
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	25 SEPTEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, REID, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER

PART A - MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

52. 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.

53. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following:

Annexes 1-4 to Agenda Item 9 (Improved Direct Communications with Residents) (minute 60 refers) on the grounds that they contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). This information was classed as exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

54. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 11 September 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

55. Public Participation

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

Paul Hepworth from the Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC) addressed the meeting regarding agenda item 7 (Reference Report: Public Places and Footstreets) (minute 58 refers). He supported the retention of the cycle scheme in Deangate and highlighted the need to experiment with the retention of 24 hour cycle access in any other areas that the footstreet scheme was extended to cover in the future, with particular reference to

Goodramgate. He circulated copies of a Department for Transport leaflet on cycling in pedestrian areas to Members for consideration.

Keith Chapman, from Nunnery Lane Residents' Association, spoke about agenda item 10 (Sustainable Street Lighting Strategy) (minute 61 refers) to outline concerns about dimming of street lights and highlight energy wasted by faulty street lights remaining on during the daytime.

Quentin Macdonald also spoke regarding agenda item 10 (Sustainable Street Lighting Strategy) (minute 61 refers), to suggest that action 7 be reworded to ensure that a lighting scheme be designed for the Moor Lane Roundabout that minimised light trespass and incorporated fully operational dimming, and that action 8 be amended to ensure that trials started immediately and that the public be asked for their opinions, so that dimming could be implemented in 6 months.

56. Executive Forward Plan

Members received and noted details of those items that were listed on the Executive Forward Plan for the next two meetings.

57. Minutes of the Economic Development Partnership Board and Local Development Framework Working Group

Members received a report which presented the minutes of a recent meeting of the Economic Development Partnership Board and asked them to consider the advice given by the Board in its capacity as an advisory body to the Council. It also presented the minutes of recent meetings of the Local Development Framework Working Group and asked Members to consider the advice given by the Working Group in its capacity as an advisory body to the Executive.

Paragraph 7 of the report detailed the following resolutions within the attached minutes which required the specific endorsement or approval of the Executive:

- a. the Board's recommendations on the Christmas Light proposals for 2007 (minute 7);
- b. the Working Group's recommendations on the Scoping Report for the York Northwest Area Action Plan (minute 4);
- c. the Working Group's recommendations on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (minute 8);
- d. the Working Group's recommendations on the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (minute 9);
- e. the Working Group's recommendations on the Employment Land Review (minute 12);
- f. the Working Group's recommendations on the York Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007 (minute 13).

The report also drew Members' attention the Board's comments on the Future York Group report (minute 4) and on the research findings on the evening economy in York (minute 5), which were considered by the Executive on 24 July 2007;

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That the minutes attached at Annexes A-D be noted and the recommendations listed at paragraph 7 of the report be approved.

REASON: To fulfil the requirements of the Council's Constitution in relation to the role of Working Groups.

58. Reference Report: Public Places and Footstreets

Members received a report which informed them of a decision made by the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel on 16 July 2007 to review the City's footstreets and support the Minster's Heritage Lottery Fund bid with funding, and sought approval to allocate £250,000 from the Council's reserves from the 2006/07 underspend as part of this funding, in recognition of the significant economic benefits to the city of this proposal.

The options available to the Executive were to either approve or reject the Executive Member's recommendation.

In relation to the comments made under Public Participation (minute 55 refers), the Assistant Director (City Development & Transport) provided reassurance that provision for cyclists would be included in any schemes brought forward for the extension of the footstreets.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That £250,000 be allocated from the Council's reserves from the 2006/07 underspend, in recognition of the significant economic benefits to the city of this proposal.

REASON: In line with constitutional requirements.

59. Report of the Review on Jobs

Members received a report which sought to brief the Executive on the review on jobs, as requested in the Policy Prospectus.

The review report highlighted how the Council could allocate sufficient resources to ensure that job creating planning opportunities were dealt with quickly, indicated how a partnership approach could assist the growth of local small businesses including refinements to the Council's purchasing policies (as part of an overall review of procurement to take account of ethical, sustainability and efficiency issues), and looked at the adequacy and success of local skill training facilities for York workers.

The Assistant Director (Economic Development & Partnerships) advised Members of the interim arrangements recently announced, which would give major employers a direct channel to a senior contact within the Council to ensure that any issues relating to jobs were resolved quickly, and outlined the next steps that were proposed to take the Jobs Review forward.

Members discussed the continuing good performance of the York economy and the low unemployment rates. They noted that an issue still to be addressed was ensuring that York residents were able to play a full part in the economic growth of the City and that some people were not left “economically excluded”, and they outlined ways in which partners and partnerships could contribute to dealing with this matter.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That the continuing good performance of the York economy and the very low unemployment rates seen in the City over the last 4 years be noted;
- (ii) That the interim arrangements recently announced, which will give major employers a direct channel to a senior contact within the Council to ensure that any issues relating to jobs are resolved quickly, be welcomed;
- (iii) That officers be requested, as part of their response report to the Future York proposals, to consider how the City Strategy Directorate resource allocation priorities can be refined to ensure prompt attention to major applications which are likely to result in significant additional jobs in the City and also to address the issues of job vacancies in the planning department;
- (iv) That, using the opportunities offered by the restructure of the Business Link support organisation, the Council and its partners consult further with small business representative organisations to understand whether more can be done to sustain the economic viability of the sector;
- (v) That the City’s approach to skill training and social inclusion issues (including relative wage rates) be progressed with partner organisations using the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other appropriate interface mechanisms.

REASON: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

60. Improved Direct Communications with Residents

Members received a report which responded to the questions raised by the Executive at their meeting on 24 July 2007 when they agreed, in principle, to the introduction of a free delivery, civic publication for a trial period of 10 issues.

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- Option 1 – to make a formal decision to go ahead with Your Local Link for one calendar year, as proposed in the previous report;

- Option 2 – to go through a full Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement now, using either the open or restricted route;
- Option 3 – to re-tender, explicitly excluding recruitment advertising;
- Option 4 – to continue with existing arrangements.

In considering this issue Members will take particular notice of the following factors:

- That a decision to award a contract for 10 or 12 issues now would mean that if the Council wished to continue beyond that timescale with a civic publication it would have to run another OJEU based procurement process. This process would be time consuming both for the Council and the bidders and would lead to the possibility of a change of supplier between the initial 10/12 issues and a longer term contract. It was believed that this would be undesirable for all parties.
- The report made clear that at present there was still some uncertainty surrounding the financial basis of the project which would need to be resolved.
- The report acknowledged that whilst a legal procurement process was followed there had been three procedural shortcomings that had led to questions about the process being asked.

These three issues indicated that Option 2 based on a full OJEU procurement and a delay to the proposed civic newspaper would be the best way forward and would allow for the issues to be resolved in the meantime.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That Option 2 be adopted;
- (ii) That the Director of People & Improvement be asked to make every effort to produce an updated A-Z of Council Services, for publication shortly after Christmas, within existing resource budget levels.

- REASON: (i) To allow for the financial and procurement issues raised to be resolved and a longer term approach to be taken to commissioning the civic newspaper;
- (ii) In the light of current budget constraints.

61. Sustainable Street Lighting Strategy

Members received a report which presented a Sustainable Street Lighting Strategy for approval.

The proposed Strategy, which was attached at Annex A of the report, had been prepared to ensure that the effects of street lighting were minimised in terms of the use of natural resources for the supply of equipment and services, the use of energy to power the lights and the light pollution produced. It set out, in a series of policy statements, the way in which the Council would deliver a sustainable street lighting service. An Action Plan was included which covered:

- Procurement of services and energy;
- Asset management;
- Waste management;
- Design and installation of new lighting schemes;
- Consideration and use of new technology;
- Seeking improvement in Supplementary Planning Guidance to incorporate sustainable street lighting where possible;
- Investigating new sources of funding.

Members had the option to approve, amend or reject the proposed Strategy in its current form.

In relation to the comments raised under Public Participation (minute 55 refers), officers advised that the lighting for the Moor Lane Roundabout had been designed in accordance with the proposed Strategy.

Members proposed to defer making a decision on the proposed Strategy to allow for further work to take place to strengthen the action plan.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That a decision on the proposed Sustainable Street Lighting Strategy be deferred for 4 weeks so that proposals could be brought forward to amend the action plan as follows:
- a) To action 4, to commit the Council to switching to a metered electricity supply;
 - b) To action 11, to require all new luminaires to be fitted with switching mechanisms capable of varying energy levels to the bulb;
 - c) To action 13, to require trials to be conducted to evaluate different methods of varying power to street lights;
- (ii) That information also be included in the report on the lighting scheme for the Moor Lane Roundabout.

REASON: To strengthen the action plan and provide further details relating to the lighting scheme for the Moor Lane Roundabout.

62. Sale and Production of Foie Gras

Members received a report which responded to a notice of motion on the sale and production of foie gras, which was referred to the Executive for consideration by Full Council on 27 January 2007.

The notice of motion, proposed by Cllr Blanchard, read as follows:
 "Council notes that:

- To produce foie gras, at just 12 weeks old ducks and geese are restrained and grain is forced down the throat through a tube or pipe, a process that often results in physical injury;
- They are forcibly fed the equivalent to an adult human eating 1-28 lbs (7-13 kg) of spaghetti a day; and, after two or three weeks, when they are ready for slaughter, their livers will have swollen to about ten times normal size. The swollen liver expands the abdomen and can make movement and breathing difficult, as well as causing other health problems;
- Most ducks are kept in wire cages so small they have no room to turn around or stretch their wings, and their feet are often injured by the wire floor;
- Many die before the force feeding cycle ends, and the mortality rate for ducks raised on foie gras farms is overwhelmingly the highest in the industry;
- The force-feeding of geese is already outlawed in Poland, Denmark, Germany, Norway and Israel.

Council believes that:

- This intolerably cruel and painful practice is unnecessary and should end;
- The city of Chicago, USA, has shown tremendous compassionate leadership in its brave decision to ban foie gras in its shops and restaurants;
- The torture of small innocent animals should not be a matter of personal dietary choice.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to Ben Bradshaw MP, Minister of State responsible for Animal Welfare, informing him of this motion and asking for the production and sale of foie gras to be banned in the UK;
- Do as much as reasonably possible to discourage or prohibit the sale of foie gras within the authority area, whether in shops or restaurants.”

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- Option 1 – to undertake all of the following actions:
 - (i) That a letter be sent by the Chief Executive to Lord Rooker, stating that the Council was opposed to the production and importing of foie gras in the UK;
 - (ii) That the procurement of foie gras be prohibited in the Council’s own establishments;
 - (iii) That a link to the Compassion in World Farming website, which gave information on the discouragement of foie gras production, be placed on the Council’s webpage;
 - (iv) That letters be sent by the Executive or the Group Leaders to either all registered food businesses in the city or only those registered food businesses in the city that have a reasonable likelihood of selling foie gras and/or using it as part of their menu offer, asking them to voluntarily withdraw foie gras from sale or use;
- Option 2 – to undertake any combination of these actions;
- Option 3 – not to undertake any of these actions.

The Executive favoured Option 2 and the following actions:

- A letter being sent by the Chief Executive to Lord Rooker, stating that the City of York Council was concerned about the production and importing

of foie gras in the UK and requesting a review of central government policies on animal welfare issues;

- Foie gras not being offered for sale by the Council on its premises;
- A link to the *Compassion in World Farming* website being added to the Council's web site;
- The contents of the motion being circulated to representative hospitality organisations in the City.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That the notice of motion be referred back to Council, with the officer report and the Executive's comments and advice (set out above).

REASON: To respond to the Council motion.

63. York Northwest Area Action Plan

Members received a report which sought their approval of the Issues and Options documents for the York Northwest Area Action Plan and sought agreement to undertake public consultation on them. Members were also asked to delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Member for City Strategy, the approval of any changes arising from the Executive's comments, and the approval of the final layout of the documents, the content of the Executive Summary, the consultation plan and the content of the accompanying consultation leaflet.

The Issues and Options documents included:

- The Issues and Options Report (Appendix 1);
- The Baseline Report (Appendix 2);
- The Sustainability Statement (Appendix 3);
- The Executive Summary.

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- Option 1 – to proceed with the amended Issues and Options documents and carry out the public consultation between November 2007 and January 2008;
- Option 2 – to request further amendments to the documents.

Members thanked officers for their hard work preparing the documents.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the Issues and Options Report, the Baseline Report and the Sustainability Statement be approved for public consultation, subject to amendments to the Issues and Options Report to include the requirement that exemplar designs should be expected in the Central Business District and to add an indoor sport option to question 13;

- (ii) That the approval of any changes requested by the Executive and the approval of the final layout of the consultation document be delegated to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy;
- (iii) That the approval of the consultation plan, the content of the Executive Summary and the content of the summary leaflet to accompany the Issues and Options documents be delegated to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy.

REASON: (i) To ensure the Issues and Options for York Northwest are subject to consultation and the responses to this are carried forward to the next stage in the preparation of the Area Action Plan;

(ii)&(iii) To ensure Members' comments are included in the documents for public consultation.

PART B - MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL

64. Setting out the long-term direction for the Council: Corporate Strategy 2007-2011

Members received a report which set out proposals for a refreshed Corporate Strategy, which set out the long-term direction for the Council, and also for an overall corporate planning framework.

The refreshed Strategy, which had been developed via an extensive consultation process, built on the excellent foundations established through the Council's existing Corporate Strategy. The refreshed Strategy was however enhanced significantly by the addition of a series of long-term (10 year) "direction statements" which gave the Council's improvement priorities essential strategic context. These focused on areas which were fundamental to how the Council needed to operate in the future and what role it took in the city. The refreshed Strategy would provide clarity over the Council's improvement priorities and set out a 4-year programme of work for the Council in the period 2007-2011. If Members agreed to the headline issues proposed in the overall corporate planning framework, then further work would be carried out to work up the detail and produce an updated Corporate Strategy document and a summary by the end of October. This could then be published widely within the organisation, with residents and with partners.

Members had the option to agree the proposed outline for the refreshed Strategy set out in Figure 1, continue with the existing Strategy or vary parts of the refreshed Strategy.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RECOMMENDED:
- (i) That the proposed outline Corporate Strategy, set out in Figure 1 of the report, be agreed;
 - (ii) That the values, direction statements, improvement priorities and imperatives set out in Annexes A-C of the report be agreed;
 - (iii) That the embedding proposals and next steps outlined in paragraphs 25-27 and 37 of the report be agreed.

REASON: In order that the Council has an agreed Corporate Strategy which sets out long-term strategic direction and improvement priorities, which in turn underpin improved services for the people of York.

S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.05 pm].