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## TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 July 2024

Present:

Councillor I Lewis (Chair)

Councillors A Ainsworth  
P Jobson  
G McManus  
G Bennett  
J Johnson

C Cooke  
KJ Williams  
K Stuart  
R Molyneux  
M Redfern

### 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed attendees and viewers to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was webcast and retained on the Council's website.

There was a one minute silence for Professor Robert Lee, former Chair of the Friends of Birkenhead Park Group.

The Chair thanked the outgoing Chair and Vice-Chair for their work on the previous committee.

### 2 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

### 3 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No interests were declared.

### 4 MINUTES

**Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 be approved and adopted as a correct record.**

The Chair advised the committee that he was awaiting legal advice in relation to minute item 69.

## **5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

One question from a member of the public was received in advance of the meeting.

Michelle Peters discussed the issue of the Mayer buildings in Bebington. Ms Peters asked the committee, as these buildings were closed, whether anything could be done to evaluate these buildings as a potential tourist facility and how members of the public might ask the council for support in applying for community asset transfers.

The Chair explained that this question had been raised at Policy and Resources Committee on the 17 July. Officers were looking at the buildings, and a deadline had been set for the 9 August to give the Mayer Community Partnership an opportunity to present a business plan. He said that if no business plan was received, or was found to be suitable, then officers would look at other options, which would give Ms Peters an opportunity to come forward. The Chair had spoken with the Assistant Director, who would be contacting Ms Peters to discuss the process.

## **6 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

There were no statements or petitions received.

## **7 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

There were no questions by Members received.

## **8 TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Chair advised that this item would be brought forward on the agenda.

The Assistant Director – Leisure, Libraries and Customer Engagement presented the report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services which provided performance information in relation to Neighbourhood Services that report to the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee. The report contained performance information relating to leisure and associated services; libraries; and museums.

The Assistant Director also informed the Committee that the Active Wirral team had been shortlisted as a finalist for the Association for Public Service Excellence Award 2024, for best service team sports, leisure and cultural services.

Members raised questions around the growth in leisure use figures and the priorities identified for particular groups, including women and girls. Members thanked officers for their work, and the Chair suggested that officers arrange for the committee to visit various leisure assets within the next few months.

**Resolved:**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

9 **APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBER CHAMPION FOR HERITAGE AND TO BIRKENHEAD PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Head of Legal Services presented the report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services. The report was to enable the committee to appoint a Member Champion for Heritage and to review the continuing need for the Birkenhead Park Advisory Committee, and appoint Members and named deputies to serve on this for the 2024/25 municipal year.

It was raised that the report asked members to give consideration to the proposal to appoint a cross-party group of Members to conduct a policy development review. A guide was attached at appendix 1 of the report.

Members discussed the membership of the cross-party group, and agreed that it be made up of all members of the Committee, with at minimum membership of the party Spokespersons.

The Chair suggested that proposed policy areas of review be emailed to the Committee Officer.

**Resolved: That**

- 1. Councillor Jerry Williams be appointed Member Champion for Heritage**
- 2. The Monitoring Officer be authorised to carry out the wishes of the Group Leaders in allocating Members to membership of the Birkenhead Park Advisory Committee and to appoint those Members in accordance with the rules on political balance, with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members; and**
- 3. The Committee appoints a cross-party group of Members, made up of the whole Committee with a minimum of the four party Spokespersons, to conduct a policy development review in accordance with the approach outlined at appendix 1 of the report.**

## 10 **BOROUGH OF CULTURE 2024**

The Assistant Director – Chief Regeneration Officer presented the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place which presented an update on Wirral's year as Liverpool City Region Borough of Culture in 2024. It was noted that this had been the second time Wirral had been the Borough of Culture for the city region. Typically, it would rotate around the region, with a grant awarded to the borough.

Members raised questions around the Wirral2024 website and its site traffic. They also raised queries as to the appendix attached to the report, which gave details of the cultural grant awards across the borough. Through discussion, it was noted that there were some inaccuracies within the appendix, and an updated version is attached to the minutes of this meeting. Members also raised questions over strategies for tourism, including tour guides and paper copies of guides for the public.

Following discussion, it was agreed that through the Member Champion for Heritage, a regular written report would be brought to committee outlining the work of the heritage team.

### **Resolved: That**

- 1. The progress in respect of Borough of Culture 2024 was noted; and**
- 2. The Director of Regeneration and Place be granted delegated authority to make any necessary changes to the programme plan for Borough of Culture agreed by the Committee in October 2023 and manage this budget accordingly.**
- 3. That the Member Champion for Heritage bring a regular written report to the committee outlining the work of the heritage team.**

## 11 **2023/24 REVENUE OUTTURN**

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhoods, which provided a summary of the year-end revenue and capital position for the 2023/24 financial year as at the end of March 2024 for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee. The report also provided Members with an overview of budget performance to enable the Committee to take ownership of the budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

Members were informed that the year-end revenue outturn for 2023/24 represented an adverse variance of £3.160m.

Members asked for assurances given the overspend of 2023/24, and whether they would be in the same position for 2024/25. Members also asked for clarification on items within the capital programme, specifically Woodchurch Sports Pavilion.

**Resolved: That**

- 1. The draft, unaudited 2023/24 outturn adverse variance of £3.160m be noted**
- 2. The progress on delivery of the 2023/24 savings programme be noted**
- 3. The transfer to and use of earmarked reserves be noted**
- 4. The draft, unaudited 2023/24 capital outturn position of £5.020m be noted.**

**12 2024/25 BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER ONE**

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhoods, which set out the financial monitoring information for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee as at Quarter 1 (30 June) of 2024/25. The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance, including progress on the delivery of the 2024/25 savings programme and a summary of reserves and balances, to support the Committee in taking ownership of the budgets and providing robust challenge and scrutiny to officers and where appropriate, Committees on the performance of those budgets.

Members were informed that for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, it was currently being forecast that they would have a balanced budget, however this needed to be seen within the wider Council budget context.

Members asked Officers for their thoughts on the current projections and what plans were in place to mitigate risks. Members also asked to compare the position at the last first quarter, with this information being circulated following the meeting. Members also raised questions over the underspends within the capital programme.

**Resolved: That**

- 1. The balanced position presented at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- 2. The 2024/25 savings programme at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- 3. The forecast level of reserves at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- 4. The capital position at the end of Quarter 1 be noted.**

## 13 BUDGET MONITORING AND BUDGET SETTING

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Director of Finance, which set out how the 2024/25 budget would be monitored through the Committee system. This would facilitate the Policy and Services Committees (the Committees) to take ownership of their specific budgets and present appropriate challenge and scrutiny of Officers on the management and performance of those budgets.

Members were informed that Appendix B of the report was tailored to the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee and its budgets. Each Policy and Services Committee would be responsible for monitoring and managing their budget, through quarterly reports and establishing a Budget Oversight Panel. The 2025/26 budget setting process would build upon the existing Medium Term Financial Plan, with an estimated £3.2m gap, and Committees would develop budget proposals through workshops focussed on reducing pressures, increasing income and finding efficiencies.

Members raised questions over the proposed savings set out within the appendix of the report. There was also a discussion around the Committee's proposed Budget Oversight Panel.

### **Resolved: That**

- 1. The process for in-year monitoring of the 2024/25 budget be noted**
- 2. The proposed approach to 2025/26 budget setting and the key assumptions to be used be noted.**

## 14 WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services, which requested that the Committee review the work programme moving into the 2024/25 municipal year.

Members requested that the following items be added to the work programme:

- Floral Pavilion Consultation, looking ahead to future years
- Future savings, libraries and Active Wirral
- Title of Floral Pavilion Consultation to be changed
- Playing Pitch Strategy update, to come to committee early in the New Year
- Public Conveniences and Changing Places updates, reports to committee

**Resolved – that the report be noted and the items relating to the Floral Pavilion Consultation, future savings, Playing Pitch Strategy and Public**

**Conveniences be amended or added to the work programme and an updated work programme be brought to future meetings.**

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## APPENDIX 1 – UKSPF BOROUGH OF CULTURE GRANT AWARDS (JULY 2024)

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
Friends of Birkenhead Park	Visualising Birkenhead Park: Past and Present	Birkenhead	<i>Project will make a significant contribution to visitor experience</i>	-	£13,710.00	£13,710.00
Grove Street Primary School	Grove Street Community Art Studio & 'Arts for All' Day	New Ferry	<i>Project will make a significant community contribution through creative activities</i>	£1,300.00	£17,781.78	£19,081.78
Wirral Poetry Festival	Wirral Poetry Festival 2024	Wirral-wide	<i>Project will further develop a community-led festival which engages communities across Wirral and will continue in future years</i>	£5,000.00	-	£5,000.00
Port Sunlight Village Trust	A Stitch in Time	Port Sunlight and local communities	<i>Project will deliver high levels of creative community engagement and unlock local heritage</i>	£3,500.00	£10,000.00	£13,500.00
471 Routes CIC	Inspire Tour	Wirral-wide	<i>Project will showcase Wirral creatives and local venues in an innovative way</i>	£3,425.00	-	£3,425.00
Liscard Community Links CIC	Liscard Sound and Vision	Liscard	<i>Project will involve multiple partners to deliver creative</i>	£5,000.00	£12,807.00	£17,807.00

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
			<i>activities for young people and build local networks</i>			
<b>Friends of Wallasey Library</b>	<b>Wirral Story Patchwork Project</b>	Wallasey	<i>Although relatively low cost, the project will have a significant impact on target groups</i>	£1,428.00	-	£1,428.00
<b>The Hive Wirral Youth Zone</b>	<b>Young People's Choirs and Musicians Performance Programme</b>	Borough-wide	<i>Project will deliver improved access to music facilities for young people from across Wirral</i>	-	£11,509.39	£11,509.39
<b>New Brighton Coastal Community Team</b>	<b>Beatles Tower Public Art Project</b>	New Brighton	<i>Project will have high visibility and is likely to increase visitor footfall and showcase local heritage</i>	£3,800.00	£5,000.00	£8,800.00
<b>StartYard</b>	<b>StartYard Venue Access Improvements</b>	Birkenhead	<i>Project will make a significant improvement to venue which is enabling inclusive and free to access exhibitions and events</i>	-	£8,000.00	£8,000.00
<b>The Caravan Gallery CIC</b>	<b>Pride of Place Project Caravan Tour</b>	Borough-wide	<i>Project will enable access to art in a unique way close to where people live</i>	£5,000.00	-	£5,000.00
<b>Voices of Wirral</b>	<b>Mind on Music</b>	Wallasey / Liscard	<i>Although relatively low</i>	£3,670.00	-	£3,670.00

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
			<i>cost, the project will have a significant impact on target groups</i>			
<b>Wirral Archaeology CIC</b>	<b>Sharing Knowledge About Wirral's Past</b>	Borough-wide	<i>Project will facilitate engagement with schools and a range of groups about Wirral's heritage</i>	-	£10,045.87	£10,045.87
<b>Rebecca Ball Bryson</b>	<b>Flotsam Poppets</b>	Birkenhead, New Brighton, Thurstaston	<i>Project will engage young people and communities on the theme of sustainability whilst developing and showcasing the work of a significant local artist</i>	£5,000.00	-	£5,000.00
<b>Friends of Warwick Park</b>	<b>90 Year Anniversary Activities</b>	Upton	<i>Project will deliver a permanent legacy for a local park in its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and the community which uses it</i>	-	£4,882.87	£4,882.87
<b>Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm</b>	<b>Accessibility Improvements</b>	Bidston	<i>Project will deliver much improved facilities at this heritage and visitor asset and open up for a wider range of visitors</i>	-	£17,280.00	£17,820.00

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>£37,123.00</b>	<b>£111,016.91</b>	<b>£148,139.91</b>