

Resources Working Party

held at Ryedale House, Malton
on Tuesday 18 September 2007

Present

Councillors Wainwright (in the Chair), Aslett, Mrs Cowling, Keal and Knaggs.

Substitute: Councillor Acomb (for Councillor Legard)

In attendance

T Anderson, Mrs B Bennett, J Davison, R Etherington, Miss C Gaynor, Mrs M Jackson, P Long, J Patten, J Rudd and Miss J Waggott

Minutes

RWP.34 Apology for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Legard.

RWP.35 Minutes

The minutes of a meeting of the Working Party held on 14 August 2007 were submitted (previously circulated).

Resolved

That the minutes of a meeting of the Resources Working Party held on 14 August 2007 as submitted be endorsed.

RWP.36 Urgent Business

The Chairman reported that there was one item that he considered should be dealt with at the meeting as a matter of urgency by virtue of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

RWP.37 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

RWP.38 Capital Programme - Monitoring Report

The Director of Policy submitted a report (previously circulated), which related to the revised Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2007-2011: Work-stream Schedule as profiled in August 2007.

The report was prepared on a monthly basis and enabled Members to track progress on the various schemes within the programme. The Director of Policy drew members' attention to the changes that had been made since presentation of the previous monitoring report.

Resolved

That the report be received.

RWP.39 Capital Programme – Financial Schedule

The Financial Services Manager submitted for information a report (previously circulated), which related to the revised Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2007-2011: Financial Schedule as profiled in August 2007.

Members commented that it would be beneficial for the Working Party to receive the report on a regular basis and suggested that a standing item be included on future Working Party agendas.

Resolved

That future Working Party agenda include a standing item relating to the Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2007-2011: Financial Schedule.

RWP.40 Major Schemes – Project Report

(a) Enterprise Centre

The Forward Planning and Economic Development Manager submitted a report (previously circulated) the purpose of which was to update Members on project progress and to seek approval to enable the project to be progressed to the shortest possible deadlines.

The Forward Planning and Economic Development Manager reported that on 10th April 2006, the Capital Programme Working Party identified the Technology Park, Malton, as a District Council priority for development and investment. Policy & Resources Committee endorsed this prioritisation on 20th April 2006. In May 2007, Yorkshire Forward approved an Outline Business Case for the Ryedale Enterprise Centre.

A full Business Plan was submitted to Yorkshire Forward at the end of June. This was based on the scale of scheme (36,000 sq ft gross) suggested by Atkins in their Feasibility Study and on funding via a Joint Venture partnership. Since the Business Plan was submitted further investigations and discussions have taken place with relevant parties, including:

- Visits to and further analysis of comparable facilities within the Region
- Discussions with potential joint venture partners and with potential operating companies
- Discussions with Northminster, the developers who are promoting the Technology and Business Park on which the Enterprise Centre would be located
- Discussions with the York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit and Yorkshire Forward regarding the possibility of funding from the newly emerging European Regional Development Fund 2007-13 (to also be operated by Yorkshire Forward).

The above investigations had concluded that there should be revisions to the scale and detail of the facility that was proposed by Atkins, and this affected the costings and specification put forward in the submitted Full Business Plan. There was also the real possibility of attracting ERDF funding to the project to supplement the RDC and Yorkshire Forward contributions and so provide a fully funded scheme. This did not guarantee approval but raised a significant potential for up to 46% of scheme costs to be met through ERDF, with a contribution towards revenue costs.

Having considered the two options, outlined in the report, for funding the capital costs of the revised scheme, Members felt that a fully public funded scheme using European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) money together with funding from Yorkshire Forward and Ryedale District Council was the preferred approach.

There were three options outlined in the report for management of the Enterprise Centre:

RWP.41 Project Management

The Chief Executive reported to Members that the Project Management update was subject to a Management review currently in progress.

RWP.42 Comprehensive Performance Management

The Director of Policy reported on a letter received from the Audit Commission inviting district councils to submit applications for re-categorisation of their CPA assessment. It was agreed that it was inappropriate to apply for re-categorisation at this time due to the changes currently taking place within the Authority. However, the Council should aim for 'excellent' and the Council Improvement Plan should identify the actions required to achieve this.

RWP. 43 Housing Grants & Private Sector Energy Efficiency Grants

In accordance with the resolution made at the last meeting of the Working Party, the Housing Services Manager attended the meeting and reported on Home Repair Grants and Energy Efficiency improvements to the existing housing stock.

RWP. 44 Vehicle Replacement Policy

The Commercial Services Finance Manager submitted a report (previously circulated), the purpose of which was to seek Members approval of a Vehicle Replacement Policy to be adopted by Commercial Services.

The Commercial Services Finance Manager reported that the majority of the Councils vehicle fleet had been financed through operating lease agreements. However, in recent years, some operational vehicles had also been purchased either from DEFRA grant funding or out of DSO reserves. There was no budget provision for the replacement of vehicles which were originally purchased out of DSO reserves. Since the existing capital programme was fully financed resources for additional purchases would have required additional borrowing.

Members noted that a Vehicle Replacement Policy together with a medium term vehicle replacement programme was an essential way forward to ensure that all future vehicle replacement decisions integrate effectively with the budget setting process and a planned, consistent approach to replace vehicles existed.

Resolved

That the Vehicle Replacement Policy be approved.

RWP. 45 Exempt Information

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items as there will be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act as the information relates to an individual (Paragraph 1) and to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3).

RWP. 46 Urgent Business

The following item was considered as it was decided by the Chairman to be urgent by virtue of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

RWP. 47 Kirkbymoorside - Church House

The Director of Policy reported on a request from North Yorkshire County Council relating to Church House, Kirkbymoorside.

The Director of Policy reported that the County Council had requested the views of Members regarding the valuation of Church House. Members suggested that further negotiations should take place and that a report be submitted to a future meeting.

RWP. 48 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30 October 2007 at 3.00pm.