

Meeting	Decision Session - Economic Development And Community Engagement (Deputy Leader)
Date	4 October 2016
Present	Councillor Aspden

9. Declarations of Interest

The Executive Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

10. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last Decision Session held on 16 August 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member.

11. Public Participation

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

12. Business Friendly Council - progress update

The Executive Member considered a report which provided an update in relation to the progress which has been made toward becoming a 'business friendly' council. This included a review of the services we currently provide for business and an assessment of our internet presence on the Council website.

Officers updated the Executive member on work that had been undertaken since April 2016, including consultations with staff, businesses and business groups such as the Federation of Small Business (FSB) and Chamber of Commerce. Some issues highlighted by Officers were:

- Work to strengthen business consultation methods.
- Signposting and how to eliminate confusion between the roles of City of York Council and Make it York.
- Digital Services – in particular how the website could be enhanced.
- Promotion of business services.

The Executive Member stated that discussions with the FSB and the Chamber of Commerce suggested that there were some excellent service areas within the Council and it was essential to share this best practice.

Resolved: That the Executive Member:

- I. Noted the work that has been undertaken to reach the objective of becoming a business friendly Council since the last Decision Session.
- II. Advised that the following next steps (set out in the paper) should be explored further and agreed to a programme of work to deliver some of the recommended outcomes.
 - a) Review how we consult with businesses with the aim of launching a new business consultation approach by April 2017.
 - b) Signposting – for example, work to eliminate the confusion between the role of Make it York (York Means Business, Visit York, Science City York) and City of York Council.
 - c) Website – review the findings from the staff and business surveys with ICT and the Web Team.
 - d) Promotion – looking at ways to promote our business services with Marketing and Communications.

- III. Agreed that work continues to develop 'business friendly' ideas and projects as a whole and that 'business friendly' becomes best practice procedure within the authority.

Reason:

- I. To continue work on business friendly Council and to foster stronger, more supportive working relationships with local businesses.
- II. To provide the best possible service for internal and external customers.
- III. To deliver tangible results for positive change and to support continuous service improvement.
- IV. To streamline existing processes where possible to produce better quality results.
- V. To demonstrate to the business community and staff that we have learned from their feedback.
- VI. To show ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability to residents and business.

Councillor Aspden, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 2.05 pm and finished at 2.20 pm].