

# Arts Leisure & Culture Select Committee

A meeting of Arts Leisure & Culture Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 24th November, 2010.

**Present:** Cllr Andrew Sherris(Chair), Cllr Hilary Aggio, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Mick Womphrey

**Officers:** Richard Bradley, Chris Renahan, Reuben Kench, Neil Russell(DNS), Garry Cummings, Paul Saunders, Vanessa Shiel(RES), Sarah Whaley, Peter Mennear(L&D)

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** Cllr Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

## 1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 **Draft Minutes from the meeting dated 3rd November 2010**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the Arts Leisure and Culture Select Committee meeting dated the 3rd November 2010.

CONCLUDED the the minutes be approved.

## 3 **EIT Review of Sport, Leisure and Recreation**

The Head of Culture and Leisure presented the draft report on the EIT review of Sport, Leisure and Recreation to the Committee which had been prepared based on the conclusions reached by the Committee at the meetings of 18 October and 10 November. Members were asked to consider and comment on the draft report and its recommendations.

Members attention was drawn to the fact that the current financial situation had worsened since the beginning of this review, and in addition to this there were areas which had been identified as producing savings which had since been transferred to other EIT reviews. Members were reminded that at the previous meeting on the 10th November 2010, they had agreed not to reduce the Environmental Development Budget for 2010/2011 which would have resulted in a £15k saving. The Head of Culture and Leisure asked Members to reconsider in light of targets not being met. Members agreed to do this and understood that this would only go some of the way to achieving the savings required and also understood that more work would need to be done in addition to this by officers to reach the savings targets which had been set. This would include further work to examine the links between this review and the outcome of the Built and Natural Environment Review.

The Head of Culture and Leisure Presented the recommended options as detailed within the attached Executive Summary of the report and highlighted the following areas.

1)There was a third party interested in taking over the lease for the Castlegate Quay Water facilities.

2)Assessing Tees Active's(TAL) Trading position at this present moment was difficult due to recent activity in respect of the refurbishment of Billingham Forum and the newly opened addition to Splash making it difficult to gain a true reflection of TAL's projected income. It was agreed that there would be further assessment/evaluation by officers in approx. 12 months which would be expected to see a reduction in the subsidy given to TAL.

3)Members heard that the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services had prepared a paper in relation to the Joint Commissioning of Leisure activities and that further work would be carried out on this.

Members agreed to accept the proposals however due to the importance and high profile of this review it was also agreed comments on this report be requested from all absent members of this Committee to enable them to send their comments directly to the Scrutiny Officer and that the final approval of the report be delegated to Chair and Vice Chair.

#### **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the Environmental Development Budget be reduced.**
- 2)comments be requested from Members to comment.**
- 3) final sign off of the report be delegated to Chair and Vice Chair.**

#### **4 EIT Task and Finish review – Finance**

Members were asked to review and consider the EIT Task and Finish Review of Finance which covered the following areas:

- 1)Audit.
- 2)Risk Management.
- 3)Finance.

Following a previous meeting of the Arts Leisure and Culture Select Committee which was held on the 3 November 2010, Members were presented with reports that outlined the scope of the functions contained within the EIT Task and Finish Review of Finance. The report concluded the Task and Finish exercise. It provided members with details on performance levels, impacts on the services going forward, interaction with customers and the Council and concluded with options for future delivery including a recommended way forward.

The Head of Finance, Procurement and Performance presented Members with the details contained within the attached report and concluded with the following recommendations for the Internal Audit and Risk Management part of the review:

- a) The Internal Audit section would be reduced in size and amalgamated with the Financial Planning section.

b) There was no change to the Risk Management and Insurance function at this moment in time. A further review of the function would be undertaken in 2012 when the Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager retires.

Members then heard from the Head of Finance and Assets who presented the Committee with the details contained within the report and concluded with the following recommendations for the Finance Services part of the Review:

c) The Finance service's main focus would be strategic financial support, stewardship and direction to the Council and would rationalise routine functions which were not considered to add value. The service would be restructured and reduced in size to reflect standardised and simplified procedures, removal of functions, and the impact of changes associated with financial planning and the roles and responsibilities of the Head of Finance & Assets and Head of Finance, Procurement & Performance.

Members agreed to the proposals contained within the report and endorse their submission to Cabinet.

CONCLUDED that

- 1) the report be noted
- 2) the recommendations be endorsed.