
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	15 OCTOBER 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS BOWGETT (CHAIR), AYRE (VICE-CHAIR), CRISP, HOLVEY, KING, REID (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), TAYLOR AND WATT
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS

27. 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.

Councillor King declared a personal non prejudicial interest in item 10 (City of York Council Public Toilets Review) as he was an Honorary Member of York Access Group who had had some input into this review.

28. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair and Executive Member as a correct record subject to the name of the Executive Member at the end of the minutes being amended from Councillor A Waller to Councillor A Reid.

29. FORWARD PLAN

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that the following items would be brought before the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services and Advisory Panel at its next meeting on 4 December 2008:-

- Performance and Budget Monitoring
- Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Bill
- Depot Security
- Reuse of Waste
- Update on Litter Enforcement Policy
- Neighbourhoods and Community Safety Group Legal Actions
- Regulation of Air Pollution from Crematoria (further information requested by Members)

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to note the update on the Forward Plan

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To inform Members of forthcoming issues.

Action Required

Director of Neighbourhood Services to circulate list of items KS
for next meeting to Members by e-mail.

30. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

31. NATIONAL SERVICE PLANNING REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND TRADING STANDARDS SERVICES

Members received a report seeking approval of the Service plans for food law enforcement, health & safety law enforcement and animal health enforcement which are produced on an annual basis in response to national requirements.

Copies of the service plans were circulated at the meeting for Members' attention.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to agree the plans and recommend that they be referred to the Executive for approval.

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed. ¹

REASON: In order that the Council can discharge its statutory obligations in regard to service planning for environmental health and trading standards services.

Action Required

1. To refer to the Executive for approval

KS

32. NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES STAFF WELLBEING INITIATIVES

Members received a report outlining a number of health and wellbeing initiatives being introduced in Neighbourhood Services to tackle absence proactively. The initiatives had been developed with colleagues in Occupational Health and Human Resources and focussed on the directorate's Civil Engineering department, although a number of the initiatives would potentially benefit all staff across the directorate.

The Performance Manager reported that although sickness absences had been reducing steadily across the directorate, absence levels in Neighbourhood Services were still higher than in other directorates. It was acknowledged that this was in part due to the nature of the work which lead to a number of Musculo-Skeletal Disorder (MSD) absences, especially across the Civil Engineering Department. He reported that a Safer Lifting Coordinator worked in those departments where there was an issue and all staff received training in lifting. Furthermore new lifting technology such as flag lifters meant that there was less chance of injury through manual lifting of heavy and awkward objects.

Members welcomed the report and congratulated the directorate on the positive direction they were taking to reduce sickness.

Members asked if the initiative to refer members of staff to an Osteopath/Physiotherapist who call in sick with a MSD absence had commenced and if so whether it was possible to obtain figures on the number of referrals to date. Officers advised that the initiative had only started at the beginning of October but that they would provide Members with these figures.¹

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to welcome the proposed improvements to staff care and well-being and support the varying projects

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To inform Members of initiatives being taken in Neighbourhood Services to further reduce staff absence levels.

Action Required

1. Officers to provide Members with number of referrals to Osteopaths/Physiotherapists since start of initiative. KS

33. SALES OF AGE RESTRICTED PRODUCTS

Members received a report informing them of the work undertaken by the Council's trading standards service to prevent the sales of age-restricted products. The report sought specific member approval for the programme of action for the next 12 months in relation to the enforcement of The Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 in relation to cigarettes/tobacco and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 in relation to aerosol paint.

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- (a) Option 1 – The Council should continue with a programme of education and enforcement action set out in paragraph 4 of the report for the next 12 months.
- (b) Option 2 – The Council may adopt a different programme of education enforcement.

Officers reported that there had been a large reduction in the number of illegal sales of alcohol taking place. He referred to Annex 1 of the report which indicated that in 2003/04 62 test purchase visits had taken place with illegal sales being recorded at 34% of these. In 2007/08 291 visits were recorded with illegal sales accounting for only 8% of these.

Members welcomed the report and congratulated officers on the reduction in illegal sales. Congratulations were also directed at those young people who had been involved in the test purchasing.

Members asked if it was possible to obtain a breakdown by ward of the results of the test purchasing activity and officers agreed to provide this information.¹

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to note the report and adopt the programme of enforcement action of the next 12 months

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order that the Council can meet its legal obligations.

Action Required

1. Officers to provide breakdown by ward of results of test purchasing activity for last year. KS

34. NOISE COMPLAINTS UPDATE

Members received a report updating them on the current position regarding noise nuisance and the operation of the Council's weekend night time Noise Patrol service.

An updated version of the report was circulated for Members' attention.

Officers reported that the number of noise complaints received by the Environmental Protection Unit had increased greatly since the Noise Patrol was introduced. This increase could be explained by a greater awareness and increased marketing of the Noise Patrol Service and the extended licensing hours. The increase in complaints was now starting to tail off.

Members welcomed the report but stressed that noise disturbance was a serious issue that nobody should have to suffer and it was important not to become complacent as there was still a long way to go in reducing the number of complaints.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) note the contents of the report.
- (ii) agree that the Advisory Panel supports the bid of £43,000 in 2009-2010.

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order that Members are aware of the activity of the noise patrol service and the necessity to submit a growth bid of £43k in 2009 -10 in order to maintain the service.

35. STATUTORY DECLARATION OF REGULATION OF POLLUTION FROM CREMATORIA

Members received a report which advised them that the Council had received a further statutory direction from DEFRA (Department of Food, Environment and Rural affairs) under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2007. This direction required the Council, by 31st October 2008, to notify DEFRA of their intentions with

respect to the fitting of mercury abatement equipment, the number of cremations covered by the abatement, and the steps in place to have it operational by 2012. The report requested Members to review its previous decision taken in June 2006 and confirm its approval to install mercury abatement equipment and submit a formal declaration to DEFRA.

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- (a) Option A – To do nothing. This would place the Council in breach of its statutory obligations.
- (b) Option B – To seek a trading agreement through the CAMEO (Cremation Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation) scheme.
- (c) Option C – Install abatement equipment to deal with 50% of cremations.
- (d) Option D – Install abatement equipment to deal with 100% of cremations and remove one cremator, so as to install the equipment.
- (e) Option E – Install abatement equipment to deal with 100% of cremations and retain 3 cremators.

Members discussed the issues surrounding this decision in detail. Concern was raised that if one cremator was removed in order to install the equipment this may cause problems if either of the remaining cremators were to break down. If this was the case, there was doubt over whether York Crematorium would be able to continue to provide a full service.

In response to questions regarding the frequency of breakdowns, officers explained that minor breakdowns of the type that could be resolved quickly were frequent however major breakdowns were very rare as there was a maintenance contract which meant that the cremators were serviced on a regular basis.

Members agreed that only having two cremators would reduce flexibility and put pressure on the remaining two cremators. They agreed that more information regarding how often breakdowns occurred and the severity of these was needed before they could make a decision. Officers agreed to bring a report to the next meeting with the information requested.¹

In response to a suggestion from a Member regarding green burials, officers agreed to investigate this option.²

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to defer decision on this item until the next meeting in order that further information on past trends, breakdowns etc can be obtained.

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To ensure a fully informed decision is made.

Action Required

1. Officers to present a report at the next meeting to include more detailed information regarding cremator breakdowns. KS
2. Officers to investigate other options including green burials and report back to the EMAP. KS

36. CITY OF YORK COUNCIL PUBLIC TOILETS REVIEW - UPDATE

Members received a report informing them of the progress on the complete review of public toilet provision for York which updated the position reported on 4 June 2008.

An update on user numbers as at 15th October was circulated to Members at the meeting.

Members queried what the procedure was if someone used the pull cord in the disabled toilet in the case of an emergency. Officers explained that if the alarm was activated, a flashing light and buzzer would sound outside the toilet. Concern was raised that there was no sign outside the toilet advising people what the alarm/light indicated and what action to take if it was activated. Members suggested that a sign could be placed advising members of the public who to contact if the alarm sounded and also suggested that it could possibly be linked to a 24 hour call out service. Officers agreed to take Members comments on board.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to note the report and project plan.

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To inform the Executive Member of work completed to date.

37. YORKSHIRE IN BLOOM 2008 UPDATE

Members received a report informing them of the outcome of York's entry into the Yorkshire in Bloom competition 2008 and the work undertaken in relation to the entry.

Officers reported that York had been awarded a silver gilt in the competition. They stated that the judges had been very impressed with the community input and that two partners had won discretionary awards. They

advised Members that the judges had praised the work of City of York Council staff and volunteers who had worked hard on the entry into the competition.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services stressed that the award was very good for the city as it promotes York and brings more people into the city. He stressed the need for businesses and others to get involved in the 2009 entry.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised:

- (i) To note the contents of the report and congratulate all those involved in a successful entry
- (ii) That the Advisory Panel support the City of York's entry into the 2009 competition.

Decision of the Executive Member:

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To inform Members of work undertaken towards and the outcome of the 2008 Yorkshire in Bloom Competition and to obtain Members' support for entry into the 2009 competition.

COUNCILLOR A REID,
EXECUTIVE MEMBER

COUNCILLOR D BOWGETT,
CHAIR

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.40 pm].