
MEETING	DECISION SESSION - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS
DATE	16 FEBRUARY 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS REID (EXECUTIVE MEMBER)

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Member was invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in the business on the Agenda. None were declared.

33. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - DECISION SESSION

It was reported that there had been 1 registration to speak at the meeting under the public participation scheme. Details of the speaker are set out under the individual agenda items.

34. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT

The Executive Member considered a report which set out the performance position to the end of December 2009 and the finance position to the end of November 2009.

Officers reported the following:

- The Neighbourhood Services portfolio is forecasting an overspend of £359k after identification of in year savings of £200k.
- Annex A on page 29 of the agenda highlights further savings of £330k which almost recovers the £359k overspend to leave £29k.
- Other pressures such as the cost of swine flu materials are being met wherever possible by under spends.
- Further pressures identified since the work on the November accounts are winter gritting and highway maintenance due to the severe winter weather.

In relation to performance, Officers advised that 71% of the Directorate Plan actions and measures are on track and although some actions are not on track, work is being undertaken on all of the actions.

Councillor King, who had registered to speak, queried the overspend and asked for clarification on the actions highlighted in the saving target at Annex A.

The Executive Member commented that Neighbourhood Services staff are to be congratulated, particularly for the hard work undertaken to keep the streets clean and clear from snow during the recent severe weather.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Member noted the report.

REASON: In accordance with budgetary and performance monitoring procedures.

35. CONTAMINATED LAND UPDATE

The Executive Member considered a report which sought approval from the Executive Member for the adoption and publication of a contaminated land strategy. The report also provides an update on the outcome of the recent contaminated land grant applications made to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Two bids were made to DEFRA under the Capital Grant Scheme in relation to the Council's ongoing contaminated land work.

Officers advised that that Local Authorities have an obligation to assess potentially contaminated land and can apply for grants from DEFRA to undertake the necessary assessments.

Councillor King who had registered to speak, queried what would happen if a site was found to be contaminated in locations such as Chapmans and Westfield Ponds. Officers advised remedial work would be undertaken.

The Executive Member commented that it is important to have a policy which sets out for residents what action is taken over contaminated land and approved Option A.

RESOLVED: (i) That Option A be accepted to approve the updated contaminated land strategy and to undertake a review every three years.

(ii) Officers to provide the Executive Member with an update on any grants received from DEFRA.¹

REASON: (i) The updated contaminated land strategy fulfils the Council's regulatory requirement to periodically review its strategy. It allows the Council to continue its programmed inspection of potentially contaminated sites and make progress on corporate priorities of a thriving, sustainable and healthy city.

(ii) To keep the Executive Member informed.

Action Required

1. Officers to provide Exec Member with further update when appropriate.

LH

36. FOOD HYGIENE - 'SCORES ON THE DOORS' UPDATE.

The Executive Member considered a report which provided an update on the progress of the food hygiene 'Scores on the Doors' scheme that was launched in June 2009. The report also seeks approval from the Executive Member to continue with the York scheme pending introduction of a national scheme by the Food Standards Agency.

Officers advised that the scheme had proved popular since its inception and people are using the website to look up the ratings of establishments. The scheme is fulfilling its objectives and 48% of food premises have improved their star rating. In relation to the Food Standards Agency scheme, Officers advised they will monitor how the new scheme operates and a further report would be brought back to the Executive Member to seek approval over what direction York's scheme should take.

The Executive Member commented that she is pleased the Scores on the Doors scheme is a success and is having the desired effect and approved Option A.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive Member agrees to the continuation of the Scores on the Doors scheme.

(ii) That officers will evaluate a national scheme should one be launched.

REASON: Scores on the Doors has been very successful. It provides the public with easy to access information that would otherwise not be readily available. The scheme is also having a positive impact on food hygiene across the city. Adoption of a national scheme at a later date would be relatively straight forward.

37. INVESTMENT IN CONTAINMENT AND PRESENTATION - RECYCLING BOXES.

The Executive member considered a report which outlines the options for the provision of recycling boxes.

Officers advised that since the recycling service was introduced, more materials have become available for residents to recycle, and as a result there has been an increase in the number of recycling containers used by residents to store and present their recycling. The current method for storage and presentation presents problems for residents and crews and

following a comprehensive trial of recycling methods in the Groves area, it was identified that the optimum method for collection of recycling would be the use of 3 boxes.

Councillor King, who had registered to speak, commented that 1 system can not work for all areas and asked how terraced properties are supposed to store and present 3 boxes, especially terraced properties without forecourts. He felt that further consultation should be carried out in the terraced areas where recycling is yet to be introduced.

Officers confirmed that the 3 box system would apply to areas which already have recycling collections and that consultation would still take place in terraced areas yet to be included to identify the best system for each area.

Officers also responded to a written statement and photographs which had been submitted by Mr. Lankester, a resident in the Groves. He had raised concerns regarding the visual impact of the recycling boxes and wheeled bins which are left untidily in the front forecourts of properties. Officers advised that the properties which are causing concern are mainly student properties. Officers are aware of the problem and are working with both of the Universities and with student landlords in an attempt to engage with students to encourage them to take recycling boxes and wheeled bins in. Officers advised that they would be happy to liaise with Mr. Lankester to identify the problem properties. The Executive Member queried whether enforcement action can be taken against such properties. Officers advised that the problem would need to be very severe to go down that route, and at present it is not severe enough.

The Executive Member accepted and approved the move towards a 3 box system but noted that consultation would still be required in terraced areas. The Executive Member noted Mr. Lankester's comments and requested that Officers liaise with him to resolve any further issues that he may have.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the Executive Member approves Option 2, the move to providing 3 boxes with lids and/or net covers to residents where practical.
 - (ii) That the Executive Member notes that consultation will still be carried out in terraced areas.
 - (iii) That the comments from Mr. Lankester be noted, along with the work Officers are undertaking with the Universities and Landlords to encourage students to be aware of the waste disposal guidance.
 - (iv) That Officers liaise with Mr. Lankester to identify problem properties.¹

REASON: In order that York can continue to provide first class recycling facilities for its residents and ensure that the collection service operates as efficiently and effectively as is possible.

Action Required

1. Officers to contact Mr. Lankester.

GD

Councillor Reid, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.55 pm].