
Meeting	Learning and Culture Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	10 May 2017
Present	Councillors Craghill (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Brooks, Dew, Jackson and Cannon (as a substitute for Cllr Wells)
Apologies	Councillor Wells, Dr J Dickinson and Mr A Hagon (Co-opted Statutory Members)

52. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial interests or disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda.

Cllr Craghill declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Attendance of Chair of Learning City) as her partner, Cllr D'Agorne, worked at York College.

Councillor Dew declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (Theatre Royal Update: 2016-17 End of Year Performance Update) as a City of York Council observer on the York Citizens Theatre Trust.

Councillor Cannon declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (York Theatre Royal 2016-17 End of Year Performance Update) as a member of York Theatre Royal and in agenda item 6 (Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual Bi-annual Performance Update 2016-17) as a community member of York Explore.

Councillor Brooks also declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 (Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual Bi-annual Performance Update 2016-17) as a member of the Friends of Dunnington Library Group.

53. Minutes

In relation to minute 46 (2016-17 Third Quarter Finance and Performance Monitoring Report) the Chair asked that further information be included in the minutes in relation to the discussion on performance issues.

She advised Members that, in relation to minute 50 (Update on implementation of recommendations from previously completed 'Disabled Access to York's Heritage & Cultural Offer' Scrutiny Review), she had received a response from the Quality Bus Partnership in relation to recommendation 5 which she agreed to forward on to committee members for their information.

Resolved: That approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 be deferred until the next meeting of the committee.

Reason: In order that additional information on discussion under minute number 46 (2016-17 Third Quarter Finance and Performance Monitoring Report) can be added before the minutes are approved.

54. Public Participation

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

55. Attendance of Chair of Learning City

The Chair of Learning City York and the council's Learning City Partnership Manager attended the meeting to provide an update on how the organisation had been working with the council and other partners to deliver joint services and an update on the York Skills Plan 2017-2020.

They advised that York's Skills Plan had been through consultation and was now before Scrutiny members for final consultation before going to Corporate Management Team and onto Executive for final approval.

Members discussed the report and the Skills Plan and the following issues were raised:

- Reduced opportunities for under 16s to develop vocational and IT skills within the school environment due to pressures on the curriculum as a result of changes in attainment measures
- Reduction in applicants applying to study Digital and IT at college
- Importance of getting female STEM Ambassadors and local role models to go into schools to promote careers opportunities to female students.
- Need to promote introduction of high level apprenticeships by working with employers and sharing case studies
- Skills shortage in hospitality industry – issues include rates of pay and difficulties for young people travelling to apprentice positions in good pubs/restaurants in countryside. Working with schools to look at ways to breakdown barriers and build curriculum links to encourage pupils into hospitality/catering industry.
- Construction – need to work with employers to ensure they take on apprentices and make the most of local employment and skills opportunities
- Care workers – staff shortage due to frequent turnover and low pay but investment going into development of high level apprenticeships, opening up career route to become care managers.

Members commented that it was a well evidenced report and agreed to receive a progress update in a further six months time.

Resolved: That the report be noted and a further update be provided to the committee in approximately six months.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on the delivery of joint services.

56. York Theatre Royal: 2016/17 End of Year Performance Update

Members considered a report which informed them of the progress and performance of York Theatre Royal.

The Chief Executive of York Citizens Theatre Trust reminded Members that the investment package from CYC had changed with revenue funding only received until the beginning of 2016-17 and then a one off capital grant of £770k being provided representing the council's financial support to the theatre for the four year period to 2020-21.

She informed Members that the Youth theatre comprised 370 young people who met weekly as part of 16 groups. However, due to its popularity, there was an ongoing waiting list of approximately 150 young people. Their challenge was to resource new opportunities for young people and to grow the offer and two new groups in theatre making had been set up at York St John University.

In relation to opportunities for older people, Members noted the information contained in the report about existing opportunities and acknowledged that value of developing new opportunities but recognised that these had to be resourced without the benefit of additional financial resources.

Resolved: That the report and Members comments on progress be noted.

Reason: To fulfil the council's role as a funding body.

57. Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual: Bi-annual Performance Update 2016/17

Members considered a report which provided an update on the performance of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd (Explore) during the second half of 2016/17.

The Chief Executive and Chair of York Explore drew Members' attention to the performance figures contained in annex 1 to the report which showed a high level of satisfaction with visits rising in 2016-17 in spite of a national trend of a decline in library visits. This was attributed to finding new ways to attract people such as reading cafes and Boccia sessions at Acomb Explore. Also, against a national trend of falling book issues, Explore saw an improvement in book issues with changes to signage at York Explore making it easier for people to find suitable books.

Members discussed the results of the CIPFA PLUS survey 2016 which they felt was very informative and helpful. In relation to the drop in the result for information provision, Members were informed that work was underway to improve this figure, with a plan to set up a web portal and undertake staff training.

With regard to community Involvement, Members were advised that about half of all libraries now had Friends groups. The benefit of

these groups, especially to smaller libraries, was acknowledged along with the desire to be able to set up friends groups for all libraries.

The Assistant Director, Communities and Equalities, advised Members that as they came towards end of 5 year contract period, the council would need to re-specify its requirements for the next period and for the new specification be signed off by the Executive in around April next year. In order to do that, the vision would need to be refreshed to ensure Members were happy with what the council was asking for. This would be done in light of the comprehensive assessment of need and informed by demographic and satisfaction data and citizens would also be consulted on their expectations. He advised that they would need to begin to pull together that re-visioning before going out to consultation and would be looking to bring this back to the committee in autumn 2017 in order to seek Members views before consulting more widely as part of the re-specification process.

Resolved: That the report and Members' comments be noted.

Reason: To help monitor the service received under the contract.

Cllr D Craghill, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.15 pm].

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