
The Executive

6th May 2008

Report of the Chief Executive

A review and updating of the protocol governing the political management of the Council for the 2008/09 year

Summary

1. This reports asks the Executive to endorse the principles of the protocol agreed between the council's political Groups after last year's election, with a view to negotiating its continuation for the coming year.
2. The Executive is asked to consider a list of topics from Group Leaders which it is proposed will form the basis of initial discussions for negotiating a Policy Prospectus for the municipal year 2008/9. This paper also provides members with a look back and review of the topics from the Policy Prospectus for the current year, including details of the progress that has been made in addressing them.

Background

3. Following the local elections held in May 2007 no one political group gained overall control of the council. In view of this position, Leaders of the four political groups represented on the council agreed a set of political management arrangements for the following 12 months. In doing so they recognised the need for a workable, durable, speedy and inclusive decision making process based on an agreed set of policy objectives and milestones. In addition they identified a number of constitutional changes, policy reviews and changes for the allocation of seats on council decision making bodies to facilitate this. Further detail of the principles which underpinned the establishment of the present political management arrangements are set out in a letter from Councillor Galloway to the other 3 Group Leaders and reproduced here as annex 4.
4. This paper seeks approval to initiate a debate with a view to establishing a second Policy Prospectus. The Executive are asked to approve the draft list of topics for the Leader of the Council to progress consultation with the other Group Leaders.

Consultation

5. Each of the Group Leaders has been asked to submit proposed topics to form a draft policy prospectus, these topics are shown at annex 1. It includes details, where available, of present position and current work against these areas of work. This list also incorporates the review issues which were proposed by the

Conservative Group and agreed in resolving this year's annual budget settlement at the meeting of the Council on the 21st February.

6. Discussion with Group Leaders to date on a proposed Policy Prospectus for the coming year has shown that 3 groups, The Conservatives, Green Party and Liberal Democrats appear to be willing to agree consideration of a Policy Prospectus for the following year. Their view is that reports set out in the Policy Prospectus should be prioritised for officer support. The Labour Group will not be part of this, however, having withdrawn from the process in February this year. The Labour Group will progress such matters as it considers relevant through alternative mechanisms available by means of Constitutional and Council processes.
7. Officers have been consulted when reviewing progress against the topics which went to form the council's first Policy Prospectus. Annex 2 shows that all but one of the policy items from the agreement has been considered by the Executive since last May and resulted in further action. Not all of the constitutional items have been addressed however, progress against these is shown at annex 3. Where constitutional changes have not been implemented or policy topics fully progressed, these are also proposed as carry over items for the new prospectus and are included in annex 1.

Corporate Priorities

8. The policy prospectus is intended to provide a framework for agreed political action which includes the Corporate Strategy in the draft list of issues under consideration.

Implications

9. Implications arising from the Policy Prospectus, will be included in individual review reports as they are brought forward, there are however no specific implications associated with this paper
 - **Financial** – There are no financial implications
 - **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no HR implications
 - **Equalities** - There are no equalities implications
 - **Legal** – There are no legal implications
 - **Crime and Disorder** – There are no crime and disorder implications
 - **Information Technology (IT)** – There are no IT implications
 - **Property** – There are no implications for property

Risk Management

10. This paper is intended to initiate a debate between the council's political Groups to ensure a continuation of the protocols which have underpinned the organisation's political management since last year's election. This report is

timely in managing the risk associated with the present protocols expiring in May.

Recommendations

11. Members are invited to:

- a) Endorse the continuation of the principles for future political management arrangements set out in Cllr Galloway's letter of May 2007 to Group Leaders, subject to any further negotiated amendments to be agreed subsequently by all Group Leaders and notwithstanding any specific issues which no longer apply one year on.
- b) Endorse the proposed list of policy and constitutional issues as a means of initiating negotiation between Cllr Galloway and other Group Leaders in resolving a new Policy Prospectus for the municipal year 2008/9.
- c) Agree to continue to receive reports on topics from the first Policy Prospectus, which whilst already reported to the Executive, are still progressing.
- d) Approve the timescale for agreeing a final version of the new political protocol due to come to the Executive on 20th May for sign off by participating Group Leaders.

Reasons – to ensure the continuation of protocol integral to the council's political management.

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bill McCarthy
Chief Executive

Report
Approved



Date 23rd April 2008

Specialist Implications Officers: None

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

- 1 Draft Policy Prospectus for 2008/9
- 2 Review of Policy items from 2007/8 Policy Prospectus
- 3 Review of Constitution items from 2007/8 Policy Prospectus
- 4 Letter from Cllr. Steve Galloway setting out political protocol for 2007/8

Background Papers

- Executive report 'Future political management arrangements at the City of York Council' 12th June 2007
- Policy Prospectus 2007/8