

1 **Report to Council 30th June 2008**

2 There have been five meetings of the Executive to report since the last ordinary
3 meeting of Full Council on 10th April. Whilst I have only been in office as Leader
4 since the 22nd May I am reporting on all of the meetings.

5 I must start by thanking my processor Cllr Steve Galloway for the work that he had
6 done in the previous five years as council leader, and for the support that he has given
7 me during the handover process.

8 Sustainability is a key theme of the administration and the Executive agreed a
9 Strategy and Implementation Plan for the council's Carbon Management Programme
10 which set out an ambitious target of reducing the council's non-housing carbon
11 emissions by 25% by 2013. This follows on from the council's commitment to the
12 Nottingham Declaration, baseline work achieved with the Energy Saving Trust which
13 then fed into a year's working with the Carbon Trust to develop the strategy.

14 The report included the creation of a Carbon Management Fund of £500,000 to assist
15 with the pump priming of projects to reduce carbon emissions. There will be an
16 annual report on the progress of the delivery of the programme.

17 A bid to the Regional Transport Board for Funding 3 new Park and Ride sites required
18 the investment of £164,000 from council reserves, but has been money well spent
19 given the support for investment of £26 million in sites at Askham Bar, A59 and
20 Wigginton Road. This will assist with transport links around the city, but in particular
21 at York Hospital. A decision by the Regional Transport Board on the Hopgrove
22 roundabout, a key bottleneck, has been deferred to July.

23 The Executive considered the final report from the Highways Ad-hoc Scrutiny
24 Committee. Whilst to some degree the report had been overtaken by events with
25 decision by the government not to award the PFI bid to York, the Executive did agree
26 to note the efficiencies and benefits gained through the PFI approach, that in the event
27 of the PFI being unsuccessful that the key issues identified should be taken in to
28 consideration when deciding on an alternative approach, that there had been an impact
29 on the repayments to the Venture Fund caused by the delays in implementing the
30 actions agreed as part of the Best Value Review, whilst agreeing that the delays in
31 implementing the actions agreed as part of the Best Value Review were necessary,
32 and that the total savings made in Highways Maintenance since the Best Value
33 Review are significantly higher than those identified thus demonstrating that there had
34 not been a financial loss to the council.

35 The Executive received a petition regarding the Balfour Street Play area and agreed
36 that there needed to be an area asset management review in the Leeman Road area
37 before a decision was made on sales of assets in the area. This has since been through
38 a call-in procedure and the Executive has agreed the recommendations from Strategic
39 Policy Panel that there should be note made of this resolution in the Capital
40 Programme.

41 A review of the protocol governing the political management of the council for the
42 municipal year 2008/09 has been undertaken with all groups being invited to submit
43 requests for review reports for the forthcoming year. These requests have been
44 included in an update, and allow for the allocation of limited officer time in dealing
45 with these reports.

46 Establishment of a board for the Golden Triangle Partnership covering Leeds,
47 Harrogate and York was supported by the Executive. The partnership assists people in
48 this area of high house prices onto the property ladder. The Executive Member with
49 responsibility for Housing will represent the city on this board, for which the minutes
50 will be made available on the intranet.

51 Results from the Residents Opinion Survey show that overall satisfaction with the
52 council has improved, and is above average in customer satisfaction with the way that
53 the Authority runs things. The results show a steady improvement across a wide
54 range of indicators thus sustaining a trend that has developed over the last 5 years.
55 The only indicator in the bottom 25% percentile – provision of sports and leisure
56 facilities – has improved by 3% on the previous year. It is anticipated that this will
57 further improve as the new swimming pools, refurbished concert hall and other
58 facilities become available over the next few years.

59 The Executive agreed a clear methodology for the allocation of LPSA2 reward grant
60 funding subject to more specific targets and milestones being included.

61 In response to the impact of the “credit crunch” and the record of achievement of the
62 York Credit Union in helping residents of the city to deal with debt the Executive
63 agreed to allocate the Union the residual £7,100 in the City Strategy fund for support
64 to Voluntary Organisations

65 As demonstration of the Executive’s commitment to progressing work that has been
66 done by the authority to improve social inclusion and equality additional resources
67 have been provided for the next two years to ensure compliance by the council with
68 government legislation in this field.

69 The gas servicing contract for the council owned homes in the east of the city has
70 been combined with the existing arrangement in the rest of the city to bring it in-house
71 with Neighbourhood Services which will help to secure service quality and value of
72 money on behalf of the council’s tenants.

73 A sustainable procurement policy was adopted by the Executive which will ensure
74 that the Council is buying in goods and services in the most environmentally
75 sustainable way, whilst continuing to ensure taxpayers receive value for money. As a
76 result of this new policy, the whole life costings of goods and services will be
77 examined, rather than just the up front costs.

78 Examples of sustainable procurement may include providing fair trade and organic
79 food in school meals; ensuring that vehicles have low emissions to improve air
80 quality; using green energy to reduce carbon emissions; decreasing the amount of
81 biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill; and working with local
82 suppliers to improve economic prosperity and encourage environmentally friendly and
83 ethical work practices.

84 Officers have been kept busy responding to the government’s timetable for the
85 adoption of Local Area Agreements, and the revisions of the definitions of the
86 national performance indicators. The selection of these have been made through the
87 partnership boards of the Without Walls Local Strategic Partnership, with councillors
88 who are not members of the boards having workshops made available to guide them
89 through the process. Full Council will be asked to endorse the Without Walls
90 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2025 “York-A City Making History” which
91 has been produced by the Partnership Boards.

92 Data protection is a topical issue, and the Executive adopted a revised Data Protection
93 Policy for the Council taking into account the latest legislation on electronic data,
94 with the understanding that there will be further legislation on paper held information,
95 and requested further member training in this area.

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Cllr Andrew Waller

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17/06/08