

Meeting	Place Scrutiny Committee
Date	24 March 2026
Present	Councillors D Myers (Chair), Healey (Vice-Chair), Fenton, Hook, Clarke, K Taylor, Wells, Whitcroft and Widdowson (Substitute)
In Attendance	Councillor Ravillious – Executive Member for Transport Tom Horner – Head of Transport Policy and Travel Behaviour Joshua Singer – Head of Transport Projects
Apologies	Councillor Vassie

26. Apologies for Absence (5:33pm)

The Committee noted apologies from Cllr Vassie who was substituted by Cllr Widdowson.

Cllr Clarke was welcomed as a member of the committee, replacing Cllr Baxter.

27. Declarations of Interest (5:33pm)

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

Cllr Wells confirmed that she had a non-prejudicial interest as she is a blue badge holder.

Cllr Healey confirmed that he had a non-prejudicial interest as he is a resident of Micklegate ward.

28. Public Participation (5:34pm)

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

Flick Williams spoke on item 5, discussing the implications of the Rougier Route for disabled people. She suggested the report did not contain adequate data to enable members to carry out their scrutiny function, challenging the premise that this scheme would reduce journey times and suggesting assumptions had been made by officers. She cited case law that stated hackney carriages to be public transport, and suggested people reliant on taxis often needed to switch between hackney carriages and private hire cabs purely based on availability. She noted that while the report focused on blue badge holders' parking rights, it did not acknowledge their right to access the foot streets by taxi. She highlighted the continued absence of an Equalities Impact Assessment, which should be created at the start of a proposal and maintained as a living document. She concluded by urging members to strongly recommend exemptions for taxis and blue badge holders, in order to avoid potential legal challenges to this proposal.

Roger French spoke on item 5 in support of the proposal, on behalf of York Bus Forum (YBF). He stated that the initiative was a crucial step toward creating a more reliable, inclusive, and sustainable transport system for the city's growing population and visitors, who were currently delayed by traffic congestion. He stated that YBF believed this congestion to be primarily due to an absence of enforcement measures, and the volume of ordinary cars negatively impacted the bus services that the Rougier Route was intended to benefit. He said the Rougier Route should be implemented as part of a more comprehensive strategy across the city centre to alleviate traffic congestion, and doing nothing was not an option. He fully endorsed the Rougier Route and committed the YBF to working alongside the council to reduce congestion.

John Iredale spoke on item 5, as chair of the local residents association, specifically regarding the effect the proposed changes would have on the residents of Bishophill. He noted that a recent meeting of the residents association had highlighted concerns such as the possibility of creating a "rat run" along Victor Street (especially for taxis leaving Bishophill); concerns about exit and entry into Bishophill if the Victoria Bar were closed, suggesting this would cause a major problem. He noted that the residents association welcomed the amended scheme's numberplate recognition, and that overall people felt this would improve public transport.

Robyn Jankel spoke on item 5 on behalf of the York Cycle Campaign (YCC), supporting the route. She asked the committee to recommend the scheme proceed without dilution. She advised that YCC supported a full-time bus gate for simplicity and safety reasons. Regarding exemptions, she urged the council to reserve the bus gate for buses, cycles and emergency vehicles, as allowing more traffic through the gate would dilute the scheme,

discouraging residents from switching to bus or active travel. She supported immediate introduction of a 20mph speed limit as part of the trial for the core area of the scheme and suggested that the minor inconvenience to drivers represented a significant increase to the safety of active travel users.

Anthony May spoke on item 5 in strong support of the proposal, on behalf of York Civic Trust. His only criticism was that he did not understand why the 20mph speed limit was now a longer term project. He supported the inclusion of hackney carriages but expressed concern regarding private hire vehicles. He agreed regarding blue badge holders where there were reasonable adjustments. He stated that he hoped the committee would support the scheme. Professor May also made a point regarding item 6 on the Local Transport Strategy – which referred to the mayor's Local Transport Policy. He said he worried this was not reflective of the Council's priorities, especially with regard to movement and place, suggesting the committee review the Local Transport Policy as it was being developed.

Andy D'Agorne spoke on item 5 on behalf of York Green Party, he supported the scheme but posed some specific points. He suggested applying the 20mph limit as a part of the trial, regardless of longer term. He stated that a short section of Tanner Row should remain two-way, so as not to send cars all around the loop, or across in front of the Grand Hotel. He agreed regarding proposals for hackney carriages. He felt there was a strong case for 7am-7pm hours of operation, since this would facilitate evening access for hospital and the nighttime economy. If 24/7 hours of operation were adopted, this would present issues with the Spurriergate barriers or Coney Street could become an alternative route. In summary he stated the scheme was a welcome measure for bus services in the city.

Janice Gray spoke on item 5, discussing the timing of the questionnaire; suggesting that the consultation should not have been put out in November/December. She felt that there had been more hold ups due to the four-way traffic lights, and that Rougier street was often otherwise empty. She mentioned she had suggested reopening Micklegate to two-way traffic, though she conceded this was unlikely to happen. She conceded that the scheme would likely mean more traffic using Nunnery Lane and Skeldergate, and didn't have any strong views on this.

Arshad Mahmood spoke on item 5, as Chair of the York City Taxi Association. He noted that many residents relied on taxis every day, and stated that the YCTA supported the council's aims to improve bus reliability and reduce congestion. However, he suggested that the council risked creating new problems while solving others. He advised that closing Rougier Street would divert around 7000 journeys a day, leading to more

congestion elsewhere and longer journey times. This would impact taxi passengers with a fare rise of £5-6 per trip from St Saviourgate to station, as well as increased journey time. He stressed that his vehicles were not just traffic but rather a key part of public transport system for people who can't use buses. He noted that many YCTA vehicles were electric or hybrid. He referred to the proven model in Leeds – which allowed hackney carriages without compromising bus performance. He suggested that this protected accessibility, prevented delays and fare increases whilst still achieving wider transport goals. Many people support this scheme but only a minority had said they would switch to buses.

29. Minutes (6:00pm)

Resolved: Members noted that the final sentence of paragraph 24 in the 26 January 2026 minutes contained missing words and this needed correcting for the record.

Once this was complete, the minutes would be signed as a correct record of the meeting.

30. Rougier Route; Improving Bus Reliability in York City Centre (6:02pm)

The report was presented by the Head of Active and Sustainable Transport, assisted by the Executive Member for Transport. The report followed a consultation on the proposals. The committee was asked to provide views on the report presented, which included potential exemptions, ways of addressing the issues highlighted by Bishophill and Micklegate residents and businesses and that's to enable our views as scrutiny members to inform the recommendation that is made to executive.

The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport thanked public participants for their comments on this matter. He explained that the proposals were developed following the Bus Service Improvement Plan funding allocation to improve bus priority through York City Centre. He noted that the extended public consultation, undertaken between 19 Nov 2025 and 12 Jan 2026 had prompted useful, identifying five key considerations in terms of taking the project forward:

1. Hackney carriages: Officers had met with Hackney carriage providers twice in the past year, established the impact of not exempting hackney carriages through the bus gate.

2. Blue badge holders: Officers spoke with York Access Forum twice in the past year and got a strong steer that they would like to see blue badge holders allowed through the bus gate. Officers also engaged with other disabled groups as part of the consultation, hearing about how bus reliability affected people where significant delays occurred – to the point that the uncertainty this generated dissuaded some residents from travelling at all.
3. Private hire taxis: Officers spoke with private hire taxi providers twice in the past year and understood there were particular implications for SEND contracts operated in partnership with CYC, in terms of potential extended journey times.
4. Bishophill Resident and local Business Access - Victor Street and Victoria Bar: Officers organised a number of drop-in events in this area. The critical issue was how to enable resident access through Victoria Bar, so officers revised proposals to retain the residents-only exemption utilising Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR).
5. Micklegate Resident and local Business Access – Fetter Lane / Bishophill Junior: Proposals without any sort of change or exemption would potentially increase the number of journeys across the front of the rail station and the number of miles travelled, so officers sought to revise the design in a way that brought a local ANPR gate on Fetter Lane, allowing people in the Micklegate area to go south into Bishophill with a proposed permit-based scheme based on Residents Parking areas. Use of taxis and blue badges in the area would further reduce additional trips around the rail station and Nunnery lane area and allow better access to local residents.

He further explained that officers had included the option of 20mph on the corridor. This had been pushed back to a later date, since without more work on the city centre strategy, the city centre area itself would need to be signed off as 30mph through to the next gate corner, which was not something officers wished to consider. Their ultimate intention was to look holistically across the city centre, at how it dovetailed with the corridor, and specifically to focus on the proposed one-way sections on Tanner Road, Toft Green and Micklegate, going forward.

If progressing this scheme, he emphasised that the proposal was to bring it in on an 18-month experimental trial basis. In order to make this cost effective there was a need to try it out in advance to see the impact on traffic, etc. To this end, officers had produced snapshot data sets and an updated strategy model, to ascertain whether this gridlocked anywhere; since no problems were observed, the proposal had been advanced to the next stage.

He explained that the next step was to trial the proposed exemptions, with camera monitoring to understand where traffic was now going. Tweaks could be made while the trial was being undertaken. With the housing growth in the city, if the council cannot move more trips to public and sustainable transport, there will be a risk of more congestion and the main bus corridor in the city therefore needed to be a priority.

On the point of lowering journey times by three minutes, the Head of Active and Sustainable Transport Transdev have had to add extra six minutes to journey times since 2019. This sort of reduction will avoid providers planning for the worst case scenario and therefore greatly aid timetabling, working with the bus operators to monitor savings.

The committee noted that a of the concerns raised from an equalities perspective remained; notably around access if no exemption was granted to people with a blue badge. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport responded that there would be certain starting locations where (without exemptions in place) this scheme would require travellers to take a diverted, and longer, journey, but nowhere would ultimately be off-limits or inaccessible.

Concern was expressed about Blue Badges being ascribed to a person and not to a vehicle. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport confirmed that Blue Badges were allocated to an individual. He explained that other local authorities with similar schemes manage exemptions for local access across multiple vehicles, e.g. Oxford has a system to apply for exemption, applicable when residents are changing rental cars.

Members asked where did the £40K costs come from? The officer responded that this was an indicative cost for a member of staff to administer the scheme. A new process would need to be designed and administered if there was to be an exemption.

Members asked if it was possible to implement a similar system for ANPR into the city centre? The Head of Active and Sustainable Travel agreed there was certainly an opportunity for this to come together with the other ANPR scheme and committed to work with the relevant team to explore this.

Members expressed concern at the lack of specifics in the modelling, asking about the results of work done to assess the effects of diverted traffic onto bottlenecks (such as the Queen Street/Nunnery Lane/Blossom Street junction) with regard to all buses, not just those passing through Rougier Street. Taxi drivers had already evidenced potential journey time and fare increases, and this same congestion would impact buses.

The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport stated that modelling suggested the primary alternate route would be Nunnery lane, Bisgopgate Street, Skeldergate Bridge. The station loop would help take a lot of bus routes off Nunnery Lane that currently run down there to turn – for example East Yorkshire and University services – but the right balance would need to be struck in rerouting. Strategic modelling had identified an indicative 90 seconds increase in journey time between Tower Street and Blossom Street, but until the trial, officers would not know for certain. He anticipated a shift away from vehicles to more buses and active travel but wouldn't know the level of this until the trial.

Members commented on road safety aspects of the scheme, noting that while this would improve the situation around Micklegate, the increased traffic being diverted could have a detrimental effect on road safety around the Bishopthorpe Road/Scarcroft Road area.

The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport explained that any casualty data here would be part of monitoring process – officers received regular updates from North Yorkshire Police.

Committee members suggested proposals could be further refined, raising concern over the lack of detail in the report and suggesting that any data identified by the modelling should have been presented to pre-decision scrutiny. Concern was also expressed regarding the £40K cost increase being purely indicative, as this amount did not seem necessary on an ongoing basis, following the initial setup of the scheme and an indicative figure should not be used as a material argument against the Blue Badge exemption.

The chair clarified that this was not in fact being presented for pre-decision scrutiny, and that more information would have been included, had been intended as such. The Executive Member for Transport confirmed that the original intention had been to present for pre-decision, however it was extremely complex and questions still needed to be answered. Nevertheless the team felt it would be beneficial to canvass the committee's feedback at this stage.

Members expressed concern that the Local Transport Plan report quoted a figure of 79% public support for increasing public transport use but this consultation gave a lower figure and less clear consensus (58% positive). Members asked officers which of these surveys, presented to the committee, mattered more. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport advised that it was natural a higher positive response would be given at an earlier stage in the scheme, with an expected drop-off, especially from

people in the Bishophill area once the scheme was directly impacting them. Given the controversial nature of implementing a bus gate, he said it was encouraging that 58% still intended use more buses, and he would have expected a more negative response to such a significant change. He suggested these figures were encouraging and more unified than, for example, a near 50:50 division of opinion. He conceded that buses would still need to be reliably running for this to be an option.

Members asked if the significant change would be worth the ensuing disruption – would the bus companies make any solid commitments to providing more for the city in response for this priority treatment. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport answered that while so such assurances had been provided in writing yet, should the trial be successful as expected, it was anticipated that the bus companies would start investing with such commitments as increased frequencies, single to double decker vehicle upgrades, smaller to full single vehicle upgrades and the instatement of new stops at the rail station for some operators. The Executive Member for Transport agreed that while nothing had been put in writing by the companies yet, they were seeing the potential. East Yorkshire had recently introduced a successful Sunday service from Bishopthorpe and were now planning to introduce a weekday service. If the scheme was successful, she fully anticipated the bus companies taking advantage of this opportunity.

Members asked whether this additional service might be a result of lobbying from the local member of parliament. The Executive Member for Transport agreed that this was one element, but residents had been demanding this and bus companies respond to demand.

The committee recognised that bus reliability was a key driver of the scheme, asking whether there might be a knock-on impact on reliability of other extremely popular routes outside the area of the scheme such as the number 1 and 5 services run by First. They queried why this information had not been presented if officers had undertaken analysis and modelling on it. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport stated that this analysis had not yet been undertaken, although officers spoke regularly to all operators including First. He advised that the modelling wasn't showing an increase on Lendal Bridge, rather the Nunnery Lane corridor was getting the majority of the extra impact and officers were hopeful that this was due to less traffic going through Rougier Street. They were confident that amending signal timings would make that network more efficient and the front of the rail station would have significantly improved operation as part of the station gateway works. The Queen Street/Blossom Street junction was an area to keep an eye on as members noted, with extra traffic

passing through and there may be opportunities to amend signal timings here too.

The committee asked whether the modelling gave an indication of what the increase in patronage would be. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport advised that officers had not modelled in detail with regard to patronage, and the modelling that had been undertaken was more focused on traffic redistribution. He suggested that the uplift in patronage would come from a few factors and it was hard to aggregate exactly how much this project would contribute in isolation. Other things were coming this year, such as the £3 fare cap. The short answer is that officers didn't know, but they would work with operators to see.

The committee asked for clarification how the exemptions would work, considering people would have friends, guests, care workers and some people may change cars regularly (eg. Users of hire cars). The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport cited the of the Residents' Parking scheme visitor permits in the two zones would be tied into the same system electronically. There may possibly be additional exemptions required for businesses and other special requirements, and there was still work to be done. Officers would work with hotels and satnav providers in order to establish an understanding of travel to the area and to map Traffic Regulation Orders. He assured members that there were alternative routes to everywhere people might need to go, and the only sections proposed as part of the bus gate were the short section on Micklegate in both directions between George Hudson Street, Micklegate Junction and the Skeldergate/Micklegate Junction and George Hudson Street southbound. Members acknowledged this but requested further detail going forwards.

Members asked where the checkpoints were throughout the 18 months, should further amendments be required. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport confirmed that the first review point would be at the six-month point. The scheme could be fully implemented sooner than the scheduled 18-month period if everything was going perfectly.

Members asked about ANPR and taxi access through Victoria Bar and Victor Street, referring to public speakers concerns about taxis using this route as a "rat run" and asking officers to clarify how those legitimately picking people up and those that that are not could be differentiated. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport responded that he would envisage Victoria Bar would remain residents only, and that taxis would be required to come via other routes. He suggested there could be exemptions for taxis and blue badges on the Micklegate bus gate but the Fetter Lane/Victoria bar one would be residents only.

Members asked officers to define the cost on day one as opposed to for full implementation. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport stated that the preferred option would be to implement on a skeleton basis to allow for later changes – utilising bolt-down kerbs and planters to delineate the route. This would not require a substantial budget on day one but would need more budget for later changes. The current budgeting was based around this methodology.

The committee asked whether there were any legal issues regarding discrimination between the two forms of taxi concerning respective exemptions for hackney carriages or private hire. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport advised that officers were getting legal advice to confirm this. As a precedent he could confirm that Leeds allowed hackneys and not private hire.

Members asked whether separate consultations had been undertaken; the report stated 15% of current traffic was both hackney and private hire, but officers had made a decision that hackney carriages specifically would make little impact on bus times. Why were officers separating them now if they had not done so previously?

The Executive Member for Transport answered that CYC taxi officer had confirmed there were 189 hackney carriages registered to the authority and 392 private hire taxis. In addition there were taxis coming from outside the area. Based on these numbers, if the scheme only allowed hackney cabs through it would reduce the stated 15% to approximately 5%.

Members asked how officers intended to address the fact that the closure could incentivise drivers on the east side of Skeldergate Bridge to go down Coney Street and over Lendal Bridge to avoid traffic on Nunnery Lane. It was noted that this had also been raised in Public Participation and the Executive Member for Transport responded, advising that vehicles were only permitted to drive down Coney Street outside of foot street hours – if bus gates were operated during similar hours there would be no need for such a diversion, therefore this scenario would only become relevant if bus gates were in operation 24/7. Nevertheless, members asked if this could be considered when the item proceeded to Executive.

Acknowledging that this was not being considered for pre-decision scrutiny at this stage, the vice chair asked if the impact assessment and the consultation full report could be included in papers presented to Executive, and that concerning the consultation, feedback from people directly affected also be included, rather than simply responses to the consultation.

He also noted that the consultation made no provision for respondents to reject the scheme outright, apart from a text box at the end.

The Executive Member for Transport confirmed he would liaise with Communications colleagues on the point regarding questions asked in the consultation, but all assessments and consultation results would be included in the papers presented to the Executive. What had been presented here was a summary of this information.

The committee asked for clarity on the wider context of how bus lanes in York would work; what it would mean for other routes and means of getting to a destination; what the impact would be on reasonable adjustments for Blue Badge holders getting to their destinations. Members expressed concern about looking at this scheme purely in isolation – and emphasised the importance of returning to first principles; the purpose of this scheme and what the tipping point would be in considering exemptions. They suggested setting the scheme out in a broader context, moving forward. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport confirmed he would take this advice on board.

Based on the earlier percentage cited for the for the number of taxis in the city, members asked whether officers could provide similar statistics with regard to Blue Badge holders; the Head of Active and Sustainable Transport conceded that no data was available for this, though he would expect it to be very small. Members noted that it was important to consider the thresholds here, even if exact data was not readily available. They asked whether the report brought to Executive would have an Equalities Impact Assessment included, and how this would be produced in the absence of figures for Blue Badge holders using the Rougier Route area. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport responded that it was impossible to distinguish the number of Blue Badge holders driving through the area from a survey, but officers would look at the impact on the end user; this would be derived from Human Rights and Equity Analysis (HREA), with questions designed to help inform that and get some data. In terms of number of users through the area – these figures would be minimal, but the impact on the end user would be based around equivalent journey time change. This would not fully be known until the trial was in place.

The committee asked that the HREA also consider private hire vehicles transporting SEND children to school as part of the analysis on journey time, noting that these children and young people could often be agitated during the journey, and delays would need to be carefully considered. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport committed to including this.

Members noted that though officers had undertaken a great deal of work with information and modelling, significant gaps had been noted here. They asked the Executive Member if she felt this report contained sufficient information to make decision. The Executive Member for Transport reiterated that the report was not being presented on a pre-decision basis, rather the intention had been to present something to the committee to obtain a cross-party steer on what questions it required answers to, its feelings regarding principles and outstanding issues. Rather than waiting until the end of the process, she had intended to promote an ongoing, honest conversation to feed the direction of the scheme. The Chair advised that he had wanted this item to come to the Place Scrutiny Committee in any form and was pleased that this had come for discussion here.

Members asked whether the report would be return to scrutiny again in a future meeting. The Executive Member answered that this would be taken away, it was currently scheduled to come to Executive in May but depending on how long this information took to gather and whether the scrutiny committee wanted it to come back, she and officers would be more than happy to bring it back to this committee. The committee suggested they would support this returning to Place Scrutiny, provided the report presented was a close match to what the Executive eventually decide on.

The Vice-Chair asked for a timetable for this, in relation to the station frontage work and Lendal Bridge repairs. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport stated that if this scheme were to be approved, officers would be looking to implement this project on site in autumn 2026. He would have to confer with highways colleagues with regard to the timeline of the Lendal Bridge repairs. Were the Lendal Bridge to remain closed as this scheme started, signage could be bagged, and bus gate operation postponed until the repairs were complete.

The Vice-Chair asked whether implementing ANPR on Fetter Lane as an option for Consideration 5 would mean the bollards originally proposed on St Martin's Lane would be removed from the scheme. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport confirmed that this was correct, and the Vice Chair advised he would feed this back to residents.

The Chair asked about modelling of journeys around the ring road as an alternative for traffic currently accessing Rougier Street. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport answered that the strategic model contained a lot of data, giving a good indication of different flows across the city. The model was strategic, covering the whole network not micro-zones. Some trips were starting to use the A64 as result of the scheme in the modelling, for example Poppleton Road to Fulford Road.

The Chair asked about CYC using private hire taxis for SEND school transport, and whether officers could undertake more detailed work to understand the number of these trips utilising this route, in order to ensure those pupils were prioritised and had their needs met. The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport responded that while he had no definite number to hand here, officers were working with education colleagues, and there were some journeys (such as Fulford to Manor School) which typically went through the area.

Cllr Taylor suggested recommending both types of taxis and Blue Badges be given exemption, since combined taxi figures in the data were minimal, and officers had advised that Blue Badge figures were also minimal. If trial, we can start with all three groups granted exclusion and if data then showed one group was problematic to the flow of buses this could be reconsidered and potentially removed from exclusion. The numbers of these vehicles were minimal and if these were not granted exclusion, it would create a lot of disruption for minimal gain. Need as much Equalities and Inclusion Assessment data as possible for presentation to Executive.

The Chair noted that the recommendation regarding EIA was covered by the HREA which officers had undertaken, but he agreed that more data needed to be presented to decision makers. Chair also suggested that the committee could word the comments regarding exceptions either as a steer or as a recommendation, and the suggestion regarding Blue Badge holders was phrased differently than the report.

The Vice-Chair suggested further clarification for the recommendations – for York licensed hackney carriages and also private hire taxis exceptions should be granted – he was unsure how those from outside York would be dealt with. Similarly with Consideration of Blue Badges, an exception could be automatically given and two separate schemes with additional cost were not required. He noted that the cost of ANPR had already been budgeted for.

Cllr Widdowson suggested there was insufficient information and data presented to undertake either exemption, and therefore for the committee to make a recommendation on them. She cited the fact that exact numbers were not available, agreeing with the sentiment but expressing reluctance to make a recommendation until proper data was available. She felt that this should either be a bus gate or a gate through which specific vehicles can pass, and without specifics on the numbers of these vehicles it was difficult to make a decision here.

Cllr Whitcroft took the previous point but stressed that what was being asked today was to make a statement of intent for the committee, with a recommendation pointing to a direction rather than a decision, and he was happy to agree with this with the understanding that this could be reevaluated during the trial.

Cllr Fenton reiterated that recommendations must be viewed in the context in how the overall network operates, with access to bus lanes, different rules for different users and in different areas, on basis of this information presented there was nothing in the report to cause him to disagree with the recommendation, he felt the information provided was insufficient to clearly endorse it.

Cllr Taylor suggested that if this scheme was intended to happen anyway, he would rather it started with the most progressive, pragmatic approach possible, rather than beginning with a more severe approach. He felt that the presented approach was more pragmatic because it allowed for amendments and fine tuning after the trial began.

Cllr Wells stated that she was not comfortable making decision at this stage. She agreed with the Vice-Chair's point regarding private hire for York Licenses, stating she would not want children and young people that use private hire cabs having to travel further. She was not sure how would we distinction could be made between external and York private hire firms. The Chair responded that while hackneys could be classed as public transport – he was unsure of the legality of discounting those not licenced in York while granting exclusion to York firms. He agreed that SEND transport contracts were really important to include, and these are private hire contracts.

Cllr Taylor stated it was worth keeping in mind that disabled residents alternated use of both forms of taxi based on availability and would experience a significant impact if one and not both were excluded. Cllr Hook added that it would not be possible to separate out Uber drivers between York and non-York registered – they now had a huge mixed fleet in the city.

The Chair noted some lack of support based on the lack of availability of information at this stage, which he acknowledged was warranted. He also noted that there was general feeling that committee members would be happy to make some recommendation or guidance note at this stage that would suggest exemption for hackney carriages, private hire taxis and Blue Badge holders to be considered.

Cllr Fenton conceded that this was going to happen anyway, given it was undergoing active consideration and he did not wish to prevent this work in order to discuss exemptions further. Aside from the practical difficulties of implementation, he acknowledged the committee were agreed on the basis on which these three groups would be considered. He just felt that it was difficult to recommend due to the paucity of data presented to the committee.

The Chair asked if this could be phrased as the committee having discussed this and highlighted these three areas as a matter of importance. The Vice-Chair suggested that if this form of words were being used, it should also apply to considerations 4 and 5, since he would not like officers to think the committee was not supportive of the earlier considerations to the exclusion of these. The Chair acknowledged this but asked if the two could be separated in the wording.

The chair proposed the wording of the recommendation and after discussion, members generally agreed to this.

To address member concerns, the Head of Active and Sustainable Transport said he was more than happy to put something together on wider context of other bus lanes and bus gates in the city.

The Vice-Chair noted that he did not need specific recommendation for considerations for 4 and 5 framing in the recommendation, since officers had advised that aspects of concern would be addressed as part of the scheme. Cllr Whitcroft agreed that drafting a recommendation on this aspect fell within the scope of what was being discussed. When comes to private car ownership and access for individual cars, this needed to be part of the wider discussion regarding private hire. It needs to be done differently way to the taxis and Blue Badge holders.

The Vice-Chair agreed to withdraw the secondary recommendation, but did wish to note this scheme would have a major impact on this part of city, and was not on this original scheme, which is why it was included in this paper.

Cllr Hook noted the need to look at the overall effect on citywide traffic and bus times, to ensure road safety problems were not exported elsewhere.

The committee then

Resolved: To provide their views on the potential exemptions and ways of addressing the issues highlighted by Bishophill and Micklegate residents and businesses:

- i. The committee asks for special consideration to be given to exemptions for private hire taxi vehicles, hackney carriage taxi vehicles and for Blue Badge holders.

Reason: To enable the views of scrutiny members to inform the recommendation to be made to Executive.

31. Local Transport Strategy Update (7:38pm)

The report was presented by the Head of Transport Policy and Travel Behaviour (Tom Horner) and the Head of Transport Projects (Joshua Singer).

Before beginning, the Head of Transport Projects highlighted one correction in point 2 of the report – which stated more inclusive cycle parking had been installed at Blake Street; this work was in fact incomplete at the time of the meeting.

He explained that this update intended to provide delivery and progress updates towards the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) and to address challenges faced by the authority, especially with regard to implementation following the creation of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. He singled out progress with regard to the rollout of real-time information screens with audio description at 127 bus stops, wider progress of bus stop accessibility and securing of a £1.9million transport funding grant from the Mayoral Combined Authority, covering cycle storage, speed reduction, active travel and pedestrian crossings, all commencing this financial year.

He also discussed emerging issues – advising that officers were working alongside the Combined Authority to develop a multi-year programme to commit to more enhanced corridor projects. The Combined Authority had provided headlines to apportion this funding as active travel, bus access/punctuality, rail stations, road safety, congestion reduction and integrated corridor and play schemes. He noted that whilst the Combined Authority were producing their own Local Transport Plan, they recognised that York's LTS was already well developed and would be a key part of that plan.

He highlighted challenges, with the key areas being delivery resource – his team had not existed at the start of the LTS and this was mitigated through dedicated transport capital project function, they had recently undertaken recruitment to bolster this further. He also discussed client resource – taking concept ideas into feasibility, modelling data to form a meaningful

and impactful project. He noted that disruption was posed by the creation of the Combined Authority – previously money had been received directly from the Department for Transport, and had needed to switch to working with the Combined Authority to bid for external grants.

He then asked the committee to consider the format and frequency of future updates on the Local Transport Strategy and its implementation, given the information set out by the report and presentation.

The chair thanked him for his report and his work alongside the Combined Authority. He then requested an update on the Movement and Place plan.

The Head of Transport Projects answered that the tender for this was now live, and interested parties were bidding as part of the procurement exercise. Following the conclusion of the procurement exercise he expected to have more information as the plan emerged. He anticipated the tender process to take another three months, adding that he would confirm this with procurement colleagues.

Members acknowledged the tender approaching completion – asking how much later the plan would then come back to the scrutiny committee, what was likely to be in it, and what actions were likely to arise from it?

The Head of Transport Projects responded that this was linked to multi-year settlement with Combined Authority – he anticipated towards the back end of that four-year period the outputs of Movement and Place would be received in terms of deliverable projects.

Members asked if this meant the process therefore started now with a four-year lead time and he responded that outputs would 2027/28 to 2029/30 at which point the outcomes of the movement and place plan would be turned into deliverable projects.

The committee asked whether there were any natural capacity gains from the Combined Authority finding its feet and requiring less direct input from the local authority. The Head of Transport Projects noted that as the Combined Authority matured and its processes became better established and understood, the council would increasingly be able to adapt processes and align its resources.

Members asked whether in future a progress tracker for each project could be provided on reports – e.g. design stage, planning stage, implementation. The Head of Transport Projects acknowledged officers would definitely take this suggestion on board for demonstrating the progress of the Local Transport Strategy at the scrutiny committee and to other groups.

Members noted that while the report confirmed projects had been commissioned, it did not clearly indicate to what extent these projects had been financed or completed. Members expressed concern at the lack of detail and transparency, and asked that in future officers deliver more information on projects, details of prioritisation and explanation as to why some schemes were not progressed, rather than members needing to request these piece by piece. If the committee was provided with this detail, it would minimise individual questions to officers from the committee and therefore lessen the time taken for officers to respond to these requests.

The Head of Transport Projects agreed that officers aimed to achieve this too, and committed to evolving programme management processes in order to produce this information going forwards.

The committee asked what made an inclusive/accessible cycle parking different from regular parking. The Head of Transport Projects explained that this was mostly to do with additional space around the cycle parking building out from the kerb.

[Cllr Taylor left the meeting at 7:51pm]

Members asked when the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Local Transport Plan was expected to be complete. The Head of Transport Projects answered that the Combined Authority had assured officers this was “currently being developed at pace” and a significant amount of movement had been observed in recent months, but he was unable to personally commit to a specific timeline yet. The Chair clarified that the Combined Authority had stated a draft of the Local Transport Plan would be ready in May, it would be consulted on over the summer and then a final agreed Local Transport Plan would be ready this year.

The committee asked for an update on the Castle Gateway project, since planning for the removal of the carpark had now been approved; members wanted to know whether there would be any ensuing implications for travel around the city.

The Head of Transport Projects spoke on his team’s elements – noting that the City Development team were leading on this project. He stated that various options were being considered regarding alternative parking arrangements, with the key preference being for improved facilities outside the city (such as Park and Ride sites incorporating overnight parking), but they were also looking at improvements to Coppergate car park to allow additional parking provision there, accepting that some redistribution across city would ultimately be necessary.

Members again raised the issue of barriers to access; in the current year 80 were being dealt with, and extrapolating this over another 2-3 years, this would cover 240-300. Members noted there were actually something like 800-1000 barriers, so some were inevitably being left over. The committee asked how these were being prioritised? The Head of Transport Projects admitted that progress had been slower to get off the ground due to resourcing issues. His team were looking at ramping up as much as possible, progressing to the hundreds or two-hundreds in one year going forwards. He conceded there may well be over 1000 barriers in the city, and if any were left over officers would endeavour to secure additional funding and a continued programme to remove these. He reiterated that his team's intention was to tackle as many as was feasible, acknowledging that some of the sites were incredibly complex, and therefore when prioritising a balance must be sought between recognising areas that attract a level of footfall that would benefit most from removal, but also acknowledging where focusing on one complex site might mean delaying 25 more straightforward ones.

Members asked whether officers still planned to address all barriers to access and the Head of Transport Projects responded that his team would aim to do this until they reached the point that funding prohibited this and they needed to go elsewhere. He committed to removing as many as possible.

The Executive Member for Transport added that part of the approach for prioritisation was to look at continuous routes without barriers, citing an ongoing University of Westminster study in the city regarding the impact of barrier removal; this involved camera monitoring a year before and after removal of barriers, informing officers of any changes in antisocial behaviour, goods access, wheelchair access, etc. She noted that this study would help inform how, where and when barriers would be removed.

The committee asked about the real-time information on buses – and how members could follow up with officers on this issue. Examples were cited where the boards were not displaying the real-time timetables or the accessible audio button was not functioning, and officers had not responded to ward councillors' correspondence within a reasonable timeframe. The Head of Transport Projects advised that he would discuss the examples raised with the relevant team, and could demonstrate this specific progress in detail.

The committee discussed format and frequency of future updates, advising officers of their clear agreement that more information was required in the future; they set a timeline of six months for the team to report back with

additional details – eg. how barriers are selected for removal, about changes to freight, details from the University of Westminster study and how the active travel programme was being prioritised. They also noted that many members would have schemes within their ward that they deemed high priority, and it would be useful to see officers' rationale of in prioritising these.

Members asked whether Movement and Place would be at a stage to be reviewed in six months, given it was currently out for tender. The Executive Member for Transport explained that there were some elements the council would want to bring forward faster, as part of the request of the contract, such as a highway design guide which was urgently needed. She agreed it would be good to lay out where things were regarding the Movement and Place plan on returning to scrutiny, as there would be different elements at different points.

Members asked whether it would be useful to ask the Combined Authority to give the same presentation to the CYC Place Scrutiny Committee that they would give to its York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority equivalent. The Chair suggested that this was a fair request and committed to formally asking the Combined Authority about this, since it ultimately would be dealt with at YNYCA level. He agreed that it could be included at this committee with regard to the City of York area elements. The Head of Transport Projects confirmed that at the stage where the Capital Programme was approved, an executive report would be prepared and available for the committee giving the detail of more scheme by scheme programme by programme.

The committee then

Resolved: To consider the format and frequency of future updates on the Local Transport Strategy Implementation.

Reason: This will be used to inform the Executive decision-making process of the views of the Place Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Local Transport Strategy.

32. Work Plan (8:04pm)

Members considered the committee's work plan for the current municipal year.

- i. Members noted Cllr Steward's request to establish a cross-party task and finish group looking at Section 106 agreements, confirming they would respond to this in due course and this would be tabled to the next committee agenda.
- ii. The Chair confirmed that he and the Vice-Chair had looked over items in the outstanding workplan, setting out where they would like these to go. The Scrutiny Officer committed to following up on this and preparing a draft of allocations for the next meeting. It was agreed items would be added to the unallocated list and then the Chair and Vice-Chair would work on allocation within the coming year's work plan, in consultation with officers.
- iii. To ensure consistent engagement, the Chair and Vice-Chair committed to meeting with relevant Directors of Portfolio across the council prior to the next meeting, to discuss what the committee requires from them in the next 12 months and what they expect their directorates to be delivering.

Cllr D Myers, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.11 pm].

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