
MEETING	DECISION SESSION - EXECUTIVE LEADER
DATE	6 APRIL 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR WALLER (EXECUTIVE LEADER)

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Leader was invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interest he might have in the business on the agenda. He confirmed that it had been 4 years since he last worked for the East Coast Franchise.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Decision Session of the Executive Leader, held on 27 January 2010, be approved and signed by the Executive Leader as a correct record.

15. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

16. INTERCITY EAST COAST FRANCHISE CONSULTATION - SUGGESTED RESPONSE

The Executive Leader considered a report which advised him of the Department for Transport's consultation exercise in relation to the re-franchising of passenger services along the east coast main line.

Officers had no further updates and confirmed that the deadline for City of York Council's response was 19th April 2010.

The Executive Leader discussed the 6 headings that ATOC (Association of Train Operating Companies) were recommending. He suggested a more realistic approach would be to retain the current operation in government ownership until the end of the original franchise in 2015 to benchmark against other franchises. Officers confirmed they would put this suggestion forward.

The Executive Leader discussed the results of the Passenger Focus survey which was completed by 6000 National Express East Coast passengers. The top three priorities were:

- punctuality and reliability of the train.
- value for money for the price of a ticket.
- being able to get a seat on the train.

The Executive Leader confirmed that York must retain its economic position and have a secure and regular link with London and Edinburgh. He discussed the importance of the retention of the Headquarters function remaining in the city and how infrastructure improvements were needed to reduce journey times on the east coast mainline.

The improvements to the rolling stock were discussed and the Eureka timetable. Officers confirmed that currently York does not run direct to Glasgow but the timetable in York was good with trains running every hour to London.

The Executive Leader commented on the following and also recommended that these points be included in the response to the government:

- Recognise the need for more luggage space
- Infrastructure, track and signalling improvements to reduce journey times and bring York back to the 1hr 45minutes London-York journey time.
- The electrification of the line between Leeds and York.
- The importance of the retention of the Headquarters function remaining in the city.

Officers confirmed that the government were putting pressure on Network Rail to investigate and build into their Capital Programme the possibility of electrification of the line between York and Leeds.

Officers agreed to include these suggestions into the response to the government and would send a final version to the Executive Leader to be signed.¹

RESOLVED:

That the Executive Leader recommends that:

- i. the views expressed in paragraphs 7 to 14 of the report be passed to the Department for Transport for its consideration for incorporation within the new franchise bidding process and as the Council's response to the franchise consultation.
- ii. the Council requests as part of that process, the shortlisted companies should be required to present and discuss their proposals to interested key stakeholders served by the InterCity East Coast network.

- iii the views of the passengers expressed in the survey undertaken by Passenger Focus and encapsulated in the table be also built into tender documents to be prepared by the Department for Transport.
- iv. the importance of the retention of the Headquarters function remaining in the city is emphasised, and recognised as a question that can be put to future bidders.
- v. infrastructure improvements to reduce journey time should be a priority, and the electrification of the route between Leeds and York should be part of the agreed environment for future operators.
- vi. there needs to be public confidence in a rolling stock replacement programme as the existing fleet is aging and decisions on long term investment have been delayed for too long.
- vii. changes to the timetable need to prioritise a regular flow of trains from York and to prevent bunching of times of departure between operators.

REASON:

To support the economic objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Strategy.

Action Required

Include the Exec Leaders comments and send a final copy of the response to the Executive Leader to be signed off. BJ

Cllr Waller, Executive Leader

[The meeting started at 4.15 pm and finished at 4.40 pm].