
MEETING	SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CALLING IN)
DATE	7 DECEMBER 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HEALEY (CHAIR), FUNNELL (VICE-CHAIR), ORRELL, SCOTT, SIMPSON- LAING, TAYLOR, R WATSON AND WAUDBY
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLORS ALEXANDER AND MERRETT

33. 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. No interests were declared.

34. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

35. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Scrutiny Management Committee (Calling In) meeting held on 9 November 2009 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

36. CALLED IN ITEM: INTRODUCTION OF A QUALITY CONTRACT FOR BUS SERVICE PROVISION IN YORK

Members received a report which asked them to consider the decisions made by the Executive at their meeting on 17 November 2009 in relation to the Introduction of a Quality Contract for Bus Service Provision in York.

Details of the Executive's decisions were attached as Annex A to the report. The original report to the Executive was attached as Annex B. The decisions had been called in by Cllrs Alexander, Merrett and Potter on the grounds that:

"The Executive:

- 1. Has failed to take into account the primacy of Full Council's passing a motion on Quality Contracts on 2nd April this year;*
- 2. Has also failed to explore using the tools that a Statutory Quality Contract would make available to improve bus reliability, punctuality and the level of fares;*

3. *Is blind to the opportunity provided to introduce cross-ticketing given that some local bus companies are not prepared to co-operate, thus creating an incentive for the public to use local bus services; and*

4. *Failed to consider the possibilities of seeking Government funding to be the first authority to implement a Quality Contract scheme.”*

Members were invited to decide whether to confirm the decisions of the Executive (Option A) or to refer them back to the Executive for re-consideration (Option B).

Cllr Alexander addressed the meeting on behalf of the Calling-in Members, concentrating on the first of the calling-in grounds. He outlined the history of the Council Motion and expressed that view that the Executive's decisions on this matter amounted to an attempt to overturn the decisions of Full Council. He urged Members to refer the matter back to the Executive for reconsideration.

With the consent of the Chair, Cllr Merrett also spoke on behalf of the Calling-In Members. He focused on the Officer report to the Executive, which he considered to be complacent in its assessment of current bus services in York. He stressed the need for a whole network approach, rather than concentrating on individual routes, stating that the introduction of a QCS would provide an opportunity for proper negotiation with bus operators to ensure delivery of essential service improvements. He circulated some information on an integrated approach to bus services and ticketing introduced in St Albans.

In response to the above comments and to Members' questions, Officers confirmed that in their view the report to Executive provided a proper and balanced response to the Council Motion. No specific date had been given for publication of government guidance on Quality Contract Schemes. Developing a scheme before receipt of the guidance could result in carrying out unnecessary work. The Department for Transport had confirmed that there would be no funding available for introducing a QCS, but technical support would be available at the development stage. Developing a trial scheme based on a corridor approach, as agreed by the Executive, would be cheaper and easier to procure, although it would not produce an integrated ticketing scheme.

After a full debate, Cllr Orrell moved, and Cllr R Watson seconded, that Option A be approved and the original decisions of the Executive be confirmed. Four Members voted in favour of this motion and four voted against. The Chair then used his casting vote in favour of the motion and it was therefore

RESOLVED: That Option A be approved and the original decisions of the Executive in this matter be confirmed.

REASON: In accordance with the procedures set out in the Council's Constitution for dealing with called-in decisions, and in

accordance with the reasons given by the Executive for their decisions.

P Healey, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 5.25 pm].