

Meeting	Executive
Date	24 June 2021
Present	Councillors Aspden (Chair), Ayre, Craghill (substitute for Cllr D'Agorne), Smalley, Waller and Widdowson
Apologies	Councillor D'Agorne
In Attendance	Councillor Kilbane

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## **PART A - MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

### **1. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, that they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Waller declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 11 (Capital Programme Outturn 2020/21 and Revisions to the 2021/22-2025/26 Programme), as a governor of Westfield Primary School. He left the room during consideration of that item and took no part in the discussions or decisions thereon.

### **2. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 20 May 2021 be approved, and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **3. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been three registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme, all from Council Members.

Cllr Douglas spoke on Agenda Item 6 (Supporting the York Economy). She supported the proposal to sign up to the Good Business Charter but raised concerns around the council's use

of regularly contracted workers not in receipt of the Living Wage.

Cllr Perrett spoke on Agenda Item 7 (Recycling Options & Waste Consultation). She queried recommendation 5, supported the proposal not to implement three-weekly collections, and urged Members to continue to work with the public in developing the recycling strategy.

Cllr Crawshaw spoke on Agenda Items 8 (Future of Medigold Element of CYC Approach to Absence Management) and 10 (Finance & Performance Out-turn 2020-21). On item 8, he stated his preference for Option 4 in the report; on item 10, he queried the position on Adult Social Care in paragraph 7 of the report and requested further details for the scrutiny committee.

#### **4. Forward Plan**

Members received and noted details of the items that were on the Forward Plan for the next two Executive meetings at the time the agenda was published.

#### **5. City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy - June Update**

The Chief Operating Officer presented a report which provided an update for June on activities both directly in response to Covid-19 and to support recovery and renewal.

As well as the latest coronavirus figures, the report highlighted the work of the public health function, along with updates on work to improve mental health provision and on re-opening the city centre. A summary of the wider work of the public health team was attached as Annex 1, with a summary of the Northern Quarter mental health project at Annex 2.

On 4 June, the official 7-day rate of Covid cases in York had been 29.4 per 100k population, remaining lower than both national and regional averages. It was reported at the meeting that this had since increased to 100 per 100k. However, due to the impact of the vaccine cases among the over-60s remained very low (12 per 100k) and there were no covid cases in intensive care. By 8 June, 71.1% of the city's estimated adult population had received their first dose of the vaccine and 48.7% had received both doses.

In commenting on the report, the Chair highlighted the expected changes to government guidance, and the proposals made to government to enable the council to support the city centre and secondary shopping areas in Acomb and Haxby. He also thanked the Covid volunteers for their work during the pandemic.

Resolved: That the contents of the report, and the information provided at the meeting, be noted.

## **6. Supporting the York Economy**

The Director of Environment, Transport & Planning presented a report which set out the findings of an independent evaluation of the council's Micro Business Grant (MBG) scheme, along with proposals to provide support for business-led collaboration through networks and Traders' Associations, and to sign up to the Good Businesses Foundation's Good Business Charter (GBC).

The Evaluation Report, by Blueberry Marketing Ltd. was attached as Annex A to the report. It provided a detailed assessment of the economic impact of the scheme, noted the strengths and weaknesses of the process so as to inform future grant schemes, identified future business support needs, and provided insights on the impact of internet and transport connectivity. Key findings of the evaluation, positive feedback from grant recipients, and potential follow-up work were highlighted in paragraphs 20-30 of the report. In terms of supporting business networks, details of funding allocations and objectives were set out in paragraphs 37-45 and Annex C. It was confirmed that the remaining government funding referred to in paragraph 38 had been received on 23 June. Information on the aims, relevance and implications of the GBC was provided in paragraphs 46-60; the accreditation criteria were attached at Annex D.

Members welcomed the report, and thanked all officers and partners involved; the Chair extended particular thanks to Julian Richer and Prof. Charlie Jeffery for their roles in promoting the GBC. Having noted the comments made under Public Participation, it was

Resolved: (i) That the significant economic impacts resulting from the Executive's decision in March 2020 to invest £1.4m in micro businesses be noted.

Reason: To recognise the sizeable economic and social impact of the Council's micro business grant scheme on York's small business community and business owners, and better understand the challenges they face in adapting to, and recovering from, Covid-19.

(ii) That the continued focus on working with networks and Traders Associations to build a stronger business community be endorsed.

Reason: To continue the Council's commitment to working with local businesses and build a stronger sense of community.

(iii) That it be noted that the findings of the MBG evaluation and the council's work with networks and Traders Association will inform plans to spend the outstanding allocation of Additional Restrictions Grant funding once trading restrictions are lifted, and that the Head of Economic Growth be instructed to bring proposals for the use of those funds to Executive at the earliest opportunity.

Reason: To support the further recovery of micro businesses and the York economy.

(iv) That, subject to the receipt of additional ARG funding from Government, £100k of ARG funds be allocated to support the delivery of events and festivals across the city, and that the implementation of that fund be delegated to the Corporate Director of Place in consultation with the Executive Member for Economy & Strategic Planning.

Reason: To support economic recovery.

(v) That the council sign up to the Good Business Charter and commit York to becoming the first Good Business Charter City.

Reason: To promote responsible business practices and provide a practical framework which enables York to Build Back Better.

## 7. Recycling Collection Options and Waste Consultations

The Director of Environment, Transport & Planning presented a report which set out the results of a city-wide consultation on recycling and proposals for future action. These included responding to Government consultation on recycling, following the release on 12 May 2021 of further details of the Environment Bill. Results of the council's consultation, to which a very high number of responses had been received, were annexed to the report.

The following options were presented for consideration, as detailed in paragraphs 39-60 of the report:

**Option 1** – recognise the consultation results and include them in the response to government consultation;

**Option 2** – based on the consultation results, progress proposals for a 3-weekly recycling methodology as per Annex 4;

**Option 3** – acknowledge the responses but do not make any changes to recycling;

**Option 4** – acknowledge the responses, do not implement 3-weekly recycling but make changes to increase recycling rates, improve efficiency and prepare the city for future change.

Options 1 and 4 were recommended, to ensure efficient and effective collection routes and make service improvements, some of which had been requested by residents in response to consultation.

The Executive Member for Environment & Climate Change welcomed the report and commended the proposals to Members. With reference to matters raised under Public Participation, officers confirmed that detailed work on routes would be carried out once the replacement vehicles had arrived.

Resolved: (i) That the 7,205 residents who took the time to complete the council consultation on recycling (one of the best consultation responses ever received) be thanked, and that the Government's own intentions to increase recycling by funding local authorities to provide additional services be welcomed.

Reason: To provide greater clarity on efforts to increase recycling across the country.

(ii) That authority be delegated to the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change, to provide a response to the Government's consultation on recycling collections based upon the resident response to the council's consultation by the closing date of 4 July.

Reason: To ensure that the council's response to the Government consultation reflects the views of residents.

(iii) That the implementation of the three-weekly recycling collections not proceed.

Reason: Results from the resident focus groups showed that communicating the three-weekly collection was extremely difficult and this would therefore be a risk to success; in addition, the forthcoming Environment Bill may mandate fortnightly collections, meaning that any fundamental change is likely to result in a second change to collection methodology in the next few years, potentially leading to abortive costs.

(iv) That the garden waste season be extended by one month, to run from the beginning of March to the end of October each year, starting in March 2022.

Reason: While there was some support for a year-round green waste service this was not conclusive, and previous customer requests have shown a demand for an earlier start to the season; this change will ensure that residents have a service that meets their need and extends the collection season, which was a theme in the consultation.

(v) That, in light of the vehicle replacement, a review be undertaken to determine whether current collection routes for recycling, refuse and garden waste are as efficient as possible and, if this results in proposals for a significant change, that a report be

taken to the Executive Member for Environment & Climate Change.

Reason: To ensure that an efficient and effective service is provided.

(vi) That officers begin to implement the bags to bins policy (wheeled bins rather than black bags), bring this matter to future Decision Sessions of the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change, and review the opportunities to extend the green waste collection to these properties.

Reason: To help prepare the city for any future changes.

(vii) That the sorting of dry recycling into two streams by the collection teams be formally adopted and that a communications campaign be launched to all householders that glass, cans and plastics can now be placed in the same box or boxes (2 boxes per household) but that paper and card must be kept separate.

Reason: So that residents are only asked to source-separate their recycling to the required level.

(viii) That it be noted that these decisions, and the previous approvals of a budget for waste vehicle replacement and adoption of the Future Fleet Management Policy, will allow officers to procure a fleet of twin stream recycling vehicles.

Reason: The existing recycling vehicle fleet is beyond its economical and serviceable life.

## **8. Future of Medigold Element of CYC Approach to Absence Management**

The HR Manager presented a report which provided an overview of the sickness processes put in place under the contract with Medigold, feedback on their impact on sickness levels in the council, and options for the future.

The following options were presented for consideration, as detailed in paragraphs 40-46 of the report:

**Option 1** – continue with the Medigold agreement for a further year to assess its impact and benefits. This was the recommended option, on the basis of the results of the agreement to date and responses to consultation with staff, managers and trades unions.

**Option 2** – go to market for a similar supplier and negotiate the lowest possible cost. This would need extra resources, and better suppliers were unlikely to be found.

**Option 3** – return to the original iTrent model. This would take a small project team about 3 months.

**Option 4** – return to the iTrent model with additional resources in HR.

The Executive Member for Finance & Performance commended the proposal to Members. In response to comments made under Public Participation, he confirmed that the contract had always been intended as a short term intervention and it was hoped to move the service back in-house in the future.

Resolved: That approval be given to extend the contract with Medigold for one year, at a cost of £90k.

Reason: So that a full assessment of the benefit can be made.

## **9. Merger of York Coroner Area with North Yorkshire County Council Coroner Areas**

Members received a report on the proposed submission of a request to the Chief Coroner and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to merge the City of York Council (CYC) coroner area with those of North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC).

The Director of Governance sought deferral of this item, as the MoJ wished to make amendments to the business case that Executive were being asked to consider.

Resolved: That it be noted that this item will be deferred to a future meeting.

Reason: To enable consideration of amendments to be made to the business case by the MoJ.



## 10. Finance and Performance Outturn 2020-21

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which provided an analysis of the council's overall finance and performance position at the end of the financial year 2020-2021.

The report highlighted the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the council's financial position, with estimated gross additional costs of £26m and income loss of £8m. These had been mitigated by grant funding, but an ongoing impact was still expected in future years. A provisional net overspend of £1.2m was reported on the net General Fund budget of £127m for 2020/21, funded from the use of contingency, earmarked reserves and the general reserve. An overview of the outturn was provided in Table 1 at paragraph 12 of the report and key variances within each directorate were summarised in Annex 1. The report also examined the position of reserves and contingency and outlined a request from York Museums Trust to extend the letter of guarantee approved by Executive in August 2020.

The performance update was based on the core indicators grouped around the eight outcome areas in the 2019-23 Council Plan. Performance in general had remained high despite the challenges of the past year, and compared well against similar local authority areas. Core indicators with a good or poor direction of travel were set out in paragraphs 25-28 of the report, and progress on the outcome areas was summarised in paragraph 30. Detailed information was provided in Annex 2.

The Executive Member for Finance & Performance commented on the overall report, highlighting the work carried out by frontline staff and the support provided by the council to residents and businesses. Other Members commented on their individual portfolio areas. In response to matters raised under Public Participation, officers confirmed that grant monies had been spent appropriately in Adult Social Care to fund pressures directly relating to Covid-19.

Resolved: (i) That the year end position be noted.

(ii) That the finance and performance information in the report be noted.

(iii) That the extension to March 2023 for the letter of credit to York Museums Trust, as outlined in paragraphs 20 to 24 of the report, be approved.

(iv) That approval be given for the use of contingency and reserves outlined in paragraphs 14 to 16.

(v) That the carry-forward of HRA reserves outlined in Annex 1 be approved.

Reason: To ensure that significant financial issues can be appropriately dealt with.

**11. Capital Programme Outturn 2020/21 and Revisions to the 2021/2- 2025/26 Programme**

*[See also under Part B]*

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which set out the outturn position of the council's 2020/21 capital programme and its overall funding, and provided an update on the impact of the programme on future years.

An outturn of £92.395m was reported on the approved 2020/21 budget of £119.859m; an overall variation of £27.462m. This comprised requests to re-profile a net -£37.575 of schemes to future years and adjustment to schemes increasing expenditure by £10.113m. The overall programme continued to operate within budget

Key areas of investment and outcomes were highlighted in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report. Variances and re-profiling requests within each portfolio area were set out in Table 1 at paragraph 11 and detailed in the body of the report. The capital programme for 2021/22 to 2025/26, re-stated as a result of the re-profiling, was shown in Table 3 at paragraph 104 and detailed in Annex 1.

Resolved: (i) That the 2020/21 capital outturn position of £92.397m be noted, and that the requests for re-profiling from the 2020/21 programme to future years, totalling £37.575m, be approved.

(ii) That the adjustments to schemes increasing expenditure in 2020/21 by a net £10.113m be noted.

(iii) That approval be given to release an additional £73k from capital contingency to allow the construction of the new crematorium waiting room.

(iv) That the revised leisure offer at the Community Stadium of a children's play area be approved.

Reasons: (a) To enable the effective management and monitoring of the council's capital programme.

(b) To ensure that mourners attending the crematorium and waiting to enter can be treated with dignity through appropriate and proper waiting facilities.

## **12. Treasury Management Annual Report and Review of Prudential Indicators 2020/21**

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which outlined the annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2020/21

The report included details of the effect on interest rates of the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent reduction in rates of investment earnings.

The report had been reviewed and scrutinised by Audit & Governance Committee at their meeting on 16 June 2021.

Resolved: That the 2020/21 performance of treasury management activity and prudential indicators outlined in Annex A to the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure the continued performance of the treasury management function can be monitored and to comply with statutory requirements

## **PART B - MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL**

### **13. Capital Programme Outturn 2020/21 and Revisions to the 2021/2- 2025/26 Programme**

*[See also under Part A]*

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which set out the outturn position of the council's 2020/21 capital programme and its overall funding, and provided an update on the impact of the programme on future years.

An outturn of £92.395m was reported on the approved 2020/21 budget of £119.859m; an overall variation of £27.462m. This comprised requests to re-profile a net -£37.575 of schemes to future years and adjustment to schemes increasing expenditure by £10.113m. The overall programme continued to operate within budget

Key areas of investment and outcomes were highlighted in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report. Variances and re-profiling requests within each portfolio area were set out in Table 1 at paragraph 11 and detailed in the body of the report. The capital programme for 2021/22 to 2025/26, re-stated as a result of the re-profiling, was shown in Table 3 at paragraph 104 and detailed in Annex 1.

**Recommended:** That the re-stated 2021/22 to 2025/26 programme of £600.778m, as summarised in Table 3 at paragraph 104 of the report and detailed in Annex A, be approved.

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

Cllr K Aspden, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.50 pm].