

[These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the sub-committee  
Scheduled to be held on 27 September 2016]

## **Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee**

**26 July 2016**

Present: Councillor J Cassidy (In the Chair)  
Councillors G Bell, L Bell, N Craven, D Drummond,  
D McMeekan and A Newman.

Also Present: Councillor E N Darke, Cabinet Member responsible for Leisure,  
Culture and Tourism.

### **CL08/07/16 Apologies**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors S Day, K Lee and P Oliver.

### **CL09/07/16 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members reported.

### **CL10/07/16 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest reported.

### **CL11/07/16 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 June 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **CL12/07/16 Culture and Leisure Services Provision**

The Sub-committee received a joint presentation from the Senior Manager, Cultural Services and Senior Manager, Sport and Leisure, who provided an overview of their respective service areas.

The presentation focused on the borough-wide facilities provided; the key achievements during 2015/16; and the priorities for 2016/17 including the key challenges ahead.

#### **Sport and Leisure**

The Sport and Leisure Teams managed Indoor Sports facilities, Outdoor activities, Sports Development and the Active North Tyneside Team who worked closely with the Public Health; Children, Young People and Learning; and Adult Social Care teams to deliver preventive services focussing on better health outcomes for residents.

The sub-committee acknowledged the continuing work to attract users to indoor sport and leisure facilities including the substantial increase in the 'Contours' membership during 2015/16.

It was noted that although the market share in relation to private gyms, especially budget gyms had remained fairly static, there had been a small but steady increase in the use of the Authority's facilities as a result of special membership promotions.

It was highlighted that equipment was modernised on a regular basis as part of a rolling programme of investment to keep up with demand, recent examples included Waves and The Parks.

In response to a Member's query about physiotherapist facilities in gyms; it was explained that this facility was already being provided at The Parks and that further consideration would be given to extend to the other areas in the future.

### **Cultural Services**

The Cultural Services Teams managed the Arts, Heritage, Tourism & Events, Libraries and Community Centres and Museums.

The sub-committee noted that some of the main cultural focus in 2015/16 had been on library provision and the North East of England's Case for Culture, which had given rise to much local and national debate.

The Authority had a statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons in the area that wanted to make use of it; also to make proper arrangements in relation to museums and archives for a local authority's own records and others it accepted into its care.

It was noted there had been an increase in visitor numbers across the borough in 2015/16 these included visitors to libraries, festivals, events, St Mary's Lighthouse & Visitor Centre and Museums, etc., which highlighted the importance of maintaining services and the continued development of facilities in providing a sense of shared history, shared place, community celebrations and the recognition that literacy, literature and learning were key to all of these.

The sub-committee welcomed the work being done to promote and develop the Authority's sport, leisure and cultural provision for residents of the borough and its visitors.

It was **agreed** that the presentation be noted.

### **CL13/07/16 Cultural Development Plan Sub Group**

Consideration was given to a report on the proposed establishment of a Cultural Development Plan sub group.

At the meeting on 28 June 2016 during the consideration of the sub-committee's work programme 2016/17, it was agreed that the Chair of the sub-committee, in consultation with appropriate officers would produce a scoping exercise for an area of interest discussed by the sub-committee at the meeting.

In terms of policy development it was proposed that a sub group should be established to undertake an in-depth study into proposals for the introduction of a Cultural Development Plan. The Chair had invited Members of the sub-committee to suggest specific areas that could be investigated as part of the in-depth study. Subsequently, two Members had provided suggestions for investigation which were included in the initial scoping document.

The proposed scope and work programme for the in-depth study was attached at Appendix A to the report.

To assist the sub-committee in deciding upon the areas for investigation, the report provided some background into the Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) '*Culture White Paper*' published in March 2016, which was the first comprehensive statement of government policy on culture in over 50 years and represented a clear statement of intent in providing a national framework for the sector. The publication of the White Paper followed a period of concern in the cultural sector about the national distribution of Arts Council England and Lottery funding, suggesting too great a bias in favour of London and the South. The paper '*Rebalancing Our Cultural Capital*' (Stark, Gordon, Powell 2013) had been particularly influential in this debate.

In the region this discussion had taken the form of the establishment of the North East Culture Partnership and the publication of the *North East of England's Case for Culture*, launched in 2015. The report outlined the existing benefits of investment in culture while arguing the case for greater investment to support learning, skills and jobs.

The Authority's existing *Arts Development Strategy 2014-2021* attached at Appendix B to the report reflected the 10 year strategic framework of Arts Council England, *Great Arts and Culture for Everyone*, translating the key objectives into a local context. These documents would provide a useful context for Members engaged in the considerations relating to the in-depth study.

Councillors D McMeekan and A Newman volunteered to serve as members of the sub group. Councillors S Day, N Craven and D Drummond had also volunteered to serve on the sub group, if its establishment was approved, prior to the meeting.

It was **agreed** (1) to establish a sub group to examine the proposed introduction of a Cultural Development Plan and to endorse the proposed initial scope and work programme; (2) that the sub group would hold its first meeting in August 2016; and (3) Members availability to be sought to ascertain whether the sub group would meet during the day or the evening to enable Members who had volunteered for the sub group to know whether they would be available to serve.