

York Civic Trust's Policy on Transport for the City of York.

### **Summary**

1. This report informs the Economic Development & Transport Policy & Scrutiny Committee of the findings from York Civic Trust workshops focusing on a future transport policy for the city.
2. York's current Local Transport Plan was drafted in 2010, and sets out a long term strategy for the city's transport system for the period from 2011 to 2031, and a more detailed programme over the period to 2015. It is probable that the City of York Council will wish to update its Local Transport Plan to reflect the proposals in the Local Plan which is currently being drafted.

### **Background**

3. As an input to this process, and with the encouragement of the Council, York Civic Trust held two workshops on transport policy in February 2017, in which 89 members participated. A separate workshop for Councillors and CYC officers was held later in February 2017.
4. The workshops focused on the big picture: the type of transport system which participants wanted to see in York and the broad types of policy measure which might be adopted, given the Trust's and the Local Plan's aspirations for York. They were designed to provide a context for more detailed, specific schemes such as those which the Trust is pursuing under its programme of Transport Improvement Projects.
5. To this end, the workshops were designed to provide answers to the following questions:
  - What are the main problems which York's transport system needs to overcome in the period to 2030, bearing in mind the likely proposals in the Local Plan?
  - What thus should be the principal objectives of a new transport strategy for York?
  - What are the most important elements of a strategy to achieve these objectives?

- What are the most appropriate transport policy measures for York to pursue within that strategy, and where should they be applied?
  - How can these policy measures best be implemented?
6. These discussions were designed to stimulate a new approach to strategy development, rather than as a replacement for the more detailed analysis and appraisal that will be needed in due course. The conclusions below should be read on this basis.

### **Statement**

7. The principal findings from the workshops have been used to formulate a statement of York Civic Trust's policy on transport for the City of York, which has been endorsed by the Trust's Board. This statement is set out below and is being offered to the City of York Council as an input to the development of its next Local Transport Plan.
- 1) The problems of congestion, air pollution, poor accessibility for some people and journeys and danger on the roads are particularly acute, and are aggravated by the constraints imposed by York's road network, use of inappropriate freight vehicles and the growth in delivery van traffic.
  - 2) There needs to be a better understanding of the scale of these problems, to allay misperceptions and to avoid unreasonable expectations (see (7)).
  - 3) The potential effects of population growth on these problems, and the likely effects of changes in travel behaviour, need to be better understood.
  - 4) York's transport policy should focus on the twin over-arching objectives of enhancing quality of life and the economic vitality of the city.
  - 5) Contributing to these, the most important underpinning objectives are achieving improved accessibility for all (and hence equality of opportunity), enhanced air quality and reduced impact on climate change, greater efficiency and reliability of the transport system, and improved safety. These objectives should be treated as being of broadly equal

importance, and should be defined in more detail as SMART objectives specific to York.

- 6) The vision in any revision of York's LTP should reflect these objectives in broad terms and at the same time set realistic targets for achievement in each of them overall and for different categories of user.
- 7) To this end the Council should establish an agreed set of outcome indicators reflecting each of these objectives, and monitor performance against them.
- 8) To achieve these objectives, York needs an integrated transport strategy which makes effective use of the full range of potential policy interventions.
- 9) The strategy needs to be developed in compatible ways in the three key sectors of the city: the centre within the Bar Walls; the city between the Outer Ring Road and the Bar Walls; and the city's outer suburbs. It also needs to consider separately the needs of residents, commuters, tourists and business.
- 10) Since (subject to (3)) population growth is likely to exacerbate York's transport problems, the strategy should focus on reducing car use and the underlying need to travel. Improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, freight and the use of the road network will be important in complementing these elements of the strategy.
- 11) The strategy should draw on as wide a range of policy measures as possible, and combine them so that they reinforce one another. In that context, paragraphs 12-20 suggest policy measures which might be worth considering, bearing in mind that the Trust has not attempted to study most of them in detail.
- 12) Land use planning is essential in reducing the need to travel. Land use and transport therefore need to be planned together. All new developments should be built as sustainable local communities, at high density, and with support and priority for public transport, walking and cycling.

- 13) Some new infrastructure will be needed. Park and ride sites should be increased and better connected; the possibility of river-based park and ride for tourists might also be considered. It is worth considering using the rail network more intensively and building new local stations. There is a case for improving the outer ring road, provided that the extra capacity is used to reduce the impact of traffic within the city.
- 14) The potential for smaller public electric vehicles to provide access to York's mediaeval street network should be considered. Charging points for electric vehicles and electric bikes need to be expanded.
- 15) More can be done to use the road network more effectively, by enforcing existing regulations, reallocating road space, using intelligent traffic signals and improving the operation of the inner ring road. At the same time, traffic should be removed from more of the city centre, allowing the foot street network to be expanded.
- 16) The cycle route network should be made more comprehensive, with more provision for off-road cycling. The pedestrian network also needs to be improved, with wider, better maintained pavements and better crossing facilities at junctions. Where cyclists and pedestrians share facilities, priorities need to be effectively signed.
- 17) The public transport system cannot continue to rely solely on conventional buses. An innovative approach is needed which makes better use of on-demand services to fill the gaps, and extends services, particularly for park and ride, into the evenings and weekends.
- 18) The lack of a freight strategy is particularly apparent. In developing such a strategy, a clear assessment is needed of the case for transhipment facilities and district delivery points to allow larger freight vehicles to be removed and delivery van traffic reduced. Appropriate provision for a transhipment depot should be made in the Local Plan.
- 19) Behavioural change will continue to be a key element of the strategy. It should focus in particular on company and school travel plans and on wider education, training and health

promotion. Smarter information on transport services should be provided to reinforce these messages.

- 20) Consideration should be given to a comprehensive pricing package for York's transport system, which provides contactless smart card charging for public transport, enables parking charges, work-place parking levies and congestion charging to be included, and offers credits for green travel.
- 21) The City of York Council should ensure that its planning, economic development and transport plans reinforce one another, and should encourage the closest possible collaboration with developers and transport operators as key delivery agents.
- 22) While York's new Local Transport Plan can be largely free-standing, the future of public transport services and fares in particular will need to be planned and financed in conjunction with West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the East Riding of Yorkshire and North Yorkshire County Council.
- 23) The strategy will only be deliverable if it is affordable. The City of York Council needs to make an honest assessment of the funds likely to be available to finance the strategy, and to seek financial support from a wider range of bodies, including developers and the beneficiaries of new investment. All potential funders need to work together to expand the funding base, seek continuity of funding, and ensure that the measures in the strategy provide best value for money.
- 24) Above all, the strategy will need to be acceptable to both stakeholders and the wider public. The City of York Council needs to encourage public and stakeholder engagement in the understanding of problems, the need for the strategy, the effectiveness of the different policy measures and the steps required to implement them. It also needs to demonstrate the benefits of the strategy and its constituent parts.
- 25) Within the resources available to it, York Civic Trust stands ready to support the City of York Council in the further development of its new Local Transport Plan. Areas in which the Trust can offer expertise include the development and analysis of a set of outcome indicators (7); the design of

sustainable local communities (12); the management of the road network (15); expansion of the cycle route network (16); development of an innovative public transport network (17); and public and stakeholder engagement (24).

8. A description of the approach adopted in the workshops and their findings is at Annex A. The workshops were informed by a briefing paper on key issues, which is at Annex B. Extracts from the 2010 Local Transport Plan used in the workshops are at Annex C.

### **Annexes**

Annex A – The workshops' findings

Annex B – Briefing paper

Annex C – Extracts from York's 2010 Local Transport Plan

Annex D – Summary of CYC Members' workshop