
MEETING	URGENCY COMMITTEE
DATE	3 AUGUST 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), GILLIES, HORTON (AS SUBSTITUTE FOR SCOTT), POTTER (EXCEPT FOR AGENDA ITEM 6) AND WALLER (AS SUBSTITUTE FOR JAMIESON- BALL)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS JAMIESON-BALL AND SCOTT

9. 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 Potter declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (Children's Centres Capital Programme) as Chair of the Governors at Tang Hall Primary School.

Councillor Waller declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (Children's Centres Capital Programme) as a governor at Westfield Primary School.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

Annex 1 to the second report (Ratification of Appointment of Chief Executive) under Agenda Item 9 (minute 19 refers) on the grounds that it contained information relating to any individual. This information was classed as exempt under paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Urgency Committee held on 26 June 2007 and 29 June 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OTHER COMMENTS

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

However representations were received, with the Chair's agreement, from Liz Young, on behalf of Unison. She spoke regarding agenda item 4 ([easy@york](#) Progress Report and Options for Phase 2) (minute 13 refers), to comment on the implications of the proposals for staff.

13. EASY@YORK PROGRESS REPORT AND OPTIONS FOR PHASE 2

Members received a report which set out the early outcomes of the first phase of [easy@york](#), provided an analysis of the early benefits that had been achieved by the programme and gave an indication of some of the lessons already learnt. It also made the case for a second phase of the programme and presented options to extend the reach of the current York Customer Centre and to establish a single, one-stop shop for face-to-face contact in the Hungate Building by 2010. The report presented high level costs for a future phase and options on how this could be funded.

The matter was being dealt with by the Urgency Committee as a decision could not wait until after the summer recess, as this delay would lead to a significant hiatus in the programme which would both delay work on phase 2 and potentially threaten the move into Hungate in 2010. Also the Programme Team were largely employed on short term contracts which were approaching their end date and they may leave if there was no commitment to a second phase and this in turn would lead to a delay in commencing phase 2 and a loss of vital skills and experience.

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- Option 1 – to end [easy@york](#) after phase 1;
- Option 2 – to continue the programme to deliver the minimum possible change to move into Hungate;
- Option 3 – to deploy the full [easy@york](#) approach on major customer facing services;
- Option 4 – to develop corporate customer contact arrangements for all of the Council's customer services, irrespective of size, and share these with partners such as Health, Police and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

The report was accompanied by a presentation from the [easy@york](#) Programme Director, the Assistant Director (Public Services) and external consultants. A copy of an article on the project from The Press was also circulated.

Members discussed the service areas listed in Annex 4 of the report, sought reassurance that the £2-2.5m investment that would be necessary to include them in the scheme would produce tangible cash savings and requested that further details on this be included in the next report. It was also clarified that the projected savings for [easy@york](#) phase 2 were different to those projected for the Administrative Accommodation Project.

Advice of the Urgency Committee

That the Executive Leader be advised:

- (i) That the review of the benefits brought about by phase 1 of [easy@york](#) be noted;
- (ii) That the options for a future phase set out in paragraphs 41-53 of the report be noted, Option 3 be recommended and a further report be brought to Members in the autumn containing robust figures for possible capital costs and revenue savings and targets;
- (iii) That it be agreed that additional funding for [easy@york](#) phase 2 be made available from Prudential Borrowing to a maximum of £2.5m where it can be supported by identified efficiencies and savings options that would repay the level of additional investment required, and that Local Public Service Agreement 2 (LPSA2) funds be allocated in line with the new bidding process, in support of the Local Area Agreement (LAA), with any [easy@york](#) related bid needing to demonstrate its contribution to the LAA and compete for funds accordingly;
- (iv) That the introduction of telephone menus in August 2007, as set out in paragraph 27 of the report be noted;
- (v) That additional savings be sought from each [easy@york](#) phase 2 service in order to fund the repayment of the Prudential Borrowing.

Decision of the Executive Leader

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Urgency Committee be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: As Option 3 will enable the move into Hungate and will lead to improvements in Customer Services and deliver savings, all of which are part of the Council's Corporate Strategy.

14. CHILDREN'S CENTRES CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Members received a report which informed them of progress to date on the development of the eight Children's Centres in York under phase 2 of the national programme, detailed the results of tenders received for capital works and set out options for closing a funding gap in order to allow construction contracts to be let.

The matter was being dealt with by the Urgency Committee owing to the need for contracts to be awarded to allow works to proceed during the school holiday period and to meet opening dates for the centres.

The report presented the following options for closing the funding gap:

- Option 1 – Remove a centre from the programme;
- Option 2 – Scheme reductions;
- Option 3 – Allocate additional corporate funding.

Advice of the Urgency Committee

That the Executive Leader be advised:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted, in particular the increased costs of delivering an acceptable Children's Centres programme following the recent tendering exercise;
- (ii) That it be agreed that the estimated receipt of £275k from the sale of Heworth Family Centre be included as a contribution to the Children's Centre programme to enable reprovision of the family centre to be delivered within the Tang Hall Children's Centre;
- (iii) That it be agreed that the transfer of £400k from the New Deal for Schools (NDS) Modernisation Programme to the Children's Centres programme reflecting the reimbursement in to the NDS Modernisation budget of a £400k Section 106 receipt from the propose housing development at Germany Beck, Fulford;
- (iv) That it be agreed to investigate further, as a high priority, the scheme reduction set out at Option 2 to construct the extensions in steel rather than aluminium at Haxby Road, subject to English Heritage and planning approval, and to allocate additional corporate capital resources to fund the planned programme.

Decision of the Executive Leader

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Urgency Committee be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In order to allow construction contracts to be let.

15. SCIENCE CITY YORK LIMITED: INTERIM GOVERNANCE OF COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

Members received a report which explained that the Council's representative and director of the newly formed Science City York Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) was the Chief Executive, who was shortly to retire from the Council, and therefore recommended that an interim replacement be made. It also made a recommendation on the role of Chair of the new CLG Board and proposed that this be taken by a private sector representative, Richard Gregory, who had been chairing the "Stakeholder Group" during the transitional period from an informal partnership to a CLG.

The matter was being dealt with by the Urgency Committee as an interim replacement was required to enable the company to make the short term decisions necessary in formulating proposals on longer term governance.

It was queried whether there could be Member involvement with the CLG at some stage and the Director of City Strategy confirmed that the whole membership of the CLG would be reviewed when proposals for longer term governance arrangements were brought forward.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the appointment of the Director of City Strategy as representative of the City of York Council and Director on the Science City York Company Limited by Guarantee be approved;
- (ii) That the appointment of Richard Gregory as the Chair of the Board of the new Company Limited by Guarantee at an annual remuneration of £10,000, plus reasonable expenses incurred in the carrying out of that role, be approved.
- REASON: (i) To enable the company to make the short term decisions necessary in formulating proposals on longer term governance;
- (ii) To recognise the importance of Science City York to developing the local, regional and national economy.

16. TEMPORARY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS IN RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

Members received a report which set out, for their approval, temporary management arrangements in Resources to cover the period of time the Director of Resources was Acting Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

The matter was being dealt with by the Urgency Committee as temporary management arrangements needed to be put in place as soon as possible following the retirement of the Chief Executive and there were no other scheduled meetings at which approval for these arrangements could be obtained during the summer recess.

Paragraph 5 of the report explained that an appointment panel had been set up to appoint one of the five Assistant Directors from Resources as a temporary Director to cover a number of functions, including those relating to Member level meetings and Corporate and Directorate Management Teams. Other responsibilities would be allocated between the Assistant Directors on a temporary basis.

Paragraph 6 of the report recommended that Peter Steed, Assistant Director (Strategic Finance), and Liz Ackroyd, Assistant Director (Audit & Risk Management), be appointed as Section 151 Officer (ie: Chief Finance Officer) and Deputy Section 151 Officer respectively until mid-October. Paragraph 7 of the report recommended that James Drury, Assistant Director (Public Services), be appointed as the Council's Proper Officer for all Register Office purposes on a permanent basis.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the appointment of Peter Steed as Section 151 Officer from the return of his August leave until 14 October 2007 be endorsed;

- (ii) That the appointment of Liz Ackroyd as Deputy Section 151 Officer from the return of her August leave until 14 October 2007 be endorsed;
- (iii) That the appointment of James Drury as the Council's Proper Officer for all Register Office purposes, on a permanent basis, be endorsed.

REASON: In order to reduce the workload on the Acting Chief Executive and delegate appropriate responsibilities.

17. APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

Members received a report which sought approval for changes to the Conservative Group's membership of committees, working groups and outside bodies following the death of Councillor Bennett, and to appoint a vice chair of the Yor OK Board and an additional representative on the York Central Steering Board. It also sought approval to appoint an Interim Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.

The matter was being dealt with by the Urgency Committee to ensure that the Conservative Group could fill its seats on committees, working groups and outside bodies as soon as possible, and as a Returning Officer needed to be appointed, following the retirement of the Chief Executive, prior to a by election being held in Heworth Without Ward.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the changes to the membership of committees, working groups and outside bodies set out in Annex 1 of the report be approved;
- (ii) That Simon Wiles be appointed as Interim Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for the City of York until the appointment of the new Chief Executive takes effect.

- REASON: (i) To fill vacant positions on committees, working groups and outside bodies;
- (ii) In accordance with Sections 8 & 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

18. URGENT BUSINESS: APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE FOR MONITORING OFFICER

Members received a report which sought formal approval to appoint a Chief Officer Appointments Committee to proceed with the appointment of the Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer within the Chief Executive's Directorate.

The matter was being considered under Urgent Business because of the need to cover the vacancy which would be left with the departure of the existing Monitoring Officer in September 2007, to minimise the use of interim arrangements and to avoid any further delays.

RESOLVED: That a Chief Officer Appointments Committee be appointed for the post of Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer.

REASON: To minimise the use of interim arrangements, to enable the Council to operate effectively and to avoid any further delay.

19. URGENT BUSINESS: RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Members received a report which sought formal approval of the recommendation of the Chief Officer Appointments Committee relating to the appointment of the Chief Executive.

The matter was being dealt with under Urgent Business to avoid any delay with the successful candidate taking up the post.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations of the Chief Officer Appointments Committee be approved and Bill McCarthy be appointed as Chief Executive, on the terms and conditions set out in Annex 1 of the report.

REASON: To enable the Council to operate effectively and to avoid any further delay.

COUNCILLOR S F GALLOWAY

Chair

The meeting started at 11.00 am and finished at 1.05 pm.

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