
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR CITY STRATEGY AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	10 SEPTEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), REID (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), GILLIES (CHAIR), D'AGORNE (VICE-CHAIR), CREGAN, HYMAN, SIMPSON-LAING AND POTTER (SUBSTITUTE FOR SCOTT)(NOT PRESENT FOR MINUTES 45 AND 46)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR SCOTT

33. 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.

Cllr Cregan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 (minute 42 refers) as a good friend of his held a number of hackney driver licences and left the room during the discussion of this item.

Cllr Gillies declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 (minute 42 refers) as a former holder of a hackney driver's licence.

Cllr D'Agorne declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 13 (minute 45 refers) as a member of Cycling Touring Club (CTC) and the York Cycle Campaign.

34. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 16 July 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record.

35. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been 6 registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation scheme.

Mr Holmes spoke on Agenda Item 11 (Petition for Residents Parking – Malton Avenue and Irwin Avenue) as the Lead Petitioner. He clarified the recent press article stating that none of the residents were angry, but that they wanted residents parking as it was a busy road and there had already been two accidents this year. Mr Holmes highlighted that cars were parked on the street and left there for weeks, and that the new housing development would increase the problem.

Mr Bileckyj spoke on Agenda Item 10 (Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) as a private hire driver and operator in favour of deregulation. He stated

that on Fridays and Saturdays there was a shortage of hackney carriages and that it was frustrating that a private hire driver could not pick up trade. He requested that private hire drivers be given the same opportunities of hackney drivers and the choice if they want to work.

Mr Rowley spoke on Agenda Item 10 (Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) on behalf of York Taxi Association in objection. He stated taxi deregulation was not right for York and doesn't work, and a lot of other authorities would go back to being regulated. Mr Rowley highlighted that to meet the Local Transport Plan there needed to be 9 more wheelchair accessible vehicles, and suggested that these 9 vehicles be introduced over the next 3 years.

Mr Plonton spoke on Agenda Item 10 (Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) as a hackney carriage proprietor in objection. He stated that he supported option 3 and asked whether the council had considered the effects of increasing taxi numbers on the city, including pollution and traffic congestion. He highlighted that there was not enough business for present vehicles let alone new ones, and that deregulation had not worked in Sheffield or Newcastle. He suggested that the extra 9 wheelchair friendly vehicles be phased in over the next 3 years and that all extra licences should be to meet unmet demand.

Mr Bowman spoke on Agenda Item 10 (Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) on behalf of Station Taxis. He stated that there was a need to drive up the quality of vehicles and that there was no evidence to support deregulation. He highlighted that there were not enough ranks for cars licensed currently. Mr Bowman stated that Station Taxis accepted that there was a need for more wheelchair vehicles but that all other increases should be to meet unmet demand and therefore Option C was acceptable.

Mr Styles spoke on Agenda Item 10 (Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) on behalf of York Pedicabs. He stated that they were trying to introduce environmentally friendly vehicles but needed to operate as hackney carriages.

36. 2007/08 First Monitoring Report Economic Development Service - Finance and Performance

Members received a report which presented the latest projections for revenue and capital expenditure by Economic Development including performance against target for Best Value performance indicators, Customer First targets and Staff Management targets.

The report advised that Economic Development was expected to overspend its budget of £2,264k by £+10k. It was proposed that all budgets were carefully monitored throughout the year and remedial action taken where appropriate to ensure the budget was balanced by the end of the year.

Members raised concerns about the downward national trend of using markets and whether there was any problems with the location and stalls of Newgate market. Officers reported that they would look at what options were available for the location of the market.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Leader be advised to :

- (i) approve the financial and performance position of the portfolio;
- (ii) recommend to the Executive an additional one-off contribution of £2.5k to the York Citizen Advice Bureau.

Decision of the Executive Leader

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In accordance with budgetary and performance monitoring procedures.

37. York's Visitor Information Centre service: future options

Members received a report which updated Members regarding the prospective relocation of the De Grey Rooms Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in order to provide substantially improved services for residents and visitors to York and the region, and commended the corner offices on Blake Street and Museum Street for more detailed consideration by officers.

The report advised that the Strategy Group has been specifically looking at two possible solutions – both in the city centre, but quite different from one another:-

Option 1 - The site of the former city centre manager's office and public toilets in Parliament Street, right in the pedestrian and retail heart of the city had been identified for a completely new, iconic two storey building.

Option 2 - The conversion of former Council offices in a three storey Victorian building on the corner of Blake Street and Museum Street, within sight of the Minster. The building was now vacant.

Members asked officers to investigate whether it would be possible to fit in a specialised disabled toilet which was changing room size.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Leader be advised to

- (i) approve that the principles identified in paragraph 5 of this report regarding the future aspirations of the York city centre Visitor Information Centre be adopted;
- (ii) accept the analysis of the two alternative options currently identified (in paragraphs 10-12);

- (iii) seek the support of the Administrative Accommodation Project Board to pursue the Blake Street option, as put forward in paragraph 13.
- (iv) approve that a further report on the sale of the Blake Street property, including a business plan, will be reported back to this meeting.
- (v) ask officers to investigate the possibility of including a changing room size disabled toilet in the new Visitor Information Centre.

Decision of the Executive Leader

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

- REASONS:
- (i) These principles confirm the importance of the service to the city, and set the key fundamental principles for any proposals to relocate the service.
 - (ii) This enables officers to progress a single option for the future delivery of this service.
 - (iii) This is the most appropriate and sustainable solution to VIC provision in the city.
 - (iv) To report to members the successful conclusion of negotiations and to confirm that an enhanced VIC service for residents and visitors in York has been secured.

38. Chief Executive's Monitor 1 Finance and Performance Report 2007/08

Members received a report which presented the first performance monitor of 2007/08 for the Chief Executives Directorate and was for information purposes only.

The latest budget for Chief Executive's Directorate totalled £9,744k. This included £52k agreed carry forwards from 2006/07 as well as two additional supplementary estimates to fund recruitment and retention costs for the new Chief Executive (£76k) as well as additional budget to fund the cost of the 2008 CPA inspection (£47k). Current projections showed that the directorate would overspend by £91k which equated to 0.9% of the gross expenditure budget.

Members highlighted that it would be useful if the tables used in both the City Strategy and Chief Executive reports were in the same format.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Leader be advised to

- (i) note the performance and financial outturn position for 2007/08.

Decision of the Executive Leader

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To inform the Executive Leader on progress made against service plan targets and budget.

39. Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Members received a report which informed Members of the duty on all local authorities to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations in their area before the end of 2007 as laid down by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

The report advised that the review commenced on 1 September and that a period of two months consultation would now take place, which would end on 27 October 2007.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Leader be advised to note the contents of this report.

Decision of the Executive Leader

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order to comply with statutory requirements.

40. 2007/08 City Strategy Finance and Performance Monitor 1 Report

Members received a report which presented two sets of data from the City Strategy Directorate, the latest projections for revenue expenditure and capital expenditure for the City Strategy portfolio and Monitor 1 (2007/08) performance against target for a number of key indicators made up of:

- Best Value Performance Indicators owned by City Strategy
- Customer First targets
- Staff Management Targets

The provisional outturn position for the portfolio showed an overspend of £+774k for the financial year. This was made up of key identified overspends totalling £+1,266k offset by identified savings totalling £-492k. It was recommended that the Executive Member request that the Executive approve the release of £400k of the contingency to support the City Strategy budget. If that was approved a forecast budget deficit would remain totalling £374k.

Members had the option of whether to support the request of a supplementary estimate from contingency or whether to require the Director of City Strategy to deliver alternative savings.

Members raised concerns about the under funding of concessionary fares and the level of recompense to bus companies which had to be funded. Officers reported that the bus companies had gone to arbitration over the

level of recompense offered and had won their appeals. This would now set a methodology and would undermine the Council's negotiating position in future.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to

- (i) note the financial and performance position of the portfolio.
- (ii) recommend to the Executive to release a contingency sum of £400k to support pressure on Concessionary Fares and Planning budgets.
- (iii) write to the Government to express concern about the under funding of the Concessionary Fares scheme.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In accordance with budgetary and performance monitoring procedures.

41. 2007/08 City Strategy Capital Programme: Monitor 1 Report

Members received a report which set out progress to date on schemes in the City Strategy Capital Programme for 2007/08 and requested the Executive Member for City Strategy to approve amendments to the 2007/08 budget.

Members had been presented with a number of amendments to the capital programme for approval, which were required to ensure that schemes were deliverable within funding constraints while enabling the objectives of the approved Local Transport Plan to be met.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to approve the adjustments set out in Annexes 1 and 2.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To manage the Capital Programme efficiently.

42. Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences (Taxi Licences)

Members received a report which sought a recommendation from the Executive Member for City Strategy to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee (being the decision making authority) concerning the review of

the council's policy to limit the number of taxi vehicle licences. The report advised Members of the Government's Action Plan for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles, the work completed since the previous reports in September and November 2005 and the consultation that had been carried out.

The Government, in their letter to local authorities, indicated that the outcome of a review would be either:

- a) to maintain the existing limit on hackney carriage licences
- b) to deregulate and thereby grant a taxi licence to anyone meeting the application criteria, or
- c) to grant a number of new licences to meet the unmet demand
- d) to grant a specific number of licences each year

Officers provided an update on paragraph 37 and circulated a handout regarding the results of a survey on national comparisons on deregulation. It was reported that the results from eight other cities were mixed, with the general trend being an increase in hackney carriage licences, and a smaller increase, and even decrease, in the number of private hire vehicles.

Members agreed that there was a need to control the number of new licences and for more wheelchair accessible vehicles. Members raised concerns about the validity of the 2006 rank queue survey and that the only reliable survey dated from 2004. Members agreed that there was a need for a new survey to be carried out as soon as possible to find out what unmet demand there was in York and the effect of the new licensing laws on this demand.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to make the following recommendations to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee:-

- (i) That a rank queue survey be conducted and repeated at least every two years in order to monitor the level of unmet demand
- (ii) Approve Option d), i.e. to issue a limited number of new hackney carriage vehicle licenses each year until market demand regulates the number of licenses issued but subject to a review after 2 years on the effects of any increase in numbers.
- (iii) That officers be asked to investigate the availability of taxi vehicles which both meet Euro 4/5 standards and which also achieve low greenhouse gas emission levels
- (iv) That any new plates which may be made available are allocated to vehicles which allow side access for wheelchair users

- (v) That officers investigate and report back on options for extending the availability of taxi rank space with particular reference to the City centre.
- (vi) That the officers be asked to investigate and report on how the Council can ensure that plates are retained by local residents and that any rental income which may be charged by plate owners is ploughed back into improving the quality of the taxi service in York.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: This represents the least disruptive and controlled route to achieving deregulation. It will permit market forces to regulate the number of taxis viable in the city in the same way as any other business.

43. Petition for Residents Parking - Malton Avenue and Irwin Avenue

Members received a report which advised Members of the receipt of a petition that requested the introduction of a residents parking scheme for Malton Avenue and Irwin Avenue.

Members were presented with two options for consideration:

- A. Add this area to the list for investigation.

This option was in line with the current residents parking policy and the wishes of the petitioners; hence it was the recommended option.

- B. Reject the request for inclusion in a residents parking scheme.

This was not the recommended option as there was considered to be strong support demonstrated for a residents parking scheme.

Officers reported that there were currently six streets on the waiting list and that it would be at least two years until this request was investigated. Members raised concerns about how long it took for resident parking requests to be investigated. Officers reported that they would look at how they could accelerate the investigation of these requests as part of the budget process to see what they could do if they had the resources.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to

- (i) Include this area on the residents parking request list and begin investigations and consultation once it reaches the top of the list.
- (ii) Inform the lead petitioner of the outcome of this report.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To facilitate parking for residents and their visitors as requested and to reduce congestion

44. Petition From Residents of Rufforth Requesting a Cycle Route Between Their Village and Acomb

Members received a report which advised Members of the receipt of a petition from residents of Rufforth requesting that a cycle route be provided between Rufforth and Acomb.

There were two main options available to members:

- That council officers continue to provide limited support as and when required for the steering group to work up a scheme for potential inclusion in future capital programmes should funding become available. This work may include such tasks as scheme cost estimation and any highway-related work required to link the route into the highway network at either end and to cross the A1237 safely. The work could also involve helping the group to identify potential external sources of funding to pay for the cycle route, should it be feasible, to increase the probability of a route being provided if full or partial council capital funding cannot be guaranteed.
- To discontinue investigation into the possibility of providing a cycle route.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to

- (i) Note the content of the petition, and ask officers to continue to provide support to the steering group;
- (ii) Reply to the lead petitioner.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASONS: (i) To enable the proposed scheme to be properly assessed and for accurate costs to be calculated to enable it to be prioritised against other potential cycle schemes for potential capital programme funds. Also to provide advice on alternative sources of funding to the steering group to better the chances of implementation.

- (ii) To inform them of the panel's decision.

45. York Station Access Ramp

Member received a report which informed Members of the issues surrounding the construction of the proposed new access ramp into York Station and the potential to implement the scheme in the 2008/09 financial year.

Officers reported that there was an error in paragraph 16 and the recommendation of the report as the new franchisee was National Express not Stagecoach.

Members agreed that there was a need to give the new operator chance to sort out a workable scheme for the proposed new access ramp.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to

- (i) Note the reasons for the delay in implementing the York Station Access Ramp scheme;
- (ii) Ask officers to continue to liaise with Network Rail and National Express to establish a workable scheme agreed by all and that future funding be bid for from the DfT.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To update the Executive Member on the issues surrounding the construction of the proposed new access ramp into York Station.

46. Winter Maintenance Service 2007/08

Members received a report which advised Members of the outcome of a review called for by a resolution at the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel revenue budget estimates 2007/08 Committee. The resolution required an efficiency saving of £10,000 from winter maintenance.

Members were presented with four options:-

Option 1 - To reduce the number of self help salt bins placed around the Councils network from 436 to 186, specifically leaving only the ones frequently used over the last three winters and those funded by other parties.

Option 2 - Continue as we do at present and position all the salt bins out this coming winter and continue to monitor the situation. This would then be reported back to Members as part of next years winter maintenance review.

Option 3 - Carry out further work regarding the removal of a number of long established carriageway routes from their winter maintenance definitive list.

Option 4 – Discontinue work on removing any long established carriageway routes from the winter maintenance definitive list.

Members requested that the salt bin list be recirculated to Members and neighbourhood management officers to ensure that salt bins were provided where residents had concerns.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for City Strategy be advised to

- (i) Note the report and approve Option 1, namely to reduce the number of self help salt bins which were disturbed around the network for the general use of the public;
- (ii) Recirculate the self help salt bin list, including those identified for removal, to members and Neighbourhood Management Officers to allow Ward Committees to consider salt bin provision in their wards.
- (iii) Not pursue Option 3 at this time.

Decision of the Executive Member for City Strategy

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To ensure the current Council winter maintenance policy is robust whilst ensuring the budget is expended in the most cost effective way based on the Council's assessed priorities.

Cllr SF Galloway
Executive Leader

Cllr Reid
Executive Member for City Strategy

Cllr Gillies

Chair of Advisory Panel

The meeting started at 5.05 pm and finished at 7.15 pm.