
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	11 MARCH 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, REID, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLOR HOGG (for agenda item 5 – Future of the City Archives Service)

175. 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.

Cllr Reid declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (Future of the City Archives Service), as a member of an organisation that had material in the archives.

Cllrs Sue Galloway, Jamieson-Ball and Reid each declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 (Derwenthorpe – Amendments to the 'Agreement for Sale' and 'Framework Agreement') as members of the Planning Committee that would deal with the planning application in respect of the Derwenthorpe development. They all left the room during consideration of this item and took no part in the discussion or decision thereon.

During the discussion on agenda item 7 (City Walls: Maintenance and Restoration Partnership), Cllr Runciman declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in relation to comments made about York College, as a governor of York College.

176. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 26 February 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

177. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION / OTHER SPEAKERS

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

Dr Eileen White, Chair of the Friends of York City Archives addressed the meeting in relation to agenda item 5 (Future of the City Archives Service). She confirmed the Friends' support for the proposed feasibility study as a

way forward and that they looked forward to helping the project in as many ways as possible.

Andrea Dudding, of UNISON, had prepared a written submission in respect of agenda item 5, which was circulated to Members with the Chair's permission. This expressed UNISON's support for the proposals in the report and asked Members to accept Option A in respect of funding for the project.

178. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

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

179. FUTURE OF CITY ARCHIVES SERVICE

Members considered a report which proposed the next steps in determining a way forward for the future of the City Archive.

Further to the recommendations from the Scrutiny review of the Archive service, undertaken in 2005, it had now been determined that it would not be possible through the tendering process to procure a service which met the Council's requirements within the available budget. It was therefore necessary to consider options for a revised in-house service. It was not considered viable to retain the service in its current form, since this would not address concerns about the adequacy of existing facilities to house the collection, accessibility (including virtual access), level of use and links to other city initiatives. It was therefore proposed to carry out a feasibility study to investigate options for governance structures.

The National Railway Museum had agreed to make available their Senior Curator, Knowledge and Access to lead this project, working an average of 3 days per week over a period of 9 months. Members were invited to consider the following options to fund the cost of buying in project leadership, estimated at around £30k:

Option A – Fund the full amount from the Council's reserves.

Option B – Partly offset the cost by keeping the half-time City Archivist post vacant during this period, saving £12k, and fund the remaining sum from reserves.

Officers confirmed that the proposals outlined in the report would not affect the funding decisions made at Budget Council in respect of the Archives.

Having considered the comments of the Shadow Executive, the comments made under Public Participation and the written comments on behalf of UNISON, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the proposed feasibility study be approved.¹

(ii) That funding option A be approved and the full cost of buying in project leadership from the NRM be funded from reserves.

REASON: To progress development of options for the future of the city archives.

Action Required

1. Finalise agreement with NRM and commence feasibility study. ST

180. CITY TREE STRATEGY - SCOPING REPORT

Members considered a report which examined options for developing a strategic approach towards the management and protection of the City's trees.

The report had been drafted to take account of the comments of Group Leaders in response to an initial scoping report presented to them in August 2007. It recommended the production and implementation of a Council tree strategy to streamline and improve the efficiency of current practices and procedures, increase the overall number of trees and areas of woodland and fulfil the authority's duty to respond to the Regional Forestry Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber. It would include a vision of the City's aspirations; baseline data; short, medium and longer term targets; and an Action Plan that specified procedures and means of implementation. Details of current tree management arrangements were attached as Annex A to the report, and examples of potential actions for inclusion in the Action Plan at Annex B.

The options presented in the report were:

Option A – to make no change to the current way in which the Council manages the trees over which it has control and influence.

Option B – to approve the production and implementation of a Council tree strategy, as outlined and recommended in the report.

Should Option B be approved, it was proposed to present a draft Strategy and Action Plan to the Executive in July 2008 and a final version in December 2008, following consultation.

Having considered the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That Option B, the production and implementation of a Council tree strategy, be approved.¹

REASON: To provide a strategic approach to tree management and future planning within the City of York.

Action Required

1. Begin production of Consultation draft of Strategy (completion by July 2008). JB

181. CITY WALLS: MAINTENANCE AND RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP

Members considered a report which sought approval to establish a partnering agreement between the Council's City Strategy and Neighbourhood Services departments, for the delivery of maintenance, restoration and major schemes on the City Walls.

All of this work was currently carried out by the Neighbourhood Services (NS) (formerly CSO) ancient monuments team. On most of the occasions in the past when works had been put out to tender, the CSO/NS team had secured the contract, due to the limited number of private contractors with the necessary range of specialised skills. They had been awarded a five year contract in 2000 but, due to staff shortages in Engineering Consultancy, the work had not been re-tendered in 2005.

Alternative procurement methods had been assessed against the Council's Service Procurement Hierarchy and discussed with the Corporate Procurement Team (CPT). In view of the expertise within the NS team, the relatively low annual value of the works and the requirement for a reactive locally based service, the CPT had advised that the best way to deliver the service was through a Partnering Agreement between NS and City Strategy.

Members endorsed the arrangements between NS and York College to provide apprentice positions and continue the employment of skilled masons, ensuring that work on the Walls was carried out to the highest standard.

Having considered the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the delivery of the maintenance and restoration of the City Walls by City Strategy and Neighbourhood Services, through a partnering agreement, be approved.

(ii) That a Service Level Agreement be agreed which will detail the framework and performance standards of the partnership, ensuring that this approach will improve the quality, productivity and cost of the service to the Council.¹

(iii) That this agreement commence on 1 April 2008, and be reviewed and monitored as detailed in the Service Level Agreement.

REASON: To ensure that the City Walls are maintained to a consistently high standard.

Action Required

1. Produce Service Level Agreement.

JB

182. DERWENTHORPE - AMENDMENTS TO THE 'AGREEMENT FOR SALE' AND 'FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT'

Members considered a report which sought approval to make amendments to the original agreements between the Council and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT) in relation to the sale and development of the Derwenthorpe site.

A number of issues had arisen over the period since these agreements were signed in October 2002, resulting in the need make amendments. It was proposed that this be done by way of supplemental agreements. These would effect the changes requested by JHRT to deal with the Village Green issue and enable JRHT to 'self develop' individual development phases, as well as those sought by the Council to revise the structure of the overage provisions and oblige JRHT to seek to maximise profits from the development. It was confirmed that this 'profit' clause was a proposal generated by the District Auditor, who required the Council to obtain 'best value' when selling any of its assets and was designed to protect the interests of tax payers.

Options available to Members included:

Option 1 – to seek different amendments to those proposed, subject to further discussion and negotiation with JRHT. This was not considered necessary, as the proposed amendments addressed all the issues raised.

Option 2 – not to amend the agreements. This was not recommended as it would jeopardise the arrangements with JRHT.

Option 3 – to agree the amendments as proposed. This was the recommended option.

Having considered the comments of the Shadow Executive and the supplementary information provided by Officers in response to the Shadow Executive's questions on some technical aspects of the report, it was

RESOLVED: That Option 3 be approved, as set out in paragraph 5 of the report, and the necessary amendments be made to the 'Agreement for Sale' and the 'Framework Agreement' between the Council and Joseph Rowntree Trust.¹

REASON: In order to make progress on this important project.

Action Required

1. Amend the agreements.

JB

S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.30 pm].