



Notice of a public meeting of

Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee

- To:** Councillors Fenton (Chair), Merrett (Vice-Chair), Ayre, Baxter, J Burton, Healey, Kelly, D Myers, Rowley, Steels-Walshaw, K Taylor, Waller and Widdowson
- Date:** Monday, 25 September 2023
- Time:** 5.30 pm
- Venue:** The George Hudson Board Room - 1st Floor West Offices (F045)

AGENDA

- 1. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 1 - 2)
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.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

[Please see the attached sheet for further guidance for Members.]
- 2. Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)
To approve and sign the minutes of the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee meeting held on 06 March 2023.

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 Thursday, 21 September 2023.**

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.

During coronavirus, we made some changes to how we ran council meetings, including facilitating remote participation by public speakers. See our updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Castle Gateway Update (Pages 9 - 26)

Members will receive a presentation which will update the Committee on the changes that have taken place in relation to the project and the next steps for future City of York Council decisions.

5. Resident Consultation and Engagement CSMC (Pages 27 - 52) **250923**

This report explains how the council engages with residents.

6. Work Plan (Pages 53 - 54)

To consider the scrutiny overview work plan.

7. Urgent Business

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

Democracy Officer:

Jane Meller

Contact details:

- Telephone: (01904 555209)
- Email: jane.meller@york.gov.uk

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
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

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 (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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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.

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	6 March 2023
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Fisher, Hollyer, Kilbane (Substitute for Cllr Musson), Lomas (Substitute for Cllr Norman), Pearson, Rowley and Wann (Substitute for Cllr Baker)
Apologies	Councillors Baker, Musson and Norman
In Attendance	Councillor D'Agorne, Executive Member for Transport
Officers Present	James Gilchrist, Director of Transport, Environment and Planning Dave Atkinson, Head of Highways and Transport Pauline Stuchfield, Director of Customer and Communities Laura Williams, Assistant Director of Customer, Communities and Inclusion Dave Smith, Access Officer Eilidh Carricker, Operations Manager, Customer Contact Centre and Web Services Will Boardman, Head of Corporate Strategy and City Partnerships Sandra Branigan, Senior Solicitor Dawn Steel, Head of Civic, Democratic and Scrutiny Services

Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting and put on record that he believed the existing arrangements for the substitution of Members at this meeting were contrary to the spirit and purpose of the legislation, specifically that which allowed the substitution of a Green Member by a Liberal Democrat one. He confirmed that he had asked the Monitoring Officer to provide further advice on the arrangements.

27. Declarations of Interest (5.31 pm)

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests that they might have in the business on the agenda, if they had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

None were declared.

28. Minutes (5.32 pm)

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 9 January 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

The Chair noted the following actions had taken place following the meeting:

- he had written to the Chief Operating Officer regarding dedicated Scrutiny Officer support on 13 January 2023 and
- that the Monitoring Officer had written to the Executive to outline the process whereby Petitions proceeded to the relevant Executive Member in the first instance.

It was suggested that an overview of s.106 processes be flagged for the new Committee's Work Plan, following the election.

29. Public Participation (5.33 pm)

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme, both in relation to agenda item 4 (City Centre Access).

Flick Williams highlighted a number of concerns regarding the actions contained within Annex A (City Centre Action Plan Update). These included the Changing Places toilet, removable benches, and mobility aid provision. She informed the Committee that the Reverse the Ban coalition had commissioned research into the legality of the Blue Badge ban and reported that the findings differed on the subject of proportionality as identified in Annex B (Consideration of the legal advice by the Monitoring Officer) of the report.

Diane Roworth also raised concerns regarding Annex B of the report and explained that she disagreed with the description of the

'considerable engagement' mentioned as this was not her experience. She made reference to a research paper which had been produced for the Reverse the Ban coalition which considered the level of engagement, the findings of which were to be published shortly.

30. City Centre Access (5.41 pm)

The Director of Transport, Environment and Planning provided an update on the City Centre Access Action Plan. He noted that the rules relating to pavement cafes were to be considered at an upcoming Economy and Place Scrutiny meeting.

Officers responded to questions from Members covering the monitoring of pavement café licensing, the dates attached to the action plan, security briefings for members, mitigations for blue badge holders and their evaluation, the York Standards for the city centre, the Access Officer's workload, the shuttle bus consultation, the 'Take a Seat' initiative, accessible toilets, and vehicle access to the footstreets.

During discussions, Members requested that information on security briefings were included in the Member Induction Programme.

A detailed breakdown of the costs of the STEER consultation was also requested.

Resolved:

- i. that the ongoing work to improve access to the city centre be noted.
- ii. That the change to the rules relating to the placement of pavement cafes be noted.
- iii. That feedback be provided to officers regarding the inclusion of security briefings for Member inductions.
- iv. That information be provided to the Committee regarding the cost of the STEER consultation.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated.

31. Customer Centre Telephone Performance Update (6.48 pm)

The Director of Customer and Communities and the Operations Manager, Customer Contact Centre and Web Services provided an update to Members on the Customer Centre Telephone Performance. It was reported that some of the data on calls, previously requested by the Committee, was not currently available. Officers confirmed that recruitment to the service area had improved significantly and had led to improvements in service delivery.

Officers responded to a number of questions from Members which covered the call back service, use of robotics, plans for election day, call demand patterns, and causes of dissatisfaction.

With reference to calls for Housing and Adult Services, it was agreed that officers would circulate the call data for these to the Committee and include in future reports on call handling.

A request was made for a further update in six months' time.

Resolved:

- i. That the report be noted.
- ii. Call data relating to Housing, Adult Social Care and direct dial calls to officers be circulated to the Committee.
- iii. That a further update be brought to the Committee in six months' time.

Reason: To update the Committee on the service performance of the Customer Centre Telephone Performance.

32. York and North Yorkshire Devolution Update (7.10 pm)

The Head of Corporate Strategy and City Partnerships provided Members with an update on the York and North Yorkshire Devolution. He outlined the next stages in the process as contained within the report.

He responded to a number of questions from Members covering consent to the order, the structure and voting rights of the Joint Committee, the status of Enterprise Zones, public engagement and the readiness of the team once the Mayor is in place.

Resolved: that the update be noted.

Reason: to ensure the Committee had oversight of the Devolution process.

33. Work Plan (7.29 pm)

Members considered the Scrutiny Work Plan for the remaining period of the current administration.

The Chair noted that there were plans for the Scrutiny function to be part of the Member training package.

Resolved:

- i. That the Work Plan be noted.
- ii. That s106 agreements be added to the future Work Plan.

Reason: To ensure the Committee had an overview of the work programme.

Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair placed on record his thanks to Members for their contribution to the Committee. He also thanked Democratic Services officers and in particular the Head of Civic, Democratic and Scrutiny Services, for the support provided to Members.

Cllr J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.32 pm].

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Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee

25 September 2023

Report of the Corporate Director of Place

Castle Gateway Update

Summary

1. The Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee have requested an update on the Castle Gateway. This is a short covering report to introduce the item, which will be supplemented by a PowerPoint presentation, Annex 1, and a verbal update at the Scrutiny meeting itself.

Background

2. In April 2018, the Council's Executive approved the [Castle Gateway masterplan](#), providing a new vision (informed by extensive engagement) to help shape the future transformation of this large area of the city.

Work on Castle Gateway was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. A comprehensive update on the regeneration of the Castle Gateway, including its next delivery stages, was then [reported to Executive in June 2022 \(Agenda pages 47 - 68\)](#), and a number of decisions were taken as follows:

- (i) That the inclusion of the new public realm at Castle and Eye of York in the council's round two Levelling Up Fund bid be noted.
- (ii) That, subject to planning permission being secured, officers be instructed to prepare tender documents to procure a contractor for Castle and Eye of York so that the procurement is ready to proceed should the Levelling Up Fund bid be successful
- (iii) That the termination of the NEC3 PSSC with Wates to produce a RIBA Stage 4 design and construction price for Castle Mills be noted
- (iv) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Place, in

consultation with the Director of Governance, to take such steps as are necessary to procure a construction contractor to complete the detail design/costing and subsequent construction of the proposed apartments, pedestrian/cycle bridge and riverside park at Castle Mills, and to bring a further report to Executive on the Castle Mills business case before proceeding into the construction contract based upon tendered price.

(v) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Place to submit details to secure the necessary statutory consent under s106 of the Highways Act 1980 from the Secretary of State for the new bridge over the Foss navigation and to enter in to a build over agreement with Yorkshire Water in respect of the sewer running across the Castle Mills development

(vi) That the decision on whether to build a multistorey car park (MSVP) at St George's Field be deferred until Executive has a construction price for Castle Mills

(vii) That officers be instructed to collect more data on parking demand, further engage with city centre businesses and stakeholders, and explore alternative options to maximise surface car parking provision at St George's Field to inform the future decision on car parking replacement.

Several key factors have changed in relation to the Castle Gateway over the last 14 months since these decisions were taken. A presentation/verbal update will be given at the Scrutiny meeting on 25 September 2023, which will cover:

- what has changed since the Executive decisions taken in June last year
- what these changes mean for the Castle Gateway
- next steps and timescales for future City of York Council decisions

Consultation

3. The Castle Gateway regeneration has engaged extensively with the public, residents, and communities through the My Castle Gateway project over a period of several years. The overarching regeneration masterplan was overseen throughout that period by the Castle Gateway Advisory Group, which comprises of key stakeholders including York Museums Trust and English Heritage (both of whom have been invited to the Scrutiny meeting on 25 September 2023).

Options

4. This section is not applicable to this covering report as there are no options being presented to the Scrutiny meeting.

Analysis

5. This section is not applicable to this covering report as there are no options presented.

Council Plan

6. The regeneration of the Castle Gateway was one of the priorities set out in the "Making History, Building Communities" 2019-23 Council Plan.

The draft "One City, for all" 2023-27 Council Plan is currently working its way through the political decision-making process. It is therefore envisaged that any future decisions relating to Castle Gateway will be assessed under the new Council Plan framework (subject to its approval at Executive and Full Council on 14/21 September 2023).

Implications

7. There are no implications from this report as it is only a project update for Scrutiny at this stage.

Risk Management

8. This is an update report to Scrutiny only, with no decisions required. A decision report will be taken to Executive in due course, which will include a full assessment of risks relating to the decisions being taken at that stage.

Recommendations

9. That Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee receives the Castle Gateway update.

Reason: To keep the committee updated.

Contact Details

Author:

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Kathryn Daly
Head of City Development
Housing, Economy & Regeneration
kathryn.daly@york.gov.uk

Neil Ferris
Corporate Director of Place

Report Approved



Date 13/9/23

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *Not applicable*

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

[Castle Gateway masterplan](#) – This masterplan was adopted by Executive in April 2018, providing a new vision to help shape the future transformation of this large area of the city.

[Executive in June 2022 \(Agenda pages 47 - 68\)](#) – This report was a comprehensive update on the regeneration of the Castle Gateway, including its next delivery stages.

Annexes

Annex 1 Castle Gateway Presentation

Abbreviations

Not applicable

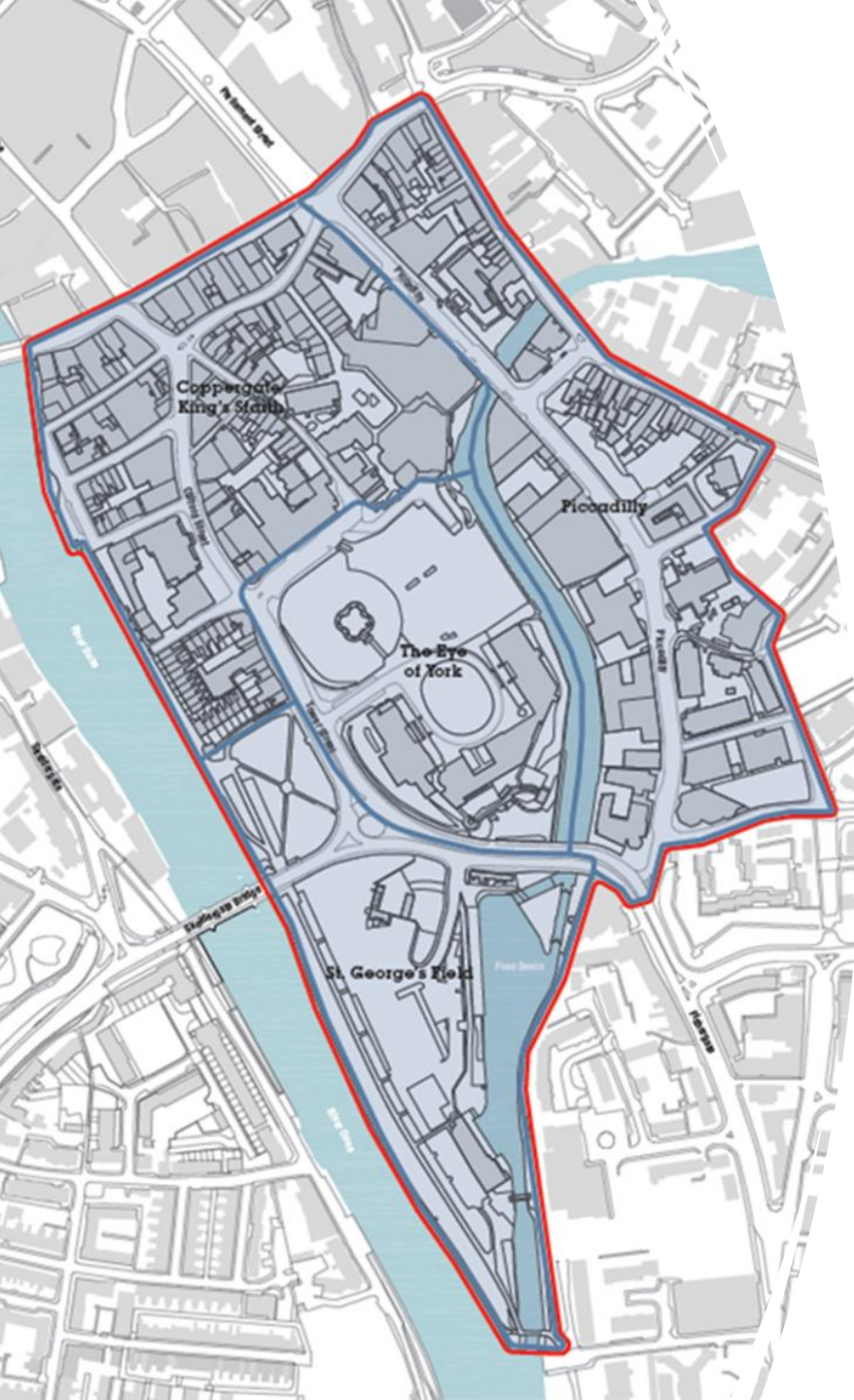


Castle Gateway

Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee – 25 September 2023

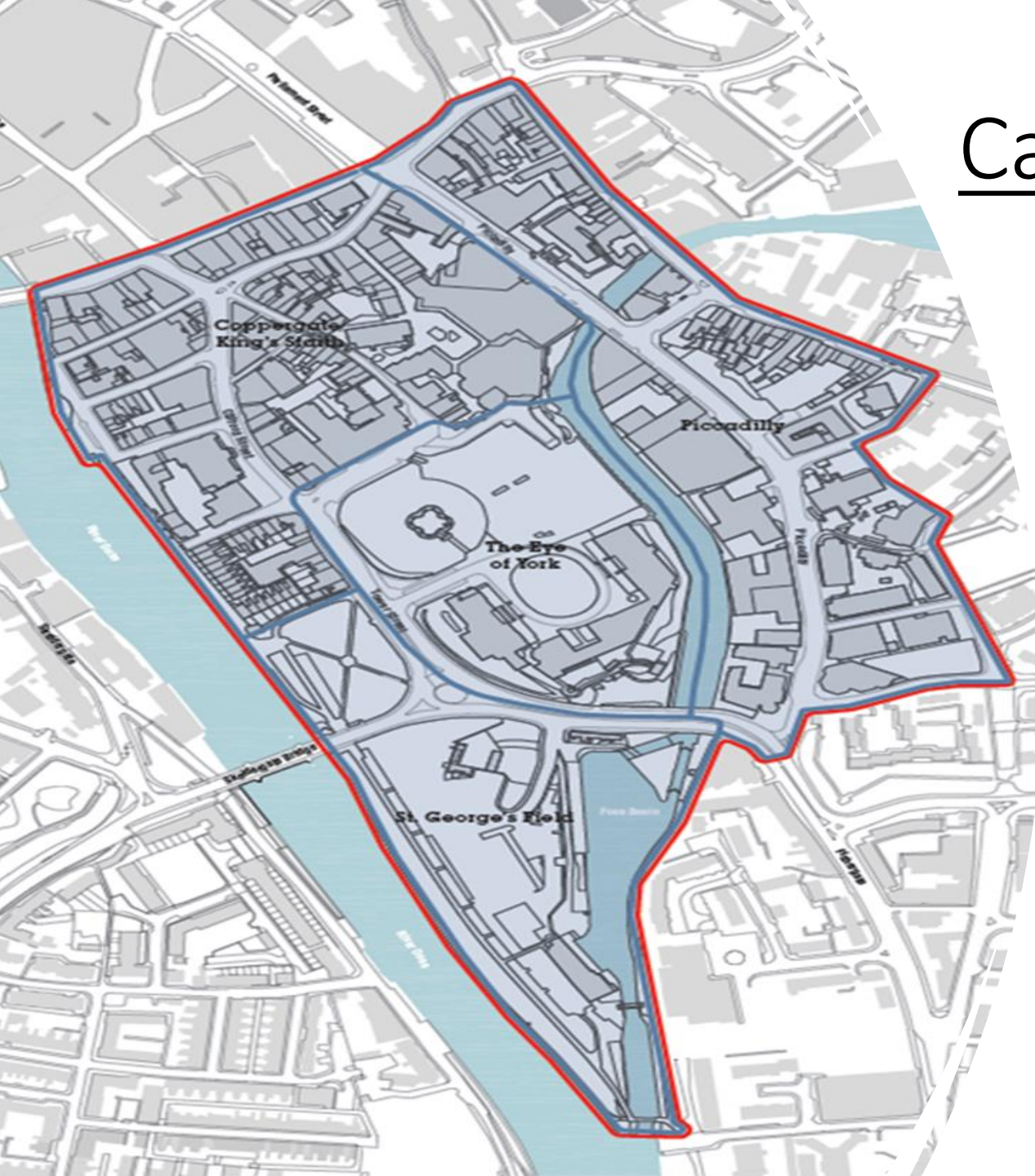


Original aims of the Masterplan



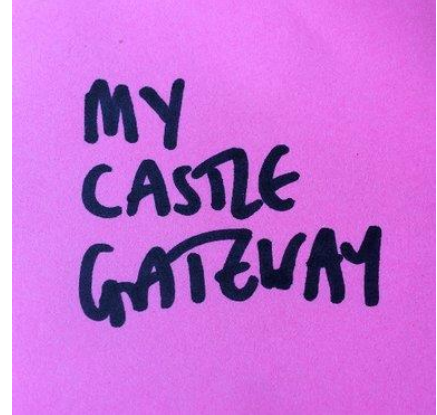
1. Act as a catalyst to regenerate this rundown part of the city
2. Castle and Eye of York heart of the masterplan
3. Enhance the setting of regionally significant historic assets
4. Enhanced cultural and heritage offer, including event space – building on the City's USP
5. Create a new multifunctional public realm and events space in the city centre for residents and visitors
6. Focus on sustainable transport and connectivity - pedestrian and cycle routes
7. Reduce vehicle journeys inside inner ring road
8. Provide new city centre homes, including affordable homes

Castle Gateway Components



- Castle & Eye of York (Heart of the Masterplan)
- Castle Mills
- St Georges Field Car Park
- 18-21 Piccadilly
- Foss Basin

“My Castle Gateway” Engagement



- Ongoing conversation since 2017 through the RIBA 1/2/3 design stages to planning
- ‘My’ approach to engagement:
 - **Build a brief** using diverse range of people’s needs and ideas - Make these ideas and differing perspectives visible
 - **Explore Challenges** cultivating an open public debate about complex issues, decisions and compromises throughout the design and development
- Informed by early masterplan contributions, the main themes for the ‘Open Brief’ engagement were as follows:
 - Gathering Playfully
 - Gathering Green
 - Gathering with Water
 - Gathering with Heritage
 - Gathering Together
- These themes shaped the focus of the design of the schemes.

Open Briefs Created:
Aug 2017 [My Castle Gateway masterplan](#)
March 2019 [Piccadilly](#)
May 2020 [Castle and Eye of York new public space](#)
Aug 2020 [Tower Gardens](#)



History of Decision Making

- Reports to the Executive:
 - ‘York’s Southern Gateway’, October 2015
 - ‘York Castle Gateway’, January 2017
 - ‘The Castle Gateway Masterplan’, April 2018
 - ‘Castle Gateway phase one delivery strategy’, January 2020
 - *COVID PANDEMIC – Programme Paused*
 - ‘Update on Castle Gateway and Business Case Review’, October 2020
 - ‘Castle Gateway Update report’, June 2022

June 2022 Report to Executive

Castle Mills:

- 1) Noted the termination of the NEC3 PSSC with Wates to produce a RIBA Stage 4 design and construction price for **Castle Mills** due to not being able to reach a satisfactory outcome on identified challenges.
- 2) Delegated authority to procure a construction contractor to complete the detail design/costing and subsequent construction of the proposed **Castle Mills** scheme. Report to be brought back to Executive with construction costs for approval to proceed.
- 3) Delegate authority to proceed with securing the necessary statutory consent under s106 of the Highways Act 1980 from the Secretary of State for the new bridge over the Foss navigation and to enter into a build over agreement with Yorkshire Water in respect of the sewer running across the Castle Mills development.

June 2022 Report to Executive

Castle and Eye of York

- 4) Approved the inclusion of the proposed public realm at **Castle and Eye of York** in the Council's round two **Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid**.
- 5) Approval to **prepare tender documents** to procure a contractor, to be ready to proceed with procurement should the Levelling Up Fund bid be successful - (preparation of docs subject to planning permission being secured) - to ensure the **Castle and Eye of York** scheme was able to deliver in the LUF timeframes.

St George's Field

- 6) **Defer the decision** on whether to build a **multi-storey car park ("MSCP") at St George's Field** until the Executive have a construction price for Castle Mills, allowing for further evidence to be collected to inform whether the MSCP still represented the best alternative replacement parking solution for the closure of Castle Car Park.
- 6) Officers instructed to collect more data on parking demand, further engage with city centre businesses and stakeholders, and explore alternative options to maximise surface car parking provision at **St George's Field** to inform the future decision on car parking replacement.

Funding Sources

There has always been a funding gap in the business case for the delivery of the heart of the Castle Gateway Masterplan. The approved business case looked at how the enabling elements were funded.

Revenue Generating Schemes “Enablers”

- **Castle Mills** – anticipated to fund the replacement parking solution at St George’s Field (MSCP) and/or potentially contribute to public realm if external funding not secured
- **17-21 Piccadilly** – anticipated to contribute to the delivery of the masterplan
- **Foss Basin** – anticipated to fund and contribute to the Foss Basin improvements

External funding

- **Active Travel Fund** – Funding the Tower Street Crossing (*inner ring road*) - secured
- **West Yorkshire Transport Fund** - secured
 - Pedestrian/Cycle route and bridge over Foss to Castle Mills
 - Bus stop and Highway improvements on Tower Street and Clifford Street
- **Levelling Up Fund (Castle Gateway elements included as part of wider city centre applications)** – Both applications have been unsuccessful to the first two rounds of the Levelling Up Fund, and unsuccessful at the final stage for MHCLG funding

What has changed?

- **Work paused on Castle Gateway during Covid**
- **Scheme costs** across all projects have gone up, and **sales market for apartments not matching cost inflation** – this has reduced the likely revenue generation from Castle Mills that was intended to fund the replacement parking solution
- **Interest rates have increased** impacting on the Council's borrowing costs
- Due to **reduced revenue generation** and **increased risk** associated with the council delivering the schemes, they can no longer be relied on as enablers which support the delivery of the masterplan
- **Building Regulations – National Changes** – planning amendments likely to be required on Castle Mills scheme, possibly requiring new application

What has changed?

- **Long term surface level capacity increased at St George's Field car park compared to business case due to**
 - Environment Agency works taking fewer permanent spaces
 - Foss Basin apartments not going ahead
 - Proposed quantum of coach parking becoming less critical across the city centre
- As a result, the **cost per additional space provided by the MSCP is significantly higher**
- **Foss Basin apartments** proposal not possible due to **Environment Agency** objection - removing revenue generation potential and retaining surface level parking capacity in SGF

What has changed?

- Off the back of the Castle Gateway masterplan, specifically the masterplan for Piccadilly, **significant private sector investment has been invested in this area:**
 - *46-50 Piccadilly (Hampton by Hilton),*
 - *60 Piccadilly (Ryedale House),*
 - *23 Piccadilly (Marriott Courtyard Hotel),*
 - *36-44 Piccadilly (Banana Warehouse)*
 - *Partial implementation of Piccadilly highway scheme – ongoing delivered by developers at each scheme.*
- Coppergate one way implemented
- Decision taken to dispose of 17-21 Piccadilly to a Registered Provider to deliver a 100% affordable housing scheme in the city centre, however marketing of site generated insufficient interest

What this means for Castle Gateway

- Enabling schemes are less able to financially support the delivery of the heart of the masterplan
- Long term capacity at St Georges Field surface level higher, therefore although still an overall reduction in spaces, retains a greater number of spaces in the city centre
- Main dependency that remains is subject to the importance of addressing the remaining lost parking capacity and revenue
- The challenge of reprovision of Blue Badge parking is also important

Current position / Next steps

- **Scheme review underway** looking at all aspects of the Castle Gateway masterplan and options for next steps
- Targeting a decision-making report at **November 2023 Executive** to agree a way forward

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Meeting:	Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee
Meeting date:	25/09/2023
Report of:	Claire Foale Assistant Director Policy and Strategy
Portfolio of:	Leader, Portfolio Holder Corporate Services, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships

Scrutiny Report: Resident Consultation and Engagement

Subject of Report

1. To explore how the council engages residents, this report shares the approach taken to consult and engage residents in three different consultations - Our Big Conversation, Our Big Conversation Transport and the Blue Badge access consultation (August 2023).

Policy Basis

2. The Council's Resident Engagement Strategy was approved by Executive in April 2021. It is based on good practice developed by the Local Government Association in consultation with local authorities "the New Conversation Guide" and the Local Government Authority engagement framework, "Continuum of Involvement" sometimes known as the Ladder of Engagement.
3. Although not all consultations are statutory, consultations are increasingly becoming grounds for successful judicial reviews as they can lead to "unlawful decisions"¹. The LGA's New Conversation Guide provides a toolkit to support officers develop and deliver consultations with this in mind.

¹ [Where others went wrong.pdf \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

4. The draft council plan considered by Council on 21 September 2023, has set out several actions that require officers to listen and learn to community groups and the lived experience of residents to help shape proposals and plans.

Recommendations

5. Scrutiny are invited to:
 - a) Note the contents in this report.
 - b) Consider requirements to ensure the Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement plan encourages the widest possible participation by being inclusive and accessible.
 - c) Consider the actions taken/proposed following the lessons learned as a result of the Blue Badge access consultation.
 - d) Make recommendations about how the council could deliver resident consultation and engagement going forward.

Background

6. Failure to ensure we have 'resilient cohesive communities who are empowered and able to shape and deliver services' is recognised as a Key Corporate Risk (KCR9), The risk notes that the council needs to engage in meaningful consultation with communities to ensure decisions taken reflect the needs of residents whilst encouraging them to deliver services that the council is no longer able to.
7. The majority of community engagement is focused on engaging specific communities, rather than engaging all residents on city-wide issues. For example, the council has successfully worked with NESTA to work with parents and front line services to co-design and test different ways of delivering early-year services. [A fairer start local: York | Nesta](#)
8. A council-wide approach to engaging residents on city-wide issues was approved by Executive in April 2021. This, the Resident Engagement Strategy, aimed to better support delivery of the council plan, demonstrate how the council listens to residents to inform development of strategies and proposals. It drew on the 'my'

engagement programme that supported Castle Gateway and York Central.

9. Resident engagement to inform the 10-year strategies (climate, economy, health and wellbeing, and now transport) became a single resident engagement programme “Our Big Conversation”. It aimed to consolidate feedback, share principles and assumptions, learning from previous engagement activity, and making best use of available budget to ensure conversations join up and inform strategic direction.
10. By taking this approach, we were able to ensure greater inclusivity by actively engaging with target communities, including those with protected characteristics with the ambition of facilitating a discussion that everyone can be part of. In addition, the approach taken was to proactively gather and present to members a wide range of views and different perspectives.

Council consultations

11. At any one time, the council can be consulting residents on up to 60 different decisions, policies or proposals, with hundreds more if you include statutory consultations such as traffic regulation orders or planning applications. The vast majority of council consultations operate as business as usual with residents engaging and results informing decision session. The process is well-tested and operating successfully. There are some notable exceptions, see below.
12. The council’s resident consultation and engagement strategy is summarised based on the Local Government Association’s Continuum of Involvement²ⁱ and draws on best practice and case studies in the LGA’s New Conversations Guide to Engagement³.
13. It describes how for engagement to be successful, both council and residents need to know exactly what it is for. The objectives below show the different levels of engagement:

² [Working in partnership – how councils can work with the voluntary and community sector to increase civic participation | Local Government Association](#)

³ [New conversations 2: LGA Guide to Engagement | Local Government Association](#)

Information giving	There is little scope to comment or influence the decisions that are being made. We do need to explain what is happening and be transparent
Consultation	There is little scope to influence the decisions that are being made but there is room to work with residents on what happens next.
Co-production	There is some scope to influence the decision that will be taken and we are open to alternatives.
Citizen power	There is a lot of room to shape the decision/service and what it is that we are deciding on. It is important that we have well-informed and involved sections of the community to help with this.
	The decision or service is up for grabs and there's potential to work in partnership with local people. We are offering long-term involvement.

14. Typically, the council will “consult” on proposals and invite residents to share feedback about proposals via an online survey. For larger projects, such as developing the Dementia Strategy, MyCastleGateway or Early-Year Services, the council facilitates opportunities for co-production with key community groups.
15. There is no central team responsible for leading the council’s full range of resident engagement and consultation, and instead roles are shared between:
 - Services who commission and develop the consultation and engagement approach, facilitate discussions with partners or community groups (such as in workshops) and analyse survey results. Some services also engage specific communities, such as the Youth Council, York Access Forum or Age Friendly York.
 - Corporate Services who run electronic consultation surveys, summarise feedback and provide expertise about questions and survey tools. These are surveys for both internal and resident audiences and approximately 60+ are live at any one point; and provide expertise about reaching different audiences and the accessibility aspects to consider; and provides expertise about how to reach audiences and promote consultations and engagement activities.
 - Some Corporate Services teams are externally funded to engage residents on Major Capital projects and the Local Transport Strategy for example.
16. The vast majority of consultations are run internally with the cost to officer time only. This leads to a mixed economy of consultations with some high quality and funded and some delivered as part of business as usual. The cost to run consultations varies significantly, for

example: Our Big Conversation June 2022-August 2023 cost £100k whereas the budget consultation (including focus groups) cost £25k. Typically, the council does not fund consultations although external funders might, for example the Department of Transport is funding the Local Transport Strategy consultation.

Our Big Conversation

17. The Our Big Conversation consultation and engagement programme iteratively explored different aspects of transport issues and opportunities in York since 2021, specifically in the context of the economy, climate change and health and wellbeing, but also exploring how people access and engage in the city centre.
18. It included an attitudinal survey in Summer 2021 which informed the Climate Change, Health and Wellbeing and Economic strategy development process, the 10-year strategies consultation in Summer 2022, and focus groups commissioned to hear from groups that typically did not engage and were identified through analysis of the representation of Our Big Conversation participants.

Our Big Conversation consultations	2021	2022	2023	Publication
Resident engagement strategy and transport consultation approved	April / May			Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 22 April 2021, 5.30 pm (york.gov.uk) item 123 Agenda for Decision Session - Executive Member for Transport on Tuesday, 11 May 2021, 10.00 am (york.gov.uk) – item 84
My City Centre	March - June			My City Centre Summer Consultation 2021 - My City Centre Results Final Report - York Open Data
Attitudinal survey	June - August			Our Big Conversation Summer 2021 - OBC Final Report - Residents Survey - York Open Data
Targeted focus groups		July		Our Big Conversation 2022 - Datasets - York Open Data

10 Year strategies consultation		June - August		
Budget 2023		November -	January	Agenda for Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects on Thursday, 12 January 2023, 10.00 am (york.gov.uk) item 24
Transport – stage 1: build understanding			February+	Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 14 February 2023, 2.30 pm (york.gov.uk) item 93
Transport – stage 2 targeted engagement			October +	Report not yet published
Transport – stage 3-5			October +	Report not yet published

19. The Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan will be run under the banner and principles set out in Our Big Conversation, incorporating lessons learned throughout the process.
20. The Local Transport Strategy Consultation is funded by Department of Transport, with additional resource funded by the DfT specifically to run the consultation and engagement process.

Our Big Conversation Lessons Learned

21. Residents shared feedback about the Our Big Conversation consultation process in the focus groups, the 10-year strategies consultation and the first phase of the Local Transport Strategy Consultation.
22. This feedback informed the approach proposed for the Local Transport Strategy Consultation. The lessons from resident feedback is summarised below (with links to the feedback in the background reports section of this report):

- a) Only consult or engage if the council is prepared to listen and change the approach
- b) Keep questions open - avoid questions that appear to already have set a course of action
- c) Keep information clear and simple, avoid technical jargon or assumptions about what residents know
- d) Show the benefit of the proposal being consulted on - for different groups - residents are keen to see no one is disadvantaged by a proposal
- e) Provide different ways to provide feedback - some people aren't online or don't like talking in meetings
- f) Ensure events and information is accessible - both for disabled people and for people who don't know the subject matter
- g) Make it relevant - different circumstances will mean different aspects of the proposal are of interest
- h) Promote the different ways to get involved early on - with events in different locations and times
- i) Show the difference feedback has made, ideally in a "we asked, you said, we did" summary

Our Big Conversation - Transport

[Our Big Conversation – City of York Council](#)

- 23. The feedback above was used to inform the Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan which set out five stages of consultation with the first stage arranged to build understanding - both to ensure the consultation would be as inclusive and accessible as possible and to help participants understand the challenges.
- 24. During the first stage, face to face workshops and discussions were held with 8 community or representative groups. These included disabled people, young people, older people, community transport and Black, Asian or Racially Minoritised groups. The workshops shared an accessible version of the engagement plan with participants who were then invited to tell the council how to ensure the consultation would encourage as wide and representative participation as possible. Feedback from these workshops was summarised (**Annex A**) and shared with workshop attendees (as a 'we asked, you said'), with this feedback informing the revised plan and Equality Impact Assessment that will be published in October.
- 25. Four online webinars were held in March 2023 inviting residents to learn more about different aspects of the proposed strategy. The webinars were recorded and published on the council's website.

They took place at different times of the day (to appeal to different personal circumstances) and each of the webinars included a BSL interpreter.

26. As a result of the feedback from community groups in stage one, the Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement plan has been updated to include significantly more opportunities for face to face discussion or workshops targeted at different community groups, highlighting different interests (eg. safe travel for school children)
27. The Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan will be presented to Executive in October 2023. Following phase one community group feedback it will include:
 - A range of accessible communications, including Easy Read, video with subtitles, BSL video, large print, braille and MP3 Audio
 - an online engagement platform to collate feedback, providing maps for residents to indicate transport issues or benefits. The online engagement platform is being assessed to sense check accessibility.
 - Workshop toolkits for schools, ward meetings, and community groups to facilitate discussions with different groups
 - Workshops at all the community groups met in phase one
 - Drop-ins or interactive displays at public spaces, for example Questions at Bus Stops, Display Boards in libraries
 - Focus groups based on an analysis of which groups are under-represented
28. There are several different related consultations taking place over the next few months. The co-benefits of joining these up is currently being explored. For example, the Air Quality Improvement Plan 4 consultation could be aligned and launched with the Local Transport Strategy consultation with opportunities to “cross-promote” the consultations through the different activities already planned to reach community groups involved in the Local Transport Strategy Consultation.
29. **Scrutiny are invited to consider what additional actions they would like the Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan to include to ensure the consultation is as representative and encourages as wide a participation as possible.**

Blue Badge Access Consultation (August 2023)

[Blue Badge access consultation – City of York Council](#)

30. In November 2021 the Council's Executive made the decision to permanently remove the exemption which had allowed blue badge holders vehicular access to Blake Street, Lendal, St. Helen's Square, Goodramgate (between Deangate and King's Square), Church Street, King' Square and Colliergate.
31. The engagement process to reach this decision followed lengthy consultation that effectively begun in November 2020 when the then Executive delegated the decision to consult on broad principles to the then Executive Member. In June 2021, the then Executive Member considered feedback from this consultation and determined to now advertise a permanent Traffic Regulation Order change, which was considered and determined in November 2021.
32. Following the election in May 2023, to support sound and robust decision making that will not be subject to future legal challenge, a consultation has begun to review, and ultimately aim to reverse the November 2021 decision.
33. The access consultation is in three stages which align to two objectives above (see 13). By introducing the more detailed engagement (stage 2 - involve the community), the aim is to better understand the lived-experience, perception and constraints of access and how to overcome these.
 - Stage 1 - Consult - this consultation begun in August and is a consultation on broad principles reflecting those based upon the new administration's manifesto commitments.
 - Stage 2 - Involve - a more detailed engagement is being planned, ideally through workshops and focus groups, to seek feedback from Blue Badge Holders on "how" to facilitate access whilst retaining the integrity of the Hostile Vehicle Measures.
 - Statutory Consultation - Following the detailed engagement to shape the proposals, a statutory consultation may need to take place as a result of the change to the Traffic Regulation Order.

34. The Consult phase of Blue Badge Holder City Centre Access launched on 7 August 2023. At its heart is a short survey, asking residents to consider five different principles. To date there have been over 3,000 online and 550 printed responses
35. To help ensure the consultation is inclusive, the below has/is taking place:
- A video with BSL interpretation explaining the purpose of the consultation has been shared
 - Easy Read is currently being produced
 - MySight York have produced Braille and Audio versions
 - The consultation was sent to all York resident Blue Badge Holders (via mail and email)
 - It was shared with different networks and community groups
 - Paper copies are in all Explore Libraries
 - Customer Services are able to support access enquiries over the phone or 'drop-in's for example, supporting users of BSL with completing the survey using an access terminal
36. On publication, concerns were raised with the disabled community identifying several issues. To understand these, Cllr Lomas met with representatives of the community to identify lessons learned. In tandem, an officer lessons-learned discussion was held to understand how the process could be improved. These are summarised below and, where possible, will be used to inform the next phase of the consultation:
- a) **Setting the standards:** The external funding of the Local Transport Strategy consultation has set a "gold standard" that the council is not funded to replicate - an engagement toolkit will be produced sharing best practice and officer training scheduled to standardise consultations as cost-effectively as possible. A consultation checklist will be introduced to support officers (draft in **Annex B**)
- Sharing feedback:** from the outset, it should be easy for participants to share feedback. The council will share how to get involved from the outset and explore additional opportunities with the York Disabled Residents Forum (YDRF) and the York Access Forum (YAF).
- b) **Sharing feedback with different services:** Survey results are generally published on the open data platform with results shared

or summarised at Directorate Management Team and/or Corporate Management Team meetings. To support this an internal policy network has been established to share key insights from different networks and community groups in advance of key policies, such as developing the Council Plan and informing the draft Local Transport Strategy.

- c) **Sharing feedback with participants:** it isn't always clear the difference feedback has made, or the different perspectives shared. We will explore how to share the feedback and difference it made with participants using the "we asked, you said, we did" approach.
- d) **Working in partnership:** the approach taken to invite different community groups to consult could lead to stronger partnerships with key groups invited to comment pre-launch.
- e) **Social Model of Disability:** The Model was unanimously agreed by council in October 2022 however has not been translated into policy to guide officer action, particularly around language and format. A policy paper will be co-produced with the disabled community and used to inform how consultations are communicated and set out going forward.
- f) **Accessible communications:** To encourage the widest participation, communications and participation should be accessible in a wide variety of formats. Healthwatch reported on Accessible Information⁴ which identified several different actions for partners, including the council, to develop more accessible communications. The corporate style guide will be updated to ensure standards for accessible communications are clear, this includes standards for Easy Read, and how to support BSL interpretation.
- g) **Sharing purpose:** Different aspects of the consultation weren't understood - for example why the council was only consulting on principles instead of "getting on with it", with the policy and legislation that supports the consultation not specified. Clearly communicating the purpose of the consultation will be included in the toolkit, together with clarity about the intended audience and the analysis process (see checklist, Annex B).

⁴ [Accessible Information Survey Findings | Healthwatch](#)

- h) **Corporate oversight:** no single service is responsible for oversight or setting the standards for the wide range of engagement activities taking place. With a key aspect of the draft Council Plan focused on listening and learning from people with lived experience, officers will consider how best respond to the above lessons and whether there is a benefit in providing a stronger corporate service focused on setting the standard for engagement activities and sharing resident feedback.
- i) **Executive member involvement:** All city-wide consultations will be overseen by the relevant Executive Member. This includes early briefings about the purpose and proposed structure of the consultation, together with oversight of the consultation design itself. Additional guidance has been provided to support officers design the consultation (**Annex C**).

37. Scrutiny are invited to consider the actions taken in response to the lesson learned (above)

Consultation Analysis

38. The lessons learned shared in this report were from multiple sources listed below:
- Our Big Conversation: Focus Groups
 - Our Big Conversation: 10-Year Strategies analysis of comments
 - Local Transport Strategy Consultation: Stage 1 - community engagement
 - Lessons Learned - Cllr Lomas discussion with York Disabled Resident Group
 - Lessons Learned - internal officer group

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Date:	13 September 2023

Background papers

Executive April 2021: Resident engagement strategy

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MId=12510&Ver=4> item 123

Executive November 2022: 10 Year strategies

[Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 22 November 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)
item 46

Climate Emergency and Policy Scrutiny Committee October 2022: item 12 -
Climate Change Strategy (Our Big Conversation detailed feedback)

[Agenda for Climate Emergency Policy and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 4 October 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Annex B [Annex B FINAL OBC Phase 2 Focus Group Discussions Findings Report 1.pdf \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Annex D [PowerPoint Presentation \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Executive February 2023: Local Transport Strategy engagement

[Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 14 February 2023, 2.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) –
item 93

The Local Transport Strategy Engagement Plan [Annex D.pdf \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Audit and Governance March 2023 - Key Corporate Risks

[Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 15 March 2023, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 47

Annexes

- Annex A : Transport Workshops what you told us
 - Annex B : Draft consultation checklist
 - Annex C : Questionnaire design guidance 2023
-

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Community workshops about transport

"You said" summary

In Spring and Summer 2023, City of York Council held a series of workshops with stakeholders from diversity, youth, SEND, heritage, older people and accessibility groups to better understand how we can work together when we launch our transport consultation.

Each group gave us incredibly useful feedback and we're taking on board everything that was said.

Some key themes are listed below:

- Everybody uses transport in some form - the consultation needs to speak to everyone
- Analyse where respondents are coming from and identify any gaps, in gender, age, religion etc, to ensure as diverse a population as possible can take part

Ensure venues used for events are fully accessible



Make sure our thoughts are listened to - we want to make a difference





- Show how all the different policies and strategies fit together and the steps each goes through
- Go to where people are - come and see us at schools, libraries and groups
- Fully update the map of all stakeholders, groups and other interested people
- Don't use jargon or leading questions
- Encourage ward and parish council discussions
- Hold workshops and focus groups in ways that different people can share their experiences and aspirations for transport
- Produce an information pack for groups to use themselves

Come with us on a journey, as a student or disabled person, and experience the network in our eyes



Identify important problems with citizens





- Promote the consultation online and off-line - for example, create a postcard to distribute and share details of events
- Demonstrate that different people have different experiences on the network
- Respond to questions and specific issues during the consultation period, not just at the end
- Create a schools pack for primary and secondary age groups, and host specific workshops for young people
- Don't rely on putting materials online - we need to see paper copies and in-person events being held
- Make sure all materials are fully accessible and have easy to read versions

**For more information, visit:
www.york.gov.uk/OurBigConversation**

Use existing networks and in-person groups to reach people who are not online



Show us the results in 'You Said, We Did' updates & reports



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Consultation checklist: draft - this checklist is to be completed as if you are writing to the resident to help inform how you approach your consultation and to consider the different aspects of an inclusive and engaging consultation.

Name of consultation

Start date xxx

End date xxx

What are we consulting on?

Overview of the proposal, purpose of the consultation, what's been already agreed, if resident feedback can influence the decision and / or implementation plan, how the consultation maps to the Engagement Framework *Contact Business Intelligence Team*

The benefits of the proposal

Include any reduced cost to the council, align benefits to the Four Core Commitments (Equalities, Affordability, Climate, Health)

What council policies impact on the proposal?

Are there council, regional or national policies that already cover an aspect of the proposal? Has resident feedback already informed a related proposal that you can use to inform this one? What other policy considerations are there?

Contact Policy Team

Is this consultation contributing to the development of a Human Rights and Equalities Impact Assessment?

If there is an impact on any of the protected characteristics then a HREIA will be needed to confirm how the different ways to provide feedback takes different needs into account. *Contact Equalities*

Who is the consultation for?

The audience - *Contact Communications Team*

Examples might include:

- Residents
- Businesses
- Different protected characteristics
- Visitors
- Community Organisations
- Councillors
- Public Transport Providers

If all residents, how will you ensure inclusive and accessible?

Contact Access Team

Consultation checklist: draft - this checklist is to be completed as if you are writing to the resident to help inform how you approach your consultation and to consider the different aspects of an inclusive and engaging consultation.

How are you designing your questionnaire?

Before you start writing your questionnaire it is important you are clear about the main aims and objectives. These should then help you to develop your questionnaire more easily and ensure that you are asking questions that will give you the information that you need.

Guidance is available on the intranet (Consultations and Engagement section).

All consultations that are city-wide should be discussed with, and approved by the relevant portfolio holder.

How to comment

Contact Communications Team for guidance **Prepare a comms plan**

List the different accessible ways of collating resident feedback, for example:

- Printed copies of the survey are available in ..., at the following locations ...
- Letters including the survey are being sent direct to ...
- Link to online survey
- Focus groups / 121 interviews
- Community group workshops
- Public space consultations eg. in high streets, parks, etc.

Accessible communications

Contact Communications Team for guidance

Thinking about the different audiences you have identified, what accessible communications and consultation documents will you provide? for example:

- Alternative language
- British Sign Language (BSL) instruction video
- Video with audio description and subtitles
- Easy Read
- Braille, large print and audio
- Video Relay Services (VRS)

What happens to my views?

Summarise from privacy statement **prepare the privacy statement**

How will you share the collated feedback and difference it's made?

Contact Information Compliance Team

Consultation checklist: draft - this checklist is to be completed as if you are writing to the resident to help inform how you approach your consultation and to consider the different aspects of an inclusive and engaging consultation.

What happens next?

When will the feedback be collated, analysed and published?

Which decision is it going to? (**prepare forward plan entry**)

Contact Democratic Service Team

Further information

- Link to service / decisions already made / reports that support
- Link to accessible formats of consultation documents (see above)

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Designing an effective questionnaire
(Internal CYC Document based on LGA/LA Guidance)

This document does not cover [BI Guidelines around electronic surveys](#), nor [accessibility](#). This guidance provides you with hints and tips on:

- The design and structure of your questionnaire
- Question types
- What can have a negative impact

Before you start writing your questionnaire it is important that you are clear about the main aims and objectives. These should then enable you to develop your questionnaire more easily and ensure that you are asking questions that will give you the information that you need. The structure of your questionnaire doesn't have to follow the same order as the aims and objectives but should be logical from the respondent's point of view. Use the following additional hints and tips to help you design an effective questionnaire:

- In practice, there is no right or wrong question or answer. Your questions should be linked to the data you need to obtain. Bear in mind that different questions can get different answers.
- Whenever possible, a questionnaire should follow some form of natural flow, reflecting a train of thought, a logical conversation, or a sequence of events, depending on the subject matter.
- Include a simple introduction – this can help encourage participation. In this you should tell the respondent:
 - who you are
 - the purpose of your survey and why you want their input
 - a reason why they should take part
 - how long it will take them
 - terms of anonymity and confidentiality
 - how the results will be used
 - when and how they will receive feedback
 - who they can contact if they have for any queries
- It is always best to start with a simple question. Sensitive topics should be explored through appropriately sensitive or even indirect questions and are best to be placed towards the end of the survey.
- Group similar questions together – you may want to include section headings if appropriate.
- Questions should be relevant, concise, clear and efficient. Most people make the mistake of asking too many and questions that they will not use. You want to get a good response so clear and concise questions will help to achieve this. Be really strict when thinking about your questions – ask yourself how will this question add insight or understanding?

- Only one question should be asked at a time- if you ask two questions in one sentence then you will be unclear about what an answer is referring to.
- Care should be taken to ensure that respondents are not lead to answer in a particular way. For example, any facts to be communicated to the respondent should be set out in a neutral manner. Positive phrases such as “the proposal is a good idea” in a question without a balancing negative phrase may lead the respondent to a positive view.
- Think about the type of questions you are asking. Are you asking questions that can be answered:
 - Accurately (What is your age?)
 - Through memory (e.g. how many times in the past 12 months have you visited....?)
 - Through a best choice of options, none of which may correspond precisely to the respondent’s view/behaviour (e.g. Which of these three statements comes closest to describing your view...?)
 - Through estimation, guesswork or even speculation
- Appropriate answers should be available to reflect the reality of the range of responses. Available answers should be clear and understandable, with little ambiguity as possible and should be phrased to the respondent’s way of thinking/talking.
- Don’t know or No view should be available to the respondent as it is often a perfectly valid answer, and a “not answered” response. You may also need to include a not applicable if necessary.
- Where it is difficult to predict the full range of answers, you could provide an ‘other or please specify’ category with a box to enter free text.
- Where appropriate, consider using questions from previous research as this gives comparability and can enhance the value of the data collected.
- Ask yourself, will your respondents understand your questions and options, be willing to answer your questions and able to answer them.
- Always pilot your questionnaire either with colleagues or people from your target audience. The aim here is to detect any flaws in your questioning and correct these prior to the main survey. This may also help you to change some open questions to questions with options. You may also be able to do a trial analysis on your sample.
- Questionnaires should be formally agreed by all interested parties. It is important that everyone agrees that the aims and objectives will be sufficiently met by the questions asked.

Question types

The type of questions used in your questionnaire play a key role in producing unbiased or relevant responses and the quality of data you receive back. Question types range from open-ended (asking for comments) to closed-ended (yes/no). These are described in more detail below.

1) Open-Ended

Open –ended questions allow people to answer a question in their own words. We want to ensure that people have an opportunity to express their views and feelings and open text boxes can allow respondents to raise issues that you might not of thought of, however, think carefully about your consultation and what you are trying to find out as sometimes respondents might find it difficult to express their feelings, it can take longer for the respondent to complete and analysing comments can be time consuming. The best way to collect comments is by using text boxes as opposed to using lines or a clear space.

2) Closed-Ended

Closed-ended questions include pre-designed answers with a small or large set of choices. When providing a set of choices it is important to cover all the possible answers that are expected. You may also want to include an 'other' category or comments box as it can be difficult to pre-determine all of the possible answers. There are different types of closed questions that you might want to use. This includes:

3) Multiple Choice

This type includes a set of pre-designed answers, for example yes/no/don't know or once/twice/three times).

4) Ranked questions

This type of question can be used when all the choices listed need to be ranked, for example you might ask people to rank how important services are from 1st to 5th Choice. It is important to pilot these questions to ensure that they are clear and will be completed correctly.

5) Rating questions

This type of question can be used when you want to **measure** people's ideas, opinions, knowledge or feelings, for example you might ask people to what extent they agree or disagree with something as demonstrated below:

6) Balanced vs. unbalanced rating scales

A five-point rating scale is usually sufficient and easily understood by people. However, there is no set limit on the number of categories to use. Using too few could give less useful information and too many could make it hard to answer. It is better to provide a balanced scale as it means that an equal number of positive and negative options are included which helps to avoid bias.

Example 1 – balanced

Excellent Good Average Poor Very Poor

This example includes two positives, two negatives and a neutral midpoint.

Example 2 – unbalanced

Excellent Very good Good Average Poor

There are some occasions in which an unbalanced scale is suitable. For example in a customer satisfaction survey, few customers may say that something is unimportant. In the example below 'important' will become the midpoint.

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Not important

7) Not applicable (N/A) / Don't know / No view

It is advisable to allow people to opt out if they don't know/have no view or if it does not apply to them as it will help increase the response rate and quality of data collected.

The following aspects can have a negative impact on your consultation:

- Excessively lengthy questionnaires – consider whether a question is required to meet the aims and objectives, or whether it is “nice to know”.
- Lack of honesty/transparency
- Excessive “about you” section – personal data should be relevant
- Repetitive questioning
- Lack of opportunity for respondents to have their say – when asking closed questions you may also want to ask ‘why do you say that’ or ‘provide further comments below’. This encourages respondents to feel that the council is interested and values their views. It may prove beneficial to the consultation as it may cover aspects that are not covered in the questionnaire, provide other opinions and give a breadth of views.

Scrutiny Work Plan

Meeting Date	Committee	Agenda Item
25/09/2023	CSMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Gateway update • Resident engagement
26/09/2023	EPAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Badge Holder Access
16/10/2023	CSMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance & Performance Monitor Q1 • Climate Change • Blue Badge Applications • Voter ID
17/10/2023	CCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance & Performance Monitor Q1 • York Learning • York Explore
18/10/2023	HHASC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022/23 Q4 and 2023/24 Q1 Finance and Performance update for Housing • 2022/23 Q4 and 2023/24 Q1 Finance and Performance report for Health and Adult Social Care • Recommissioning of the Resettlement Pathway • LD Provision
24/10/2023	EPAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance & Performance Monitor Q1 • Local Transport Plan • Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan • Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) looking back/looking ahead
07/11/2023	CCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Hubs • Digital Inclusion
13/11/2023	HHASC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care Strategy • Reablement Contract • Urgent care delivery review in York and the East Coast
27/11/2023	CSMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Central Update • Devolution

Committees

CSMC	Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee
EPAT	Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee
HHASC	Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
CCC	Children, Culture and Communities Scrutiny Committee

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