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MEETING	DECISION SESSION - CABINET MEMBER FOR CITY STRATEGY
DATE	5 JANUARY 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR MERRETT (CABINET MEMBER)

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### **31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. Councillor Merrett declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 – “City Strategy Capital Programme” in so far as it referred to cycling issues, as a member of the York Cycle Campaign and as an honorary member of the Cycling Touring Club.

### **32. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Decision Session – Cabinet Member for City Strategy, held on 1 December 2011, be approved and signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

### **33. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/OTHER SPEAKERS**

It was reported that there were no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme.

The Cabinet Member granted a request to speak from Councillor Healey who spoke on issues in respect of agenda item 6 – “Bus Improvement Study”. Councillor Healey urged caution if there was to be a move towards a quality contract scheme in which the Council would take a leading role in terms of decisions on routes etc. He stated that he would welcome more bus contractors rather than less and suggested that, because of their experience and expertise, they would be better placed than the Council to make commercial decisions.

Councillor Healey stated that it was important that when decisions were taken they were based on the outcomes that the Council would want to have achieved by 2015.

#### **34. AIR QUALITY UPDATE**

The Cabinet Member considered a report that provided an update on the outcome of the recent Air Quality Support Grant (AQSG) applications made to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The report gave an overview of the planned expenditure of the AQSG and provided an update on local air quality management in York and on progress with the Low Emission Strategy (LES).

Officers stated that, since the report had been published, further grant funding of £19,500 had been awarded in respect of the Eco-Stars Fleet Recognition Scheme.

Referring to paragraph 34 of the report, the Cabinet Member requested that officers make arrangements for the report on Low Emission Strategy to be presented at the Cabinet meeting on 6 March 2012 rather than 3 April 2012 if this was possible.<sup>1</sup>

The Cabinet Member thanked officers for the work that they had carried out.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted and its contents endorsed.

**REASON:** DEFRA's AQSG programme is the most appropriate way of funding the continuation of LAQM in the city and projects in relation to the council's Low Emission Strategy. Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) is a statutory undertaking that contributes towards the corporate priorities on protecting the environment and protecting vulnerable people.

#### Action Required

1. Investigate possibility of bringing forward the report and amend Forward Plan accordingly MS

**35. CITY STRATEGY CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2011/12 MONITOR 2**

The Cabinet Member considered a report that set out progress to date on schemes in the 2011/12 City Strategy Capital Programme, including budget spend to the end of November 2011. The report also proposed adjustments to scheme allocations to align with the latest cost estimates and delivery projections. It was proposed to reduce the over-programming to approximately £190k to ensure that the programme was kept within budget at outturn.

The Cabinet Member was presented with a number of amendments to the programme of works for approval. These amendments were required to ensure the schemes were deliverable within funding constraints, whilst enabling the objectives of the approved Local Transport Plan to be met.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the adjustments to scheme allocations set out in Annexes 1 to 3 of the report be approved.
  - (ii) That the reduction to the 2011/12 City Strategy capital budget be approved, subject to the approval of Cabinet.

REASON: To enable the effective management and monitoring of the council's capital programme.

**36. BUS IMPROVEMENT STUDY**

The Cabinet Member considered a report that outlined the content of the bus improvement study which was underway and which would be completed by mid-2012. The report also summarised the progress already made to achieving the Council Plan's objectives for public transport in the city.

Referring to issues raised by Councillor Healey earlier in the meeting, officers stated that there would be competition through a tendering process so this may provide opportunities for new contractors to come into the city. A quality contract would also

provide an opportunity for those involved to make better investment decisions.

Responding to questions, officers stated that overall there had not been a fall in bus patronage but this was because of the impact of concessionary travel. The reliability and frequency of services, as well as the costs of travel may have made provision less attractive to some people.

The Cabinet Member stated that he had made it clear at Quality Bus Partnership meetings that the council was looking to move forward on the basis of partnership working. It was, however, imperative that significant improvements to bus travel had to be delivered.

The Cabinet Member considered the following options:

Option 1 – as detailed in Appendix A to the report, outlined the intended approach for the bus improvement study. Following an initial piece of investigative work, four areas had been identified for consideration:

- a. Perceived under performance of the bus network.
- b. Concerns about the medium term viability of the bus network.
- c. Outlining what has and what could be delivered through the existing voluntary partnership arrangements.
- d. What regulatory or partnership arrangements might be available to deliver improvements to the bus network in York.

Each of the areas outlined above would be studied in depth and, following consultation with bus operators, members of the public and other key stakeholders, conclusions would be brought back to a future Decision Session.

#### Option 2

The Cabinet Member was invited to propose an alternative course of action if it was felt that the proposals outlined in Appendix A would not meet the required objectives, namely to propose a course of action which would deliver a step change improvement to the bus network in York.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
  - (ii) That the methodology, scope and focus of the bus improvement study (as set out in Appendix A of the report – Option 1) be agreed subject to the following issues also being included in the scope:
    - Smart tickets (as well as multi-operator tickets)
    - Addressing cross-city traffic issues to major trip-generating sites

REASON: This course of action will allow the Council to continue to work towards its stated aim of delivering a significant improvement to the bus network.

CLLR D MERRETT, Cabinet Member  
[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 4.55 pm].