



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CULTURE AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2023 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Dawood - Chair

Councillor Agath  
Councillor Chauhan  
Councillor Singh Johal

Councillor Aldred  
Councillor Halford

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**22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Karavadra.

**23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**24. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

In relation to minute 20 regarding 'Ward Funding Annual Report', it was agreed that the record be amended to reflect it was confirmed that the informal scrutiny work would be led by the Vice-Chair.

AGREED:

That subject to the above change, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

**25. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**26. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE**

It was noted that none had been received.

## **27. PETITIONS**

It was noted that none had been received.

## **28. SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT FINDINGS INTO 'ENCOURAGING WOMEN INTO SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES'**

The Director of Delivery, Communications and Political Governance submitted a report setting out a range of findings, following a period of community and industry consultation, also providing recommendations to support the industry to engage, and encourage more women to participate in sport and physical activity.

The Chair of the Task Group, Councillor Halford, made some initial comments. She thanked everyone involved and highlighted how the report showed how the Council could improve women's participation in sport and break down barriers. She stated that she was pleased that the findings from the work would help to inform the forthcoming Sports Strategy.

The Deputy City Mayor for Climate, Economy and Culture added that proper access to sport was important for women and girls and that a significant amount of work was ongoing.

The Head of Sports Services and the Sport & Active Recreation Development Manager introduced the report.

The report and the following points were noted:

- Both locally and nationally, women were less likely than men to participate in sport.
- Active Leicester had facilitated the responses to recommendations from internal and external Council departments with some contributions from external partners. Key points included:
  - Committing to using female role models in marketing techniques and moving towards behavioural change in marketing techniques.
  - The continuation of the recruitment academy which had been successful in reaching female workers. A stand-alone website was being developed for women to be profiled more relevantly and would have a section dedicated to physical activity.
  - The strategy would continue to be monitored. This was a priority area and key for development.
  - A Health and Wellbeing hub was committed to being piloted at a Council leisure centre, looking at new ways of working to reach out to the local community, especially to women and girls who may not otherwise come to a leisure centre.
  - Relationships were continuing to be forged with internal and external partners to encourage women and girls to participate more.
- Different Council departments and key stakeholders were involved to promote opportunities for women and girls.

- There was still a deficit in women's engagement in sports and this needed to be worked on.
- The reference to posters showing ladies swimming in burkas would be clarified.
- Attention was drawn to the 'This Girl Can' Campaign and its success. Additionally, attention was drawn to the 50% gender split in staffing.
- It was suggested that good practice in other Local Authorities could be taken into account.
- A breakdown of the data into both ethnicity and age groups was suggested to allow these factors to be considered in the Strategy.
- There was a need to encourage girls in sport through education.
- In terms of monitoring participation of women and girls in sport, Sport England conducted the Active Lives survey, using a small sample of 200-500 people twice per year. Whilst this sample was not specifically female, conclusions could be drawn for women and girls based on this. In addition to this, a public Health and Wellbeing survey was being conducted using a sample of 2000 people in the city. This allowed for greater detail than the Sport England survey.
- The issue would come back to Scrutiny in terms of the process of delivering and implementing the Active Leicester Strategy Action Plan
- In terms of budget, there was no dedicated money attached to the Strategy. The strategy would be a guidance document for stakeholders on the way of working aimed at getting the inactive population more active by using resources more efficiently. Strategy and recommendations would be determined looking at how to work together in terms of improved representation and better marketing, support and leadership, rather than about a budget.
- Leisure Centres did have a budget and as such there would be an impact if there was a reduction in the services of leisure centres. There would be ongoing challenges, but more could be achieved without necessarily having more resource.

The Chair thanked those involved.

#### AGREED:

1. That the Executive response report be noted.
2. That a report on various bodies that could promote women's engagement in Sport (i.e. the NHS or Universities) be produced, possibly with a Board to look into this.
3. That good practice in other authorities be considered in the Strategy.
4. That other groups with protected characteristics be considered such as those that participate in disability sport.
5. That indicators for success be established.

## 29. MUSEUM SERVICE UPDATE

The Director Tourism, Culture & Inward Investment submitted a report providing an overview of the museum service's National Portfolio Organisation programme which is funded by Arts Council England.

Councillor Clarke, Deputy City Mayor for Climate, the Head of Arts and Museums, the Audience Development & Engagement Manager and the Finance & Project Manager introduced the report.

The Deputy City Mayor for Climate, Economy and Culture noted that the Museum Service was a service that could be looked on with pride, especially in the way it reflected the city.

A presentation was given outlining the use of National Portfolio Organisation funding from Arts Council England, plans for new galleries, exhibitions and schemes, including the Climate Change Gallery at Leicester Museum and Art Gallery (LMAG), the 'Healthier Happier City' initiative and a programme of free activities aimed at helping with the cost of living. The presentation also looked at engagement with volunteers and volunteer development.

The Chair thanked the officers for their work, particularly how museums and culture could be used in different ways and noted that the service could be proud of the work they do, especially given that other Councils were cutting such services.

In response to questions, the Commission was informed that:

- National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) capital funding was being applied for, the criteria of which involved environmental issues and involving communities on co-production work. This was part of a broader capital programme which included the Climate Change Gallery at LMAG. This was an important subject both for the Council and for the city. It was added that the exhibition should have a unique Leicester connection rather than being about climate change in general. It was acknowledged that the city had heritage in terms of attitude and commitment to the environment including healthy spaces, clean air and the way the city was designed which could be put forward within the gallery. The co-production element should allow for anybody who wanted to be a part of it having an opportunity to contribute.
- In terms of partners to work with, subject to NLHF funding being approved the project would then require further work in this area. The co-production approach sought the views of the community. If an expression of interest for the lottery funding went forward, a development stage application would be submitted for a development grant so that more work could be done on the project, including forming partnerships. A number of partners in the city and regionally were being considered.
- With regard to reaching communities for volunteers and training volunteers, the work was ongoing. There was a three-year funding

programme, the plans for the first year had been laid out, but it was planned to develop in the following two years. It was aimed to recruit up to 350 volunteers. However, this would need to be the cap due to the turnover of volunteers. The training programme involved a range of aspects of museums work, for example at events or in conservation.

- The largest community event had been the Riverside Festival and the Museum Service had a presence there with a stall of volunteers showcasing a photographic archive collection. This had reached lots of participants. Other events included events at the universities focussed on students, and three library-based events (the BRITE Centre, Fosse Library and Evington Library).
- Regarding off-site activities for older people, a conversation was underway with the Carers Centre working towards a creative project on what could be done to raise awareness of heritage issues for people with dementia and activities for people with dementia. This was expected to be launched by April 2024. Over the three-year run of funding it was hoped to work with people of all statuses and backgrounds to be inspired by cultural activity.

**AGREED:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Museums Strategy be reported to the Commission once available.
3. That progress on the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) programme be monitored on a 12-monthly basis with an item coming to the Commission.

### **30. BURIAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Director of Neighbourhood & Environmental Services summarised the Burial Strategy Update slide presentation appended to the agenda. This included the action taken to mitigate the pressure on burial space following increased demand from the coronavirus pandemic and the reducing availability of burial space in the council's cemeteries.

Councillor Cutkelvin, Deputy City Mayor for Housing and Neighbourhoods introduced the report.

The Director of Neighbourhood & Environmental Services gave a summary of the report. He added that whilst there was no immediate solution to pressures on burial space, a solution needed to be sought by 2026, given that burial space was forecast to reach capacity for 2030-31 for all communities. He further added that Leicester was not alone in that there were other cities in a similar situation. However, the issues were more apparent in Leicester due to the size of the city and its tight boundaries where other cities had more green space.

He clarified that there was no legislation for the reuse of burial space at this time.

He concluded that there had been good engagement from faith groups and there was a policy across all spaces to maintain provision. Work across the groups was continuing in order to look at provision beyond 2030.

The Chair thanked the officers involved for their report.

In response to questions, the Commission were informed that:

- There were currently over 120,000 graves in cemeteries, of these, only 4,000 were new. In terms of pre-sales, 700 were sold for future use in the five years before the policy was ended due to short-term need.
- By 2026 work would need to have started on identifying sites, surveying them, putting out a tender and undertaking procurement as there was a three-to-four year build process. The Capital Projects Team were looking into this. Soil conditions were also important as an environmental permit would be needed. This would require 12 months of groundwater monitoring to take place alongside the other preparations.
- There was initially 20 acres available, but there was an intention to deliver for a minimum of 50 years.
- Whilst more people were opting for cremation due to the cost-of-living crisis, faith had a big influence on whether people were buried or cremated. In general, more people were choosing cremation, over 80% nationally, however it was different in Leicester due to the city's demographics.
- Concern was raised over lobbying to bring the rest of the country into line with London in terms of legislation to allow, in certain circumstances (i.e. after a certain length of time and where there are no objections), the exhumation of graves, which were then dug deeper, to allow other people to be buried as well as the original occupant (who would be buried deeper). It was suggested that this did not align with traditional Catholic beliefs and as such the Catholic faith needed to be considered and taken into account.
- It was not thought that there would be an increase in burial costs due to supply and demand. The costs were benchmarked against other Local Authorities and Leicester was at the lower end of the price range when compared against comparable authorities.

AGREED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Commission be kept informed of the national consultation and any legislative changes.

3. That all faiths be involved with local consultation regarding any changes in legislation on the re-use of graves arising from the national Law Commission review of burial legislation.
4. That a 12-monthly update be brought to the Commission.

### **31. WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme was noted.

The Chair noted that the meeting scheduled for 25 March 2024 may need to be changed. The Commission would be kept informed.

It was suggested that the Library and Community needs assessment programme could come to the Commission on 29 January.

Leicester had been identified for a pilot programme by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to bring additional resource to the city. Work had begun on what this might look like in terms of heritage priorities for Leicester. It was suggested that this be brought to the Commission for comment.

Allocations for the and the Culture and Creative Industry Strategy and the Festivals and Events review were discussed. The arrangements for these items would be confirmed outside the meeting.

**AGREED:**

That the work programme be revised to incorporate the items suggested above.

### **32. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There being no items of other urgent business, the meeting ended at 19:03.

