

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5 December 2019

Present:

Councillor Hacking - In the Chair

Councillors Andrews, Battle, Chambers, Collins, M Dar, Douglas, Grimshaw, Hitchen, Rawlins and Rawson

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure
Karen Shannon, Manchester Histories

Apologies:

Councillors Doswell and Kirkpatrick

CESC/19/50 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 7 November were submitted for approval. A Member commented that the request for information on the cost of introducing a Public Space Protection Order was outstanding, and requested that this information was provided to Members.

A Member commented that that he had received the information that had been circulated following the previous meeting that provided data on voluntary posts and that take up of £10 tickets at the MIF. He thanked officers for providing this information, however commented that more work needed to be done to engage with residents across the city for the next event.

The Chair informed Members that the draft final report and recommendations of the Review of Advice Services in Manchester Task and Finish Group would be circulated to Members of this Committee for comment, with the final report to be submitted to the January 2020 meeting of Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee for endorsement.

Decisions

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2019 as a correct record subject to the above comments.
2. To receive the minutes of the Review of Advice Services in Manchester Task and Finish Group meetings held on 30 October 2019 and 15 November 2019.

CESC/19/51 Peterloo Massacre 200th Anniversary Programme

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an overview of events which marked the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre in 2019.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- Providing a general introduction;
- Describing the approach to participation and engagement;
- Information on the programme of various events;
- Information on learning resources;
- Participation, Engagement & Volunteering information; and
- An update on the communications strategy.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Noting the important work of volunteers and staff in Central Library to successfully deliver this programme of events;
- Noting the importance of the actions of the citizens at Peterloo and what that represented;
- Could this model of engagement be used to showcase smaller local history projects;
- Noting the importance of social history in the school curriculum;

The Chair invited Councillor Rawlins to provide an update in regard to the Peterloo Memorial. Councillor Rawlins informed the Committee that progress continued to be made and an independently Chaired public meeting would be convened during 2020 and this would be followed by a consultation event. She stated that Members of the Committee would be kept informed on how this work has progressed.

Karen Shannon, Manchester Histories informed the Committee that the programme of events had been developed over a four year period and had been co-designed with residents and community groups from across Manchester. Noting that the programme had engaged with forty-six different cultural organisations from across the city with Central Library acting as the main hub, noting the geographical importance of Central Library and the library space helped facilitate positive debate and discussion. She paid tribute to the staff at the library for their invaluable support and enthusiasm for the project. She stated that the programme of events delivered had successfully brought together arts, culture, history and heritage groups and had raised awareness of Peterloo amongst residents.

She stated that the programme of events had been developed around the themes of protest, democracy and freedom of speech, both from a historical perspective and a contemporary view point. She stated that the programme had only recently finished and data was still being collected, however it was noted that a significant number of people had engaged with this project. She stated that the projects had been important to educate young people about this important event in history, noting the radical read project. She stated that the learning resources and archive of the project, including the music commissioned were now available online to act as a legacy for the project and provide a learning resource. Information on this resource had been provided to schools so that they were aware of this, commenting that to date there had been over two hundred downloads of the education pack that went live in September. She further informed the Committee that an anthology of young people's stories, including the essay written and performed by Olivia McFadden would be published.

Karen Shannon, Manchester Histories stated that planning was already underway to deliver projects in 2020 around Alf Roberts, disability rights and protest; celebrating Engels in Manchester and the Pan African Conference, both at a local level and national level. A Member commented that consideration needed to be given to accessibility and whether projects could be taken out into neighbourhoods. The Head of Libraries Galleries and Culture acknowledged this commented and confirmed that consideration was been given to how projects and events in Central Library could be transferred and hosted in neighbourhoods.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure paid tribute to Manchester Histories and all volunteers and community groups that had contributed to the delivery of such a successful event, that showcased the heritage and values of the city. He particularly welcomed the involvement of children and young people in this project.

Decision

To note the report.

CESC/19/52 Manchester's Park Strategy 2017-2026

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an update on the progress of delivering the Park Strategy since the last report to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee on 24 May 2018.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Providing a context and background, noting that in December 2017 a ten year strategy for Manchester's Parks was launched to guide investment, upkeep and activation;
- Describing progress against the actions identified within the Plan;
- Information on Quality Standards;
- Information on income;
- Information on Friends, Communities and Volunteers;
- Information on resourcing of the Park's Team; and
- The contribution towards mitigating climate change.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- How would local Members be involved with the development of park plans;
- Who would be responsible for the maintenance of the Hough End mobile changing rooms;
- How effective was the new interactive football wall at Platt Fields Park, and was the intention to roll this out;
- There appeared to be a lack of investment in playing pitches in North Manchester, in particular the smaller parks;
- What was being done to support Friends Groups in terms of their own marketing, branding and social media;

- What criteria is applied to assess a 'safe' park, noting that safe is a relevant term to different people and what measures have been introduced to ensure they are safe;
- Consideration should be given to installing CCTV equipment in parks, particularly secluded parks to address issues of Anti-Social Behaviour; and
- Commenting on the lack of play facilities in parks for children with disabilities and their families.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure informed Members that playing pitches were subject to a different strategy and that was the reason they were not referenced within this report. He stated that all Members had been contacted previously regarding this subject and had been invited to comment on and prioritise pitches in their respective wards, and Officers were currently working through these responses. He said that there was a programme of developing bespoke park plans that would involve all relevant stakeholders, including Police, Housing Providers, Friends Groups and Members. He said that despite the ongoing budget cuts Manchester had continued to invest in parks.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) commented that a report was scheduled for consideration at the January 2020 meeting on Capital Strategy for Leisure Facilities that would provide Members with an update on the Playing Pitch Strategy. He stated that they were two separate strategies for the purposes of planning to protect playing fields, however acknowledged that there was a cross over in terms of investment

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) stated that planning applications were currently submitted for temporary changing facilities at Hough End, to be delivered in March, subject to planning approval. He said this would be followed by capital investment for improved facilities at the site, and it was anticipated that this would be managed using existing arrangements. He further commented that the football wall would be evaluated, pending any decision to roll out further and the Committee would be kept informed of these developments.

The Parks Lead informed the Committee that Friends Group had been supported to embrace and use social media, using a volunteers' development programme. She further commented that staff undertake safety inspections, in conjunction with Friends Groups, commenting that these were undertaken from a service user perspective, noting that parks needed to appear well loved and cared for, free of weeds and graffiti.

The Parks Lead stated that accessibility was important for all citizens and consideration would be given as to how best consult on park plans to ensure all opinions were captured and understood, including those who currently did not use local parks as a result of limited accessibility.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure acknowledged the comment from the Committee Member who had raised the issue of accessibility by acknowledging that more needed to be done to improve this. He stated this was understood and was a priority for future investment and planning across all parks.

A Member commented that the Our Manchester Disabled Peoples Board could offer support this area of work.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) responded to a question from a Member regarding the 'Parks in Partnership' grant funding offer by advising that information on how this funding could be accessed was to be agreed and information on this would be made available at the appropriate time, adding that it was anticipated that the fund would be launched in spring 2020.

Decision

To note the report.

CESC/19/53 Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an update, following the decision by the Executive in May 2018 to endorse the recommendations of the Sport and Leisure Review and agreed to approve the adoption of the new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and the operating arrangements proposed to deliver it. The report described progress made over the last twelve months and highlighted that Manchester was tackling inactivity six times faster than the national average. Whilst this is a remarkable achievement the Council and partners are not complacent and more work was required to continue the journey of increasing active lives and widening access to tackle underrepresentation.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- Information on Manchester Active;
- Describing progress on the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy;
- Describing Health and Well-being Progress;
- Describing Sports Development Progress;
- Describing Capital Investment Progress;
- Describing Key Priorities for the remainder of the year;
- Describing Leisure Centre Contracting Arrangements; and
- Describing Key achievements over the last 12-months.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- A definition of active was requested and if ward level data was available;
- Noting the positive impact the staff working in teams had on residents;
- Welcoming the development of facilities at Hough End;
- What training was given to staff to support people with disabilities;
- How were 'closed' sessions for specific groups advertised;
- What was the take up of Social Prescribing;

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) informed the Committee that the data was produced had been supplied from IPSO Mori who had undertaken the telephone survey. He stated that 'active' was measured as 3x 30min of moderate exercise per week. A Member enquired if this information could be provided by ward

in future reports, however that Committee were advised that this was not currently available. The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) welcomed the positive comments from the Members regarding staff and he stated this would be relayed to staff.

In regard to disabled and older provision, the Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) stated that free swimming for over 60s was offered and specific sessions across sites were advertised by each provision. He stated that disabled groups did utilise leisure centre facilities, however there were not many disabled specific programmes offered by operators, however Voluntary Community Sector groups did organise these. He stated that all front line staff received appropriate training regarding disabled person's participation.

In regard to Social Prescribing, the Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) stated that following devolution, local health partners were engaged with the physical activity agenda and health partners were represented on the Manchester Active Board. He stated it had been recognised that having relevant local information in a comprehensive and accessible format for GPs was essential, and work was ongoing to deliver the MCRactive digital platform that would be available to GP surgeries in Manchester.

Decision

To note the report.

CESC/19/54 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme.