Minutes of the Meeting of the
HERITAGE, CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2016 at 5:30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Bajaj (Chair)
Councillor Dr Barton             Councillor Shelton
Councillor Govind               Councillor Singh Johal

In Attendance:

Councillor Clair, Assistant City Mayor - Culture, Leisure and Sport

*** *** ***

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Unsworth.

They also were received from Councillor Dawood, who was absent due to other Council business.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

38. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Commission received the minutes of its meeting held on 20 September 2016.

It was noted that a report on the heritage aspects of the development of the Market Square, including the Alice Hawkins statue, was likely to be submitted to the next meeting of the Commission, (minute 31, “Market Square Redevelopment Project”, referred). A report or a presentation including
designs for the Jewry Wall development also was likely to be submitted to that meeting, (minute 32, “Developments at New Walk Museum and Jewry Wall Museum”, referred).

Members were advised that, as agreed under minute 33, “The role of the arts and culture in delivering therapeutic care – proposed review”, the title of the scrutiny review had been changed to “The role of the arts and culture in delivering mental health and well-being outcomes”. The Task Group had held its first meeting and was due to meet again shortly.

AGREED:
That the minutes of the meeting of the Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission held on 20 September 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

39. PETITIONS
The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

40. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS, STATEMENTS OF CASE
The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations or statements of case had been received.

41. NEW WALK MUSEUM STAIRCASE
The Business and Regional Development Manager (Arts and Museums) gave a presentation on the New Walk Museum Staircase, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Business and Regional Development Manager explained that, since becoming the museum in 1849, the building had been enlarged and altered. This had resulted in an awkward configuration. In the 1970s the front staircase was removed and replaced with one at the side of the entrance foyer. This did not create a good arrival point for visitors and the upper floor of the museum was poorly used, as visitors often thought that the staircase was a fire escape.

Other problems included the museum currently only had one fully compliant fire escape and there was no dedicated passenger lift, so those needing assistance to reach other floors had to use the goods lift. This facility was available by request, but it broke down if used too often.

The design for a new staircase had been commissioned from an architect, the inspiration for it being an ammonite. A fire-protected passenger lift that operated from the foyer also would be installed. The stairs and lift would arrive at the same point on the upper floor.
Other works to be undertaken included:

- Re-opening the storm porch at the front of the museum;
- Moving the reception desk, to become a joint desk for the museum and the shop, which would help open up the entrance area;
- Removing part of the ground floor ceiling, to create an open area; and
- Improving the general appearance of the museum.

Initial tests had been carried out as required by contractors. These included health and safety tests in relation to where the lift shaft would be installed and those required to identify if asbestos was present in the building. Further works needed included moving art works from the basement, in order that the lift shaft could be installed.

It was anticipated that the first exhibition in the refurbished museum would be the Open art exhibition in the upstairs gallery, followed by the museum’s annual summer exhibition. The dates of these would be announced in the next few weeks.

The following points were then made during discussion:

- The budget for these works was estimated at approximately £620,000. Approximately half of this would be funded from the Property Maintenance fund, (due to the fire safety issues being addressed), with the remainder being met from the Economic Action Plan;
- The contractor for the project was Jenkins Weir. This was part of a framework contract;
- The museum currently received approximately 150,000 – 200,000 visitors each year. A number of factors could affect daily numbers, (for example, the weather and other events taking place in the area). Numbers had increased this year, due to the Fabulous Foxes exhibition following the success of Leicester City football team;
- The statue of the suffragette Margaret McDonald had not been on display since the museum was refurbished in the 1990s, but it would be appreciated if it could be displayed again somewhere;
- National publicity could be given to the re-opening of the staircase, as it would be a piece of art; and
- The refurbishment would allow more natural light in to the museum.

AGREED:

1) That the innovative proposals for the replacement staircase and refurbishment at New Walk Museum be welcomed;
2) That Members be kept informed of progress with this project; and

3) That the Head of Arts and Museums be asked to advise Members of the current location of the statue of the suffragette Margaret McDonald and whether the statue can be displayed somewhere.

42. BEREAVEMENT SERVICES UPDATE

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environment Services submitted a report updating Members on Bereavement Services.

The Bereavement Services Manager introduced the report, explaining that the marketing of the Council’s bereavement services focussed on promoting Gilroes Cemetery as people’s cemetery of choice. The biggest challenge to this would be the forthcoming opening of a new crematorium to the south of the city, but a guide to the city’s services had been developed, which was distributed by hospitals in the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL).

It was noted that forthcoming legislative changes would affect death certification. Currently, in order for someone to be cremated, three certificates were needed from three doctors, but it was proposed to remove this requirement and replace it with a medical examiner system.

Consultation on the new medical examiner system had only closed recently, so the government had not yet published its response. It therefore was not possible at this stage to identify what impact the proposed new system was likely to have on costs. It was known that the government would fund the initial set-up costs, but bereaved families would meet the ongoing cost by payment of a fee to the Council medical examiner service. At present, it was felt that the government had significantly under-estimated the investment that would be needed.

The Bereavement Services Manager also outlined the environmental impact of burials, cemeteries and cremations. This included environmental work undertaken by Council officers in cemeteries, such as the installation of bee hives, (as the bees assisted with the pollination of plants), as well as bird and bat boxes. Metal left from cremations was recycled and the money donated to charity. This year, approximately £5,000 had been donated to the Rainbows Hospice.

Members queried why it was quicker for some communities to register deaths than others, but the Bereavement Services Manager explained that this was due to the preference in some communities for cremation and for burials in other communities. The forthcoming changes to the requirement for three certificates to enable cremations to take place should alleviate this situation.
Delays also could be caused if a death was referred to the coroner, or due to the funeral director, (for example, if they had staff shortages). With the correct paperwork, the Council could organise a burial in approximately one day and a cremation in approximately two days.

It was recognised that many people did not know the processes that needed to be followed when someone died, so the application forms for bereavement services had been changed to account for this and the Council's website had been improved to make more information available. In addition, through the partnership established with UHL, a folder of information was provided with a death certificate, to ensure that people were aware they could approach the Council for advice. A new guide for the public was being planned for when the new legislation came into force.

Officers had met with the Council of Faiths, to discuss issues of interest and concern to communities. In addition, out-of-hours burial services and Saturday cremations could be provided. The government Department for Communities and Local Government had looked into these services and now used them as examples of good practice. Consideration would be given to how more information on these services could be made available to different communities.

It was noted that an open day had been held at Gilroes Cemetery in April 2016. This had included information on the history of the registers held and a tour of the crematorium. Members suggested that this could be repeated, including information on how to complete the required forms.

In response to a question, it was noted that information on how to donate a body to medical science usually was provided by university medical schools. These medical schools then arranged for the burial or cremation of the body when appropriate.

Members suggested that community leaders could be included in discussions held with funeral directors, but it was noted that these meetings were only held on an ad hoc basis. There were two main companies operating in the city, as well as a number of independent providers, but they were reluctant to meet together, as they were commercial competitors. If anyone had any concerns about a particular funeral director, these could be followed up by Council officers with that director.

It was stressed that the Council could not choose a funeral provider for a particular person, as this was a matter for those dealing with the funeral arrangements to decide. The Council arranged public health funerals according to the faith of the deceased.

Members noted that current cemeteries in the city were not suitable for natural burials, as these used more space and there was not enough room in existing cemeteries. However, it was hoped that natural burials could be provided when a new cemetery was established.
Fees for bereavement services were benchmarked annually. From this, it was known that the Council’s fees were below average for adult cremations and were the cheapest locally. The Council also charged less than the average cost of a burial, when compared to cities such as Birmingham and Coventry.

Due to the Council’s overall financial situation, consideration needed to be given to the costs to the Council of the services provided. As well as measures such as fee increases, the Council therefore also had increased the range of memorials that could be purchased and had reduced the service cost base.

AGREED:

1) That the report be received and noted; and

2) That the Bereavement Services Manager be asked to:

   a) Ensure that the bereavement services marketing plan includes details of how the needs of faith communities are met and how this information is provided to those communities; and

   b) Consider holding another open day at Gilroes Cemetery and Crematorium, this to include advice on the processes that needed to be completed following a person’s death.

Councillor Govind left the meeting at this point (6.30 pm) and returned at 6.45 pm

43. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT STRATEGY - UPDATE

The Head of Sports and the Sports Regeneration Manager gave a presentation on progress with the development of the Leicester Physical Activity and Sport Strategy. A copy of this is attached at the end of these minutes for information.

The Sports Regeneration Manager explained that the development of this Strategy had arisen following work nationally by the government and Sport England that recognised the need to change behaviour to get people involved in physical activity.

In the city, it was felt that a change in approach was needed to achieve this, but Council officers did not have the experience, knowledge or capacity to undertake the research on which the new direction would be based. An expert therefore had been recruited to do this.

The key findings from their work were:

- 50% of children starting school were not physically ready;
- There were problems in transition between schools, with levels of physical activity dropping off at each stage;

- Although there was a boost in activity at primary school level due to government funding, there was duplication and variable quality in provision and gaps in provision had been identified;

- There was a decline in secondary school physical education provision, which was attributed to the reduction in the School Sports Partnership infrastructure;

- Colleges and universities had an important role to play in supporting sport and physical activity in the city, as they had a large intake of students each year. As well as playing a role in sport and physical activity provision, they also had an important role in the deployment of students into the community to support the infrastructure of community activity;

- The city had a lower number of accredited sports clubs than regional counterparts. In addition, levels of volunteering, membership and participation in competition with voluntary sports clubs were all lower than regionally and nationally;

- Community use of secondary school sites was mixed, with some examples of good practice, but also some excellent assets across the city not being utilised for the community. Reasons for this included that schools did not have the facilities management expertise to offer community use and financial reasons;

- There were many indoor and outdoor facilities in the city, but facilities in the city’s parks generally were not good quality, especially for higher level sport. A better plan for the use of parks for activities therefore was needed;

- The focus for sustainable travel historically had been on modal shift, not health. An opportunity therefore existed to broaden this focus, although resources would be needed to do so. However, funding could be difficult, as the Council currently was covering a short term funding gap for sustainable travel, pending the approval of an external funding bid for the next 3 years;

- Interventions needed to be based on evidence, not just providing opportunities to participate in activities and hoping that people would attend;

- The Council was good at providing individual, isolated projects, but a more co-ordinated approach was needed;

- Active workplaces were important in helping improve people’s health and well-being;
Consideration needed to be given to how better use could be made of professional and semi-professional sports clubs, (for example in the provision of positive health messages);

Improvements needed to be made in the knowledge of the current physical activity and sport workforce;

Upskilling of workers who had direct contact with the public would help raise the awareness of physical activity, (for example, in youth services, the police, and medical personnel); and

A further opportunity was to develop the next generation workforce through apprenticeship opportunities and leadership programmes. This could potentially be connected to the volunteering offer.

The Head of Sports invited the Commission to comment on key priorities, to help move on from consultation on the Strategy to implementing it.

In view of concerns about childhood obesity, Members asked why vending machines at sports centres were filled with sugary drinks and unhealthy foods. In reply, the Head of Sports explained that work was ongoing with Public Health officers in improving health options and this would be taken in to account when reviewing contracts for the machines.

It was queried whether the finding of lower than average participation in the city was accurate. For example, there was significant grass-roots participation in football. This also raised the question of whether the wrong communities were being targeted, as using the wrong data could lead to resources being misdirected. An example of this was that sports could be played on days on which faith communities could be at their places of worship. Different focus on different genders also could influence participation levels.

The following points were made in discussion:

- The City Council had made significant investment in sports facilities, but it was not known whether the Council had any input to the bodies governing them;

- The bookings system for sports facilities could be too rigid, deterring people from using those facilities;

- Sports clubs could be too inflexible in their purpose, usually being for just one sport. Encouraging them to offer a variety of sports could increase participation;

- A lot of money was spent on sports merchandise, which indicated an interest in sport that could be taken advantage of;
Encouraging participation in activity could be as simple as encouraging people to walk, rather than use transport;

Currently, approximately 8% of city residents used leisure centres. Better marketing could help increase usage, but the centres also needed to provide facilities that would encourage people to attend and be fit for purpose. A review of sports centres was underway, which as well as looking at sports facilities provided also would include consideration of facilities such as showers and opportunities for future investment;

Residents of some areas of the city would need to travel to sports facilities, but this could be expensive to do;

Initiatives introduced through the Strategy would need to change behaviour and habits. One way of achieving this could be to improve the ways in which people were encouraged to value activity. There was a role for sports clubs in teaching children and young people how to become physically active;

It was known that investment in sport in primary schools had increased, but it was not known how this was being used. For example, there was no information on whether the number of pupils participating in physical activity had increased, or whether the money been spent on existing provision. It was hoped that physical activity could be encouraged through all subjects, such as using the playground for mathematics lessons;

It was hoped that organisations and volunteers external to the Council would engage with the development of the Strategy, in order to make it as relevant as possible;

Additional resources were unlikely to be available to help implement the Strategy, but existing resources would be would be refocussed. Directing resources to the Strategy’s priorities also would help future bids for additional resources; and

A key strand of the strategy would be the role of sport in physical and mental wellbeing. This would build on previous successes with schemes such as referral programmes, (for example, referrals by GPs), and could show benefits in reduced expenditure on medical treatments.

Councillor Dr Barton left the meeting at 6.55 pm, during the above discussion.

AGREED:
1) That the presentation be received and noted; and

2) That the Head of Sports be asked to undertake regular monitoring of the Physical Activity and Sports Strategy once implemented and to report the results of this to this Commission as appropriate.
44. WORK PROGRAMME

The Commission received and considered its current work programme.

In response to an invitation to Members and officers to suggest items for inclusion in the programme, some concern was expressed that such items would not be adopted. The Commission was reminded that all suggestions were considered for inclusion in the programme on a case by case basis, but there was insufficient time available to the Commission to consider all possible items.

45. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.22 pm
DRAFT LEICESTER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT STRATEGY

Andrew Beddow / Vicky Ball
Sport Services

Setting the Scene
Methodology

National Context

- 'Towards an Active Nation' Government strategy.

- 'Sporting Future', a new strategy for an Active Nation - Sport England Strategy
Local Context

• High levels of deprivation.
• Growing younger population.
• High levels of health inequalities exist.
• Life expectancy is significantly worse than regional and national averages.
• Inactivity levels high, costing Leicester health services in excess of £5.8m per annum.
• Sporting infrastructure weak.

Draft Strategy Vision

“Building a strong future for all in Leicester, transforming peoples health and wellbeing through physical activity and sport.”
Key Findings

Findings can be categorised into 4 themes:

1. Education
2. Places to be active
3. Insight and communication
4. Workforce

1. Education

- Early Years
- Schools
- Further and higher education
2. Places

- Sports Clubs
- Schools
- Indoor/outdoor spaces
- Active travel

3. Insight and Communication

- Community Engagement
- Health
- Communications
4. Workforce

- **People and Skills:**
  - Ensure that there is an appropriately skilled workforce in place to deliver the strategy.

Next Steps and Feedback

- Feedback collated
- Implementation designed
- Governance and leadership confirmed
Thank you

Questions / Feedback?