
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	11 SEPTEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, REID, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLOR D'AGORNE

42. 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.

43. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 24 July 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

44. Public Participation

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

45. Executive Forward Plan

Members received details of those items that were listed on the Executive Forward Plan for the next two meetings.

There was some concern about the complexity and volume of paper being used to monitor the Forward Programme. Members expressed the view that, whilst officers needed to monitor the report production process and ensure that new deadlines were met, when reporting the forward programme in Executive agenda papers only a summary was required. The full Forward Programme should be made available electronically, should be monitored regularly by responsible portfolio holders and may be discussed at Leaders meetings.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Forward Plan be noted;

(ii) That, in future, Executive papers should include a summary of the programme information including the title, description, scheduled decision date and portfolio holder responsibility for each item.

REASON: To inform the Executive of items pending for future meetings.

46. Minutes of the Young People's Working Group

Members received a report which presented the minutes of a recent meeting of the Young People's Working Group and asked them to consider the advice given by the Working Group in its capacity as an advisory body to the Executive.

The report drew Members' attention to the Working Group's comments on the options for the selection of the Children's and Young People's Champion (minute 4), which had subsequently been considered by the Children's Services EMAP (Executive Members & Advisory Panel) on 19 July 2007, when a decision on the matter was taken, and the Group's comments regarding the transfer of the Connexions Service responsibilities to the Local Authority from April 2008 (minute 5), which would be considered by the Council when proposals for the management structure for the new service were received.

The Executive Member for Youth & Social Inclusion provided an update on progress with electing a new Children's and Young People's Champion and reported that the Executive Members for Children's Services and Advisory Panel (EMAP) had confirmed their previous view that the Champion should not be an Executive or Shadow Executive Member.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That the minutes of the Young People's Working Group meeting held on 12 July 2007 be noted;
- (ii) That any proposals for changing any constitutional arrangements be referred in the first instance to a Group Leaders' Meeting.

REASON: To fulfil the requirements of the Council's Constitution in relation to the role of Working Groups.

47. Amendments to the Council's Constitution

Members received a report which asked them to note amendments made to the Constitution by the Council's Monitoring Officer pursuant to the provisions of Article 16 of the Constitution.

The amendments to the Constitution were detailed in the schedule attached as Annex 1 of the report.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That the amendments implemented to the Constitution be noted.

REASON: To ensure the Constitution is effectively revised and monitored and that appropriate corporate governance arrangements are in place.

48. Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan towards a Climate Change Strategy for the City

Members received a report which sought approval of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan towards a Climate Change Strategy for the city, and also sought agreement to the adoption of the Environmental Policy as a basis for the Council's Environmental Management System (EMS).

The Strategy and Action Plan were attached as Annex A of the report and the Environmental Policy as Annex B. The Strategy related specifically to Council actions in this area and was therefore a strategy for the Council rather than the city.

The report presented two options for consideration:

- Option A – to do nothing and continue Council sustainability activity in an ad hoc manner, utilising opportunities as they arise;
- Option B – to provide a strategic coordinated approach to Council work on sustainability and the development of a Climate Change Strategy.

Supplementary information had been circulated explaining how the targets had been arrived at, what "carbon neutral" meant and how the proposed target for the Council fitted with this definition.

Written comments from Sir John Lawton, Chairman of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, on opportunities for carbon mitigation in York, were circulated at the meeting.

Officers explained that they intended to bring forward a further report in December presenting the draft options appraisal for the actions for the Carbon Management Programme and which would provide an opportunity for Members to comment on the options proposed before the final Strategic Implementation Plan was produced in March. It would also provide an opportunity to update Members on the progress with the Local Strategic Partnership on the Climate Change Strategy for the city.

The Executive expressed their thanks to officers for the work undertaken in preparing the report, which provided a good basis for further development of a strategy to address climate change in the City. Members noted that the supplementary information provided would need to be analysed to understand more clearly what barriers there may be to implementation of the strategy. They expressed the view that the Council should be setting a good example to the City, that the strategy must include specific trackable actions, that there should be input from all Council departments (including the Neighbourhood Services Directorate) and that there should be clarity about timescales, achievability, costs and the availability of resourcing streams.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That the Environmental Sustainability and Action Plan towards a Climate Change Strategy and the Environmental Policy statement be endorsed as a useful basis on which to develop a further report which should address the following issues:
- a) required actions;
 - b) possible milestones;
 - c) practicality;
 - d) costs and resourcing streams;
- (ii) That, in producing a refined strategy, officers be requested to show clearly the following:
- a) enablers indicating the percentage of the total target that each will achieve;
 - b) further detail on the “City” (Local Strategic Partnership) component of the strategy;
 - c) a consultation, resident education and public engagement programme.

REASON: To provide a basis for future action in environmental sustainability for the Council and for its Environmental Management System (EMS).

49. Efficiency and Strategic Procurement Programme

Members received a report which sought approval for a set of reviews and other pieces of work aimed at improving the Council’s efficiency. These reviews were in addition to the Council’s existing efficiency based exercises which had already been successful in more than achieving the targets set by the Government. It also presented a Strategic Procurement Programme for approval.

The report explained that the key difference between the Efficiency Programme and the Strategic Procurement Programme was that in the former, the Council needed to review and identify the size of any inefficiency and then identify the best options for tackling this inefficiency, whereas for the latter the potential inefficiency had been identified and it was officers view that the best options for addressing these were procurement based solutions. The Programmes, attached as Annexes A and B respectively, were lists of options and could be added to or reduced as Members wished.

The report detailed some of the areas that the Council was working on in terms of shared services and explained that some further work would be done to collect a full list of shared services and, with the Regional Centre of Excellence, to identify further opportunities within the region for developing shared services.

Members endorsed the report as a basis for further investigation but on the understanding that, at this stage, the commitment was only to further research rather than an acceptance that the method of providing a public

service, or indeed any presumption about the quality of that public service, would be changed.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That the Efficiency Programme set out in Annex A of the report be approved;
- (ii) That the Strategic Procurement Programme set out in Annex B of the report be approved;
- (iii) That the position on shared services and further work planned in this area be noted.

REASON: In order to move the Council forward in terms of its approach to the identification and achievement of efficiency savings.

50. Finance Strategy 2008/09 to 2010/11 and Policy Prospectus Response on the Future of a Fair Grant for York

Members received a report which presented the Council's draft Financial Strategy for 2008/09 to 2010/11. In doing so it covered both the Council's financial position for the next three years (the Medium Term Financial Forecast or MTFF) and potential options for bridging the gap between the expected budgetary position and the funding available. It also attempted, for the first time, to formalise a number of financial policies relating to the Council's financial management.

The report also set out the Policy Prospectus response on the future of a Fair Grant for York, which was, in summary, that:

- The Council would pursue a robust response to three aspects of the national funding consultation, these being the Area Cost Adjustment, Tourism Funding and proposed arrangements for Concessionary Fares. Where appropriate this response would look to include wider stakeholders such as the local MPs.
- Officers would look to identify and exploit opportunities to establish York as an opinion leader for local government financial issues. It was noted that the benefits of such an approach were only likely to be realised in the medium to long term.

Officers reported that an extra £0.5m had been made available to the Council under the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGI).

Members expressed concern regarding the low level of grant received from central government and highlighted the major challenge that this created for the Council, in the light of increased demand for public services and increased delegated responsibilities from the government.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: a) That the attached financial strategy be endorsed, whilst it be noted that:

- (i) The revised calculation base for the MTFF currently excludes requests for funding expenditure on Council priorities and service aspirations;
 - (ii) The initial funding gap (excluding priority and aspirational growth) of £10.484m;
- b) That the proposed approach to balancing the budget be formally adopted and the relevant savings targets be noted:
- (i) 2.5% per service;
 - (ii) plus 2.5% per director;
 - (iii) plus a 5% yield on income budgets (including an analysis of the options available to extend the Council's trading activities);
- c) That the proposed response to the Policy Prospectus request for proposals to influence current and future funding decisions at a national level be supported;
- d) That the Head of Finance be requested to develop a response to the extant consultation on potential changes to the grant distribution formula with a particular focus on:
- (i) Delivering changes to the Area Cost Adjustment for York,
 - (ii) Ensuring that new arrangements for concessionary fares are funded either as a specific grant or are excluded from formula damping calculations,
 - (iii) Opposing the proposed changes to the day visitor funding calculation;
- e) That the Chief Executive be requested to table proposals for public consultation based on techniques exemplified in paragraphs 22b, c and d of the report.

- REASON:
- a) & b) To enable the commencement of formal budget planning for 2008/09;
 - c) To maximise the Council's potential influence on national funding policy and decisions;
 - d) To ensure that York's views are reflected in any final decision on national funding changes;
 - e) To ensure a full consultation exercise takes place.

51. Developing the York Compact: new codes of good practice

Members received a report which set out and sought approval of the new and revised York Compact codes of good practice that had been

developed by the York Compact Group. It also asked Members to endorse the Council's continued involvement in and support for the York Compact.

The report explained that the original local codes of good practice agreed in 2002 were quite lengthy documents, applied only to the Council and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and reflecting the situation in place at the time. Since then the membership of the local compact had widened and there had been substantial developments in relation to national and local policy and practice, including the Government's drive to develop the role of the voluntary sector in public service delivery. A process of reviewing the local codes, with the dual aims of shortening them to improve their accessibility and broadening their remit to include the wider public sector was therefore put in place. The revisions had also taken into account changes to the national codes of good practice and the developments in local policy and practice. The main revisions to the codes were summarised in the table at paragraph 10 of the report and the full codes were attached at Annex 2.

The report presented two options for consideration:

- Option 1 – to endorse the codes of practice in full as currently drafted, accepting that some clauses will not be met in the short term;
- Option 2 – to seek specific amendments to individual codes of practice.

Officers confirmed that the proposed changes would not make a significant difference to the processes and procedures already in use within the Council.

Members noted that there was an emerging concern that the substantial documentation now involved in the Compact agreement was becoming a barrier to transparency and understanding while possibly increasing the amount of time and resources devoted to bureaucracy.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

- RESOLVED: (i) That the new and revised York Compact codes of practice be endorsed in full;
- (ii) That the Council's continued participation in the York Compact be supported;
- (iii) That all Directorates be advised of the terms of the Compact and be asked to monitor any costs and benefits arising out of implementing the processes contained therein.

- REASON: (i) So that the Council can build on its positive engagement with the voluntary and community sector in the city, with the aim of improving services for people in the city;
- (ii) So that the Council can play its part in implementing the new codes of good practice.

S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.50 pm].