

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 JANUARY 2016

Present: County Councillor McKerlich(Chairperson)
County Councillors Dilwar Ali, Howells, Hyde, Stubbs and
Weaver

50 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Javed and Govier, Councillor Ed Stubbs advised that he would be late due to work commitments.

51 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

52 : MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee held on 3 December 2015 were agreed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Councillor Hyde's apologies and signed by the Chairperson.

53 : SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Bradbury, Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-Operatives and Social Enterprise, Sarah McGill Director Communities, Housing & Customer Services, Isabelle Bignall Assistant Director Customer Services and Nicola Richards Central Library Manager to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he said that the previous year had been another successful one and the presentation to follow would demonstrate that.

Members were provided with a presentation on Summer Reading Challenge which included key issues such as: Overview, Consistency of service, Strategy, The Launch, The Programme, Summer Reading Challenge goes digital, Partnership working, The Results, Promotional events, Authority Performance, Qualitative Assessment (including case study) and The Big Friendly Read – Summer Reading Challenge 2016/17.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for their presentation and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members noted it had been an excellent year and were happy that the stretched target of 70% was staying. With regards to school promotional events, Members asked if there was anything more that Members could be doing to help, as many Members sit on School Governing Bodies. Officers accepted the offer of help and noted that the challenge had reached a plateau with regards to numbers; Officers would contact Members in due course.

- Members stated that Llandaff North and Fairwater libraries were due to close for refurbishment and asked how this would affect the numbers of children able to take part in the challenge. Officers advised that they have a travelling library to go to these areas and that when Grangetown and Roath libraries closed for the same reason there had only been a decline in numbers of 400.
- Members asked for further information on the Budget and whether it was under any threat. Officers advised that the Summer Reading Challenge had a separate budget provided by the Reading Agency and that it was not under any threat; Officers also added that the challenge brings in lots of support from the local business community.
- Members asked if there was any spin off from the challenge such as parents being encouraged to listen to their children read. Officers stated that this had happened in last years challenge particularly with the traveller community. The Central Library Manager stated that parents are also encouraged when they bring their children to the library and listen to the professional story tellers; the Cabinet Member added that library rhyme and story times also involve parents reading.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member, officers and other witnesses for attending the meeting, giving their presentations and statements and for answering Members questions.

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee’s behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations.

54 : ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING - 2014/15 RESULTS

Sarah McGill (Director – Communities, Housing & Customer Services, Isabelle Bignall (Assistant Director – Customer Services) and John Agnew (Corporate Customer Services Manager)

Members were advised that Councillor De’Ath Cabinet Member for Skills, Safety & Engagement was currently on paternity leave so was unable to attend for this item.

Members were provided with a presentation on Adult Community Learning (ACL) Performance Data 2014/15, which included information on: ACL Partnership Success Rates; Performance Data – Progress Against Partnership Targets for 2014/15 and Factors Contributing to Results.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for their presentation and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked if the numbers of students had increased. Officers advised that there had been a dip in numbers due to the increase in enrolment fees and the fact that information on the courses wasn’t reaching the people it should; Officers now work with Communities First more closely to reach people and to understand outcomes and benefits. The option to enrol and pay online has also been introduced and now numbers were increasing by approximately 10% term on term.

- Members sought further information on online enrolment and the ESOL courses. Members were advised that around 30% of students use the online enrolment option and that it was not mandatory. Members were further advised that ESOL provision is run by Cardiff & The Vale College and they are working on bringing waiting lists down and increasing funding. Officers noted that Committee had previously suggested Cardiff & Vale College be invited to attend a future meeting to provide information on Life in the UK/UK Passport and that this would be progressed.
- Members asked how the YMCA had such high target success rates. Officers advised that the YMCA results were national Results and added that people using the YMCA facilities are obliged to complete the courses.
- Members noted that the Authority's target was lower than Cardiff & Vale College; Officers stated that the target was based on a national comparator for the previous year and that that 87% statistics had been checked and verified by Welsh Government. Members considered it would be useful to see the numbers behind the percentages for comparison purposes.
- Members asked why the target percentage was low (72%) in 2012/13. Officers explained that in 2011/12 it had been an historic poor performance and was at 45.7%, the responsibility was then given to Sarah McGill's Directorate and processes were put in place to remedy the poor performance such as splitting programmes to measure the differences in North and South Cardiff, Leisure Courses/Communities First Courses; Certification being awarded across the board; Better management of the service; Improved performance of staff and Accreditation after each module. It was also noted that there had been both General Fund and Grant provision for ACL.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member, officers and other witnesses for attending the meeting, giving their presentations and statements and for answering Members questions.

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee's behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations

55 : 2016/17 BUDGET PROPOSALS - FOR CONSULTATION

The Chairperson advised that statements would be given by organisations and stakeholders of groups affected by the 2016/17 Budget Proposals – for Consultation. The Organisations/Stakeholders attending Committee were Artesmundi, The Riverside Banner Project and What Next?Cardiff.

The Chairperson welcomed Andrea Heath, Rehana Nadeem and Kensi Hayaan of the Riverside Banner Project to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation to Committee. They were joined by Richard Berry of WAWA Ltd. Many points were made and are summarised as follows:

- Cuts to the Arts would be detrimental to the City, there is a particular case for Cultural Arts as it is less physical than other art forms;
- A budget of £62k is provided by the Council, which funds 14 projects. In 2015/16 almost 1000 people, 9000 participations and 29000 people have seen the work produced in exhibitions and programmes;
- Cultural project grants are only open in Communities First Areas, they were introduced at time of cuts as a new community model aimed to target those in need in deprived areas, any further cuts would be disastrous.
- Cultural schemes guarantee grant funding into Community First Areas, match funding is then sourced; almost doubling the value of the Council contribution.
- Cultural Schemes encourage local people to integrate with their community;
- Programmes are designed specifically for protected characteristics such as Ethnic Minority Women and Older People, their loss would have a huge impact for equality;
- Riverside Banner Project is a platform for the community to come together with all generations sharing their skills & cultures;
- It gives a voice to the minorities, an expression of identity, provides community cohesion, provide culturally appropriate venues and encourages non traditional audiences;
- Students from low income families who take part in Art are three times more likely to get a degree as it is proven to improve numeracy, literacy, health, wellbeing and self esteem;
- Riverside Banner Project provides employment for 4 people;
- A £5k project had brought in £9k in fees and contributions, there are benefits and longevity from the all the interchanging as all projects cross and all gain exponentially.

The Chairperson thanked witnesses for the presentation to the Committee and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked whether the Project had applied for the Neighbourhood Partnership Grant and were advised that they had been in receipt of a Neighbourhood Partnership Grant for the last few years.
- Members were concerned that a project that has such positive effects on mental health and isolation and that could provide women only classes could be under threat of budget cuts, it could potentially save a lot of money whilst only saving a small amount.
- Members asked if classes provided by the Project could be accessed elsewhere and were advised that there were classes available for women in the community but they tended to be more structured classes such as learning English.
- Members were interested to find out what schemes/projects were potentially being left uncut and to what expense to those facing potential cuts.
- Members noted the positive effects that Arts can have on peoples lives and improve quality of lives; Members also noted that the Authority was facing unprecedented cuts and that decisions needed to be made. Members

commended the work undertaken by the project and the spin offs and collaborations that have also come from it.

The Chairperson thanked witnesses for answering Members questions and accepted Councillor Peter Bradbury Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-Operatives and Social Enterprise and Roger Hopwood Arts and Theatre Manager's request to address the Committee having observed from the public gallery.

Councillor Bradbury stated that many tricky decisions would need to be made. He added that he has listened to the presentation and questions and would feed them back to Cabinet colleagues and get a response to Scrutiny. He explained that the Arts Active programme would be expected to be delivered by the new operator for the Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) at St David's Hall.

Members were advised that Roger Hopwood would send a breakdown of the whole budget line to Committee Members and also that the £453k will be tied up in the ADM at St David's Hall.

The Cabinet Member stated that St David's Hall and the New Theatre were being kept open in very challenging times; the Council was continuing lots of projects including the Cultural Centre at Western High, Being involved in the Roald Dahl centenary; the Cabinet Member has written to the Culture Minister regarding Cardiff being culturally important and supporting local groups and helping them to find grants from other sources.

Councillor Bradbury apologised he was unable to remain to hear the remaining two stakeholders presentations.

The Chairperson welcomed Carl Grainger and Karen Mackinnon of Artesmundi to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation which included information on Visitor satisfaction metrics, National and International Profile, Economic Impact, Creating a stronger community, The Importance of Cardiff's Investment and Consequences.

The Chairperson thanked witnesses for the presentation to Committee and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked how much the Welsh Government contributes through the Arts Council and were advised that the contribution was £140k per year, this was up for review and the proposal for 2016/17 would be announced in March.
- Members noted that other Cities had previously been interested in Artesmundi and asked whether they had been approached. Members were advised that there were no negotiations going on at all and that they had no interest in leaving Cardiff, however they would need to look other projects as they don't have a venue and work in partnerships.
- Members asked if there was any lottery funding available and were advised that they received lottery funding via the Arts Council for Wales, this has been used for specific projects such as outreach work. It was added that match

funding still needed to be found as the Arts Council for Wales provided 70% maximum for any project.

- Members asked for further information on the leverage on Cardiff's funding. Members were advised that it was approximately 10/1 and that the £80k of Cardiff meant a turnover of £900k.
- Members asked if there were any other grants obtained specifically match funded to Cardiff's input. Members were advised that the £80k funding over two years from Cardiff was unrestricted funding used for sub projects that could then apply for match funding.
- With regards to Economic Benefit, Members asked whether there had been any discussions with local hoteliers and businesses who benefit from the large number of visitors to the City, for potential investment. Members were advised that this was just starting they were looking at ways of trading, it was complicated as they are a registered charity and being a trader means a risk of loss.

The Chairperson thanked witnesses for answering Members questions.

The Chairperson welcomed Laura Drane and Mathew Talfan of What Next? Cardiff to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation by Laura Drane and Mathew Talfan and the following points were made:

- It was recognised that there was a tough financial settlement, which has come on top of other hard settlements.
- Arts and Culture had a positive effect on health and wellbeing,
- How a vibrant arts scene attracts businesses, visitors and students;
- Leverage was stated as being £1b investment leading to £250b outturn;
- Arts and Culture impacts on regeneration,
- It has positive economic impact and creates a brand abroad;
- Arts makes real and valuable connections with people the city and the region, it binds Cardiff together and connects Cardiff to the world.
- Art has a wider impact on the Cardiff brand and affects the profile and credibility of Cardiff;
- It was important to show that Cardiff has something distinct to offer to be a liveable city, to be cultural, interesting, with an exceptional quality of life, where citizens can grow and develop on all levels and engage with the wider world.
- Cuts threatens to undermine all this, there needs to be an ongoing dialogue and a whole strategy to help the City in the longterm.

The Chairperson thanked witnesses for their presentation and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members stated that Councils don't forget the value of such movements but budgets are cut further and further. Members noted the key point made regarding working with the cultural sector in a long term way. It would be helpful for long term working to know which cuts were fatal and which would slow down schemes.

- Members asked if any other local authority examples could be provided. Members were advised that Bristol has signed up to a memorandum of understanding to Arts England and Manchester had a commitment to Arts and Culture.
- Members noted that Cardiff was in competition with other cities to be a liveable city and asked what damage the cuts would cause. Members were advised that the cuts would effect participants, individual artists, community groups, arts buildings and that the ecology of the arts is very complex so the damage would be felt.
- Members asked how Arts benefit other parts of the public sector services provided by the Council. Members were advised that there had been research undertaken by Kings College London on the benefits of Arts, such as community cohesion, health and wellbeing, raising educational attainment/attendance/behaviour and a positive effect on social care.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member, officers and other witnesses for attending the meeting, giving their presentations and statements and for answering Members questions.

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee’s behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations

56 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for Monday 15 February 2016 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 4, County Hall.