

ADULTS & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
2 MARCH 2021	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Adrian Chapman, Service Director : Communities & Partnerships	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Recreation	
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CULTURE AND LEISURE SERVICES, INCORPORATING PETERBOROUGH CULTURAL STRATEGY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Service Director	Deadline date: NA
<p>It is recommended that Adults & Communities Scrutiny :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scrutinise the current approach being taken by Peterborough Ltd and City Culture Peterborough 2. Endorse the approach set out in section 4.2 to refresh the Active Lifestyles Strategy, including agreeing its involvement in its development, and agreeing to receive formal reports on its progress throughout the next municipal year 3. Comment on the Vision and Values document which will underpin the emerging Cultural Strategy, as a formal part of the consultation process 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is presented at the request of the Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 This report is provided at the request of the Committee.

2.2 This report is for the Adult & Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference Part 3, Section 4 - Overview Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1: Functions determined by Council:

6. Libraries, Arts and Museums

2.3 Culture and leisure services, and their development, contribute to all aspects of Peterborough life – for residents, employers, visitors and partner agencies. The work set out in this report therefore contributes directly to all corporate priorities.

3. TIMESCALES

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

4.1 Following the arrangements put in place by the council last year, Peterborough Ltd and City Culture Peterborough have continued to operate leisure and Culture services respectively since. This committee have received regular progress reports during this time. To ensure the committee remains fully updated, and feels able to scrutinise the approaches being taken, the following sections provide more up to date information.

4.1.1 Peterborough Ltd

- i. The impacts of COVID-19 continue to affect the planning and delivery of services. At time of writing, leisure venues remain closed and further government guidance is awaited on reopening and any restrictions that may be applied. With the majority of employees either furloughed or flexi furloughed, the remaining core team are carrying out essential duties to ensure the business is protected, that facilities remain compliant, that communication with staff and customers remains ongoing, and supplier management is robust, whilst tentatively preparing for the re-mobilisation of services when able.
- ii. Whilst buildings are closed, it is essential that they remain fully compliant and meet all statutory requirements in readiness for eventual re-opening to the public. All venues are being regularly visited with security, mechanical and electrical inspections being conducted and access provided for contractors to conduct statutory testing (e.g. fire suppression systems, legionella testing etc). With buildings closed it has provided an opportunity to carry out maintenance and repair work that would otherwise be difficult to complete whilst they remain operational.
- iii. In readiness for the summer season, works have started to re-commission and prepare the Lido for opening as soon as we are able to. The Lido takes several weeks to prepare and hasn't operated since 2019 so starting early means the building, plant and equipment can be thoroughly inspected and serviced in good time for reopening. The Lido is a well-known landmark and cherished community facility which has undoubtedly been missed by many people. It is hoped that subject to the Government reducing restrictions a full season of uninterrupted activity will be possible.
- iv. Pre and post school care to children of key workers at Hampton Library and Leisure Centre has continued to be provided. This has enabled key workers whose children attend the Hampton Primary School to continue working during this challenging period.
- v. In addition, the council is working with Peterborough Ltd to develop children's holiday clubs in support of the Holiday Activities and Food programme which the council has successfully been awarded funding to support. This citywide initiative, which will also be supported by other organisations, will provide children in receipt of free school meals with access to healthy food, physical activities, enrichment activities and nutritional education for both children and parents. The scheme will be free of charge for qualifying children and operate at a number of venues during the Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021 school holidays.
- vi. With services currently suspended, the website includes the Vivacity at Home pages which provide customers and residents with a wide range of activities they can participate in from home. For example, members of the team have been working hard to encourage people to banish the winter blues by working out with Vivacity at Home. With the gyms and leisure centres closed free, live-streamed and on-demand home exercise classes for all Peterborough residents are being offered. There is a specially designed programme of classes from instructors including Yoga, Pilates, Ab Blast, Chair Based Pilates, Les Mills Cardio-Vascular Circuits, and Bums and Tums. The classes are free for all to take part in and you don't need to be a Vivacity member to access them. They are a great resource that enables Peterborough Ltd to keep in touch with customers and residents whilst providing them with an opportunity to keep active during lockdown. This offer has been warmly received and drawn positive customer feedback. These pages have also been shared by other organisations providing extensive reach to residents and others visiting the website. In a post COVID world this offer will continue to be provided due to its popularity and ability to reach people who prefer to exercise from home.
- vii. Whilst the majority of Vivacity employees have been furloughed or flexi furloughed since March 2020, in excess of 20 frontline employees have been trained to carry out refuse loader duties to support Aragon colleagues. This has been invaluable in recent weeks when regular waste management employees have either been on sick leave, shielding or self-isolating. The staff have been regularly called on to work with Aragon colleagues to help ensure

household waste collections have continued with minimal disruption to residents. This has also significantly assisted Vivacity's wider integration into Peterborough Limited and supported the ethos of cross service working which has benefitted residents.

- viii. Finally, Vivacity and Peterborough Limited colleagues have worked closely with the council in supporting the preparation of our funding bid to the National Leisure Recovery Fund which is being administered by Sport England. At the time of writing the outcome of the bid is awaited, but if successful will make a welcome financial contribution towards the deficit created following the extended disruption to leisure services since March 2020.

4.1.2 **City Culture Peterborough**

- i. City Culture Peterborough are currently delivering to the Arts Council Culture Recovery Fund plan, using the funding we were awarded towards the end of last year. This plan includes the development of a new service delivery model, a service marketing plan and undertaking consultation to align museum provision to local need. The plan is also focussed on moving delivery online with local creative practitioners and partners. We have now also submitted an application to round two of this funding, and await a decision.
- ii. Following the announcement of the Tier 4 'Stay at Home' Alert Level in December, the reluctant decision was made to cancel the reopening event at Flag Fen (the Festive Yule Bonfire), which was due to take place on 21st December. However, work has continued unabated on Flag Fen's future strategy and long-term plans, with an advisory board now in place that will give knowledge and expertise to the plans. We plan to re-open Flag Fen as soon as we are able.
- iii. The Museum is currently closed in line with Government guidance. However, the team are working remotely delivering on the objectives of the Culture Recovery Fund alongside staff who continue to carry out essential maintenance work at both the Museum and Flag Fen, the conservation of the Must Farm log boats, and condition checking the collections and monitoring the environmental conditions in the Museum stores and galleries.
- iv. The Key Theatre re-opened in November with a programme in line with Government guidelines. Sadly, shows and the wider programme were abruptly cancelled on 20 December as Peterborough was moved to the higher tier. Staff though are gradually being brought back in to work, and during this time an activity plan has been developed to support vulnerable or excluded groups in the city. A new theatre box office system has also been procured, which will go live in April 2021. The new system, provided by operator Ticket Solve, is a market leader and will help the Theatre to realise existing and new growth opportunities.
- v. With the exception of Central library, libraries that were open prior to the current lockdown have had to close. Central Library remains open for the services allowed under lockdown guidelines, specifically to provide access to public computers, a Select and Collect book service, and Visa biometrics services. The public can still access e-books, e-audiobooks and e-magazines, which are proving very popular. At time of writing we are working with City Culture Peterborough on a roll-out plan to re-open further libraries for a 'select and collect' service and public computer access alongside plans to restart a safe mobile library service.

4.2 **Active Lifestyles Strategy**

- 4.2.1 The current Active Lifestyles Strategy was approved by Cabinet in 2019, and is attached at appendix 1. As can be seen, the Strategy was developed in close partnership with a wide range of partner organisations, including those with specialist knowledge of sports and leisure, economic development, and health and wellbeing. Although adopted by the council, the strategy is a strategy for the city as a whole, and the partnership created to develop the strategy continues to actively exist today.

- 4.2.2 The Strategy has provided the framework for coordinated activity to be delivered across Peterborough across all four of its themes: Active Living, Active Education, Active Recreation, and Active Sport. However, there is still much to do to support our residents and communities to adopt an active lifestyle, with its resultant benefits linked to improved physical and emotional health and wellbeing, a more resilient economy, improved educational attainment, and an even

more cohesive and integrated society. The pandemic has shone an even brighter light on the need to create the right opportunities in safe and accessible ways to address inactivity.

- 4.2.3 Government has recognised the need to support organisations involved in creating active lifestyles opportunities, through for example its Leisure Recovery Fund programme previously referred to, and through its support for Sport England’s funding programmes (along with the National Lottery). We anticipate a new long term funding strategy to emerge later this year from Sport England in response to the changing needs and dynamics of our communities.
- 4.2.4 With all of this in mind, and taking full advantage of the opportunities we have currently to work with Peterborough Ltd, we are scoping out the work needed to refresh the current Active Lifestyles Strategy. Although it was envisaged to remain current until 2023, the reality is that the pandemic will inevitably lead to different priorities for residents, communities and service providers, and so a refresh of the strategy seems appropriate. Critically, it will enable us to develop our strategy aligned to the future funding intentions of Sport England.
- 4.2.5 The committee is asked to endorse this approach, consider its involvement in the development of the refreshed strategy, and agree to receive formal reports on its progress throughout the new municipal year.

4.3 **Peterborough Culture Strategy**

- 4.3.1 The pandemic has touched all aspects of life, most obviously physical and mental health, public confidence and the economy. As Peterborough and the country start to recover from these impacts, there is an opportunity to not just go back to how things were before, but to build back, better. The cultural landscape within Peterborough can play an essential role in the recovery, driving new skills and employment, creating community cohesion and integration, empowering and engaging communities and helping to grow the local and national reputation for Peterborough as a destination city for tourism.
- 4.3.2 Whilst the former Vivacity services form a part of the cultural landscape within Peterborough, there are many other organisations locally that play a key role in the broader cultural offer. Historically, many of the organisations have worked in silos, developing and delivering their own offer and at times, competing against one another for business or for funding. There has been a lack of overall direction and collective vision of how different organisations can work together for the greater good.
- 4.3.3 The development therefore of the new, ambitious, long term Peterborough Culture Strategy is vital in building confidence, providing opportunities, and growing our economy. The Strategy is being co-produced with a group of partners including Arts Council England, City Culture Peterborough, Nene Park Trust, Metal, Jumped Up Theatre, and Festival Bridge, supported via a wider Cultural Forum.
- 4.3.4 We are working hard with our partners to create a flexible and dynamic strategy by the start of the new municipal year, most likely predominantly a digital strategy that can flex and adapt according to need. An important milestone in this process was the creation of a Vision and Values document, which is included at appendix 2. This documents forms the framework for wider consultation, including with this scrutiny committee, and eventually the creation of the strategy itself.
- 4.3.5 Officers will present the detail of the Vision and Values document in the committee meeting itself in order to capture the initial views of Members. We would also request that the Committee agrees to receive the final draft strategy later in the year ahead of it being recommended for approval, subject to committee’s agreement, to Cabinet.

5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Consultation on the emerging Culture Strategy will be widespread and engaging. Cultural partners are already very engaged via the Cultural Forum, and partners forming the co-

production group are ensuring as many views as possible are incorporated. Much of this consultation has been via a public survey, the details of which are at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CL22LJR>.

Similarly, the consultation on the Active Lifestyles Strategy refresh will follow a similar pattern.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 The views of the committee are vital in informing the development of the Culture Strategy, as well as in scrutinising the ways in which culture and leisure services are being delivered in Peterborough.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report will help ensure appropriate scrutiny is applied to current service provision, ensure that the diverse voice of elected councillors is reflected in the Culture Strategy development, and pave the way to bring forward a refresh of the Active Lifestyles Strategy.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 N/A

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 All services currently delivered by Peterborough Ltd and City Culture Peterborough are provided within pre-agreed budgets.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 N/A

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 It is envisaged that the Culture Strategy, when adopted, will ensure access to arts, culture and heritage for our whole population, as well as that provision being reflective of the profile of Peterborough's communities.

Rural Implications

- 9.4 It is envisaged that the Culture Strategy, when adopted, will ensure access to arts, culture and heritage for our whole population, as well as that provision being reflective of the profile of Peterborough's communities.

Carbon Impact Assessment

- 9.5 *Summarise here the results of your completed Carbon Impact Assessment Form (form to be submitted to the Transport and Environment Team).*

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 Appendix 1 – Current Active Lifestyles Strategy
Appendix 2 – Culture Strategy Vision and Values document

