
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	20 NOVEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR REID

99. 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.

100. Exclusion of Press and Public

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

- Annex 2 to agenda item 8 (York Racecourse – Application for Lease Extension and Amendments)
- Annex A to agenda item 9 (Review and Strategy for the Commercial Property Portfolio)

on the grounds that they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons, which is classed as exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

101. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the re-convened Executive meeting held on 30 October 2007 and the Executive meeting held on 6 November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

102. Public Participation

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

103. Executive Forward Plan

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

104. IT Development Plan 2008-09

Members considered a report which asked them to review areas for investment in IT that had been identified and put forward by Directors, and to decide which of these projects should be funded.

The proposals had been evaluated by the Corporate IT Strategy Group (CITSG) and were presented in priority order in Annex A to the report. A summary of each proposal, with a breakdown of costs, was set out in Annex B. Those bids that had been rejected by CITSG were summarised in Annex C.

Three options were presented for Members' consideration:

Option 1 - to fund all the bids recommended by the CITSG (i.e. those listed above the dotted line in Annex A)

Option 2 – to fund more bids than recommended by the CITSG; that is, to include the two bids listed below the dotted line in Annex A. All of these bids could be funded from the General Fund allocation, although more funding would be required from HRA and Neighbourhood Services.

Option 3 – to fund fewer bids than recommended by the CITSG.

The report highlighted those proposals that would or would not be funded should Members wish to select Options 2 or 3.

Officers circulated additional information at the meeting regarding the potential annual savings to be achieved by each scheme (Annex D)

Having noted the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the order of priorities recommended by the CITSG be agreed in principle, subject to the allocation of resources as part of the 2008/09 budget process.

REASON: In order to allocate the IT Development Plan funding for 2008/09 to priority projects, to support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities.

(ii) That consideration also be given during the budget build process to the appropriate provision to be made in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for spend on the IT Development Plan in 2009/10.

REASON: To ensure that sufficient resources are identified for future years' IT Development within the Council's forward plan, subject to the overall budget position.

(iii) That Officers be asked to refine the proposals further, to identify more specifically the revenue savings that each will deliver over the lifetime of the investment.

REASON: In order to inform the budget build process.

105. Comprehensive Performance Assessment Inspection - Self Assessment

Members considered a report which sought endorsement for the Council's draft self assessment, to be submitted to the Audit Commission on 10 December 2007 in preparation for the corporate inspection in January 2008.

The draft self assessment, attached as Annex A to the report, had been prepared following wide ranging and inclusive consultation with stakeholders and would form the starting point for the work of the inspection team.

It was noted that briefings on the draft self-assessment had been offered to Members individually, in addition to the pre-Council seminar on this subject held on 4 October 2007.

Having noted the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That the content of the self assessment be endorsed, noting that it may be subject to editorial changes by the Chief Executive.

REASON: To enable the self assessment to be sent to the Audit Commission according to their required timetable.

106. York Racecourse – Application For Lease Extension And Amendments

Members considered a report which presented a request from the Race Committee to make changes to the lease of York Racecourse, in order to enable investment in developing and maintaining their facilities to continue.

The changes requested were:

- To restore the lease length to 99 years, from 2008
- To include the whole of the West Enclosure in the lease
- To increase the number of permitted Race Days from 15 to 20
- To add the 'Ascot Bend' to the track on a permanent basis
- To extend the definition of 'Race Weeks'.

Ward Members' suggestions for consideration in respect of the lease, and Officers' responses, were set out in paragraph 9 of the report. Members were invited to consider three options:

Option A – Agree the lease extension. This was the recommended option.

Option B – Decline to extend the lease. Not recommended, as failure to support improvements and future investment could be seen as detrimental to the long term prosperity of the City.

Option C – Accept some of the proposed changes but not others. Not recommended, as it was thought unlikely that York Race Committee would accept a partial agreement.

With reference to the comments of the Shadow Executive on this item, Officers confirmed that:

- The land at Sim Balk Lane had been used as an overflow car park on a one-off basis for Royal Ascot. It was not owned by the Council or the Race Committee and was not included in the agreed Traffic Management Plan.
- Policing outside the racecourse area was not considered to be a matter for the Race Committee.
- The location of temporary toilets was yet to be agreed and would be discussed with relevant Ward Members.
- In terms of benefits to York residents, the Racecourse provided employment and leisure facilities - a substantial proportion of racegoers were residents of York.
- The Racecourse already contributed to traffic management via an agreed formula.
- There was currently only one evening race meeting and the 10pm curfew for post-race entertainment was strictly adhered to.
- It was expected that the proposed changes to the lease would generate more investment in Area W (i.e. part of the West Enclosure).

Members commented that some of the issues raised by the Shadow Executive could be addressed more appropriately in the context of the annual meeting with the Race Committee, when plans for the future season were discussed.

- RESOLVED: (i) That Option A be approved, that is:
- a) to surrender the existing lease for the Racecourse in favour of a new 99 year lease, from 2008;
 - b) to include the remaining 3 acres of the West Enclosure in the lease, subject to the results of advertising under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972;
 - c) to increase the number of permitted Race Days as of right to 20, with any others to be subject to approval by the Head of Parks and Open Spaces, in consultation with Officers in City Strategy;
 - d) to add the 'Ascot Bend' to the race track, in exchange for land on the Tadcaster Road straight;
 - e) to allow up to 10 days for the erection of hospitality marquees and 4 days for removal, instead of the current 'Race Week', subject to the approval of the Head of Parks and Open Spaces.

REASON: To ensure that York Racecourse maintains its position amongst the top courses in the country, whilst at the same time continuing to be a valued local amenity that plays a valuable role in the economic development of the City and

brings benefits in a manner that is acceptable to the residents of York.

- (ii) That Officers be asked to investigate further options for providing a set of temporary toilets, including bringing back into use the existing toilet block on Knavesmire Road, on major Race Days.

REASON: In order to address Ward Members' suggestions in this regard and in view of the fact that the Race Committee are not willing to provide toilets in the Scarcroft Hill area and that there is no budget provision for the estimated £8k cost of providing and servicing toilets for the main race meetings.

- (iii) That the other issues raised by Members be kept under review and addressed as part of any proposed changes to licensing arrangements and planning permissions and / or during traffic management reviews.

REASON: To ensure that these matters are dealt with in an appropriate context.

- (iv) That any further refinement of the 'off course' race management arrangements - which may involve additional cost - be submitted as a revenue growth bid as part of the annual budget build process.

REASON: To ensure that adequate funding arrangements are in place before any changes are agreed.

107. Review & Strategy for the Commercial Property Portfolio

[See also Exempt Minute 107]

Members considered a report which identified the properties making up the Council's Commercial Property Portfolio, examined the background to current ownership, established criteria for holding these premises in the future and audited performance for the period 2000 to 2005. A report on this matter had previously been considered by the Executive Member for Corporate Services and Advisory Panel, on 30 October 2007. The Executive Member's decisions were set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

The review formed a Service Asset Management Plan, linking to the Council's approved Corporate Asset Management Plan. It related to commercial properties in two categories – Operational (properties ancillary to service use) and Non Operational (properties not directly part of a service). The main focus of the review was on the latter.

Annex A to the report (an exempt document) included a list of those properties that might be subject to review, together with fact sheets on each group of non-operational properties, setting out the benchmarks, voids and write offs that had occurred and recommending future policy. The report outlined the recommended objectives for holding property in the

future and the recommended performance indicators for future property management. Recommendations for suggested new measures and changes for the future, relating to rent reviews, condition surveys, potentially saleable properties, new investment properties and properties to be retained for the longer term, were set out in paragraph 10 of Annex A.

Having noted the comments of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: (i) That the performance of the Council's operational and non-operational portfolios be noted.

(ii) That the recommendations summarised in paragraph 10 of Annex A to the report be approved.

(iii) That recommendation (d) in paragraph 10 be considered further by the Corporate Asset Management Group and a report brought back to the Executive Member for Corporate Services outlining the investment strategy.

REASONS: To provide Members' input to the Commercial Property Review, set targets for future performance and identify actions on individual properties.

S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.30 pm].