

<b>GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 6</b>
<b>13 January 2021</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of:	Adrian Chapman, Service Director: Communities and Partnerships	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation	
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**CULTURE AND LEISURE SERVICES IN PETERBOROUGH**

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>FROM:</b> Service Director for Communities and Partnerships	<b>Deadline date:</b> N/A
<p>It is recommended that Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notes and comments on the content of the report, and suggests additional themes to explore that may support the economic growth and sustainability of our city.</li> </ol>	

**1. ORIGIN OF REPORT**

1.1 This report is presented to the committee at their request.

**2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT**

2.1 The Scrutiny Committee requested that a report is presented to them, updating them on the delivery arrangements for culture and leisure services following the ending of the council's contract with Vivacity at the end of September 2020, with a particular focus on the opportunities for supporting the economic development and growth agendas for the city.

2.2 This report is for the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1

Functions determined by Council:

- Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Economic Development including Strategic Housing and Strategic Planning

2.3 Culture and leisure support all of the council's corporate priorities, but the particular focus of this report supports the priority to drive growth, regeneration and economic development most of all. A strong and ambitious culture and leisure offer will drive inward investment, increase visitor numbers, and support the broader local economy through additional spend. A vibrant culture and leisure sector will also help to increase the availability of new jobs, and help keep our population healthy, reducing the number of lost days through sickness absence across all employers.

**3. TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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#### **4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Council entered into a Funding and Management Agreement (FMA) dated 1st May 2010 with Vivacity Cultural and Leisure Trust under which the assets, staff and responsibility for delivering cultural and leisure services transferred to Vivacity in return for grant payments made by the Council. Services included libraries, culture and heritage venues, sports centres and swimming pools.
- 4.2 In June 2020, Vivacity served 90 Days' Notice of Termination of the Agreement on the grounds that Regulations made under the Coronavirus Act 2020 constituted a force majeure which had persisted for more than 90 days preventing performance of the services. Services set out in the Agreement therefore ceased to be provided by Vivacity at the end of September 2020. It should be noted that a strong legacy has been left by Vivacity on which we can continue to build.
- 4.3 From 1 October 2020, the services formerly delivered by Vivacity under the previous FMA have been managed by City Culture Peterborough and Peterborough Ltd, as summarised below:
- City Culture Peterborough – Arts, Culture and Heritage services
  - Peterborough Ltd – Sports and Leisure services
- City Culture Peterborough is a trading company of the City College Peterborough charitable foundation, the charitable arm of City College Peterborough. City College Peterborough is the council's own adult skills service, with the Principal jointly reporting to the chair of the governing body and the Service Director for Communities and Partnerships. Peterborough Ltd is a company wholly owned by the council as a Local Authority Trading Company.
- 4.4 The arrangements set out above are overseen via an officer partnership board, which brings together the leads from City Culture Peterborough and Peterborough Ltd, with senior council officers, and it meets monthly. The Service Director for Communities and Partnerships is the Senior Responsible Officer for the development and delivery of all services and associated strategies, and he works closely with the Cabinet Member to set out the vision and strategic direction for services going forwards. Services will be formally reviewed on a quarterly basis considering effectiveness, service usage, COVID-19 compliance, and value for money. From this the council will be able to build up a full understanding of service delivery in the COVID-19 and post COVID-19 environment to assess the ways in which people will want to access services going forwards.
- 4.5 Two important strategic documents will set out the agreed vision for culture and leisure services: (i) the existing Active Lifestyle Strategy, which will be reviewed and refreshed; (ii) a new, long-term Culture Strategy, for which development work has recommenced. Both of these documents are vital to describing the aspirations we have as a city, to demonstrating the significance we place on culture and leisure to support the city's growth and cohesion, and to attracting the levels of investment from third parties and the quality of offer that Peterborough deserves.
- 4.6 The council successfully secured funding from the national Arts Council England Culture Recovery programme to support the sustainability of cultural services as a consequence of the pandemic. A grant of £493k has been secured to support the safe reopening of venues, the development of systems, tools and content to communicate with the public and build audiences, to develop a new web presence and box office booking system, to work with community groups and artists to deliver events and activities to kick-start a cultural offering, and to set up youth panels for each service to advise on making services more engaging. A new leisure services recovery grant scheme has also recently been announced, and we are in the process of preparing our submission.
- 4.7 Given the significance of culture and leisure to the city's economy, the following section describes some of the key projects now underway:

#### 4.7.1 **Flag Fen**

A major area of focus is the development of Flag Fen, particularly in the context of the internationally-significant Must Farm boats. This work closely links to the development of Peterborough Museum, and to work we are supporting with Whittlesey Town Council and Fenland District Council, to create an important visitor attraction on the King's Dyke Nature Reserve. Between these three attractions, an important 'string of pearls' will be created, attracting local, national and international visitors to our city.

#### 4.7.2 **Museum and Art Gallery**

The Museum has relaunched with an art display of local artists work, from across our local communities, to celebrate Peterborough. However, we have successfully secured funding from Western Loans Art Fund for a project called 'Romancing the City', which will bring together 60 significant Romantic and Neo-Romantic works, allowing us to display many of our own paintings which normally remain in storage. This will support Peterborough Museum being perceived by more people as a venue with inspiring collections that can provide a vibrant programme, which will help greatly towards our future sustainability.

The extension of Peterborough Museum is also a project contained within our successful Towns Fund programme, and will specifically hold the Must Farm boats described above. This will bring significant visitor numbers into Peterborough city centre, and it is our intention to take this opportunity to develop a much broader heritage visitor attraction offer as part of the development of the new Culture Strategy previously referred to.

#### 4.7.3 **Key Theatre**

We have an opportunity, through the Arts Council recovery grant, to develop at pace a new and vibrant offer for our theatre. We see the Key Theatre as an important venue in our city offering, with its strategic central location and set alongside the embankment where there is huge potential for outdoor events to be held and to collaborate with the new university. We are also working collaboratively with both the Cresset and the New Theatre to ensure that we do not compete unnecessarily for the same audiences, but instead create a diversified offer to attract visitors from both within and outside our city.

#### 4.7.4 **Libraries**

The successful Towns Fund bid also includes a project to create a new Central Library and cultural hub in the former TK Maxx building on Bridge Street. This will enable a full relaunch of our library service, from both the new building but also across the city, with the service modernised and focussed on a far broader offer than available at present. Of particular focus will be how we can best use our libraries to support economic growth, skills development, and entrepreneurship.

#### 4.7.5 **New Regional Pool Development**

Following an approach from the Peterborough Investment Partnership, the Council jointly funded a feasibility exercise to inform its consideration of options for the replacement of the existing Regional Pool. Specialist leisure sector consultants, SLC, produced the report and looked at a variety of potential sites for a new Pool. They carried out an appraisal of the sites comparing these with the option of retaining and renovating the existing Regional Pool. The consultants concluded that a new Pool and Leisure Centre offered better value than renovating the existing Pool which opened in 1976 and would require major investment over the next decade to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Of the locations reviewed by the consultants it was concluded that the Pleasure Fair Meadow Car Park site, owned by the PiP, offered a suitable location for a new Pool and Leisure complex. Following the initial feasibility study, the PiP has undertaken detailed business case development work to investigate the costs and benefits of developing a Pool at Pleasure Fair Meadow whilst also retaining the bulk of car parking provision. The PiP has proposed to commission, develop and construct a new facility at Pleasure Fair Meadows and to sell the completed facility to the Council.

#### 4.7.6 **Werrington Sports Centre and Library**

A brief and specification are being agreed currently to confirm the detail required by leisure consultants ready to start work on the full feasibility for new leisure and library provision in Werrington. This will confirm the best location for the facility following feedback from Sport England that confirmed a lack of leisure facilities within this area and the city as whole. The facility mix will include as a minimum a six lane, twenty five metre pool, a one hundred station fitness studio, two class studios, a cafe and a Library area. The development will go ahead as soon as suitable funding has been identified.

#### 4.7.7 **Football Foundation Local Football Facility Plans**

This project is an opportunity for grant funding to be used for grass roots football, increasing participation through improvements across the city. A formal development plan has now been signed off by the council, the Football Association and the Football Foundation, with agreement for up to 50% of the available funding now able to be allocated for the main projects. There are currently seventeen priority projects for potential investment within Peterborough, and six of these are being actively pursued currently.

4.8 As can be seen, work has been developed at pace to seize the opportunities available to us to significantly scale-up our culture and leisure strategy and offer, with the intended consequence of positively impacting on Peterborough's economy. We need our offer to be fit for purpose, relevant and accessible to all, supporting our existing businesses and residents, but also attracting visitors from outside the city. We also need to show potential investors and future residents that Peterborough has a varied and exciting set of opportunities that recognise and celebrate all that is good about Peterborough.

### 5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The development of both the refresh of the Active Lifestyles Strategy and the new Culture Strategy will include extensive consultation with councillors, residents, businesses, community organisations, practitioners, clubs and societies.

### 6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

6.1 It is anticipated that the Committee will be reassured that there is sufficient focus being placed on the economic benefits to the work underway following the termination of the contract between Vivacity and the Council.

### 7. **REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 It is vital that, following a period of intense and rapid change, and in the context of the ongoing pandemic and economic uncertainty, appropriate rigour is being applied to important workstreams that will help further strengthen our economy and society.

### 8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 Options for the future delivery arrangements for culture and leisure services will be considered during 2021, as per the original decision to place these services with Peterborough Ltd and City Culture Peterborough.

### 9. **IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Financial Implications**

9.1 The Council are working with the existing Vivacity Trustees, Nene Park Trust and a set of External Auditors to close off leisure transactions as at the 30<sup>th</sup> of September and formally transfer assets to the ongoing bodies. Both Peterborough Limited and City Culture Peterborough are providing monthly accounts from November on the ongoing running costs of both services which are incorporated in the Council's overall monitoring position.

As referenced in Sections 4.6 and 4.7, the Council and its Partners are applying for available funding from both the Arts Council England Culture Recovery programme, the Sports England Recovery programme and also the Towns fund to support these services.

### **Legal Implications**

9.2 Not applicable.

### **Equalities Implications**

9.3 The work to refresh the Active Lifestyles Strategy and develop the new Culture Strategy will ensure that culture and leisure services are available to all, regardless of location or circumstance.

### **Rural Implications**

9.4 The work to refresh the Active Lifestyles Strategy and develop the new Culture Strategy will ensure that culture and leisure services are available to all, regardless of location or circumstance. The specific Werrington-based project will provide important additional facilities that are more accessible to rural communities to the north and west of the city.

9.5 At this stage, the report sets out a progress update on work underway. As each specific aspect of this report develops in more detail, the questions above will need to be re-examined to ensure maximum take-up of all relevant opportunities.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None.

## **11. APPENDICES**

11.1 None.

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