

At a meeting of the CULTURE AND LEISURE REVIEW COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 2008 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor D. Errington in the Chair

Councillors Ellis, P. Gibson, G. Hall, Howe, T. Martin, Symonds and Wares

Also in Attendance:-

Councillor Tate – Chairman of Policy and Co-ordination Review committee.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the Committee on behalf of Councillors Foster, Mordey, J.B. Scott and Wake.

Minutes of the last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 16th September, 2008 be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to Councillor Mordey being recorded as requesting information on the existing competitive leagues in schools in Sunderland, not Councillor Errington, and also that Councillor G. Hall declared a personal interest in Item 6 – 2012 Olympic Preparations, as Chairman of Sunderland Volunteer Life Brigade and not as Treasurer of the University of Sunderland Cricket Club.

Councillor T. Martin provided photographs of allotment drainage issues and asked officers to investigate these further.

Declarations of Interest

Item 5 - 25 Metre Pool Provision Rationale for Specification

Councillor T. Martin declared a personal interest as a member of the Raich Carter Sports Centre Management Board.

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A Place to Play – A Review of Music Venues in Sunderland

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with a brief introduction and update on the progress in relation to the policy review on music venues in Sunderland, which included a proposed timetable of groups invited to the Committee over November 2008, December 2008 and January 2009.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Zoe Channing, Assistant Head of Culture and Tourism Arts and Creative Development, introduced a short DVD presentation filmed by young people during the music festival at Cliff Park over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The presentation focused on the use of music to inform of climate change.

In response to a query from Councillor P. Gibson regarding attendance and capacity figures for the event, Ms. Channing advised that the marquee used accommodated 300-400 people and that 500-700 people attended the event overall.

Councillors Errington and G. Hall expressed concerns over the lack of a multi purpose, indoor venue in Sunderland.

Members also expressed a desire to see representatives of Pop/Contemporary genres, possibly a band that had performed at the event and a brass band or orchestra to be included in the performers invited to provide information in connection with the Committee's policy review.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) Nigel Cummings, Review Co-ordinator, investigate Members' requests for the inclusion of other performers in addition to those timetabled to attend the Committee as part of the policy review;
- (ii) the contents of the report be received and noted.

25 Metre Pool Provision Rationale for Specification

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report to provide an update on the development of the new 25m swimming pools at Silksworth and Hetton and to advise Members of the rationale behind the agreed specification for the facilities.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mike Poulter, Head of Project and Service Development, was present to address any questions.

Members raised the following issues:-

- Did this signal the end of the Pool Expansion Plan?

Mr. Poulter advised that there were no further plans arising from the 2004 report or the recently completed strategic review. He couldn't say that there would be no further pools in the future as the council was receptive to public demand, however this would be dependent on the availability of funding.

- Is there any availability of external funding?

Mr. Poulter advised that the Council is always trying to secure external funding but Sport England, who helped fund the Aquatic Centre, had most of their resources tied up, due to the 2012 Olympics. In any case the provision of swimming facilities in Sunderland was now at such a level that Sport England would no longer see further investment as a priority.

- What was the percentage of primary schools using the pools and how far would they have to travel?

Julie Russell, Sport and Leisure Partnership Manager agreed to find out and provide this information to Members.

- Councillor Howe expressed his disappointment that there was no pool in the Fulwell Ward considering there are five schools in the area and he understands many residents are using Temple Park in South Shields instead of the Aquatic Centre, due to distance they have to travel.
- Councillor G. Hall asked that information about problems and complaints relating to the Aquatic Centre be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

Julie Russell, advised that a report on the Annual Review of the Aquatic Centre was already in progress and that a section on the complaints received would be included to place them in context.

- Councillor Symonds felt that Mr. Poulter and the department should be congratulated on their efforts in securing the new pools in a time when other cities were closing theirs down and where approximately 650,000 people had used the pool with only a small amount of complaints. That was highly commendable.
- The Chairman and Councillor P. Gibson (as a councillor for the Silksworth Ward) thanked Mr Poulter, for keeping them fully informed of the Silksworth pool progress and looked forward to receiving the next members update.

Mr Poulter advised that an internal and external website was to be developed for the pool and he would circulate a construction timetable to ward members once the initial building work was underway.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) Information be circulated to the Committee detailing the percentage of primary schools using the Aquatic Centre and distances they had to travel.
- (ii) it be noted that a report on the annual review of the Aquatic Centre was to be brought back to the Committee which would include a section detailing the complaints received and placing them in context; and
- (iii) the contents of the report be received and noted.

Cultural Programming and Activity

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Members with an update regarding the Cultural Strategy that was launched in August 2003.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Zoe Channing, Assistant Head of Culture and Tourism Arts and Creative Development, presented the report and was on hand to answer Members' questions.

Members raised the following issues:-

- In relation to the action plan, Project 3, to improve the promotion of St. Peter's Church as a potential World Heritage Site, why has the completion of the Nomination Document been put back a year?

Ms. Channing advised the Nomination Document had been put back to allow another site (Darwin at Downe) to be brought forward.

- In relation to Project 4, to deliver a 50m pool and regional centre of sporting excellence, an average of 1500 people are visiting the site per day. How many are attending the fitness centre and how many are using the pool?

Julie Russell agreed to find out and provide the information to members.

- What are the next major events planned at the Aquatic Centre?

Julie Russell informed Members a licensed gala was due to take place at the end of November and other events included: Children in Need, North

East Sports Awards and the Tyne and Wear Youth Games, building up to the Olympics.

- The action plan refers to the Cultural Heritage Development Officer post being extended until end of September 2008, was this not a permanent post?

Zoe Channing agreed to find out and advise the councillor accordingly.

- In relation to delivering a public art programme of regional significance, Members asked to see some form of indication at the end of the C2C route that the cyclists had arrived in Sunderland.

Ms. Channing advised that there were several pieces of work in development that will be used to promote the City. One of those was a piece of artwork framing the Lighthouse at the end of the C2C route.

- Was the Houghton Area included in the Cultural Strategy?

Ms. Channing advised that work was ongoing with several organisations with regards to the Houghton Area that were not included in the report.

- What were the details of the Projects for Ryhope Gateways and Stadium Park Gas Vents?

Ms. Channing informed Members that two pit pony statues were to be erected to mark the entrance/exit to Ryhope.

Mike Poulter explained that the Stadium Park Gas Vents were being disguised with an artwork of gold/bronze heads, that could be lit up at night.

Pictures of the Project will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

- Was there a timescale for the report on Maritime Museum Feasibility Study noted in the Cultural Strategy?

Ms. Channing agreed to find out and report back.

Having fully considered the report and answered Members' questions, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted for information and further updates on the Cultural Strategy be submitted to future meetings of the Committee.

Work Programme 2008/09

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide for Members' information the current work programme for the Committee's work during the 2008/09 Council year.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor T. Martin requested that the lack of fishing facilities in the Hendon/sea front area be included in the Committee's Work Programme.

Having considered the report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Signed) D. ERRINGTON,
Chairman.