

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member For Economy and Strategic Planning
Date	26 July 2022
Present	Councillor Mason

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (10:04)

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registerable interests he might have in respect of business on the agenda, if he had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. None were declared.

7. MINUTES (10:05)

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 June 2022 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Executive Member.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (10:05)

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn spoke under the general remit of the 10 year economic plan, suggesting that it was not fit for purpose. She listed a number of areas in which she felt that the strategy was deficient, highlighting that the strategy made no mention of targeting inequalities in deprived communities. She noted that the key actions in the strategy were unfocussed and suggested that it needed to be rewritten.

Cllr Kilbane spoke on agenda item 4, Quarterly Economic Update. He welcomed inward investment being taken in house at the council and he asked for clarification on the staffing

structure of the inward investment team. He raised a number of questions concerning update and made requests to the Executive Member for areas of inclusion in the report.

The Executive Member noted the speakers' comments and advised that before the Decision Session he and officers had met with 15 businesses to discuss policy.

9. QUARTERLY ECONOMIC UPDATE (10:16)

The Executive Member considered a report providing updates on the local financial climate, core business support work and Council-led initiatives, and includes an update on the state of the national and local economy, key account management work, progress against major milestones, and inward investment. The Head of Economic Growth and Director for Housing, Economy and Regeneration were in attendance to present the report. The Head of Economic Growth detailed the report, highlighting that:

- The number of people on payroll had increased.
- The claimant count was 1200 above pre covid levels.
- City centre footfall was 15% down. There had been spikes in footfall during the changing footfall restrictions. This figure was now levelling up.
- There had been a successful visit from the Minister for Rail the previous day for the bid to bring GBR Rail to York.
- The York Festival of Business was in development and 2000 businesses received the business bulletin.

The Executive Member then asked several questions about the update to which the Head of Economic Growth and Director for Housing, Economy and Regeneration explained:

- How the claimant count had changed during different economic phases, including covid.
- The background to the inward investment posts and the staffing structure for it. It was noted that the Head of Inward Investment would consider the resources needed to support this when they were in post.
- The concerns raised by businesses at the business breakfast that morning. These concerns included the cost of doing business (particularly for sole traders), which was causing stress, impacting mental health and causing uncertainty. There was concern around skills recruitment and retention, with uncertainty being the common theme in concerns.

The Head of Economic Growth and Director for Housing, Economy and Regeneration then addressed the points raised by the public speakers. The Executive Member noted that the 10 year economic strategy was a draft strategy that included health implications within it. He asked the Head of Economic Growth and Director for Housing, Economy and Regeneration about the themes for the Business Festival and they explained that they would be working with partner organisations on this. Businesses were encouraged to email economic.growth@york.gov.uk for information on support for their businesses. The Executive Member then;

Resolved: That the contents of the Quarterly Economic Update report be noted.

Reason: To support York's ongoing economic work and understand how York is performing from an economic perspective.

Cllr Mason, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 10.04 am and finished at 10.27 am].