



Notice of a public meeting of

Place Scrutiny Committee

To: Councillors B Burton (Chair), Healey (Vice-Chair), Baxter, Fenton, Hook, D Myers, K Taylor, Vassie and Whitcroft

Date: Tuesday, 24 June 2025

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: West Offices - Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
To note apologies for absence.
- 2. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 5 - 6)
At this point in the meeting, Members and co-opted members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.
- 3. Public Participation**
At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the Committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the

management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is **5:00pm on 20 June 2025.**

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

4. Park Investment Fund (Pages 7 - 14)

This report seeks feedback from the Committee on the recommended criteria to be used in allocating £500k parks investment fund. Feedback from the Committee will be incorporated in the report on the criteria scheduled for the consideration by the Executive on 15th July 2025.

5. Work Plan (Pages 15 - 22)

To consider the Committee's work plan for the 2025/26 municipal year.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
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我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (ہندی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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Declarations of Interest – guidance for Members

- (1) Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:

Type of Interest	You must
Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related) OR Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)	Disclose the interest; speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Affects) OR Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)	Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote <u>unless</u> the matter affects the financial interest or well-being: (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.

- (2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.
- (3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations,

and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.



Meeting	Place Scrutiny Committee
Meeting Date	Tuesday 24th June 2025
Report of	Ian Hoult Head of Environmental Services
Portfolio of	Executive Member for the Environment and Climate Emergency (Cllr J Kent)

£500k Parks Investment Fund

Summary

1. This report seeks feedback from the Committee on the recommended criteria to be used in allocating £500k parks investment fund. Feedback from the Committee will be incorporated in the report on the criteria scheduled for the consideration by the Executive on 15th July 2025.

Background

2. The Council Plan 2023-2027 which sets a clear vision for the council - *by working with the city we will establish the conditions that would make the city healthier, fairer, more affordable, more sustainable and more accessible*. As part of delivering this Plan, Budget Council in February 2025 approved a two year £500k investment into the Council parks.
3. Consideration of how the fund will be used commenced at the April meeting of the Executive Member for the Environment and Climate Emergency. It was stated in the report *“that improving green spaces, parks and play-areas that are freely available, whilst enhancing the biodiversity and increasing pollinators to ensure the spaces are more sustainable, is directly aligned to the council’s vision. In addition, residents have told the Council in petitions, the development of the Local Plan, and throughout consultations that they value the city’s unique character and how it is enhanced through well-maintained green spaces. Investing in the protection and development of public spaces leaves a lasting and positive impression of a city residents are justifiably proud of”*.

4. The report also noted the following indicative criteria could be used to allocate the investment fund:
 - A. Sites within communities which score higher on Indices of Multiple Deprivation,
 - B. Projects which address long standing maintenance issues e.g. footpath rebuilding,
 - C. Play areas where the equipment is over 15 years old, (in some cases the council has equipment which is nearly 30 years old),
 - D. To support the expansion of Green Flag standard e.g. Hull Road Park, and,
 - E. Where projects have or potential for 3rd party funding contributions
5. The views of Scrutiny Committee are now being sought on the recommended criteria below and on what, if any, weighting should be given to each criterion.

Consultation

6. As noted in the Public Realm Service update report presented at Executive Member decision session in April 2025, this report is part of the consultation for the Parks Investment Fund.

Options

7. Members have the option to
 - A. Agree the criteria detail below in Paragraphs 8 to 20
 - B. Add to or amend the criteria in Paragraphs 8 to 20
 - C. Suggest an alternative approach to allocating the fund

Criteria

8. The suggested criteria for use are detailed below. Some sites and projects are likely to qualify under several criteria, whilst others will be discounted due to more recent investment. To aid decision making it is suggested that the criteria are weighted to develop a scoring matrix to rank sites and projects in most need of investment.

A. Sites within communities which score higher on Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

9. IMD are a composite score of a range of separate indicators, grouped into seven distinct domains: Income, Employment, Education, Skills and Training, Health and Disability, Crime, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment. Each Index represents a different aspect of deprivation.
10. The Council's Business Intelligence Unit has provided IMD scores for the area in a 300m radius surrounding Yorks open spaces and play areas. Scores range from 30 to 2, the higher the score the higher the level deprivation.

B. Projects which address long standing maintenance issues to key infrastructure.

11. Key infrastructure includes such assets as footpaths, buildings and play area safety surfacing. Investment that will extend the life of the existing asset for several years or decades. Whilst it is possible to fund such work from the revenue budget, the scale of the work required means that some schemes are just too large for this funding source. Footpath and bridge work projects would contribute to Council's Active Travel ambitions.

C. Investment into play areas with a priority to improving those sites with the oldest equipment or would benefit from relandscaping

12. There are in the region of 90 equipped play areas across the city, with around half provided by the city council. The rest are provided by a mix of parish / town councils, housing association, Ministry of Defence and estate management companies. The age of the equipment is generally new to 15 years old due to successive national and local funding rounds, 106 driven investment, local fund raising and the construction of new play areas within recent housing developments. Despite this there remain a few play areas where a large proportion of the equipment is 20 or more years old and several sites which have specific pieces of equipment which are even older. It is recommended that that priority be given to the investing into these sites.
13. Not all sites are laid out in a coherent way due to historical land ownership issues and piecemeal development around the site. By removing old fencing, improve paths or creating more open aspects the opportunity exists create a greater sense wellbeing and security

D. Support the expansion and retention of Green Flag Award standard

14. Over the last 20 years a range of Council parks have achieved the Green Flag award standard – see <https://www.greenflagaward.org/>. Sites are general assessed every two years and at present Clarence Gardens, Glen Gardens and West Bank Park hold the award. Rowntree Park is awaiting the outcome of this year's judging (having missed last year due to repeated flooding) and Rawcliffe County Park is on hold pending the completion of the Environment Agency flood protection work the local area.
15. Work has been under way at Hull Road Park this last few years to improve the quality of the site (for more detail see <https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=870&MId=14599> Item 27 Paragraph 85), and this park currently has the most potential for achieving additional Green Flag status. Investment over the next 18 months would put the park in a good position to enter for the award.
16. The fund could also be used to support the retention of the award at existing sites. Clarence Gardens pavilion for example needs internal rearrangement and upgrading so that it can accommodate community uses now that it is no longer needed as a bowls pavilion. Community involvement being one of the themes the Green Flag judges consider when assessing a site for the award.

E. Projects which have or have the potential for 3rd party funding contributions

17. In support of the fund the Council will seek to maximise other funding opportunities and use the fund to leverage external assistance in both cash and kind. This will include exploring National Lottery or other grant opportunities and partnership work with other York organisations and networks.
18. Best use will be made of Section 106 development payments in accordance with the Planning Obligations. This may include delivery of fully funded projects from S106 payments to topping up schemes to maximise the value of the project.

F. Investment into War Memorial maintenance and restoration

19. The Council is responsible for the care of a several memorials including War Memorial Gardens, Duncombe Place Boer War Memorial, Acomb Green Memorial and Rowntree Park. Rowntree Park is a memorial to those of who *fell and suffered* from the Rowntree Cocoa works in WW1

and contains two listed structures in the dovecote and Terry Avenue gates.

20. 2014-18 was the last time that any significant work took place to the memorials, prior to that it was 2000-02 for the Rowntree Park memorials. It is suggested that a new assessment is undertaken of all the memorial structures which would inform a possible programme of work.

Analysis and weighting

21. The suggested criteria target the investment at those communities in most need, as defined by IMD, and enable schemes from across the city to be considered. It recognises that there are some key infrastructure issues which could be addressed and that there are opportunities to invest in those play areas where the equipment is some of the oldest to be found in the city. In some cases, best use of the fund could be through partnering with other city organisations or seek an external contribution towards a scheme. Finally, there is the opportunity to expand the number of council sites which hold the Green Flag award and to invest in the city's war memorials.
22. It is suggested that a weighting could be applied to the criteria to produce a shortlist for expenditure. A possible approach would allocate points based on this order of priority.
 1. Sites with higher IMD
 2. Replacing play equipment over 20 years old
 3. Key infrastructureThen equal weight to
 - = 4 Green Flag award
 - = 4 Availability of external funds
23. An alternative approach would be to select one criterion as a driver for investment, for example, expenditure would be restricted to play areas.

Council Plan

24. This investment supports two of the Council's Core commitment:

Equalities and Human Rights- Equality of opportunity. We will create opportunities for all, providing equal opportunity and balancing the

human rights of everyone to ensure residents and visitors alike can benefit from the city and its strengths.

Health- Health and wellbeing - We will improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.

Implications

25. At this stage there are limited implication; a full analysis will be included in the report to the Councils Executive.
- **Financial** *Budget council approved investment of £500k over 2025/26 to 2027/28. This report identifies the criteria that will be used to allocate the funding.*
 - **Human Resources (HR)** *At the time of writing, we were still waiting comments but comments will be added to the Executive report.*
 - **Equalities** (Contact – Equalities Officer) *At the time of writing, we were still waiting comments but comments will be added to the Executive report.*
 - **Legal** (Contact – Head of Legal) *At the time of writing, we were still waiting comments but comments will be added to the Executive report.*
 - **Crime and Disorder** (Contact - Senior Partnerships Support Officer, Community Planning & Partnerships) *At the time of writing, we were still waiting comments but comments will be added to the Executive report.*
 - **Information Technology (IT)** *There are no IT implications*
 - **Property** (Contact – Property) *At the time of writing, we were still waiting comments but comments will be added to the Executive report.*
 - **Other** *There are no other implications*

Risk Management

26. There are no risks with this decision; the report will inform the planned report to the Councils Executive on 15th July where any risks will be reported.

Next steps

27. Depending on the recommendations from the Executive in July officers will apply the criteria and weighting to know locations and issues to produce a list of possible schemes. This will be presented for approval at a later meeting of Executive.
28. Following review of the criteria, the selected parks and green spaces will be shared with the Public Health and Communities team to review proposed impact. In addition they will consider the community capacity available to support additional planting, or maintenance actions in identified areas.

Recommendations

29. Members are asked to

- 1) Comment on the suggested criteria detailed in Paragraphs 8 to 20

Reason: to guide the investment of £500k in the city parks and open spaces

- 2) Comment on the weighting approach detailed in Paragraph 22

Reason: to help prioritise investment.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Patrick Looker
Assistant Director Finance

Report
 Approved



Date 16.06.2025

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All ☒

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Budget Council 27th February 2025

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=331&MIId=15004>

Meeting of the Executive Member for the Environment and Climate
Emergency 29th April 2025

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=870&MIId=14599>

Annexes

None

Abbreviations

IMD Indices of Multiple Deprivation

**Place Scrutiny Committee
Work Plan 2025/26**

	Theme	Item	Lead Officer / Exec Member	Scope
24 June 2025				
	Parks	Parks Investment Funding	Cllr Kent	To seek feedback from the Committee on the recommended criteria to be used in allocating £500k parks investment fund.
	Work-planning for the municipal year 2025/26	Work Planning	Chair / All	To help identify the Committee's focus for the 2025/26 municipal year.
23 September 2025				
25 November 2025				
26 January 2026				
24 March 2026				
19 May 2026				

This Committee is responsible for monitoring the performance of the following service areas:

- 10 Year Economic Strategy, Economic Growth & Inward Investment
- 10 Year Transport Strategy
- Local Transport Strategy
- Accessibility in public areas including City Centre Access Strategy
- Parking Services (inc Digital ResPark)
- Highways
- Planning & Development Services
- Strategic Housing Provision
- Regeneration & Asset / Property Management
- Public Realm
- Waste Services
- Fleet
- Public Protection (Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Food Safety Licensing)
- Client Management: Make it York, GLL
- Client Management: YorWaste
- Emergency Planning, Flood Risk
- Monitor Emissions Impacts across the City
- Consider MCA Joint Committee Decisions as relate to this Committee
- Culture, inc York Theatre Royal, Museums, Music Venues Network (& elements of MIY)
- Libraries & Archives

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List for items referred from the Council's Previous Scrutiny Committees for the Place Scrutiny Committee

Dial & Ride

- Update on administration's work on this, since Task & Finish Group recommendations passed in June 2024. A "one year on" meaningful update would be appreciated by all concerned here, as that's plenty of time.

Review of CYC's Property Asset Portfolio

- Covering how each of CYC's property assets are performing in terms of income generation/returns on investment, their long-term security / financial prospects, possible disposals, use-class mix, vacancy rates, any scope for meanwhile use for communities, opportunity to feed into next Asset Management Strategy (as now expired), and anything else of value.

Input into formulation of next Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

- Including an eye to progressing the on-street parking question which has not been prioritised to date.

Car Parking provision across the city

The report we did not get in March 2025 - Covering public, private and Park & Ride provision, Blue Badge parking, income received, usage, impact on closing Castle Car Park on the wider estate, wider aims e.g. shifting to less polluting vehicles, approach taken for busy shopping areas outside of the city-centre (e.g. Haxby, Acomb Front St), future of Res Park.

Parking Enforcement

- Costs of service / Income generated - scope to improve? Can we offer services to private land owners?
- Activity across entire local authority area - How many enforcement officers do we have, how many fines issued, which areas of their city are they issued in, how often are Res Park zones visited. *A view of this over the last 5 - 10 years would be helpful for identifying trends.*
- Position on pavement parking
- Consistency of enforcement (seen officers apply different limits to Double Yellow Lines)
- Hotline performance - how many reports logged, how many of these received visits in a timely manner (or at all)
Out-of-hours drop in provision due to over-stretched Police unable to prioritise parking

Review of York's economy / economic development strategy

Stock-take of performance against current strategy and its relevance next to the Combined Authority's economic development role, as well as key personell changes within CYC

Pros and cons of combining economic development services with the Combined Authority

Planning and Development Services - enforcement

Operational challenges / opportunities, performance over the last 5-10 years relative to staffing numbers, numbers of (known) breaches by developers

Tourism Levy

Officers are exploring options with the partners/hospitality sector for a Tourism Levy. Opportunities for Scrutiny engagement when/if a proposal is developed with partners/hospitality sector.

A-Boards

How effective has the A-Board "ban" been?

Make It York

General update on their work, successes, challenges, relationship with all of the market traders, plans for Christmas Market (with reference to Committee's previous recommendation to look at ways to "spread" it out to reduce crowding and make it more accessible).

Park & Ride

Opportunity to feed into full tender, following likely short-term tender discussed at March 2025 Scrutiny

Age Friendly York

What is being done to help make the city a better place for older people to live in?

Review of Council's pedestrian crossing policy

Reviewing city's Economic Strategy

Review of the original Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

Review of how the first BSIP has gone, achievements, next steps, future asks of the Mayoral Combined Authority

Other Bus-related matters

- Enhanced Bus Partnership; how effective is it, is this the best model for delivering service improvements for residents?
- Bus stop improvements

Council-run businesses

How are CYC generating income commercially? Are we using everything we can to the best of our ability to generate new or more income streams?

York's Pay Gap

For 2026 as already had an initial report on the Gender Pay Gap – what is the city's pay gap like in relation to ethnicity and disability? What is the Council doing to support local businesses – especially smaller ones – to improve on their gender pay gap performance?

Highway Maintenance

Adoption of the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan will go through public decision making

Assets of Community Value

How can CYC:

Promote adding to the local register of Assets of Community Value;

Make it easier for residents and community groups to nominate an ACV;

Celebrate the success stories of ACVs in our community to encourage new nominations;

Prepare for law changes on the Community Right to Buy in securing a wider range of ACVs.

ACV's could be included in part of a briefing to Members including a wider briefing on Property and the Council's Asset Management Plan around Jan 26.

2025 Library Needs Assessment Report (containing data from the Early Engagement Consultation)

Briefing ready to be provided on feedback from an early consultation on library usage that fed into the Assessment of Need document. This information will then feed into a library strategy and associated budget savings (target £600k) proposals which will be then consulted on.

Further opportunity further Scrutiny including either be a part of the consultation or pre scrutiny (or both) before recommended proposals for Executive likely in the first quarter of 2026.