

Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee & Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee - Commissioned Joint Committee
Date	25 October 2021
Present	Councillors Baker, Crawshaw, Daubeney, Fenton, Hollyer, Hook, Hunter, Lomas (Substitute), Musson, Norman, Pearson, D Taylor and K Taylor (Substitute)
Apologies	Councillors Douglas and Rowley

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### **1. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interest not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interests that he might have in respect of the business on the agenda. Cllr Lomas advised that she held a blue badge and that she had spoken on access to the city centre on behalf of people with disabilities. The FSB Regional Chair noted that as well as being on the FSB he ran a courier company. The Chair declared a personal non prejudicial interest as his mother sat on the steering group of the Human Rights Equalities Board. There were no further declarations of interest.

### **2. Public Participation**

It was reports that there were no registered speakers under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **3. City Centre, Vision, Accessibility and Traffic Regulation**

At their meeting on November 18 2021, the Executive were to consider a number of reports covering the future vision of the city centre and ongoing accessibility and regulation of vehicles for the city centre. In relation to this, Members considered a report that informed them of:

- The Council's emergency response to Covid
- The Council's Equality Duties
- The context of the four reports that Executive are going to consider,
- The structure of the work and consultations undertaken to date

- Emerging recommendations
- Emerging content of reports
- The latest context as to the city centre recovery
- The work undertaken to review Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measures

The Head of Regeneration Programmes gave a presentation on the four decisions in relation to City Centre, Vision, Accessibility and Traffic Regulation that were to be made by the Executive on 18 November. The Chair thanked him for the presentation and invited external attendees to give an overview of their organisations. The Executive Director York (BID), Chief Executive Officer York Civic Trust, and FSB Regional Chair explained the role and work of their organisations. Members were then invited to ask questions of officers and external participants, who responded as follows:

- The Head of Regeneration Programmes noted that there was a mixture of businesses, cafes and restaurants in the city centre doing food deliveries. The Executive Director York BID noted that the picture was complicated and depended on the future of businesses as some independent retailers may look at online retail and deliveries versus the costs of running city centre premises. The FSB Regional Chair suggested that regarding the food hubs, it was only large national businesses that would be able to afford electric vehicles and not small independent businesses. A member noted that moving food hubs to more residential areas in Wards may create different problems.
- The Head of Regeneration Programmes was asked if York Couriers Union had been approached during consultation and the Head of Regeneration Programmes noted that there had been a number of workshops with couriers.
- Regarding the competing interests of road users, the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning noted that cyclists could not cycle on foot streets and added that cyclists could not be licenced in the way that vehicles were. The Corporate Director of Place noted the challenge around making the city centre accessible for all. A member noted that cycles were the chosen mode of transport for some people for mobility reasons.
- The Executive Director York BID noted that York BID had spoken to delivery companies and one company had reported that 60% of their deliveries were made by car. He suggested that the council approach delivery companies to make an informed discussion on delivery modes.

- A member noted that a number of blue badge holders were unhappy with the 8pm foot streets extension and he noted the debate around the early evening economy in the city centre/

[Cllr Taylor left the meeting at 6.32pm]

- The Corporate Director of Place reported that York was moving towards an early evening food economy and the Head of Regeneration Programmes noted the loss of lunchtime trade to city centre cafes and restaurants due to people working from home during the pandemic.

[Cllr Taylor returned to the meeting at 6.34pm]

- The Executive Director York BID noted that the BID was supportive of getting more data on the city centre and noted the need to look at the ambition for the city centre. He suggested that the council could look at the how European neighbours operated their city centres and he noted the growth of the experience economy. A Member noted that there was a dichotomy in terms of a family friendly city centre in terms of access to the city centre. In relation to the early evening economy in European cities whereupon retailers stayed open until later in the evening along with cafes and restaurants, a Member noted that some retailers may not want to stay open beyond 7pm.
- The Chief Executive Officer York Civic Trust noted that there was a need to have a family friendly inclusive and warming city centre that was accessible to all. A Member noted the percentages of working age and retired people that were disabled and noted that if foot streets was to be extended, that thought should be given about how to make the city centre accessible to everyone.

[Cllr Hollyer left the meeting at 6.45pm]

- In response to a Member comment concerning the aesthetics of the city centre, the Corporate Director of Place noted that the government had removed the requirement for planning permission for café licences and this exemption had been extended for a year from September.
- In consideration of what families and children need in the city centre, the Head of Regeneration Programmes advised that a theme of the My City Centre vision was to build more play pave in

the city centre and it was noted that there were generational spaces in York such as Spark. The Executive Director York BID added that café licences had made a difference to the numbers of cafes open during the evening. A Member expressed crime and anti-social behaviour concerns over going into the city centre on an evening.

[Cllr Hollyer returned to the meeting at 6.54pm]

- The Chief Executive Officer York Civic Trust noted the need to look at the aesthetics of public space. A Member expressed concern regarding a focus on the removal of vehicles and a Member noted the limitations of living in a historic city, and encourages a joined up approach, citing Bath and Chester as examples of this. The Head of Regeneration Programmes explained that the council had engaged with other local authorities to look at best practice. The Chief Executive Officer York Civic Trust added that the Trust was undertaking a piece of work on nine European cities that York could work from and he agreed to share this information with the committee. The Executive Director York BID noted that many residents used the city centre and the FSB Regional Chair suggested that there should be ongoing evaluation on the decisions made by the Executive on the city centre.

[Cllr Pearson left the meeting at 7.09pm]

- The Head of Regeneration Programmes was asked and confirmed that the council had consulted with Disabled Motoring UK, who had made a number of recommendations to the council. The Director of Environment, Transport and Planning was asked and explained that Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) could be reviewed at any time and a request had been made to the Secretary of State to run the TROs for longer.

[Cllr Pearson returned to the meeting at 7.13pm]

- The Director of Environment, Transport and Planning was asked and explained that reviewing the success of TROs was part of the rationale for order of the reports that would be presented to the Executive for decision. Responding to a question on anti-terror measures being used to enhance the public realm, the Head of Regeneration Programmes explained that permanent measures could be built into the infrastructure.

During the meeting a number of Members expressed support for the appointment of an Access Officer, as did York Civic Trust. Concerning income from café licences, it was confirmed that income was less than before and officer numbers had not proportionally gone up. The Corporate Director of Place noted that there had been encouragement for café licences. A Member noted the need to make the city centre accessible to all and she encouraged the Executive to follow the social model of disability.

The Chair suggested that Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee could consider the following items in relation to City Centre, Vision, Accessibility and Traffic Regulation:

- Understanding the needs of different businesses (with input from couriers)
- The development of the public realm to deliver different types of behaviour
- Update on York Civic Trust work on 9 cities (Chair to liaise with Chief Executive Officer York Civic Trust on this)

He also suggested that Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee could explore what it means to be a family friendly city.

Resolved: That the discussions held at the meeting be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee at their meeting on 8 November 2021.

Reason: In order to inform the Committee's consideration of all the factors relevant to the Executive on the 18 November 2021.

Cllr Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.28 pm].