
MEETING	SHADOW EXECUTIVE
DATE	5 JULY 2006
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS MERRETT (CHAIR), EVANS, FRASER, HORTON, KIND, LOOKER, POTTER AND SIMPSON-LAING
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR KING

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in any of the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

21. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Annex 2 to Executive item 10 (York Central Area Action Plan), on the grounds that it contained information relating to the financial and business affairs of particular persons, which 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).

22. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Shadow Executive held on 21 June 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

23. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

24. EXECUTIVE MINUTES

The Shadow Executive made the following comments on minute 30 (Council Plan and Year End Performance Results) from the Executive minutes at page 1 of the papers circulated for the Executive meeting to be held on 11 July 2006:

The Shadow Executive

- *Want to understand what extra costs are involved in these proposals and would like to know where it is going to be funded from (both direct funding and staffing) and asks the Chief Executive to advise us.*
- *Note that this appears to be an admission of failure of the existing communication strategy.*

25. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Shadow Executive made the following comments on the Forward Plan at page 9 of the papers circulated for the Executive meeting to be held on 11 July 2006:

The Shadow Executive:

- *May require Officer attendance at the relevant Shadow Executive meeting/s in respect of the following items (current Executive dates in brackets):*
 - *Restructuring of Chief Executive's Department (25/7)*
 - *Corporate Asset Management Plan (12/9)*
 - *Capital Strategy Document (12/9)*
 - *Consideration of Waste PFI Outline Business Case (12/9)*

26. REPORT BY THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION

The Shadow Executive considered a report which was listed as item 6 on the agenda for the Executive meeting on 11 July, at page 11. The report introduced a presentation by the Local Lead Inspector from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) on the findings of the Inspection of Services for People with Learning Disabilities, carried out at City of York Council in March 2006.

Having discussed the issues set out in the report, the following comments were agreed:

The Shadow Executive:

- *Express our concern that the Inspectorate is not reporting in a cross party forum as in the past and hope that we will go back to this in future.*
- *Agree to call the item in unless the Executive agree to allow the Shadow Executive Member the right to ask questions and speak at the Executive meeting on this item as required.*

- RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive be asked to take the above comments into account when considering this item.
- (ii) That the item be called in, unless the Executive agree to allow the Shadow Executive Member the right to ask questions and speak at the Executive meeting on this item as required.

27. FINANCE STRATEGY 2007/08 TO 2009/10

The Shadow Executive considered a report which was listed as item 7 on the agenda for the Executive meeting on 11 July, at page 15. The report presented the Council's draft Financial Strategy for the period 2007/08 to 2009/10. It reflected the Secretary of State's decision to nominate the Council in relation to its Council Tax levels for 2006/07 and 2007/08 and explored options to move to a more strategic approach to meeting future budget pressures and delivering efficiency improvements.

Having discussed the issues set out in the report and questioned officers present at the meeting, the following comments were agreed:

The Shadow Executive:

- *Note the report with concern, especially the situation with reserves and the suggested policy of maximising Council Tax rises.*
- *Request that there should be Member involvement in the Efficiency Review Programme.*

RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive be asked to take the above comments into account when considering this item.

(ii) That the item not be called in.

28. DIRECTORATE OF CITY STRATEGY - ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW

The Shadow Executive considered a report which was listed as item 8 on the agenda for the Executive meeting on 11 July, at page 63. The report presented proposals for the organisational structure of the Council's new Directorate of City Strategy, which came into being on 1st April 2006.

Having discussed the issues set out in the report and questioned officers present at the meeting, the following comments were agreed:

The Shadow Executive:

- *Reiterate their wider concerns regarding strategic functions not sitting within the Chief Executive's Department.*
- *Request that an appropriate title be agreed for the Assistant Director with responsibility for partnerships and the economy.*

RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive be asked to take the above comments into account when considering this item.

(ii) That the item not be called in.

29. HIGHWAYS SERVICES

The Shadow Executive considered a report which was listed as item 9 on the agenda for the Executive meeting on 11 July, at page 75. The report advised on progress to date with highway services procurement and sought approval for a proposed reporting and management structure for this procurement and, if required, to provide delegated authority to submit

an expression of interest for a highway management Private Finance Initiative bid, in consultation with the Executive Member.

Having discussed the issues set out in the report and questioned officers present at the meeting, the following comments were agreed:

The Shadow Executive:

- *Has concerns regarding the affordability of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) given the Council's funding position and some of the associated risks.*
- *Support the setting up of a Steering Group but request that the key decision be made by the Executive or, if timescales require, the Urgency Committee.*

RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive be asked to take the above comments into account when considering this item.

(ii) That the item not be called in.

30. YORK CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN

The Shadow Executive considered a report which was listed as item 10 on the agenda for the Executive meeting on 11 July, at page 87. The report presented a revised timetable for preparation of the York Central Area Action Plan (AAP) and sought approval to appoint consultants to produce an Issues and Options document and carry out public consultation relating to this.

Having discussed the issues set out in the report and questioned officers present at the meeting, the following comments were agreed:

The Shadow Executive:

- *Agreed to welcome the fact that the Executive have come round to the Shadow Executive's previously expressed views on the need for an early Area Action Plan to set the framework for development and regret the delay in getting to this point.*
- *Welcome the additional Yorkshire Forward money.*
- *Believe that there is a need to understand the impact of the British Sugar announcement for the York Central site development.*

RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive be asked to take the above comments into account when considering this item.

(ii) That the item not be called in.

31. URGENT BUSINESS: CLOSURE OF BRITISH SUGAR PLANT

Members received a briefing from the Chief Executive, the Director of City Strategy and the Assistant Director (Economic Development) on the likely closure of the British Sugar plant in York. This item was taken as urgent business as the closure had only been announced on 4 July 2006.

Having discussed the issues outlined in the briefing and questioned officers present at the meeting, the following comments were agreed:

The Shadow Executive:

- *Are extremely concerned at the announcement that British Sugar are to close the York plant and the resultant job losses.*
- *Express concern about the wider knock-on effect the closure will have on seasonal workers, farmers, hauliers etc.*
- *Express concern that the Council had not made contact with British Sugar nationally and been unable to do so locally since the announcement.*
- *Seeks urgent action by the Council to contact British Sugar to see what possibility there is to alter their proposals.*
- *Seeks assurances that Future Prospects will be able to cope with providing support, particularly in light of the successive cuts to the service in recent years.*
- *In the light of the successive series of closure announcements (Terry's, Nestle, British Sugar) asks officers to look at whether a more strategic approach is required to deal with what appears to be a rapid collapse of the manufacturing/processing industry in the city.*

RESOLVED: That the Executive be asked to take the above comments into account.

D M Merrett, Chair

[The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 4.10 pm].