
Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	12 November 2014
Present	Councillors Waller (Chair), Watt (Vice-Chair), Semlyen, Barnes, Burton, Scott and D'Agorne
In Attendance	Councillor Healey

28. **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 the business on the agenda.

Councillor Scott declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 (Draft Final Report on Graduate Business Start-Ups, Entrepreneurialism and Higher Value Jobs) as his wife was a small business owner.

Councillor D'Agorne declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 (Update report on the implementation of the recommendations from the Construction Skills Scrutiny Review and the work of YorCity construction) as he had attended a Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) event referred to in an annex to the report.

No other interests were declared.

29. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 1 October 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

30. **Public Participation**

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

Gwen Swinburn spoke regarding the Committee's remit and Agenda Item 9 (Scoping Report on Proposal for Scrutiny Review of Lendal Bridge Closure). In relation to the York Economic Strategy, she stated that she had previously asked for a review of the performance of the whole strategy rather than a review against individual elements, such as the funding of Science City York.

In relation to Agenda Item 9 she urged the Committee to conduct the proposed review. She felt that it might be useful if there was outside oversight of the legal guidelines used in the decision making , the policy process and democratic governance issues.

Councillor Healey spoke regarding Agenda Item 9, he felt it would be a good topic to review. Firstly, that it had been billed as a 'trial' and that there had been too much of a focus on positive rather than negative outcomes. Secondly, he shared his thoughts about the payment of Penalty Charge Notices for crossing the bridge during the restricted hours and the Traffic Adjudicator's decision.

31. Attendance of the Cabinet Member for Homes & Safer Communities

The Cabinet Member for Homes and Safer Communities presented a report which updated the Committee on the priorities within her portfolio area.

A number of questions received by the Cabinet Member related to new Council Housing at Beckfield Lane, the level of Council Housing Rent/Tax arrears, Gas Safety Certificates in Housing Accreditation in the Private Rented Sector, new housing developments and pressure on existing infrastructure and the New Homes Bonus.

In response the Cabinet Member gave an update to Members on the design of the housing at Beckfield Lane. The homes had been designed to allow a level access lift in the front room and larger rooms had been put in place so that residents' carers could stay overnight. Regarding the question about tax arrears she informed the Committee that she would provide a written response on the level of tax arrears to include the figures from last year alongside this year.

She also added that information would be provided to the Member who asked about examples of heating costs in the Gas Safety Certificates in the Housing Accreditation scheme.

In response to whether communities would see an allocation of money from the New Homes Bonus (NHB) alongside Section 106 monies it was commented that the NHB was not additional money, but money granted by National Government. She confirmed that although this issue did not fall within the remit of her portfolio she would give an update to Members.

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

Resolved: (i) That the Cabinet Member be thanked for her report and the updates given to Members' questions.

(ii) That a written response be provided to include information on the level of current tax arrears compared with figures from the last year.

(iii) That additional information on the allocation of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) be provided to Members by the Cabinet Member.

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

32. Draft Final Report on Graduate Business Start-ups, Entrepreneurialism and Higher Value Jobs

Members considered the draft final report on the work on the agreed scrutiny review of more productive and higher value jobs being undertaken by a Task Group on behalf of the Committee.

Discussion took place between the Committee on a number of the proposed draft recommendations particularly around recommendation (i) and the amount of affordable city centre space for start up and growing businesses in York.

In relation to recommendation (i) it was felt that further refinement to the wording and meaning was needed, particularly about where the affordable space would come from, how it could be delivered and a definition of what was appropriate and affordable.

Members felt, in relation to recommendation (i), it should be referred back to the Task Group Members for further work.

One Member commented that that there needed to be a mention of Science City York in the Officer's report, the Chair noted this and asked that this and their role within NewCo be included in the report for consideration at the next Committee meeting.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the wording of recommendation (i) be referred back to the Task Group for clarification.

(iii) That a section on Science City York and its role within NewCo be included in the Higher Value Jobs Scrutiny Review draft final report.

Reason: In order to clarify the recommendations and to conclude work on this scrutiny review so the draft final report can be presented to Cabinet.

33. Update report on the implementation of the recommendations from the Construction Skills Scrutiny Review and the work of YorCity Construction

Members considered a report which provided them with an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the previously completed Construction Skills Scrutiny Review and the ongoing work of YorCity Construction.

In relation to recommendation 2 (Apprenticeship Developments), one Member asked if policy changes had been made a result of the review's recommendations.

Officers informed the Committee that the procurement exercise for the Community Stadium had specified a number of employment opportunities for local people and that they would anticipate an upward trend in local employment as a result of this. They suggested that these figures could be included in the Economic Dashboard.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That all the outstanding recommendations be signed as complete.

Reason: To conclude the scrutiny review.

34. Addressing climate change, fuel poverty, rising fuel bills and generating and selling localised sustainable energy in York.

Members received a report which outlined the current ongoing work happening across the Council and the city to help mitigate against climate change, fuel poverty and rising fuel bills. The report also illustrated the ongoing work relating to the generation of localised sustainable energy.

The Committee praised the depth of the report and ongoing and planned future work undertaken by Officers.

Resolved: That Officers be thanked for their work and the progress on the future long term strategy for decentralised energy generation in the city be noted.

Reason: In order to keep the Committee informed of work ongoing in this area.

35. York Economic Dashboard

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

Officers informed the Committee that it was their intention to produce live online data for the dashboard and that it would continue to be considered by the Committee every quarter.

Resolved: That the report be noted and a further update be provided for the January meeting.

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

36. Scoping Report on Proposal for Scrutiny Review of Lendal Bridge Closure

Members considered a report which presented them with information regarding a proposed scrutiny review on the closure of Lendal Bridge. The report outlined actions that had been taken since the end of the trial closure of Lendal Bridge, including financial details such as income collected from penalty charge notices, application numbers for refunds and the proposal to establish a cross party Congestion Commission.

Discussion took place in which some Members felt that there were still unanswered questions and that a review could be used as a learning exercise. It would also allow for the Council to gain further knowledge and learn from the experience.

The Chair clarified that he had brought the topic forward for consideration but that it should be carried out in a way to note that Council Officers had carried out their jobs.

Some Members felt that a review should take place. Others disagreed and felt that a review would not be objective and would be used in a political manner.

A vote took place and it was decided to not conduct a review into the Lendal Bridge closure.

Councillor Scott asked that it be minuted that in his opinion, the vote did not reflect the make up of the Council and he stated that he would pursue the matter further.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That a review not be conducted on the Lendal Bridge Closure.

Reason: To ensure compliance with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

37. Update Report on Membership of the Supporting Older People's Task Group

Members received a report which informed them of the need to amend the membership of the Supporting Older People's Task Group following changes to the composition of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Scrutiny Officer gave Members some background to the current situation, namely that two out of the four scrutiny committees were now not conducting reviews on the Corporate Review of Supporting Older People. However, the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee encouraged those committees who still wished to conduct reviews on the topic to proceed. He added that if Members wished to continue with a review that work could continue into the next municipal year.

One Member of the Task Group suggested that timing issues and the nature of the topic would not allow for proper consideration by the Task Group. Therefore it was;

Resolved: That the Committee do not continue with the review.

Reason: As the topic had been abandoned as a Corporate Scrutiny Review and that the time left in the municipal year would not be sufficient for suitable consideration.

38. Work Plan 2014/15

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the 2014-15 municipal year.

Members asked that Councillor Crisp as the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism be invited to attend the Committee's January meeting to discuss the current situation of Newgate Market and the economic impact that had been made by the Tour de France on the city.

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

- The possible attendance of the Cabinet Member in January.

- That a section on Science City York and its role within NewCo be included in the Higher Value Jobs Scrutiny Review and be considered by the Committee in January.
- That the Supporting Older People's Scrutiny Review Draft Final Report be deleted from the work plan.

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

Councillor A Waller, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.00 pm].