

City of York Council

Resolutions and proceedings of the Meeting of the City of York Council held remotely on Thursday, 17 December 2020, starting at 6.10 pm

Present: The Lord Mayor (Cllr Janet Looker) in the Chair, and the following Councillors:

Acomb Ward	Bishopthorpe Ward
Lomas S Barnes	Galvin
Clifton Ward	Copmanthorpe Ward
Myers	Carr
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe Ward	Fishergate Ward
Widdowson Fenton Mason	D Taylor D'Agorne
Fulford and Heslington Ward	Guildhall Ward
Aspden	Fitzpatrick Craghill Looker
Haxby & Wigginton Ward	Heworth Ward
Cuthbertson Hollyer Pearson	Douglas Perrett Webb
Heworth Without Ward	Holgate Ward
Ayre	Heaton Melly K Taylor

Hull Road Ward

Musson
Norman
Pavlovic

Huntington and New Earswick
Ward

Cullwick
Orrell
Runciman

Micklegate Ward

Baker
Crawshaw
Kilbane

Osbalwick and Derwent Ward

Rowley
Warters

Rawcliffe and Clifton Without Ward

Smalley
Wann
Waudby

Rural West York Ward

Barker
Hook

Strensall Ward

Doughty
Fisher

Westfield Ward

Daubeney
Hunter
Waller

Wheldrake Ward

Vassie

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Wells.

77. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Kilbane declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 (iii) (Motion on Stand Up for Carers – Increasing Carer’s Allowance), as a member of his family was in receipt of Carer’s Allowance. He left the meeting during consideration of that item and took no part in the discussion or decision thereon.

78. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 29 October 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair at a later date, subject to the following amendments:

- Minute 73(i) – amend to include reference to the motion moved by Cllr Warters and seconded by Cllr Rowley to suspend Standing Orders to allow an amendment to be moved;
- Minute 73(ii) – amend to include Cllr Doughty’s name in the list of those voting against the amendment to Motion (ii).

79. Civic Announcements

The Lord Mayor expressed her thanks to Council staff and Members, and the public in general, for their hard work and commitment in supporting the York community through the pandemic.

The Lord Mayor went on to announce her recent attendance at the following events:

- The online launch of the Culture Strategy for York, which had originated from a Scrutiny committee that she had chaired;
- The Forum on the Annual Human Rights report;
- The formal opening of a new residential care home on the former site of Burnholme School.

80. Public Participation

It was reported that three members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting under the Public Participation item. All three wished to speak on the motion at Agenda Item 8(i) – “Call for ‘Free after three’ Parking Initiative.”

Phil Pinder, Director of York BID, spoke on behalf of York Retail Forum. He urged Members to support the motion in order to stem further losses and closures in the retail and hospitality sector.

Andrew McGuinness, Vice Chair of York Quality Bus Partnership (YQBP) spoke against the motion on behalf of the YQBP. He asked Members to consider instead the role that buses could play in the economy, which would reduce congestion and environmental impact.

Maeve Pearson spoke against the motion on behalf of York Cycle Campaign. She expressed concern about the increased risk to pedestrians and cyclists and suggested that enhanced cycle access be provided to the city centre to help boost trade.

81. Petitions

It was reported that notice had not been received of any petitions to be presented at the meeting.

82. Report of Executive Leader and Executive Recommendations

A – Executive Leader’s Report

A written report was received from the Executive Leader, Cllr Aspden, on the work of the Executive.

B – Executive Recommendations

Cllr Aspden moved, and Cllr D’Agorne seconded, the following recommendations contained in Minutes 67 and 68 of the Executive meeting held on 26 November 2020 and Minutes 69 and 70 of the Executive meeting held on 15 December 2020:

Minute 67 - Update on the Asset Management Strategy 2017-2022

Recommended: That Council approve: ¹

- a) the establishment of a capital budget of £3.9m, to fund the acquisition of the Head

- leasehold interest of the Eco Centre, Amy Johnson Way;
- b) the investment of a further £100k to fund green infrastructure improvements to the building, providing an increase in revenue funded from the One Planet York budget; and
 - c) the delegation of authority to the Corporate Director of Economy & Place, in consultation with the Director of Governance, to complete the purchase once all due diligence has been satisfactorily conducted on the property.

- Reasons:
- a) To establish clear principles to guide and shape future use of the council's assets and to continue to carry out a programme of proactive work to shape the commercial and operational property portfolio further.
 - b) To support the ongoing economic vibrancy of the city while increasing the income from the council's commercial and operational property portfolio.

Minute 68 - Capital Programme : Monitor 2, 2020/21

Recommended: That Council approve the adjustments resulting in a decrease of £36.538m, as detailed in the report and in Annex A.²

Reason: To enable the effective management and monitoring of the council's capital programme.

Minute 69 - New Stadium Leisure Complex Commercial Proposal on Restaurant Units

Recommended: That a further £1.375m prudential borrowing be applied to the Community Stadium project to offset the loss of commercial investment in the project.³

Reason: To ensure the stadium project is fully funded at the lowest risk to council finances going forward.

Minute 70 - Amendment to Council Tax Support Scheme

Recommended: That Council approve an amendment to the CTS scheme to implement a De Minimis limit of £2.50

before a council tax support customer is required to receive a revised council tax bill. ⁴

Reason: To support financial inclusion and protect financially vulnerable customers from confusing and unnecessary multiple bills.

A named vote was then taken on each of the above sets of recommendations, with the following results:

Minute 67

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden		Cllr Doughty
Cllr Ayre		Cllr Rowley
Cllr Baker		Cllr Warters
Cllr Barker		
Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		
Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		
Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		

Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr D Taylor		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		
Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
43	0	3

Minute 68

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden		Cllr Doughty
Cllr Ayre		Cllr Rowley
Cllr Baker		Cllr Warters
Cllr Barker		
Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		
Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		

Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		
Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr D Taylor		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		
Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
43	0	3

Minute 79

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden	Cllr Warters	Cllr Doughty
Cllr Ayre		Cllr Rowley
Cllr Baker		Cllr D Taylor
Cllr Barker		
Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		

Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		
Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		
Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		
Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
42	1	3

Minute 80

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden		
Cllr Ayre		
Cllr Baker		
Cllr Barker		
Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Doughty		

Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		
Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		
Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		
Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Rowley		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr D Taylor		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		
Cllr Warters		
Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
46	0	0

All of the Executive recommendations were therefore declared CARRIED and it was

Resolved: That the above recommendations be approved. ^{1,2,3 & 4}

Action Required

1. Note the approval of the Executive

NF

recommendations on the Asset Management Strategy and take the appropriate actions.

2. Note the approval of the Executive recommendation on the Capital Programme Monitor and take the appropriate action. DM

3. Note the approval of the Executive recommendations on the New Stadium Leisure Complex Commercial Proposal on Restaurant Units and take the appropriate actions. DM

4. Note the approval of the Executive recommendation on the Amendment to the Council Tax Support Scheme and take the appropriate action. PS

83. Report of Deputy Leader

A written report was received from the Deputy Leader, Cllr D'Agorne.

84. Motions on Notice

(i) Call for 'Free After Three' Parking Initiative

Moved by Cllr Rowley and seconded by Cllr Doughty.

"Now that we have come out of the second national lockdown and in recognition of a continuing significant improvement in Covid case numbers, Council believes this is the time to take all practical steps to support residents and city businesses in recovering our local economy and helping to protect jobs.

As part of this recovery, Council calls for a **'Free after three' car parking scheme**. After a hopefully strong run up to Christmas Council is mindful that January sees a lull but businesses cannot afford this after the last nine months. The scheme would enable **free car parking at any City of York Council car park** after 3pm each day, seven days a week in January and February 2021.

The scheme would be likely to see a fall in overall parking revenue receipts but this will actually be modest against falls suffered in lockdowns already this year. However it is not a zero sum game as the drop in revenue we now proactively enable will help save jobs, businesses and receipts like business rates. Helping subsidise this scheme through the release of £250k from the general reserves is therefore a true case of spending now to avert a worse financial loss in the future.

It is proposed that Council delegate implementation of the scheme to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Leader.”

Cllr Ayre then moved, and Cllr D’Agorne seconded, an amendment to the motion, as follows:

“After the first paragraph, **insert** a new second paragraph, as follows:

‘Council notes the hard work carried out by Council staff, under difficult circumstances, to accelerate the city’s economic recovery from the pandemic, including the processing of over £110 million in grant payments for local business, and the delivery of parking incentives for Council owned car parks, including via the RingGo app last summer. In addition, residents within City of York can continue to access the discounted £2 Minster Badge offer, which secures parking discounts and free parking after 6pm.’

In the second (now the third) paragraph, **delete** all after ‘Council calls for’ and **insert**:

‘further parking and sustainable travel incentive initiatives to be brought forward including specific time limited initiatives as part of the economic recovery plan. After a hopefully strong run up to Christmas, Council is mindful that January sees a lull but businesses cannot afford this after the last nine months.’

Delete the third (now the fourth) paragraph and **substitute**:

‘By identifying further incentive schemes as a part of our ongoing response to the pandemic and within the budget process, Council can continue to support the local economy through such schemes, whilst ensuring a balanced and sustainable budget is set for all Council services.’

To the end of the final paragraph, **add**:

‘the Executive Member for Finance and Performance, and the Executive Member for Transport.’”

A named vote was taken on the amendment, with the following result:

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden	Cllr Doughty	
Cllr Ayre	Cllr Rowley	
Cllr Baker	Cllr Warters	
Cllr Barker		

Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		
Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		
Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		
Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr D Taylor		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		
Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
43	3	0

The amendment was therefore declared CARRIED and the motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“Now that we have come out of the second national lockdown and in recognition of a continuing significant improvement in Covid case numbers, Council believes this is the time to take all practical steps to support residents and city businesses in recovering our local economy and helping to protect jobs.

Council notes the hard work carried out by Council staff, under difficult circumstances, to accelerate the city’s economic recovery from the pandemic, including the processing of over £110 million in grant payments for local business, and the delivery of parking incentives for Council owned car parks, including via the RingGo app last summer. In addition, residents within City of York can continue to access the discounted £2 Minster Badge offer, which secures parking discounts and free parking after 6pm.

As part of this recovery, Council calls for further parking and sustainable travel incentive initiatives to be brought forward including specific time limited initiatives as part of the economic recovery plan. After a hopefully strong run up to Christmas, Council is mindful that January sees a lull but businesses cannot afford this after the last nine months.

By identifying further incentive schemes as a part of our ongoing response to the pandemic and within the budget process, Council can continue to support the local economy through such schemes, whilst ensuring a balanced and sustainable budget is set for all Council services.

It is proposed that Council delegate implementation of this work to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Leader, the Executive Member for Finance and Performance, and the Executive Member for Transport.”

A named vote was then taken on the amended motion, with the following result:

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden	Cllr Warters	Cllr Doughty
Cllr Ayre		Cllr Rowley
Cllr Baker		
Cllr Barker		

Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		
Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		
Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		
Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr D Taylor		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		
Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
43	1	2

The **amended motion** was therefore declared CARRIED, and it was

Resolved: That the above motion, as amended, be approved. ¹

(ii) Finding the Sweet Spot – Carbon Reduction and Economic Prosperity

Moved by Cllr Craghill and seconded by Cllr Baker.

“Council notes:

- The commitment made by this Council in March 2019 to achieving zero carbon by 2030 and ongoing work on a 2030 strategy and action plan.
- The pressing need to tackle poverty and inequality in York, exacerbated by the Covid crisis and the need to create new jobs and support our local economy as part of the Covid recovery.
- The innovative work being done by local councils as diverse as Amsterdam and Cornwall to use the globally acclaimed economic model developed by Oxford academic, Kate Raworth – now widely known as ‘Doughnut Economics’ – to make sure that all their policy decisions achieve both environmental sustainability and economic/social equity.

www.doughnuteconomics.org and
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/climate-emergency/our-action-plan/what-is-cornwall-council-doing/decision-making-wheel/>

Council resolves

- To request officers to facilitate a wider understanding of the approach and how it can be used by arranging information sessions for elected members, relevant council officers and interested partner organisations.
- To request Executive to consider the use of the doughnut economics approach to inform the current review of the council's ‘Better Decision Making Tool’, and also in due course the potential to inform future strategy development (for example on carbon reduction, anti-poverty work and the city's Economic Strategy).”

A named vote was taken on the motion, with the following result:

For	Against	Abstained
Cllr Aspden		Cllr Warters
Cllr Ayre		
Cllr Baker		
Cllr Barker		
Cllr Barnes		
Cllr Carr		
Cllr Craghill		
Cllr Crawshaw		
Cllr Cullwick		
Cllr Cuthbertson		
Cllr D'Agorne		
Cllr Daubeney		
Cllr Doughty		
Cllr Douglas		
Cllr Fenton		
Cllr Fisher		
Cllr Fitzpatrick		
Cllr Galvin		
Cllr Heaton		
Cllr Hollyer		
Cllr Hook		
Cllr Hunter		
Cllr Kilbane		
Cllr Lomas		
Cllr Mason		
Cllr Melly		
Cllr Musson		
Cllr Myers		
Cllr Norman		
Cllr Orrell		
Cllr Pavlovic		
Cllr Pearson		
Cllr Perrett		
Cllr Rowley		
Cllr Runciman		
Cllr Smalley		
Cllr D Taylor		
Cllr K Taylor		
Cllr Vassie		
Cllr Waller		
Cllr Wann		

Cllr Waudby		
Cllr Webb		
Cllr Widdowson		
Cllr Looker (Lord Mayor)		
45	0	1

The motion was therefore declared CARRIED and it was

Resolved: That the above motion be approved. ²

(iii) Stand Up For Carers – Increasing Carer’s Allowance

Moved by Cllr Hook and seconded by Cllr Daubeney.

“The pandemic has opened all our eyes to the importance of carers, whether employed in the care sector or unpaid people who care for family members.

Carers have been at the forefront of the Coronavirus pandemic response and continue to do a selfless and remarkable job in very difficult circumstances.

Despite this, the Government has overlooked these key workers and have failed to offer adequate support, and unpaid carers in particular have been left to face mounting financial and emotional pressures.

Carers UK research shows that unpaid carers in the UK have saved the state £530 million every day of the pandemic. It is time to give them the support they deserve.

Council notes:

- Caring for people’s health doesn’t stop at the hospital exit, or the GP’s surgery door, there are approximately 6.5million volunteers in the UK who look after a family member or friend who is elderly or has a disability, or a mental or physical illness.
- The financial and emotional challenges faced by unpaid carers have been made far worse by the Coronavirus pandemic.
- There are around 19,000 carers in York, but many people who provide care do not recognise themselves as a ‘carer’.
- The latest government figures show that 2,351 unpaid carers in York are entitled to receive Carer’s Allowance, although only 1472 currently do.

- 879 people who are entitled to Carer's Allowance do not receive it due to overlapping benefits, these are mostly older carers on low incomes.
- 900,000 full-time unpaid carers rely on Carer's Allowance at just £67.25 a week; it is the lowest benefit of its kind.
- Carer's Allowance has not been increased during the pandemic despite the pressure on carers and economic impact of Covid-19.

Council believes that more must be done to support unpaid carers, particularly as they continue to face major financial and emotional challenges working on the frontline of the response to the pandemic.

Consequently, Council resolves:

- That the Council lobby national government to increase Carer's Allowance by £1,000 a year, from its current rate of £67.25 a week to £87.25, in line with the £20 a week uplift in Universal Credit, including those who do not receive the Allowance due to overlapping benefits and with equivalent increase in Carer Premium and Carer Addition.
- To call on the Government to expand the eligibility for Carer's Allowance, by raising the earning limit from £128 a week to at least £139.52.
- To request that the Executive Members for Communities and Adult Social Care & Health bring forward a report to a decision session, to highlight the work and voluntary efforts of carers in the city, including highlighting the work of the York Carers Centre. This report should further identify what is and can be done to support carers in York.

On being put to a named vote, the motion was declared CARRIED unanimously, and it was

Resolved: That the above motion be approved. ³

**Note: Cllr Kilbane did not take part in the vote, having declared an interest in this item- see Minute 77.*

(iv) Developing the Next Generation of Workers

Moved by Cllr Webb and seconded by Cllr Douglas.

“Council believes that the Covid recession is the worst time for young people to be leaving education or training and seeking to enter the jobs market in almost 30 years.

Council notes:

- that from July to September, 16-24 year olds experienced the biggest percentage increase in rates of unemployment since the Labour Force Survey (LFS) started collecting quarterly data in 1992 – even before the initial furlough scheme ended;
- that according to Job Centre Plus, York currently has well over 1000 16-24 year olds unemployed;
- the continued importance of food services and accommodation to a visitor economy such as York’s and to the employment opportunities of young people more generally; this sector lost the highest percentage of jobs over the same quarter, with young workers worst affected;
- that since August 2019, £0.5m of unallocated council apprenticeship levy has been returned to the Treasury due to it not being spent within an imposed two year deadline.

Council believes proper plans must be developed at both the national and local levels to ensure young people in York are not consigned to years of unemployment or low paid, unstable work.

Council resolves:

- To request that the Chief Operating Officer, on behalf of the council, writes to the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, seeking a broadening of the Government’s ‘Kickstart’ Scheme beyond just those young people on Universal Credit and ‘at risk of long term unemployment’, and further, to push for a fully funded youth guarantee of jobs, training or employment;
- To request that Executive steps up its commitment to apprenticeship training in the council to train and develop more young people, helping to avoid the requirement to send more York apprenticeship funding back to Government, and to report on its progress through bi-annual updates to either Executive or the relevant Executive Member Decision Session;
- To support establishing a joint review, convened between Economy & Place and Children, Education & Communities scrutiny committees, to develop a robust strategy for ensuring that best use is made of all available support and

funding for apprenticeships, both within the council and with partners and businesses throughout the city.”

On being put to a named vote, the motion was declared CARRIED unanimously*, and it was

Resolved: That the above motion be approved. ⁴

Action Required

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Note approval of the amended 'Free after three' Parking Initiative motion and take the appropriate action. | IF |
| 2. Note approval of the motion on Carbon Reduction and Economic Prosperity and take the appropriate action. | NF |
| 3. Note approval of the motion on Increasing Carer's Allowance and take the appropriate action. | AH |
| 4. Note approval of the motion on Developing the Next Generation of Workers and take the appropriate action. | IF |

85. Questions to the Leader or Executive Members

[Note: for ease of reference, questions are grouped by Executive Member rather than listed in the order in which they were asked.]

Questions to Cllr Aspden, Executive Leader

From Cllr Kilbane: Your report refers to the York Central development including 2,500 new homes instead of 'up to 2,500' - has there been a shift in position?

*(**Supplementary from Cllr Webb:** You are advocating eating into commercial land to provide non-affordable apartments – how can you justify increasing the financial risk to the council?).*

Response: The plan is to endeavour to include 2,500 homes on the site, and now that planning approval has been granted I look forward to working with the Labour group to meet our aspirations in respect of housing. I don't agree with Cllr Webb's assertions; the council has made a decision to borrow, set against the achievement of future income from the Enterprise Zone. I hope Labour will welcome the fact that government has contributed £77m to the site and am happy to work through the details with their group as the project progresses.

From Cllr Warters: Will you be lobbying government and Higher Education organisations for students to remain at home after Christmas and continue their courses remotely, rather than repeating the mistake of welcoming 40,000 students to York?

(Supplementary from Cllr Warters: If it's considered safe for students to return in January, when will the council ask its staff to come back?)

Response: I am not going to demonise or segregate groups. I praise the work carried out by public health, the NHS, universities and schools in difficult circumstances. My commitment is to ensure we are communicating health guidance as quickly as possible and taking a York approach, including test and trace work with universities. We continue to follow national guidance on working from home.

Questions to Cllr D'Agorne, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Transport

From Cllr Hook: Why is it so crucial that we secure Devolution funding?

Response: We have put forward a bid with North Yorkshire for a joint Devolution deal, full details of which are on the council's website. The proposals include a £67m York Place fund to support the York Station Front, York Riverside Walkway, Castle Gateway and other projects in the coming year; £175m funding for Bio-Yorkshire; funding for housing, including affordable homes; and £10m for a low carbon skills programme.

(Supplementary from Cllr Rowley: The Railway Institute Band Room is to be demolished as part of the York Station Front scheme – will you work to provide a replacement?)

Response: I'm happy to support anyone affected and am aware that efforts are being made to find suitable replacement premises.

From Cllr Musson: Can you detail the steps taken to progress policy in respect of last year's Council motion on zero carbon?

(Supplementary from Cllr Crawshaw: Can you reassure us that a strategic approach is being taken, with everyone is signed up to a holistic plan that will be in place when we come to Devolution

Response: Despite officers having other priorities with Covid-19 and flooding, they have taken advantage of government funding to put in place policies for development through the Local Transport Plan refresh, which had been due to start in April but was delayed due to the pandemic. We are continuing the Clean Air Zones, which also makes public transport more effective and helps tackle pollution. Several programmes are under way and others are being developed. I would welcome cross-party support on this, and on the one-year recovery plan which forms part of our response to the pandemic.

From Cllr Douglas: How did the Green Party become involved in the payoff to the Chief Executive and its principles so compromised?

Following a request by Cllr Ayre the Lord Mayor referred this question to the Monitoring Officer who stated that this was a matter being debated via the Audit and Governance Committee and also with external auditors, and as a result it would be inappropriate to comment further. In response to a challenge from Cllr K Taylor, the Lord Mayor sought clarification from the Monitoring Officer as to whether it might be more appropriate to discuss this matter more fully when the auditor's report had been completed, either at Audit & Governance Committee or at Full Council. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that this was the case.

Questions to Cllr Smalley, Executive Member for Culture, Leisure & Communities

From Cllr Cullwick: Can you provide an update on play areas?

Response: We need to stop the slide in the quality of play areas. I am glad to say that this administration has accepted £100k funding to work in partnership with community groups to make improvements. The fund is open from today for applications from groups and details can be found on the council's website at www.york.gov.uk/PlayAreaImprovements

From Cllr Doughty: As a member of the Make It York (MIY) Board, can you outline the specific actions you suggest MIY should take to address its increasing problems?

Response: I only joined the Board recently. The MIY Service Level Agreement has been discussed at Executive. I'd be happy to meet you to talk about this.

Questions to Cllr Waller, Executive Member for Economy & Strategic Planning

From Cllr Crawshaw: Inward investment in Make It York has attracted just 18 jobs – is it meeting the Council's expectations?

Response: There was a report on this to my most recent Decision Session and there will be a focus on inward investment in the uncertain run up to Brexit. I am happy to work with scrutiny on that. As discussed at Executive this week, a new contract with MIY will be in place by 31 March.

(Supplementary from Cllr Douglas: Do you believe that an improved commitment to inward investment requires bringing it back in-house?)

Response: I would refer you to my comments at the Scrutiny committee meeting on 27 March 2015, when I expressed concerns around the hurried set up of MIY.

Questions to Cllr Widdowson, Executive Member for Environment & Climate Change

From Cllr Lomas: Given the Lib Dems' abandonment of their pledge to make York carbon neutral by 2030, was the pledge a mistake or an intention to deceive?

(Supplementary from Cllr Kilbane: Can you explain how the multi-storey car park voted through Planning Committee recently fits with the zero carbon target?)

Response: We have not abandoned any targets; we have said that the council will hit the 2030 target and will work with partners on how best to get the whole city involved. The multi-storey car park has not yet gone through Planning; I will be able to comment when a decision has been made.

Questions to Cllr Ayre, Executive Member for Finance & Performance

From Cllr Barker: What can we expect this year in terms of an increase in government funding?

Response: There has been talk of a 4.5% increase in spending power, but the LGC predict that 85% of this will come from council tax increases. So in reality there will be no increase as the government is shifting the burden to local residents.

Questions to Cllr Orrell, Executive Member for Children, Young People & Education

From Cllr K Taylor: The Liberal Democrats have presided over failures in Children's Services for years – what steps have been taken to ensure the service does not receive a negative assessment from OFSTED?

Response: We were not in charge in 2016. Steps have been taken to improve services in several ways within the directorate structures.

(Supplement from Cllr Webb: Do you commit to ensuring that services are brought up to date in terms of dealing with children in need of protection?)

Response: Yes.

Cllr Janet Looker

LORD MAYOR OF YORK

[The meeting started at 6.16 pm and concluded at 9.57 pm]