

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Resolutions and proceedings of the Meeting of the City of York Council held in Guildhall, York on Monday, 30th June, 2008, starting at 6.30 pm

Present: The Lord Mayor (Cllr Brian Watson) in the Chair, and the following Councillors:

ACOMB WARD	BISHOPTHORPE WARD
Horton Simpson-Laing	Galvin
CLIFTON WARD	DERWENT WARD
Douglas King Scott	
DRINGHOUSES & WOODTHORPE WARD	FISHERGATE WARD
Holvey Reid Sunderland	D'Agorne Taylor
FULFORD WARD	GUILDHALL WARD
Aspden	Looker
HAXBY & WIGGINTON WARD	HESLINGTON WARD
Firth Hogg R Watson	Jamieson-Ball
HEWORTH WARD	HEWORTH WITHOUT WARD
Blanchard Funnell Potter	Ayre
HOLGATE WARD	HULL ROAD WARD
Alexander Bowgett	Cregan Pierce

HUNTINGTON & NEW EARSWICK
WARD

Hyman
Orrell
Runciman

MICKLEGATE WARD

Fraser
Gunnell
Merrett

OSBALDWICK WARD

Morley

RURAL WEST YORK WARD

Gillies
Healey
Hudson

SKELTON, RAWCLIFFE & CLIFTON
WITHOUT WARD

Moore
Watt
I Waudby

STRENSALL WARD

Kirk
Wiseman

WESTFIELD WARD

Steve Galloway
Sue Galloway
Waller

WHELDRAKE WARD

Vassie

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brooks and Crisp

13. 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. The following interests were declared:

Cllr Scott:

- a personal and prejudicial interest in Motion (ii) (Local Authority Business Growth Incentive), insofar as it related to residents' parking fees, as a resident of a Respark area;
- a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 (Report of Executive Leader and Executive Recommendations from the meeting on 30 June), with regard to any references in Statement of Accounts to Equal Pay claims, as a solicitor specialising in Equal Pay issues.

Cllr Taylor - a personal and prejudicial interest in Motion (ii), insofar as it related to residents' parking fees, as a resident of a Respark area.

Cllr Fraser – a personal, and possibly prejudicial, interest in Motion (ii), insofar as it related to residents' parking fees, as a resident of a Respark area.

Cllr Blanchard – a personal interest in Motion (iii) (Local Rail Services), as a resident of Strensall.

Cllr Merrett – a personal interest in Motion (iii), as an employee of Corus Rail.

Cllr Simpson-Laing – a personal interest in Agenda Item 7, insofar as it related to the decision on the Back Park Petition (Minute 16 of the Executive meeting on 17 June), as a member of the Friends of Back Park.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 10 April 2008 and the Annual Council meeting held on 22 May 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

15. CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no civic announcements.

16. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Lord Mayor reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Sam Southgate, of the National Union of Journalists, spoke in relation to the effect of redundancies on staff at the Press newspaper in York. He informed the Council that 12% of the workforce were due to be made redundant by the

end of July. This would exacerbate the problems caused by understaffing, overwork and low pay and would undermine the capacity of the Press to support local democracy. He urged Members to support the NUJ's campaign for quality journalism and to make a public statement of concern if possible.

17. PETITIONS

Under Standing Order 7, Cllr Looker presented a petition on behalf of residents of the Walmgate area, calling for measures to deal with traffic issues on Walmgate itself.

RESOLVED: That the petition be referred to the Executive or appropriate committee.¹

Action Required

1. Include item on Forward Plan for Executive / EMAP and JB write report to meet appropriate deadlines.

18. NOTICES OF MOTION

(i) Child Poverty

It was moved by Cllr Runciman and seconded by Cllr Vassie that:

“Council notes that:

- 1) Despite being one of the wealthiest countries in the world, Britain has one in five of its children living in poverty.
- 2) This is the second successive year that national figures have failed to improve, with the number of children living in relative poverty having risen by 100,000.
- 3) Child poverty has only fallen by an estimated 15% since 1998, when the Government set its target to halve it by 2010 and abolish it completely by 2020.
- 4) Approximately 14% of York's children live in poverty, and despite this being below the national average of 20% this is still unacceptable.

Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and to the 4 MPs for the City of York Council area to request that the Government re-affirms its commitment to halving child poverty by 2010, by investing £2.8bn a year to tackle the issue of increasing child poverty in Britain.”

Cllr Merrett then moved, and Cllr Looker seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

“In the second paragraph (beginning ‘*Council requests*’), after ‘*schools and families*’ add ‘, to the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Opposition Spokespersons’ and after ‘Government re-affirms’ add ‘, with the support of other political parties,’.

After the final paragraph, add:

'Council also requests that officer time be committed, consistent with its commitment to NI116, to addressing the issues locally which can help to reduce child poverty, namely:

- Better promotion of benefit take-up
- Providing additional support through services such as Future Prospects to help improve employment prospects
- Better support to schools and families from disadvantaged backgrounds such as providing funding for extra-curricular activities to raise aspirations.

Council calls for an Action Plan officer report on the geographic areas suffering with the highest levels of child poverty in the City, with suggested measures, such as those already detailed, with a view to Council taking its own responsibilities in equal measure to the Government.”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“Council notes that:

- 1) Despite being one of the wealthiest countries in the world, Britain has one in five of its children living in poverty.
- 2) This is the second successive year that national figures have failed to improve, with the number of children living in relative poverty having risen by 100,000.
- 3) Child poverty has only fallen by an estimated 15% since 1998, when the Government set its target to halve it by 2010 and abolish it completely by 2020.
- 4) Approximately 14% of York’s children live in poverty, and despite this being below the national average of 20% this is still unacceptable.

Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, to the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Opposition Spokespersons and to the 4 MPs for the City of York Council area to request that the Government re-affirms, with the support of other political parties, its commitment to halving child poverty by 2010, by investing £2.8bn a year to tackle the issue of increasing child poverty in Britain.¹

'Council also requests that officer time be committed, consistent with its commitment to NI116, to addressing the issues locally which can help to reduce child poverty, namely:

- Better promotion of benefit take-up
- Providing additional support through services such as Future Prospects to help improve employment prospects
- Better support to schools and families from disadvantaged backgrounds such as providing funding for extra-curricular activities to raise aspirations.

Council calls for an Action Plan officer report on the geographic areas suffering with the highest levels of child poverty in the City, with suggested measures, such as those already detailed, with a view to

Council taking its own responsibilities in equal measure to the Government.”²

The motion, as amended, was then put to the vote and was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, as amended, be approved.

(ii) Local Authority Business Growth Incentive

It was moved by Cllr Scott and seconded by Cllr Potter that:

“Council notes and welcomes the £690,000 Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) reward money.

Council also notes that £200,000 has been allocated to assist in the establishment of a community stadium in York.

Council instructs that the reward money be spent in the following ways:-

- £30,000 grant to York Racial Equality Network (YREN)
- £53,000 to re-instate travel tokens entitlements to the 07/08 level
- £54,000 to the Graffiti Tackling Team initiative to replace the cuts in the Neighbourhood Services portfolio budget
- £10,000 to Safer York Partnership (SYP) towards the establishment of a graffiti database, to replace the cuts to York Pride money allocated to it
- £50,000 to fund a fireworks display
- £40,000 to fund better Christmas lights
- £30,000 to bring forward the recycling pilot to start pilot to terraced and difficult to access areas in August 2008
- £50,000 to fund pilot of ‘Smart Choices’ initiative for personalised travel planning
- £20,000 to re-instate Audit and Fraud post
- £50,000 for additional contact hours for Home Care – in relation to city-wide enabling and intermediate care team – High Dependency and EMI services
- £40,000 to reduce residents’ parking permit fees by 10%
- £27,000 for free evening parking for residents from 5:30 pm, with effect from 1st July 2009
- £7,500 to establish free parking for Green Minster Badge holders – for cars owned by residents which are considered ‘environmentally friendly’
- £15,000 additional grant to York Credit
- £7,500 grant to the Older People’s Assembly
- £6,000 grant to Older People’s Advocacy York.”

Cllr Waller then moved, and Cllr Richard Watson seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

“Delete all after ‘*Council instructs*’ in the third paragraph and insert: *‘that the remaining allocation of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive be placed in reserves.’*”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

A further amendment, put forward by Cllr D'Agorne, accordingly fell as it was not compatible with the first amendment.

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“Council notes and welcomes the £690,000 Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) reward money.
Council also notes that £200,000 has been allocated to assist in the establishment of a community stadium in York.
Council instructs that the remaining allocation of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive be placed in reserves.”³

On being put to the vote the motion, as amended, was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, as amended, be approved.

(iii) Local Rail Services

It was moved by Cllr Gillies and seconded by Cllr Wiseman that:

“This Council instructs Officers to investigate, and report back through City Strategy EMAP, with the appropriate agencies the feasibility of developing a dedicated rail service to run between York Railway Station and Strensall, with intermediate stops at York District Hospital and Haxby, utilising the existing railway infrastructure.
The Council also registers its support for future light railway / tram train systems for the City of York.”

Cllr Steve Galloway then moved, and Cllr Hyman seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

“Delete all after ‘to’ in the first sentence and insert: ‘update and report back, in conjunction with other appropriate agencies, via the City Strategy EMAP, on the progress made in implementing the LTP proposal to provide a rail service running between York Railway Station and Strensall, with intermediate stops at York District Hospital and Haxby, and which would utilise as far as possible existing railway infrastructure.’

Delete all after ‘support’ in the second paragraph and insert: ‘in principle for the future use of light railway / tram train type systems in the City of York area, subject to the successful conclusion of the technical trial which is being conducted in South Yorkshire, the availability of the necessary funding and confirmation that such a system would complement the City’s long term sustainable transport strategy.’”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

"This Council instructs officers to update and report back, in conjunction with other appropriate agencies, via the City Strategy EMAP, on the progress made in implementing the LDF proposal to provide a rail service running between York Railway Station and Strensall, with intermediate stops at York District Hospital and Haxby, and which would utilise as far as possible existing railway infrastructure. ⁴

The Council also registers its support in principle for the future use of light railway/tram train type systems in the City of York area, subject to the successful conclusion of the technical trial which is being conducted in south Yorkshire, the availability of the necessary funding and confirmation that such a system would complement the City's long term sustainable transport strategy "

The motion, as amended was then put to the vote and declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, as amended, be approved.

(iv) The Supply of Rented Housing

It was moved by Cllr Simpson-Laing and seconded by Cllr Bowgett that:

"City of York Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Housing Minister in support of the cross party report of The Communities and Local Government Select Committee – 'The Supply of Rented Housing'. Council requests that he ensures that York's need for affordable housing, as identified in the independent Fordham's Report, is highlighted in relation to the Committee's recommendations to ensure that the City of York and its residents receive a fair share of any financial allocation resulting from the report.

The Chief Executive is asked to draw particular attention to the following matters in writing to the Housing Minister, in order to:

- Receive a fair quota for York of the Committee's call to build an extra 50,000 properties, nationally, for the social rented sector each year to meet the country's housing shortage.
- Allow councils, including City of York, to build their own homes as a means to providing much needed affordable homes for York residents.
- Increase the supply and quality of rented housing and that homes for rent should no longer be seen as 'second best' to owner occupation.
- Build more affordable family homes, to reduce overcrowding and waiting lists as a result of building too many flats.
- Call for restrictions to be imposed on right-to-buy sales where necessary and that money received remains within the authority of purchase.
- Support the call for the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to investigate fiscal measures that would provide an incentive to property owners not to leave their properties

empty for long periods – and support local authorities in their efforts to prevent and reduce the incidence of ‘buy-to-leave’ through investigating how there can be better use of existing powers, including Empty Dwelling Management Orders, to bring empty dwellings into use and by ensuring that the information necessary to take action, on ownership for example, is readily available.”

Cllr Hudson then moved, and Cllr Watt seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

“In the second paragraph:-

- at the start of the second bullet point, add the words ‘*call on the Government to return the Housing Revenue Grant to*’.
- delete the fifth bullet point and substitute ‘*call for revenue from right-to-buy sales to remain within the authority of purchase*’.”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“City of York Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Housing Minister in support of the cross party report of The Communities and Local Government Select Committee – ‘The Supply of Rented Housing’. Council requests that he ensures that York’s need for affordable housing, as identified in the independent Fordham’s Report, is highlighted in relation to the Committee’s recommendations to ensure that the City of York and its residents receive a fair share of any financial allocation resulting from the report.⁵

The Chief Executive is asked to draw particular attention to the following matters in writing to the Housing Minister, in order to:

- Receive a fair quota for York of the Committee’s call to build an extra 50,000 properties, nationally, for the social rented sector each year to meet the country’s housing shortage.
- Call on the Government to return the Housing Revenue Grant to allow councils, including City of York, to build their own homes as a means to providing much needed affordable homes for York residents.
- Increase the supply and quality of rented housing and that homes for rent should no longer be seen as ‘second best’ to owner occupation.
- Build more affordable family homes, to reduce overcrowding and waiting lists as a result of building too many flats.
- Call for revenue from right-to-buy sales to remain within the authority of purchase.
- Support the call for the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to investigate fiscal measures that would provide an incentive to property owners not to leave their properties empty for long periods – and support local authorities in their efforts to prevent and reduce the incidence of ‘buy-to-leave’ through investigating how there can be better use of existing powers, including Empty Dwelling Management Orders, to bring empty

dwelling into use and by ensuring that the information necessary to take action, on ownership for example, is readily available.”

The motion, as amended, was then put to the vote and declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion, as amended, be approved.

(v) National ID Cards Scheme

It was moved by Cllr Kirk and seconded by Cllr Holvey that:

“Council notes that:

- 1) From 2011/12 everyone over the age of 16 applying for a passport will have their details – including fingerprints and facial scans – added to a National Identity register. The Government also plans to make it compulsory for all UK citizens over the age of 16 to have ID cards, despite the fact that all legal UK citizen have NHS and NI numbers so this is wasteful duplication.
- 2) Successive cases of data loss by the Government, most notably the loss of computer discs containing the personal details of 25 million people, has made the public increasingly concerned about the ID cards scheme.
- 3) Such a scheme will cost every York taxpayer at least £200, and all York residents £90 to obtain one of the ID cards. The introduction of compulsory identity cards will unfairly penalise residents on lower incomes in York, who are finding it difficult to cope with rising costs of food and fuel.
- 4) Identity cards will obstruct our civil liberties, allow personal data to be shared without our consent, encourage fraud, will not prevent illegal working and will not help to fight crime and terrorism.
- 5) The scheme could cost up to £18bn, which would be better spent on other security measures, such as more police and intelligence officers.

Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Home Secretary asking that the Government rejects its expensive plans for ineffective ID cards, most particularly making them compulsory at the expense of local residents.”⁶

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the above notice of motion be approved.

Action Required

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Write to Secretary of State, Opposition Spokespersons and MPs. | DB |
| 2. Produce Officer report addressing these issues. | ST |
| 3. Add this sum to the Council's reserves and make any necessary adjustments to the budget record. | SA |
| 4. Include item on Forward Plan for City Strategy EMAP and produce the report within appropriate deadlines. | JB |

5. Write to the Housing Minister in the terms described. DB
6. Write to the Home Secretary in the terms described. DB

19. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

A written report was received from the Leader, Cllr Andrew Waller, on the work of the Executive.

Cllr Waller then moved, and Cllr Runciman seconded, the recommendation contained in Minute 7 of the Executive meeting on 3 June 2008, relating to the Sustainable Community Strategy. On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the recommendation in Minute 7 of the Executive meeting on 3 June 2008 be accepted and that the Sustainable Community Strategy be approved.

Cllr Waller then moved, and Cllr Runciman seconded:

“That the recommendation under Minute 16 of the Executive meeting on 17 June 2008 be approved and that Balfour Street Play Area be removed from the capital receipts programme and the capital programme be reduced by the size of the budgeted receipt (£350k) as a consequence (as set out in Option A in paragraph 8 of the Officer report circulated to Members on 27 June 2008.”

On being put to the vote, the above motion was declared carried and it was

RESOLVED: That the above motion, incorporating the recommendation from the Executive meeting on 17 June 2008, be approved.

Cllr Waller then moved, and Cllr Runciman seconded, the recommendation contained in Minute 27 of the Executive meeting on 30 June 2008, relating to the Statement of Accounts.

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the recommendation in Minute 27 of the Executive meeting on 30 June 2008 be accepted and that the Statement of Accounts be approved.

At the invitation of the Lord Mayor, Cllr Pierce then moved as urgent business, and Cllr Scott seconded, the recommendation made by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 26 June 2008 regarding the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

Cllr Waller then moved, and Cllr Runciman seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

“Delete paragraph a) of the recommendation in Minute 8 of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 26 June 2008.”

In accordance with Standing Order 14(f), a named vote of those Members present was requested and put on the above amendment, as follows:

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden	Cllr Alexander	
Cllr Ayre	Cllr Blanchard	
Cllr Firth	Cllr Bowgett	
Cllr Steve Galloway	Cllr Cregan	
Cllr Sue Galloway	Cllr D’Agorne	
Cllr Hogg	Cllr Douglas	
Cllr Holvey	Cllr Fraser	
Cllr Hyman	Cllr Funnell	
Cllr Jamieson-Ball	Cllr Galvin	
Cllr Kirk	Cllr Gillies	
Cllr Moore	Cllr Gunnell	
Cllr Morley	Cllr Healey	
Cllr Orrell	Cllr Horton	
Cllr Reid	Cllr Hudson	
Cllr Runciman	Cllr King	
Cllr Sunderland	Cllr Looker	
Cllr Vassi	Cllr Merrett	
Cllr Waller	Cllr Pierce	
Cllr R Watson	Cllr Potter	
Cllr Waudby	Cllr Scott	
	Cllr Simpson-Laing	
	Cllr Taylor	
	Cllr B Watson (Lord Mayor)	
	Cllr Watt	
	Cllr Wiseman	
20	25	0

In accordance with the named vote, the amendment was declared LOST.

The original motion was then put to the vote and declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That recommendation in Minute 8 of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 26 June 2008 be accepted and that the 2007/08 Annual Governance Statement be approved subject to the amendments set out in that recommendation.

[At this point in the meeting, the guillotine fell]

20. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER

A written report was received from Cllr Sue Galloway, the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services.

Notice had been received of nine questions on the report, submitted by Members in accordance with Standing Orders.

The guillotine having fallen at this point, Members agreed to receive written responses to these questions. The questions and the written responses are set out below.

(i) From Councillor Morley

“Would the Executive Member say what factors have led to the improvement in letting times for empty Council homes?”

Reply

“There has been a significant improvement in the void turn around times for empty homes. In 2006/07 the void period averaged 3.55 weeks and in 2007/08 this was 2.77 weeks. This is well below the 3 week target and is at its lowest level this century. One of the main factors has been the “Golden Goodbye” incentive scheme encouraging people to leave their homes in relettable condition. On average there is a 1 week difference between those homes relet following the award and those that did not qualify.”

(ii) From Councillor Ayre

“Would the Executive Member outline progress on the choice based lettings scheme?”

Reply

“There have been 124 choice based lettings on hard to let properties since the scheme started. I am pleased to say that York and North Yorkshire sub region have successfully bid to CLG for funding to consider the implementation of sub regional choice based lettings.”

(iii) From Cllr Orrell

“Would the Executive Member outline in more detail some of the findings of the survey on the Long Term Commissioning Strategy for Services for Older People?”

Reply

This survey of older people attracted a very good response rate and in addition to a postal survey, we conducted stakeholder events and four focus groups.

There was support for the provision of low level preventative services to enable people to remain healthy and in control. One of the key messages was the provision of a handyperson service and I am pleased to be able to tell you that, with the help of the Supporting People programme, this is one of the first areas to be addressed. More information on this service will be available shortly.

In addition we are working with the PCT on a menu of preventative services, including community based befriending and support services. There was also strong support for specialist residential care to be increased – especially for those suffering from dementia.

Whilst most people wanted to remain in their own homes, there was a feeling that smaller and more manageable homes should be built. Some homeowners expressed a wish to downsize but said that the cost of a smaller home was often more than their current home was worth and that there was no incentive to move. Hence I think it is now necessary for us to start looking at how we might assist those homeowners – both council and owner occupiers – who wish to downsize to release family accommodation.

Although Telecare had been slow to take off in York, it was interesting that over 50% of respondents wanted the Council to make more use of this. The £225k that is in the budget will therefore enable us to meet those demands and I am pleased to say that over 250 vulnerable residents have already benefited from having bogus caller alarms fitted.”

(iv) From Cllr Aspden

“Would the Executive Member give more detail on the Golden Triangle partnership scheme?”

Reply

“The one which is probably the most important at the moment is the proposed scheme to prevent homelessness and support home ownership and sustainability. The proposed scheme will provide an equity loan to eligible households who are unable to meet their mortgage payments.

There are three options under consideration.

One is to pay off a household's arrears and the loan would be added as a charge on the property to be paid back on sale of the property. There would also be the option to pay back the loan earlier if the family circumstances changed whilst still in the property.

The second option is to pay off the household's arrears and provide an equity loan. The advantage here would be that the loan would be used to bring back the household's mortgage payments to a level which they can meet. Again there would be a charge on the property which would be paid on sale.

The third option is to pay off a household's arrears to enable a sale to go ahead – again the loan would be repaid on sale of the property.”

(v) From Cllr Simpson-Laing

“Will the Executive Member, when discussing issues regarding the PCT, the Hospital Trust and those who work for and within all areas of the Health Services, ensure that she recognises the work done not just today but over the last 60 years since the setting up of the NHS?”

Reply

“Indeed, and before that the vision of Lloyd George when he introduced the National Insurance Act in 1911.

However, I have to say that when I met David Nicholson, the Chief Executive of the NHS on his recent visit to York, we did not dwell on the history of the NHS but rather had a constructive dialogue about the future shape of services.”

(vi) From Cllr Simpson-Laing

“In relation to 'Tenancy Services' and the issue of enforcement, can the Ex Member for Housing and Adult Social Services explain what she views as an acceptable period of time for action to be taken to clear gardens when they have been reported as having excessive build ups of food waste refuse bags and items that could be a fire danger?”

Reply

“I assume that it is “refuse bags” to which the councillor refers. If there is a proven health hazard at a Council tenancy then I would expect that housing officers – working with other agencies such as Environmental Protection and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue – would take action to rectify the problem.”

(vii) From Cllr Bowgett

“Can the Executive Member with regard to Homelessness inform Council on a proposed occupation date for the new Peasholme Centre?”

Reply

“Spring 2009 as indicated at the HASS EMAP held on 2 June 2008.”

(viii) From Cllr Horton

“With regard to 'Strategy and Enabling' will the Executive Member ensure Council that she will send a submission to the 'Local Development Framework Working Group' confirming her support for the Council's Affordable Housing Policy as a means to provide much needed homes for those on the Councils Housing Waiting List?”

Reply

“Like most Members of Council I supported the affordable housing policy when it was placed before Council. It is for the working group to consider all representations made. I would be interested in seeing refinements to the affordable housing policy if it could be demonstrated that additional housing units could be made available for those in need over and above what is being achieved under present arrangements.”

(ix) From Cllr Horton

“With regard to boiler replacements, can the Executive Member give details on the energy efficiency ratings of the Council's housing stock gas boilers, explain why such a large number were replaced reactively and the relative unit costs of this compared to planned replacements?”

Reply

“Three questions in one!

I would refer the member to the answer given to his colleague Cllr Merrett on the same topic at the Council meeting on 29 November 2007."

21. QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS RECEIVED UNDER STANDING ORDER 10(C)

Thirteen questions had been submitted to the Executive Leader and Executive Members under Standing Order 10(c)(i).

The guillotine having fallen at this point, Members agreed to receive written answers to these questions. The questions and the written responses are set out below.

- (i) To the Executive Leader, from Cllr Alexander:
"Will the Executive Leader give a date for changes to the Council's Constitution that will allow 'champions' to report to, and progress issues through, Council?"

Reply:

"Arrangements are being made for Champions to be able to prepare a written briefing on their role and work. The briefing note will be submitted to Democratic Services, who will ensure the note gets circulated to all Members for information at the same time as agenda for Council meetings get published. In this way, all Members will be kept up to date and informed about the progress and work of Champions on a regular basis. Members can then decide whether they wish to seek clarification on the briefing note from the relevant Champion or indeed whether they wish to put forward a motion for future Council or Executive meetings based on the information contained in it. I am advised this practice will not require any constitutional change."

- (ii) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Potter:
"Can the Executive Member for City Strategy explain what work has been undertaken on the following motion passed at Council in November 2007?"

Reply:

"Council agrees that bus cross-ticketing, within the City of York Council boundary, is adopted as a primary objective of Council's desire to further develop public transport usage in the city. Council calls for council officers to negotiate with local bus operators to achieve this with a target implementation date being set as being no later than January 2009.

Consultants Halcrow have been appointed to investigate options for, and the potential costs of, introducing bus through ticketing. They are expected to complete their report in July. The expectation is that an officer report, reviewing feasibility and costs, will be presented to the Executive in September."

- (iii) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Merrett:
“Would the Executive Member for City Strategy explain what progress has been made on updating the Council’s bio-diversity action plan to meet current standards and to feed in to the draft Local Plan?”

Reply:

“Work on a re-appraisal of the 1996 biodiversity audit is being undertaken as is an outline of a new Biodiversity Action Plan. These will be fed into the LDF process prior to the core strategy being submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2009.”

- (iv) To the Executive Member for City Strategy, from Cllr Potter:
“Can the Executive Member for City Strategy urgently investigate ways of incentivising local residents to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and so contribute locally to preventing global warming and climate change, bringing a report back to Full Council for discussion in September?”

Reply:

“The City’s response to the causes of climate change has been agreed by the LSP and was endorsed by Executive last year. A further report detailing how the Council could respond to the challenge was also endorsed by the Executive recently. Both reports are available on the Council’s web site.

The strategies both require changes to behaviors. Examples of incentives for change, which are currently available, include discounted parking fees for the users of low emission cars and the cycle allowances which are available to employees.

The policy reports to be considered during the present year have been discussed by Group Leaders and a prioritised list, which reflects the amount of officer time available, has been endorsed by the Executive. I understand that the list includes a report back on the progress being made in implementing our climate change strategy.”

- (v) To the Executive Member for Corporate Services, from Cllr Gunnell:
“Can the Executive Member for Corporate Services give Council Members the year on year running costs of the Barbican auditorium to the Council since its closure, including Business Rates, Utilities and Security costs?”

Reply:

“Since Absolute Leisure were granted a short term lease for the Auditorium in October 2005 they have been responsible for running and repair costs. Under that agreement the Council continued to pay business rates for the Auditorium, which in 2007/08 were £85k.”

- (vi) To the Executive Member for Corporate Services, from Cllr Simpson-Laing
“Can the Executive Member for Corporate Services give an update on the identification of ownership of land on Runswick Avenue, which Officers have been trying to identify since June 2007?”

Reply:

"It remains unclear who owns this land, though I can confirm that it is not in the Council's property portfolio."

- (vii) To the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion, from Cllr Ayre:

"Would the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion report on the visitor figures for the revamped Acomb library and outline forthcoming changes to the library service elsewhere in the City?"

Reply:

"In April 2008 Acomb library received 10064 visitors as opposed to 4002 for April 2007. This is a phenomenal result and shows just what can be achieved with a little imagination and flair in the revamping of a library. We are aiming to export the new Explore model that is proving so successful in Acomb to other parts of the city. A new library opens officially in New Earswick tomorrow. I visited it last Thursday and was impressed at the thought and attention the project has received. In particular, by hosting the library on the school site, there are now new opportunities for adult learning for parents who can drop their children off at school and then step into the library. There are also plans to further revamp the central library. While the building is a magnificent example in terms of architecture we have work to do to transform the dark feel of much of the building into something more welcoming to visitors in the 21st century.

Across the city, comparing the figures for April 07 with those for April 08, York has seen a 21.6% increase in library visitors. This is very encouraging because it shows that we are getting to grips with the important task of keeping libraries relevant in the age of internet access. I believe libraries have a bright future so long as we apply ourselves to creating a five year plan that enables them to evolve and reflect the changing needs of residents rather than simply keeping them the way they are and watching them wither, as they are in many other parts of the country."

- (viii) To the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion, from Cllr Moore:

"Would the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion comment on the Council's new position on encouraging film crews to visit the City?"

Reply:

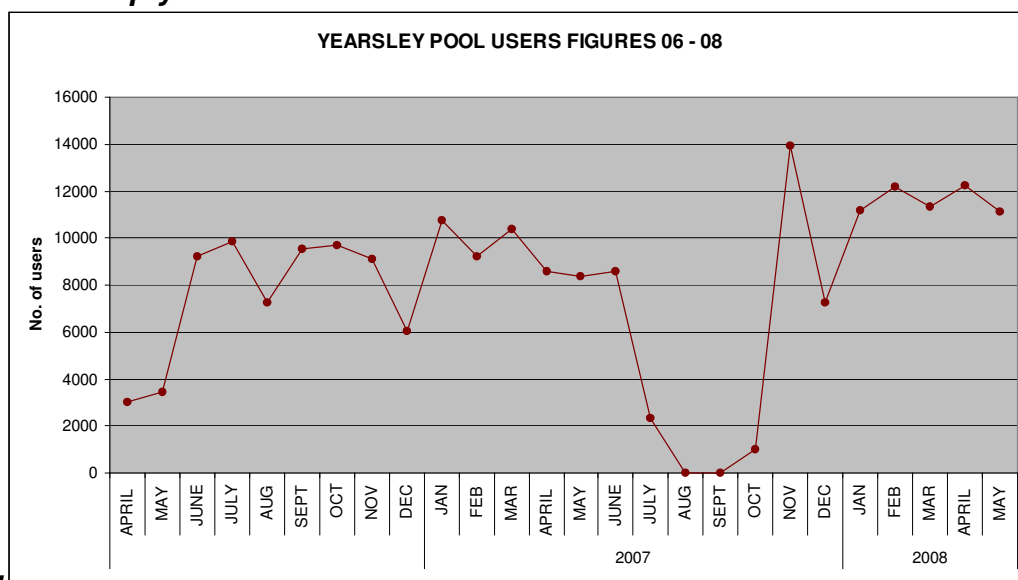
"At the beginning of this year officers and I attended a meeting with Screen Yorkshire to indicate our interest in signing up to the Film Friendly Partnership that encourages film makers to come to Yorkshire to make use of our fantastic locations. While it is fair to say that York is often the host for film makers, particularly local television and student productions, we are now seeing a new interest from major film producers. This is wholly to be welcomed as it raises the city's profile nationally and internationally and, if the films are successful, has a long term impact of increasing the number of visitors.

Recently I have been working with officers to ensure that when such film makers visit the city, particularly those engaged in period dramas, we have a contract that guarantees CYC having copies of still photographs of dressed sets, such as the recent dressing of the Shambles when the Robinson Crusoe production was in town. The kinds of images that result from these productions will enable the city to maximise the publicity it derives from welcoming these productions to the city and, hopefully, encourage still more productions to see York as a fantastic location to film.”

(ix) To the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion, from Cllr Moore:

“Would the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion provide visitor figures and energy performance figures for Yearsley pool since it re-opened?”

Reply:



As of now energy costs are down by over 60%. We will produce a fuller evaluation when we have full year figures.

Energy 1 Nov - 31 March (YSP)			
2007/08		2006/07	
Steam	Elec	Steam	Elec
£ 9,098.71		£34,405.59	
£ 5,518.45		£25,211.27	
£14,617.15	£8,500.00	£59,616.86	£5,300.00
TOTAL	£23,117.15	£64,916.86	

(x) To the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion, from Cllr Looker:

“Can the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion confirm that the swimming pool at Heslington East campus is a crucial part of the Liberal Democrat swimming strategy, and if so give Council a date when work is expected to commence on site, along with a clear timetable so Council knows the expected date of opening and the pool’s location?”

Reply:

“As the minutes of the Executive meeting of 27th October 2007 confirm, the council is committed to working in partnership with the university to deliver a pool on the Heslington East site by 2011.

Council has recently received confirmation from the university that it is in the process of finalising the swimming pool report and recommendations and that this report will be considered in July, as the university has always said it would be.

It is understood that the university’s meeting in July will confirm more precisely the location of the proposed swimming pool on the Heslington East site and give an indication as to when work will commence, and other relevant timescales, in order to deliver a completed pool by 2011, the date agreed between the parties.”

- (xi) To the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services, from Cllr Simpson-Laing:

“Can the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services describe her plans and campaigns, through partnership working with the Executive Member for Corporate Services, for the financial year 2008/09, to ensure that York’s retired residents who are entitled to Pension Credit and Council Tax benefit are claiming the benefits they are entitled to?”

Reply:

“In 2007/08 £991,000 in extra benefits was gained for customers through the work of the Finance Team in Social Services. This work is carried out in conjunction with the Benefits Section of the Council. The Council works closely with the DWP, voluntary organizations, etc. This work will continue throughout the current year.

In addition I am looking at developing a pilot scheme with GPs to improve the take up of benefits for their patients.”

- (xii) To the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services, from Cllr Simpson-Laing:

“Can the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services explain her plans to programme and install either double or secondary glazing in remaining single glazed Council properties as a means to improve the SAP ratings and eco-footprints of the Council’s stock, as well as to reduce the fuel bills of tenants?”

Reply:

“There is a window replacement scheme in this year’s capital programme which will see work carried out at 84 homes. These

*windows are beyond their economic lifespans and the Council cannot justify the high repair and painting costs
98.5% of our current stock have either double glazing or high performance single glazed windows.
As a means of increasing a homes SAP rating the provision of double glazing is much less effective than improving loft insulation and introducing condensing boilers – which is where our limited resources are currently focused.”*

(xiii) To the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services, from Cllr Alexander:

“Can the Executive Member for Housing and Adult Social Services report to Council the number of private sector landlords who have signed up to the ‘Voluntary Code of Conduct’ with regard to ‘To Let’ sign advertising that a property is a student property, and what percentage is that of all private sector landlords?”

Reply:

“This scheme is managed by the Universities of York and York St John who advise that 844 landlords have signed up to the code. It is estimated that there are between 1200-1500 landlords who let to students. A precise percentage cannot be provided as there is no statutory requirement to register as a landlord.”

22. SCRUTINY - REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

A written report was received from Cllr Galvin, the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC), on the work of the SMC since the last report to Council, on 10 April 2008.

23. ACTIVITIES OF OUTSIDE BODIES

a) Minutes of Outside Bodies

Minutes of the following meetings had been made available for Members to view on the Council’s website:

- York and North Yorkshire Waste Management Partnership – meeting on 7/2/08
- North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority – meetings on 13/2/08 and 25/2/08
- Safer York Partnership – meeting on 10/4/08
- Pension Fund Sub-Committee – meeting on 15/5/08
- North Yorkshire Police Authority – meetings on 4/2/08 and 25/2/08

No questions had been submitted to representatives on the above bodies.

b) Review of List of Minutes of Outside Bodies Reported to Council

RESOLVED: That the revised list of Outside Bodies whose minutes are reported to Council, circulated with the Council papers (and attached as Annex 1 to these minutes) be approved.¹

Action Required

1. Include revised list in Constitution and ensure minutes are reported to Council. KS

24. APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED: That the appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies and Working Groups set out in the revised list circulated at the Council meeting (and attached as Annex 1 to these minutes) be approved.¹

Action Required

1. Make the necessary changes to membership on the committee management system. KS

Cllr Brian Watson

LORD MAYOR OF YORK

[The meeting started at 6.30 pm and concluded at 10.00 pm]