
MEETING	URGENCY COMMITTEE
DATE	27 MARCH 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), MERRETT, POTTER, REID AND WALLER

35. 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.

No interests were declared.

36. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following:

Annex 11 to Agenda Item 4 (Neighbourhood Services Re-structure) (minute 38 refers) on the grounds that it contained information relating to individuals. This information was classed as exempt under paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

37. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

38. NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES RE-STRUCTURE

Members received a report which sought approval of a proposed re-structure of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate.

The report was being considered by the Urgency Committee because the re-structure needed to be implemented immediately to deliver the Directorate's corporate priorities.

Paragraph 5 of the report set out the major challenges facing the Directorate in the next twelve months and paragraph 7 of the report set out a summary of the proposed changes. The proposed senior management structure was set out in Annex 1 of the report, with the Directorate split into five divisions:

- Neighbourhoods and Community Safety;
- Environmental Services;
- Maintenance Services;

- Finance;
- Performance Management.

The options presented in the report were to approve the proposed structure or to retain the existing structure.

The changes to the line management structure for the Safer York Partnership (SYP) had only recently been approved by the SYP board, and the SYP structure as a whole would be subject to a further review. Members were therefore requested to delegate responsibility to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to effect any subsequent modification to the SYP structure, in consultation with and the agreement of the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) Board.

Officers advised that the structure chart for Licensing & Bereavement Services included in Annex 3 of the report should show the Safer York Partnership three full time equivalent (fte) Licensing Officer posts reporting to North Yorkshire Police, not the Council's Licensing Manager.

Members thanked the Director of Neighbourhood Services for his hard work developing the proposals and bringing staff on board with the proposed changes through the consultation process. They highlighted the importance of creating a dedicated enforcement team to free up Street Environment team resources, and also of creating the post of Waste Minimisation Officer to reduce waste and improve performance against indicator BV199.

Some Members expressed concern regarding the monitoring of costs and efficiency of services and emphasised the need for clear information to be available to Members to enable them to make judgements of these issues, rather than just receiving reassurances. Officers outlined a range of factors that would ensure service efficiency, including the need for maintenance services to be competitive, the work with ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns) on street environment services and the monitoring of performance indicators relating to waste services. They also advised that the outcomes of future service reviews would be reported to Members, as would the outcome of discussions with the Director of Resources regarding future trading accounting arrangements.

Some Members, whilst supporting the co-location of the Safer York Partnership with Council services, expressed concern regarding the police losing a degree of ownership of the Partnership, if it became too integrated, and the Partnership being perceived by the public as less independent. Other Members welcomed the move of the Partnership to more accessible and user friendly premises, their co-location with Neighbourhood Pride Officers, with whom they shared objectives, and with the seconded Police Liaison Officer, which would ensure police ownership was maintained.

RESOLVED: (i) That the re-structure be approved as detailed in the report;

- (ii) That responsibility to effect any subsequent modification to the Safer York Partnership structure be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services, after consultation with and in agreement with the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership Board.

REASON: To allow the Directorate to provide modern, efficient and customer focused services.

COUNCILLOR S F GALLOWAY

Chair

The meeting started at 12.15 pm and finished at 12.40 pm.