

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
CULTURE AND SPORTS SUB-COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 18 APRIL, 2019

- Present:** Mr D Cook, (Chair); Councillor A Simpson (Vice-Chair); Councillor L Berry; Councillor A Forsyth; Mr J Knowles; Ms K Penman; and Councillor C Pike.
- Apologies:** Mr C Sutherland.
- Officers:** Director of Education & Children's Services; Head of Lifelong Learning & Leisure; Head of HR & OD; Service Manager, (Culture); Acting Service Manager (Sports and Physical Activity); Accountancy Finance Manager; Principal Solicitor (Governance); and Committee Officer (J McRobbie).
- In Attendance:** Network Liaison Manager; Arts and Heritage Manager; and Information Literacy & Learning Librarian.

1. SEDERUNT AND DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked if members had interests to declare. No interests were declared.

2. RESOLUTIONS

A. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Sub-Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching a decision.

B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Sub-Committee **agreed**, that under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the Meeting for Item 5 of the business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the Paragraph 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(A) Minute of Meeting of 8 February, 2019

There had been circulated and was **approved** as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of 8 February, 2019.

Arising from the consideration of the above, the Chair indicated that a date for the proposed workshop on Finance, (Item 7), would be established in early course.

(B) Minute of Meeting of 6 March, 2019

There had been circulated and was **approved** as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of 6 March, 2019.

4. CULTURE AND SPORTS STRATEGIES UPDATE

The Sub-Committee heard from the Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure of the approach being adopted in the provision of information to the Sub-Committee, with greater reliance on officers attending to make presentations as opposed to pre-circulated formal reports. This was intended to reduce any potential barriers to hearing directly from operational staff to better inform the Sub-Committee's deliberations.

The Chair, on behalf of the Sub-Committee welcomed Jacqueline Geekie, (Information Literacy & Learning Librarian); Saskia Gibbons, (Arts and Heritage Manager); and Karen Thomas (Network Liaison Manager) to the meeting, which thereafter received a presentation (as appended), providing an update on how the Culture and Sports Strategies, envisaged by Aberdeenshire Council as a process of 10 years' planned work, were now being progressed in terms of the revised Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA) approach. The presentation contained a link to a video on "Across the Grain" – a cultural festival held across Aberdeenshire in October, 2018 and intended to be repeated.

The Sub-Committee heard from the Acting Service Manager, (Sports and Physical Activity) of the bottom-up approach being pursued to ensure the strategy documents were living documents, informed by experience, user feedback, and the monitoring of outcomes against strategic aims. The Service Manager (Culture) stressed the need to have the Culture Strategy considered in terms of engagement with customers, potential customers, and staff, as well as with partners, with the liberation of staff to respond to local needs, such as book sales and coffee mornings in libraries. All ideas of events could be considered, if related to the achievement of the strategic aims.

There was discussion of the varied means of gathering and assessing user feedback, including formal surveys and exit interviews; the partnership working between third sector, Health and wellbeing agencies, the Universities, and organisations such as the Elphinstone Institute, (an advocate for the Doric), and the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland (TMSA); the continuing promotion of inter-generational work via library-sponsored events, with attendant community benefits and the breaking down of generational stereotypes, in addition to any skills development, or learning; the increase in autism-friendly library based activities; the continuing evolution of Community Cafes; and the methods to ensure the sharing of good practice, and learning accrued from less positive experiences, across staff, with regular team sessions, including both a formal sharing, and informal networking opportunity; and the potential to afford users the opportunity to provide a donation in support of free events, should they so wish.

The Sub-Committee **agreed:**

- (1) that officers lodge the “Across the Grain” video on the Live Life Aberdeenshire website in early course, commending it as an excellent representation of the event; and
- (2) to note that an assessment of the first year of the Sport and Culture Action Plans, which supported the 10-year strategy documents, would be reported to a future meeting, and afford members the option to input to assist progress;
- (3) that consideration be given to the preparation of a “good news” report of Live Life Aberdeenshire stories, similar to that prepared for the Council’s Education & Children’s Services Committee, for submission to the Communities Committee;
- (4) that consideration be given to requesting the Integration Joint Board to consider Live Life Aberdeenshire at a development session;
- (5) that officers consider and apply as appropriate, the availability of donation boxes at events; and
- (6) in all other respects to commend the work undertaken to date and thank the officers for their attendance and presentation.

5. BUSINESS UNIT FACILITIES – SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPENING HOURS

There had been circulated a report dated 26 March, 2019, by the Director of Education & Children’s Services, reporting the proposed amendment, under powers delegated to him, of opening hours for various sports and physical activities, in line with Aberdeenshire Council’s budget decisions of February, 2018.

There was discussion of the process which required to be followed in terms of Employment Legislation for any alteration of existing terms and conditions, and the timescale within which this could be applied.

Having, the Sub-Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to acknowledge the proposed reduction in total opening hours for sports centres and swimming pools, as detailed in Appendix Three to the report, further to the decision taken by Aberdeenshire Council on 8 February, 2018; and
- (2) to note the intention to empower local managers to consult with local ward Members, and users in their area, before reaching a final decision on specific proposals.