
Corporate & Scrutiny Management Committee

8 June 2015

Report from the Assistant Director Governance and ICT

Yearsley Pool Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee

Summary

1. This report provides the Corporate & Scrutiny Management Committee with information on the situation regarding the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee set up to investigate ways to reduce the subsidy given to Yearsley Swimming Pool while securing its long-term future.

Background

2. As a result of the public interest in the potential loss of the Council subsidy to Yearsley Pool and concern over the pool's future, Cllr Aspden submitted a scrutiny topic with the aim of safeguarding the pool's long-term future.
3. Cllr Aspden's proposal for a scrutiny review was initially put to the Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee but because of their busy workload Learning & Culture OSC Members agreed that the topic submission should be presented to Corporate & Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) for their consideration.
4. At a meeting in January 2015 CSMC decided to proceed with the review and agreed the review aim: "To investigate ways to reduce the subsidy given to Yearsley Swimming Pool while securing its long-term future."
5. CSMC agreed to appoint an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee comprising Cllrs Aspden, Boyce, McIlveen, Richardson and Watson to undertake the scrutiny review on their behalf and at the first Committee meeting in late February 2015 Cllr Aspden was appointed Chair. In April Cllr Richardson informed other members he was resigning from the Committee due to a conflict of interest.
6. At the later Council Budget meeting the Council carried a Green party amendment to "Earmark unallocated future New Homes Bonus up to

£300,000 per year for up to five years, from 2016/17 onwards, to maintain the Yearsley Pool”.

7. However, Cllr Aspden took the view that any measures taken to reduce the subsidy to Yearsley Pool can only be a good thing for the city so the original premise of the Scrutiny Review is still sound and it was agreed to continue with the review.
8. One of the priorities in the new Executive’s policy programme, following the May 2015 elections, is that Yearsley Pool remains open. However, how this is to be funded will not become clear until the new budget for 2015-16 has been agreed in July 2015.

Work to date

9. During their investigations members of the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee:
 - Considered current finance and usage figures for Yearsley Pool;
 - Met representatives of the Yearsley Pool Action Group, which collected a petition signed by more than 6,600 people to safeguard the pool;
 - Received emails from almost 50 individuals and groups, including York City Baths Club; Yorkshire Regional Canoe Polo Club; Overland Underwater SWCUBA; Aqua fit; Team Jorvik, York Octopush (underwater hockey) and York Triathlon Club, which all supported Yearsley Pool;
 - Visited the pool and had talks with the centre manager
 - Held a public consultation meeting attended by about 50 people at the 68 Youth and Community Centre in Monkton Road, York;
 - Attended a York City Baths Club training session at Yearsley to talk with club officials, parents and some of the young swimmers.
10. Members also agreed to consult Yearsley Pool Shareholders and in early May 2015 met with representatives of Nestle, York, whose factory is across the road from the Yearsley Pool site in Haxby Road. The Ad Hoc Committee was pleased to note that the company is keen to improve its health and wellness facilities and intends to provide a gym for employees as part of wider plans to develop the York site.
11. Nestle’s preferred option is to work with CYC and a leisure company to provide these facilities alongside Yearsley Pool, both for the benefit of employees and to support the local community.

Way forward

12. Following the resignation of Cllr Richardson and the local elections in May 2015, after which Cllr Aspden was appointed to the new Executive as Deputy Council Leader, the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee was left with just one member. As a result of this CSMC are now required to appoint new members if they wish the scrutiny review to continue.
13. CSMC will also receive at the meeting a verbal update on ongoing discussions to help them make a final decision on whether the scrutiny review should continue.

Conclusions

14. The Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee cannot continue its work due to the loss of membership detailed above. If the review is to proceed a new Ad Hoc Scrutiny will need to be formed.
15. The review is proving a worthwhile exercise with a high level of public engagement and a positive response from all the consultation meetings the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee has taken part in.
16. Yearsley Pool has a wide customer base and loyal following but relies on the Council subsidy to continue its current level of activity.
17. Any review recommendations that lead to a reduction in subsidy for Yearsley Pool will be beneficial to the city.

Options

18. After considering the information above CSMC can agree to:
 - i. Continue with the Yearsley Pool Scrutiny Review and appoint a new Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee to carry out the work on their behalf;
 - ii. Abandon the Yearsley Pool Scrutiny Review in light of the priorities in the new Executive's policy programme.

Council Plan

19. The Yearsley Pool Scrutiny Review supports the Build Strong Communities and Protect Vulnerable People elements of the Council Plan 2011-15.

Implications

20. There are no implications associated with this report. Any implications arising from the recommendations in the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee's final report, should CSMC decide to proceed with the scrutiny review, will be identified and addressed accordingly.

Risk Management

21. There are no risks associated with this report.

Recommendations

22. After considering the information above CSMC is recommended to proceed with the Yearsley Pool Scrutiny Review and appoint a new Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee to continue the work on their behalf.

Reason: To enable options to reduce the Council subsidy to Yearsley Pool to be identified.

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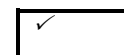
Report Approved



Date
28/05/15

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes – None