
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	26 MAY 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS WALLER (CHAIR), AYRE, MOORE, MORLEY AND RUNCIMAN
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY AND REID

1. 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. No interests were declared.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 12 May 2009 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme, both in relation to agenda item 5 (Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options – Minute 5 refers).

Tom Hughes, of Meadlands Residents' Association, expressed concerns about proposals for development in the draft green belt area to the east of Metcalfe Lane. He urged Members to make a clear and precise decision that would protect green belt land, in accordance with the views of the LDF Working Group and the motion approved at Full Council on 2 April 2009.

Mark Warters, of York Natural Environment Trust, noted that there was a conflict between the intention expressed by Members to protect the green belt and their support for developments in areas such as Osbaldwick, and that the issue of environmental capacity had not been properly addressed in the LDF documents. He urged Members to support Option 2 in the report (approval of the Core Strategy Preferred Options document as amended by the recommendations of the LDF Working Group), in accordance with the motion approved by Full Council on 2 April 2009.

4. 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.

5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTIONS

Members considered a report which presented details of the draft Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy Preferred Options document, together with the recommendations of the LDF Working Group, and asked Members to approve the draft document for public consultation. The document itself had been made available in the Members' Library and on the Council's website.

The LDF Core Strategy would be the first development plan document produced by the Council under the new planning system, providing a written statement of the City's planning strategy and vision up to 2030. As such, it must deliver the spatial and physical elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy and must conform with national planning guidance and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The final submission document would be subject to independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate, whose recommendations would be binding. Government guidance indicated that the plans must be 'justified', 'effective' and 'consistent with national policy'.

The contents of the draft document had been considered by the LDF Working Group at their meetings on 6 and 20 April 2009. Details of the Group's recommendations were provided in the minutes of those meetings, attached as Annexes C and D to the report. They included a recommendation for the use of a windfall allowance and increased densities to help meet the overall housing target for York set in the RSS. Paragraphs 23 to 30 of the report outlined Officers' advice in respect of this recommendation. Briefly, the advice was that York did not meet the criteria for the use of windfalls and that the issue of housing figures in the current recession should be addressed by the inclusion of a question to residents in the document, the responses to which would then be used to inform the Council's future approach to the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS). In the light of this advice, Members were invited to consider the following options:

Option 1 – approve the draft document for public consultation, as amended by the recommendations of the LDF Working Group modified to reflect the comments made in paragraphs 23 to 30 of the report.

Option 2 - approve the draft document for public consultation, as amended by the recommendations of the LDF Working Group.

During the debate, Members expressed their commitment to the conservation of the draft green belt.

Having noted the advice of the Shadow Executive on this item and the comments made under Public Participation, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the view of the LDF Working Group in respect of housing demand numbers, which was also endorsed by Council, be supported; namely, that the numbers that central government wishes to see incorporated into the Local

Development Framework are deeply flawed, as they fail to recognise that:

- it will be many years before housing demand will return to pre-recession levels;
- windfall sites will continue to arise in the City and these will go some way to meeting demand over the next 20 years at least;
- the City cannot continue to expand at a rate of an additional 850 homes indefinitely as this will fundamentally change the character and setting of York and the surrounding area;

and in addition the density assumptions, for the last 5 years of the plan, fail to recognise the impact that the needs of smaller and single person family units will have on the demand for different types of property.

(ii) That the threat to develop green belt land, particularly in the areas near Huntington and Osbaldwick, which could be a consequence of central government failing to modify its policies, be noted.

(iii) That, therefore:

- a. The draft LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options document be approved for the purposes of public consultation, subject to being amended to include questions for consultees that address the recommendations of the LDF Working Group, which can be used as evidence to support the challenge to Government on York's housing targets and the current rules that prohibit the inclusion of 'windfalls' in delivering the City's future housing supply.¹
- b. Authority be delegated to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy, to make any incidental changes to the draft document that are necessary as a result of the recommendations of the LDF Working Group, as endorsed by the Executive.²
- c. Authority be delegated to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy, to approve the full sustainability to accompany the Preferred Options document consultation.³
- d. Authority be delegated to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City

Strategy, to approve a Consultation Strategy and associated documents. ⁴

REASON: In order to address the concerns of residents and Members regarding the protection of green belt land in the City and to enable the Local Development Framework Core Strategy to be progressed to the next stage.

Action Required

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| 1. Amend draft document in accordance with these recommendations / comments | SS |
| 2. Make any necessary incidental changes in consultation with Executive & Shadow Executive Member | SS |
| 3. Approve full sustainability appraisal in consultation with Executive & Shadow Executive Member | SS |
| 4. Approve consultation strategy in consultation with Executive & Shadow Executive Member | SS |

6. THE SIXTH STAFF SURVEY

Members considered a report which presented the results of the sixth Staff Survey and sought approval for the next steps required to address the priority areas identified through the draft Single Improvement Plan (SIP).

A total of 1,847 questionnaires had been returned, representing a response rate of 37%. Almost three quarters (71%) of staff had indicated that they were satisfied with their current job, a result comparable to the last three surveys. Although satisfaction with achieving something useful was high at 83%, satisfaction with pay levels was much lower (52%), which probably reflected the recent pay and grading review.

The response to the staff survey would be addressed in the workstreams of the refreshed SIP for 2009/10, which included:

- Internal communications
- HR priorities such as PDPs, workforce development and pay & grading
- Health and safety awareness
- Equalities actions and improvements
- Code of conduct awareness

Other activities planned or under way were summarised in paragraph 34 of the report. Arrangements for communicating the survey results and planned actions to staff were set out in paragraphs 35 to 37. The headline results had already been published on the intranet and in staff newsletters. Further communications would be provided through individual directorates and as part of the SIP process.

Members noted with approval the positive results achieved, particularly in view of the timing of the survey, and the plans to undertake further analysis at departmental level and for ORC International to provide benchmarking at no extra cost.

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

RESOLVED: (i) That the results of the staff survey, including the further analysis to be undertaken, be noted.

(ii) That the 'next steps' outlined in paragraphs 33 and 34 of the report be approved.¹

(iii) That it be requested that the Single Improvement Plan (SIP) report to the Executive include further actions to be undertaken to address the results of the survey.²

REASON: To ensure an appropriate response to the results of the survey, including benchmarking and a monitored action plan.

Action Required

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| 1. Make arrangements to implement the next steps (report paragraphs 33 and 34) | SC |
| 2. Ensure that the SIP includes actions to address the survey results | SC |

7. SINGLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN REFRESH 2009/10

Members considered a report which set out proposals for the work streams within the refreshed version of the Council's Single Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2009/10 and explained the basis for their inclusion in the SIP.

The SIP was a core element of the eighth theme of the Corporate Strategy, 'Effective Organisation', and was intended to cover continuous improvement of the Council's internal processes and governance frameworks. The original SIP had been reported to Executive on 30 June 2008. Following a review of corporate governance earlier in the year and the recent staff survey, a number of further areas had been identified for potential inclusion in the refreshed SIP.

A total of nine workstreams were now proposed for inclusion in the SIP, namely: HR, Equalities, Health & Safety, Member Training, Project Management, Code of Conduct Awareness, Partnership Governance, Internal Communications and Risk Management. Details of the proposed coverage of these areas, and the lead Officers in respect of each area, were set out in paragraph 12 of the report. Performance would be monitored via Corporate Management Team and the Executive on a quarterly basis.

Members thanked Officers for the work undertaken on this major cultural change and suggested that 'Improvement Plan' might be a less confusing title for the SIP.

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

RESOLVED: That the draft Single Improvement Plan, and the areas proposed for inclusion, be approved. ¹

REASON: To ensure the effective management of key actions to be taken to support on-going development and improvement work at the Council critical to the achievement of the Effective Organisation corporate priority.

Action Required

1. Make arrangements to finalise and implement the SIP SA

8. DATA QUALITY POLICY

Members considered a report which presented a draft corporate Data Quality Policy for discussion and approval.

The draft Policy, attached as Annex A to the report, had been produced as part of a plan of improvement to address the recommendations of the Audit Commission in respect of the Council's overall management arrangements for ensuring data quality. Details of these recommendations were provided in paragraph 5 of the report. The draft Policy had been endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 13 January 2009.

Members were invited to accept the draft Policy as presented, or to suggest amendments.

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

RESOLVED: (i) That the draft Data Quality Policy be approved. ¹

REASON: To raise the profile of data quality, develop a high level commitment to improving data quality and ensure a consistent approach.

(ii) That progress in achieving the requirements of the Policy be reported annually to the Audit and Governance Committee and the Executive. ²

REASON: To strengthen data quality review and reporting arrangements and in particular the reporting of outcomes to senior Officers and Members.

Action Required

1. Make arrangements to finalise and implement the Data Policy SA

2. Make arrangements to schedule annual reports on the Executive Forward Plan and include annual reports on the Audit & Governance Committee agenda SA

A Waller, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.40 pm].