

At a meeting of the CULTURE AND LEISURE REVIEW COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 15th JULY, 2008 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor J.B. Scott in the Chair

Councillors Ellis, Errington, P. Gibson, G. Hall, Mordey and Wake

Also in Attendance:-

Councillor Tate - Chairman Policy and Coordination Review Committee

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the Committee on behalf of Councillors Foster, Howe, T. Martin, Symonds and Wares

Minutes of the last Meeting

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 17th June, 2008 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an opportunity to comment on the Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy for Sunderland.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms. Zoe Channing, Assistant Head of Culture and Tourism Arts and Creative Development presented the report advising the Committee that the strategy would support the Council in achieving its Strategic Priorities of a Prosperous, Healthy, Learning, Attractive and Inclusive City and support delivery of related themes within the Local Area Agreement.

In response to a query from Councillor Ellis regarding specialist music schools in the city, Ms. Channing advised that they were presently carrying out another piece of work in developing a music strategy to address music activity taking place within the city. She advised that there were no specialist music schools in the city but all schools had it on their curriculum and would be taken into account in the development of the strategy.

Councillor Hall referred to the good facilities available at Southmoor School and Ms. Channing advised that the strategy would address how facilities like these could be utilised more by residents throughout the city.

With regard to a query from Councillor Mordey regarding the delivery of the 'Fighting Fund' initiative as referred to in paragraph 3.4.1 of the report, Ms. Channing advised that the bid would help maintain current public art in the city, upgrade or refurbish public art where necessary and help in promoting the development of temporary and long term temporary art pieces, such as the Empire fly tower.

Councillor Errington asked if there was a link to schools to advise them when exhibitions or artists were being promoted in the city which may tie in with the school curriculum at the time and was advised that the Council had an Arts and Education Officer who invited schools to events and kept them up to date with future plans. A regular meeting has recently been arranged to be held with representatives from Children's Services and Community and Cultural Services so that any areas of interest could be flagged up.

Councillor Wake referred to paragraph 3.2.3 of the report and sought clarification as to what was meant by 'developing creative interventions'. Ms. Channing explained that when previous events had been organised and held the arts team had had no involvement. They were now involved at the organising stage to give a creative view on plans for events. Ms. Channing informed the Committee that they were introducing art into events such as the heritage festival, through music, theatre and dance, in a bid to make art more accessible to all.

Having thanked the Officer for her report, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that Members comments on the Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy be noted and that the report be received for information.

Wellness Centre Pricing

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with the opportunity to receive details of Cabinet's response to the Committee's recommendations regarding wellness centre pricing.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Nigel Cummings, Review Coordinator, presented the report to the Committee advising that a study into the wellness pricing structure, including comparisons with other local authorities, had been added to the work programme for 2008/09. He explained that it had also been proposed that this Committee undertake an annual review of the pricing policy framework relating to Wellness Centres in the future.

Councillor Hall referred to the joint meeting that had been held with this Committee and Policy and Coordination Review Committee, at which the Director of Community and Cultural Services had advised that he would be issuing the decision on the pricing for OAP's through the Member's Digest publication. To date, he had not seen this and Ms. Alison O'Neill explained that the Director had been on annual leave following that meeting and the decision would be signed and appear in a future issue of the digest.

Having considered the report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the Committee include the Wellness Pricing Structure in the current work programme for 2008/09.

Work Programme 2008-09

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) which attached for Members' consideration the current work programme for the Committee's work during 2008-09.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

4. RESOLVED the information contained within the work programme be received and noted.

Policy Development and Review 2008/09 : Scope

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) which invited Members to agree a detailed focus for the policy development and review into music development within the city for 2008/09.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Cummings presented the report advising that it may be beneficial for the Committee to undertake an audit of venues and facilities which were available presently in the city. The policy review would help in developing the music strategy for the city and it was proposed that an in depth scope of the topic be prepared and submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for approval.

Consideration was given to the report and Members welcomed the review topic, identifying key areas within the city that could benefit from being included as part of the audit of venues / facilities.

Accordingly it was:-

5. RESOLVED that Music Development be agreed as the Committee's focus for their Policy Review during 2008/09 and that a further in depth scoping report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny Handbook

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) which gave Members the opportunity to consider additional information for inclusion in the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Having considered the report, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted and that the proposed additions are incorporated into the handbook.

The Chairman then closed the meeting, having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

(Signed) J.B. SCOTT,
Chairman.