
Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	28 January 2015
Present	Councillors Waller (Chair), Healey (Vice-Chair), Semlyen, Barnes, Burton, Scott and D'Agorne
In Attendance	Councillor Warters

Chair's Comments

Councillor Waller welcomed Councillor Healey to his new role as Vice Chair of the Committee. He thanked Councillor Watt for the contribution he had made as the former Vice Chair. As it was Councillor Semlyen's last meeting he also thanked her for the work she had carried out as former Chair of the Committee.

Councillor Semlyen echoed Councillor Waller's comments about Councillor Watt and stated that she always found him well informed and prepared for meetings.

39. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have had in business on the agenda.

Councillor Semlyen declared a personal interest in the remit of the Committee as she had volunteered to organise a European UK mobility weekend in September.

Councillors D'Agorne, Barnes and Scott declared personal interests in Agenda Item 9 (Brownfield sites and infrastructure report publication) as members of the Audit and Governance Committee. This item included at Annex B a draft of a report due to be considered at a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee at their February meeting.

No other interests were declared.

40. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the last meeting held on 12 November 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

41. Public Participation

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

Councillor Warters made a number of comments in relation to the remit of the Committee and to specific items on the agenda.

Firstly, he spoke about the issue of rural taxi buses which had been raised at the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee and about a recent Cabinet decision about funding for rural bus routes.

In relation to Agenda Item 6 (Second Quarter Finance and Performance Monitoring Report) he felt that the wording relating to the 20mph speed limit programme was politically loaded and the pilot's project's "success" should be changed to "progress".

On Agenda Item 9 (Brownfield Sites and Infrastructure Report Publication) he asked for clarification on the status of the job title of the Chief Officer who had written the report and associated annexes.

42. Attendance of the Cabinet Member for Transport (including written report on soft measures for transport modal shift and responsible driving, plus public transport review)

The Cabinet Member for Transport attended the meeting and presented a written report.

In response to comments raised by Councillor Warters under Public Participation, the Cabinet Member, stated that the decision made in regards to the implementation of budget savings on council funded local bus services was to re-examine the criteria for consultation. However a date could not be given

for when this criteria would be finalised and the Cabinet Member felt that it would not be included within the budget proposals. A number of questions received by the Cabinet Member related to engagement with bus users, repair work to traffic signals at junctions, 20 mph speed limits and his objectives for the forthcoming year.

In relation to public engagement around bus services it was reported that there was an official Bus User Group but this tended to only be convened if there was a specific policy change.

Regarding the monitoring of speed effects of 20 mph zones and in particular the South Bank pilot project, the Cabinet Member explained that the project had been carried out to examine the impact on main or distributor roads where speeds were in excess of 20 mph or more.

In response to a question about what his next set of objectives would be, the Cabinet Member said they would be around communications and culture changes, project management, how schemes were designed and how a cross party approach could be promoted.

The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that in regards to repayment of Lendal Bridge fines, a decision had been made to notify all those who had received a fine and work was currently being undertaken to produce a list of contacts. This work was expected to be complete by early February.

Officers stated that they would circulate information to Members around repair work to traffic signals and 20mph speed limits following the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for his report and attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: (i) That the Cabinet Member be thanked for his report and that it be noted.

(ii) That Officers circulate the requested information to Members.

Reason: In order to keep the Committee informed of the Cabinet Member's priorities.

43. Six Monthly Update Report on Major Transport Initiatives

Members received a report which provided them with an overview and update in relation to the major transport initiatives currently being progressed in the city.

Officers were asked which schemes they considered were likely to not be completed until the next financial year.

The schemes detailed were;

- Bus interchange improvements on Rougier Street.
- A19 Pinch Point Scheme £1.9 million of funding had been held up as a result of works at Germany Beck.
- Control of the Askham Bar Park and Ride Site had been transferred to an Asset Board and so was not under control of Council Transport Officers.
- Following disparate responses from working with Fossgate User Group before Christmas in regards to the Footstreets Review, Officers had now planned to work with shopkeepers to design a scheme with them.

Discussion took place between Members and Officers on the monitoring of free parking. A question was also asked about the repayment of fines from the time of the closure of Coppergate. In response, Officers advised the Committee that further information needed to be sought from the Traffic Penalty Tribunal and the Council's Finance Department before this could be answered.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee informed about major transport initiatives.

44. Second Quarter Finance and Performance Monitoring Report

Members received a report which provided them with details of the 2014/15 forecast outturn position for both finance performance in City & Environmental Services.

Members queried the following figures;

- Lower than expected car parking revenue- might this be a good time to revisit the idea of free parking, particularly in light of the closure of the Marygate car park?
- Land charges- did this mean that house sales were higher than expected?
- Potential further funding that could be gained through the £1bn West Yorkshire + Transport Fund-what share of the fund York was likely to get?

In response Officers stated that that the car parking revenue lost by the closure of the Marygate car park would be paid to the Council from Network Rail. The increase in housing sales were a sign of the nationwide trend of emerging from recession.

In response to a question about the West Yorkshire + Transport Fund, it was noted that the bid was now in the public domain but that a final decision would not be made by the Combined Authority on how much York would receive until after the General Election. This would then allow for the financial implications to become clearer.

The Chair asked Officers if they could provide written information on this issue for Members.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

- (ii) That written information be provided to Members on the financial implications on potential further funding from the West York + Transport Fund.

Reason: To update the Committee of the latest finance and performance position.

45. Update Report on Universal Credit

Members received a briefing paper which provided them with an update on the progress of the national implementation of Universal Credit and proposals for the provision of local support through a 'Universal Support-Local Delivery' (US-LD) partnership.

Some Members commented that the paper showed that the situation did not seem as bad as they first thought and that the economic indicators were doing well.

They added it would be a good topic to examine in the future. Other Members urged caution and hoped that the third sector would not have to be relied on in order to implement the local support.

Resolved: That the report be noted and that a further report be provided in late 2015.

Reason: To keep the Committee informed about the implementation of Universal Credit.

46. Update Report on Economic Dashboard and Part Time Working in York

Members received a report which provided them with a copy of York's latest Create Jobs and Grow the Economy Dashboard.

Officers highlighted that there had been a drop in average weekly earnings as a proportion of jobs tended to be at lower wages.

Some Members were concerned that the average earnings of part time workers in York appeared to drop by 10 % over the past six months and questioned why. Officers reported that although this was concerning, the average part time earnings for York residents were still the highest in the region.

Members requested that further information on which employers paid the living wage in the city and statistics into low wages be provided.

Resolved: That the report be noted and the requested information be provided.

Reason: To keep Members informed about changes to the Economic Dashboard.

47. Brownfield sites and infrastructure report publication

Members received a report relating to the publication of a report to Council Management Team prepared by the Director of City and Environmental Services (CES) and its appearance on the

York Press website. The report related to proposals for delivering brownfield and infrastructure proposals.

The author of the report confirmed to Members following a question posed earlier during Public Participation by Councillor Warters, that she was the Interim Director of City and Environmental Services.

She took the Members through the report and gave reasons for why she felt that a review was needed to look the sources of funding and areas of likely growth, she underlined that this was a management report and had been redacted as there were management and HR implications.

Members requested if they could have an unredacted version of the report on confidential papers, Officers agreed.¹

Discussion took place around a series of infrastructure proposals including Castle Piccadilly and about the Committee's role in oversight of major schemes and projects.

In response to Members' questions it was reported that;

- Work around the Castle Piccadilly area was at a preliminary stage and Officers were being asked to do further work on this.
- There were a number of major schemes and projects happening at the moment and Members should consider whether they should solely come to ECDOSC for consideration or whether they should take more of an overview role.
- York had relatively low land values and high residential values and the recent change in the political composition of the Council did have an effect on interest in investment in the city.

The Chair thanked the Interim Director for presenting the report to Members.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: In order that the Committee be kept updated on issues of delivery for brownfield and infrastructure proposals.

Action Required

1. Circulate report to Members of the Committee. SCT

48. Draft Final Report on Graduate Business Start Ups, Entrepreneurialism and Higher Value Jobs

Members considered the Draft Final Report of More Productive and Higher Value Jobs Scrutiny Review.

Councillor Scott requested that it be noted that there had been no debate on this agenda item.

Resolved: That the report be noted and the draft recommendations be endorsed as outlined in the report.

Reason: To conclude the work on this scrutiny review in order that the draft final report can be presented to Cabinet.

49. Work Plan 2015

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the rest of the municipal year.

Discussion took place around the attendance of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development which was scheduled for the March meeting.

Some Members felt that it might be more beneficial for Councillor Alexander to support Councillor Levene in attending the meeting given that he had only recently assumed the responsibility for Economic Development within his Cabinet portfolio. Councillor Alexander, as the former Leader, used to have Economic Development as one of his responsibilities.

Councillor Healey moved the proposal to invite Councillor Alexander alongside Councillor Levene to the next meeting to present the Economic Development item. Councillor Scott seconded the motion. On being put to the vote, this motion was carried.

Following further discussion it was;

Resolved: That the work plan be noted and the following amendments be made;

- The attendance of the Cabinet Member for Transport and Councillor Alexander at the March meeting.
- That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism's update on the Shambles Market also include the Tour de France.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has a planned programme of work in place.

Councillor Waller, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.40 pm].