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Meeting	Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date	29 April 2025
Present	Councillors K Taylor (Chair), B Burton, J Burton, Fenton, Healey (Vice-Chair), Hook, Steward, Vassie, Merrett and Coles (Substitute)
Officers In Attendance	James Gilchrist - Director of Environment, Transport and Planning Steve Ball - Resilience and Contingencies Manager Georgina Meredith - Resilience and Emergencies Officer Ian Hout - Head of Environmental Services Rebecca Copley - Business Manager for Environmental Services
In Attendance	Councillor Kent – Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency
Apologies	Councillors Whitcroft

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### **57. Apologies for Absence (17:30)**

Apologies was received from Cllr Whitcroft, he was substituted by Cllr Coles.

### **58. Declarations of Interest (17:30)**

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Coles confirmed that in relation to minute 61. Emergency Planning that she was the Deputy Mayor for Police Fire and Crime at the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and emergency planning was a part of her portfolio.

## **59. Minutes (17:31)**

The Committee discussed the minutes from the 25 March 2025 and highlighted a number of amendments the Committee considered were needed before they could be agreed. The Chair therefore invited members of the Committee to send amendments to him outside of the meeting to then be amended in the minutes before they come back to the Committee.

Resolved: Members of the Committee to send amendments to the chair.

## **60. Public Participation (17:35)**

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

Flick Williams stated that buses in York only having one space for wheelchair users was discriminating against wheelchair users who were being left behind by crowded buses and highlighted 140 cases where wheelchair users had been left at bus stops.

Gwen Swinburn raised concern at the rise in parking charges in areas such as the Groves on residents and businesses and stated that the Council was charging less for parking in wealthier areas such as Bishopthorpe Road. She asked that the Council review its parking charging policies.

## **61. Emergency Planning (17:42)**

The Resilience and Contingencies Manager introduced the report on emergency planning. He highlighted how the Council works with partners and government in relation to emergency events, the training undertaken for both officers and Councillors regarding emergency planning and confirmed that the Council's emergency planning was internally audited and undertook a peer review in 2024. He noted that the Council would often hold a leadership and guidance role during emergency events and the Council always had a senior officer as a Silver Commander on call, which could always be escalated to Gold Command.

The Committee noted that there were so many potential emergencies the city could face, with a particular highlighting of the power cuts in Spain, they enquired how could the Council prepare for such a wide range of emergencies. Officers confirmed that plans were in place for a wide range of emergencies, even so, they confirmed that every emergency was different. Therefore, it was explained that it was important to focus on

planning to deal with the potential outcome of an emergency, rather than ever possible event.

Members discussed individual preparation and enquired about how residents could ensure they are prepared for emergencies. Officers noted that there are outreach events such as York Get Ready Together to promote preparation. The Local Resilience Forum website was also highlighted which included resources such as Household Plan templates. The Committee acknowledged the usefulness of the QR code provided on the Local Resilience Forum templates which provided information to residents about preparedness, they did however, raise concerns for those that might not be able to use a QR code, officers acknowledged that the QR might not be accessible to all residents and highlighted the use of the chatbot function on the site which could respond directly to residents and provide appropriate information.

Members discussed whether more could be done to promote resilience and things such as the Household Plan template. They considered whether copies of the template and links to it could be added to community noticeboards. Members also enquired about whether they could seek grant or sponsorship funding to send information on preparedness to all households. It was noted that the Council was exploring including resilience information in annual council tax letters. Members also enquired about ensuring support was provided to small businesses, noting that larger organisations would like to have their own specific plans. Members also enquired as to whether there was scope to commercialise emergency planning for small businesses.

The Committee enquired about how the Council ensures vulnerable residents are prioritised and supported in emergencies. Officers confirmed that data sets were kept to identify vulnerable individuals, and work was done with adult and children's social care to ensure support was provided to vulnerable individuals. Members enquired about whether people could self-identify or identify others they know that are vulnerable, officers confirmed that this was the case, and that people could be identified to the Council by relatives.

Officers confirmed that in cases of emergencies rest centres could be established, for security reasons it was confirmed that there was not a publishable list for these centres. It was confirmed as part of communications with Councillors things such as the locations of rest centres in their wards would be shared with them as part handling any emergency. On communications it was confirmed that in cases of emergency the Council worked on the principle of having a single version of the truth communicated. Members enquired about military assistance and whether

this could be affected by changes to the barracks in Fulford. Officers confirmed that each region had an assigned liaison officer so changes would not affect how emergencies would be dealt with. The Council maintained the ability to request military assistance, this would be sent to the Secretary of State who would decide whether to deploy military personnel.

Councillor training was discussed with the opportunity for future training to be considered by the Council's Joint Standards Committee to support Members to be prepared and able to support their communities.

Members raised the digital switch over and enquired about what measures could be taken to address the challenges the switch over could present to residents in relation to being prepared for emergencies. Officers noted that the switch over presented a challenge due its wide window for rollout and how it was being done by individual companies rather than one coordinated project. They noted that it was important to continue to warn people to be prepared for the switch over.

Resolved:

- i. Request that the Executive explore how the Council can include more information on resilience in its communications and to seek support for an all-household communication to promote resilience planning;
- ii. To request that the Executive explore the scope to commercialise emergency planning for small businesses;
- iii. To recirculate the link for Emergency Planning to Committee members;
- iv. To request that officers review how temporary Council IDs are assigned.

Reason: To promote resilience against potential emergency events.

## **62. bags to bins report (19:14)**

The Head of Environmental Services introduced the report on the roll out of the bags to bins project. Officers noted that for the first phase letters would be going out shortly to inform households of the change and a second round of letters would include FAQs ahead of the move to bins from bags. It was confirmed that the first phase would include 2835 properties with a similar number in phase two, phase three would look to review those final properties not included in phases one or two to review again whether it might be possible to move them to bins. It was confirmed that the move

form bags to bins would provide benefits by containing waste and would improve health and safety of the collection crews.

The Committee discussed the communications plan to households and enquired about how the Council would promote the assisted collection service. Officers confirmed that a wide range of information such as the assisted collection service would be included in the second letter to residents, however, they confirmed that the Council was prepared to receive enquires from residents after the first letter that will be sent out. Officers confirmed they would also keep Ward Councillors engaged where the rollout was being carried out.

Members enquired about potential challenges with the move to bins such as potential blocking of back alleys. Officers confirmed that site visits would be undertaken early on to identify challenges and potential solutions, while all residents would be shared information on how to store and present bins. Members enquired whether the site visit walkabouts would help identify other issues such as parking. Officers confirmed that parking was always a problem city wide for waste collection, where persistent issues were identified, these were passed to transport to consider actions such as parking restrictions.

The Committee enquired whether those households that would still be using bags could apply for moving to a bin. Officers confirmed that residents could request this, and the Council would review and seek to provide bin collections if possible. Members asked if the Council had maps showing those areas that would be continuing bag collections, it was confirmed it did and these could be shared with the Committee.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the report and thanked officers for there work on the project.

Reason: To ensure the rollout of bags to bins is progressing successfully.

### **63. Work Plan (19:50)**

The Committee considered its work plan acknowledging the changes to Scrutiny after Annual Council which will see changes to the Committee. Members enquired about the possibility of having the report on parking and officers confirmed that they would discuss with the Executive Member for

Transport about bringing a report on parking to the Committee's May meeting. Members also noted that it had been a year since the task and finish group on Dial and Ride and proposed a update on the topic be added to the work plan for the new scrutiny structure to review.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the work plan with requests for parking and Dial and Ride to be added to the work plan.

Reason: To ensure the Committee has a program of work.

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.56 pm].