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MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	20 MARCH 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS MACDONALD (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), SCOTT (CHAIR), LOOKER (OPPOSITION SPOKESPERSON), MOORE AND R WATSON

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### **38. 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 R Watson declared a personal prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 (Accounts Submitted for Write-Off) as Annex C referred to a client of his firm. He left the room and took no part in the discussion or decision on the item.

### **39. Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following:

Annexes A, B and C, and Supplementary Annex D to Agenda Item 6 (Accounts Submitted for Write-Off) (minute 43 refers), on the grounds that they contained information relating to the financial affairs of particular persons. This information was classed as exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

### **40. Minutes**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Member for Corporate Services and Advisory Panel held on 12 December 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair and the Executive Member as a correct record.

### **41. Public Participation**

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

## 42. Directorate of Resources - Service Plans 2007-2008

Members received a report which presented the 2007/08 Service Plans for the Resources Directorate, for approval and comment.

The Service Plans detailed key service challenges and objectives for 2007/08 and were attached to the report as follows:

- Annex 1 – Financial Services;
- Annex 2 – Public Services;
- Annex 3 – Property Services;
- Annex 4 - Information Technology & Telecommunication (ITT) Services;
- Annex 5 – Audit & Risk Management.

In addition to seeking clarification of a number of existing performance figures and targets for future years in the scorecards, Members made comments and raised on the Service Plans, including the following:

- Commenting that the Service Plans were well laid out and informative;
- Highlighting the need for an integrated approach to service planning and financial planning;
- Requesting that a glossary be provided with future Service Plans;
- Suggesting that the format of the drivers' sections be standardised;
- Noting the difficulties of delivering the front end of the Benefits Service via the [Easy@York](#) project and seeking confirmation that these would be addressed at workplan level;
- Noting that a number of existing performance figures for Property Services were not available prior to the year-end and requesting that these be circulated to Members to enable them to consider if suitable future targets had been set;
- Highlighting the importance of optimum management of the commercial property portfolio;
- Discussing whether setting a lower target for ITT customer satisfaction than the existing performance figure allowed resources to be diverted to other priority areas for improvement or whether it reduced impetus to perform well in this area;
- Seeking an update on progress with procurement work;
- Noting that the staff appraisal targets for Audit & Risk Management needed to be adjusted to be brought in line with directorate targets.

### Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised:

- (i) That the content of the report be noted and acknowledged;
- (ii) That Members' comments be noted.

### Decision of the Executive Member

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

REASON: To improve and monitor performance.

#### **43. Accounts Submitted for Write-Off**

Members received a report which sought approval to write off irrecoverable accounts, each one over £2,000 in value, for National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), Sundry Debtors and Housing Benefit Overpayments. It also provided details of the value of other irrecoverable accounts under £2,000 that had been written-off under delegated authority in the current financial year.

Paragraph 4 of the report provided a breakdown of the £153,237 write-offs where each debt had a greater value than £2,000 and the £771,906 where each debt had a value of less than £2,000.

A supplementary report and annex had been published on 12 March 2007, detailing a further £557,025 of NNDR write-offs requiring the Executive Member's approval, which had been identified since the completion of the original report.

An updated version of the table at paragraph 23 of the report, which set out the write-offs to date in the context of the total charges raised by the Council, was circulated to Members, incorporating revisions made to reflect the figures in the supplementary report.

Members noted the following corrections to the report:

- To Annex A to remove a write-off of £2730 which had been included twice in error and to adjust the total to reflect this;
- To paragraph 4 to refer to SCREF 21;
- To Annex B to correct the net figure for SCREF 21 to £4560.50.

#### Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised:

- (i) That the write-off of the amount of £153,237, as shown in paragraph 4 of the report (with individual debts listed in Annexes A-C), be approved, taking note that each debt has a value greater than £2,000;
- (ii) That the write-off of £771,906 of accounts valued at less than £2,000 for the 6 month period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 (as shown in paragraph 4 of the report), under the Head of Finance's delegated authority, be noted;
- (iii) That the write-off of a further £557,025, as shown in the supplementary report (with individual debts listed in Annex D), be approved, taking note that each debt has a value greater than £2,000.

#### Decision of the Executive Member

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

REASON: To keep the accounts up to date.

#### **44. Future Agenda for Corporate Services EMAP**

Members received a report which provided an outline of the business currently scheduled for meetings of the Executive Member for Corporate Services and Advisory Panel during the forthcoming year, April 2007-April 2008, together with items of Resources business which were scheduled for other meetings.

Members were asked to consider the future content of agendas for Executive Member and Advisory Panel (EMAP) meetings and the frequency of the meetings as there was not sufficient business to sustain eight full meetings during 2007/08.

It was confirmed that the Corporate Procurement Strategy would be brought to EMAP, before progressing to the Executive, as noted in paragraph 5 and Annex 2 of the report, despite its omission from Annex 1.

The Assistant Director (Audit & Risk Management) advised Members that there were a number of additional items from her division likely to come to EMAP over the forthcoming year that had not been included in the report as it stood, due to the late confirmation of those items after the paper had been sent for publication. Officers also advised that a number of items requiring Executive approval could be brought to EMAP first if Members wished to comment on them.

Members expressed the view that all meetings should be retained in the corporate diary and only cancelled if there was insufficient business to be brought forward at the time. They also requested that an updated version of the report be presented to the next meeting as the new membership of the EMAP following the elections may wish to take a view on the issues raised.

#### Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised:

- (i) That the future content of Executive Member for Corporate Services and Advisory Panel agendas and the frequency of meetings be noted;
- (ii) That all meetings should be retained in the corporate diary and only cancelled if there was insufficient business to be brought forward at the time;
- (iii) That an updated version of the report be presented to the next meeting.

#### Decision of the Executive Member

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

REASON: To manage the business for EMAP meetings in 2007/08.

Q MACDONALD  
Executive Member

D SCOTT  
Chair of Advisory Panel  
The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.05 pm.