



# Culture and Leisure Sub Committee

**North Tyneside Council**

Monday, 16 March 2020

**Tuesday, 24 March 2020** Room1 0.01, Ground Floor, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, NE27 0BY commencing at 6.00 pm.

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Apologies for Absence</b>	
To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.	
<b>2. Substitute Members</b>	
To be notified of the appointment of any Substitute Members	
<b>3. To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted</b>	
You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.	
You are also invited to disclose any dispensation in relation to any registerable and/or non-registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda.	
Please complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting.	
<b>4. Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 8</b>
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020.	
<b>5. An Ambition for North Tyneside</b>	<b>9 - 10</b>
To receive a report which provides an overview of North Tyneside Council's Regeneration Strategy and its interface with Culture and Leisure.	

Members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and receive information about it. North Tyneside Council wants to make it easier for you to get hold of the information you need. We are able to provide our documents in alternative formats including Braille, audiotape, large print and alternative languages.

**Agenda  
Item**

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6. **Operating Agreement for the Playhouse, Whitley Bay**

**11 - 12**

To receive a report which summarises the decisions taken by Cabinet relating to the Operating Agreement with SMG Europe (now ASM Global) for the continued delivery of services at the Playhouse, Whitley Bay.

**Circulation overleaf ...**

## **Members of the Culture and Leisure Sub Committee**

Councillor Jim Allan  
Councillor Karen Clark  
Councillor Cath Davis  
Councillor Karen Lee  
Councillor Pam McIntyre  
Councillor Pat Oliver

Councillor Linda Bell  
Councillor Julie Cruddas  
Councillor Joe Kirwin  
Councillor Maureen Madden  
Councillor Andy Newman  
Councillor Steven Phillips

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## Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee

28 January 2020

Present: Councillor C Davis (Chair)  
Councillors J Allan, L Bell, K A Clark, J Cruddas, J Kirwin,  
M Madden, P McIntyre, A Newman, P Oliver and S Phillips

Apologies: Councillor K Lee

### **C&L12/20 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members reported.

### **C&L13/20 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

### **C&L14/20 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 October 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **C&L15/20 North Tyneside Council Play Site Strategy 2020-2030**

The Sub-Committee received a report which introduced the North Tyneside Council Draft Play Site Strategy 2020-2030, was presented by officers from the Local Environment and Horticultural and Parks Services.

Play was an essential part of every child's life and contributed to their development, mental and physical health, wellbeing and fitness. The purpose of the Play Site Strategy was to set out the approach for the management and investment of play sites.

The Play Site Strategy supported the Authority's 'Our North Tyneside Plan' priorities, providing a great place to live, work and visit, and the 'Green Space Strategy 2015'. Importantly, the strategy sets out priorities for ongoing play site investment and provision, with the purpose of providing communities in North Tyneside with a network of high-quality play areas. North Tyneside Council currently provided 57 outdoor play facilities across the borough. Included within the play facilities were traditional play areas, wheeled sports areas, multi-use games areas, teen shelters, water play sites and the Adventure Playground located in Shiremoor. Play site categories and standards were based on nationally recognised guidelines with five objectives; Quantity, Quality, Accessibility, Safety and inspections of play sites, and Management, as set out in the strategy.

In 2007, North Tyneside Council received £5.5m of funding to improve play equipment across the borough bringing it up to national standards. The then Play Partnership which consisted of the voluntary and community sector, and North Tyneside Council, had undertaken extensive participation and consultation activities throughout 2005 and 2006. Local provision was examined in detail and a variety of initiatives were undertaken with children and young people across the Borough. The initiatives included mapping and a quality audit of local provision, along with the hosting of focus groups including children, carers and young people. Since the study there had been significant improvements in play sites.

The previous Play Strategy 'Things to do, places to hang out' ensured that North Tyneside Council, and its partners through the Play Partnership, worked toward the Authority's key priority reflected in the Council Plan and the then Children and Young People's Plan. This included providing a whole range of opportunities for personal and social development, recreational and cultural activity, creative self-expression and independent play. The outcomes that were achieved relevant to play sites were described in the 2020-2030 draft strategy.

Since the initial strategy was adopted by the Authority, many improvements and other changes had taken place. The main changes to occur were:

- Many sites had been improved raising standards and increasing accessibility and quality;
- Previous investments had enabled the Authority to deliver many of the 2007 Strategy actions points, resulting in larger and better equipped play sites;
- Capital funding opportunities had changed: S106 residential sites, as other funding reduced; and
- In 2015, the Authority adopted the Green Space Strategy, which underlined the importance of play in a child's development. The strategy also stated the current approach in setting standards for the provision of equipped play based on quality, quantity and accessibility.

The Authority's current play site provision included 56 outdoor play facilities and 1 staffed Adventure Playground located in Shiremoor. Included within outdoor facilities were traditional play areas; 7 wheeled sports areas (skate parks and a BMX pump track); 18 multi use games areas; 7 teen shelters and 3 water play sites. Shiremoor Adventure Playground was unique in its play offer and was the only staffed Adventure Playground in the North-East of England. It was built with Play Pathfinder funding in 2010 and its aim was to attract visitors from across the whole borough.

North Tyneside had developed categories for its play facilities based on the nationally recognised guidelines of the 6 Acre Standard which was created by Fields in Trust (FIT), formerly the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) as detailed in Appendix 1 of the draft strategy. Each category gives a catchment area for individual play sites, which was illustrated in the North Tyneside Play Site Coverage map at Appendix 2. The catchment area increases based on the facilities offered, recognising that people would travel further to use larger better equipped sites. A detailed breakdown of individual play sites and their designation was provided in the North Tyneside Play Area Categories table at Appendix 3. North Tyneside's coverage was now regarded as good with only a few gaps in play provision remaining.

In order to meet the high standards of play site provision across the borough an Action Plan was included in the draft play site strategy to achieve those standards.

The sub-committee was invited to put forward comments on the draft Strategy as part of the engagement and consultation process. These included the following comments with responses (*italics*) from officers, as appropriate: -

- Play sites across the borough that were currently in poor repair and plans for their maintenance: *A five-year plan had been developed by the play site service, which identified those sites which require investment. It was proposed that sites would receive investment through a combination of the play site maintenance budget, as part of any future funding opportunities and through section 106 agreements, where appropriate.*

- Anti-social behaviour in terms of teens to mitigate issues arising: *Youth shelters were provided in some play areas and parks across the borough. The Authority worked closely with the Police to tackle any ASB.*
- Developers contributions to locate land for future use and to ensure that quality standards were met: *The Authority's Play Site Team worked closely with Planning in relation to any new play site provision identified as part of a new development. The team influenced as much as possible, the standard and specification of the play sites to be developed.*
- Sites on the map awaiting development e.g. Merlin Place, Longbenton: *The Authority was currently involved in consultation with the community in this area and other sites across the borough.*
- Determining which play sites were needed in an area in relation to young children e.g. Newcastle Wall in Killingworth when parking at the lakes as well as anti-social behaviour from those kids from the area: *The Play Site Strategy identified gaps in provision across the borough. In relation to this area, Killingworth Lakeside play site was the nearest site.*
- The option to use school sites rather than community play sites: Ofsted had produced guidelines on evening use of school sites to protect the schools interests e.g. dog walkers/anti-social behaviour: *The Authority had explored this in the past but there had been some reluctance from schools, due to the potential to attract anti-social behaviour issues on their site. However, the Authority would continue to look at any future opportunities for accessing play sites in school grounds, where appropriate.*
- Funding for open space use e.g. Castle Park which was a topic for building houses and the play site strategy: *S106 agreement funding had been requested for this area and other areas across the borough.*
- 'Friends of Groups' support in fund raising and awareness in terms of community requirements: *The Authority worked with a number of friends of groups across the borough and welcomed their positive involvement, contributions and support.*
- Asset transfers in relation to community play park facilities: *It was explained that there hadn't been much interest from communities to take on responsibility for play sites, due to the health and safety requirements associated with inspecting and managing the sites.*
- Funding opportunities for additional smaller play sites in the borough e.g. St Mary's: *The Play Site Strategy had identified gaps in provision along the coast particularly where there were high levels of footfall, which included the area next to St Mary's Lighthouse. This location would be considered as part of any future funding opportunities for play site provision.*
- Sport England funding opportunities e.g. Churchill Playing Fields: *Officers were in discussions with Sport England regarding potential funding opportunities for appropriate locations across the borough.*
- The Play Site Strategy for North Tyneside Council should be integral to the needs of its users and the Authority needed to be creative in securing future funding for play site development.

The Chair, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, thanked officers for their presentation and welcomed the opportunity to comment on the draft North Tyneside Council Play Site Strategy.

**Agreed** that the report and presentation on the draft North Tyneside Council Play Site Strategy 2020-2030 be noted; and the comments from the sub-committee on the approach to the management and investment of play sites be received.

**C&L16/20 Chair's announcement**

In response to a member's request for further information regarding the Sub-Committee's work programme, the Chair commented that further to the recent Scrutiny Chairs and Deputies meeting and pre-agenda discussions, Members were encouraged to put forward additional items not already identified and, if appropriate, a particular topic for investigation (study group) for her attention via the Democratic Services Officer.

## Meeting: Culture and Leisure Sub Committee

**Date: 24 March 2020**

**Title: An Ambition for North Tyneside**

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**Author: Graham Sword**

Tel: 0191 643 6421

**Service: Regeneration and Economic Development**

**Wards affected: All**

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

To provide the Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Sub Committee with an overview of North Tyneside Council's Regeneration Strategy and its interface with Culture and Leisure

### **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Culture and Leisure Sub Committee note the contents of the report.

### **3. Details**

The Council's Regeneration Strategy 'An Ambition for North Tyneside' was approved by Cabinet in November 2018. This sets out what has been achieved to date, what is happening at the moment and what will happen in the future, if and when funding becomes available. The report sets out a series of priority projects for the next 10-15 years. It reports how the Regeneration Strategy and its proposed projects will contribute towards the cultural and leisure offer of North Tyneside.

The Council's culture and leisure provision accounts for over 3 million visits by members of the public over the course of a year. This includes visits to the range of indoor and outdoor sports facility provision; involvement in the Active North Tyneside programme; engagement with libraries and Customer First Centres; visits to museums and St. Mary's Lighthouse; and audience figures for Playhouse, Whitley Bay. In addition, the wide range of events across the Council's summer and winter programmes engage both residents and visitors, helping to sustain the tourism economy, which supports local business and helps generate jobs in the Borough. These services help shape the Borough's unique sense of place and make North Tyneside a great place to live, work and visit.

The following presentation follows the format of 'Ambition for North Tyneside' providing Members with a review of cultural and leisure related physical regeneration projects that have been delivered by the council and partners throughout the borough over a number of years.

It reports on current cultural and leisure related physical regeneration projects, including developing a long term masterplan for Segedunum, investment in a new 4G pitch at

Amberley, refurbish and re-set The Wooden Dolly in Northumberland Square and further investment in Palmersville Sports Facility,

It reports on projects that are being developed at the moment and what could be delivered; if and when funding becomes available, including lighting Collingwood Monument and The Priory, working options to manage and appropriately develop St Mary's Island and further development of Killingworth Lake.

#### **4. Background Information**

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [Our North Tyneside Plan 2020 - 2024 \(Council Plan\)](#)
- (2) [Cabinet Report 25 November 2019 'Ambition for North Tyneside'](#)
- (3) [Cabinet Report 1 April 2019 'An Ambition for North Tyneside'](#)
- (4) [Cabinet Report 26 November 2018 'An Ambition for North Tyneside'](#)
- (5) [A Strategy for Arts Development in North Tyneside 2014-2021](#)
- (6) [A Heritage Strategy for North Tyneside 2014-2021](#)
- (7) [Tourism Strategy 2014-21](#)

**Meeting:** Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee

**Date:** 24 March 2020

**Title:** Operating Agreement for the Playhouse, Whitley Bay

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**Author:** Steve Bishop, Senior Manager      Tel: 0191 6437410  
Cultural Services

**Service:** Environment Housing and Leisure

**Wards affected:** All

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## 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee, with a summary of decisions taken by Cabinet relating to the Operating Agreement with SMG Europe (now ASM Global) for the continued delivery of services at the Playhouse, Whitley Bay.

## 2. Recommendations

The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information in the report.

## 3. Details

### Background

As part of the Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee work programme 2018/19, Members agreed to carry out a review of the Operating Agreement with SMG Europe relating to the Playhouse, Whitley Bay, and specifically to consider the break point of the Agreement by either party prior to the deadline for notice to expire on the 31 December 2019.

The review of the Operating Agreement was to assess if the Authority and its residents were receiving the specified service and to gain a clearer understanding of the terms of the agreement and its operation. Non-executive Members were invited to be part of the sub-group, with six taking up the invitation. A series of evidence gathering meetings with officers of the Council and SMG Europe Holdings Ltd were then undertaken.

At its meeting on 29 January 2019 the Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure advised the Sub-Committee that, following a discussion with the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet members, they agreed that contract decisions, such as that relating to SMG Europe and the Playhouse, should be a key decision for Cabinet. In relation to such decisions a new process had been agreed. Reports would be submitted to Cabinet following discussion at Strategic Property Group, where there were property implications associated with any contract arrangements. Consistent with wider contract considerations, Cabinet would also have the chance to consider issues relating to its policies on employment, environmental issues and community engagement.

### **3.2 Cabinet decision**

At its meeting on 1 April 2019 Cabinet received a report setting out options in respect of the Operating Agreement with SMG Holdings Ltd, agreed in 2009, to run the facility at Playhouse, Whitley Bay.

Prior to discussing the report Cabinet resolved that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and having applied a public interest test as defined in Part 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

The Operating Agreement entered into was for a period of 15 years from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2024. The Agreement contained an option for either party to give notice to break the Agreement at the five year and ten-year points by either party giving to the other not less than 9 months' notice of their intention to break the Agreement. Therefore, a decision in writing to break the contract, should either party choose to do so, would have been required by 31 March 2019.

SMG Europe had agreed to vary the notice period under the Agreement by one month whilst retaining the 9 months' notice period, meaning that written notice would be required by 30 April 2019. The consequential effect of this was, if notice was given the Agreement would come to an end on 31 January 2020.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: to accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, or alternatively, to not approve the recommendations.

Cabinet resolved that:-

- (1) it be agreed to retain the existing Operating Agreement with SMG Europe until the contract expires on 31st December 2024; and
- (2) approval be given to enter into a Deed of Variation to the existing Operating Agreement, as set out in the report.

In coming to its decisions Cabinet reasoned that in financial terms the management of the Playhouse delivers a professional operation, at relatively low cost to the Authority, while enhancing the Authority's reputation both in terms of tourism and arts development, consistent with its own strategy objectives.

Comparative data with other Authorities in the region does not suggest that other models provide a more efficient return for resources invested. The Playhouse enjoys a good reputation both locally and regionally. SMG Europe is able to bring the benefits of being linked into an international network of artists and performers to a local audience.

This decision modifies the existing Agreement to minimise the financial risk to the Authority, while retaining an acceptable level of profit share in relation to the operation of the Playhouse.

### **3.3 Timetable**

Following Cabinet's decision, the modified Operating Agreement came into effect on 1 January 2020, in effect Year 11 of the substantive Agreement, and will remain operational until 31 December 2024.