

Meeting	Economic Development and Transport Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	10 May 2017
Present	Councillors Cuthbertson (Chair), D'Agorne (Vice-Chair), Cullwick, Gates (Items 1-6), Looker, D Myers, K Myers and Warters

50. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

51. Minutes

The Chair raised an error in the minutes from the previous meeting. Under minute item 40. Declarations of Interest it was Councillor K Myers who declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of York Museums Trust, not Councillor Gates.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of 8 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair, subject to the above amendment.

52. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme on the following item:

4. Report of York Civic Trust – Proposed Transport Policy

Mr Paul Hepworth spoke, on behalf of Cycling UK, to welcome the report of York Civic Trust and to make follow up suggestions:

1. That a programme of formal and regular dialogue between CYC and transport stakeholders be put in place.

2. That consideration be given to 'vehicle restricted areas' rather than footpaths, an example being access for cyclists past York Minster.
3. That discussion be had regarding allowing two way cycling on one way street. It was felt this would encourage modal shift for local journeys.

53. Report of York Civic Trust - Proposed Transport Policy

Members considered a report informing them of the findings from York Civic Trust workshops focusing on a future transport policy for the City.

Dr David Fraser, Chief Executive of York Civic Trust (YCT), was in attendance to present the report and answer Member questions. He explained that the report was part of a wider programme of work known as 'York Futures' which was informing the update to the 2011 Local Transport Plan. He also stated that YCT had invited all Members to participate.

The Chair thanked Professors Tony May and Greg Marsden for the work they had undertaken and for the excellent York Civic Trust workshops which several committee Members had attended. The committee echoed the Chair's thanks and highlighted the need for a cross-party approach to achieve these aims.

In response to questions from Members Dr Fraser stated:

- If congestion charging were to be considered, it would be possible to charge for movement in a comprehensive way. This would mean a fair price for everyone.
- If the reintroduction of bollards were to be proposed, there was very little evidence from other historic European cities that street furniture had an impact on behaviour.
- In response to a suggestion that 'off road' cycling was disruptive due to damage caused to grass verges he expressed the opinion that cycling was far less disruptive than other traffic.

Officers in attendance confirmed that there was nothing in the report that they would challenge, but many of the proposed interventions would be dependant on funding. The Local Plan was the largest strategic decision that would be made in the coming months and a review of the transport plan would follow.

Officers also stated that the use of KonSULT in this process would be looked at more closely.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update Members on the findings from York Civic Trust workshops focusing on a future transport policy for the city.

54. Annual Report from Make it York

Members considered a report updating them on the progress being made by Make it York (MIY). Steve Brown, Managing Director of MIY was in attendance to present the report and answer Member questions.

MIY highlighted the following points from the report for note:

- They had equipped several business ambassadors to discuss York as a business destination whilst they were travelling overseas for work.
- Preparations for the York Mediale, which would take place in October 2017, to celebrate York's UNESCO City of Media Arts Status.
- The success of the Shambles Market Food Court which had brought considerable extra footfall into the market.
- Early tourism statistics for the year were suggesting a very strong year for the city.

In response to several questions from Members in relation to job losses due to businesses moving out of the city, Mr Brown explained that whilst it was very difficult to have an impact on the business plans of multinational companies, MIY did have a good relationship with businesses in the city. MIY were also being proactive and trying to provide a rapid response in a bad situation. Within 48 hours of Nestle's announcement MIY had provided a list of firms that were expanding and needed staff with similar skills. He also highlighted that some IT companies in the city were struggling to employ people with the right level of digital skills. In contrast AMC Global had announced the creation of up to 150 scientific jobs, and despite Nestle's announcement MIY felt the job market in York was quite buoyant.

In response to further Member questions Mr Brown stated:

- MIY were 100% supportive of the SPARK's development and anything which encouraged new start ups. They would be watching to see how much was taken up by street food vendors and the impact this may have on the Shambles Market Food Court.
- The UNESCO City of Media Arts had been awarded to York and MIY had been tasked with making it into an opportunity for the city, an example of this being the Mediale. This would allow the city to be shown worldwide as a creative and dynamic place. If done properly this would positively impact on inward investment.
- The Business Improvement District project was starting to dress empty shop fronts in periods between occupancy so they were more attractive.
- The hospitality industry did struggle with staff recruitment, and particularly retention, but this was a national issue.

Resolved: That Members note the report.

Reason: To ensure that Members are aware of the progress of Make it York.

55. Six Monthly Report on Major Projects

Members considered a report providing them with an overview and update on major projects currently being progressed in the City, including major transport initiatives. Officers gave a brief background to the report and the project matrix.

During discussion with Members Officers stated:

- The revised timetable for the Local Plan, including consultation on the potential new sites, was expected to go to Executive in July.
- The stadium was not 'red' under the RAG rating system as it was under the control of the project team, despite outside issues.
- There would be public consultation on the Castle Gateway project and the committee would be updated regularly on other actions.
- No decision had been made as yet on an increase in retail space at the community stadium, this was purely a potential option.

- The access route to the York Central Site was still being considered and would be consulted on before any decision was made.

Resolved: That Members note the report.

Reason: To update Members on the present position in relation to major projects in the city.

56. Economic Strategy Update

Members received a report providing a progress update on the key actions outlined in York's Economic Strategy 2016-20. Officers gave the committee a brief background to the report and annex. They clarified that in respect of outcome indicators, specific projects were not always for CYC to hold to account and that often the outcomes were apparent.

In response to questions from Members, Officers stated:

- The One Planet York Impact Assessment Tool had been adopted for reports to Executive.
- Whilst it was difficult to influence decisions of multinational companies such as Nestle, strong relationships were still vital to the local economy. CYC needed to listen to businesses and Members should be ambassadors for the city as decisions they made are discussed in board rooms.

Members commented on the positive work that was being done towards the overall goal of economic growth, however highlighted that there were still areas which could be given greater focus, such as high value sectors and the cultural identity of the city in relation to chocolate production.

It was confirmed that the Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement would be invited to the first meeting of the relevant new committee. It was agreed that the Chair would write to the Executive Member to raise the issue of job losses in the city ahead of that meeting.

Resolved: That Members note the report.

Reason: To enable the delivery of the Economic Strategy, and priority actions and outcomes for the city.

57. Air Quality Scoping Report

Members considered a report presenting information to help them decide ways to progress a scrutiny review into air quality in the city. Officers stated that these were a series of considered recommendations on items that the committee may want to look into, particularly in areas where CYC has the most direct influence.

In response to Member comments that there was a lack of input from Public Health, Officers clarified that teams from across the council worked together on policy and delivery in relation to air quality and public health, but that the report was written by one team. It was also highlighted that there had recently been Member briefing session on Air Quality delivered by both the Public Protection Manager and Assistant Director Public Health.

Officers clarified that CYC must submit an Annual Status Report to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and that this would cover the information requested in the first part of the motion to Council. Further reports on the Clean Air Zone and Anti-Idling Strategy would be considered by the Executive Member on 5 August.

Resolved: That, as this was the last meeting of EDAT, this work should be continued by the relevant new scrutiny committee, which would be asked to consider how planning applications effect transport emissions and also to consider how City of York could contribute by replacing its diesel fleet with more environmentally friendly vehicles.

Reason: To ensure air quality issues effecting the city are given due consideration.

58. Update Report on Implementation of Recommendations from Grass Verges Scrutiny Review

Members considered a report providing them with their first update on the implementation of recommendations arising from the previously completed Protection of Grass Verges Scrutiny Review.

Some Members highlighted an ongoing issue with damage being done to grass verges by utility companies.

There was also a suggestion that repairing damage to grass verges should be a planning condition, not just an informative, as Planning Enforcement were unable to act upon these. There was a further suggestion that vehicle registration numbers be included in letters to residents where available.

As relevant Officers had left at this stage of the meeting it was agreed this matter be referred to the new scrutiny committee.

Resolved: That Members request further updates and the attendance of relevant officers at a future meeting to clarify any outstanding recommendations to the review.

Reason: To raise awareness of those recommendations which are still to be fully implemented.

Councillor Cuthbertson, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.35 pm].