

LEISURE AND CULTURE SUB COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

23 January 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.L.Thomas

Councillors: M.Ellis, S.Miller, S.Renkes, R.L.Taylor and D.Whitelock

Officers In Attendance S. Curran, P.Walker and W.John

1. **MINUTES OF THE LEISURE AND CULTURE SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 17TH OCTOBER 2017.**

The Committee noted the Minutes.

2. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18.**

The Committee requested that the following items be added to the Forward Work Programme:

- Performance of Community Centres post transfer including; type of transfer, financial position, sustainability and type of use.
- Tourism; that Cllr A Llewellyn as the previous Chair of Economic and Community Regeneration Scrutiny Committee who undertook a Task and Finish Review on Tourism be invited to inform the Committee of the findings of the group and that Cllr S Hunt, Chair of the current Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee to inform the Committee of any ongoing work that may be of interest to the Committee.

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

3. **WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17**

The Committee received information in relation to the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 16/17 as contained within the circulated report.

Members noted that the standards that had not been met were resource based standards where adverse budget pressures had impacted on stock purchases, staffing levels and opening hours.

Members asked for clarity on the process and were informed that the Annual Report is submitted to the Welsh Government, which is then externally assessed and advised upon by a group of Chief Librarians.

Members were pleased to note the increase in numbers of visits and the creative and innovative range of events now offered by libraries. The Digital Inclusion work undertaken was praised.

Members noted the decrease in book issues and virtual visits and the fact that this represents a national trend.

It was also noted that the net cost per visit was one of the lowest in Wales representing good value for money for citizens of Neath Port Talbot.

A discussion was had on Welsh books and that they represent 1% of the books issued. Members asked, if to assist with the WG target of increasing Welsh speakers should more Welsh books be made available? It was noted that the existing Welsh book stock is limited but that Welsh Learners and children are prioritised as a demographic and the Top 20 Welsh books are always available.

The Committee were interested if there would be a change to the Framework as this is the third and final year of Framework 5 of the Welsh Public Library Standards and were informed that the main indicators were likely to remain the same.

Members queried if Audio Books included Pod Casts. Officers stated that they do not currently but provisions are being considered to develop this in the future.

Members were pleased to note the 'Book 4 U' scheme where 12 Local Authorities share library stock.

The high feedback rates of consultation exercises was praised and Members asked if there was any best practice that could be shared. It was explained that there exists a level of loyalty with library users who are a 'captive audience' when in situ and non-users are surveyed in events held outside the libraries.

The Committee were extremely pleased to note the 97% of children surveyed who felt that the library has made a difference to their lives.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

4. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

Resolved: that pursuant to Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12 A to the above Act.

5. **HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2017/2018 CELTIC LEISURE**

The Committee received information in relation to the half year performance review 2017/18 of Celtic Leisure as contained within the circulated report.

The Committee noted that monthly meetings are held as part of the performance management framework and Members were pleased to note the performance and hoped that it would continue.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

CHAIRPERSON