

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change
Date	8 March 2023
Present	Councillor Widdowson
In attendance	James Gilchrist, Director of Environment, Transport and Planning Shaun Gibbons, Head of Carbon Reduction Ben Grabham, Head of Environmental Services Steve Wragg, Flood Risk Manager Marilyn Sanderson, Environment Agency

12. Declarations of Interest (15:00)

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests she might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

13. Minutes (15:00)

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 14 December 2022 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

14. Public Participation (15:00)

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

Tony Clarke spoke on agenda item 6 - E-petition - More Bins a Clean City Centre, Surrounding Areas and River's Embankment. He stated that the condition of the city centre affects the local economy and that there were thick deposits of congealed dirt throughout the centre, which were causing obstructions to pedestrians. He concluded that recent operational changes were welcomed but that they were not enough.

Dave Merrett also spoke on agenda item 6. He echoed some of the comments made by Tony Clarke before speaking on the lack of deep

cleans in the centre and that street cleaning schedules were not being fulfilled properly. He also stated that the outer parts of the city centre were clustered with litter and that cleaning arrangements need to be improved.

Kate Ravilious spoke on agenda item 5 - Local Area Energy Plan. She was pleased that the Plan was conducted with North Yorkshire but stated that it missed a big opportunity because it doesn't include behavioural change as a tool for decarbonisation. She then spoke on the lifestyle changes that could reduce energy demand and the benefits that would arise before stating that a wellbeing model needs to be explored and urged the Council to revise the Plan.

David Larkman spoke on agenda item 4 - York 5 Year Flood Plan Update. He spoke on the risk of flooding for listed buildings and business in the city centre and that the temporary barriers and pumps at Tower Gardens and Peckitt St have been reduced to defend against 4.7 metre levels. He called for a flood defence above the 4.7m and spoke against the Environment Agency planning application on Tower St.

Conrad Whitcroft White also spoke on agenda item 5. He raised concerns over the plausibility of York's 2030 carbon zero target before speaking on the importance of Community Energy and asking for further exploration on this topic. He then questioned the Council's transport goals and the lack of skill development in installing the new technology.

Andy Dearden also spoke on agenda item 5. He challenged the Plan and stated that it would be difficult to meet carbon targets simply through the switch to electric vehicles and heat pump installations. He also questioned the modelling assumptions and priorities for spending projects before urging for the Plan to be reviewed.

15. E-petition – More Bins a Clean City Centre, Surrounding Areas and River's Embankment (15:22)

The Executive Member considered an e-petition regarding cleanliness in the city centre and the provision of more bins, which ran from 15 April 2022 to 15 June 2022.

The Head of Environmental Services presented the e-petition and accompanying report and explained the service changes that have happened over the past 12-15 months regarding the city centre. He noted that:

- Bin provision in the city centre has increased and two extra bins per ward have been allowed.

- There was a dedicated collection of bagged commercial waste on Sunday mornings which has reduced the amount of time waste is left uncollected.
- Mechanical sweeping takes place on a daily basis in the city centre with additional manual sweeps that happen on Saturday and Sunday mornings.
- The Council has supported activities undertaken by partners, including by supporting York BiD's picnic and seating area installations through additional bin provisions.
- The Council were working with York BiD to undertake a deep cleansing programme throughout the city centre.

The Executive Member thanked the environmental services staff for their work and;

Resolved:

- i. That the e-petition and its contents be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the views of the signatories of the e-petition and the content of the e-petition are considered.

- ii. That the service changes that have happened over the last 12-15 months regarding the city centre and the arrangements to ensure the city centre is kept clean be noted.

Reason: To reflect on the changes that have taken place and consider if there are further recommendations the Executive Member wished to make to the service.

16. Local Area Energy Plan (15:30)

The Executive Member considered a report which summarised the outcome of York's Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) and its process to support the accelerated decarbonisation of the city's energy system towards achieving net zero by 2030.

The Head of Carbon Reduction presented the report, where he explained the importance of the Plan and noted that it had raised some significant challenges for York due to requirements for 73,000 heat pump installations and 91,000 fully electric vehicles, amongst others. He went on to explain that the LAEP would also provide opportunities through the creation of new markets and employment opportunities, inward investment, and cleaner air.

The Officer stated that the Council has already received investment of over £300 million in the last 18 months to deliver programmes and projects that contribute to the decarbonisation of York's energy system but added that the plan would require an overall investment of around £3.8 billion. He then explained that some of the priority projects, including studies for solar and wind feasibility, were already in progress and that the LAEP was being used to secure funding from Innovate UK and for funding applications to York and North Yorkshire's Net Zero Fund.

He concluded by explaining that the LAEP process and methodology were well defined, and the Plan now had quantified carbon savings for the priority projects listed.

Resolved:

- i. That the publication of the York Local Area Energy Plan be approved.

Reason: To support the accelerated decarbonisation to achieve the council ambition for York to be net zero by 2030.

17. York 5 Year Flood Plan Update (15:36)

The Executive Member considered a report which contained an update on York's 5 Year Flood Plan following new funding being allocated to the Environment Agency to renew existing, and provide new, flood defences across the city. The Flood Risk Manager, City of York Council, and the Project Director, Environment Agency (EA) were in attendance to present the report and respond to questions.

Key points raised during the presentation of the report included:

- The planning stage appraisal and design works at Germany Beck were completed and a planning application has been made.
- The Council were developing works to increase the flood resilience of Millennium Bridge. Design work was ongoing, permissions and the delivery programme would be finalised in the new financial year.
- The DEFRA funded Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme which explores natural flood risk management solutions in the Swale, Ure and Nidd catchment areas, was progressing well. The recruitment of catchment partner posts has also progressed and a new project manager for City of York Council has been recruited.
- DEFRA announced that Schedule 3 of the Flood Water Management Act would be enacted in 2024 and would transform the way that surface water was managed through future planning applications and new developments using sustainable drainage. The Flood Risk

Manager would be developing the Council approach and a future report would be brought to all relevant committees.

Key updates from the EA included:

- The majority of the capital schemes have now been completed. However, the Clifton and Strensall storage areas had been paused due to the groundwork being unworkable over the winter period with work now resuming.
- The Property Flood Resilience (PRF) project was progressing. The EA has installed barriers in 27 properties and feedback from residents was positive.
- All of the trees had now been planted.
- A planning application for defences at St Georges Field has been submitted, this is linked to the additional works at the Foss Barrier. There would also be a public consultation on 21 March 2023 regarding this scheme, and property resilience measures in the Peckitt Street/Tower gardens area to address concerns from residents with a morning face-to-face drop-in session and a virtual evening drop-in session.

The Executive Member thanked the Officer and the EA for their work and;

Resolved:

- i. That the updated report and the evidence presented by the Environment Agency be noted.
- ii. That the Executive Member provides feedback on the content of the report.

Reason: To support the delivery of flood resilience interventions in York and across the wider River Ouse catchment.

Cllr Widdowson, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 3.48 pm].