

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 16 JANUARY 2007

LEISURE AND MUSEUMS UNIT STRATEGY 2007 – 2012

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To review the previous Leisure Strategy and recommend a draft replacement for wider consultation, before formal adoption by the Council in the spring.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2002 the City Council adopted its first Leisure Strategy, designed to guide investment and operations in the areas of Leisure and Museums for five years. This document has now come to the end of its life, and a draft replacement has been written which aims to take those services through the next five years.

3. THE FIRST STRATEGY

- 3.1 This was begun by an outside consultancy as a sport and recreation strategy. In the middle of the project the Leisure and Museums Units were combined to form a single unit, and the strategy expanded to try and address this. It was completed in-house because the consultancy had clear difficulties in making it unique to the City Council.
- 3.2 It was too big, and contained too many aspirations which the City Council was not able to influence, but nevertheless it has proved effective in directing the work of the Unit over the 5 years of its life. The preamble to the new document reviews its successes and sets out some of the lessons learned from it.

4. THE NEW STRATEGY

- 4.1 The draft strategy is available on the intranet with a hard copy in the Members' Room. The two principal changes in approach for the new strategy are that it is linked more explicitly to the work of the Leisure and Museums Unit, and that it concentrates on outcomes more than outputs. The aim is to link the strategy directly to the Exeter Vision, primarily by using the Government's Shared Priorities as a framework, in which the four main strands of the Unit's work – Play, Physical Activity, Museums and Canal and Countryside – can operate. There are seven Shared Priorities, of which five lend themselves to cultural services. The shorthand descriptions of those five are Learning, Communities, Health, Environment and the Quality of Life. The new strategy shows how the Unit can contribute to each of those.
- 4.2 There are therefore very few precise descriptions of projects or pieces of work, as were found in the old strategy, with a much greater concentration on the

“why” as opposed to the “how”. The latter will be found in the service plans prepared each year by the three sections of the Unit (Leisure, Museums and Community Outreach) which will also replace the detailed Action Plan which was the previous strategy’s implementation plan. The Unit will continue to report on the progress of the strategy and of the service plans to Scrutiny Committee Community each year as before.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 If this draft is approved it will be circulated to users and partners in the city, the county and the region before coming back to the Committee in June in amended form for formal adoption. There will be further opportunities for discussion and development at that point.

6. RECOMMENDED

- 1) that the Committee notes the new draft Strategy and comments on its contents prior to circulation for public comment.

HEAD OF LEISURE AND MUSEUMS

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COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None