

**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Economic Development and Community
Engagement**

4 December 2018

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy and Place

**Attracting new Inward Investment through Promotion of our Historic
Assets and developing a shared vision for York**

Summary

1. To provide the Executive Member with an update about governance arrangements on promotional activity to support the Economic Strategy and increase inward investment and the value of the economy.

Recommendations

2. The Executive is asked to:

- 1) Endorse the proposed governance structure

Reason: There are many stakeholders involved in shaping a shared vision for York. Examples include education/university, tourism and hospitality, arts and heritage, financial, science, commercial, etc. To build ongoing engagement it is important these stakeholders and partners have opportunity to provide comment and challenge. The proposed governance structure provides space for different sectors and target audiences to have a role in shaping the vision, whilst progressing conversations to a conclusion.

- 2) Endorse the staged process to develop the shared vision and promotional activity

Reason: We have successfully secured funds from the LCR business rates pilot to increase inward investment and the value of the economy through taking a joined up approach to promoting the city's strengths

and assets. The project takes a staged approach to ensure we deliver activity based on evidence. It also encompasses evaluating the impact of activity throughout the duration of the project to leave a framework we can then continue to use once the project concludes.

Background

3. The Leeds City Region (LCR) business pilot project to fund a project to attract increased investment by promoting our strengths and assets and developing a shared vision has been approved and funds from LCR are now available.
4. This project proposal developed following discussions with key individuals across the city, including universities, Make It York, the York BID and the Head of Comms Group, together with regional partners WYCA and NYYER LEP.
5. York is evolving. We are in the midst of unprecedented regeneration providing huge commercial and economic opportunity for York. This project sets out to join together our place making across the city to develop a shared vision for York, rooted in our considerable strengths and assets.
6. The project is set out in **Annex A** – it aims to:
 - a. **Engage residents:** connect residents to the whole city, building their confidence, harnessing their energy, curating their stories to show how they are the story of York. Ensure resident pride in the city is conveyed and harnessed.
 - b. **Evolve perception:** Build on city strengths to enhance the regional, national and international perception of York for all its key audiences
 - c. **Attract investment:** Draw on the shared perception to build an understanding amongst inward investors and property developers of future opportunities.
 - d. **Attracting visitors:** Increase spend in the tourism sector by continuing to attract a higher value and longer staying visitor.
7. Target audiences for the project are residents, employees who work but don't live in the city, higher value current and potential visitors, potential and recent property developers, inward investors and business owners.

8. A strong shared narrative, used and championed by different York stakeholders will help consolidate and amplify answers to the below:
- Why should I re-locate my business in York?
 - Why should I book a short break in York?
 - Why should I invest in a new property development in York?
 - Why should I live / return to live in York?

Project approach

9. We will take a staged approach to developing a shared narrative and supporting promotional activity. This approach aims to create a framework for future inward investment promotional activity that can continue beyond the lifespan of the project.
10. York already has strong and well recognised promotional activity used successfully to attract the many millions of visitors each year. In addition, our different stakeholders and partners across the city tell their own story through their own promotional activity. This project will create an overarching approach to marketing the city, by creating one shared narrative that will speak to target audiences, be clear and enduring. Stakeholders will be able to use this shared narrative in addition to their core messages.
11. We will develop an evidence base comprised of audience insight, stakeholder and partner engagement, the current perception of York and collation of our strengths and assets including regeneration outcomes to develop a single unifying vision. This vision will be uniquely and authentically York, and dock into the regional Yorkshire story (complementing both the LEPs and One Yorkshire promotional activities).
12. We will embed this vision through a series of experiences, including digital (broadcasting our story to a wide, international, audience), provide a cultural experience for residents and create marketing content targeted to key audiences to attract inward investment.
13. We will inspire residents to share their stories and bring to life the strengths and assets of York. Our pride in the city will build and promote confidence in York.
14. The stories will be used to target wealth creators and property developers to drive excitement about our scarce commercial space, aiming to attract significant and high profile commercial interests for York Central, Castle Gateway or Guildhall.

15. Finally, we will measure our success against our outcome framework (**Annex A**), working with regional partners to support the vision for the region.
16. This project underpins several other projects (funded from multiple sources) to ensure the single unified vision is either derived from, influences or augments different place making projects currently underway:
 - a) Story-telling
Telling the story of our place making through one unified vision (this project)
 - b) My City Centre
This project will draw on the research and community engagement phase of My City Centre to create a shared understanding of place and how places change
 - c) Castle Gateway
The Castle Gateway project will develop digital collateral to bring to life the public realm ask of residents (funded by the LCR business pilot) which further adds to the place making story of York
 - d) Cultural commission
We will combine the LCR business rates pilot funds to hold a cultural experience (outlined in the My Castle Gateway and place-based narrative projects) to help residents physically experience the narrative. This will form a separate paper to CMT/decision makers
 - Digital experience - Planning colleagues will work with partners to develop an augmented reality immersive experience that engages wealth creators and inward investors. They will ensure this digital experience is future-proof, can be maintained and is commercially viable, bringing to life key themes from the vision whilst providing the opportunity to showcase planning schemes.
 - e) Place making strategies
This project also makes sure we have an overarching place-based vision to create consistency in message, avoiding the risk of fragmenting the sense of place into a series of themes. For example, the cultural (Arts and Heritage) strategy and creative industries strategy both draw on a single unified York vision to enable delivery, including raising visibility and having a consistent marketing and communications approach.

Consultation

17. Since the LCR business pilot funding was agreed, we shared the design of the project (Annex A) with the Universities, Head of Comms Group, NYYER and a scoping group comprised of Make It York, Mediale, WYCA and CYC. There is agreement that this project will support wider promotional activities, if we have appropriate governance processes in place.
18. A recent stakeholder survey has been conducted and respondents told us that only:
 - 54% of respondents are clear about the overall ambition and areas of focus for York
 - 38% of respondents believe the city delivers a unified voice regionally, nationally and internationally.
19. This reinforces the need to unify York's vision to focus on the whole of York rather than key city themes.
20. Make It York aims to have completed the Tourism Strategy before Christmas. Early discussions with the Head of Visit York include drawing on the output of this project at the appropriate time.

Governance

21. Make It York are crucial partners in developing and embedding the vision and are involved through all stages of the project (including initiation).
22. The project is comprised of four delivery stages with a supporting governance structure proposed. It recognises this is a city challenge and as such will be delivered in partnership with sector leaders and audiences representing the city, together with opportunity for Executive members to provide insight and challenge at key points throughout.
23. Overarching strategic direction, approvals, challenge and project management (specifically supporting risk management) will be provided by the City Partnership Group. This group will be comprised of senior representatives from across the city, including Cllr Aspden and Cllr Myers. The Director of Economy and Place, as project sponsor, will chair.
24. At key decision points throughout the project life cycle, the City Partnership Group provides insight and recommendations to Executive for their consideration. Executive will be invited to comment on the evidence-

based recommendations and endorse the direction of travel. Project management and delivery will be led by the Director of Economy and Place as project sponsor, in consultation with the Executive member for Economic Development, Cllr Aspden.

25. Operational delivery will be delivered via the Operational Delivery Group, chaired by the CYC Project Manager with attendees from CYC and partners. This group will share progress, update risks, escalate issues, take actions and propose solutions.
26. There are two steering groups who will, at the appropriate stage, advise the City Partnership group or influence the operational delivery group. These steering groups are aligned to different stages of delivery, explained below:

Stage 1 – research and design

27. The research and design stage will be governed by the “narrative steering group” comprised of representatives from the different sectors representing York (see Annex A). Many of these representatives have already been approached and are happy to join “a coalition of the willing”.
28. The narrative steering group will draw on the available insight and evidence to help shape a single unifying vision that is undoubtedly unequivocally authentically York. They will provide challenge and support to the agency (below) to make sure the sector they represent views are heard.
29. Representatives of this group will commission a specialist place-based agency to:
 - Understand perceptions of target audiences and what would most attract them to invest/live/visit/study/work/do business in the city
 - Develop an engagement framework to structure conversations with different target audiences so they can describe their understanding of a vision for York.
 - Deliver an engagement process to engage different audiences including in areas of deprivation, using geo-targeting to encourage people to engage in changing perception.
 - Collate proof points and features that are unexpected and unique to York, including drawing on regeneration and place making initiatives underway

- Condense the target audience insight into a core easy-to-understand, authentic, vision with a hierarchy of messages that most appeal to the audience (s)
- Test different ideas with different audiences throughout Spring 2019

Stage 2 – development

30. The development stage will be governed by the “marketing steering group” comprised of representatives of the target audiences the vision speaks to (see Annex A). Several individuals have already volunteered to be part of this group.
31. The purpose of this stage is to draw on the narrative to evolve the target audiences perception, and will include:
 - Drawing on work underway in Make It York to create a toolkit with flexible and consistent elements. This toolkit will be shared with city and community partners to ensure the narrative is presented consistently and authentically.
 - Producing content that appeals to the target audiences and can be used by partners for example, a series of social media posts, videos, photo library and a high quality prospectus that showcases the very best of York, promoting organisations that share the vision themes. The videos will be produced by Make It York.
 - In addition, although still part of Stage 2, the below two experiences will be created with identified city partners by drawing on the vision :
 - Cultural commission – York Mediale will be approached to develop a cultural experience. This cultural experience aims to bring to life the vision and inspire and engage residents, building on lessons from the 2018 York Mediale Festival. It will combine funding from the other LCR business rates pilot, My Castlegateway to demonstrate how public realm can tell the story of York in innovative and surprising ways, working closely with cultural partners in the area.
 - Digital experience - Planning colleagues will work with partners to develop an augmented reality immersive experience that engages wealth creators and inward investors. They will ensure this digital experience is future-proof, can be maintained and is commercially

viable, bringing to life key themes from the vision whilst providing the opportunity to showcase planning schemes.

32. The marketing steering group will ensure the narrative is curated through these different experiences in an audience appropriate way to meet the outcomes. They will challenge how the narrative is adapted to meet different audience needs, whilst retaining the integrity of the narrative.
33. The project manager will be responsible for ensuring a defined set of key activities are agreed with the appointed agency including a simple way of evaluating this.
34. Sustainability of the project will be built into the criteria for recruiting the agency.

Current status

35. The project manager post, funded by the LCR project, is due to be advertised. The recruitment panel comprises MIY, CYC and York St John representatives. The post will be interviewed in January.

Option

36. The Request for Quotation (RFQ) is now ready to be tendered and attached in **Annex B**. Costs will be covered by the LCR business pilot fund. The RFQ has had content contributions from MIY and the Head of Comms group.
37. The Executive member is asked to endorse the staged approach, supporting governance and confirm we can now progress to recruitment of the agency and recruitment of the project manager.

Analysis

38. Advantage: The RFQ for the agency who will deliver stage 1 has been prepared with input from the Head of Comms group and MIY. Attracting an experienced, credible agency with expertise in developing city inward investment narratives that draws on existing strengths and assets is crucial to build confidence amongst city partners.
39. Disadvantage: Due to the complexity of York, the many different sectors and opportunities, there will need to be strong and determined leadership to create the right conditions for a vision to be developed, agreed and shared. Recruiting the agency who can deliver this challenge is recognised in the proposed budget.

Council Plan

40. This project contributes to the economic development strategy.

Implications

- **Financial** Funding has been provided by the LCR business rates pilot
- **Human Resources (HR)** Recruitment of the project manager has followed CYC processes
- **Equalities** none
- **Legal** none
- **Crime and Disorder** none
- **Information Technology (IT)** IT will be involved in the development of the digital experience
- **Property** none
- **Other**
MIY have been involved throughout the development of this proposal and any works will be sub-contracted to them via the Tecla agreement.

Risk Management

41. Risks at this stage include

- a. Related strategies will create their own York vision that will then undermine this project and each other. To mitigate the risk, we have engaged stakeholders and partners throughout to manage expectations and help define the project scope.
- b. To realise the outcomes of the project, the vision will need to be championed by all key city influencers, with stakeholder engagement a key component. Given the forthcoming election, we recommend the project progresses to the research and design stage with audience testing taking place throughout spring and Executive decisions post election.

Contact Details

Author:

Claire Foale
Head of Communications
01904 552057.

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Neil Ferris
Director of Economy and Place

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Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Ian Floyd (LCR funding), Director CCS
Charlie Croft (cultural experience) AD Culture and Communities
Simon Brereton (Economic Development Strategy), Head of Economic Development
Will Boardman (Strategy), Head of Policy
Julia Massey (Skills), Head of Skills and Development

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes (not for publication)

Annex A – Project overview

Annex B – Request for Quotation

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CYC – City of York Council

LCR – Leeds City region

LEP – Local Enterprise Partnership

MIY – Make it York

NYYER – North Yorkshire, York and East Riding LEP

RFQ – Request for quotation

WYCA – West Yorkshire Combined Authority