

Innovation Strategy Status March 2013 – Briefing Paper

Context

1. City of York Council has committed to supporting innovation within the city, responding to the nationally accepted need to radically transform our approach to public services and re-balance the relationship between council, partners and communities. The Government have identified innovation as key to the country's growth agenda and through greater investment and increased collaborative working in innovation we can meet the challenges facing the city.
2. Current thinking indicates innovation is the best way to address the pressing issues faced by society including social engagement, environment, health and aging. Innovation in this context is as much about people and place as it is about technology.

The Vision

3. The aim now is for a better connected public sector, greater capacity in the voluntary & community sector and a more enterprising and innovative approach with the council itself, all within a city that is an international centre for innovation.
4. By working in partnership, the council and Science City York (SCY) will develop and embed innovation across the council, making open innovation core to how services are shaped and delivered across the city. By forging links between residents, businesses, and public services and other groups, greater collaboration and engagement will be possible to find the best solutions to current and emerging challenges facing the city. York will be a forerunner in demonstrating the successful use of innovative practices to develop and enhance the city and the lives of its residents.

Initial Concept

5. The concept of introducing and innovation strategy was raised in 2012. Since that point, there has been considerable development from the initial concept to a much wider vision and programme of work that focuses on the city-wide activity.
6. The original concept for an innovation strategy concentrated on the rolling out of the GeniUS! concept into a second phase. Since its launch in January 2012, GeniUS! has undertaken 5 successful challenges and challenge 6&7 are in development. The platform has been internationally recognised through the (Living Labs Global Awards, LGYH innovation award, and the Guardian Public Service awards and LGC innovation award) as a showcase method for embedding innovation within the city culture.
7. With the assistance of NESTA, an initial outline for an Innovation Strategy was drafted around this specific area of open innovation centred on GeniUS! In April 2012 funding was sought as part of the second phase of the NESTA Creative Councils programme to develop this and expand the GeniUS! concept.
8. However, this funding was not achieved, leading to a reassessment of the project's goals and deliverables. It was agreed that the initial pilots had illustrated that whilst GeniUS! had considerable value, its development in isolation would miss the full opportunity the concept of open innovation could offer to York as a whole. Therefore to ensure maximum impact from the development of the GeniUS! concept and open innovation, it was concluded it needed to be part of a much larger innovation programme with a wider reaching strategy.

Innovation across York

9. The council and SCY have since been establishing a specific innovation partnership to develop this strategy and associated work programme. During this the partnership have been working to initiate relevant networks and to develop the wider strategy, objectives and delivery programme, aligning these to ensure they meet the council's objectives and developing metrics and performance frameworks to ensure successful delivery.
10. Funding was sought from the council's Delivery & Innovation fund to develop and deliver a two year innovation catalyst programme. This was approved by Cabinet in October 2012 and enabled the programme to be established and resourced, with a small team being fully established in

March 2013. This is a combination of SCY dedicated resource and council resource, with the work being led by the Head of Performance & Innovation in the Office of the Chief Executive.

11. Since the establishment of the full team, the development of the strategy and delivery programme have moved forward apace. They have are being designed to deliver in line with the council's key aspirations for the city and have been developing around five themes: community engagement; council workforce development; economic impact; building capacity and infrastructure; and growing an innovation community.
12. This will catalyse the change to a more enterprising, innovative and entrepreneurial culture within the council and will accelerate change in developing new ways of delivering services. As a result, the programme will assist the council with the delivery of the Council Plan 2011 – 2015 across all five of the key priorities.
13. The formal strategy is now 90% complete and will be finalised during April.

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