
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities
Date	31 January 2023
Present	Councillor Smalley (Executive Member)
In Attendance	Angela Padfield, Head of Service, York Learning Pauline Stuchfield, Director of Customer and Communities Laura Williams, Assistant Director Customer and Communities
In Attendance Remotely	Paul Cliff, Shared Head of Adult Learning and Skills (York and North Yorkshire)

17. Declarations of Interest (10:00 am)

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any disclosable pecuniary interests, or other registerable interests he might have in the respect of business on the agenda, if he had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. None were declared.

18. Minutes (10:01 am)

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 3 January 2023 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

19. Public Participation (10:02 am)

It had been reported that there had been four registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

All public participants spoke on agenda item 5, City of York Council – Human Rights City Commitment Strategy.

Flick Williams thanked officers for the report but raised concerns with some inconsistent decisions made, and she questioned the lack of progress made on mitigations for disabled people,

particularly the Blue Badge ban in the city centre. She also queried which equalities and human rights challenges faced in York were highlighted at the Local Government Association conference in Harrogate.

Stephen Pittam, Chair of the Steering Group for the York Human Rights City Network (YHRCN), noted that the Civil Society Partnership hosted jointly by York CVS and the Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York had been working together on York becoming a Human Rights City since 2011. He stated that the YHRCN supported the commitments noted within the report but that they still strongly believed that human rights considerations were not considered by the council when access to the city centre for Blue Badge holders was banned, and more recently in establishing the policies within the Local Plan to deliver appropriate accommodation for Gypsy and Travellers in York.

Cllr Fitzpatrick welcomed the proposals within the report but questioned the structure. She acknowledged the importance to train staff but questioned how this would be embedded to ensure accurate equality and human rights impact assessments were completed. She also raised concerns regarding the omission of opposition political parties, particularly on the discussions around the Human Rights & Equalities Board, and noted that a transparent cross political party decision making process would be welcomed.

Caroline Hunter, the Chair of York Travellers Trust (YTT), noted that despite requests being made there had been no dialogue between the council and YTT on the Local Plan. She highlighted concerns regarding the planned growth of the Gypsy and Traveller site in Osbaldwick and suggested that the plan for new sites using Section 106 monies was not enforceable. She suggested that the affordable housing policy would be more effective, and she urged officers to engage with the Trust.

20. York Learning - Self Assessment Report 2021/2022 (10:18 am)

The Executive Member considered a report that presented York Learning's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for the academic year 2021/22. The full report was attached at Annex 1 with performance data contained within. The report showed how York Learning performed in relation to the Education Inspection

Framework and this final report would be sent to Ofsted on 31 January 2023.

The Head of Service noted that the performance of York Learning continued to be good and overall achievements were above national benchmarks. The other key points raised included:

- The 16 -18 study programme, which continued to perform well, with 78% of those learners progressing with positive outcomes.
- Tutors had undertaken specialist training in 'Trauma Information Teaching' to better support young people.
- Apprenticeship achievement rates were above the national average at 71.4%.
- An improved induction process would be developed to support the performance rates in maths.
- 99% of learners enjoyed their training and would recommend York Learning to their friends.

The Executive Member noted the key areas for development and in answer to his questions, the Head of Service confirmed:

- The achievement rates in functional skills had dropped due to a variety of reasons from drop out of small class sizes, increased sickness and competing job demands of learners.
- The Governance Improvement Board provided support and challenge to York Learning, which had contributed to the key themes in all areas self-assessed.

The Executive Member thanked all York Learning staff for their continued commitment to the service.

Resolved: That the service's self-assessment report for submission to Ofsted, be approved.

Reason: To help monitor the service and ensure robust governance arrangements.

21. City of York Council - Human Rights City Commitment Strategy (10:26 am)

The Executive Member considered a report that sought to reaffirm City of York Council's (CYC) commitment to being a Human Rights City and to move forward the relationship

between CYC and the York Human Rights City Network (YHRCN).

The Director and Assistant Director of Customer and Communities provided an update, noting that the YHRCN had asked for six points of improvements which related to governance structures, impact assessments, decision making, and the functioning of the governance framework around the Human Rights & Equalities Board. Working collaboratively with the YHRCN Executive, a refreshed structure for York's partnership on human rights inequalities would be agreed.

In answer to the public participants, and the Executive Members questions, officers confirmed that:

- The Assistant Director's portfolio now included inclusion, and she was considering the staffing structure, which already consisted of an Access Officer and a small team supporting migrant communities.
- The Access Officer was currently focused on the access arrangements to the city centre for Blue Badge holders.
- Work would continue with the University of York to address the need for human rights and equality impact assessments, and to ensure human rights training was embedded across the council.
- A Community Voices project review would be undertaken, to ensure people with hidden or marginalised voices were heard.
- York was also a city of sanctuary, and as part of a range of good work outlined, officers worked closely with partners to welcome people from the Ukraine, as well as those seeking asylum.
- The Human Rights & Equalities Board review would be open to cross party participation once the Terms of Reference were agreed.

The Executive Member welcomed the representations made by the York Travellers Trust and he asked the Director to inquire if the appropriate officers were considering them. He also confirmed that he had attended the Local Government Association (LGA) Conference in Harrogate on behalf of a colleague at extremely short notice and that was the reason for no notes, the LGA had also confirmed that the event was not recorded.

The Executive Member thanked all, particularly the YHRCN, for their commitment to champion human rights across the city and he noted that the declaration stated that it marked an ambition, not a destination, and as such work on the human rights agenda should be ongoing at pace, with human rights and equalities at the heart of policy and decision making in the city.

Resolved: That it be agreed to:

- Re-commit to the declaration made in 2017 to become a Human Rights City, recognising that this marked an ambition and was a significant step on a journey, and putting those rights at the heart of decision making;
 - Commit to moving forward in agreement with York Human Rights City Network (YHRCN) with a refreshed structure for the Human Rights and Equalities Board produced by a joint task group;
 - Facilitate in partnership an annual or bi-annual national Human Rights City conference;
 - Implement the council's responsibilities within the Action Plan (Annex A to the report) and any agreed priority items in the annual indicator report including:
 - Work with the YHRCN and the University of York to develop and deliver Human Rights training to City of York Council's (CYC) leadership team, managers, and staff.
 - Commit to planned meetings between the YHRCN Executive, senior members, and officers to discuss progress with the human rights agenda.
 - Agree to work alongside YHRCN to review the 'Community Voices' project to ensure that it meets its original objective to work with the most marginalised.
- and
- Regular public reporting back through the Executive Member Decision Sessions.

Reason: To reaffirm City of York Council's commitment to being a Human Rights City.

Cllr Smalley, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.39 am].

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