

Annex A: 10 year strategies consultation: summary of feedback

Full reports are published on the Open data platform

- <https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/our-big-conversation-summer-2020>
- <https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/our-big-conversation-summer-2021>
- <https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/our-big-conversation-2022>

Summary

1. A summary of the feedback from Our Big Conversation 10 year strategies and the independent targeted focus groups is below.
2. Both the focus groups and the consultation participants shared what it's like to live in the city and also recommended actions the council could take to improve the quality of life for residents.
3. There are six common themes that have been articulated throughout:
 - a. Cost – what financial burden does the Climate Change Strategy place on residents and businesses?
 - b. Ambitions – are we ambitious enough? there is an inherent tension between the pace of change, scale of ambition and cost
 - c. Interdependencies – there are significant co-benefits between the strategies that has been identified through the comments – specifically climate action comments have been provided in response to the Economic and Health and Wellbeing Strategies, including the health impact of climate action and the health benefits of an inclusive economy.
 - d. Individual perspectives – the focus groups (and demographic differences in the attitudinal study) show the differing requirements and recommendations of different groups of people, the seldom heard and those with protected characteristics.
 - e. Targets – understanding the Climate Change targets created some confusion. This will be resolved through the revised strategy and Action Plan, with more work to follow to understand more details about the anticipated impact of the actions.

- f. Engagement – participants in the consultation (whether the survey, focus groups or face to face activities) highlighted their interest in supporting implementation of the strategies, recommending action and confirming they would like to continue to be kept informed.
4. Ultimately the inherent tension between pace and cost of change, ambition and interdependency, and different groups requirements and perspectives will rest with the Executive to resolve. Ongoing engagement will help inform the Executive.
5. The consultation process took place over 18 months, starting in the aftermath of the pandemic and concluding as fuel prices rose and during the highest heat wave since records began. The extent to which external factors (such as the heat wave) influenced resident insight is evident, with many of the Climate Change Strategy priorities recognised as the most important of all strategic priorities.

Our Big Conversation - 10 year strategies consultation report

Summary

6. The Strategies were broadly supported, although with a large proportion (c28%) not knowing if they could support. The Climate Change Strategy was both most supported and not supported simultaneously, with two thirds in favour and nearly a third not supporting. The main issue with the Climate Change strategy was the perceived lack of a roadmap of action and an action plan has been developed to address this.
7. Over 75% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that all five of the principles in the strategies were correct with the most important being the commitment *to continuously adapt to change and build inclusive, healthy and fair communities*.
8. Key priorities were mostly supported (recognised as either a priority or a high priority) with *reducing carbon, reforming local transport, improving the Natural Environment, making good health more equal, preventing poor health now and starting good health and wellbeing young* more of a priority.
9. Residents and businesses highlighted several areas where they could contribute to delivering the strategies, and where they would like the council to focus.

Our Big Conversation – focus group

Summary feedback

1. Cost was seen as the largest barrier to change although all participants are keen to change what they can with carbon offsetting distrusted. Education and maintaining the momentum of any changes were felt to be key to driving then delivering enduring change.
2. Participants feel both central and local government and large organisations bore the highest burden of responsibility for driving change.
3. Any change should be equitable and beneficial to all.
4. Participants are strongly in favour of the council taking climate action through leading by example but there were mixed views about the achievability of this. (Note, the Action Plan will help answer this challenge).
5. Affordability of housing as a driver for economic growth was a great concern for residents, as was the cost of living in York and there was a reoccurring recommendation that York sets a “York Living Wage”. A lack of industrial diversity was highlighted as an issue with Leeds perceived to have better diversity of job opportunities and a lower cost of living than York.
6. There is a perceived tension between economic growth and sustainability goals with York’s transport infrastructure considered inadequate with high congestion and poor alternatives to car use, and a perception that the council do not understand car use is essential for some groups. Although participants were keen car usage should be discouraged, a majority felt significant improvements to alternatives are needed to tempt them away from the “easy option” of car use.
7. There is a perceived tension between residents and tourists and whether a reliance on the tourism sector would harm York’s ability to diversify economically in the future.
8. Respondents did not trust generic consultations and called for strategies to be co-produced with residents.