

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Resolutions and proceedings of the Meeting of the City of York Council held in Guildhall, York on Thursday, 10th April, 2008, starting at 6.30 pm

Present: The Lord Mayor (Cllr Irene Waudby) in the Chair, and the following Councillors:

ACOMB WARD

Horton
Simpson-Laing

BISHOPTHORPE WARD

CLIFTON WARD

Douglas
King
Scott

DERWENT WARD

Brooks

DRINGHOUSES & WOODTHORPE WARD

Holvey
Reid
Sunderland

FISHERGATE WARD

D'Agorne
Taylor

FULFORD WARD

Aspden

GUILDHALL WARD

Looker
B Watson

HAXBY & WIGGINTON WARD

Firth
Hogg
R Watson

HESLINGTON WARD

Jamieson-Ball

HEWORTH WARD

Blanchard
Funnell
Potter

HEWORTH WITHOUT WARD

Ayre

HOLGATE WARD

Alexander
Bowgett
Crisp

HULL ROAD WARD

Cregan
Pierce

HUNTINGTON & NEW EARSWICK
WARD

Hyman
Orrell
Runciman

MICKLEGATE WARD

Fraser
Gunnell
Merrett

OSBALDWICK WARD

Morley

RURAL WEST YORK WARD

Gillies
Healey
Hudson

SKELTON, RAWCLIFFE & CLIFTON
WITHOUT WARD

Moore

STRENSALL WARD

Kirk
Wiseman

WESTFIELD WARD

Steve Galloway
Sue Galloway
Waller

WHELDRAKE WARD

Vassie

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Galvin and Watt

78. 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:

79. MINUTES

Cllr Richard Watson moved, and Cllr Jamieson-Ball seconded, the following amendment to the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 24 January 2008:

“That the note under Minute 62(iii) be amended to read as follows:

‘In accordance with an interpretation of the advice offered by the Monitoring Officer regarding members of the Planning Committee dealing with any future planning applications in relation to the Eco Town proposal, the following Members left the Chamber during the debate on the above motion and took no part in the decision thereon:

Cllrs Blanchard, Cregan, Crisp, Firth, Funnell, Horton, King, Kirk Pierce, Simpson-Laing, B Watson and Wiseman.’”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED

Cllr Brian Watson then drew attention to an error in the second paragraph under Minute 59 (Civic Announcements, Lord Mayor Elect and Honorary Recorder of York), which it was agreed should be corrected.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the above amendment, and the removal of the word *‘for the second time’* from the paragraph under Minute 59 recording Cllr Brian Watson’s acceptance of his nomination as Lord Mayor Elect, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 24 January 2008 and the Budget Council meeting held on 21 February 2008 be approved and signed by the Lord Mayor as a correct record.

80. CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no civic announcements.

81. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Lord Mayor reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme.

Ian Watkins, Brigade Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union of North Yorkshire, spoke in relation to the Integrated Risk Management Plan and its effects on Fire and Emergency cover in the City of York. He expressed concern at the detrimental effects of the new arrangements on national standards, the

removal of guaranteed attendance times and the pressure to cut resources, and warned that the review of fire cover provision in York could result in the loss of fire engines, as it had done elsewhere in the region.

82. STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Mrs Christine Bainton, the Independent Chair of the Standards Committee, presented the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for the Municipal Year 2007/08. She drew attention to the imminent changes to the role and membership of the Standards Committee resulting from implementation of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and the Action Plan agreed in response to issues raised by the Ethical Governance Audit.

Cllr Horton, the Vice-Chair, then moved receipt of the Annual Report and Cllr Hudson seconded the motion and it was

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2007/08 be received.

Cllr Horton then moved, and Cllr Hudson seconded, a recommendation made by the Standards Committee on 14 March 2008 in respect of a proposed alteration to the Members' Allowances Scheme. On being put to the vote, the recommendations were declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the recommendation of the Standards Committee, to include provision in the Members' Allowances Scheme to withdraw Members' allowances during the period a Member is suspended from office as a result of the finding of the Adjudication Panel for England or the Standards Committee that the Member has failed to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct, be approved.¹

Action Required

1. Amend Members' Allowances Scheme.

GR

83. PETITIONS

The following petitions were presented by Members under Standing Order 7:

- (i) A petition presented by Cllr Potter, on behalf of residents asking the Council to aim for a 'plastic bag free City of York' and calling for a government ban on single use plastic bags.¹
- (ii) A petition presented by Cllr D'Agorne, on behalf of residents calling for a 20 mph zone in certain streets within Fishergate Ward.²
- (iii) A petition presented by Cllr Simpson-Laing, on behalf of residents of Runswick Avenue, Wetherby Road and Beckfield Lane in relation to the ownership of a plot of land in Runswick Avenue.³

- (iv) A petition presented by Cllr Simspon-Laing, on behalf of residents calling on the Council to return the travel token allocation to £40 for the Budget Year 2008/09.⁴
- (v) A petition presented by Cllr Looker, on behalf of businesses in Stonegate, seeking action in relation to nuisance being caused by a beggar in this street.⁵

RESOLVED: That the above petitions be referred to the Executive or appropriate committee.

Action Required

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Refer petition to Executive / appropriate committee
(include item on Forward Plan) | KS |
| 2. Refer petition to Executive / appropriate committee
(include item on Forward Plan) | JB |
| 3. Refer petition to Executive / appropriate committee
(include item on Forward Plan) | JB |
| 4. Refer petition to Executive / appropriate committee
(include item on Forward Plan) | JB |
| 5. Refer petition to Executive / appropriate committee
(include item on Forward Plan) | KS |

84. NOTICES OF MOTION

Prior to consideration of the Notices of Motion submitted under Standing Order 11, Cllr Scott moved, Cllr Gillies seconded and Council agreed, a motion to suspend Standing Orders to enable an additional motion to be moved, of which notice had not been given.

Cllr Simpson-Laing then moved, and Cllr Gillies seconded, the additional motion, as follows:

“The City of York Council calls upon its Chief Executive Officer to arrange urgent talks, with a view to preventing a reduction in bus service to the residents of York, with Moir Lockhead, the Chief Executive of First UK, Richard Eames, Managing Director of First York, the Executive Member for City Strategy, the Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy and the Director of City Strategy to discuss the changes to be made to bus services by First York, which will have drastic consequences in relation to:

- the ability for York residents to travel to work, education, shop and access to health facilities
- will result in increased traffic levels on many routes
- will result in increased levels of poor air quality

Council requests that the meeting is convened before the 18th April so that any alterations to the proposed changes to services can be lodged with the Traffic Commissioner before the closing date.”

Cllr Reid then moved, and Cllr Waller seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

“At the end of the motion, add:

‘Council calls upon Government to match its words by giving councils more control over bus company fares and routes, and to fully fund any changes to local authorities of national policies which impact on council transport budgets.’”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared LOST.

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

RESOLVED: That the above motion be approved.¹

Seven Notices of Motion had been submitted under Standing Order 11, of which three had been referred from the Executive with recommendations and four submitted for consideration directly by Council.

(i) Businesses in City Centre Peripheral Streets

This motion had been referred to the Executive by Council on 4 October 2007 and referred back to Council on 26 February 2008.

It was moved by Cllr Fraser and seconded by Cllr Looker that:

“This Council is concerned that whilst businesses in the inner core of the City Centre are thriving, some of the City Centre peripheral streets such as Goodramgate, Micklegate and Fossgate, were not perceived as benefiting from this prosperity and are, in some cases, taking on a somewhat ‘run down’ look. Further, Council notes that a review of the Council’s footstreets scheme is currently under way and determines that regard should be had to this issue, in the conduct of that review. Finally, Council resolves to allocate adequate resources, including Officer time, to research this problem, and to develop an Action Plan, to include an economic regeneration strategy, to address this issue and to encourage a culture of vibrancy and prosperity, in these streets.”

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED unanimously and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, and the Executive recommendations thereon, be approved.²

(ii) Landfill Tax

It was moved by Cllr Ayre and seconded by Cllr Waller that:

“Council notes:

- 1) The increase in Landfill Tax from £24 per tonne to £32 per tonne from 1st April 2008;

- 2) That when the Landfill Tax was established in 1996 it was stated that it would not be a net revenue raiser by HM Treasury;
- 3) That despite protests from councils of all political persuasions as co-ordinated by the Local Government Association (LGA) still no commitment has been made by central government to return the increased revenues to local government to assist with the provision of improved recycling services;
- 4) That revenues which could be utilised to boost still further the York recycling rate, through additional kerbside collections and improvements in the range of materials collected, will otherwise be lost from this local authority.

Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Local Affairs, and to the four MPs for the City of York Council area stating the above concerns of the Council.”

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED unanimously and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be approved.³

(iii) Age-Friendly Cities

This motion had been referred to Council by the Executive on 29 January 2008.

It was moved by Cllr Potter and seconded by Cllr D’Agorne that:

“Bearing in mind that older people in York account for 19.4% (35,185) of the population, compared with 13.6% nationally, the Older People’s Assembly welcomes the recent World Health Organisation Guidance on building age-friendly cities. It invites the Council to support the adoption in York of the following key features in the Guidance in order to bring about significant improvements to the lives of older people locally:

- 1) A civic culture that respects and includes older people.
- 2) A Council that regularly seeks the views of older people and reflects their opinions in policy developments.
- 3) Well-maintained and well-lit pavements.
- 4) Improved repair and renewal of uneven pavements, and visible enforcement of litter laws.
- 5) Increased attention to gully and drain cleansing and treatment of footpaths in icy weather.
- 6) Public buildings that are fully accessible to people with disabilities.
- 7) Improved bus travel with the use of smaller vehicles for routes off the main roads. Ensuring all bus drivers are more passenger focused and wait for older people to be seated before starting off.
- 8) Housing integrated in the community that accommodates changing needs and abilities, as people grow older.
- 9) Friendly and personalised information in plain language instead of automated answering services.
- 10) Sufficient and well signed public toilets that are clean, secure and accessible by people with disabilities.

- 11) Sufficient public seating that is well situated, well maintained and safe.
- 12) Encouraging commercial premises to make their toilets available to the general public.

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED unanimously and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, and the Executive recommendations thereon, be approved.⁴

(iv) Post Offices

It was moved by Cllr Gillies and seconded by Cllr Brooks that:

“This Council instructs the appropriate officers to open discussion with the Post Office on the possibility of the Council taking over the running of the Fulford, Haxby Road, Micklegate and Clifton Green Post Offices and in so doing safeguard these valuable community assets. A report on the discussions to be brought back to the next Ordinary meeting of full Council. Furthermore, this Council expresses its dismay at our Labour Member of Parliament for failing to support the retention of Post Offices in the recent Commons debate.”

Cllr Aspden then moved, and Cllr Vassie seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

In the first sentence:

before *‘taking over’*, insert *‘either’*

after *‘Clifton Green Post Offices’*, insert: *‘or entering into partnership arrangements aimed at sustaining at least some basic SPO facilities in these areas.’*”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“This Council instructs the appropriate officer to open discussion with the Post Office on the possibility of the Council either taking over the running of the Fulford, Haxby Road, Micklegate and Clifton Green Post Offices or entering into partnership arrangements aimed at sustaining at least some basic SPO facilities in these areas, and in so doing safeguard these valuable community assets. A report on the discussions to be brought back to the next Ordinary meeting of full Council. Furthermore, this Council expresses its dismay at our Labour Member of Parliament for failing to support the retention of Post Offices in the recent Commons debate.”

Cllr Scott then moved, and Cllr King seconded, a further amendment to the amended motion, as follows:

“Delete the second sentence and substitute the following:

'Council recognises that these latest closures are difficult for the communities affected as they come on top of the previous cuts made by the last Conservative government of 3,542 branches.'

In the third sentence:

- after 'dismay', insert: *'that the Conservative motion before Parliament failed to guarantee continued subsidies to maintain the Post Office Network and recognise the hard work of'*

delete 'at' and substitute 'the', then insert: *'City of York'*

delete *'our Labour'*

delete *'for failing to support'* and insert: *'in trying to retain'*

delete *'the retention of'*

delete *'in the recent Commons debate'* and insert: *'under threat in York'*.

Insert a fourth sentence, as follows:

'Council requests that a report is brought back to the Council meeting of June 2008 and that the Chief Executive communicates with the Post Office informing them of the intentions of the City of York Council so that there is no immediate disposal of the aforementioned premises'."

On being put to the vote, the above amendment was declared LOST.

The motion, as amended, was then put to the vote and was declared CARRIED unanimously and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, as amended by Cllr Aspden's amendment, be approved.⁵

(v) Neighbourhood management

The following motion, which had been referred to Council by the Executive on 26 February 2008, was formally withdrawn by Cllr Scott, with the consent of Council:

"Council believes that residents should have the ability to influence the local provision of services. It recognises the importance of Neighbourhood Management and the need to link the Local Strategic Partnership and Local Area Agreement to neighbourhood initiatives rather than imposing decisions from the top. By listening to the local community, services are made more responsive whilst at the same time promoting democracy and participation.

Council proposes an approach to community leadership and neighbourhood management that recognises the key role that local councillors have to play in leading and inspiring communities to take pride in improvements that are driven by residents themselves. Current thinking demands that local councils step back from the traditional role of service provider and instead provide increasingly localised services that don't assume ownership by the Council but whose development has been shaped by local residents. It recognises that one size doesn't necessarily fit all. We believe that this Council must drive service improvement by empowering, building confidence and supporting residents. This will increase democratic participation."

(vi) Web-Casting Council Meetings

Cllr Scott moved, and Cllr Alexander seconded, that:

“Council notes the increasing use of technology by public institutions to communicate with the public. Such developments can be evidenced in every public sector organisation in the country. Mainstream political parties have taken advantage of new forms of communication such as YouTube and MySpace websites, as well as social networking websites such as Facebook and Bebo.

Council believes that technological developments in the public sector should not be limited to exercises such as consultations and voter registrations. The public should be given every opportunity to engage with the decision-making process and, more specifically, meetings of Full Council. This could open up the decision-making process to a whole new section of the local population, making it more inclusive and transparent. Not only will this enable the public to witness elected Members debating local issues, it could also prompt better communication between councillor and constituent, strengthening local democracy.

To this end, Council requests that:

- 1) Officers prepare a report on the feasibility of web-casting meetings of Full Council, as well as other Council meetings. The report should consider:
 - The various options, from contracting outside services to providing services ‘in house’.
 - The cost effectiveness of such an exercise, based on overall cost against numbers likely to view web-casts from outside City of York Council.
 - The feasibility of recordings being placed on the Council’s website and other hosting websites.
- 2) Officers present this report to the Executive not later than 17 June, in order that the issue can be referred to the 30 June meeting of Full Council.”

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED unanimously and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be approved.⁶

(vii) Armed Forces Covenant and Gurkha Soldiers

Cllr Firth moved, and Cllr Aspden seconded, that:

“Council notes:

- 1) There is a major concern from the armed forces, local residents and the country as a whole, that the covenant between the armed forces and the government has been systematically destroyed over recent years, resulting in over-commitment of our limited forces, inadequate equipment and a total lack of quality, specialist medical care for servicemen.
- 2) York has a long-standing and important affiliation with the army and is currently home to a large number of Gurkha soldiers and their families.

The recent decision to stop retired Gurkha servicemen from remaining in the UK and receiving desperately needed medical treatment is a disgrace and should be rescinded.

Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Defence, and to the four MPs for the City of York Council area to request that the government affirms its commitment to the covenant with the armed forces, and to call for an end to the immoral and divisive treatment currently suffered by retired Gurkha soldiers.”

At 9:30 pm, the meeting was adjourned to enable submission of a revised version of an amendment to the above motion of which notice had been given by Cllr King.

At 9:50 pm, the meeting was reconvened and this item was deferred pending consideration of agenda item 7 (Minute 85 refers).

At 10:10 pm the guillotine fell and the following revised amendment, with Council’s consent, was deemed to have been moved and seconded without debate:

“Delete paragraph 1 after ‘*Council notes*’ and replace with the following two paragraphs:

- *That many present and former York residents have served the City and the Country by becoming members of the Country’s armed forces and thanks them for that service.*
- *That currently there is significant concern, as expressed by the Royal British Legion campaign, that the covenant between the Armed forces and the government has broken down over recent years and concern also that the Armed Forces are involved in too many fields of operation, resulting in concerns over conditions of service.’*

In the second paragraph:

- Delete the number ‘2’ and insert before ‘York’ ‘*Council also notes that.*’
- After ‘*their families*’, insert: ‘*Council welcomes the changes made in 2005 to allow those Gurkhas discharged after June 1997 (when their base was changed from Hong Kong to the UK) to allow them to settle in this country. However Council believes that Gurkhas retiring prior to this date should also have the right of settlement and to receive*’
- Delete the remainder of the sentence except for the words ‘*desperately needed medical treatment* and insert: ‘*considering their service for this country and calls on the government to make this further concession*’.

In the third paragraph:

- After ‘*area to*’, delete the remainder of the sentence and substitute:
 - *‘request that the government re-affirms its commitment to the covenant between the Armed Forces and those who serve in it’*
 - *request that the MPs ensure that all Gurkhas, their families and dependents have the right to reside in this country as a right of service irrespective of their date of discharge and ensure that all non-UK nationals who serve in this country’s Armed Forces receive the same pay and pensions as those they serve with and the right to bring their wives and families to Britain.’*”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“Council notes:

- That many present and former York residents have served the City and the Country by becoming members of the Country's armed forces and thanks them for that service.
- That currently there is significant concern, as expressed by the Royal British Legion campaign, that the covenant between the Armed forces and the government has broken down over recent years and concern also that the Armed Forces are involved in too many fields of operation, resulting in concerns over conditions of service.’

Council also notes that York has a long-standing and important affiliation with the army and is currently home to a large number of Gurkha soldiers and their families. Council welcomes the changes made by the Labour Government in 2005 to allow those Gurkha's discharged after June 1997 (when their base was changed from Hong Kong to the UK) to allow them to settle in this country. However Council believes that Gurkhas retiring prior to this date should also have the right of settlement and to receive desperately needed medical treatment considering their service for this country and calls on the Government to make this further concession.

Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Defence, and to the four MPs for the City of York Council area to:

- Request that the government re-affirms its commitment to the Covenant between the armed forces and those who serve in it.
- Request that the MPs ensure that all Gurkhas, their families and dependents have the right to reside in this country as a right of service irrespective of their date of discharge and ensure that all non-UK nationals who serve in this country's Armed Forces receive the same pay and pensions as those they serve with and the right to bring their wives and families to Britain.’

On being put to the vote the motion, as amended, was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, as amended, be approved.⁷

Action Required

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Arrange meeting with First York. | SC |
| 2. Action the responses as per Executive recommendations (Executive Minute 174, 26/2/08) | JB |
| 3. Write to Secretary of State and York MPs. | SC |
| 4. Refer motion to Social Inclusion Working Group and Inclusive York Forum. | LE |
| 5. Arrange discussions with Post Office and report to Council meeting in June 2008. | JB |
| 6. Investigate feasibility of web casting and report to Executive by 17 June 2008. | SA |
| 7. Write to Secretary of State and York MPs. | SC |

85. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

A written report was received from the Leader, Cllr Steve Galloway, on the work of the Executive. Cllr Galloway then moved, and Cllr Jamieson-Ball seconded, those minutes requiring confirmation from the Executive meeting on 8 April 2008, namely:

- Minute 198 – Review of Council’s Constitution

Cllr Gunnell then moved, and Cllr Looker seconded, an amendment to the above minute, as follows:

“After Recommendation (i), insert an additional Recommendation (ii), as follows:

‘(ii) Add to the list of Champions a further Champion, an Equalities Champion, to champion equalities within the City of York Council Organisation, the provision of its services and within the community at large.’
Re-number the current Recommendation (ii) to be Recommendation (iii).”

The above amendment was put to the vote, with the following result:

For – 20

Against – 20

The Lord Mayor then used her casting vote to vote against the amendment, which was declared LOST.

The original Executive minute was then put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above minute, and the recommendations of the Executive, be approved.¹

Action Required

1. Make the agreed revisions to the Constitution.

GR

86. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER

A written report was received from Cllr Jamieson-Ball, the Executive Member for Corporate Services.

Notice had been received of five questions on the report, submitted by Members in accordance with Standing Orders. The guillotine having fallen at this point, Members agreed to receive written answers to these questions. The questions and the written responses, as circulated to Members after the meeting, are set out below:

(i) From Councillor Holvey

“Could the Executive Member provide more information on the turnaround time for processing new benefits claims?”

Reply

“Based on new figures made available this week, I am delighted to be able to announce that the average time for processing new benefits claims between April 2007 and March 2008 was 29 days. Not only does this better both the Council’s own target of 32 days and the national standard of 30 days, but it is also the fastest average processing time the Council has ever achieved.

I am sure all Members of Council will join me in thanking the staff involved in turning around a service that, 4 years ago, was taking some 73 days to process new benefits claims.

Furthermore, the provisional result for 2007/08 indicates that the Council is now averaging 13 days to process charges in circumstances notified by benefit claimants. Again, this figure betters the Council’s performance last year of 15 days and its own target of 14 days.

The improvements seen in both the time taken to process changes in circumstances and new benefits claims was acknowledged by the independent District Auditor, who noted in his Annual Audit Letter that, for the 2006/07 year, the benefits section showed significant improvement in its performance.

I believe that the achievements of the 2007/08 year in the benefits section demonstrate the continuation of this significant improvement.”

(ii) From Councillor R Watson

“How has the York Contact Centre improved the services it provides over the last year?”
target?”

Reply

“As noted in the report, the York Contact Centre is providing a significantly improved service to that which it was providing a year ago. For example, in March 2007 the percentage of calls answered in 20 seconds was only 46%. Over the last few months this has been averaging in the high 90s %. The overall percentage of calls answered has also significantly improved from the low 80% mark to average over 99% in the last three months – which included the peak period of Council Tax billing. Effectively, this means that the vast majority of the 1,000s of calls the Contact Centre receives each month are being answered quickly, with only a tiny number of customers abandoning their call.

This has been achieved through the introduction of new technology – like the voice recognition software – and changes to processes, such as identifying peaks and troughs in customer demand and tailoring work patterns around that. For the first time this year the Council was able, through the Contact Centre, to provide extended opening hours to manage the Council Tax billing process.”

(iii) From Cllr Looker

“Has the Executive Member for Corporate Services been entirely satisfied with the new system for tracking Members’ queries in the light of the training recently received by many Members?”

Reply

“Legitimate concerns have been raised about the new system, but I do remain satisfied that this is the right approach to take in dealing with Member enquiries. The implementation of the system has highlighted the need for all Member enquiries to be handled in a consistent fashion across all directorates, whereas the new system was only really designed to manage the services that have already been through the easy@york programme. As such, expectations for the new system could have been managed better.”

(iv) From Cllr Looker

“Could the Executive member comment, now that the 'Corporate Property Data Base' has gone live, whether the useage of the Barbican Auditorium is recorded in it and if not whether those leasing the premises will be required in future to provide that information, such as usage and opening dates, as a matter of public record?”

Reply

“In order to set the answer to this question in its full context, it is important for Members to understand that the Technology Forge Database is intended for use as the Council’s Corporate Land and Property Asset Register.

As such, it will record the following information:

- *The Council’s property ownership – including leases*
- *Capital valuations*
- *Ownership details*
- *Estate management information, including all leases – in and out*
- *Condition surveys*
- *Asbestos surveys*
- *Links to maps and Autocad drawings – including floor plans (incomplete)*

Because the Barbican Auditorium will be on a long lease the Council is only likely to hold limited information relating to the Council’s remaining responsibilities.

In future, it may be possible to look at developing a module for the Technology Forge Database to record information such as usage. However, the level of detail about usage has to be balanced with our ability to collect and maintain such information. The costs could be prohibitive.”

(v) From Cllr Looker

“Can the Executive Member for Corporate Services explain what is the up to date situation as regards sickness levels and are we expecting to see a real improvement?”

Reply

“It is anticipated that sickness absence levels in the Resources Directorate will be around 10.5 days for 2007/08 once March’s figures have been included. This is an unconfirmed provisional figure so must be treated with a degree of caution. Short term sickness is down to under 5 days for the first time in the last few years. The overall figure,

therefore, is down to the number of long term absences within the department. Most of these are the result of serious illness amongst a small number of staff."

87. QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS RECEIVED UNDER STANDING ORDER 10(C)

Eighteen questions had been submitted to the Executive Leader and Executive Members Under Standing Order 10(c)(i).

The guillotine having fallen at this point, Members agreed to receive written answers to these questions. The questions and the written responses are set out below.

(i) To the Executive Leader, from Cllr Pearce:

"At its meeting of 29 November, the Council approved nem con a notice of motion calling for the setting up of a task force to make proposals for practical steps to tackle the impact on longer term residents of students living in rented housing outside their campuses. The notice of motion also called for Council to join other university cities via the LGA to lobby central government to introduce new controls to enable councils to exercise control over changes of use from family housing to student lets through changes to planning or other legislation.

In three months' time, dandelion seeds will be blowing in the wind over Badger Hill from the overgrown gardens of vacated student houses in the summertime ghost streets. What progress has the Council made with these initiatives in the full three months since its November meeting?"

Reply:

"Since the motion was agreed, officers have focused on a number of ways to address the relevant issues, particularly in relation to studentification, which is a particular concern to residents of Badger Hill and other areas of the City where there is a high proportion of students residing in family dwellings in the community.

Firstly, a meeting took place between the University and CYC Councillors in January and it was agreed that setting up a "task force" to look into the issues relating to the condition of student accommodation may not be the best way forward, as a Voluntary Code already exists (involving the University, landlords and the Council).

However, it was agreed that a small group would be set up to discuss the specific issues raised in the Council motion.

This meeting is scheduled to take place after April when the initial results of the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey should have been received, so evidence from the survey could be linked to the perceived poor standards. This Voluntary Code meeting is expected to take place around 19th May.

Officers are addressing the issues of studentification through the Local Development Framework. An evidence base on studentification is

being produced, which would support the LDF process in York. This involves the following methodology:

- Officers have been researching the methods employed by other local planning authorities in addressing the issues of student accommodation and exploring opportunities to ensure that communities do not become unbalanced as a result.*
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment, carried out by Fordhams Research, was published in June 2007 and Officers are currently considering how this Assessment can provide an input into the evidence base.*

It is anticipated that the issues of studentification and the evidence base will be reported to members in due course.

A letter regarding the issues raised in the motion has been sent to the responsible government Minister. A reply is awaited."

(ii) To the Executive Leader, from Cllr Moore:

"Would the Leader confirm when the new factory at Nestle will be officially opened?"

Reply:

"I understand that the new factory will be officially opened on 28th April."

(iii) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Simpson-Laing:

"Can the Executive Member explain what lessons have been learned from choosing the Salvation Army Citadel as the venue for the first week of issuing tokens and bus passes and will she ensure that the venue is not used for such an event in future?"

Reply:

"This question is incorrect as the use of the Citadel actually gave the Council an extra 2 weeks capacity which was used to validate entitlement to bus passes. No token issuing was carried out there. The normal 4 weeks distribution sessions are currently taking place at the Guildhall and in the Parishes.

It was felt prudent to have the extra 2 weeks as for the first time all bus passes had to be validated and renewed. The Citadel was booked before Christmas, only after establishing that no better location could be found either on Council premises or elsewhere.

The passes currently being issued are set to expire over a three year period, purposely to avoid repeating the stresses of the current upheaval, occasioned by a Central Government decision.

I would anticipate that in future years the normal distribution sessions at the Guildhall would be more than sufficient."

(iv) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Simpson-Laing:

"Would the Executive Member for City Strategy explain what action Officers are taking to ensure that correct timetable information is provided at all bus stops and at those locations identified by the

Council as information points following the closure of the Bus Information Office?"

Reply:

"The Council has already set up arrangements for a number of public facing contact points around the City to carry stocks of leaflets provided by bus companies. The responsibility for providing and maintaining stocks lies with the bus companies, although Council officers periodically monitor the situation and pro-actively encourage bus companies to replenish/replace leaflets as necessary. The Council also provides display cases at bus stops to provide bus operators with the opportunity to display information about their services. Information at City Centre stops and selected other key locations is provided and maintained by the Council. In addition the Council ensures timetable data is available on the "yorkshiretravel.net" and "transport direct" internet sites and is developing a network of electronic timetable displays around the City, including predictions of actual rather than scheduled arrival times. Additionally, the "Yournextbus" mobile phone text service is being launched, to provide access to this information in another convenient form. This is being introduced progressively, on a route by route basis. A review of arrangements for providing information about bus services in the City is a topic due to be considered by a joint Council and Operator Working Group, under the auspices of the Quality Bus Partnership."

(v) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Merrett:

"Would the Executive Member for City Strategy indicate the numbers of children being trained to cycle each year over the last five years, and the forward projection?"

Reply:

"Cycle training figures for the last 5 years are:

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07
Level 1 (64% of school roll year 5)			1,691	1,132	1,164
Level 2 (62% of school roll year 6)	1,688	1,348	1,356	1,325	1,143
Level 3 (of school roll year 7)	466	594	529	470	205 (12%)

There are no targets set for cycle training as it is dependent on schools requesting cycle training, however it is the intention to increase the numbers being trained year on year during the lifetime of LTP2. To that end we are currently working with almost all the schools in York (over 95%) to deliver cycle training.

The pool of available staff to deliver cycle training decreased but the situation has improved with an additional 10 cycle trainers recently recruited which means we will be able to increase the amount of cycle training this year. In addition new initiatives are being introduced i.e. interactive and quiz based, that will enable the council to engage with and deliver cycle training to more year 7 students."

- (vi) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Horton:
“What is the anticipated Final Cost (AFC) for the Moor Lane roundabout works split into CYC contribution and others?”

Reply:

“The final cost of the Moor Lane Roundabout scheme is anticipated to be £3.8m over the three years of the design, construction and defect liability periods all funded from the Local Transport Plan settlement. There are no other contributions which have been used to fund the scheme.”

- (vii) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Simpson-Laing:
“Can the Executive Member for City Strategy explain why there has been slow progress in bringing forward York’s Local List?”

Reply:

“Members previously agreed to wait for the publication of the, then, imminent Heritage Protection Bill as the initial consultation stated that it would contain guidance on Local Lists. The Government then significantly delayed publication of the guidance and Officers therefore recently decided that we needed to move forward in the absence of this guidance. However the Draft Bill was subsequently issued on 2nd April 2008 and will, if approved, give us the opportunity to produce Local Lists which are fully in compliance with the Government’s requirements.

The Draft Bill says that if you want to have a Local List, and it is not mandatory, then you have to have a framework based on Government criteria. The 5 criteria are:- Local, Historic, Archaeological, Architectural and Artistic. Detailed guidance on the criteria has not yet been produced by the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) or English Heritage. If we decide to proceed we will need to determine our policy and then go through the normal consultation process. I have asked Officers to bring a report forward on the implications of the Heritage Protection Bill in order to meet the DCMS for consultation responses on the Draft Bill by June 2008.

- (viii) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr D’Agorne:
“Will the Executive Member please outline the timescales for City of York Council to respond to the outcome of the Highways PFI bid and work up an alternative strategy to address the backlog of outstanding maintenance work?”

Reply:

“Council officers will be getting feedback from DfT on the Expression of Interest bid in May. This feedback will help in forming a view about any further involvement with Highway Maintenance PFI projects in the future.

Discussions with procurement and financial specialists, as well as a leading contracting organisation, on procurement options and opportunities for York are already scheduled for next month. Also the

latest draft documentation on output specification contracts has just been obtained.

This will all enable a more considered and informed report to be brought to the Executive and it is expected that this will be before the end of July 2008

In the meantime existing external contracts and in-house service arrangements can continue, allowing sufficient time for a revised strategy to be approved and implemented.

I must emphasise that the PFI bid was our only opportunity to address the backlog. Without major extra funding the current budgets will only maintain the asset at its current levels and not allow any extra investment."

(ix) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr D'Agorne:

"In the light of approval for Regional Funding for all three Park & Ride proposals, can the Executive Member outline the process for determining which other schemes will be cut from LTP2 over the next 3 years to provide the required 30% matched funding for these schemes?"

Reply:

"Members will be aware that our Major Scheme Bid for the provision of the Park & Ride Sites was successful. The DfT will provide funds for approximately 85% of the total cost of the schemes leaving us with 15% to find, not the 30% that the Councillor quotes.

This is approximately £3m and will be funded by capital receipts from the sale of the Askham Bar site, any appropriate developer contributions and the £1.325m allocation already included in the 5 year LTP2 programme to enlarge the Askham Bar site."

(x) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr D'Agorne:

"Can the Executive Member provide a report on progress towards achieving the air quality objectives within York's Air Quality Management Area and what work will now be undertaken to review demand management options to address growing traffic associated with new developments such as Hungate and the Foss Basin retail developments?"

Reply:

"I am surprised to get this question because Cllr Waller deals with Air Quality matters but nevertheless I will endeavor to answer it.

Any planning application has to be examined in relation to the Air Quality Action Plan and meet the requirements of that Plan. In addition planning applications in the above area have to be considered in the context of the Foss Basin traffic masterplan. The masterplan allows us to use developer contribution to fund a wide variety of measures, already identified, as and when development come forward.

I understand that the Air Quality Progress Report is due for submission to DEFRA shortly. An update on this work is on the provisional agenda for September's Neighbourhoods EMAP. There will also be information on the affiliation of two of our air quality sites into the national monitoring network. The report will also seek approval to

spend our anticipated Air Quality Grant allocation (to be determined by DEFRA sometime in the next few months)."

- (xi) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Hyman:
"Can the Executive Member inform Council of the outcome of the Access York bid to the Regional Transport Board?"

Reply:

"I am delighted that our bid for 3 new Park and Ride sites was supported by the Regional Transport Board and the bid approved. It is proposed to submit a report to the 22 April Executive providing details of the results of all of the bids to the Regional Transport Board which the City has an interest in, as well as the Park & Ride, were Hopgrove Roundabout, Yorcard and Regional Information Systems bids. The report will also indicate the next steps in the process and request authority to use contingency funds already allocated in the 2008/09 budget to progress the Access York bid to final approval."

- (xii) To the Executive Member for Children's Services, from Cllr Bowgett:
"I would like to ask the Executive Member for Children's Services, Cllr Carol Runciman, if she has seen the film 'Live Now, Drive Later' and, if so, if she will recommend that this film be shown to all children over the age of 14 in York schools?"

Reply:

"I was unable to attend the recent showing of the film, 'Live now, die later' but am aware of the contents. I will be happy to promote it in schools and I commend the hard work of all the young people who were involved in making it alongside the Press, who have actively promoted it."

- (xiii) To the Executive Member for Children's Services, from Cllr Hogg:
"Will the Executive Member give an update on the opening of the new Children's Centres around the City and let Council know what services for families it is planned to offer in them?"

Reply:

"The City of York has been developing its Children's Centres for some years. The city was included in Phase 2 of the national programme with a requirement to providing 8 such centres by April 2008. In October 2005, proposals were agreed to site the eight Children's Centre at the following primary schools - Hob Moor, Westfield, Carr, Clifton Green, Haxby Road, New Earswick, Tang Hall and St. Lawrence's Schools. There has been a lot of consultation and strong planning with partners, which has resulted in all 8 achieving national "designation" status by the April 08 deadline. Children's Centres are a means of delivering a range of integrated and locally based services to children aged 0-5 years and their parents/carers and the next two to open will be at Tang Hall and New Earswick.

Children's Centres offer information, advice and support to parents/carers, as well as early years provision, access to health care services, family support, outreach visiting, adult learning opportunities

and access to employment advice. The mix of services on offer will differ between Centres, reflecting the particular needs of individual communities.

Phase 3 of the programme will see a further 4 centres being designated in York by April 2010 and planning is underway to identify sites which "fit" with current arrangements and which will ensure that the offer of services for all 0-5 year olds and their families is provided across the city. The City of York has been developing its Children's Centres for some years. The city was included in Phase 2 of the national programme with a requirement to providing 8 such centres by April 2008. In October 2005, proposals were agreed to site the eight Children's Centre at the following primary schools - Hob Moor, Westfield, Carr, Clifton Green, Haxby Road, New Earswick, Tang Hall and St. Lawrence's Schools. There has been a lot of consultation and strong planning with partners, which has resulted in all 8 achieving national "designation" status by the April 08 deadline. Children's Centres are a means of delivering a range of integrated and locally based services to children aged 0-5 years and their parents/carers and the next two to open will be at Tang Hall and New Earswick.

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- (xiv) To the Executive Member for Leisure and Culture, from Cllr B Watson:
"In view of his article in 'The Councillor' publication, would the Executive Member like to inform Council when he envisages his term of office to expire?"

Reply:
"2011"

- (xv) To the Executive Member for Housing Services, from Cllr Potter:
"Will the Executive Member explain to Council why Residents' Associations have not yet received a clear set of arrangements for on-going provision of skips or the proposed replacement for 2008/09 any why this situation has been on-going for at least a year?"

Reply:
"There was a delay in setting out the arrangements for the coming year due to increased health and safety issues that needed to be discussed with the provider, for example, asbestos dumped in skips, overflow and over filling of skips to unsafe limits etc. All of these issues impact on the potential options and costs."

Unfortunately the long term position regarding the provision of skips via Resident Associations Estate Improvement Grant has changed as a result of the contractor saying that they are unable to provide the previously agreed solution of manned box wagons as a result of health and safety concerns for their operatives.

Officers are working with the contractor to find a long term solution, however until a solution is reached the status quo will continue with skips being provided at the same frequency as previously agreed with the RA's.

As outlined in my written response, an update will be given to the Federation of RA's at their next meeting on the 17th April."

- (xvi) To the Executive Member for Adult Social Services, from Cllr Hogg:
"What progress, if any, has been made with the North Yorkshire & York PCT on the Long Term Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services?"

Reply:

"I am pleased to be able to report that we have had three meetings of the Joint Strategic Integrated Commissioning Group. Terms of Reference for the Group have been agreed. A workplan has also been agreed around intermediate care, mental health services for older people, prevention and management of long term conditions. It is expected that a report on the work of the group will be presented to an EMAP in the summer."

- (xvii) To the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, from Cllr Orrell:
"Could the Executive Member give an update on the Cold Calling Zones in the City, and share any information that has been obtained on the review of the success of the programme?"

Reply:

"I am grateful for the question from Cllr Orrell, and I hope that he can convey my thanks for the support given by the Chief Constable to the delivery of the Cold Calling Control Zones,

The council has surveyed the 442 properties in the initial 30th October 2007 launch of the zones. Of the 192 who returned the form by 13th March 2008, 125 (67%) felt less concerned about doorstep crime because of the zone, and only 4 (2%) felt more concerned. Some 29 had been cold called since the introduction of the zone but had felt able to deal with the situation due to the information supplied in the packs sent to residents. This degree of personal empowerment of some of our most vulnerable citizens is a tribute to the hard work of Trading Standards, and the Neighbourhood Police Teams, and I am sure that the councillor will join with me in thanking those staff for making the scheme work."

- (xviii) To the Executive Member for Youth and Social Inclusion, from Cllr Ayre:
"Would the Executive Member report on the progress towards the Young People's Services for York?"

Reply:

“The City of York Council assumed responsibility for the Connexions Service previously delivered by the local sub regional partnership on 1st April 2008. When the Connexions Grant funding was transferred to the local authority on 1st April the new Young Peoples Services was established comprising of Connexions and the Youth Service, within Learning, Culture and Children's Services. The Council has a clear vision for localising services for children and young people age 0-19.

Young People's Services will deliver key services to young people aged 13-19, including the Youth Offer, Information Advice and Guidance (IAG), Targeted Youth Support and Positive Activities. It is the intention to co-locate Connexions staff and Youth workers in locality teams covering the North, West and South East of the city at Kingswater, Moor Lane, Fulford and the city centre young people's centre at Castlegate.

The new arrangements provide an opportunity for the new service to work in partnership to build upon existing good practice and explore new integrated approaches to providing positive activities, IAG and targeted support for children and young people.”

88. SCRUTINY - REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

A written report was received from Cllr Blanchard, the Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC), on the work of the SMC since the last report to Council, on 24 January 2008.

89. ACTIVITIES OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Minutes of the following meetings had been made available for Members to view on the Council's website:

- Association of North Yorkshire Councils - meeting on 14 January 2008
- Yorkshire and Humber Assembly – meeting on 7 February 2008
- Local Government Yorkshire and Humber – meetings on 22 November 2007 and 28 February 2008
- North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority – meeting on 10 December 2007
- Regional Transport Forum – meeting on 5 March 2008
- Pension Fund Sub-Committee – meetings on 14 November 2007, 7 December 2007 and 14 February 2008

No questions had been submitted to representatives on the above bodies.

90. APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED: That Dr Alison Birkinshaw be appointed as a non-statutory co-opted Member of the Children's Services Advisory Panel (Further Education Representative), in place of Mr Mike Galloway.

Cllr Irene Waudby

LORD MAYOR OF YORK

[The meeting started at 6.30 pm and concluded at 10.15 pm]