
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning
Date	14 August 2019
Present	Councillor Waller

6. Declarations of Interest

The Executive Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

7. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last Decision Session held on 22 July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member.

8. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn spoke on Agenda Item 4 (Business Rate Support and the Councils Property Planning). She raised a number of concerns, including the asset management strategy not being updated, there being no performance metrics or cards in economic development, and the property portfolio only maximising returns to the council. She requested the appointment of an Asset Management Committee, and suggested that a full review was needed of the property portfolio.

9. Business Rate Support and the Councils Property Planning

The Executive Member considered a report that informed him of the existing business rate support provided and available to businesses in the city. The report also provided information on

how the council could help in developing the city's economy through its role as a corporate landlord.

The Head of Customer and Exchequer Services outlined the types of business rate relief available to business noting that in addition to mandatory, discretionary and time limited relief there was an enterprise zone which provided relief up to the state aid equivalent of £55,000 per annum. It was noted that a number of business were in receipt of business rate relief.

The Head of Commercial and Operational Asset Management explained that there were a considerable number of businesses in the council's property portfolio and added that the nature of the portfolio provided an access to support for local businesses in York.

In response to comments and questions raised by the Executive Member, the Head of Customer and Exchequer Services explained how the council took a proactive approach through business rate relief being paid out automatically (subject to businesses signing a state aid declaration form). The Head of Commercial and Operational Asset Management was asked and explained that the acquisitions and disposals of assets were reported to the Executive and that there had been a report and presentation to a Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved: That;

- a) The content of the report be noted.
- b) Officers work with the consultation process identified in the Executive Member Decision Session held on 22 July 2019 for business rates, and to include a review of the Council's policy for business rate discounts.
- c) Officers prepare a report on the strategic utilisation of the Council's property portfolio to support independent retailers, and diversification of the High Street.

Reason: To ensure that York continues to have a buoyant, thriving and well planned business economy.

Councillor Waller (Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning)
[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.30 pm].