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Meeting	Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date	25 March 2025
Present	Councillors K Taylor (Chair), B Burton, J Burton, Fenton, Healey (Vice-Chair), Hook, Whitcroft, Steward, Vassie and Merrett
Officers in Attendance	James Gilchrist - Director of Environment, Transport and Planning Patrick Looker – Assistant Director of Finance Julian Ridge - Sustainable Transport Manager
In Attendance	Councillor Ravilious

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**50. Apologies for Absence (17:30)**

There were no apologies.

**51. 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 Whitcroft noted that he had a non-prejudicial interest in relation to minute 55 as the discussion on the item would include his motion to Council on Residential Parking.

Cllr Merrett noted that he had a non-prejudicial interest in relation to minute 55 as a member of the York Bus Forum.

**52. Minutes (17:31)**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the committee held on 25 February 2025 be approved and then signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **53. Public Participation (17:32)**

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

Anthony May stated that the Council required a parking strategy to ensure it managed to maintain its targets of reducing car travel by 20% by 2030 and sustaining its £9m parking revenue. He also suggested the Council have a short-term contract for park and ride while the Combined Authority Mayor developed a bus strategy.

Flick Williams stated that accessibility should be recognised as a right and not a nice to have. She stated that blue badge parking had been closed off at the train station and only one space on buses for wheelchair users was a nightmare for the disabled as they would be left at bus stops.

Gwen Swinburn recommended that Scrutiny make a priority of reviewing the Council's economic strategy and review the Council's Property Portfolio. She asked that Residents parking schemes be expanded to cover the whole of the city.

### **54. Finance and Performance Monitoring Report (Q3) (17:45)**

The Assistant Director of Finance introduced the 2024/25 Finance and Performance Monitor 3. Members considering the monitor raised a number of questions for more information, officers confirmed that they would write to the Committee on topics that they could not answer in the meeting. These questions included, does the Council know how many people in the city are eligible for pension credit but not claiming it, and how will the Council promote applying? Members asked what training was provided to officers to promote the Council becoming more entrepreneurial? The Committee enquired as to whether SLA04 on street cleaning needed reviewing as to whether there is a new business as usual response time. Members asked if there was a good reason why only 10 homes had been completed on the Langley Gate estate on the A59 in a 6 month period. Such a low completion rate on an estate which has had planning permission for at least 5 years, would indicate that the planning system cannot be entirely held to account for the lack of new houses being built in the city. Members also considered data relating to a decline in the number of working age people in employment and enquired as to whether the Council had greater detailed data relating to the decline.

The Committee also raised several questions relating to waste collections. Members enquired as to why there had been an increase in waste going

directly to landfill, officers noted that there had been planned closures at Alerton Park which might have affected this but would explore further. A rising number of missed bin collections was also raised, and it was confirmed that this could be related to greater reporting and officers were investigating this.

Resolved:

- i. That officers would write to the Committee to provide further detail on a number of topics raised from the monitor report.
- ii. Noted the finance and performance information.
- iii. Noted that work will continue identifying the savings needed to fully mitigate the forecast overspend.

Reason: To ensure expenditure is kept within the approved budget.

### **55. Car Parking across the city and the Park and Ride Re - tendering (18:15)**

The committee considered the report, with the chair raising his frustration at finding out, on the day of the meeting, that there would be no report as requested regarding parking and that the paper shared would only give a detailed summary of the park and ride aspect. He noted how 5 pages of the report were spent explaining why the parking aspect would not be focused on. The chair added that the argument that parking was a too wide and complex area was not a sufficient reason to not bring the report requested without explanation in good time. He reflected that it can often feel like, when a broad subject is requested, Members are advised to look at specific aspects but, when specific topics are requested, Members are advised that such items need taking in the round as they were part of broader subject areas.

Officers outlined that the Council would be negotiating a new contract for York's Park and Ride buses. They confirmed that there were opportunities to explore expanding the use of the park and ride sites, as well as questions relating to how park and ride fits alongside the Mayoral Combined Authority. It was confirmed that the park and ride was ran as cost neutral to the Council and options for the new contract should consider how the Council balances potential cost against the opportunities for new and improved services.

It was confirmed that the combined authority was now the local transport authority, however, the park and ride officers confirmed was not the same as regular bus services and therefore the Council could maintain control

rather than it being transferred to the combined authority. It was noted that the combined authority would likely still require several years before it could take on the park and ride facilities regardless of any Council decision. Members discussed the prospect of maintaining control of the park and ride and noted that the Council could seek a shorter contract to allow for the combined authority to develop its transport functions.

Members discussed the possible future use of park and ride facilities. Officers noted that the Council had £4 million of Bus service improvement plan funding which could support transforming park and ride sites into transport hubs with more bus stops on site, additional overnight parking, car clubs, more cycle parking, and more electric vehicle charging. The Committee also discussed what else could be included in the tender process. It was noted that the Council could raise wheelchair access on York's park and ride buses as part of the tender process.

The Committee noted that the York Central Access Strategy included plans for the park and ride route from the Rawcliffe Park and Ride. This it was noted would link York Central to the railway station and create access to the York Central economic area.

Members discussed the tender process for the new contract and enquired as to whether there was more than one viable bidder to operate park and ride. Officers noted that there were challenges to new bidders as the park and ride would require a substantial bus depot to operate from. Members enquired as to whether the park and ride could be broken up into multiple contracts. It was confirmed that this was possible but that it would create more complexity in contract management and could lose the advantages in the economies of scale of running the whole service.

Resolved:

- i. To recommend that the Council pursues a short-term tender for the park and ride with requirements for more wheelchair spaces, longer operating hours, and weekend parking.
- ii. To ask that the Executive Member for Transport seek the Mayoral Combined Authority to outline its plans for bus travel in York and North Yorkshire, including what role York's park and ride could play in this.
- iii. To request that the Council review its intermediate stops policy on park and ride services.
- iv. To request that the Executive explore greater commercial use of park and ride land.

Reason: To ensure the Council's tender process for the Council's park and ride services delivers improved services for the city.

## **56. Work Plan (19:57)**

The chair confirmed that the Committee would look at add to its work plan an item on Residents Parking in the city, he also noted potential items for property asset portfolio review and reviewing cities economic strategy.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the Committee work plan.

Reason: To keep the committee's work plan updated.

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.02 pm].