

MEETING	LEARNING & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	21 MARCH 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS REID (CHAIR), CUNNINGHAM-CROSS (VICE-CHAIR), FITZPATRICK, JEFFRIES, LEVENE, TAYLOR, WATSON, BARBER (CO-OPTED STATUTORY MEMBER) AND BARTON (AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CLLR BROOKS)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR BROOKS AND MRS P WIDDOWSON (CO-OPTED STATUTORY MEMBER)

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#### **45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the Committee. No further interests, other than those listed in the agenda papers, were declared.

#### **46. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 February 2012 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **47. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

**48. YORK MUSEUMS TRUST SCRUTINY REVIEW  
PRESENTATION & PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY PLAN  
PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Members received a presentation from the York Museums' Trust (YMT) in support of their scrutiny review to determine whether YMT have achieved appropriate collections management standards in line with the Collections Loan Agreement and Collections Management Protocol agreed in 2002.

The Commercial Director of YMT explained that City of York Council's role was as custodian trustee with ultimate ownership of the collections. YMT's role was that of managing trustee giving them day to day responsibility for looking after and managing the collections. He advised the Committee that the collection was vast and extremely diverse and the range of object types and collection types all had different preservation issues. He stated that in 2002 when YMT was set up, a number of priorities were identified, these being the storage, documentation and development of the collection. He provided the following information:-

Storage

- In 2002 storage was identified as inadequate, outdated, and there were issues with damp in some places.
- YMT now have four external storage sites on a long term basis at Birch Park, Ricall Grange, James Street and Fulford Cross. Material is moved between stores to get the best fit and between museums and stores dependent on displays.
- Castle Museum has lost some storage space due to the expansion of Kirkgate and there are still some remaining on-site storage issues to sort out.
- Art Gallery store is a big challenge. It is very important to preserve paintings in the correct environment with a need to maintain correct temperature and humidity levels. Currently the plant servicing the building is within the storage area and while this creates a suitable environment for paintings there is the potential for damage to paintings from water leaks. A forthcoming re-configuration of the Art Gallery will address this problem as the plant will be repositioned onto the roof.

## Documentation

- Identified as a priority due to the need to apply for accredited museums status.
- Director of Collections Management was recruited who set about task of documentation in formal way with regular meetings to assess progress.
- All fine arts collection is now catalogued as well as most of the archaeological collections and science collection (at box level). Remaining challenge is social history – currently reassessing approach to that.
- 157,000 records (equates to approx 75% of collection) on database but some records represent multiple objects.
- YMT cannot rely solely on their own staff due to the time needed to document the collection. Job is currently undertaken by curators and documentation staff however the plan is to involve the 50/60 volunteers.
- Veritau (Internal auditors) have carried out random sampling exercise to test procedures and ensure all staff understand procedures. They gave assurances that the controls in the system were good.
- Database conceived as internal tool but can also be used to respond to public enquiries about the collections. Aim is to get all existing data into public domain but some challenges and issues around that to work through.

## Development

- Collection is continually developing – some new items may be very expensive to purchase while others may cost nothing.
- Core collection may attract other donations.
- CYCs ownership of YMT may have effect of putting some donors off who may instead decide on long term loan rather than actual donation.
- YMTs trust status attracts benevolence from individuals.
- Close relationship with British Museum – British Museum devoted room to York Collection. YMT has also loaned work around the world as well as to Tate and V&A Museum.
- Trying to bring in external expertise by bringing in facilitators who are given access to the collection and add information to database.
- Growth in admissions, trading and renaissance income

Members noted that they had already received a general invitation to visit the Castle Museum but acknowledged that this would not deal with storage. Members agreed a task group made up of Councillors Watson, Taylor and Fitzpatrick to take this review forward and the Scrutiny Officer agreed to liaise with YMT to arrange for the task group to visit the Trust's storage facilities.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the presentation be noted.
  - (ii) That a task group be set up comprising Cllr Watson, Taylor and Fitzpatrick to take the review forward.
  - (iii) That a visit be arranged to look round the Trust's storage facilities.

REASON: In order to progress the scrutiny review.

**49. 2011/12 THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT - LIFELONG LEARNING & CULTURE AND CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

Members received a report analysing the latest performance for 2011/12 and forecasting the financial outturn position by reference to the service plan and budgets for relevant services falling within the Committee's remit.

Members noted that the decline in visits to swimming and sport centres (para 18), however noted the officer's view that the opening of the new competition standard swimming pool at York Sports Village would significantly boost participation. One Member expressed concerns that the number of students visiting the facility would give a false impression of numbers and impact on the sports participation figures. Officers advised that students were included in sports participation figures but Members agreed that it would be beneficial to have a breakdown of this figure to enable them to differentiate between use of the facilities by students and by York residents.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

REASON: To update the committee on the latest financial and performance position for 2011/12.

**50. UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM A PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED SCRUTINY REVIEW ON CULTURAL QUARTER & CASUAL PLAY**

Members received a report which provided them with an update on the implementation of the outstanding recommendations arising from two previously completed scrutiny reviews, namely the Cultural Quarter review and the Casual Play review.

The Head of Arts and Culture provided an update on the outstanding recommendations in relation to Cultural Quarter review. She advised Members that, with regard to recommendation 2, Invigorate York had been tasked with this as part of working towards preferred options which would then be worked up into a site plan before going out to public consultation. Members asked to see a draft of the consultation document before it went out to consultation so they could pass their comments to the Head of Major Development Projects & Initiatives. With regard to recommendation 3, the Head of Arts and Culture advised that the move to parcel the York North West Site into a British Sugar development site and York Central development site had now taken place. She confirmed that the York Central Development Site included a cycle/pedestrian link and this was being taken forward by the City Development Team.

The Head of Play provided an update on the outstanding recommendation in relation to the review of Casual Play. She advised Members what action had been taken to encourage ward committees, parish councils and residents associations to promote the value of outdoor play. She reported that this had included briefings to Members as part of their induction training, Change Champion workshops, sharing of good practice among parish councils and residents' associations and the production of fact/information sheets. She stated that further training would be offered to Members as well as "Tell me More" information sessions, targeted at residents associations and ward committees. Members acknowledged that this piece of work was ongoing but that they did not require any further input as a scrutiny committee.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That, in relation to the Cultural Quarter review:
    - (a) outstanding recommendations 2 & 3 remain as not being fully implemented
    - (b) That it be agreed that a six monthly update not be requested as it was acknowledged that no change was expected during that time.
  - (ii) That, in relation to the Casual Play review, outstanding recommendation 2 be signed off as fully implemented.

REASON; To raise awareness of those recommendations which have still to be implemented and those which can be signed off.

**51. ATTENDANCE OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES & CHAIR OF LEARNING CITY**

The Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People's Services provided information on her priorities and challenges for this municipal year, explaining she had only returned to the role of Cabinet Member in December 2011, part way through the budget process, and therefore still had to develop a clear forward plan. She spoke briefly on the following areas:

- Early Years Provision in education and children's services is hugely important – need to work closely with health services to identify, as early as possible, families who may be unable to adequately care for their children due to problems such as alcohol, drug misuse or relationship issues. Important to maintain early intervention budget. Wants to work closely with children's centres. Need to consider how to best reach "hard to reach" parents. Needs cooperation of health visitors and GPs.

- Children's Front Door – pulls together different professionals including health workers, social workers, educational social workers, police etc. Referrals all come to one place. Impressed with work and opportunity it provides. Also need to look at how to support schools with absentee rates.
- Education – Consultation process regarding Burnholme School is now underway. Careful consideration needs to be given on how to manage the process. A meeting for parents has already taken place and was attended by many headteachers which hopefully gave parents confidence that CYC will continue to provide a good quality education for children in that community. Parents need to understand that small secondary schools will always face challenges in providing a diverse curriculum. Acknowledged the need to ensure that students from Applefields who currently attend Burnholme for some mainstream curriculum continue to receive the opportunity.
- Education Partnership – Election of independent chair has made a difference to the quality of partnership, which now has sense of independence rather than just an authority run organisation. Will provide way of maintaining community of schools and offer opportunity to network with colleagues.

The Chair of Learning City York was also in attendance at the meeting and provided information on the work of Learning City York, York's Lifelong Learning Partnership. She provided a briefing paper and an overview of the work of Learning City York including its background and core purpose, vision, current priorities, interventions & performance Measures (2011), membership of the Board, ways of working and funding of Learning City York Partnership and Secretariat. She explained what activity had taken place during 2011 against their four strategic priorities: Sustainable Economic Growth; Enterprise and an Enterprising Culture; Employability and Economic Inclusion; and Personal, Social and Community Development. She responded to particular issues raised by Members. A full copy of the briefing paper has been attached to the online agenda on the council's website.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the information provided by the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People's Services be noted.
  - (ii) That the Committee receive a future briefing on "Children's Front Door"
  - (iii) That the information provided by the Chair of Learning City York be noted.

REASON: To ensure that Members are kept informed of work within the remit of the Committee.

**52. LEARNING AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2011-12**

Members considered the committee's work plan for the last meeting of the 2011-12 municipal year which would take place on 30 April 2012.

RESOLVED: That the work plan be agreed.

REASON: To progress the work of the committee.

Councillor Reid, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 7.20 pm].