

North Yorkshire County Council

Chief Executive Decision Session Consultation with the Executive

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Tuesday, 21 April 2020 commencing at 10.00 am.

County Councillors present via Skype and phone: Carl Les, David Chance, Gareth Dadd, Caroline Dickinson, Michael Harrison, Andrew Lee, Don Mackenzie, Patrick Mulligan, Janet Sanderson and Greg White.

Officers present via Skype: Richard Flinton, Barry Khan, Gary Fielding, Stuart Carlton, Chrys Mellor and Melanie Carr.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

30. Welcome by the Leader

The session was chaired by County Councillor Carl Les, who confirmed that the role of the Executive at this informal session was to consider the reports and give a view to the Chief Executive. It was noted that this was not a formal decision making meeting and that where a decision was required, the Chief Executive would use his own discretion after considering the views of the Executive.

31. Minutes

That the Minutes of the decision session held on 14 April 2020, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed by the Chief Executive as a correct record.

32. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Andrew Lee declared an interest in Agenda item 8 – the grants for businesses update, as the owner of a retail business.

33. Forward Plan

Considered –

34. Revised Library Strategy

County Councillor Greg White introduced the revised library strategy *Your Library, your place* for the Executive's consideration and endorsement, ahead of it being presented to a future meeting of Full Council for approval. The report included an overview of the consultation that had taken place.

Chrys Mellow, NYCC Libraries General Manager, confirmed that all community libraries were consulted in order to inform the revisions to the library strategy, and that the views of the public were then sought on the final draft.

In regard to the consultation responses, Cllr Janet Sanderson queried what might have influenced the higher number of responses from certain areas e.g. 19% from Hambleton in contrast to only 5% from Selby. It was noted that although the public consultation had been widely advertised using the same various methods across the whole region, the total number of responses had been minimal, and that there were no known factors affecting the number of response per area.

County Councillor Gareth Dadd queried if there may be any cost savings to come and requested a future financial update.

It was confirmed that whilst the revised strategy needed sign off by Full Council there was no urgency, as Libraries were already implementing new ways of working in support of the revised strategy. **The Executive therefore agreed to recommend to the Chief Executive that -**

- i) The revised library strategy *Your Library, your place* be recommended to the County Council for approval as part of the Council's Policy Framework.
- ii) The implementation of the revised library strategy should involve community libraries and engagement with communities.

Resolved –

The Chief Executive considered the report and the views of the Executive and decided to use his emergency powers to implement the recommendations of the Executive.

35. Lowering the age range of Riccall Community Primary School to 2-11

County Councillor Patrick Mulligan introduced the report which sought approval for the publication of proposals and statutory notices to lower the age range of Riccall Community Primary School.

The Corporate Director for Children's and Young People's services confirmed that:

- The majority of responses to the informal consultation carried out by the school Governors indicated parents were in favour of the proposals.
- There had been no objections received from other providers in the area.
- In light of the current social isolating rules, the school could be asked to write out parents to draw their attention to the proposals and statutory notices

The Executive agreed to recommend to the Chief Executive that -

- i) The proposals and statutory notices be published on 30 April to lower the school age range of Riccall Community Primary School from 1 September 2020.
- ii) A final decision on the proposals be taken on 23 June 2020.

Resolved –

The Chief Executive considered the report and the views of the Executive and decided to use his emergency powers to implement the recommendations of the Executive

36. Funding Arrangements for A1(M) J47 & Harrogate Rail Line Improvements

Members agreed to defer consideration of the item until the next Chief Officer Decision Session in consultation with the Executive, scheduled for 28 April 2020.

37. Grants for Businesses Update

Barry Khan Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Democratic Services) introduced his report on supplier relief due to COVID-19 seeking approval of the process for considering supplier relief due to Covid-19 in accordance with the Procurement Policy Note 02/20.

He provided an overview of the significant impact on businesses of the pandemic which was likely to result in a number of the County Council's suppliers struggling to meet their contractual obligations and potentially their financial viability, ability to retain staff and their supply chains being at risk.

Members noted the government guidance detailed in the report on how Councils might assist their suppliers and the proposed safeguards that would prevent system abuse which included sample checking and audits to ensure the Council was protected. Members queried the likely impact of the additional support, and it was confirmed there would be an impact on the Council's cash flow as result of paying supplier invoices on immediate terms.

Members agreed the suggested process was a fair and flexible way of dealing with the Council's suppliers during the difficult COVID-19 period, and therefore **agreed to recommend to the Chief Executive that -**

Power be delegated to the Corporate Director - Strategic Resources [or in his absence the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)] in consultation with the Supply Chain Resilience Board to determine any decisions regarding supplier relief and to make any consequential decisions to enact that relief (in consultation with the relevant Executive Members).

Resolved –

The Chief Executive considered the report and the views of the Executive and decided to use his emergency powers to implement the recommendations of the Executive

Please note that this decision has been treated under the special urgency procedure in Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 and call-in has therefore been exempted by the Chairman of the County Council under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

38. Other business which the Chief Executive considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

Gary Fielding, Corporate Director – Strategic Resources informed members he would shortly be seeking approval of a change in policy to enable the deferment of employer pension

contributions during the Coronavirus pandemic, to be considered on a case by case basis.

The meeting concluded at 10:57am