of the Section 11 audit regional challenge event at the next meeting on 19 March 2014.

Resolved: That the work plan be noted and amended as above.

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

Councillor A Reid, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.55 pm].