

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Resolutions and proceedings of the Meeting of the City of York Council held in The Guildhall, York on Thursday, 29th June, 2006, starting at 6.30 pm

Present: The Lord Mayor (Councillor Janet Hopton) in the Chair, and the following Councillors:

ACOMB WARD	BISHOPTHORPE WARD
Horton Simpson-Laing	Livesley
CLIFTON WARD	DERWENT WARD
Jones Scott	Greenwood
DRINGHOUSES & WOODTHORPE WARD	FISHERGATE WARD
Reid Sunderland	D'Agorne Hill
FULFORD WARD	GUILDHALL WARD
Aspden	B Watson
HAXBY & WIGGINTON WARD	HESLINGTON WARD
Hall Hogg R Watson	Jamieson-Ball
HEWORTH WARD	HEWORTH WITHOUT WARD
Blanchard Kind Potter	Lancelott
HOLGATE WARD	HULL ROAD WARD
Bartlett Fairclough Nimmo	Smallwood Wilde
HUNTINGTON & NEW EARSWICK WARD	MICKLEGATE WARD

Orrell
Runciman

Evans
Fraser
Merrett

OSBALDWICK WARD

RURAL WEST YORK WARD

Morley

Bradley
Macdonald

SKELTON, RAWCLIFFE & CLIFTON
WITHOUT WARD

STRENSALL WARD

Moore
I Waudby
M Waudby

Cuthbertson
Kirk

WESTFIELD WARD

WHELDRAKE WARD

Steve Galloway
Sue Galloway
Waller

Vassie

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Holvey, Hyman, King and Looker

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. The Lord Mayor invited Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they had in any of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

MINUTES

2. The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on 11 April 2006 and the special meeting held on 27 April 2006 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

3. The Lord Mayor announced the receipt of the following gifts to the City, which were available to view in the Council Chamber:
 - A book from the Lithuanian Ambassador;
 - A desk set from Munster.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4. The Lord Mayor reported that no registrations to speak had been received under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

PETITIONS

5. No petitions were presented by Members under Standing Order 7.

NOTICES OF MOTION

6. In accordance with Standing Order 11, four notices of motion had been received:

(i) ftr

It was moved by Councillor Simpson-Laing and seconded by Councillor Merrett that:

"This Council has some concern over the partnership agreement between CYC & First York Ltd with regard to the 'ftr'. Council asks CYC Officers:

- To ensure that ticketing difficulties, including the issue of 'Family Tickets' and the inability of the ticket machines to give change are sorted out as a matter of urgency so that York residents are not financially penalised when using the service.

- That CYC ask First to retain conductors on board or allow contact between passengers and drivers when there are payment difficulties or access/destination issues particularly for those with disabilities.”

Cllr Steve Galloway moved, and Councillor Waller seconded, under Standing Order 11, that the motion stand referred for the preparation of an Officer report and subsequent consideration by the Executive, without substantive debate at this meeting.

That was put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be referred for the preparation of an Officer report and subsequent consideration by the Executive.

(ii) Young People’s Champion

It was moved by Councillor Kind and seconded by Councillor Fraser that:

"This Council welcomes the election of the first elected Children’s and Young People’s Champion and congratulates Cllr David Scott as the successful candidate."

The motion was put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be approved.

(iii) “Change It” Campaign

It was moved by Councillor Scott and seconded by Councillor Kind that:

"This Council supports The Press "Change it" campaign and directs the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Home Secretary requesting him to:-

1. Urgently review the law in relation to the abduction of children by strangers.
2. Amend the legislation or introduce new legislation which will permit judges (at their discretion), where an individual has been convicted of actual or attempted child abduction where a sexual intent has been proved to the satisfaction of the Court, to make banning orders and to place offenders on the Sex Offenders' Register."

The motion was put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be approved.

(iv) Selby & York Primary Care Trust Cuts

It was moved by Councillor Sue Galloway and seconded by Councillor Waller that:

"City of York Council calls upon the Secretary of State for Health to halt the cuts at Selby and York Primary Care Trust, in order to protect the health of local residents."

The motion was put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be approved.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

7. A written report was received from the Leader on the work of the Executive, and he then formally moved, and Councillor Waller seconded, those minutes requiring confirmation from the following meeting:
- (i) Executive on 27 June 2006, Minutes 19 and 20 (*circulated with the late papers*) – recommendations in respect of the Statement of Accounts 2005/06, with the inclusion of amended pages 29 and 58-60, and the 2006/07 Council Plan, with the inclusion of the amendments circulated.

The motion was put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That minutes 19 and 20 of the above meeting, and the recommendations of the Executive in respect of the Statement of Accounts 2005/06, with the inclusion of amended pages 29 and 58-60, and the 2006/07 Council Plan, with the inclusion of the amendments circulated, be approved and that the relevant page of the Accounts be signed by the Lord Mayor as the formal record of them being approved by Council.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER

8. A written report was received from Councillor Sunderland, the Executive Member for Housing. Councillor Sunderland then responded to a series of questions put by Members in accordance with Standing Orders. Prior notice had been given of ten questions to the Executive Member under this item. These were taken in the order set out on the list circulated around the Council Chamber, until

the 10 minute time limit had elapsed, as follows:

(i) From Councillor Livesley:

“Would the Executive Member confirm the details of the progress made on Housing Modernisation over the last three years?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The figures are as follows:

Since 2003 the following works have been completed.

- *1377 properties have received Tenants Choice*
- *1696 homes have had upvc double glazing fitted*
- *747 fire doors have been fitted*
- *217 roof coverings have been replaced*
- *164 properties have had new doors fitted*
- *9 blocks of flats have been re-rendered*
- *332 homes have received either new boilers or full heating systems.*
- *196 home have received new fires.*

There are also the programmes of works which have been completed under the York Pride works:

- *Replacement of door entry systems*
- *Repairs and maintenance of communal areas, concrete paths repairs/ground works.*
- *Improved communal and security lighting*
- *And 49 burglar alarms were fitted across the city. Estate managers liaised with Safer York Partnership to identify those at risk.*

(ii) From Councillor Greenwood

“How was the substantial reduction in rent arrears achieved?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The Current Tenant arrears have reduced by £500K over the last two years. £300K in 2004/05 when the department exceeded the target by £100K and a further £195K in 2005/06 achieving the targets set.

There are a number of factors that have led to the achievement.

The creation of a specialist income management team – In September 2004 the role of the estate manager was changed in the City based team. The staff were split between Tenancy management function and Rent recovery function. This was initially seen as a pilot for a year.

Over recent years there had been a trend for the arrears to increase. The arrears rose from £783k in March 2003 to £1,047k in March 2004 and at September 2004 the debt had risen by nearly £100K to £1,131k. The reasons for this trend were various:

- Lack of focus on arrears;
- Implementation of the new integrated system;
- Staff resources v Customer priorities.

During the first six months of the pilot between September 2004 and March 2005 there was a dramatic improvement in performance. The trend had been reversed with the arrears standing at £784k. The overall reduction across the two teams during the period were as follows:

The specialist team saw a 29% reduction with £236.5k coming off the arrears. The remaining generic team saw a reduction of £125k, a 25% reduction.

The progress continued through the remainder of the pilot and in January 2006 a report was received on the success of the scheme the report came to EMAP and was approved by Lib Dem members. This allowed for a permanent change to a specialist income management team and a separate tenancy management team which were both incorporated into the restructure of the department.

Some of the reasons for the success of the specialist approach are:

- Greater focus on the task less distraction away from targets.
- Earlier intervention, catching the debts at a earlier stage ensuring that the debt is more manageable for the customer.
- Greater specialist knowledge, allowing staff to pursue benefit cases more rigorously.
- Greater focus on individual targets that were owned by the individuals and the team. This lead to staff motivation a willingness by staff to put extra effort in and come up with innovations.
- Staff changed working patterns doing out of hours working in the evenings and at weekends.
- Some of the other reasons for the successful reduction in the arrears are to some extent spin offs from the specialist approach.
- The introductions of a regular monthly newsletter giving staff regular up dates on the progress towards meeting their targets.
- Work with advice agencies to set up the court referral system that are run by HARP and CAB
- Debt advice service at council offices run by the CAB.
- Targeting customers who owe more than £250 at the rent free periods encouraging them to pay during this period this has lead to payments in excess of £250K during these four weeks.
- Evening and weekend visits and greater emphasis on face to

face contact.

- *Regular monthly monitoring at a senior level.*
- *The running of Media campaigns at Christmas. And the use of a rent arrears leaflet sent out with all arrears letters.*
- *The introduction of different methods of payment eg swipe cards and the internet allow customers to pay there rent outside council office hours. This along with the promotion of direct debit has contributed to an improvement in payment patterns.*
- *Regular meetings with benefits and their improved performance has helped as well.*

The Housing Department has made excellent progress, at both collecting and preventing debt."

(iii) From Councillor Horton

"Why has the number of non-decent Council houses risen significantly on the 2005/6 year end performance figures and how is the Council going to respond?"

The Executive Member replied:

"These have actually reduced from 1,574 in 2004/5 to 1,034 in 2005/6."

(iv) From Councillor Cuthbertson

"What has been the effect of the introduction of rent payments by swipe card?"

The Executive Member replied:

"The Swipe cards were introduced in July 05 and have proved extremely successful with our customers. They are able to use them at cashiers, the post office and any paypoint or payzone retail outlet. Between July 05 and 31/3/2006 we received 47,000 transactions this way and a total of £2,634,912 was paid using this method. The popularity has continued this year with nearly 16,000 transaction up to 21/6/2006 and a total of £843,311 received.

Customers are clearly taking advantage of the fact that they can use the scheme out of hours as we regularly receive between £20-£25K at the weekend.

It should also be remembered that each transaction is costing £0.45p as opposed to over £2.00 for the rent collector and the ATM at Acomb. Customers now have over a 140 places in the city where they can pay. On 1/1/2006 we also introduced internet payments, we had 46 transactions up until the end of March and 105 transactions between April and June so this method is gradually increasing. I firmly believe that the introduction of swipe cards has also contributed in some way to the reduction in current rent arrears.

Once again it needs to mentioned that Labour were also opposed to the

introduction of this payment system.”

The 10 minute time limit elapsed before the following questions could be taken:

(v) From Councillor Brian Watson

“What proportion of residents associations are still meeting on the usual monthly basis?”

(vi) From Councillor Potter

“What level of support are residents associations now receiving from the Neighbourhood Pride Unit compared to that previously received from Community Services and when will the SLA between Housing and Neighbourhood Services finally be agreed?”

(vii) From Councillor Jones

“Could the Executive Member please explain the drop in tenants satisfaction?”

(viii) From Councillor Horton

“Given that the average time to re-let Council properties has now risen to 32 days can the Executive Member inform Council how much potential revenue is being lost as a result and what effect it is having on the housing waiting list?”

(ix) From Councillor Merrett

“Can the Executive Member please explain what is being done to provide more protected accommodation and support to deal with those vulnerable tenants who suffer from unwelcome visitors who are a nuisance / problem to them and other tenants?”

(x) From Councillor Merrett

“Would the Executive Member advise how many affordable properties for sale have been agreed in section 106 agreements for housing developments completed to date, how many of these properties were successfully sold to persons from the York Housing waiting lists, and how many remained unsold and were returned to the developer (including a breakdown by property type & bedroom number & price)?”

**QUESTIONS TO EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS
RECEIVED UNDER STANDING ORDER 10(C)**

9. In accordance with Standing Order 10 (c) (1) the following questions were put and responses given:

(i) From Councillor Brian Watson to the Executive Leader

“Would the Leader of the Council explain why so many residents did not receive notice of the public meeting about the relocation of the Peasholme Centre and will he urgently organise another meeting to ensure proper consultation with residents?”

The Executive Leader replied:

“In relation to the streets to be leafleted, these were agreed between officers and Ward Members.

The streets where some residents are claiming to officers that apparently leaflets hadn't been delivered were Ogleforth and Aldwark, two streets that Cllr Watson asked to be included and which are on the distribution list. There were no concerns raised with officers over the area leafleted surrounding the Fishergate site.

Written confirmation has been received from the contractor to the effect that leaflets were delivered to all homes in the streets on the list.

I am happy for an officer to attend the Guildhall Ward Committee meeting on 13th July to answer any outstanding questions that residents may have.”

(ii) From Councillor Simpson-Laing to the Executive Member for City Strategy

“Can the Executive Member inform Council on which other routes in the city the ‘ftr’ is being considered for, as reported in the Corporate Strategy 2006-2011?”

The Executive Member replied:

“There are no plans to extend the use of the ftr at the present time. It is possible that in the future it will be considered for use in public transport links connected with the York Central development.”

(iii) From Councillor Simpson-Laing to the Executive Member for City Strategy

“Could the Executive Member describe what action she plans to take, in the next 6 months, in relation to growing congestion on York's arterial routes during rush hour, in particular to help with the running of buses?”

The Executive Member replied:

“Congestion levels are not increasing in the City. Our plans continue to be to encourage residents to walk or cycle to destinations when ever possible, thus minimizing demand for

road space.”

(iv) From Councillor Simpson-Laing to the Executive Member for City Strategy

“Would the Executive Member agree to bring forward at the earliest possible date, a Supplementary Planning Guidance to stop the conversion of 2 bed terraced houses into flats, due to the effect that this is having on the supply of starter homes, and that at recent Planning Appeals CYC Policy H8 has been seen to contradict Policy H9 of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan, with CYC decisions for refusal being overturned?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The issue of the conversion of terraced houses and other properties into flats will be considered as part of the on going work on the Local Development Framework. More specifically it is proposed this will be considered as part of the production of the Development Control Development Plan Document. The inclusion of suitable policy approach within a development plan document will clearly have considerably more weight than a draft SPG.”

(v) From Councillor Moore to the Executive Member for City Strategy

“Can the Executive Member confirm that we have achieved all our Planning Targets for the year and should therefore no longer be designated a Standards Authority after 30th June?”

The Executive Member replied:

“I am absolutely delighted to be able to report that we have met, and indeed exceeded, the Government targets in the current assessment period 1st July 05 to 30th June 06.

*Majors are at **75.47%** compared to a target of 60%, Minors at **70.06%** (target 65%) and Others at **86.87%** (target 80%).*

I would ask Members to remember that we have achieved these results from an incredible low base. In 2002/03 a mere 18% of major applications were determined within the 13 week timescale, minors languished at 39% and others were a measly 59%. I think that you would agree with me that we have achieved great results and I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all the Officers in Development Control whose hard work and commitment has enabled this major turn around in performance to take place.

So long as the Government don't move the goal posts I am confident that the standards status will be lifted.”

(vi) From Councillor Potter to the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services

“Will the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services explain why there is a two tier system of street cleaning operating in the City, where terraced areas are only swept once or twice a year when gullies are cleaned whilst the remainder of the City streets are swept on a 40 day cycle? Please can he also give his assurance that the imminent review of street cleaning will address this inequality and ensure that terraced areas receive the same level of service enjoyed by the rest of the City?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The 40 day cycle refers to the two large and two small mechanical sweepers. These vehicles can not operate in areas with a significant number of parked cars. In most cases, this is terraced streets where residents do not have off street parking, however, in other areas with similar parking difficulties are also affected.

Through York Pride we have increased the frequency of Terrace sweeping over the last two years, and we are achieving, on average approximately a 10 month cycle. Prior to this it was over a year between sweeps.

All Street Cleaning operations including arrangements for terraced properties will be assessed as part of the review commencing in July 2006 to further enhance York Pride.”

(vii) From Councillor Holvey to the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services

“Would the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods not agree that the timely removal of graffiti is of key concern to residents and say what the Council is doing to achieve this?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The timely removal of graffiti is a key concern to residents therefore the Council has established monitoring arrangements within the City Centre and in our Neighbourhoods to identify graffiti before arranging for it to be removed.

Street Environment Officers through their work with ward members during walkabouts, and their general monitoring responsibilities are key to the identification and response to graffiti on both public and private land. The proactive service delivered has allowed us to exceed our targets as follows:

The average performance for 2005/6 was:

*COLI 77a Average time taken to remove obscene graffiti –
Target 2 days*

Actual 1.98 days.”

(viii) From Councillor Vassie to the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services

“Would the Executive Member give details of the recycling levels that the Council and partners have achieved in the City?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The total waste arising was 3,500 tonnes less than last year. This has bucked the national trend of 3% waste growth and brings us in 5% below our own challenging target.

The tonnes of recycling are:

- *16,100 tonnes recycled*
- *7,400 tonnes composted*

Making the annual recycling 24.08% of the waste arising against the government set target of 18%.

We have 12 partner groups we have worked with us this year and they collected a total of 220 tonnes of recycling and composting material which is included in the above figures.”

(ix) From Councillor Richard Watson to the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services

“Could the Executive Member give an update on progress with the Eco Depot?”

The Executive Member replied:

“The contractor, Mowlem, is currently on programme and practical completion is scheduled for 30th September 2006.

Plans are being drawn up to enable relocation of services to the new depot over a 6 week period that begins on the 1st October 2006. This will give Keyland Gregory possession of the existing depot site on the 10th November 2006. Staff are being consulted and a project plan will shortly be produced so that the move can be managed without disruption to our customers.

Issues around the 'Eco - sustainability' agenda are progressing. The majority of the straw panels are in place on the new office building, the roof is being installed to include photo voltaic cells that will contribute to the energy needs of the site. A new planning application has been made for the wind-turbine on a smaller scale. Rainwater harvesting is also being included in the scheme.”

(x) From Councillor Aspden to the Executive Member for Social Inclusion and Youth

“How has the Executive Member responded to the recommendations made in the Inclusive Decision Making Scrutiny Report?”

The Executive Member replied:

“I am pleased that the final report of the Inclusive Decision Making Scrutiny Panel was reported to the Executive on June 13th. The recommendations were accepted subject to the usual financial constraints, although the first, and most significant, recommendation regarding the establishment of a Social Inclusion Working Group had been pre-empted by the Constitutional Review. What is important now is to get the Working Group up and running with a work plan. The first meeting of SIWG is scheduled to take place in July.

The establishment of a Disabled Persons Forum, as outlined in the scrutiny report, to feed into the Working Group will be a priority. I am delighted to be able to confirm this evening that the former DPAG budget will be available to the SIWG. This small pot will enable SIWG to develop its role in ensuring that inclusive decision making is high on the Council's agenda.”

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

10. Councillor R Watson moved and Councillor Moore seconded those minutes requiring confirmation from the following meeting:
- (i) Audit & Governance Committee on 6 June 2006, Minute 13 – recommendations in respect of the Committee Role, Remit and Key Relationships – Statement of Purpose.

RESOLVED: That minute 13 of the above meeting and the recommendations of Audit & Governance Committee in respect of the Committee Role, Remit and Key Relationships – Statement of Purpose be approved.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

11. Councillor Nimmo moved and Councillor I Waudby seconded those minutes requiring confirmation from the following meeting:
- (i) Licensing & Regulatory Committee on 2 June 2006, Minute 4 – recommendations in respect of Electoral Arrangements – Parish of Clifton Without.

RESOLVED: That minute 4 of the above meeting and the

recommendations of Licensing & Regulatory Committee in respect of Electoral Arrangements – Parish of Clifton Without be approved.

MINOR DRAFTING AMENDMENTS TO THE NEW CONSTITUTION

12. Councillor Steve Galloway moved, and Councillor Waller seconded, the recommendations in the report of the Head of Civic, Democratic and Legal Services, at pages 35-37 of the Council papers. The report sought approval for some minor drafting amendments to the Council's new Constitution. An amended version of the schedule of amendments annexed to the report had been circulated around the Council Chamber.

RESOLVED: That the amendments to the Constitution, set out in the amended version of the schedule of amendments circulated around the Council Chamber, be approved.

SCRUTINY

13. A written report was received from Councillor Kirk, the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC), on the work of the SMC since the last report to Council, in April 2006.

ACTIVITIES OF OUTSIDE BODIES

14. Minutes or reports of the following meetings of Outside Bodies were considered. In accordance with a previous request at Council, these had been made available to Members to view on the Council's computer system. The Lord Mayor invited comments and questions, firstly, from Council representatives on those bodies either in relation to the body generally or specifically on the minutes, and then, secondly, from Members generally.

- **Yorkshire and Humber Assembly**
Meeting on 24 January 2006 and Executive Board meeting on 20 April 2006
- **North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority**
Meeting on 8 February 2006 and special meeting on 27 March 2006

APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

15. RESOLVED: That the appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies and Working Groups, as set out in the revised list circulated around the Council Chamber (attached as Annex A to these

minutes), be approved.

Councillor Janet Hopton
LORD MAYOR OF YORK

[The meeting started at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.40 pm]

Appointments and Changes to Membership of Committees, Working Groups and Outside Bodies

COMMITTEES

Young People's Working Panel

To appoint Cllr Looker as second Labour substitute.

Corporate Services Advisory Panel

To appoint Cllr Potter as the Labour substitute.

Children's Services Advisory Panel

To appoint the following co-opted members:

Statutory Co-opted Members

Mr J Bailey	Parent Governor Representative
Miss C Duffy	Catholic Representative
Mr A Lawton	Parent Governor Representative
Dr D Sellick	Church of England Representative

Non-Statutory Co-opted Members

Ms F Barclay	Teacher Representative
Mrs A Burn	Headteacher Representative
Mrs J Ellis	Governor Representative
Mr M Galloway	Further Education Representative
Ms B Reagan	Teacher Representative
Mr M Thomas	Teacher Representative

Education Scrutiny Committee

To appoint Mr John Bailey as a Parent Governor representative, in place of Dr G M Clayton.

Appointments Panel – Assistant Director for Economic Development

Liberal Democrat (2)	TBA TBA
Labour (1)	TBA

Appointments Panel – Assistant Director for City Development and Transport

Liberal Democrat (2)	TBA TBA
Labour (1)	TBA

(p.t.o.)

PARTNERSHIP AND OTHER BODIES**Schools Organisation Committee**

To appoint Ms Annette Hill as a Teacher representative, in place of Ms L Johnson.
To appoint Roger Highton as a Diocese C of E representative, in place of Mr David Thewlis.

OUTSIDE BODIES**LGYH Employers Committee**

To appoint Cllr Bartlett and Cllr Fraser to this committee, which replaces the Yorkshire & Humber Employers Forum.

The Members' Council of York NHS Foundation Trust

To appoint Cllrs Fraser, Kirk and Livesley to the above body.

[Note: The appointments made at Annual Council to the York NHS Foundation Trust Board are no longer applicable, as the City of York Council is not now required to appoint to that body.]