

SCRUTINY BOARD (CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES)

WEDNESDAY, 6TH JULY, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors C Anderson, C Campbell,
R Grahame, M Harland, G Hyde,
J Illingworth, P Latty, M Lyons, C Towler
and N Walshaw

10 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:

Agenda item 7 – Appendix A of the Executive Board report is designated exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3) 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).' (Minute no.17 refers).

11 Late Items

There were no late items.

12 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting, however Councillor C Townsley drew the Board's attention to the fact that he was President of Horsforth Historical Society.

13 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors K Maqsood, R Stephenson, M Robinson and K Wakefield. Notification had been received that Councillor M Lyons was to substitute for Councillor K Maqsood, Councillor P Latty for Councillor R Stephenson, Councillor C Anderson for Councillor M Robinson and Councillor C Towler for Councillor K Wakefield.

14 Call In Briefing Paper

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report in relation to the procedural aspects of the call in process.

Members were advised that the options available to the Scrutiny Board in respect of this particular called in decision were:

Option 1- Release the decision for implementation

Having reviewed this decision, the Scrutiny Board may decide to release it for implementation. If the Scrutiny Board chooses this option, the decision will be immediately released for implementation and the decision may not be Called In again.

Option 2 - Recommend that the decision be reconsidered.

The Scrutiny Board may decide to recommend to the decision maker that the decision be reconsidered. If the Scrutiny Board chooses this option a report will be submitted to the decision maker.

In the case of an Executive Board decision, the report of the Scrutiny Board will be prepared within three working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting and submitted to the Executive Board. Any report of the Scrutiny Board will be referred to the next Executive Board meeting for consideration.

In reconsidering the decision and associated Scrutiny Board report, the Executive Board may vary the decision or confirm its original decision. In either case, this will form the basis of the final decision and will not be subject to any further call-in.

Failure to agree one of the above options

If the Scrutiny Board, for any reason, does not agree one of the above courses of action at this meeting, then Option 1 will be adopted by default, i.e. the decision will be released for implementation with no further recourse to Call In.

RESOLVED – That the report outlining the call in procedures be noted.

15 Community Hubs - Phase 2 Business Case

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report, together with relevant background papers, in relation to an Executive Board decision dated 22 June 2016 in relation to 'Community Hubs - Phase 2 Business Case'

The decision had been called in for review by Councillors C Campbell, J Bentley, J Chapman, C Townsley and S Lay on the following grounds:

'There has been a complete failure to consult with service users around the proposed closure of Horsforth Area Housing Office. The paper misrepresents the level of discussion that has taken place with Horsforth Historical Society. No discussion had taken place with the museum about the specific proposal to close the building at the time the paper was published. The only discussion

with the historical society to have taken place was arranged after the publication of the report and at the instigation of ward members.

The lack of consultation means that serious issues, such as the Historical Society's lease on the building until 2029, have not been considered. This lease was drawn up following a Heritage Lottery funded refurbishment of community space at the site. It is not at all clear what the implications are of prematurely removing from its intended a heritage lottery funded asset, but this is precisely the sort of issue that should have been resolved by consultation.

The report fails to address the wider issues of the selling off of assets in outer towns and districts and the proceeds diverted to other areas and the lack of any community facilities at all in some areas.'

The Scrutiny Board considered the following written evidence:

- Copy of the completed Call In request form
- Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) presented to Executive Board at its meeting on 22 June 2016
- Scrutiny Inquiry report on the development of Community Hubs (as referenced in the Executive Board report)
- Extract from the draft minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 22 June 2016.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Chris Townsley, Signatory to the Call In
- Councillor Jonathan Bentley, Signatory to the Call In
- Councillor Debra Coupar, Executive Board Member for Communities
- James Rogers, Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities)
- Lee Hemsworth, Chief Officer – Customer Access
- Dayle Lynch, Executive Manager, Strategic Asset Management.

Councillors C Townsley and J Bentley presented the reasons for calling in the decision.

These included:

- Misinformation and a lack of consultation regarding the proposal to close Horsforth Area Housing Office.
- Concern about the impact of closure on members of Horsforth Historical Society.
- The need to ensure equality of provision across the city and meeting the needs of communities.

In response to the concerns raised, the following points were made:

- An outline of the community hub programme and development of a phased approach, which included a specific focus on identifying gaps in provision.
- Confirmation that a Community Hub is already formed in Horsforth library as previously agreed as part of the Phase 1a programme. As such, the Executive Board report was providing a progress update in delivering the Phase 1a Community Hubs.
- Confirmation that feedback from the local community regarding development of the community hub programme had been overwhelmingly positive. It was noted that consultations were undertaken in Horsforth through the Housing Office and the existing Community Hub.
- An apology from the directorate in making the assumption that Councillor Townsley was being consulted as Ward Member and in his capacity as President of the Historical Society.
- Confirmation that the proposals outlined in the Executive Board report enabled investment in community provision.
- Clarification regarding lease arrangements. The Board was advised that the lease on the building was up to 2029. As such, discussions regarding the conditions of the lease and alternative options were ongoing.

The Chair invited questions and comments from the Board and the key areas of discussion were:

- An update on the level of consultation that had been undertaken.
- Confirmation of the options already being considered regarding the future location of Horsforth Historical Society. These were:
 - To remain at the current location
 - To relocate to basement of Mechanics Institute.
 - To relocate to Horsforth Hall Park Depot (it was noted that this particular option had already been ruled out due to issues with cost and timing)
- The on-going commitment to continue dialogue with the Horsforth Historical Society to find an appropriate solution. It was noted that a meeting involving interested parties was scheduled to take place in August to consider potential options.
- Assurances were sought that future consultations with Ward Members would be acknowledged separately to the need for wider consultation with local communities and interested parties.
- A suggestion to review the general role of asset management in identifying and valuing available assets and particularly its role in establishing priorities linked to the Community Hub programme. It was suggested that this be raised with the Chair of Scrutiny Board (City Development) for consideration.

- Concern that not releasing the decision for implementation would delay the on-going positive work that was being undertaken with the Community Hubs programme.
- A suggestion that the Scrutiny Board continued to receive regular updates, particularly in terms of discussions with Ward Members and the local community, as part of its wider monitoring of the Community Hub programme.

Following consideration of Appendix A of the Executive Board report, designated as exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3), which was considered in private during the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report and information provided be noted
- (b) That the Chair of Scrutiny Board (City Development) be made aware of the suggestion to review the general role of asset management in identifying and valuing available assets and particularly its role in establishing priorities linked to the Community Hub programme.
- (c) That the Scrutiny Board continues to receive regular updates, particularly in terms of discussions with Ward Members and the local community, as part of its wider monitoring of the Community Hub programme.

(Councillor J Illingworth joined the meeting at 9.40am during the consideration of this item.)

(Councillor R Grahame left the meeting at 10.25am during the consideration of this item.)

16 Outcome of Call-In

RESOLVED – That the decision be released for implementation.

17 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 25 July 2016 at 10.00 am
(Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 10.40 am)