

SCRUTINY BOARD (CULTURE AND LEISURE)

MONDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2008

PRESENT: Councillor T Hanley in the Chair

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

65 Late Items

Although there were no late items as such, the Chair made reference to Officer advice that had been received from the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) in relation to the Board's draft report on the Wharfemeadows Inquiry.

66 Declarations of interest

Councillor Kirkland declared a personal interest in Agenda Item, 8, Wharfemeadows Inquiry – Draft Report – due to his Membership of Otley Town Council. (Minute No. 70 refers).

A further interest was also declared during the meeting. (Minute No. 73 refers).

67 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2007, be confirmed as a correct record.

68 Executive Board Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Executive Board held on 19 December be noted.

69 Overview and Scrutiny Minutes

In relation to Minute No.52, Executive Board, 17th October 2007, Members discussed issues surrounding Roundhay Mansion, Leeds Grand Theatre and the City Varieties Music Hall. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had suggested that the Board may wish to investigate developments at Roundhay Mansion and the governance arrangements for the Leeds Grand Theatre and City Varieties.

Reference was made to the Board's recent site visit to Roundhay Mansion and the suggestion that separate management arrangements may be appropriate for Leeds Grand Theatre and the City Varieties.

Attention was also brought to proposals to amend Call-In arrangements.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 November 2007 be noted.
- (2) That a briefing note on the current governance arrangements for the Leeds Grand Theatre and City Varieties be prepared and circulated to Members of the Board.

70 Wharfemeadows Inquiry - Draft Report

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a draft final report following the Board's inquiry into the fencing arrangements made at Wharfemeadows Park, Otley. The Chair thanked Members for their input into the Inquiry and reference was made to the important contributions of the Wharfemeadows Action Group (WAG), Otley Town Council and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

Members discussed the advice of the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) in relation to Recommendation 2 of their report. Recommendation 2 stated:

'That all legal advice obtained by the Council is publicly available save in exceptional circumstances to be determined by the Council's Monitoring Officer. The reasons for any non disclosure should be made clear by the Monitoring Officer.'

A proposal was made that the report be amended to remove Recommendation 2 and Paragraph 62 and that a further report be brought to address issues raised in Recommendation 2. This proposal was seconded and was subsequently voted against.

Councillor Atha outlined an alternative draft report which he had prepared and had been distributed to Board Members.

A further proposal was made that Recommendation 2 be amended to read

'That all legal advice obtained by the Council is publicly available save in circumstances to be determined by the Council's Monitoring Officer. The reasons for any non disclosure should be made clear by the Monitoring Officer.'

This proposal was seconded and voted in favour of.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report be amended as agreed.
- (2) That the report be referred to the Executive for consideration at the earliest opportunity.
- (3) That the Board considers the response to its report and recommendations at an appropriate time.

NB Before conclusion of this item, Councillor Atha formally declared his intention to submit a minority report, which, upon receipt, would be appended to the Board's agreed report.

71 Major Projects Update

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which outlined major projects currently undertaken within the Leisure portfolio. An appendix to the report gave an update on the following projects:

- Swimming and Diving Centre
- City Museum
- Discovery Centre
- Carriageworks
- Art Gallery Phase 1

It was reported that the Board would receive a separate future report on the Grand Theatre and City Varieties projects.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

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

In response to Members' questions and comments, the following issues were discussed:

- It was reported that there had been problems with the floating floor at the new swimming pool. This was still awaiting specialist advice and repair from the contractor and had not prevented use of the pool.
- There had been a short period of closure following a leak from the diving pool for safety measures whilst electrical works had been rectified.
- The City Museum was due to open at the end of August 2008. There would not be a phased opening due to security issues and the movement of large displays and items.
- Further to the Board's previous concerns regarding damage caused by Skateboarders, Councillor Procter reported that he was awaiting a meeting with representatives of Civic Buildings and City Centre Management.
- Problems with the main doors at the Art Gallery had now been rectified.
- Members expressed concern regarding the delegated decision to cancel of the Leeds Half Marathon. Members suggested that the Board invite Councillor Procter to review this decision. It was reported that this decision was likely to be the subject of a 'call-in' and the Board was advised to await the outcome of any such meeting: Subsequently, the Board could request a specific report on which to consider this matter in more detail.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Board invite Councillor Procter, to review of the decision to cancel the Leeds Half Marathon.

72 Leeds Strategic Plan and Council Business Plan: Outcomes and Priorities

The Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) submitted a report which updated the Board on the Leeds Strategic Plan and Council Business Plan: Outcomes and Priorities.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Paul Maney – Head of Performance Management, Development Department
- Dylan Griffiths – Project Manager (Policy), Chief Executive's Department

It was reported that the Executive Board had approved the revised Corporate Planning Framework and that the Leeds Strategic Plan and Council Business Plan set the strategic priorities and outcomes for this framework. Members were reminded of the consultation process for the Leeds Strategic Plan undertaken between September and November 2007 which had gathered comments from all Scrutiny Boards and Area Committees.

It was reported that 4 main areas had been identified during the consultation for the Leeds Strategic Plan:

- General support for the proposed outcomes and priorities.
- Concern that the priorities for Environment and Transport should be strengthened; a stronger emphasis on Older People, Children and Young People.
- Interdependency throughout the different themes.
- That whilst priorities had targeted the right areas there was still room for amendment.

The report detailed interconnectivity between the strategic themes and priorities, and Members attention was drawn to where Culture and Leisure issues fell within other outcomes and priorities. Examples of these included the following:

- Transport – Improving the quality, use and accessibility of public transport services in Leeds; improving road safety for all users, especially motor cyclists and pedal cyclists.
- Health and Wellbeing – Reduce rate of increase in obesity and raise physical activity for all.

It was reported that increasing participation was a major improvement priority for the strategic outcomes in Culture.

Reference was made to the requirements of the Local Area Agreement and the Board was also informed of the main business outcomes as outlined in the draft Business Plan along with the next steps and implications for Council Policy and Governance as detailed in the report. A proposed timetable of tasks was also detailed.

The Chair thanked Paul Maney and Dylan Griffiths for their attendance.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

73 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 an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions which highlighted decisions that fell within the Board's remit.

Issues discussed in relation the Board's future work programming included the Middleton Park Equestrian Centre and Outdoor Bowls Provision. It was reported that a meeting was due to be held between Council Officers and trustees of the Equestrian Centre.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(During discussion of this item, Councillor Atha declared a personal interest due to his position as a trustee of the Middleton Park Equestrian Centre)

74 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 11 February 2007 at 10.00 a.m. Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 09.30 a.m.