

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to: Executive Board

Date: 2 November 2011

Subject: Response to Leeds Owl Trail Deputation

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

In a Deputation to Council on 14th September 2011, the Leeds Owl Trail made five requests.

1. That local authority buildings accept Owl Trail maps.
2. That Welcome to Yorkshire be encouraged by Leeds City Council to include and promote Leeds Owl Trail without payment.
3. That any plans for developing further trails within the city are looked at, and that the Council becomes an umbrella organisation to support and promote existing trails.
4. That the Leeds Owl Trail is formally embraced as part of the fabric of the city.
5. That the Council supports the commissioning of new owls throughout the city.

Recommendations

1. That the response to the Deputation is noted.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report is in response to the Deputation to Council made by the Leeds Owl Trail on 14th September 2011.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Deputation requested that Leeds City Council support the growth of the Leeds Owl Trail and made a number of requests. It outlined the activities offered by the Trail and explained the benefits to the City the Owl Trail brings.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The Leeds Owl Trail asked that local authority buildings accept Owl Trail maps.

Leeds City Council is very supportive of the Owl Trail and is happy to display Trail leaflets where space allows. The Owl Trail organisers have been contacted and advised where to deliver a supply of leaflets which will then be distributed around libraries and leisure centres for the organisation.

- 3.2 Leeds Owl Trail requested that the Council contacts Welcome to Yorkshire and encourages them to include and promote the Trail.

Welcome to Yorkshire is independent of the Council and sets its own policy. The Council is however currently in discussion with the company on the membership issue as it shares the concerns of the Owl Trail organisation that Welcome to Yorkshire is moving to a membership organisation that will not market Yorkshire but just its membership. Leeds City Council already pays an annual fee and is also expected to pay an amount per venue. It is clear to both the Owl Trail and the Council venues that while there is benefit in being part of an overall county brand the amount of money required for membership could be used for a high profile targeted marketing campaign specific to the venues. The negotiations are continuing and the concerns of the Owl Trail will be raised in this forum. In the meantime, the Council has agreed to highlight the Trail as part of Leeds Inspired communications and will seek to include a link to it on the new Council website.

- 3.3 Leeds Owl Trail asked that any plans for further trails within the city are looked at and requested that the Council becomes an umbrella organisation to support and promote existing trails.

The Council has met with the Owl Trail organisation on a number of occasions and is very supportive of its continuing development. There are already a number of other trails across the City and the Council is trying to give coherence and support to them. To progress this a Heritage Lottery Bid is being prepared. The Owl Trail has decided at this stage not to be a named partner but support the umbrella concept and the bid will seek to identify opportunities for the Owl Trail to be involved.

- 3.4 Leeds Owl Trail asked to be formally accepted as part of the fabric of the city.

The City is very proud of its heritage and the owl and its symbolism is important in that. The Owl Trail brings to life the heritage and as such is an important part of

telling the story of Leeds. The Council supports and thanks the organisation for its hard work and commitment and will include the Trail where appropriate in its communications.

3.5 The Council was requested to support the commissioning of new owls.

Leeds City Council does seek opportunities to commission new owls when the opportunities allow. This can be as obvious as the two owls added to Millennium Square or as much smaller developments both permanent and temporary. We cannot require, but we will continue to use our influence with developers to incorporate owls into prominent developments in the City.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Leeds City Council staff have had a number of meetings with the Owl Trail organisers and these will continue. Issues raised in the deputation have been discussed with them and with the Executive Member for Leisure.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 Leeds Owl Trail offers an engaging way for local people to learn about the history of their city. Its focus on the owls on and in buildings means it is accessible to all. Further development and support of the Trail will only enhance cohesion and equality of opportunity.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The Owl is a key symbol for Leeds and the Owl Trail brings this symbol to life for many so it plays an important part in telling the story of Leeds.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 To develop the umbrella approach discussed in the deputation, to provide coherence and to support new trails Leeds City Council is submitting a Your Heritage bid from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This does not require matched funding.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This report is subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Not applicable.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Leeds City Council supports the Leeds Owl Trail and will continue to work with it to promote the City.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That this response to the Deputation is noted.

7 Background documents

7.1 Deputation papers.