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| Meeting | Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects |
| Date | 17 October 2022 |
| Present | Councillor Ayre (Executive Member for Finance and Performance) and Councillor Craghill (Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods) |
| In Attendance | Tim Bradley (Asset Manager) Simon Brereton (Head of Economy) Tracey Carter (Director of Housing Economy and Regeneration) Ben Murphy (Regeneration Programme Manager) Katie Peeke-Vout (Regeneration Programme Manager) Pauline Stuchfield (Director Customer and Communities) |

Declarations of Interest [10:05]

The Executive Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have had in respect of business on the agenda. They confirmed he had none.

Minutes [10:05]

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 11 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member.

Public Participation [10:05]

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme. Cllr Douglas spoke on Agenda Item 7 - York Shared Prosperity Fund. She expressed disappointment in the central government funding. She explained that she was not convinced that the projects earmarked for the funding were suitable and that there had been a lack of progress for Acomb. She suggested that the funding should be used for place based projects based on the city plan.

Submission of funding bids to Levelling Up Fund in accordance with delegations from Executive Committee at item 5, 16.6.22 [10:09]

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects considered a report that set out the two final bid compositions to the second round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The report formally recorded the subsequent decision (of the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects, as delegated by the Executive), to submit the bids.

The Director Housing, Economy and Regeneration outlined the progress the progress towards the bids. The Regeneration Project Manager detailed the bids noting that both had business cases. The benefits of the bids were noted and it was added that elements of the schemes were as a result of public engagement. It was further noted that the timescales for bidding and spending were difficult to meet. The Executive Member thanked Officers for their work and the bids. He then;

Resolved:

- i. To formally note the decision of the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with himself, to submit two LUF bids.

Reason: To comply with the constitutional requirements of the Council, and resolutions of the Executive.

- ii. That the final LUF bid compositions as set out in the report be formally noted.

Reason: To comply with the resolutions of the Executive Committee, confirm the final bid compositions that were submitted to government, and ensure public transparency of decision making and activity.

Application for Community Right to Bid under the Localism Act 2011 [10:12]

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects considered a report detailing an application from Naburn Parish Council to list Blacksmiths Arms, Naburn, York as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The Asset Manager detailed the application noting that the public house was central to village life and he added that there had been no objections to the application, or updates to the published report. The Executive Member then;

Resolved: That approval be given to the renewal of the listing of Blacksmiths Arms, Naburn, York, as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) for the reasons outlined within this report.

Reason: To ensure the Council meets its legislative requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and promotes community access to community facilities.

York Shared Prosperity Fund [10:14]

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects considered a report that outlined the City of York Council's Investment Plan, which was developed in partnership with local stakeholders and as agreed by the York UKSPF Partnership Board and the Executive Member, for the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The Council was to be responsible for delivering York's UKSPF funds for the period 2022 to 2025 and further steps were required to formally agree the Investment Plan and confirm arrangements for expenditure once Government had agreed the Investment Plan. The report presented to the Executive Member addressed those issues, together with an outline of expenditure in the current financial year.

The Head of Economy advised that the Investment Plan had been based on consultation and he explained how the consultation had been carried out. He noted the priorities of the plan and how the £600k within it would be split between three themes. He explained the process for the expenditure of the fund. The Director Housing, Economy and Regeneration noted that the Council had made all efforts to make sure the fund would be spent in line with council strategies. It was acknowledged that the current year's spend was based on double within timescales. The Executive Member thanked Officers and partners for their work on the York UKSPF and he acknowledged the difficulties posed with the timescales for the spend of the fund. He then;

Resolved:

That the Council endorse the York investment plan and its submission to Government be endorsed.

Reason: To support the York economy and shared prosperity.

That, subject to Government approval of the plan, it be recommended to Executive that they confirm expenditure in accordance with the plan and delegate the Corporate Director of Place to make allocations, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects and the York UKSPF Partnership Board.

Reason: To support the York economy and shared prosperity.

That, following consultation with the York UKSPF Partnership Board, approval be given to launch of a call for proposals for financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Reason: To support the York economy and shared prosperity

That, following consultation with the York UKSPF Partnership Board, delegation be given to delegate the approval and submission of the York Rural Prosperity Fund investment plan to the Corporate Director of Place.

Reason: To support the York rural economy and shared prosperity

Annual Report on Financial Inclusion and Welfare Benefits Activities (2021/22) [10:22]

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods, considered a report presenting the Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits outturn report 2021/22 and an update on the first quarter of 2022/23. This included information on the financial support available to residents dealing with the challenges of covid-19 during 21/22 and the cost of living impacts moving into 2022/23; an update on benefits statistics and performance administered by the council including the York Financial Assistance Scheme; and other financial inclusion (FI) activity during 2021/22 including delivery of Financial Inclusion grant schemes.

The Director of Customer and Communities outlined the report noting that more work was being done directly with residents in their localities. She advised that there was 11.5k residents claiming Universal Credit, 48% of whom were in work. She thanked staff for their work on the additional delivery of grants. The Head of Customer and Exchequer Services reported that 1051 food vouchers and 367 fuel vouchers, amounting to £126k had been given to residents, and demand was increasing. He added that he demand for the York Financial Assistance Scheme was high, with 54% of the fund spent. He noted that what the council was providing was not meeting the demands for fuel and rent.

The Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods commented that it was a difficult time for people and a challenge for staff. She noted the advice given to people to draw down more benefits and she welcomed York Challenge Poverty Talk Money Month. Noting the rise in Universal Credit claimants, she expressed concern over what was coming next in terms of finding further capacity without further support from the government. She noted the support in communities to help residents. The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects supported the comments of Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods. He acknowledged the hard work of officers, adding that would be a challenging winter for the council to put in the resources it had into supporting residents. He also noted that Ward Councillors could look at using Ward funding to help residents. It was then;

Resolved: That the content of the report and the support provided to residents who are financially vulnerable be noted.

Reason: To ensure councillors, residents and stakeholder groups are aware of the ongoing financial inclusion activity across the city. The use of associated funding including Covid-19 and cost of living support and their impacts.

Cllr Ayre, Chair

[The meeting started at 10:00 and finished at 10:31].

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