

SCRUTINY BOARD (CULTURE AND LEISURE)

MONDAY, 10TH DECEMBER, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor T Hanley in the Chair

Councillors B Gettings, A Hussain,
B Jennings, G Kirkland, V Morgan,
L Mulherin, L Rhodes-Clayton and
G Wilkinson

54 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 11 "Roundhay Mansion". The appendix was confidential under the Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4.3 – 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).'

55 Declarations of interest

Councillor Kirkland declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10, Wharfemeadows Inquiry update due to his position on Otley Town Council. (Minute no.61 refers).

Councillor Gettings declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12, Work Programme, due to his position on the Leeds Grand Theatre Board. (Minute no.63 refers).

56 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Atha and Barker.

57 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following to read as below:

- Minute no.39 – Major Projects Update – An update report was requested on progress at Roundhay Mansion. It was agreed that a report would be submitted to the November meeting.

58 Performance Report Quarter 2

The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement submitted a report which highlighted key performance issues considered to be of corporate significance identified for the Scrutiny Board (Culture and Leisure). The report also

included a predicted CPA score for 2007/08 and a performance table which detailed all performance indicators for this Board.

Members discussed the information presented in the report and noted that there were no significant performance issues to report within the Culture and Leisure portfolio.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

59 Members' Questions

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited Members to discuss a range of issues which were representative to the remit of the Board.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Councillor John Procter, Executive Member for Leisure
- Catherine Blanshard, Chief Libraries, Arts and Heritage Officer
- Martin Farrington, Acting Chief Recreation Officer

Wharfemeadows Park

A question was asked regarding when works at Wharfemeadows Park would be completed and whether there were any plans to carry out improvements to the side road off Farnley Road at the top of the park, which was reported as being in a state of disrepair. In response, it was reported that £450k had been earmarked for improvements to Wharfemeadows Park. The tennis courts had been refurbished and there were plans to consult young people through the Youth Service regarding the refurbishment of the skate park and a new youth shelter. Further developments at the park included new and improved signage, refurbishment of the playground and landscaping works. With regard to the road repairs, it was reported that this would be investigated and Members advised of the outcome.

Chevin Forest Park

A Member queried whether Parks and Countrysides could promote the use of Chevin Forest Park for healthy exercise. It was reported that the use of parks for exercise was encouraged in general.

Roundhay Mansion

A number of Members expressed concern regarding the length of time since Roundhay Mansion was open to provide catering facilities. It was reported that delays had partly been encountered due to previous considerations for a possible change in the use of the mansion building. There were also extensive works to be carried out to the interior. Members agreed to arrange a site visit to the building.

Sports Trust

Councillor Procter was asked how and when would be the best time for scrutiny involvement into the Sports Trust proposals. It was reported that a

draft agreement was being developed. It was further reported that should a Sports Trust be established, it was this agreement that would detail the governance arrangements, including the relationship with the City Council. Given the importance of such an agreement, Councillor Procter stated that he would welcome the Board's input in this regard and while there were still some unresolved issues, it was agreed that the Board would be given the opportunity to examine the proposals at the earliest possible opportunity in the New Year

Leeds City Museum

Councillor Procter was reminded of the Board's previous concerns regarding the level of expenditure on anti-skateboarding measures in general, including outside the City Museum: This included the Board's suggestion that more should be done to enforce existing bye laws. Councillor Procter welcomed the Board's comments and agreed there was a need to enforce existing bye laws. Councillor Procter further stated that, while anti-skateboarding measures were also necessary to prevent damage, he would investigate this issue further and advise the Board of the outcome.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a site visit for Board Members to Roundhay Mansion be arranged.

(Councillor Jennings joined the meeting during the discussion of this item)

60 Parks and Countryside Update

Further to the Board's request at the beginning of the Municipal Year to receive an update on the Parks and Countryside Service, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which detailed a presentation prepared by the service.

Sean Flesher, Parks and Countryside Principal Area Manager (West), gave the Board an overview of the presentation.

It was reported that since the 1980s and the reduction in investment for parks, both locally and nationally, there had been a shift towards providing a general 'roving' maintenance service. It was further reported that more recently, the Service had been targeting the use of its resources by using customer survey information, alongside the principles / assessment criteria associated with the Green Flag Awards. It was also stated that there had been an increased emphasis on staff training and development to further enhance the service provided and a Green Space Strategy was being developed.

Following the presentation, Members raised and discussed a number of issues including:

- The cost of the service: This was reported as being 22p per visit.
- Funding sources: It was reported that there had been a number of successful Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) applications. The Service had also received some funding from Area Committees.
- Priorities for young people: It was reported that the customer survey information had indicated the following areas as investment priorities:
 - Play;
 - Skate Parks;
 - Multi-use Game Areas (MUGAs);
 - Safety
- The relative quality of provision at Community Parks in comparison to Major/ Country.
- The need to provide the Board with the full version of assessment scores (as detailed on slide 10).

Members congratulated the Parks and Countryside Service for recent improvements to parks and cited various examples of improvements across their wards.

RESOLVED – That the report and presentation be noted.

61 Wharfemeadows Inquiry Update

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which gave Members a progress update on the Wharfemeadows Inquiry.

It was reported that since the Board's last meeting, further correspondence had been received from Greg Mulholland MP and a meeting had been held with the Leader of Otley Town Council. A draft final report to the Inquiry had been prepared and it was proposed to hold a working group meeting to discuss the report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

62 Roundhay Mansion

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report following the request of a Board Member for an update on the situation at Roundhay Mansion. Appended to the report was an exempt appendix considered by the Executive Board which detailed the marketing exercise of the Mansion and options for its future.

The Executive Board had resolved that the site be remarketed on the basis of Option 6 as detailed in the exempt report and that this would involve further investigation of costs of refurbishment and further reports on offers received.

In brief summary, the Board discussed the following:

Minutes approved at the meeting
held on Monday, 14th January, 2008

- Sustainable long-term use of the premises.
- Likely levels of investment required.
- The impact of the current condition, orientation of rooms and listed status on any future development and refurbishment.
- The marketing process and appointment of agents.
- Potential timescales involved.

During the discussion, Councillor Procter undertook to provide Members with a copy of the prospectus used as part of the previous marketing exercise.

Members confirmed the need a to arrange a site visit to the building, as previously agreed.

RESOLVED – That the Board be kept apprised of developments at appropriate times and that a site visit to the building be organised as soon as practicable.

(Councillors Kirkland and Wilkinson left the meeting during discussion of this item at 12.00 p.m. and 12.25 p.m. respectively).

63 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which detailed the Board's current work programme. Also attached to the report was the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 December 2007 to 31 March 2007.

Issues discussed in relation the Board's future work programming included Wharfemeadows, the Sports Trust proposals and the Draft Green Space Strategy.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the work programme be amended to ensure the Board's timely consideration of the issues/ areas identified by Members, in particular the Sports Trust proposals, Roundhay Mansion and the Draft Green Space Strategy.
- (2) That a working group meeting be held on 19 December 2007 to discuss the Wharfemeadows Inquiry.

64 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 14 January 2007 at 10.00 a.m. (pre-meting for all Board Members at 09.30 a.m.).