

### **1. Efficiency Partners**

In July the Executive considered the initial findings from the review of services undertaken by the Council's efficiency partner Northgate Kendrick Ash. These have been worked on over the summer along with proposals from the Corporate Management Team for a broad based programme of work to deliver savings and improvement of services. A greater appreciation of the condition of the national public finances over the summer has shown that this programme is even more imperative for the City of York Council in order to anticipate the reductions in public expenditure. We are awaiting the figures from the next CSR three year period. This is in the context of York charging the least for council services of any authority in Yorkshire. There will be regular reporting of the actions that will be taken as a consequence of the Efficiency Review to bring democratic accountability to the changes that are being proposed.

### **2. Risk Management**

The Executive approved a revised and refreshed risk management policy and strategy to improve the management and assessment of risk in the work that the council does.

### **3. Area Based Working**

Building on the success of the YorkPride vision of the council the proposals for Area Based Working were considered in July, and are being developed as part of the efficiency review. The connection between council officers and specific services in defined geographic areas has worked in the city centre, and in a number of services already such as the barrow sweeping. The proposals will enhance the workings of the Ward Committee teams, and assist the connection between public requests for service and the delivery of these services at a street level. Further reports will be coming to the Executive.

### **4. Castle Picadilly**

The Executive has been able to put into operation the council's new procurement regulations to demonstrate that the findings of the Roanne case have been implemented. This was demonstrated in the Castle Piccadilly Regeneration Project procurement concession. Whilst the current national economic situation means that the project may not proceed as quickly as in previous years, it does lay down the foundations for regeneration for a part of the city centre which is in need of improvement.

### **5. Sustainable Communities Act**

The final update on the Sustainable Communities Act came back to Executive at the end of July to allow submission of the seven selected proposals to be worked up for the Local Government Association. York has been held up as an example of good practice in putting the Act into Action. I would like to thank the officers of the council who worked so hard to ensure that this was delivered , and especially that all ward committees were covered for the collection of suggestions from the public.

## **6. Headquarters Project**

At the end of July the Executive received an update on the progress of the Council Headquarters building project. Some of the changes in ways of working can start before the move into the new Headquarters and these will form part of the efficiency savings that can be delivered early. The developers have been reminded of the need for the project to remain within the existing budget, and they have indicated that they are fully aware of this. Work will be undertaken assessing the tenders by a review team. I am pleased at the level of engagement with the process, and the interest across the city in the two proposals both of which are very exciting in the re-use of existing buildings.

In September the Executive agreed to support the development of the Hungate site as a prime location for office development and to actively market the site. To assist with this the archaeology of the site needs to be investigated along with the preparation of the whole site. The accounting of the project will include consideration of the costs that would have been incurred to bring the Peaseholme Centre up to the new government standards for provision of facilities had the service remained where it was. This would have been in the region of £2 million. The overall budget remains fixed at the total of £43.804 million).

## **7. Urban Eco Settlement**

Proposals for the Urban Eco Settlement at the former British Sugar site were approved for submission to the Department of Communities and Local Government. This would set up an exemplar pilot on the site to demonstrate new ways of constructing homes, and would build on York's reputation for piloting new technology for eco construction. The concept of the four Urban Eco Settlements around the Leeds City Region (LCR) is becoming well advanced with work having been done by the LCR Housing Panel to work up schemes following the agreement by central Government to the proposal by the 11 council leaders from the LCR to abandon the Eco New Town and instead develop brownfield sites close to existing transport links and close to employment. Following the selection of LCR to be one of only two 'Forerunners' in the country I hope that when the agreement is signed off by Ministers early next month that there will be a clear undertaking for investment in this programme.

The Urban Eco Settlement was one of the issues brought to the attention of the Minister for Yorkshire and The Humber, Rt Hon Rosie Winterton, at an all-party meeting that I arranged at the Mansion House on 25<sup>th</sup> August. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss the importance of the operator for the East Coast Mainline Franchise having their Headquarters in York, and the opportunities for relocating civil service jobs outside of London to the Hungate site which had been allocated for the new council Headquarters (this was also an item on the Executive agenda for 22<sup>nd</sup> September). Given the proximity to existing large DEFRA buildings there is the opportunity for a 'mini Whitehall' and I have received a letter of support from the DEFRA Minister Rt Hon Hilary Benn for the proposal.

#### **8. Ring Road improvements**

The ability of the CYC Transport Team to spend unallocated Transport Funds from elsewhere in the Region has again been utilised to the advantage of York with the opportunity to use additional capital to reduce congestion on the ring road. This will be used for the A19 roundabout at Clifton Moor which will complement the improvements already made at Askham Lane, the improvements at Hopgrove, and the A59 improvement near Poppleton which forms part of the Access York Phase 1 Park and Ride plans.

#### **9. Scrutiny Reports to Executive**

##### **Hungate**

The Executive has considered the final report from the Hungate Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee which was very well researched with some very interesting FOI information from English Heritage, although an important week was missing and therefore it is still difficult to work out how EH came to write its final letter on the planning application. Had this information been available then the Scrutiny Committee would have had more details to make recommendations to the Council to help avoid a repeat of the situation (or help to advise English Heritage on how similar situations with other councils could be prevented in order to avoid aborted development costs). The communication on the new HQ project has demonstrated that the improvements to pre-project public consultation and feedback recommended by the Scrutiny Committee have been implemented already.

##### **Extended Schools and Planning Enforcement**

Education Scrutiny Committee also reported back to the Executive on their review of the Extended Schools Agenda and all of the recommendations were endorsed by the Executive.

In September the Executive was able to endorse the final report of the Planning Enforcement Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee.

## **10. Capital Programme**

Capital Programme Outturn was considered with 96% of the 2008/09 Capital Programme having been delivered as part of the strong performance of the council.



Inside of new Oaklands Pool



External View Oaklands Pool



Wood Pellet silo Oaklands Pool

The delivery of a 'One Stop Shop' for council services in the West of the City took one step closer with the purchase of land at the rear of the Acomb Explore on Front Street.

### **11. Burnholme Community College**

Burnholme Community College received the answer from the Executive that they needed to remain open, and over the summer delivered a 21% increase in 5 A\* to C GCSE results. This, together with the vastly improved results at York High School, demonstrates the administration's commitment to the improvement of examination results which was called for in the Future York report to ensure that every child in York received the full benefit of a high quality education. Education officers will work with staff and governors at Burnholme Community College to ensure that they build on their 'good' OFSTED result and that they increase the numbers of pupils on their site.

### **12. Car Parking**

Following discussions with the Retail Forum the Executive considered how car parking charges could be altered to increase the attraction of York as a shopping destination to stimulate the city centre economy without impacting on the council's commitment to more environmentally friendly forms of transport for commuting. It was agreed to run a "Cheaper Tuesdays" scheme in October and November using the payment by phone method. This can be readily monitored to see the impact on usage as Tuesday is a relatively quiet day. At the same time the Executive agreed the purchase of a new, more flexible ticket machine in the Piccadilly multi-story car park with a view to introducing off peak reduction in charges, as well as payment by credit card.

### **13. Carbon and Energy Management**

Carbon and Energy Management with the council's commitment to cutting Carbon emissions by 25% by 2013 was reviewed in September, which coincided with the Workshop for staff on Energy on 16<sup>th</sup> September, and the launch of the 'Hotspots' scheme on 11<sup>th</sup> September.



Staff Workshop on Climate Change 16<sup>th</sup>  
September

Launch of Hotspots Campaign with  
Energy Partnership and Energy Saving  
Trust 11<sup>th</sup> September

#### **14. Locality Home Care Contract**

The Executive approved the extension of three of the four Locality Home Care Contracts to December 2010 to ensure that there is a smooth transition for residents receiving the service if they are moving to new care providers.

#### **15. Barbican.**

The Executive received a report on 22<sup>nd</sup> September which showed that encouragingly there were four expressions of interest in the future use of the site. It was agreed that the Barbican would be marketed, with the inclusion of the Kent Street Coach Park. In order to assist with the objective measurement of bids against each other a weighting criteria was agreed which took into account; financial impact on the council, quality of facilities for the use of residents of York and visitors, coherence with the overall masterplan for the area, quality of the entertainment programme for the city, and opportunities for community involvement and activities.

#### **16. Eco Jobs Task Group**

There has been a task group made up of from City of York Council and partners looking at how the city can make sure that it benefits from the new generation of eco-jobs, as well as actions that LSP partners can take to stimulate locally based environmental jobs. Greater application of insulation, and renewable energy is one line of enquiry, along with the training needed in the workforce to take account of new technology in construction. The work of this group was reported to the Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> October, and will be taken forward with the LSP as it overlaps the Environment Partnership and Economic Partnership areas.

#### **17. University Pool**

The Executive has re-affirmed its commitment to working with the University to develop the pool on the East of the city. The current strategy of the council is the only that will provide the number of swimming lanes that was described as necessary by Active York. The report detailed how a city centre competition standard pool currently is unrealistic due to the lack of a site immediately available for it, lack of affordability, and would compete head to head on with the University Pool.

The Steering Group (composed of an independent chair, University, City of York Council, community and Amateur Swimming Association representatives) met 6 times between February 2007 and November 2008. The University has now commissioned FaulknerBrown Architects to undertake a design study and cost plan for the project. The impact of the recession in terms of making borrowing more difficult has taken its toll on the project. Therefore the University and Council have commenced a review to look at the opportunities for different funding arrangements to overcome the existing funding gap.

Cllr Andrew Waller