



**Notice of a public
Decision Session - Executive Member for Economy and Strategic
Planning**

To: Councillor Mason (Executive Member)

Date: Tuesday, 1 November 2022

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registerable interests he might have in respect of business on this agenda, if he has not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

2. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Friday 28 October 2022.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

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

- 3. Food Service Plan 2022/23** (Pages 1 - 50)
This report contains the annual food service plan to satisfy the statutory requirements within the Food Law Code of Practice which is overseen by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).
- 4. Inclusive Growth Fund Update** (Pages 51 - 62)
This report provides an update on the actions set out in the Inclusive Growth Fund.
- 5. Quarterly Economic Update** (Pages 63 - 78)
This report presents updates on the local financial climate, core business support work and Council-led initiatives, and includes an update on the state of the national and local economy, key account management work, progress against major milestones, and inward investment.
- 6. Urgent Business**
Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer

Margo Budreviciute

Contact details:

- Telephone – 01904 551573
- Email margarita.budreviciute@york.gov.uk

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 **(01904) 551550**

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democracy Support Group by:

4:00 pm on Thursday 3 November 2022 if an item is called in *after* a decision has been taken.

*With the exception of matters that have been subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of item on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm on Friday 28 October**.

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above



Decision Session – Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning **1 November 2022**
Report of the Corporate Director of Place
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022/2023

Summary

1. The council is required to produce an annual food service plan to satisfy the statutory requirements within the Food Law Code of Practice which is overseen by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).
2. It is recommended that the service plan is approved at a level which ensures local transparency and accountability.

Recommendations

3. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - i) Approve the food service plan

Reason: This will ensure that the council has a plan to fulfil its obligations under the Food Law Code of Practice.

Background

4. The FSA has a key role as the 'Central Competent Authority' in overseeing official feed and food controls undertaken by Local Authorities and ensuring their activities meet the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice. It also seeks to work in partnership with local authorities to help them to deliver official feed and food controls.
5. Service plans are seen as an important part of the delivery process to ensure that national priorities and standards are delivered locally.
6. The FSA advises that a service plan should include the following information about the services they provide;
 - the means by which they will provide those services

- the means by which they will meet any relevant performance targets or performance standards; and
 - a review of performance, in order to address any variance from meeting the requirements of the service plan and identification of areas for improvement.
7. Local Authorities are subject to a programme of audits by the FSA. As part of these audits, the FSA would expect to find a service plan in place on which the Local Authority can be audited. The results of these audits are published in the public domain.
 8. The FSA are not prescriptive on who should approve the service plan, but suggests it is approved at a level that ensures local transparency and accountability.
 9. It is also worthy of note that the FSA are undertaking a fundamental review of the way that Local Authorities regulate food businesses through their 'Regulating Our Futures' programme.

Consultation

10. The service plan in Annex 1 reviews last year's performance and considers service delivery for the year ahead. As our service delivery for the year ahead is prescribed by the Food Law Code of Practice consultation is not considered necessary.

Options

11. (a) Approve the food service plan.
(b) Approve the food service plan with amendments.
(c) Not approve the food service plan.

Analysis

12. Options (a) and (b) will ensure that the council fulfils its obligation to have a food service plan, and will ensure we meet our statutory obligations. It will ensure all premises due an inspection or other type of intervention will receive one.
13. Option (c) would leave the council in a position of reputational risk and possibly subject to adverse publicity e.g. by the FSA.

Council Plan

14. The food service plan contributes to the corporate council priorities in the Council Plan as follows:
- Good Health and Wellbeing: Every resident enjoys the best possible health and wellbeing throughout their life.
 - Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy: High-skilled and better-paid jobs in sustainable businesses, providing opportunities for all York's people in an inclusive economy.
 - Safe Communities and culture for all: People are safe from harm in strong, resilient and supported communities, enhanced by an appealing and inclusive cultural offer. We respond to complaints from members of the public and investigate cases of food borne illness in the community.
 - An open and effective Council: We work as an open, transparent and accountable organisation, in partnership with key stakeholders, to deliver on residents priorities. We help and support businesses.

Implications

15. **Financial** - The proposals set out can be delivered within existing budgets.
16. **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no HR implications.
17. **Equalities** – The work contained in the food service plan has to be delivered in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. However, there are clear overlaps with a number of the One Planet York principles, including health and happiness, equity and local economy and culture and community. Our services, particularly the pre-inspection consultancy advice visits, are designed to help local businesses thrive and grow.
18. The service deals with a wide range of customers, including various ethnic groups. The service already adapts its service to meet the needs of different groups.
19. **Legal** - Failure to deliver a food service in accordance with our obligations could result in the FSA taking over delivery of the council's food service.

- 20. **Crime and Disorder** – The work programme is aimed at ensuring businesses are meeting their legal obligations and can link to the disruption of wider criminal activity including modern slavery and organised crime gangs.
- 21. **Information Technology (IT)** – There are no IT implications.
- 22. **Property** – There are no property implications.
- 23. **Other** – There are no other implications.

Risk Management

- 24. The risks associated with the food plan and the steps to manage them through a regular review of performance indicators are highlighted above.

Contact Details

Author:
Anthony Dean
Public Protection Manager
Public Protection
Tel: (01904) 551588
anthony.dean@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:
James Gilchrist
Director of Transport, Environment and Planning
Report **Date** 14/09/2022
Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s) List information for all

N/A

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A – Food service plan 2022/2023

Annex B - Equality Impact Assessment - Food Service Plan 2022-2023

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

Food Standards Agency (FSA)

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PLACE DIRECTORATE

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022/2023

**Drawn up in accordance with the
Food Standard Agency's Framework Agreement**

FOREWORD

Under the statutory Food Law Code of Practice, City of York Council (the Council) is required to produce an annual service plan that covers their various food functions.

The Public Protection team carry out many of the Council's regulatory functions particularly those relating to Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing and is responsible for the all the Council's duties in relation to food and feed. For clarity, this includes (i) food hygiene matters i.e. that food is safe to eat, (ii) food standards matters i.e. that food is what it says it is and (iii) similar provisions in relation to animal feed.

This service plan sets out our aims and objectives for 2022/2023 and also looks at what demands are placed on the team and what resources are available to meet those demands. It also reviews our performance over the last year. To this end, any variance between the 2021/2022 planned and actual performance is highlighted as well as any service improvements.

This plan illustrates the effective use of existing resources to target the highest risk businesses, while maintaining a balanced enforcement mix.

The current system of ensuring food hygiene and standards has its roots in the Food Law Code of Practice introduced in 1990. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is currently reviewing the way this activity is delivered, and there may be changes to the role Local Authorities play in the coming years.

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims and objectives

The Council strives to achieve the following in its various food related functions:-

- To approve and register food/feed premises as prescribed by government;
- To operate a comprehensive regime of interventions, for example inspections, sampling, advice and other approaches, including formal enforcement action, to ensure that food and animal feed is safe and is what it says it is;
- To 'score' food hygiene businesses in accordance with the FSA's food hygiene rating system;
- To provide support, assistance, training and advice to local businesses, thereby enabling them to produce and market products that comply with legal requirements and best practice. In the process of this support, help businesses recover from the coronavirus pandemic, survive the cost of living crisis and those which want to grow, grow. There may be a charge for these services;
- To act as a Primary Authority and Originating Authority, and deal with enquiries referred to us by other agencies;
- To investigate complaints about the labelling, composition, safety and fitness of food, feeding stuffs and the operation of food premises;
- To take prompt and effective action in response to food hazard warnings and other threats to food safety in York;
- To investigate cases of communicable disease notified to the Authority;
- To share intelligence obtained in the course of our work with the police and other law enforcement agencies to help wider social

issues such as tackling modern slavery and disrupting organised crime gangs.

- Through all of the above, ensure the health and well-being of residents and visitors to the city.

1.2 Links to corporate objectives and plans.

The Council's Plan for 2019-2023 includes the following eight key priorities:

- **Good Health and Wellbeing:** Every resident enjoys the best possible health and wellbeing throughout their life.
- **Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy:** High-skilled and better-paid jobs in sustainable businesses, providing opportunities for all York's people in an inclusive economy.
- **Getting around sustainably:** People benefit from the wide range of transport options available to them, including cycling and walking, with the city's roads, footpaths and cycle network prioritised for improvement.
- **A Better Start for Children and Young People:** Families and carers are supported, so that every child and young person has the opportunity to develop, learn and achieve their aspirations.
- **A Greener and Cleaner City:** York's environment is protected and enhanced through investment in the council's frontline services, on the path to sustainable living.
- **Creating homes and World-class infrastructure:** The right housing is affordable and available alongside good quality infrastructure to support communities and business.
- **Safe Communities and culture for all:** People are safe from harm in strong, resilient and supported communities, enhanced by an appealing and inclusive cultural offer.

- **An open and effective Council:** We work as an open, transparent and accountable organisation, in partnership with key stakeholders, to deliver on residents priorities and achieve the Council Plan outcomes for our city.

1.3 Public Protection managers review the demands across the whole service annually and refresh a Public Protection service plan which describes all the activities we will undertake during the course of the year to support the priorities listed in the Council plan. This includes delivering this specific food service plan to ensure that food businesses are meeting their legal obligations.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the council

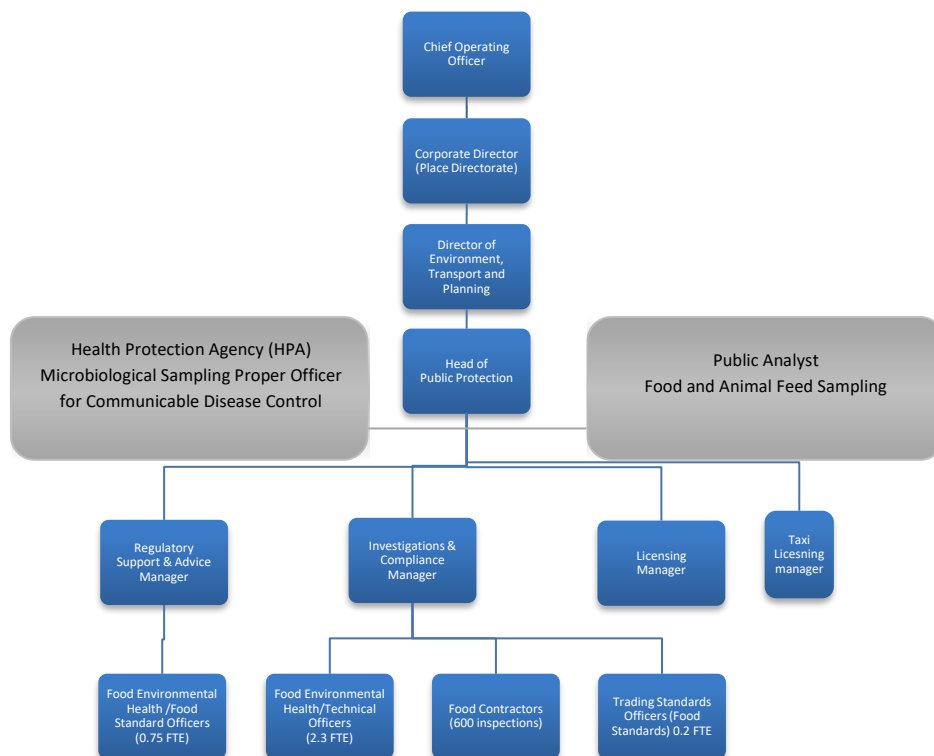
City of York Council is a unitary authority, with a population of 202,800 (according to the 2021 census) and an area of 27,250 hectares. The majority of the electorate are located in the urban city area, with the remainder resident in the outlying towns and villages.

The area is predominantly urban, covering the historic city with the associated tourism, hospitality and catering activities. Studies show that food and drink is the largest area of spend for tourists.

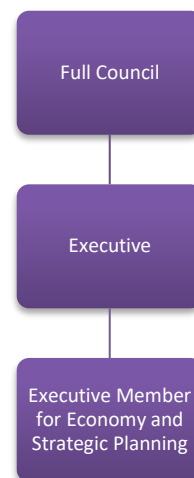
2.2 Organisational structure

The following diagram shows how those responsible for managing and delivering food and animal feed activity fit into the Council's overall structure and also the political structure.

Officer Structure



Political Structure



Other specialist support services include:-

- Public Analyst services for food are provided under contract by 'The Public Analyst Service Ltd'. Feed samples are analysed under the North Yorkshire County Council contract for animal health and feed.
- Microbiological food examination is carried out under service level agreement with the Health Protection Agency (HPA) laboratory service.

2.3 Scope of the food and feed service

The Public Protection team has responsibility for all of the council's food hygiene, food standards and animal feed activities (including 'primary production' activities).

The structure charts above, show that in relation to food matters the team comprises of both environmental health and trading standards professionals, in addition to technical support staff. Some officers have dual qualifications and are therefore able to deal with both food hygiene and food standards matters. We have additional support from specialist Food Safety contractors to deliver routine inspections and North Yorkshire County Council delivers our animal feed activity under a contract for services.

On a day to day basis, officers are involved in the following specific activities:

- A programme of interventions focusing on food and feeding stuffs. This primarily consists of inspections conducted for food safety matters conducted in accordance with a risk assessment (as described in the Food Code of Practice).
- 'Scoring businesses' after an intervention in accordance with the Food Hygiene Ratings Scheme. We also deal with appeals and re-score visits (a charge is made for businesses wishing to be re-scored on a 'cost recovery' basis).
- Investigation of complaints from consumers, and reacting to intelligence from other sources.
- Investigation of food poisonings/infectious disease notifications.
- Promotion and education/advice for businesses and the public. For example, we provide pre-food hygiene rating inspections for businesses, on a cost recovery basis, to help raise standards locally.
- Sampling of food and animal feed.
- Sharing intelligence obtained in the course of our work with the police and other enforcement agencies to help tackle wider social issues including modern slavery and organised criminal activity.
- Signposting growing businesses to the help available through the Local Growth Hubs.

Our Environmental Health Offices also have responsibility for Health and Safety duties in certain business premises (those outside of the scope of the Health and Safety Executive) and also occasionally assist in other areas of Public Protection work including support with trading standards prosecutions – in particular disclosure of unused material.

2.4 Demands on the food team

The Council's area contains a mix of manufacturing, retail and catering premises; hospitality and catering are the dominant sectors. There is a large international confectionery manufacturer, a district hospital, various large academic institutions and a racecourse. We have a relatively small number of farms.

Table 1 - Breakdown of food premises by FSA category (from Civica records).

FSA Category	Number on 1 April 2022
FSA Primary Producer	10
Manufacturer & Packer	44
Importer/Exporter	2
Distributor/Transporter	20
Retailers Other	83
Restaurants/Cafe/Canteen	514
Supermarket/Hypermarket	62
Small Retailer	256
Hotel/Guesthouse	125
Pub/Club	220
Takeaway	208
Caring Establishment	130
School/College	93
Mobile Food Unit	54
Restaurant/Caterers - Other	241
Total	2062

The number of food premises fluctuates year on year, but is typically around the 2,000 mark. As can be seen, the profile of food premises in York is heavily biased towards restaurants and caterers, which is a reflection of the city's status as a major tourist destination.

As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and current economic situation we have already seen an increased turnover of business ownership in the restaurant and catering food sector, and anticipate that this will continue in the year ahead. This 'business churn' places a strain on the team's resources due to requirement to undertake inspections of these new premises.

Under the product specific Regulation (EC) 853/2004, there are four premises that are currently 'approved' by the food team, these being two egg packing centres, one dairy processing plant and one fish processing plant, the latter being approved during 2021/2022.

The team works in accordance with the principles of the Primary Authority scheme, which is promoted by the Office of Product Safety and Standards (part of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy or 'BEIS' as it is commonly referred to). We have developed Primary Authority Partnerships with a number of local businesses.

The service is primarily delivered from council offices at the Eco Depot, Hazel Court, York, but the majority of officers now work at home for around three to four days a week.

The council's hours of operation for the general public are 08:30 -17:00, Monday to Friday. Given the number of restaurants and takeaways, a lot of our interventions, such as inspections, are conducted outside of these hours.

2.5 Regulatory Policy

The Public Protection team follow an enforcement policy which ensures we operate in accordance with the Regulators' code. The formal enforcement action taken under the enforcement policy is reviewed by Members annually.

2.6 Covid-19 Impact

During 2021/2022 the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a huge impact on the way the world operates. The impact of lockdowns on food businesses has been significant with many businesses being unable to operate during lockdown or having to adapt and operate in new ways.

The Covid-19 lockdown restrictions have also had a huge impact on the work of Public Protection and, like other Local Authorities, prevented us from being able to carry out a large number of food inspections, except for where an imminent food safety matter was identified. Guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency during 2021/2022 and for the year ahead, under the 'Covid Recovery Plan', is being used to help prioritise our service to deal with the greatest risks to public health and safety.

As a result of the reduced number of inspections conducted during the Covid pandemic there is a backlog of some 300 inspections , representing approximately 1/3 of all food hygiene inspections which were due in the 2020/2021 financial year. We are however making good progress against the Food Standards Agency's 'Recovery Plan' (see below) and in that respect are ahead of where we are expected to be.

Whilst Public Protection were unable to carry out significant numbers of inspections during lockdown, advice was given to many businesses on compliance with new Covid-19 regulations and guidance.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Interventions at Food and Feed Establishments

The term 'intervention' is used to cover the broad range of controls that we use when dealing with food businesses to verify compliance with food law. Interventions are classified as either 'official controls' or as 'other interventions'. The following definitions are taken from the Code of Practice:

Interventions that are 'official controls' include:

- inspections;
- monitoring;
- surveillance;
- verification;
- audit; and
- sampling - where analysis/examination is required these are to be carried out by an Official Laboratory.

Other interventions, i.e. those which *do not* constitute official controls include:

- education, advice and coaching (including where businesses pay for this advice); and
- information and intelligence gathering (this can include sampling for information gathering purposes, obtaining relevant information during visits for other reasons, internet research, telephone surveys, and self-assessment questionnaires).

All food premises are 'risk rated' to reflect the products they supply and the systems they have in place to ensure compliance. Almost all food businesses must receive an intervention within a defined period of time. In some cases the intervention must be an 'official control' (and in some cases only a certain kind of 'official control' e.g. an inspection). In other cases, generally lower risk businesses, this can be an 'other intervention' which is not an 'official control'.

Examples of highest risk premises are places serving particularly vulnerable people, and/or places serving high risk foods with short 'use by' dates and a poor record of compliance. Examples of lowest risk premises (providing they have good systems in place and there is good

confidence in management) are retailers selling pre-packed foods, pubs/clubs only serving drinks and bar snacks, sweet/chocolate shops and cake manufacturers amongst others.

3.2 Food Hygiene Interventions

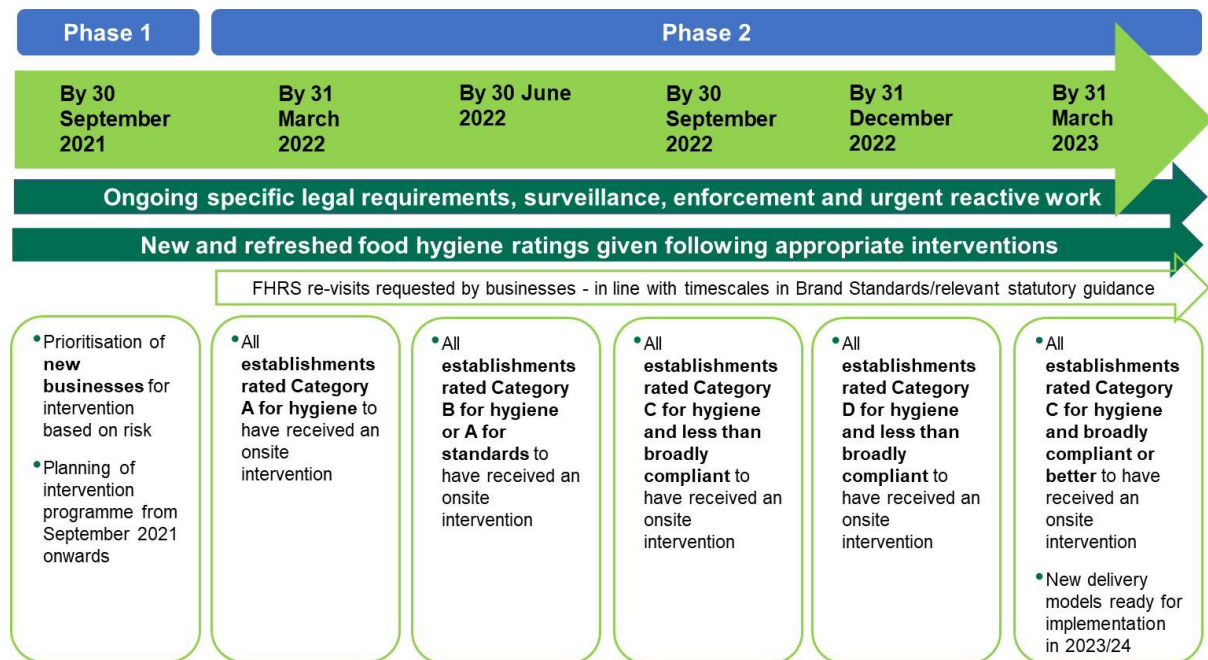
Review of last year's food hygiene intervention performance (2021/2022)

As noted, during 2021/2022 Public Protection were unable to carry out all the food hygiene interventions, normally required by the Food Law Code of Practice, due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, businesses being closed, and re-directing resources to deal with Covid enforcement work.

As a result of these issues, which were not unique to York, the FSA issued guidance to local authorities, known as the Covid Recovery Plan, advising they prioritise higher risk food businesses for interventions. The aim of this being to reduce risk of transmission of the virus, reduce the burden on local authority resources being used to combat Coronavirus, but ensure that food hygiene standards were still being met by higher risk or poorer performing food businesses.

The Covid recovery plan, updated in June 2021, required all local authorities to carry out relevant food hygiene interventions as per Figure 1 below, as a minimum.

Figure 1: Outline of the FSA Recovery Plan



However, Public Protection committed to inspect the following in 2021-22

- all ‘A’ rated food businesses,
- all ‘B’ rated food businesses,
- all ‘C’ rated food businesses,
- all non-broadly compliant ‘D’ rated food businesses,
- all new food businesses

This being above the minimum FSA intervention standard required.

Table 3.1 below shows a summary of the performance against the Covid Recovery Plan for 2021/2022 and also our own targets as set out above.

Table 3.1 Food hygiene interventions from 01/04/21 to 31/03/22

High risk ← → Low risk

Premises intervention rating	A	B	C	D	E	Unrated	New	Total
No. of interventions normally required	16	42	261	724	201	58	144	1,446
No. of interventions required by FSA recovery plan	16	42	10	0	0	58	144	270
No. of interventions required by Public Protection Plan	16	42	261	35	0	58	144	553
No. of interventions postponed by recovery plan	0	0	0	653	184	0	0	837
No. of interventions achieved	13	38	171	35	3	40	108	408
No. of premises closed so unable to inspect	3	4	38	36	14	18	16	126
No. of premises where no intervention was achieved	0	0	52*	1*	0	0	20**	73

* Unable to inspect but businesses rated with a food hygiene rating score of 5.

** Businesses registered late in 2021/2022 year and moved into 2022/2023 inspection programme

As can be seen – apart from the new businesses who registered late in the year - Public Protection were able to undertake all the interventions required by the FSA's recovery plan, as well as carrying out interventions over and above the requirements of that recovery plan.

Of the above inspections carried out 86% of the businesses received a broadly complaint food hygiene rating (Scores of 3, 4 or 5), and 41% received a food hygiene rating score of 5.

Across all businesses in York, including those not inspected this past year, 97% are rated as broadly compliant and 75% have received a food hygiene rating of 5.

Proposed Food Hygiene Intervention Plan (2022/2023)

In March 2022, The Food Standards Agency issued an update to their Covid-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan detailing local authority expectations on the recovery of the food intervention plan until the end of March 2023.

The emphasis of the plan continues to prioritise higher risk premises for interventions where higher risks arise from businesses who are inherently high risk due to the nature of their products or services they provide, or from businesses who are high risk due to their poor food hygiene practices and procedures.

The FSA Covid recovery plan requires that all local authorities carry out relevant food hygiene interventions as a minimum between April 2022 and March 2023 at

- all 'A' rated food businesses,
- all 'B' rated food businesses,
- all non-broadly compliant 'C' rated food businesses,
- all non-broadly compliant 'D' rated food businesses, and
- all newly registered food businesses

To comply with the FSA's minimum intervention recovery plan Public Protection proposes on inspecting

- all 'A' rated food premises,

Food Service Plan – 2022/2023

- all 'B' rated food premises'
- all 'C' rated food premises,
- all non-broadly complaint 'D' rated food premises (food hygiene rating of 0-2),
- all 'D' rated food premises with a food hygiene rating of 3 or 4
- all butcher premises, and
- all newly registered food businesses

As can be seen Public Protection are again going beyond the minimum requirements set out by the FSA.

Based on the above it is anticipated that the following interventions will be required this financial year, see table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Food hygiene interventions due: 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

High risk ←————→ Low risk

Premises intervention rating	A	B	C	D	E	Unrated*	Total
No. of premises officially requiring intervention (including all overdue interventions) under normal circumstances	15	60	215	791	315	93	1,489
No. of interventions Planned (compliant with FSA Recovery Plan)	15 (30)	60	215	282	0	93	665 (680)

* This is the number of unrated premises at the start of the year. There will be more premises during the year as new businesses open etc.

In addition where intelligence or complaints are received about a business, which is classed as a D' risk category premises with a food hygiene rating of 5, or a risk category 'E' premises, then public protection will consider carrying out an additional food intervention to ensure that food hygiene standards are maintained.

3.3 Food Standards Interventions

Review of last year's food standards intervention performance (2021/2022)

As per the food hygiene standards interventions, food standards interventions in 2021/2022 were also affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. Under the FSA's Covid recovery plan, updated in June 2021, all local authorities were required to carry out food standards interventions as detailed in Figure 1 previously shown above.

Under normal circumstances Public Protection would usually inspect premises falling within the High 'A' premises intervention rating category and take an 'intelligence led' approach to food standards for those premises falling within the medium, low or unrated premises intervention rating categories, rather than following the regime specifically set out in the Food Law Code of Practice.

However under the FSA's Covid Recovery Plan, Local Authorities were required to inspect all higher 'A' rated food standards businesses and identify any unrated or new food businesses which would be likely to be classed as 'A' rated businesses. Where any businesses were identified as being 'A' rated then the FSA require that they are inspection by the end of June '22.

During 2021/2022 Public Protection received additional funding from the FSA to carry out a telephone survey of the 1,100 previously unrated food businesses, with those interactions being classed as an interventions.

Table 3.3 below shows a summary of the performance against the Covid Recovery Plan for 2021/2022.

Table 3.3 Food standards interventions from 01/04/21 to 31/03/22

Premises intervention rating	High 'A' Risk	Medium 'B' Risk	Low 'C' Risk	Unrated	New	Total
No. of interventions required under FSA recovery plan	6	0	0	1,100	71	1,177
No. of interventions achieved	4	0	0	769	0	773
No. of premises closed	2	0	0	127	0	129
No. of interventions not achieved	0	0	0	204	71	275

As can be seen Public Protection managed to inspect all the existing 'A' rated food standards premises and survey 896 of the unrated food premises, of which 127 were found to be closed. We did not carry out any interventions with new businesses (although some key issues like advising on food allergens are addressed by Environmental Health Officers on the opening food hygiene inspection)

Table 3.4 below shows the results of risk categorisation of the unrated food premises contacted in the prioritisation survey. The results of which inform this year's food standards plan below.

Table 3.4 Telephone Survey Prioritisation Results

	High 'A' Risk	Medium 'B' Risk	Low 'C' Risk
Numbers of Premises	18	497	257

Proposed Food Standards Intervention Plan (2022/2023)

The FSA recovery plan continues to require that all local authorities carry out relevant food standards interventions at all 'A' category premises, and consider all new and unrated premises.

In relation to category 'B' and 'C' premises no interventions are required until 2023/2024, or when any new Food Standards delivery model is ready for implementation, unless intelligence or complaints are received about a business and indicates that there may be issues of concern. This is akin to the approach that we have been taking to Food Standards inspections for a number of years.

Based on the above it is anticipated that the following food standards interventions will be required this financial year (see table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Food standards interventions due: 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

Premises intervention rating	High 'A' Risk *	Medium 'B' Risk	Low 'C' Risk	Unrated	New	Total
No. of interventions required under FSA recovery plan	18	0	0	275	~ 100	393
No. of interventions Planned compliant with FSA Recovery Plan	18	0	0	275	~100	393

This will involve inspecting the three previously identified 'A' rated; and 18 premises identified in the prioritisation survey by end of June 2022. We are pleased to advise that these inspections have now been completed.

In addition by the end of September 2022 it is hoped that we will have completed the prioritisation of the remaining 275 unrated food premises and, where necessary, undertaken inspections of any additional premises likely to be classed as 'A' risk.

For new businesses registering during the 2022/2023 year, each business will be assessed using a prioritisation questionnaire or telephone survey, and any identified as being likely to fall within a high or 'A' rating will receive a formal inspection as required.

Where intelligence or complaints are received about a business which falls within the 'B' or 'C' risk categories, then public protection will consider carrying out an additional food standards interventions.

In addition to the above our Environmental Health Officers will continue to give advice in relation to food allergens during the course of their food hygiene visits.

3.4 Feeding stuffs/primary production interventions 2022/2023

City of York Council has a total of 192 registered feed premises, as required by Regulation 183/2005, which are involved in the use, manufacture or marketing of feed.

In 2021/2022 a total of 12 programmed animal feed interventions were due to be undertaken, with 11 interventions actually undertaken by North Yorkshire County Council, under the animal health and feed contract, on behalf of City of York Council.

In 2022/2023 a total of 9 programmed animal feed interventions are due to be undertaken, again to be undertaken on behalf of City of York Council by North Yorkshire County Council under the animal health and feed contract.

As well as proving their competence and ability to deliver the service in a customer focussed way, the supplier was asked to demonstrate the ways in which they could contribute towards the council commitment to becoming carbon neutral and help tackle some of the wider concerns around modern slavery and organised crime. Where appropriate we will incorporate primary production hygiene interventions to reduce the burden on farms.

3.5 Food and Feed Complaints

We investigate food and feeding stuffs complaints in accordance with procedures in our quality management system.

In 2021/2022 we received 79 complaints about the safety of food and 113 complaints about the hygiene of premises. We received a further 13 complaints about food standards. These figures are fairly consistent year-on-year, reflecting how busy the food sector is in York and the high awareness of food issues amongst our customers. We anticipate a similar number of complaints in the year ahead.

3.6 Food and feed sampling

The food safety team is primarily concerned with the microbiological safety of food, but also samples food to establish the nature and likely harm arising from foreign bodies and the like.

The sampling programme tends to focus on areas of past non-compliance, premises that are failing to meet minimum standards and emerging priorities such as cross contamination in connection with E.coli.

Each year Public Health England undertakes microbiological analysis of the samples we take, most of which are done without charge under a credits system. It is not known at this stage whether recent changes to Public Health England will affect this provision.

Our food standards samples look at the description, composition and labelling of food, to ensure that legal requirements are being met. Samples are normally targeted at areas where problems are regularly found, or where intelligence and/or complaints suggest there could be issues.

The team sample foods and feeding stuffs in accordance with national guidance. We participate in nationally co-ordinated sampling programmes, such as those organised by Public Health England, and also sample where local intelligence indicates a need (e.g. where poor food handling practices are observed).

We are currently recording our food standards and food safety samples on the United Kingdom Food Surveillance System.

Due to the Covid pandemic no samples were undertaken during 2021/2022, compared to 47 being undertaken in 2019/2020, the last year before the Covid pandemic.

3.7 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food related infectious disease

The team investigate all food poisoning notifications and outbreaks of food borne disease in accordance with procedures agreed with Public Health England and our local quality procedures.

In 2021/2022 the team received 73 formal notifications of infectious disease, with a similar number of notifications anticipated in the coming year.

3.8 Food/feeding stuffs safety incidents

We deal with all food alerts from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in accordance with the Food Code of Practice and our local quality management system. Notifications are received from the FSA by e-mail and appropriate action is taken in each case.

The reactive nature of these notifications makes it difficult to estimate the likely level of future activity. Although alerts can be issued by the FSA for information only, some require a formal response. A formal response might involve issuing a local press release or contacting multiple food businesses directly, which has resource implications.

3.9 Primary Authority Scheme

We are committed to following the principles of the Primary Authority scheme and have entered into Primary Authority agreements in relation to food with seven businesses.

3.10 Advice to businesses/customers

The team provide high levels of support and assistance to businesses operating or intending to operate in the City of York area.

We typically receive around 300 requests for business advice each year, but in 2021/2022 we actually received 410 requests, as well as numerous requests for advice and support in relation to Covid.

Advice is often requested by prospective businesses before they commence trading. We are seeing many new premises opening and new business proposals being considered. We anticipate dealing with a

much higher number of requests for advice in 2022/2023 as a result of the high levels of business churn being currently experienced.

We also receive a large number of requests for advice from businesses interested in improving their rating under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. We provide this service for a charge on a cost recovery basis using a Pre-Inspection Audit (PIA).

Last year 57 businesses took up this PIA service, this number being lower than in the years prior to the Covid pandemic, when typically around 70 or so PIAs were carried out each year.

Of the 57 businesses receiving a PIA last year, 45 were existing businesses and 12 were newly registered food businesses. For the existing businesses, 38% of the businesses saw their food hygiene rating score improve when they received their formal food hygiene inspection, 49% saw their food hygiene rating score remain the same (mainly for those with existing food hygiene rating scores of 4 and 5), and 6 businesses saw their score reduce.

For new businesses, 58% of the businesses who had a PIA received a food hygiene rating score of 5 at their formal food hygiene inspection, and 67% received a 'Broadly Compliant' food hygiene rating inspection score.

This demonstrates that these pre inspection advice visits do improve standards.

3.11 Liaison with other organisations

The team will ensure that it is operating in a manner that is consistent with both neighbouring and national local authorities and other agencies. Various methods will be used to facilitate this, including benchmarking, peer review and liaison with:-

North Yorkshire Food Liaison Group

Our regional food liaison group works under the wing of the North Yorkshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Group. All eight North Yorkshire local authorities are represented on both of these groups. Of particular relevance is the food safety quality management system (QMS) which the group maintains. Officers from the other authorities in the North Yorkshire region are of course preparing for Local Government re-organisation which will see their services amalgamated into one team

across the region. It is yet to be decided how this will impact on the North Yorkshire Chief Officers Group.

Yorkshire and the Humber Trading Standards Group – Food and Feed

This group is formed by the Yorkshire and Humber Trading Standards Executive Group and meets at least once a year to discuss food standards issues. They look at regional projects where intelligence indicates there are emerging issues, for example counterfeit alcohol or meat substitution.

Public Health England (PHE)

The PHE food laboratory, based at FERA near York, undertake microbiological analysis of food samples on our behalf. Regular meetings are held to promote coordination and good sampling practice across the region.

North Yorkshire District Control of Infection Committee

This is a multi-disciplinary group of public health consultants, consultant microbiologists, environmental health officers, infection control nurses, general practitioners and associated professions. It meets on a quarterly basis to discuss infection control issues and set policies in relation to their investigation and control.

North Yorkshire Police Disruption Panel

The panel exists to share intelligence and undertake activities to disrupt organised crime, including activities connected with food businesses. Where the team receives a food related complaint that does not fall within its enforcement remit or geographical enforcement area, it refers the person concerned to the correct body or forwards the item of work to the relevant authority without delay.

3.12 Promotional and project work

The team continues to raise consumer and business awareness through press releases, particularly following prosecutions.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial allocation

The net Public Protection budget, for all environmental health, trading standards and licensing functions is £1.3m per annum.

4.2 Allocation of staff

As can be seen in the structure chart above, our food officers are shared across two teams i.e. 'Investigations and Compliance' which carries out the bulk of our interventions and enforcement, and 'Regulatory Support and Advice' which provides business advice. The resources are however shared between the two teams as demand requires it.

Full time officers spend approximately 1,200 hours per annum on front line related tasks. Of this time, the majority of the team spend approximately 50% of their time on food related issues i.e. 600 hrs per year per FTE. The technical officer spends ~100% of their time on food.

Therefore, we have 3,660 hours of officer time to deliver the food service, and will be broken down as follows.

Task	Time (hours)
Lead officer role – performance monitoring, service planning, NY food group	120
Intervention programme (in house staff only)	750
Enforcement work (e.g. investigations/prosecutions)	280
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	60
Food/premises complaints, including business advice, alerts etc.	900
Infectious disease	120
Primary authority/income work	780
Project work	120
Management of food contractors	250
Sampling	150

Officer training	140
TOTAL TIME TO DELIVER SERVICE	3,660

In addition to the above resources there is a budget of £40,000 for contractor inspections which will purchase in the region of 600 inspections. Some of which may be used this year to supplement our increased food standards work as required by the FSA's Local Authority Covid Recovery Plan.

Animal Feed

Our animal feed/primary production inspections will be carried out on our behalf by competent officers at North Yorkshire County Council.

Management

The above figures do not include Management time, which will be undertaken within existing resources.

4.3 Staff development plan

The Food Law Code of Practice requires that staff achieve at least 20 hours of food related Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year.

Staff development needs are identified on an ongoing basis, through the team's quality management system. We also hold annual Performance Development

Reviews with individual officers, where the training needs are considered. Identified training needs will be met by:-

- Training to achieve specific qualifications
- Attendance of technical seminars/courses
- In-house training on specific issues
- Cascade training by staff that have attended relevant courses
- Use of online training resources (e.g. FSA online content)

Training records show that officers achieve the required levels of CPD training required by the Food Law Code of Practice.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Quality assessment and internal monitoring

The food team operates within the North Yorkshire Food Liaison Group's quality management system (QMS).

The QMS includes a rigorous system of controlled documents that state the minimum standards for our food enforcement activities. It includes internal monitoring within the authority and is further enforced by inter-authority auditing.

The system ensures the delivery of high quality enforcement activity across the City of York, which is consistent with the other North Yorkshire authorities and is in accordance with good practice.

5.2 External monitoring

The Council's activities are subject to periodic monitoring from the Food Standards Agency. The last monitoring visit took place in February 2022 in relation to Food Standards, whereby a plan of action as previous detailed was put in place. This plan was completed and signed off as complete in March 2022.

6. ENFORCEMENT

6.1 Formal action

The following table 6.1 summarises the level and types of formal enforcement action taken in 2021/2022.

Generally we believe that to be effective, the full range of enforcement options should be used, from informal letters offering advice, through to prosecutions where this course of action is considered appropriate.

Formal action was made more difficult in 2021/2022 due to the partial closure of the courts, due to Covid, and as a result the need for the courts to concentrate on Crown Prosecution Service cases.

Table 6.1 Summary of Public Protection Food safety/standards Enforcement 2021/2022

Type Of Action	Numbers Taken/ Issued 2021/2022
Voluntary Closures	2
Seizure of detention of foods	0
Emergency Prohibition Notice	0
Prohibition Notices	0
Simple Caution	0
Hygiene Improvement Notice	5
Remedial Action/Detention Notices	0
Prosecutions Concluded	0
Prosecutions Pending	3
Written Warnings	392

7. SUMMARY

7.1 Summary of performance – including key variations from the service plan.

We carried out a food hygiene intervention for the vast majority of all the premises due an intervention in 2021-2022, with those missed being as a result of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic since March 2020 and the premises being lower risk.

We have also continued to take firm enforcement action against the poorest performing businesses, where possible due to the pandemic, with 1 business prosecuted for food standards matters.

7.2 Customer Satisfaction

Public Protection regularly survey our business customers and members of the public, to ensure that we are providing a high quality, customer focused service.

In 2021/2022 our surveys found the following, as per table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1 Summary of Public Protection Satisfaction Survey Results 2021/2022

Directorate Measure	2021/2022 Result	Target
% of businesses reporting contact with officers was helpful	100%	95%
% of businesses reporting that they were treated fairly	98%	90%
% of business reporting that the visit was useful	98%	95%
% customers satisfied with the overall level of service provided	76%	85%

7.3 Areas of challenge of areas for improvement in 2022/2023

- Dealing with the backlog of missed food hygiene inspections should be manageable but there are challenges in dealing with the backlog of food standards unrated inspections as required by the Covid Recovery plan.
- Supporting business recovery from the pandemic and support through the cost of living crisis as well as advice as businesses re-open or new businesses start up. Advice will include signposting businesses to those offering grants and other forms of support to help businesses grow.
- Further improvements to intelligence gathering and sharing, particularly in relation to identifying victims of modern slavery and tackling organised crime.
- Undertake horizon scanning on food related issues.
- Improve our Proceeds of Crime capability – particularly amongst Environmental Health staff.
- Increased public interest and scrutiny of the food hygiene inspections.

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**City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment**

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	Place		
Service Area:	Public Protection		
Name of the proposal :	Food Service Plan 2022/2023		
Lead officer:	Ant Dean		
Date assessment completed:	29/07/2022		
Names of those who contributed to the assessment :			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Anthony Dean	Public Protection Manager	City of York Council	Environmental Health and Trading Standards

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	<p>What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.</p>
	<p>City of York Council has a legal responsibility to produce an annual food service plan which sets out the aims and objectives for the year, in relation to food safety and hygiene, food standards, and feed. The plan reviews the performance over the previous financial year, considers the likely demands on the service in the year ahead, and considers the resources available to do this.</p> <p>The report is submitted to the Executive Member Session for approval.</p>
1.2	<p>Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)</p>
	<p>There is a central government requirement for local authorities to comply with relevant legislation, codes of practice, guidance on enforcement priorities and a framework document to produce an annual service plan for food law enforcement. This plan is supplementary to the Public Protection Service Plan.</p> <p>The plan provides more specific detail on the Service’s aims and objectives for the forthcoming year in complying with the current Food Law Code of Practice and Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement with Local Authorities, which embodies the requirements of the legislation.</p> <p>In addition the food plan also considers the views and requirements of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) who provide advice and guidance for food and animal feed interventions required by local authorities.</p>

1.3	<p>Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?</p> <p>Food producers and retailers in the City Residents of York, and visitors to York who may visit local food premises, or anyone who consumes food labelled in the district Elected members Authorised officers engaged in Food enforcement activity Animal feed producers</p>
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Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

2.1	<p>What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights?</p> <p>Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.</p>	
	Source of data/supporting evidence	Reason for using
	Business customer satisfaction survey results	This survey assesses the effect of interventions undertaken, and how well the advice and service provided is received.
	<p>The Council retains a comprehensive database on which details of all inspections / interventions are recorded. The system identifies all known local premises on the basis of risk, and thereby enables a comprehensive risk-based inspection programme to be identified for the subsequent municipal year.</p> <p>This data is at the heart of the proposed Service Plan.</p>	This provides an understanding of the types of businesses inspected and the levels of compliance associated with business types.

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.	
Gaps in data or knowledge		Action to deal with this
At this moment it is not known precisely how many food premises are managed by persons from particular ethnic groups, although it is suspected that certain types of food business (e.g. takeaways) are run by and tend to members of the BME communities.		Further information could be gained on this during the inspection process, when the ethnicity of food premises owners could be gathered. This could be cross referenced against compliance and customer satisfaction levels to help ensure these groups are not disadvantaged.

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	None identified	Neutral	Low
Disability	None identified	Neutral	Low
Gender	None identified	Neutral	Low
Gender Reassignment	None identified	Neutral	Low
Marriage and civil partnership	None identified	Neutral	Low
Pregnancy and maternity	None identified	Neutral	Low
Race	Language and literacy may add to the challenges of compliance, but information leaflets and translation services are available and our inspections are aimed at helping compliance	Positive	Medium

Religion and belief	Officers need to have a wide knowledge of diverse cultures domestically and commercially within the City. This includes knowledge and respect of different religions and faiths that we come into contact with on a day-to-day basis. E.g. knowledge of slaughterhouse rituals and types of foods consumed by different groups	Positive	Medium
Sexual orientation	None identified	Neutral	Low
Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer	None identified	Neutral	Low
Low income groups	Included in the inspection programme are food banks and other premises serving low income groups or those otherwise under financial pressure in the current economic climate to ensure that food is safe and what it says it is.	Positive	Medium
Veterans, Armed Forces Community	None identified	Neutral	Low
Other	None identified	Neutral	Low
Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.	No impacts on human rights have been identified as a result of the service plan.		

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p>Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or across services, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
<p>Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?
<p>Language and literacy issues may mean that people from BME groups may make compliance even more challenging. The availability of translation services is promoted in our literature and through use of language line is available where needed. The training programme on Safer Food and Better Business is designed to improve hygiene standards and reduce the likelihood of enforcement action, and is available in a number of different languages. Applicants are able to carry out food hygiene training in their preferred language.</p>	

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:
<p>- No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.</p>	

- **Adjust the proposal** – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations.
- **Continue with the proposal** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the proposal** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.

Option selected	Conclusions/justification
No major change to the proposal	Throughout the report the only potential equalities issue relates to ethnicity and concern of potential language barriers. Translation of advice is made available to all businesses, in order that they are able to understand the legal requirements for their business in their own language, and so provide safe food for the residents and visitors to York.

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.			
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
N/a			

Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

8. 1	<p>How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?</p>
	<p>Business satisfaction surveys will continue to be undertaken, in order to assess the impact of the food safety, standards and feed work undertaken by Public Protection. Where issues are identified, proactive measures will be implemented to resolve any identified concerns.</p>

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**Decision Session –
Executive Member (Economy and Strategic
Planning)**

1 November 2022

Inclusive Growth Update

Summary

1. This report provides an update on the actions set out in the Inclusive Growth Fund, as agreed by the Executive Leader at his Decision Session on the 18 September 2019.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - i. Note the progress that has been made on the agreed Inclusive Growth Fund projects

Reason: So that the Council nurtures a pipeline of projects that positively address inclusive growth in the City of York.

Background

3. At a Full Council meeting on the 17 July 2019, £300k of the £660k Leeds City Region Business Rates Pool was reallocated to support inclusive growth across York. In September 2019, the Executive Leader then approved the proposal to establish an Inclusive Growth Fund which would support eight inclusive growth projects.
4. By inclusive growth, it is meant that the benefits of economic growth must be felt by all those in society, regardless of where they live, how they make a living, and who they are. Inclusive growth cannot have neighbourhoods that are left behind, opportunities that are only selectively available, or a two-tier economy where some people do well at the expense of others who are not.

5. The eight projects approved by the Executive Leader were intended as one-off pieces of work that would spur inclusive growth for the city over the longer term. The projects would either be subsumed into mainstream budgets or become self-sustaining.
6. These eight projects were as follows:
- Establishing a York Poverty Commission
 - Community hubs as drivers of economic growth
 - Greening our retail estate
 - Community jobs fairs
 - 14+ vocational training and work
 - Independent retail growth fund
 - Mental health, wellbeing and employment
 - York Economic Strategy consultation
7. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 and subsequent drop in national economic output by the largest margin since 1709, these projects were put on hold as the Council re-assessed the economic and social landscape of York.
8. The focus of the Council's work went towards ensuring the survival of businesses and jobs primarily through the delivery of Covid-19 grant schemes, such as the Micro Business Grant Scheme and the two rounds of Additional Restrictions Grant. This focus is evident in Figure 1 with City of York Council being among the top 5 local authorities in the UK for delivering its allocation of Covid-19 financial support from the Government.

Local Authority	Allocation	No of payments	Value of payments	Percent spent	Average grant
South Yorkshire MCA	£31,721,837	24,025	£47,939,507	151%	£1,995
Maidstone BC	£64,595,814	9,650	£71,592,928	111%	£7,419
West Berkshire Council	£63,860,844	9,347	£69,392,366	109%	£7,424
City of York	£113,425,329	27,655	£113,429,729	100%	£4,102
Basingstoke & Deane BC	£49,141,983	7,489	£48,678,616	99%	£6,500
Warwick DC	£73,471,157	17,315	£71,854,422	98%	£4,150

Figure 1: Local Authority Spend of Covid-19 Funds¹

¹ BEIS – Coronavirus grant funding: local authority payments to small and medium businesses

9. At the same time, the gravity of the pandemic underlined the importance of every job, every business and every citizen in our economy and gave cause to double down on the commitment to achieve inclusive growth across York.
10. Not only did this flow through into the work re-started in developing York's 10-year economic strategy and in the inclusive growth project initiatives themselves, but across the wider York business community as businesses across the city signed up to the Good Business Charter (GBC). The GBC is an accreditation which organisations in the UK can sign up to in recognition of responsible business practices, such as paying the real living wage, providing fairer hours and contracts, and commitment to diversity and inclusion. York was the first city in the UK to sign-up to the GBC.
11. With Covid-19 restrictions fully removed in July 2021, work on the inclusive growth projects were able to significantly progress. As such, all funding has now been committed to the inclusive growth projects, with the commitment that it will be spent by the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
12. It is clear though that the significant rise in the cost of living will lead to a drop in York residents living standards, with inflation and the cost of energy unlikely to abate in the short-term. As such, a strong focus and commitment to inclusive growth must be maintained if inequalities are not to be worsened.
13. A final report in 2023 will provide a detailed inclusive growth evidence base, summarising York's position so that an assessment can be made of how to progress inclusive growth in the city.

Inclusive Growth Fund Project updates

14. The current status of the Inclusive Growth Fund projects is as follows:

Project title	Funding	Current status
Establishing a York Poverty Commission	£20k	In progress via York CVS
Community hubs as drivers of economic growth	£40k	Complete
Greening our retail estate	£70k	In progress

Community jobs fairs	£30k	In progress via York Learning
14+ vocational training and work	£50k	Complete
Independent retail growth fund	£40k	Complete
Mental health, wellbeing and employment	£25k	On hold
York Economic Strategy consultation	£25k	Complete

Establishing a York Poverty Truth Commission

15. It was agreed at the Executive Members Decision Session in February 2021 that Council funding for the Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) was dependent on other funders being prepared to contribute and an organisation being identified to act as the fundholder. York Centre for Voluntary Service (CVS) have now successfully raised additional funds from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, University of York, and the Two Ridings Community Foundation's Deciding Together Fund. Council funding has now been released to York CVS and the project is underway.
16. £20k from the Inclusive Growth Fund will help cover staff salaries, expenses for the community commissioners and venue hosting for meetings.
17. As discussed in the last update report, across October 2021 two preliminary sessions were held to get an understanding of what a PTC might look like in York and to talk to those who might like to get involved.
18. Since then, York CVS has been focused on recruiting people with experience of poverty to become community commissioners, of which they currently have 10 and are aiming to have 12-15. The 10 commissioners have already met and been introduced to each other.
19. These community commissioners will identify issues which keep them in poverty and from that they will be able to identify and invite civic commissioners to join the PTC. This approach, and the PTC in general, is very much led by the community commissioners. It is thus not yet clear who will be invited to be a civic commissioner at this stage.

Community Hubs

20. As outlined in the previous report, this project is complete. The work undertaken as a consequence of the funding meant that at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, our community hub network was well established and had dedicated Council staff resource. For an update on the Community Hubs as a whole see the paper that went to [Full Council on Thursday 19th May 2022](#).

Greening our retail estate

21. Following a review of this project there has been a reallocation of the budget for this initiative. The overall spend commitment remains at £70k, but this has been split for two projects.
22. £20k of this £70k fund has now been allocated towards procuring researchers to produce a report which examines the current, and forecasts the future, 'green' economy in York, with special regards to 'green' jobs and 'green' skills.
23. The report will initially map out what the green economy is with an introductory explainer that defines the green economy, green jobs and green skills, along with an overview of York's current green economy, including its constituent industries, assets and current job numbers. It will then map out what they key industries in York will be, what skill requirements will be needed and job forecasts, before concluding with a prioritised list of actions for the Council and partners to take to support the development of a greener economy.
24. Procurement is on-going at time of writing. The project will be concluded in November with the study being launched at York Business Festival 2022 as part of the Greener Economy week.

Community Job Fairs

25. Community Job Fairs run by York Learning take place twice a year at the York Railway Institute, with these being run in March and September in 2022. At the time of writing, the September fair has not taken place yet but has 73 employer's set-up to exhibit.
26. This will be the first jobs fair since late 2019 in which social distancing rules will not limit the number of attendees and organisations attending. In our last update, it was reported that the Job Fair in March 2022 had much more of the 'buzz' usually associated with pre-Covid events but was limited due to social distancing rules.

27. From a York Learning perspective, the team has benefited hugely the Job Fairs initiative, and they have been able to recruit learners for various programmes including ever-popular English and Maths, ESOL provision, their vibrant Information, Advice and Guidance programme and the thriving Digital Skills courses.
28. Further jobs fairs are planned in Acomb in November this year and at York Railway Institute in March 2023. The list of jobs fairs that have undertaken since the Inclusive Growth Fund was agreed in September 2019 are detailed in Figure 2.

29. **Figure 2: York Learning Jobs Fairs**

Date	Venue	No of Exhibitors	No. of Visitors
25/9/19	York RI	68	578
6/11/19	Local - Acomb parish Church Hall	27	241
23/9/2020	Virtual	n/a	n/a
6/10/2021	York RI	49	274
23/3/2022	York RI	57	396
21/9/2022	York RI	tbc	tbc
Nov 2022	Acomb	tbc	tbc
Mar 2023	York RI	tbc	tbc

14+ Vocational Training and Work

30. The initial aim of this project was to support non-academic career routes for young people at risk of becoming 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) through working with York's secondary schools and colleges.
31. The Council has recruited 14 places from 8 of the 9 mainstream secondary schools in York for a two year course, starting in September 2022, for Year 10 students leading to accreditation and progression to York College Post 16. The funding has allowed this to be offered to schools at the reduced rate of £650 per place for the full year which has maximised take up. This is in addition to support that enable the ten Year 11 students training in Construction at York College last academic year.

32. The new Identified students all will benefit from the different style of learning and engagement that the course will offer.

Independent Retail Growth Fund

33. A meeting with traders' associations was held on the 29 June 2022. As well as hearing the benefits of the Good Business Charter, traders' associations were invited to submit proposals for projects and initiatives, particularly around Winter and Christmas 2022.
34. Applications to the fund closed on the 31 August and 12 projects have been approved, totalling £24,965. Christmas lights and events in Haxby, Micklegate, Acomb, Goodramgate and Shambles Market are being supported, together an initiative by a newly emerging network of wedding businesses and a selection of events in 2023.

Organisation	Amount	Project Details
Haxby and Wigginton Traders' Association (HW1)	£2,000	Christmas Lights Event This popular local community event has become ever-larger over the last few years, now attracting several hundred people, and input from HW1 and Haxby Town Council has been pivotal in its continued growth. This year will look to emulate the success of previous years, including a complementary event at Haxby Sports Bar and input from YO1 Radio. The Christmas lights switch on event has also been moved to coincide with Small Business Saturday on 3rd December.
Haxby and Wigginton Traders' Association (HW1)	£1,000	Easter 2023 Event Emulating the format of previous years', this event will be in the form of an Easter egg/ Easter Bunny hunt around the local area.
Haxby and Wigginton Traders' Association (HW1)	£2,000	Wiggifest 2023 Wiggifest has was a major success in 2022, with the event raised several thousand pounds for local causes, and brought the community together. Alongside the music and entertainment, there were a number of stalls and several family activity events,

Organisation	Amount	Project Details
		many of which were sponsored by local businesses.
Indie York	£2,500	<p>Indie York Tote Bags</p> <p>Indie York will use the funds to buy 2,500 branded tote bags, which will be used to deliver a profile raising competition in late summer 2022 and as promotional assets to distribute at the York Food Festival and at relevant events in the run up to Christmas.</p>
Bridal Reloved York	£2,500	<p>Winter Wedding Fayre</p> <p>Bridal Reloved is a local group of wedding related businesses that want to work together through networking and joint projects to promote themselves to potential customers. Using the funds, they will be putting on a winter wedding event. This will involve a Christmas wedding market and showcase for couples planning their weddings to also include a wedding show and a mock-up wedding venue to recreate a winter wedding theme</p>
Micklegate Business Initiative	£2,500	<p>Micklegate Mingle</p> <p>As in previous years, the mingle will be a free entry family event at Christmas with rides stalls, Santa and entertainment. It is aimed at young families, specifically from the more deprived estates, giving them the chance to enjoy an afternoon and bring some festive cheer to the area.</p>
Micklegate Business Initiative	£1,000	<p>Soapbox 2023</p> <p>Funding will be used to support the on-going costs of Soapbox 2023</p>
Goodramgate Traders	£1,465	<p>Provision of Social Media Training</p> <p>In person group training by Pick & Mix Marketing to help Traders optimise the use of</p>

Organisation	Amount	Project Details
		Facebook & Instagram for business including the use of paid advertising
York Market Trader Forum	£2,500	Christmas Leaflets Funding will support the creation and distribution of the Christmas Seasons leaflets of the market to increase footfall and also to make the market to look more appealing for the city visitors during the festive season.
Goodramgate Traders	£2,500	Christmas Event To promote Goodramgate as the destination for Indie shopping, eating, drinking & entertainment including its abundance of heritage, through a Christmas event.
Bishy Road Traders Association	£2,500	Christmas Market 2022 Funding will be used to showcase and support local, independent food outlets, makers & creatives to sell their goods as well as providing some musical entertainment. This will also be an opportunity to switch on the Bishy Road Christmas lights.
Acomb Alive	£2,500	Acomb Christmas Lights 2022 The funding will support this year's Christmas lights show in Acomb.

Mental health, wellbeing and employment

35. This initiative was designed to support mental health, wellbeing and employment in the city. The initial project funded under this was 'Building Business Resilience' research report which York St John University produced for in July 2021, followed by a mental health event at York Business Week in 2021.
36. The Council continues to promote a number of free support services such as the [HSE's working minds](#) and [St Nick's Thriving at Work](#) service through its weekly business bulletin.

York Economic Strategy and Partnership

37. At the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning Decision in June 2022, the initiation of the next phase of York's 10-year Economic

Strategy consultation was approved. This consultation involved the following:

- May – Our Big Conversation - targeted focus groups
- June to August – Our Big Conversation - 6 week resident, business and partner consultation
- July to August - Open call for comments on draft Economic Strategy

38. The funding from the Inclusive Growth Fund has ensured that the consultation and development of the strategy has had an inclusive approach. For instance, under the first phase of the consultation, the Council commissioned York Citizens Advice to consult with its clients on the priorities of any future economic strategy.
39. Phase 2 of Our Big Conversation has also had a particular emphasis on reaching all of York's communities, including the disabled community, children and young people, older people, students, black and minority ethnic people, and the LGBTQ+ community.
40. With this consultation period now over, the Council is carefully studying the results and will refine its draft strategy accordingly. These refinements will be articulated to the Executive Member before the final strategy is brought before the Executive in November 2022.
41. As approved at the Executive Member's previous Decision Session, a new Economic Partnership is being established and will meet for the first time in November 2022.

Council Plan

42. The projects in the Inclusive Growth Initiatives Fund address the following outcomes from the Council Plan:
 - Good health and wellbeing;
 - Well-paid and an inclusive economy;
 - A better start for children and young people;
 - A greener and cleaner city; and,
 - Safe communities and culture for all.

Implications

- **Financial** – no new financial commitments. Previous commitments within the body of the report;
- **Human Resources (HR)** – no implications;
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** – the proposed project to green the Council's retail estate will address the Council's climate change challenge. A number of the proposed projects will positively support the Council's equalities objectives;
- **Legal** – no implications;
- **Crime and Disorder** – no implications;
- **Information Technology (IT)** – no implications;
- **Property** – depending on the findings of the survey, the proposed project to green the Council's commercial estate will have property implications. Any measures taken to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's commercial stock will need to balance commercial viability with environmental benefits.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks identified in respect of the recommendations.

Contact Details

Author:

Simon Brereton
Head of Economic Growth
Economy & Place
simon.brereton@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Tracey Carter
Director – Housing, Economy &
Regeneration

Report **Date** 20 October 2022
Approved

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CYC – City of York Council

MIY – Make it York

NEET – Not in Employment, Education or Training

GBC – Good Business Charter



**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Economy and Strategic Planning****1 November 2022**

Report of the Director of Housing, Economy and Regeneration

Quarterly Economic Update**Summary**

1. This report presents updates on the local financial climate, core business support work and Council-led initiatives, and includes an update on the state of the national and local economy, key account management work, progress against major milestones, and inward investment.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - i. Note the contents of the report

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

State of the Economy

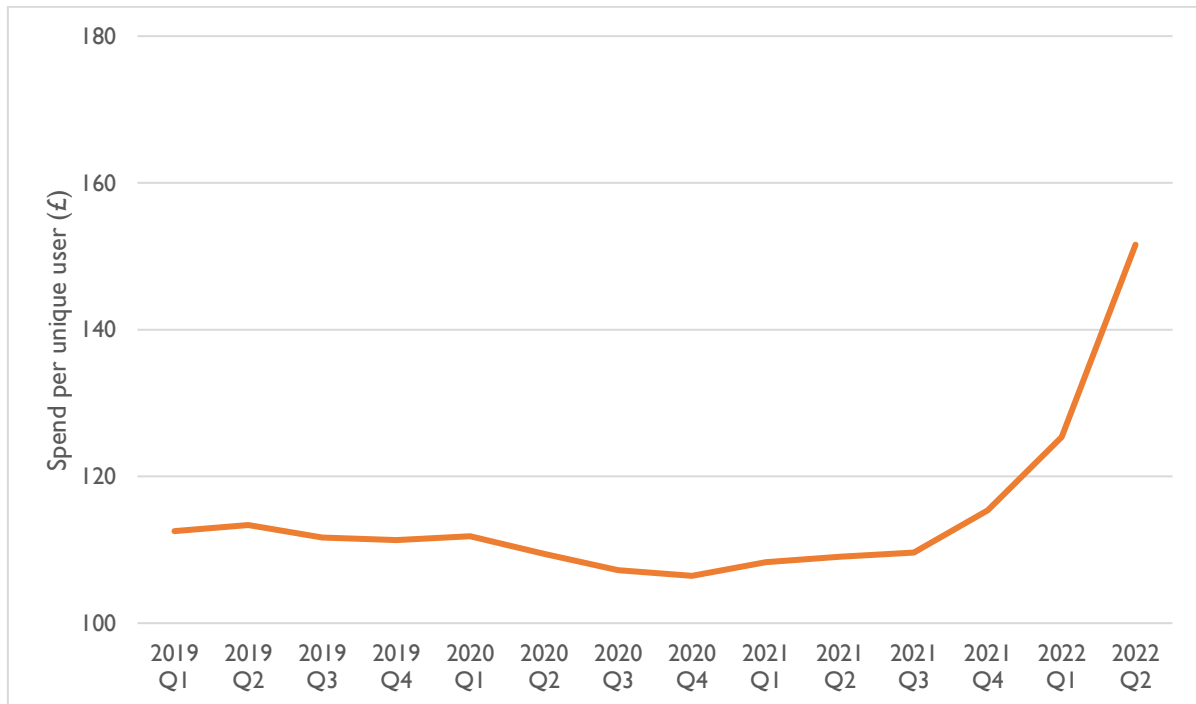
3. Since the last update in July 2022, there have been a number of events that have impacted the performance and outlook of the UK economy. Strike action, record-breaking heatwaves, the death of our monarch, a change of government, the value of the pound decreasing against major currencies and the continuing rise in inflation and interest rates, have brought about a challenging period for residents and businesses to navigate. Recent turbulence following the October 2022 mini-budget and subsequent change in Prime Minister have added to the short-term challenge. The cost of living and the cost of doing business continues to increase and remain at high levels.
4. At time of writing, the UK's inflation rate had risen to 9.9%¹, largely driven by supply-side factors, such as energy and food prices. Households and businesses across the country are being impacted by this high rate of inflation, with the value of their savings falling and purchasing power

¹ This is the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure for inflation in August 2022

decreasing if their income does not keep pace with the rate of increase in inflation.

5. The Centre for Cities thinktank have attempted to gauge the cost of living across towns and cities across the UK by calculating the annual local inflation rate. They have done this through looking at real-time wages and then keeping the inflation rate constant for each consumption component (e.g., energy, groceries), but varying the weight of these components by looking at the consumption patterns of each city. For instance, the weight attributed to consumption on energy will be larger for cities that have more households that are ranked E and D in their Energy Performance Certificates than in cities which have more households ranked A and B.
6. Using this metric, York's local inflation rate for August 2022 has been estimated to be 9.8%². With the exception of Warrington, this is the lowest rate recorded in northern England, but it is relatively high in comparison to southern cities such as London, Cambridge and Reading.
7. The price of energy and petrol appears to be main driving force behind the rise in the inflation rate in York. In Q2 of 2022, the energy spend per unique user in York had risen to £151.58 per month which is £43.27 increase from a year earlier and can be viewed graphically in Figure 1. For petrol, the Q2 spend for 2022 per unique user was £116 per month which is roughly £24 more than a year earlier, but when accounted for inflation it is £8 less than a year earlier. This indicates that the greater spend on petrol is due to the rise in price of petrol rather than residents purchasing a greater quantity of petrol.

² Centre for Cities: Cost of Living Tracker – <https://www.centreforcities.org/data/cost-of-living-tracker/>

Figure 1 – Energy Direct Debit Values Per Unique User – York³

8. Whilst data is not locally available on the energy spend of York's businesses, the Federation for Small Businesses (FSB) estimates that electricity and gas bills for businesses will have doubled or trebled, or in some cases increased by four-to-five fold, this quarter. The degree to which businesses' energy bills will have increased depends on the type of contract they are signed up to and when they have signed up to it. But with 97.5% of York's businesses being small and micro sized, it can be expected that they fit into the FSB's cost estimations, which itself corroborates with the findings picked up by the Council's business growth managers from their workings with York's businesses.
9. To reduce the cost of energy the Government announced the Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) for domestic energy users and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) for non-domestic energy users in September. The EPG was introduced from 1st of October and has been set at £2,500 a year for typical levels of consumption. This is lower than the original Ofgem Q4 2022 price cap, substantially lower than forecasts for 2023, but 27% above the summer 2022 cap. The EPG was initially planned to last two years, but this was cut-back to last till April 2023, at which point targeted support will be given.
10. The EBRS will provide a discount on non-domestic energy customers' gas and electricity unit prices, with the level of price reduction varying on each businesses contract and circumstances. The scheme will run to

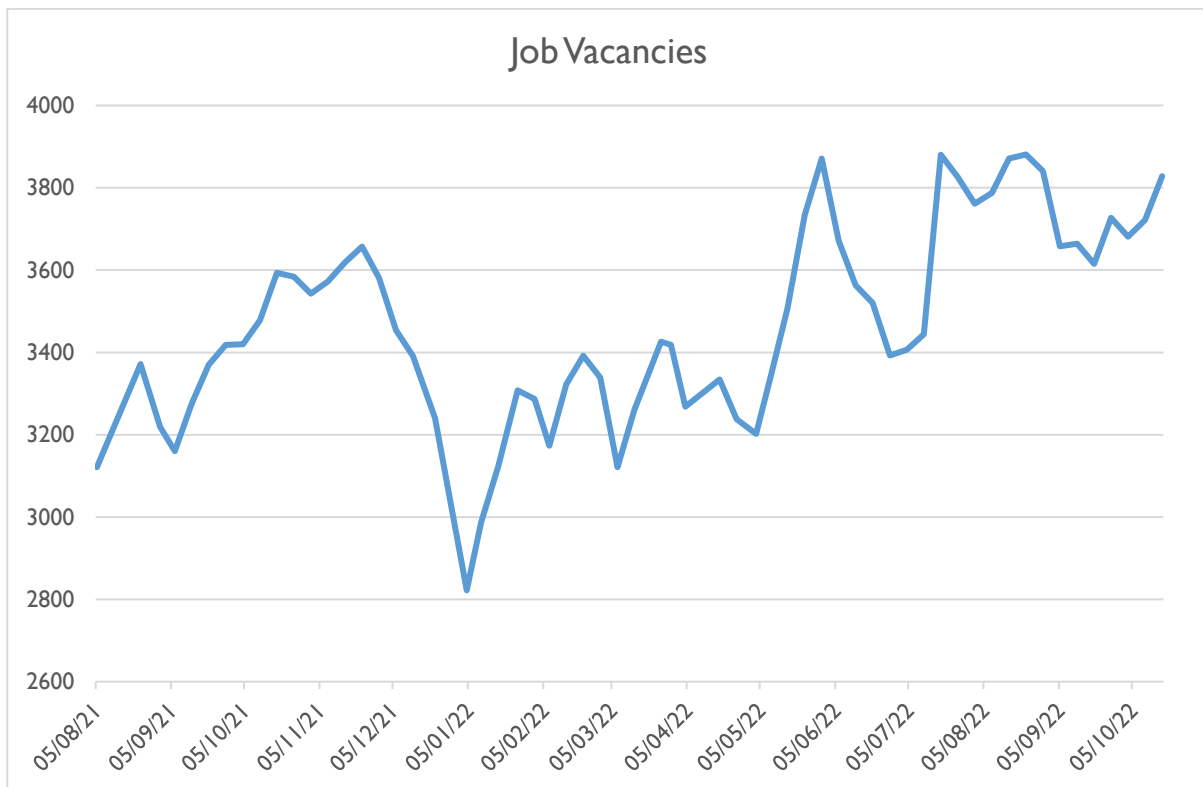
³ ibid

April 2023 at which point targeted support will be given to vulnerable industries.

11. The Council has set-up a [dedicated page](#) to explain these schemes, whilst simultaneously continuing to promote energy efficiency measures, such as the ReBIZ scheme, to help households and businesses become more environmentally friendly and save money on energy bills.
12. The Government also announced it's 'Plan for Growth' in September. This plan outlined several measures, particularly around the tax system, that are intended to deliver economic growth. Without publishing a plan for how these measures would be costed for, participants in financial markets became nervous about the UK's debt obligations and began selling holdings of UK bonds, pushing up their yield (interest rate) across both short and long-term holdings and caused the pound sterling currency to fall in value to record lows against major currencies.
13. At the same time, mortgage rates quickly rose in anticipation that the Bank of England (BoE) would have to raise the UK's base interest rate more aggressively than previously thought. The average two-year fixed mortgage rose to 6.46%, the highest since 2008 and the average five-year fixed mortgage rose to 6.14%, a 14-year high according to financial information company Moneyfacts.
14. The changes in mortgage rates will impact the housing market in York. According to the latest ONS data from 2020, the number of households in York that owned a home with a mortgage or loan was 26,313 which equates to roughly 31% of households⁴. The BoE estimates that 80% of all mortgages are on a fixed-term basis⁵, which suggests that for York roughly 21,000 households are on fixed-deals and 5,000 households are on variable deals. The recent changes will mean that those on fixed-rate mortgages will likely face higher interest rates when they re-mortgage and those on variable rate mortgages will see their interest rates increase. For those looking to purchase a new home by taking out a mortgage, they will also face higher borrowing costs.
15. With regards to the labour market, the number of job vacancies in York persists at high levels. At the beginning of October, there were 3,828 job vacancies within 5 miles of York City Centre from the job website Indeed, as seen in Figure 2. The average number of vacancies across Q3 2022 was 3,720 job vacancies per week, with that figure continuing to rise since we began recording the total in August 2021.

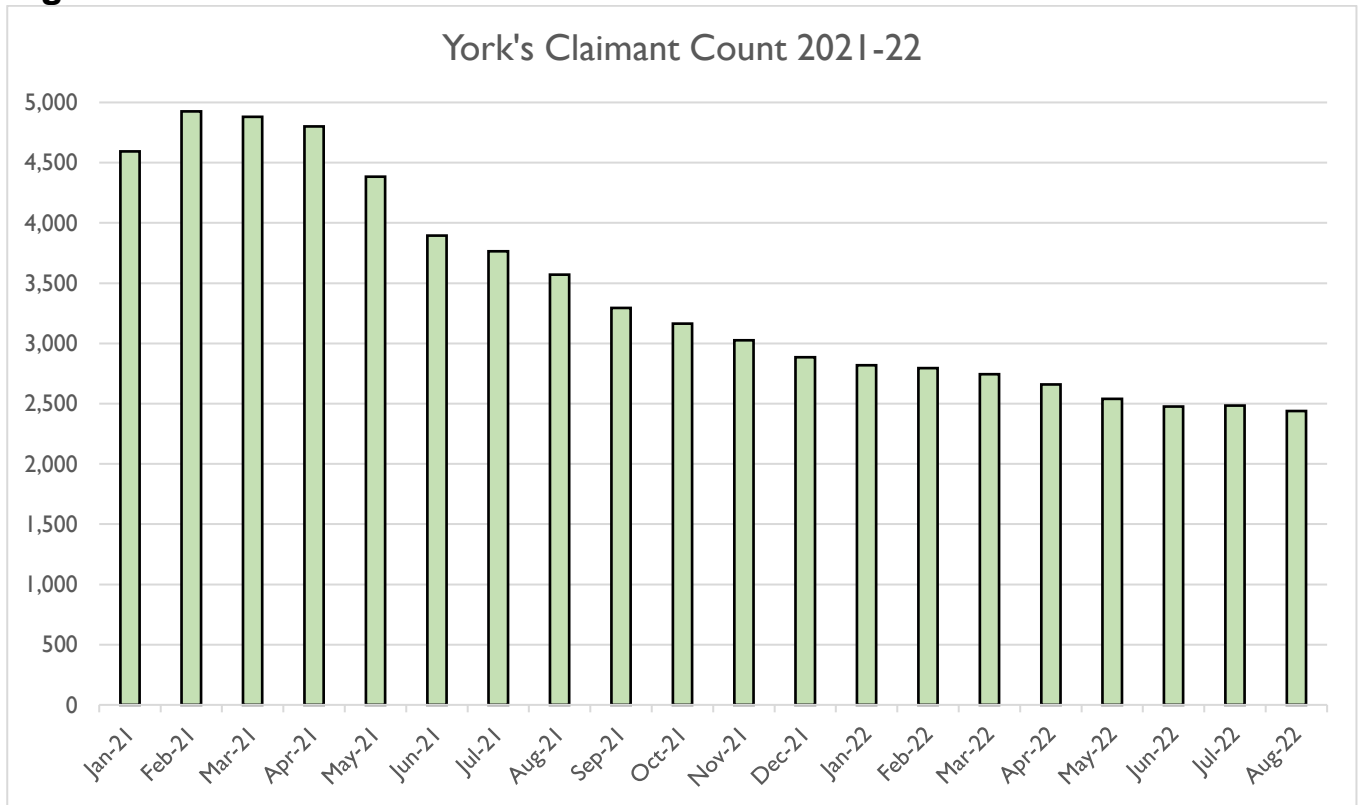
⁴ ONS: Subnational estimates of households by tenure – January 2022

⁵ Bank of England, Monetary Policy Report February 2022 – <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy-report/2022/february-2022>

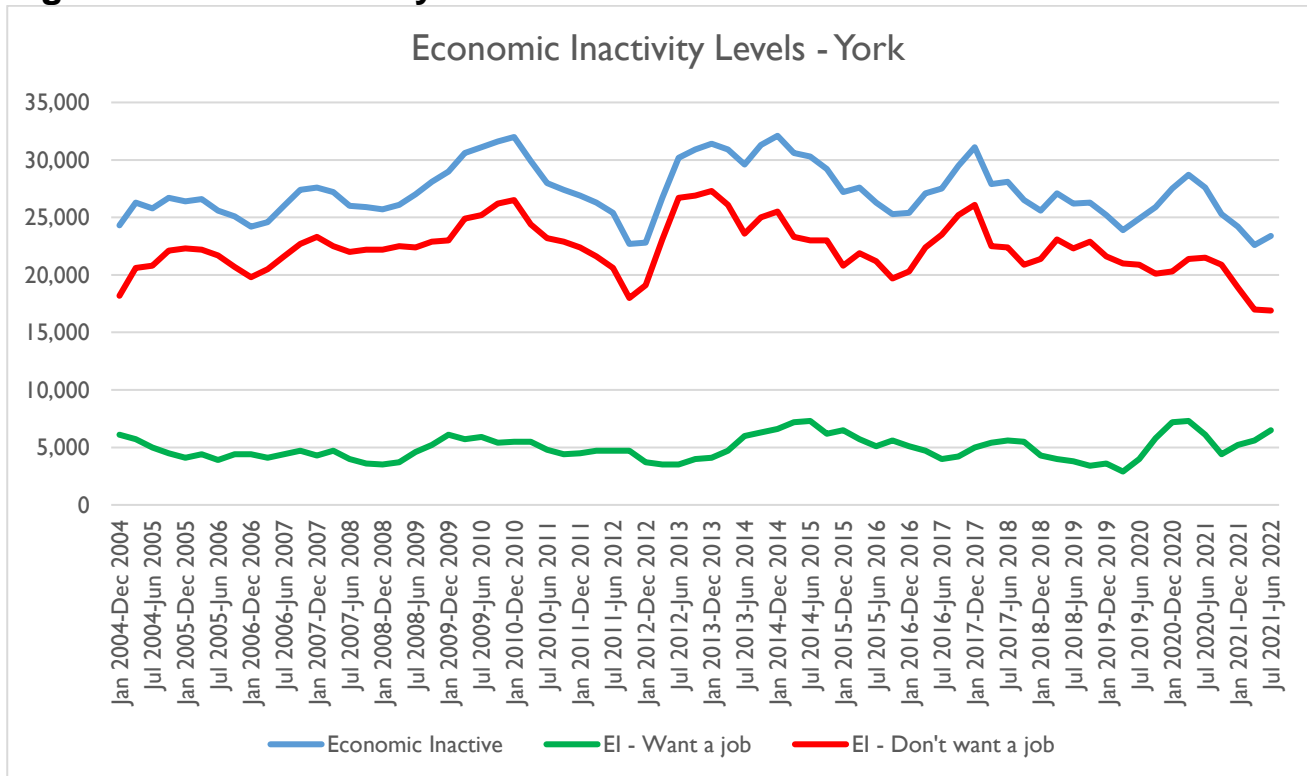
Figure 2 – Job vacancies within 5 miles of York City Centre

16. When looking at unemployment, the claimant count for York has continued to decrease, with it falling every month bar one since February 2021 as seen in Figure 3. For August 2022, there were 2,440 people claiming out of work benefits which is 1,130 people less than a year earlier but is still roughly 620 people more than March 2020. York does however remain the city in the UK with the lowest increase in the claimant count compared to pre-Covid levels according to the Centre for Cities Unemployment Tracker⁶ and its current claimant count rate is comfortably less than the average rate for the City between 1986 and 2021, which is 3,370.

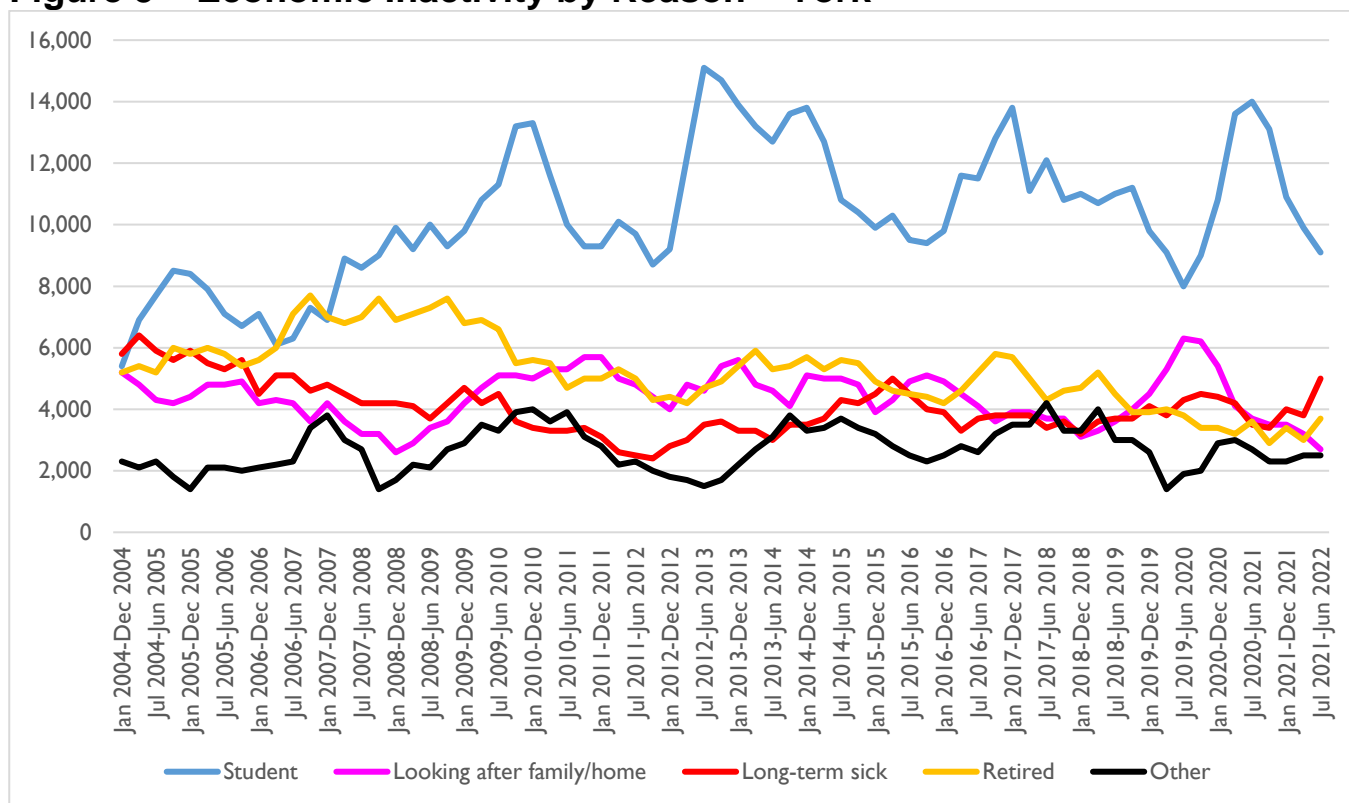
⁶ Centre for Cities Unemployment Tracker – <https://www.centreforcities.org/data/uk-unemployment-tracker/>

Figure 3 – York’s Claimant Count 2021-22

17. The UK’s unemployment rate also continues to decrease and is now at its lowest since 1974. UK economic inactivity rates have also been increasing. The economically inactive are those not in employment who have not been seeking work within the last four weeks and/or are unable to start work within the next 2 weeks. This includes students, those who have retired early, carers, those who are temporarily or long term sick, as well as people who are not able to find work.
18. Figure 4 provides the economic inactivity rates for York since 2004. Although there was an 800 person increase in economic inactivity rates in the last reading to a total of 23,400, this is the lowest the figure has been since records began in 2004, bar the period October 2011-December 2012. This makes up 17.3% of the working-age population in York, which is the second lowest percentage since 2004.
19. The number of people who are economically inactive and do not want a job is at the lowest it has ever been, standing at 16,900. Whilst those who are economically inactive but do want a job is at 6,500. This figure is amongst the highest figures since 2004 and has increased by 2,100 people since June 2021.

Figure 4 – Economically Inactive in York

20. Students have consistently been the most economically inactive in York, representing 9,100 of the current total. However, as seen in Figure 5, this is significant drop from a year earlier, meaning roughly 5,000 students have become economically active. Second amongst the reasons for being economically active is long-term sickness, which has risen to 5,000 people and now represents 21.5% of the economically inactive, the highest since 2006. This follows what is been seen nationally, where long-term sickness is at an all-time-high.
21. Amongst those who are retired and are of working-age, there has been an increase to 3,700 people in the period ending June 2022. Although this is the highest it has been since June 2020, it represents 16% of the total of economically inactive, which is lower than the average of 16.5% over the past decade.
22. The number of people who are economically inactive because they are caring for their family or home has fallen to 2,700 which is the second lowest ever level, the lowest being in 2008, a time of the financial crisis. This could imply that the as with 2008, the current economic challenges are forcing those people who would normally stay at home to look after their family or home into employment.

Figure 5 – Economic Inactivity by Reason – York

Business Intelligence

23. The Council's Business Growth Managers continue to work closely with York businesses, and between both have an active pipeline of over 115 business needing support. Our Sector Development Manager held an additional 25 in-person and virtual conversations with key business accounts across rail, construction, insurance, legal, technology and manufacturing sectors.
24. Intelligence from this engagement shows common threads of concern within the business community including ongoing difficulties caused by supply chains, cash flow blockages, recruitment difficulties, high energy bills and a general market slow down which has had an impact on confidence levels.
25. The Business Growth Managers continue to maintain regular contact with key intermediaries. In this last quarter that has included Ad:Venture, Skills for Growth, York St John University, York College, University of York and the Department for International Trade, WECAN, Scale-Up Programme, Strategic Growth Programme, IUK Edge, Aspire2Lead, IoD, FSB, WNY Chamber and Y&NY Growth Hub.
26. Similarly, networking events and sessions hosted and attended by the Business Growth Managers over the last quarter, such as Connect Over

Coffee, The Commerce Club and Women in Business, have been vital in providing new business introductions and disseminating advice and support as broadly as possible.

Business Intelligence – Costs

27. From both small and large businesses, there has been concern regarding the ongoing rise in inflation and the cost of doing business. Initially the larger businesses were able to absorb costs but lately they have been passing these on in price rises to customers. Some firms are however finding it difficult to pass these increased costs on due to contractual arrangements.
28. Businesses have also reported a sharp increase in transport costs. Companies importing are seeing delivery costs escalate and, in some cases, this is being priced separately. This is also linked to disruptions in the supply chain, especially from the far east. This is affecting both deliveries and imports. In August there were significant material delays from China owing to Covid-19 lockdowns. This has since eased off somewhat, but it takes a few months for businesses and trade to regain momentum and catch-up to production levels when these lockdowns occur. There are further concerns of supply chain disruption across the continent with the implementation of the European Union's Winter gas reduction plans which will affect UK businesses sourcing from the continent.

Business Intelligence – Recruitment

29. Recruitment is still a major concern for businesses in York. One large company in the city has resorted to recruiting from further afield and promoting remote working where possible. This has helped recruitment, but as more companies have followed this practice, it is becoming more difficult to find recruits.
30. There are also wage pressures across most sectors, with staff expecting upward of 5% increase in salary as a minimum, reflecting the current rate of inflation. Wage demands for remote workers is increasing even faster. One company with multiple sites is seeing remote recruitment wage demands come closer to London wage rate.
31. Employers continue to report that they are struggling to find the people with the right set of skills. One company has increased all staff wages by 21% to retain staff and ease recruitment pressures.

Business Intelligence – Premises

32. Four businesses have held discussions around their premises, including one business moving to larger premises after a merger. This will allow the business to bring some manufacturing back to York and recruit additional staff when the merger is completed at the end of the year. They require additional space in the medium-long term and the Economic Growth Team are helping them identify additional sites. Another smaller rail company now have half of their workforce working remotely so are looking for smaller premises when they have a lease break next year.

Business Intelligence – Rail Sector

33. As part of our commitment to establish York as a centre of excellence for rail skills, a roundtable was held in September. The focus of the session was to work with the sector and explore the potential to tailor Skills Bootcamps to meet the needs of the rail sector now and in the future. The Skills Network has secured Government Funding to deliver a range of bootcamps including Data Analysis, Infrastructure Technician, Project Management and Sustainability. This is an ongoing initiative working with the sector and meeting on a quarterly basis.
34. There has also been on-going work with the National Railway Museum, the Trans-Pennine STEM Ambassador Hub and rail industry partners to deliver 'Railway Futures', a two-day careers event for students of all ages on 4th & 5th October based at the National Railway Museum. The event showcased the combination of innovation, engineering, and technology in the railways and a look to the future of digital and sustainability within the sector. It also featured the breadth of careers available in the rail industry, and the different sectors and routes into these and made links that young people can follow to connect their learning to a future career path in the sector.
35. In conjunction with the Supply Chain Network, an event is being laid on for the rail sector in York. The event is on Monday 7th November and will explore the opportunities available in the rail supply chain. Attendees will learn about the projects being undertaken in York and explore how SME's can improve their chances of winning work with these projects.

York Business Festival

36. The Economic Growth Team have been organising the first York Business Festival, which is set for delivery across November 2022.

Consistent feedback from York Business Week, which ran for 11 years, showed that participants could not attend all the events in one week, even if they wanted to. This has led to the formation of the first ever 'York Business Festival', where events will be spread out across the whole month, making it easier for businesses, employees and entrepreneurs to attend.

37. The 5 weeks of the Festival will focus on the 5 different themes of York's forthcoming Economic Strategy, with the Council, local business support providers and key local stakeholders leading on the week's events. The first week is around creating an economy that is driven by good business and is being led by the Institute of Directors in partnership with the Economic Growth Team. The second week is themed on 'thriving business – creating the right conditions for sustainable growth' and is being led by the Y&NY LEP. The Council's Carbon Reduction and Economic Growth Team are leading the third week's events on 'reducing carbon and creating a greener economy'. And the last two weeks are being delivered by the University of York, on the theme of 'creating a thriving workforce', and the Department for International Trade on 'making York a global city'.
38. The purpose of the Festival is to help local businesses understand what support is available in York, in particular for SME and micro businesses which make-up the large majority of businesses in the city. An assessment of the outcomes and impact of the Festival will be made, with findings presented to the Executive Member in the new year.

York Business Festival –Small Business Saturday

39. The Small Business Saturday team will be visiting York on Wednesday 9th November, as part of their annual UK wide tour, leading up to the official day on Saturday 3rd December. This year they will be showcasing the independent businesses of the Goodramgate area after a positive and productive visit to Haxby in 2021.
40. The visit falls in the 'Sustainable Growth' week of York Business Festival, so complements the ethos of the theme, and signals the Council's commitment to the whole business community as the UK's first city to sign up to the Good Business Charter.
41. Small Business Saturday offers free 1-2-1 business mentoring sessions, workshops and livestreams interviews with business owners directly from

their premises. There will also be pre-recorded interviews with businesses unique to York, offering behind-the-scenes proceedings.

42. The Economic Growth Team is working with Indie York to promote the event, which is a valuable means of highlighting the local business community and boosting footfall in the lead up to the Christmas period.

Inward Investment

43. Over the reporting period, the team responded to 20 new investment enquiries, with six of these being overseas enquiries from businesses looking for York locations, eight being UK based companies exploring York as a new opportunity, and the remaining 6 represented by York businesses planning to move or expand within the city. There is continued interest from a broad range of sectors including IT, manufacturing, leisure, hotels and food.
44. The Economic Growth Team also helped host a visit from Scarborough-based international export business PBS International, Nebraska Sorghum and representatives from York Nebraska Council and York (Nebraska) University. This visit to York provided connections to our local bio-economy business and an opportunity to explore potential business opportunities in the sector. The visited was hosted at York's Biorenewables Development Centre (BDC) and was attended by representative from CNAP, Azotic Technologies and York and North Yorkshire LEP.
45. The team also worked with Y&NY LEP colleagues to host a visit from the Department for International Trade (DIT) around energy and infrastructure sector in York. The visit was also held at BDC's premises where DIT representatives learnt about York's growing bio-economy and rail sectors. As a result, we are sharing an updated rail tech prospectus with DIT, boosting York's opportunities for international collaborations and joint ventures.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

46. The Government have established a new UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) as part of the Levelling Up White Paper, and published the national UKSPF prospectus in April 2022.
47. York has an allocation of funds and City of York Council will be responsible for delivering York's UKSPF funds for the period 2022 to 2025. An Investment Plan, developed in partnership with local

stakeholders was submitted for Government assessment at the end of August, with a formal response expected in November 2022.

48. York has been allocated £5,107,510 of UKSPF funding, which includes a fixed 4% of the allocation for CYC to administer the fund, covering legal, finance and staff costs.
49. A stakeholders Partnership Board has now been established to steer the Fund, and is chaired by the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects who has been given delegated responsibility for UKSPF by the Council Executive.
50. Once the Investment Plan has had formal Government approval, the bidding process from potential applicants can begin, and work is currently underway to ensure that can take place as quickly as possible given the time constraints of the Fund, and the mandate to spend specific funding in allocated years.

Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

51. On 25 March 2021 the Government announced a new COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) of £1.5 billion to support those businesses affected by the pandemic but who were ineligible for existing support linked to business rates.
52. City of York Council's Business Rates Team was able to apply relief to those businesses who met a stringent set of criteria, and in a position to pay up to 70% of the net liability discounted to 952 local business.
53. The scheme, now closed, allowed the Council to give a further £4,652,354 to support businesses impacted by COVID 19 trading restrictions.

Consultation

54. Consultation and engagement on the economy, and related issues, through Members and officers, partners and residents are a pivotal elements of our approach, and central to informing our work using evidence-based information and research.
55. All ongoing consultation work has been outlined in the body of the report.

Council Plan

56. Our work addresses the following outcomes from the Council Plan:

- Good health and wellbeing;
- Well-paid and an inclusive economy;
- A better start for children and young people;
- A greener and cleaner city; and,
- Safe communities and culture for all.

Implications

- **Financial** – no financial implications;
- **Human Resources (HR)** – no implications;
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** – our work positively supports the Council's equalities objectives;
- **Legal** – no implications;
- **Crime and Disorder** – no implications;
- **Information Technology (IT)** – no implications;
- **Property** – no direct implications

Risk Management

There are no specific risks identified in respect of the recommendations.

Contact Details

Author:

Simon Brereton
Head of Economic Growth
simon.brereton@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Tracey Carter
Director for Housing, Economy and
Regeneration

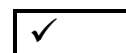
**Report
Approved**



Date: 21 October 2022

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Glossary:

BDC – Biorenewables Development Centre

BoE – Bank of England

CARF – Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund

DIT – Department for International Trade

EBRS – Energy Bill Relief Scheme

EPG – Energy Price Guarantee

FSB – Federation for Small Businesses

LEP – Local Enterprise Partnership

ONS – Office for National Statistics

SME – Small and medium (business) enterprises

UKSPF – UK Shared Prosperity Fund

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