

SCRUTINY BOARD (SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND CULTURE)

THURSDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor M Rafique in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, D Cohen, M Lyons,
R Harington, M Ingham, J McKenna,
B Urry, J Chapman and J Marjoram

103 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of documents.

104 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

105 Late Items

There were no late items.

106 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

No declarations were made.

107 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Wadsworth.

108 Minutes - 24th January 2013 and 31st January 2013

RESOLVED – The minutes of the meetings held on 24th January 2013 and 31st January 2013 were approved as a correct record.

109 Scrutiny Inquiry - Marketing and Promotion of the City - Session two

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which introduced the second session inquiring into the marketing and promotion of the City.

In attendance to answer questions from Members were:

Catherine Blanshard – Chief Officer, Libraries, Arts and Heritage;
Cate Walker – Project Officer, Libraries, Arts and Heritage;
Laraine Penson – Northern Ballet;
Quirin Gerstenecker – Opera North;
Amy Sanderson – Leeds Grand Theatre; and
Su Matthewman – West Yorkshire Playhouse.

Minutes approved as a correct record at the meeting
held on Tuesday 9th April 2013

The Chief Officer, Libraries Arts and Heritage and external witnesses took Members through a presentation which highlighted the importance of culture to the City. The specific strengths in dance and opera were highlighted as unique selling points for Leeds, but the overall range of the cultural offer was also stressed as important.

Members considered that greater effort should be made to engage younger people from less affluent communities to attend cultural events in the City. The circulation of free tickets for school children was brought up. The pricing of tickets was raised by Members and also the impact of charging for Opera in the Park. Members requested that information be circulated with regards to the review of Opera in the Park since charging was introduced.

Members discussed the talent and culture outside the city centre where local amateur events often engage and inspire people. Members agreed that more opportunities should be given to these groups and that they should be promoted wherever possible and involved in major events such as the 'Grand Depart' of Le Tour de France in 2014.

Members requested that officers explore the possibility of Leeds bidding for the European Capital of Culture, and were informed that the 2023 would be the next year that Leeds could bid for this.

The Board noted that there was a transport challenge in terms of getting people in and out of the city centre in the evenings to attend events. The Board were formed that the Executive Member was in discussion with Metro giving consideration to this.

Members asked about the future after the Leeds Arena has opened and were concerned that Leeds keeps ahead in terms of its cultural offer. Members were informed of the major sporting events which will be happening over the next couple of years including the Rugby League World Cup which Leeds is a host City for and the Tour de France Grand depart in 2014. Leeds is also bidding to be a host city for the next Rugby Union World Cup in 2015.

In discussions about the opening of the Leeds Arena it was confirmed to Members that the opening season will be a mixture of events. Officers were also advised to give careful consideration to religious festivals when planning events at the Arena.

RESOLVED –

- (a) (a) That the issues discussed by this session of the inquiry be incorporated into the Board's draft inquiry report;
- (b) That officers explore the possibility of Leeds bidding for European Capital of Culture;
- (c) That information regarding the review of Opera in the Park following the introduction of charging be circulated to Members; and

(Councillor Akhtar left the meeting at 11:15am during the discussion of this item. Councillor Cohen left the meeting at 11:25am during the discussion of this item.)

110 Recommendation Tracking

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which updated the Board on recommendations from previous inquiries which have not yet been completed.

In attendance to answer Members questions were:

- Catherine Blanshard – Chief Officer, Libraries, Arts and Heritage (Breeze Card); and
- Alice Winter – Head of Employment Leeds (Employment and skills).

Members discussed the issuing of Breeze Cards to all young people in Leeds. Concern was raised about the collection of data by the Council on the services that children use. The Chief Officer agreed to provide further assurance to confirm whether it was possible for users of Breeze Cards to opt out of data collection and that it was not essential for a Breeze Card to be produced when using Council leisure centres.

Members agreed that the recommendation with regards to Appendix 2 of the report enabling every child to have a Breeze card '*That the Director of City Development and Director of Children's Services investigate by September 2012 a mechanism for the automatic issue of a Breeze Card to children and young people to enable opportunities for participation in Breeze activities*' be signed off.

It was noted by the Board that Councillor Marjoram objected to the signing off of this recommendation due to the issues raised above.

Members considered the report attached as Appendix 3 - Maximising Powers to Promote, Influence and Create Local Employment and skills Opportunities. Of most concern to Members were the children who did not achieve high GCSE grades and what support was in place to help them find appropriate further education or employment.

Members also discussed the enforcement of contracts with large developers requiring them to employ local labour and the challenges this presents.

Members went on to review the progress made against the recommendations. Members agreed that the recommendations; 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 had been achieved and could be signed off.

However they considered that recommendations 5, 6, 9, 10, and 12 had not been achieved and required further work to be undertaken and a report back

in July to consider this. Recommendation 11 had been dealt with when the initial response was reported to the Board previously.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the recommendation in relation to Breeze Cards as detailed above be signed off;
- (b) That recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 in relation Maximising Powers to Promote, Influence and Create Local Employment and skills Opportunities be signed off; and
- (c) That recommendations 5, 6, 9, 10, and 12 in relation Maximising Powers to Promote, Influence and Create Local Employment and skills Opportunities continue to be worked upon and an update on progress be submitted to the Board in July 2013.

(Councillor Chapman left the meeting at 11:35am during the discussion of this item. Councillor Marjoram left the meeting at 11:45am during the discussion of this item)

111 Work Programme

The Board received a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which considered the Board's work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

Members discussed what steps the Board should take in relation to holding a scrutiny inquiry into the West Park Centre. By unanimous vote the Board agreed that no further action should be taken until the outcomes of the report on the future of West Park Centre has been decided by the Executive Board on 24 April 2013.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the work schedule be noted;
- (b) That the list of Key Decisions be noted; and
- (c) That the Board take no further action in relation to scrutinising the West Park Centre until the future of the West Park Centre has been decided by the Executive Board.

112 Date and time of next meeting

10am Thursday 21st March 2013 (A Pre meeting for Members will take place at 09:30am).