

MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	25 MARCH 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, REID, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER

183. 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 Runciman declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 (Theatre Royal Funding Agreement), as a Trustee of the Theatre Royal.

184. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Annex A to agenda item 9 (Gas Servicing Future Procurement), on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), which is classed as exempt under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

185. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 11 March 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

186. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that Dan Bates, Chief Executive of York Theatre Royal, had registered to speak in relation to agenda item 6 (Theatre Royal Funding Agreement). However, in view of the proposal to defer this item, he had asked that his request to speak be held over to the next meeting.

187. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

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

RESOLVED: (i) That the Forward Plan for the next two meetings be noted.

(ii) That the Forward Plan be amended to include the following item on the list for the Executive meeting on 6 May 2008:

- A review and updating of the protocol governing the political management of the Council for the 2008/09 year.¹

REASON: So that this item can be included on the Executive agenda for 6 May.

Action Required

1. Add this item to the Forward Plan.

SH

188. THEATRE ROYAL FUNDING AGREEMENT 2008/09

Members received a report which sought approval for a new Service Level Agreement (SLA) with York Theatre Royal, to come into effect after expiry of the current SLA, on 31 March 2008.

Members expressed concern about the lack of a detailed business plan, measurable performance indicators and milestones in the draft SLA attached as Annex A to the report. Additional information on these issues had been requested but had not been made available before the meeting. It was therefore considered prudent to defer consideration of this item to enable Officers to produce that information and also to respond to suggestions made by the Shadow Executive in relation to extending the theatre's pricing policy for families and those on low incomes.¹

RESOLVED: That consideration of this item be deferred until the next meeting.²

REASON: To receive the additional information required and ensure that there is clarity about the Theatre's plans for the next few years before signing off the agreement.

Action Required

1. Produce the required information to go with the report to Executive on 8 April.

ST
GR

2. Add this item to the agenda for Executive meeting on 8 April.

189. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

Members considered a report which summarised the key messages, findings and conclusions set out in the Annual Audit Letter of the District

Auditor in respect of the 2006/07 audit year. Alistair Newall and Alan Humphries from the District Auditor's office were present to answer Members' questions on the Annual Letter.

The Annual Letter, attached as Annex A to the report, was generally positive and recognised the considerable progress made in many areas to improve and develop across the Council. However, it did identify weaknesses for priority action in some areas, including: sickness absence, arrangements for ensuring data quality, the approach to equalities and inclusion, and arrangements for producing the annual accounts. It was confirmed that the letter at Annex A, although marked as a draft, was in fact the final version.

Officers were currently drafting an action plan in response to the issues raised in the Annual Letter. This would be reported to the next meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee. It was suggested that the agreed plan also be incorporated into the corporate OEP action plan and used for in-year progress monitoring and follow up purposed by the Corporate Management Team.

Members noted that the Audit Letter was to some extent out of date, as it represented the position during the 2006/07 financial year and did not take full account of improvements made more recently. However, they noted that it praised the Council for providing 'good value for money' and that a number of key services were rated highly by the District Auditor, including waste management, children and young people, social services and benefits.

Having noted the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the contents of the report be noted and that the Annual Audit Letter at Annex A be noted as probably the most favourable ever received by a York Council.

REASON: To comply with the statutory requirements for the external audit of the Council.

(ii) That Officers be requested to prepare an action plan aimed at addressing the issues highlighted in the Audit Report as requiring further improvement.¹

REASON: To ensure the effective management and follow up of key action to be taken to support on-going development and improvement work at the Council.

Action Required

1. Prepare action plan.

SA

190. REVIEW REPORT - SAFE CITY

Members considered a review report, produced jointly by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Chief Superintendent (Area Commander York), North Yorkshire Police, in response to a request from Group Leaders in their “policy prospectus”. The report highlighted how the Council could assist the police in making improvements in relation to the Safe City agenda.

The report noted the success achieved by joint working between the North Yorkshire Police (NYP), the City of York Council (CYC) and other partners within the Safer York Partnership (SYP). It set out the police approach to Safer Neighbourhoods, using the framework of “Access, Influence, Interventions and Answers” and indicated how CYC could assist, or was already assisting, NYP within this framework.

These existing and proposed joint activities included:

- Working together at a ward and strategic level to identify ‘Tier 1’ police locations, where the public can access their local policing teams.
- The production of jointly owned strategic plans to ensure that policing activity is directed to where it is most needed.
- Safer Neighbourhood teams consulting with communities about their concerns and prioritising these through the Ward Committee structure.
- Engaging CYC and other partners in future discussions on the establishment of safety cameras in York, following a review of their use in the light of the Department for Transport (DFT) criteria.

Details of Neighbourhood Policing Areas, the Tier 1 Policing model, the Community and Engagement and Feedback model for community safety and the DFT criteria for safety cameras were annexed to the report.

Having noted the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the report be noted and that the local Police Commander and officers of the Safer York Partnership be thanked for the progress made in addressing community safety issues during the past year.¹

(ii) That the North Yorkshire Police Authority be requested at least to continue existing funding levels, through the BCU, for the Safer York Partnership.²

(iii) That the Executive’s support for the Neighbourhood Policing initiative, which has done much to improve public perceptions of the effectiveness of community safety arrangements in the City, be confirmed.

(iv) That the introduction of initiatives such as the mobile speed enforcement service and Capable Guardian scheme be anticipated, as further evidence of the City’s wish to

establish a safe and secure community environment fit for the 21st century.

REASON: In order to maintain the momentum achieved over recent years and to work towards a target to have the safest City in the country, as judged by both crime statistics and public perceptions.

Action Required

1. Pass on the Executive's thanks to Police Commander and SYP officers. KS
KS
2. Pass on this request to North Yorkshire Police Authority.

191. GAS SERVICING FUTURE PROCUREMENT

Members received a report which presented the results of a recent procurement exercise undertaken in relation to gas servicing. The report suggested a future direction for the gas servicing and maintenance service to council dwellings, following expiry of the current contract.

The report recommended an amendment to the current Housing Repairs Partnership between the Council's Housing and Neighbourhood Services departments to enable Neighbourhood Services to carry out all of the gas servicing in the City. In view of the comments made by the Shadow Executive on this proposal and the need to establish conclusively that a new internal contract would be in the best interests of tenants, it was suggested that the item be deferred to a future meeting.

Officers confirmed that the information required could be supplied in time for the item to be considered at the Executive meeting on 6 May 2008.

RESOLVED: (i) That consideration of this item be deferred to a future Executive meeting.¹

(ii) That additional information on the options available to the Executive be provided before the end of the current Municipal Year.²

REASON: To enable Officers to test the options available and to justify their proposals.

Action Required

1. Add this item to the Forward Plan for Executive on 6 May 2008. LE
LE
2. Provide the required additional information to go with report to Executive on 6 May.

S F Galloway, Chair
[The meeting started at 2.05 pm and finished at 2.45 pm].