
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	6 MAY 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, REID, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER

209. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllrs Aspden, Steve Galloway, Sue Galloway, Sunderland and Waller each declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in agenda item 11 (City Strategy Financial Support to Voluntary Organisations – Minute 219 refers), as members of the York Credit Union.

210. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Annex A to agenda item 14 (Gas Servicing Future Procurement – Minute 222 refers), on the grounds that it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons. Such information is classed as exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

211. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 22 April 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

212. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION / WARD MEMBER COMMENTS

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

With the Chair's permission, Cllr Crisp addressed the meeting in respect of agenda item 6 (Back Park Petition – Executive Response), as Ward Member for Holgate Ward. She spoke in support of the petition, noting that 'Back Park' or 'Balfour Street Play Area' comprised the whole of the land marked as Areas A and B on the map attached to the report on this item. She expressed the view of local residents that no part of the land should

be sold and that to do so would compromise the right of children in the area to play in a safe place.

213. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

Members received and noted details of those items that were currently listed on the Forward Plan for the next two Executive meetings.

214. BACK PARK PETITION - EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

Members considered a report which asked them to respond to a petition submitted to the full Council meeting on 29 November 2007. The petition called upon the Council to *'permanently remove Back Park...from the list of leisure land under threat of sale'*.

The land comprising Back Park, illustrated on a plan attached to the report, had originally been gifted to the York Corporation by Arnold Stephenson Rowntree, to be held as public land for recreational purposes. At the time of the petition, it had not been earmarked for sale. However, part of the land (Area A on the attached plan) had been included on a list of capital disposals approved at Budget Council in February 2008. The Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG) had suggested that part of the receipt from the sale be used to upgrade the remaining sections of land, thus helping to improve the generally poor condition of public land in this area of York. Legal advice was currently being sought as to the status of the land, since disposal for purposes other than those stipulated in the Deed of Gift might require consent from the successor organisation to Arnold Stephenson Rowntree.

In response to the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, and the comments made by the Ward Member, Members noted that a decision on disposal of the land was not due before 2009, by which time the likely effects on the area of the York Central development would be better understood. In the meantime, it was important to take a holistic view of leisure provision in this area, with a view to determining a long term plan. This would include consultation with the local community on how any improvements should be funded.

RESOLVED: (i) That the receipt of the petition, and the status of the land at issue, be noted.

(ii) That Officers be asked to undertake an area asset management review in the Leeman Road area.¹

REASON: To ensure that the communities assets in this area are optimised and the highest quality of public provision achieved.

Action Required

1. Complete asset management review (expected within next 12 months)

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215. A REVIEW AND UPDATING OF THE PROTOCOL GOVERNING THE POLITICAL MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE 2008/09 YEAR

Members considered a report which asked them to endorse the principles of the protocol agreed between the Council's four political Groups after the elections last May, with a view to negotiating its continuation in the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

Attached to the report as Annex 1 was a list of proposed topics submitted by Group Leaders. Members were asked to approve the draft list as the basis for consultation between the Group Leaders, with a view to establishing a second Policy Prospectus for the coming year. It was noted that the Labour Group would not take part in these negotiations, having withdrawn from the process in February 2008. An update on the items included in the 2007/08 Policy Prospectus was attached as Annex 2 to the report.

Members commented that the list of outstanding constitutional amendments included in Annex 1 had all been sponsored by the Labour Group and did not have any broad-based political support. Therefore they should not be progressed at this stage.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the continuation of the principles for future political management arrangements agreed by the political Groups in May 2007 be endorsed, subject to any further negotiated amendments to be agreed subsequently by Group Leaders and notwithstanding any specific issues which no longer apply one year on.

(ii) That the draft list of review reports on policy issues be endorsed for inclusion in a new Policy Prospectus for the Municipal Year 2008/09 and that these reports have priority in the use of Officer time and other resources during the coming year.¹

(iii) That Officers be instructed to take no further action at this time on developing the constitutional amendments listed in Annex 1 to the report.

(iv) That the Executive continue to receive update reports on topics from the first Policy Prospectus which, whilst already reported to the Executive, are still progressing.²

(v) That the timescale for agreeing a final version of the new political protocol, due to come to the Executive on 20 May, for sign-off by participating Group Leaders, be approved.³

REASON: To ensure the continuation of the protocol, which is integral to the Council's political management.

Action Required

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| 1. Prepare new Policy Prospectus, to include the topics listed. | SC |
| 2. Report to Executive on progress with outstanding topics from first Prospectus. | SC |
| 3. Agree new Protocol formally with Group Leaders. | SC |

216. GOLDEN TRIANGLE PARTNERSHIP BOARD - MEMBER REPRESENTATION

Members considered a report which presented proposals to establish a Golden Triangle Partnership (GTB) Board, which would oversee the work of the Partnership and set its strategic vision, and asked them to nominate the Council's representatives on the Board.

The GTP was a three-way partnership between housing and planning officers in Leeds City Council, Harrogate Borough Council and City of York Council. The establishment of a Board (Option 1) was recommended on the grounds that it would ensure that the three partner local authorities were clearly setting a strategic direction for the Partnership. Option 2 was to maintain the existing structure, which had at times resulted in conflicting priorities and had recently led to questions being made regarding future funding for the GTP.

Membership of the Board would comprise Executive Members with responsibility for the housing portfolio in each authority, Chief Housing Officers from each authority and the Project Manager. Input from other stakeholder representatives or specialists might be drawn in as appropriate.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That Option 1, to establish the Golden Triangle Partnership Board, be approved.¹

(ii) That the Executive Member for Housing Services and the Head of Housing Services be nominated to represent the City of York Council on the Board, and that their names be included on the list of appointments to be approved at the Annual Council meeting on 22 May 2008.²

REASON: To ensure the effective delivery of the priorities established within the Golden Triangle Partnership.

(iii) That the minutes of any meetings of the Board be added to the list of minutes of Partnerships and Outside Bodies to be made available on the intranet and reported to full Council.

REASON: To ensure that the Board's decisions are properly communicated to Council Members.

Action Required

1. Carry out any actions necessary to establish the Partnership Board. LE
2. Ensure that these nominations are included in the list for approval at Annual Council. GR

217. RESIDENTS' OPINION SURVEY RESULTS 2007/8

Members considered a report which presented the results of the Residents' Opinion Survey undertaken in 2007/08.

In total, 1,655 usable responses had been received to the Survey, representing a response rate of 33%. The responses indicated that, overall, 51% of residents were satisfied with the way that the City of York Council ran things, as compared to 44% in the 2005/06 Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) survey. The majority (65%) considered that things had remained the same over the past three years. In terms of the more specific 'corporate health' indicators, most residents agreed that the Council was working to make the area cleaner and greener, safer and a better place to live, whilst 54% agreed that the Council provided value for money.

Details of the results in relation to individual service areas were set out in paragraphs 10 to 62 of the report, together with a table showing key indicators and findings from the Survey. A table at paragraph 63 compared the BVPI indicators from 2007 with the 2006/07 unitary quartiles.

With reference to the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, Members commented that the Council's performance with regard to overall customer satisfaction was in fact now above average. In respect of complaints handling, it was noted that the difference between the best and worst performing Councils was very narrow and that there might sometimes be difficulties in this area in distinguishing between a query and a complaint.

RESOLVED: (i) That the generally improved ResOp survey results be noted and that the Executive record its thanks to those Officers and Members who have worked so hard to provide good quality public services to the citizens of York.

(ii) That the Chief Executive be requested to identify how satisfaction with public service standards in the City can be improved further and, in particular, to address any indicators which suggest that performance may be below national average levels.¹

REASON: In order to monitor the Council's performance and ensure the continued delivery of quality services.

Action Required

1. Review results to identify potential for improvement and address any below average indicators. SC

218. USE OF LPSA2 REWARD GRANT / LAA FINANCIAL POLICY

Members considered a report which discussed proposals for the use of the Local Public Service Agreements 2 (LPSA2) reward grant and the proposed financial policy that would govern York's second Local Area Agreement (LAA). It also provided an update on progress towards completion of the LAA.

In July 2007, the Executive had agreed in principle to use the LPSA2 reward grant to support the outcomes of the LAA, stressing that subsequent decisions on its specific use would be considered in the context of the wider budget setting process. They had asked the Directors of City Strategy and Resources to develop a robust bid process to facilitate the allocation of any LPSA2 grant funding that might become available. In response to this request, the report outlined a proposed methodology, enabling the Executive to act as commissioning body and employ a selection process for considering business case applications.

The methodology, which was based upon that already used in the allocation of Council capital and revenue bids, was detailed in Annex A to the report. It was proposed that the Executive Delivery Board of the Local Strategic Partnership (Without Walls) consider any suggested projects in accordance with this methodology before reporting back to the Executive. A set of principles that would govern the bidding process was summarised in paragraph 16 of the report. The most recent version of the proposed performance indicators for the LAA, which were currently being agreed and negotiated with central government, was attached as Annex B.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the methodology that has been developed for allocating the LPSA2 reward grant be approved, subject to the inclusion on the application form of more specific targets and milestones and the establishment of a robust progress reporting mechanism.¹

REASON: To initiate the use of LPSA2 reward grant to support the outcomes of the Local Area Agreement (LAA), as previously agreed in principle.

(ii) That the draft list of LAA performance indicators (PIs) included in the report be noted, with some concerns.

(iii) That the Chief Executive be instructed to review the proposed LAA PI list, in consultation with responsible Members, to ensure that the PIs are focused on achieving

identifiable and verifiable improvements in street level public services.²

REASON: So that Members can be satisfied that these issues have been addressed when the draft PIs come before the Executive for approval next month.

Action Required

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| 1. Include more specific targets and milestones / more robust reporting mechanism. | JB |
| 2. Review the proposed LAA PI list, in consultation with responsible Members. | SC |

219. CITY STRATEGY FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2008/2009

Members considered a report which sought their advice on the most appropriate way of allocating the residual £7,100 City Strategy voluntary sector grants budget for the 2008/09 financial year.

Four new funding applications had been submitted for the current year, of which one had since been withdrawn, leaving the following to be considered:

- York Older People's Assembly – requesting £10k for part time administrative support;
- Older Citizens Advocacy York (OCA Y) – requesting £10k to ensure continuation of their service at the current level;
- York Credit Union – requesting £25k to help eradicate its deficits from the previous and current years.

Members were asked to consider the following options:

Option A – share the sum proportionately between the three applicants;

Option B – support none of the applications but carry the sum forward into the 2009/10 financial year;

Option C – award the full sum to a single applicant.

Option A was recommended, on the basis that it would be a fair and equitable method of partially supporting all three groups within the limited resources available.

Having considered the advantages and disadvantages of each application and noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: That Option C be approved and that the full sum of £7,100 be awarded to the York Credit Union.¹

REASON: In view of the need to support those most affected by the current economic situation and the 'credit crunch' at this particular time.

Action Required

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| 1. Implement the award to York Credit Union. | JB |
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220. SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SCRUTINY FUNDING

Members considered a report which presented a request from the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) for additional funding to finance a city-wide survey on the broad strategic options available to tackle traffic congestion.

The request had arisen from the SMC's consideration of an interim report from the Traffic Congestion Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee, in which a request had been made for £17k additional funding for a survey on strategic options to tackle traffic congestion, and of a further report detailing alternative options for gathering York residents' responses. The Head of Marketing and Communications had advised that a survey of the kind proposed – to determine residents' attitudes to congestion – was defined as research rather than consultation and that the best way to determine residents' attitudes would be through a 'Talkabout' special, costing around £6k. Costings for the survey proposed by the Committee were set out in Annex A to the report, while details of the alternative 'Talkabout' option were provided in Annex B.

The Executive was asked to consider the following options:

Option 1 – grant the SMC's request for £17k additional funding;

Option 2 – allocate £6k additional funding, in line with the Head of Marketing and Communications' suggestion;

Option 3 – refuse the application for additional funding.

Members commented that there was a lack of clarity in terms of exactly what the £17k funding was expected to deliver.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: That the Scrutiny Management Committee be invited to choose between the following two options:¹

- **Option 1** – to agree to release the £14k currently allocated in the contingency provision for Scrutiny activities, plus £3k from reserves, for use in fully funding the application from the Traffic Congestion Scrutiny Committee.
- **Option 2** – to make available appropriate funding from reserves, up to a value of £6k, to facilitate an assessment of public opinion on the options for addressing traffic congestion issues in the City using existing mechanisms such as 'Your City', 'Talkabout' and the Council's on-line consultation module.

REASON: To enable the SMC to make a decision on this issue and the use of Scrutiny funding without improper interference from the Executive.

Action Required

1. Include an item on the agenda for SMC meeting, seeking a decision on the two funding options. GR

221. INCLUSION AND EQUALITY PROGRESS - REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY RESOURCES

Members considered a report which provided an update on progress made on inclusion and equalities issues and sought funding for temporary resources from contingency to make improvements to the collection and use of customer and staff data in respect of the six Equality 'strands'.

Positive progress was reported in all the areas of the Council's agreed Equality Strategy for 2005-8, *Pride in our Communities*. However, continued improvement would depend upon the collection and use of relevant data. To meet level 2 of the revised Equality Standard for Local Government, the Council must have '*a particular working group or persons (to) ensure that all the needs around (equality) data collection are developed and implemented.*' There was currently no capacity within Directorates or the Equalities team to perform this function.

Approval was therefore sought for the provision of additional staff resources totalling £55k over an 18-month period (Option 1). To maintain the current status (Option 2) was not recommended, as it would expose the Council to legal and financial risks and would mean that it was unlikely to progress beyond level 1 of the revised Equality Standard.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: That Option 1, the release of up to £55k from Council reserves to fund the additional staff resources over 2008/09 and 2009/10, be approved.¹

REASON: To facilitate effective performance management and minimise the legal and financial risk arising from legal challenges that may be brought under Employment and Equality legislation.

Action Required

1. Make the necessary budget adjustment / carry out recruitment of additional staff. GR

222. GAS SERVICING - FUTURE PROCUREMENT

Members received a report which presented the results of a recent procurement exercise undertaken in relation to gas servicing and suggested a future direction for the gas servicing and maintenance service to council dwellings. This item had originally been included on the agenda for the Executive meeting on 25 March 2008, when it was deferred for

further information. That information had now been obtained and incorporated in a revised report.

In November 2003 the Executive Member for Housing had agreed a two-fold approach to gas servicing, with an external contractor undertaking all works in the City area and the Council's Neighbourhood Services (NS) department all works in the Acomb area, under a partnering agreement. Following expiry of the external contract on 31 March 2008, a new approach was proposed.

The recommended approach (Option 1) was to amend the existing Housing Repairs Partnership, under which NS now carried out the majority of maintenance repairs, to include the whole of the gas servicing for the City. The alternative approach (Option 2) was to ask Officers to undertake a formal tendering process for the servicing and maintenance of gas heating appliances in council dwellings. Option 1 was recommended on the basis that it would enable the delivery of efficiencies that would significantly reduce cost and improve performance in this service area.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item, it was

RESOLVED: That Option 1, which involves in-sourcing the gas servicing work, be approved and that the Housing Repairs Partnership be amended to include the whole of the gas servicing for the City.¹

REASON: To secure service quality and value for money on behalf of the Council's tenants.

Action Required

1. Amend Housing Repairs Partnership.

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S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.50 pm].