

**Notice of a
Decision Session - Executive Member for Culture, Leisure &
Tourism**

To: Councillor Ayre (Executive Member)
Date: Monday, 16 January 2017
Time: 4.30 pm
Venue: The King John Room (GO59) - West Offices

AGENDA

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00 pm on Wednesday 18 January 2017.**

*With the exception of matters that have been subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **Thursday 12 January 2017 at 5.00 pm**

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. Minutes (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 19 December 2016.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak at the meeting can do so. The deadline for registering is **Friday 13 January 2017 at 5.00 pm.**

Members of the public may register to speak on :-

- an item on the agenda
- an issue within the Executive Member's remit;

Filming, Recording or Webcasting Meetings

Please note this meeting will be filmed and webcast and that includes any registered public speakers, who have given their permission. This broadcast can be viewed at <http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts>.

Residents are welcome to photograph, film or record Councillors and Officers at all meetings open to the press and public. This includes the use of social media reporting, i.e. tweeting. Anyone wishing to film, record or take photos at any public meeting should contact the Democracy Officer (whose contact details are at the foot of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at: http://www.york.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11406/protocol_for_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings_20160809.pdf

4. Future Management of Allotments (Pages 3 - 14)

This report seeks approval for the development of an alternative management arrangement for the allotment service.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name- Judith Betts

Telephone No.- 01904 551078

Email-judith.betts@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting Decision Session - Executive Member for
Culture, Leisure & Tourism

Date 19 December 2016

Present Councillor Ayre (Executive Member)

20. Declarations of Interest

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

21. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 28 November 2016 be approved and then signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

22. Public Participation

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

23. York Learning- Self Assessment Report 2016/17

The Executive Member considered a report which presented him with a high level summary of the York Learning Self Assessment Report (SAR) for the academic year 2015/16. The report presented highlighted key strengths and areas for improvement.

Officers informed the Executive Member that when the final SAR report for 2016/17 was published it would be longer and would cover five curriculum areas.

Two particular outcomes within the report were highlighted to the Executive Member. These were that there had been an increase in the pass rate in GCSE Maths from 62% to 79% and that overall success rates for the service were declining from

80% to 76%, although these still remained good and in line with similar services across the country.

The GCSE Maths pass rates were particularly noteworthy as these grades had been obtained from students who had previously failed the examination before being taught on York Learning programmes.

The decline in overall success rates were due to no longer using short courses as building blocks to longer qualifications. These have been withdrawn following a review of English and maths qualifications. Where students had been unsuccessful, the service has identified individual students personal circumstances as mitigating factors. More coaching in exam preparation was being offered to try and improve overall student performance.

In response to a question from the Executive Member about partnerships and referrals routes for learners with mental health issues, Officers reported that along with the retention of a member of staff they had secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund to enable individual support to be offered to students along with mindfulness tutoring.

The Executive Member requested more details from Officers on where the provision would be delivered from in York and stated that he was happy to receive the report in its current format, before final publication.

Resolved: That the report be received and noted.

Reason: To help monitor the service and ensure robust governance arrangements.

Councillor Ayre, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 4.35 pm and finished at 4.50 pm].



**Decision Session - Executive Member for
Culture, Leisure and Tourism**

16 January 2017

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy and Place

Future Management of Allotments

Summary

1. This report seeks approval for the development of an alternative management arrangement for the allotment service.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to approve the development of alternative management arrangements for the allotments service, and once these have been developed, to receive a further report.

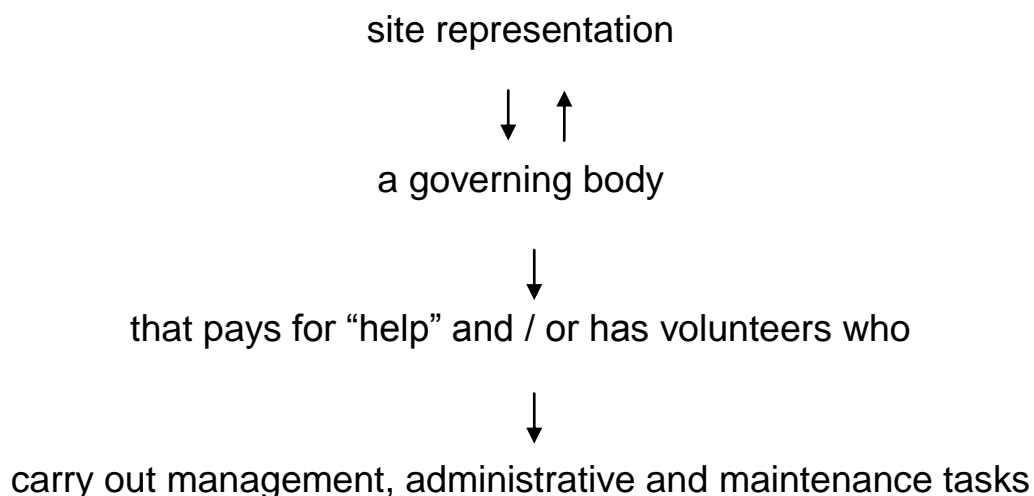
Reason: To harness the talents and energies of the community and to move the service onto more sustainable management arrangement.

Background

3. The Council has some 1,250 allotment plots spread over 18 sites. The sites are: Bootham, Carr, Field View, Fulford Cross, Hospital Fields, Glen (in Scrope), Green Lane, Hob Moor, Holgate, Hospital Field, Hempland Lane, Howe Hill, New Lane, Low Moor, Scarcroft, Strensall, Wigginton Road and Wigginton Terrace. Background information on the sites is provided as Annex 1.
4. Management of the service is through one full-time officer with limited part time assistance from the Council's Business Support service. Most sites have a voluntary site secretary who, on behalf of the Council, shows prospective tenants around the site, lets plots and deals with simple day to day enquires. A limited number of sites have voluntary tenants associations who run site shops and offer gardening advice and support to tenants.
5. This initiative is being developed as part of the council-wide programme of exploring new ways of delivering services, including community-led management. As part of this exercise there are no proposals to either close allotments or sell off any land.

6. A number of councils around the country have allotment sites which are run independently from the council; this includes both single sites and larger groupings of sites. The arrangements take on a variety of forms such a federation of tenants, a charity, Industrial and Provident Society, a not for profit company or another similar body. In all cases the council continues to own the land and protects its use through a lease. A list of councils where some or all of the management is undertaken by a community organisation is provided in annex 2.

7. All arrangements have a common structure:



8. An initial examination of these alternative arrangements has indicated that such an arrangement could work in York. Already at the local level Bustardthorpe allotments have been self managed for several years. In other areas of leisure provision the community has recently taken on management of tennis courts, bowling greens and fishing ponds.

9. The benefits of placing the allotments under community management fall into three broad categories:

- a. It will fully utilise the knowledge and experience that exists within the allotment community, for example, in the areas of project and financial management, funding opportunities and best horticultural practice.
- b. It will increase local decision-making. Tenants would be members of the new body and have a direct say in how it is run, and where and how their rent is spent.
- c. Longer term it will deliver cost savings to the authority and tax payer.

As well as the current day to day budget deficient there are additional service costs such as management support and accommodation.

10. The key to developing such arrangements is to find suitably motivated and experienced volunteers who are willing to take on leadership and administration roles. Preliminary soundings through the tenant consultation workshops (see below for more details) are that there are people interested and experienced in developing a new community management organisation. (Additional volunteers may be required later to become trustees or directors).

Proposal

11. If approval is given to this approach, it is proposed to set up a task and finish group drawn from tenants, with the remit to define what a community management body for York allotments should look like and what it needs to get it up and running. The tasks would include:
 - A detailed assessment of best governance arrangements
 - Initial feasibility assessment including a high level business plan and financial viability
 - Consideration of / proposed basis on which the assets will be held; and,
 - An assessment of any transitional requirements, further advice required and implementation costs
12. The group would meet w/c 23rd January through until the end of February. The work of the group will reported be back to the Members in April. This would allow for the possible launch of a new organisation in the late spring / early summer.
13. So that all tenants are aware of the proposal, and the opportunity to be part of the task and finish group, a letter was been sent all tenants over the New Year period. The letter also responded to the issues raised during earlier consultation process.

Consultation

14. Initial discussions on the idea of community management started in March this year at a joint meeting of the site secretaries and association representatives. This was followed up at attendance by at association meetings including, for example, the Scarcroft and District AGM 20th April, and Low Moor association open meeting 18th October.

15. In early October all tenants received a letter and Frequently Asked Questions sheet explaining why this exercise was taking place, the letter invited tenants to take part in a series of workshops and to provide comments.
16. The first group of workshops were held on the 15th and 17th November. This was followed up a meeting of the site secretaries and association representatives on 29th November. Finally, three follow-up workshops were then held over the 7th and 8th December. Each meeting had an attendance of between 12 and 15; with over 60 different individuals attending, offering guidance and option or asking to be kept informed of future developments. In addition some 30 other tenants responded to the October letter.
17. During the consultation process a number of representations were received saying that the management of service should stay with the council and fees should be increased to cover the shortfall income over expenditure. In recognition of this and as an alternative option, fee increases have been proposed as part the current budget process.
18. In addition the suggestion was also made that individual sites may wish to either become self-managed or partner up with a local community organisation such a community centre. For now these options are not being recommended because a) of the complexities of trying to establish up to 17 individual agreements and b) it would substantially increase the number of volunteers required to run the service if each sites needed both Trustees and a management committee.
19. The allotment officer has been heavily involved in the process and depending on the future direction of the service, has expressed an interest in supporting any new organisation.

Options and Analysis

20. Two options are available:
 - a. To develop community management options for York allotments.
 - b. Not to pursue this idea further.
21. Option a) would establish if such an approach is viable. If it is, subject to further Executive Member approval of the details, then it

would place the asset in community control and support the principle of volunteers assisting with the care of the city's open spaces. This is the recommended option.

22. Option b) the management of service would be retained by the Council without further consideration of alternative options.

Council Plan

23. Both options in this report are in line with the Council Plan priorities that ensure valued community facilities are protected and the Council works with other organisations to deliver the best services for residents.

Implications

Financial

24. The service currently runs at a loss of £17k per annum. For 2016/17 direct expenditure is £80k with income expected to be £63k. The proposal being put forward to the Executive Member would address this issue. As a contingency, a fee increase of 27% was approved by the Executive 7th December 2016. The new fees would come into effect in January 2018 which, assuming no price resistance, would balance income and direct expenditure.

Human Resources (HR)

25. The City of York Council employ one member of staff directly linked to these proposals, namely the Allotments Officer. This post is therefore in scope of the review and is subject to the Council's management of change policies and procedures. The individual has been fully involved in the development of the proposals and has been formally consulted on the implications for their employment. As the proposal is to end any management provision from the Council to the Allotments, this post is formally at risk of redundancy.
26. There are clearly a number of external service delivery models being considered and once a decision has been reached on the preferred model, we will consider whether there are any TUPE implications.

Equalities

27. There are no equalities issue as this stage. Should the project proceed then an equalities impact assessment will be undertaken.

Legal

28. There are no legal implications as this stage.

Crime and Disorder

29. There are no crime and disorder implications.

Information Technology (IT)

30. Allotment administration is supported through the *Colony Enterprise* IT package which holds data on such things as vacancies and waiting lists, lettings and terminations, and invoicing and payments. Use of the system would be offered to the new body.

Property

31. A lease will be required with any new management body. The lease is likely to be similar to those already in place or being developed for tennis court, bowling greens and fishery management. Depending on the length of the lease this may require the approval of the Executive.

Other

32. There are no other implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

33. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified with the proposals contained in this report are that the task group fails to establish a new management model for the service. This may damage the Council's reputation. Level of risk is assessed as "Very Low". This means that periodic monitoring is required of the operation of the new arrangements.

Annex 1: Background information

Annex 2: Examples of community management of council allotments

Background Papers: Consultation papers (file held by the author)

Contact Details

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|------|---------|
| Author: | Chief Officer responsible for the report: | | | |
| Dave Meigh Operations Manager Public Realm (Strategy and Contracts) | Charlie Croft Assistant Director (Communities & Equalities) | | | |
| | Report Approved | ✓ | Date | 5.01.17 |
| Specialist Implications: Nick Carter HR Business Partner | | | | |
| Wards Affected: | | | All | ✓ |

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Annex 1: Background information @ mid December 2016

| Site | Plots | Vacancies | Waiting list | Legal situation | Association |
|-------------------|-------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Bootham | 119 | 3 | 13 | Stray | Yes |
| Carr | 47 | 1 | 1 | Statutory | |
| Field View | 2 | 0 | 0 | Statutory | |
| Fulford Cross | 50 | 2 | 14 | Allotments Act 1908-1950 | |
| Hempland Lane | 172 | 22 | 23 | Allotments Act 1908-1950 | Yes |
| Howe Hill | 53 | 5 | 7 | Allotments Act 1908-1950 | |
| Glen (inc Scrope) | 79 | 6 | 6 | Statutory | |
| Green Lane | 95 | 8 | 9 | Statutory | Yes |
| Hob Moor | 40 | 1 | 9 | Statutory | Yes** |
| Holgate | 81 | 9 | 14 | Inclosure Acts or Awards | |
| Hospital Fields | 52 | 1 | 24 | Statutory | Yes** |
| Low Moor | 203 | 19 | 53 | Stray | Yes |
| New Lane | 39 | 2 | 6 | Inclosure Acts or Awards | |
| Strensall | 20 | 0 | 5 | Statutory | |
| Scarcroft | 182 | 4 | 71 | Statutory | Yes** |
| Wigginton Road | 37 | 5 | 13 | Statutory | |
| Wigginton Terrace | 21 | 0 | 11 | Stray | |

Notes 1. Statutory allotment land is defined as land of which the freehold or very long lease is vested in the allotments authority, and which was either originally purchased for allotments or subsequently appropriated for allotment use

Notes 2 ** Part of one association covering three sites

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Annex 2: Examples of community management of council allotments

- Adur and Worthing Borough Council:
<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/parks/allotments/worthing-allotments-general-information>
- Bath and Northeast Somerset Council
<http://www.banes-allotments.org.uk/>
- Birmingham City Council
- *<http://www.bdacallotments.co.uk/>*
- Bournemouth District Council
- *<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Parks/ThingstoDo/Allotments.aspx>*
- Gosport
- *<http://www.gosportallotments.btck.co.uk/Devolvedmanagement>*
- Guildford
- *<http://www.guildfordallotments.org.uk>*
- Ipswich Borough Council
- *<https://www.ipswich.org.uk/content/renting-allotment>*
- London Borough of Barnet
- *<http://www.barnetallotments.org.uk/federation.php>*
- Maidstone Borough Council
- *<http://www.maidstoneallotments.co.uk/index.html>*

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