

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects and Equalities
Date	24 January 2024
Present	Councillor Lomas (Executive Member)
In Attendance	Laura Williams (Assistant Director, Customer, Communities and Inclusion)

10. Declarations of Interest (10:00)

The Executive Member was 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 she might have had in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

11. Minutes (10:00)

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session of the Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, and Equalities held on 12 October 2023 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

12. Public Participation (10:01)

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Flick Williams spoke on agenda item 4 Implementing the Social Model of Disability. She thanked the Executive Member and Assistant Director Customer, Communities and Inclusion for consulting with disabled people. She spoke about the need for disability equalities training and explained the problems with officers understanding of the use of language in regard to disabilities. She explained why social model of disability needed to be enacted.

Cllr Ravilious had registered to speak on agenda item 4 Implementing the Social Model of Disability. As she was unable to attend the meeting, the Executive Member read out Cllr Ravilious' statement in which she

welcomed the report and it's reference to actions to address the climate and biodiversity crisis impacting disabled people in different ways. She suggested that the term 'eco-ableism' was inappropriate and she requested an amendment to paragraph 52 of the report under the section on Environment and Climate Action.

The Executive Member welcomed the intention to work more closely and to bring together City of York Council to work as one council on issues that had the potential to disable people. She noted that the entire report was aimed at avoiding and challenging ableism wherever and whenever it was encountered, which would mean difficult changes to the council's way of thinking and working together across the board. She added that just as when the council engaged in work on anti-racism it should never shy away from naming and discussing ableism, but instead it should find ways to work together to address them. She added that the council should reflect on the use of the specific term "eco-ableism" as driving division was not the aim of this paper, and she suggested that the overarching term "ableism" should be used instead.

13. Implementing the Social Model of Disability (10:07)

The Executive Member considered a report that set out a clear policy statement as to what the Social Model of Disability meant in terms of how the council would communicate, engage, and deliver services to those who live, work, study in or visit the city. The report also contained an update on the work of the York Access Forum and the move to appoint an independent Chair to take the work of the forum forward.

The Assistant Director, Customer, Communities and Inclusion outlined the report and recommendations, noting the work of York Access Forum. The Executive Member commented that she was delighted to be making a decision on implementing the Social Model of Disability at the Decision Session as it was the result of work done by many people in the council and in the city following the motion to council in 2022. She expressed gratitude to members of YDRF, HRCN and the Access Forum who had given their time to have input into the paper. She noted that the experience in York over the last few years taught how far was needed to go to avoid ableism and enable all who live or work in York or who visit our city have equal access both to the built environment and all of the services and positive benefits that the city offered.

The Executive Member added that embedding the social model of disability was not easy, and as a disabled person she had been on her own journey of learning and understanding, having been conditioned all my life to perceive the world through a medical model lens. She added that she

looked forward to the challenges that would inevitably come as people worked together to go on the journey to use the social model of disability to remove barriers and make the city better for everyone.

The Executive Member then:

Resolved: That;

1. The policy statement on implementing the Social Model of Disability at City of York Council be approved.
2. A commitment be made to the council providing elected Members and officers with appropriate Disability Equality Training.
3. The York Access Forum update, Terms of Reference, and the next steps in appointing a new forum Chair be noted.

Reason: To ensure CYC officers and decision makers are working to a clear policy statement as to what the Social Model of Disability means.

Cllr Lomas, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.10 am].

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