

Report to Full Council from the Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement

Economic Development

Successes:

Over the past year, York has been named as the Sunday Times' Best City to Live In, has won the Conde Nast Travellers Award for the Best UK City for Architecture and was recently recognised in a YouGov Poll as the UK's favourite city. It is pleasing that the city is receiving recognition, but what is important is turning that recognition into tangible gains for the residents of York.

Jobs and pay:

Government employment statistics, published in September 2018, showed that York has increased its jobs total by 5,000 over the past year – there are more people working in our city than ever before. Many of these jobs are well paid roles in our high-value sectors. Many too are roles in our retail and tourism industry, meaning that average pay in York slightly decreased last year. Our challenge as a city is to help shops, restaurants, hotels and tourist venues become better-paying employers for the 1/3 of the local workforce who work in their businesses. We must also work to create more higher-paid jobs in the city and we are looking to address this through major initiatives at York Central and the Guildhall redevelopment.

City centre and the retail economy:

The plight of the high street has been a constant theme across the year, fuelled by national media coverage of high profile retail closures. We have focussed our efforts on working closely with local partners – York BID, Make it York, York Retail Forum in particular – to get a clearer picture of York's challenges and put measures in place to help our high street. Centre for Cities recently published figures showing that York is

second only to Cambridge in terms of keeping our city centre premises full. The overall vacancy rate in the city centre is less than half the national average. We are now working with those same partners and other stakeholders to put a compelling bid to Government for the £625m Future High Street Fund.

Recent decisions including funding a wayfinding project with the BID, and instigating a My City Centre consultation with the people of York will help us keep that city centre strong and put our local communities at the heart of our strategy.

Outside the city centre, we have worked closely with secondary shopping centres, including Acomb businesses, to help improve footfall to Front Street. We have supported local festivals and brought new Christmas lights to Acomb – on Wetherby Road and also on Boroughbridge Road. In Haxby, we are supporting the emerging HW1 traders association, which is focusing on independent retail.

Make It York:

We have worked hard to provide a clearer strategic direction for Make It York. We welcome the new Managing Director – Sean Bullick – and the Council will be working with him and his team to develop a new business plan and SLA, as part of our work on a new version of York's Economic Strategy.

Funding:

Over the past year, we have helped secure significant new funding for York. There is £1.4m from the LCR Business Rates Pool for housing, regeneration and economic growth projects, European funding for the HyperHubs electric vehicle charging project and for the Routeways employment and apprenticeships project. Money has also been secured from YNYER LEP which is being spent on Scarborough Bridge, York Central and the ring road.

Much progress has been made on our major projects. Work will finally begin at the Guildhall, bringing this key building back into productive use. York Central is finally within our grasp, and will bring space for 6,500 new jobs in the city centre. Castle Gateway will bring the eye of York to life. Over coming years, these projects will be key drivers as we continue to grow the economy. We need to make this growth work for everyone in the city and we have just launched a survey of business accommodation needs among existing York businesses. We want to make sure that it is not just the businesses that move to York Central who will be able to expand and develop – all our businesses must benefit from being in York.

Civic & Democratic Services

Restructure:

A restructure has recently been completed, in which the Civic Team has been transferred to join the Democratic Services Team and the Mansion House Team has moved to be managed with Customer Services. This work was undertaken to streamline and provide capacity to both teams, in recognition of the importance of supporting our civic heritage in York, as well as the commercial enterprise of the Mansion House.

Elected Member Development:

The Democratic Services Team is currently putting together arrangements for Induction Days for all newly elected and returning Members on 7th and 8th May 2019, in order to cover topic areas. A core programme covering both statutory and further key areas of development will be put together over the coming weeks, with the involvement of Political Groups.

I am also pleased to inform Members that the team have secured the Regional Local Government Association Event for New Councillors, which will be held in York at West Offices on 20 June 2019. It will provide a great platform and opportunity for newly elected Members and

interested returning Members to network with new Councillors from other regional local authorities.

Electoral Services

City of York Council and Parish Council Elections:

Arrangements for Council elections on Thursday 2nd May are well advanced. All polling venues are booked and staffing for roles on polling day has been finalised. Poll cards will be sent from Monday 25th March. 21 wards will be contested, with a total of 128 polling stations and 300 polling staff working on the day. Nominations will begin on 27th March and end on the 3rd April.

Postal votes will be sent out Monday 15th April and currently around 15,000 electors have arranged to vote by post.

Counting of votes will be held on Friday 3rd May at Energise, Cornlands Road and substantial changes have been made to the arrangements from those used in the combined Parliamentary and City of York Council Elections held in May 2015.

The Tour of Yorkshire is due to pass through Wheldrake Ward on polling day and a rolling road closure will cause access to both Elvington and Wheldrake polling stations to be reduced. Additional arrangements are in place to notify electors that there will be no access via vehicles, but access on foot will be possible.

Communications

During the current financial year (2018/19), the Communications team reached on average 72 million people per month, including the city's local media who regularly use the Council's photos, videos and stories. Notable national and regional stories include the Sunday Times Best Place to Live, housing (numbers and homelessness in the Daily

Mirror), STEP and several human interest stories related to how the council delivers its services.

The Communications Team has also trialled a new way of engaging residents in to shape master plans for York Central, My Castle Gateway and York Station Frontage, with a mix of walking tours, social media conversations, local media briefings and events.

Community Engagement

A total of 400 community organisations received funding this financial year, with grants ranging from £10 to £14,000 and, for the first time, a social value engine has been used to evaluate projects and their benefits to the community.

Ward Committees:

The year has seen a lot of well attended Ward committees, particularly issue-led events, engaging residents in the future development of the city. Next year, free interactive presentation software called Mentimeter will be piloted at Ward Committees, which allows for interaction and participation by those attending.

Parish Councils:

A large number of projects have been delivered in partnership with the Parish Councils, including working with Naburn Parish Council to ensure a bus service continues and local environment improvement projects such as graffiti removal and cleaning of the war memorial with Fulford Parish Council.

Local Area Inclusion:

The 4CYG project is now moving to a point of supporting the sustainability of the community hubs, founded as part of the project. Popular hubs are now open at Chapelfields Sanderson

House, Foxwood Community Centre, Bell Farm Social Hall and Red Tower Navigation Road.

Other provision at Tang Hall Community Centre, St Luke's Church Clifton and Lidgett Grove will continue to receive support and investment.

Partner organisations offering services from the hubs include: Citizens Advice York, CYC Benefits and Adult Social Care Advice, York Learning, Community First Credit Union, Age UK, Older Citizens Advocacy York, Peasholme Charity and York Carers.

Community Covenant:

The Community Covenant project, delivered in partnership with other North Yorkshire councils, is progressing well. Various activities have been delivered to understand the extent of the Armed Forces community in the region and their particular needs. This research has now been completed and is being complemented by a Community Survey, currently being carried out in York.

Training is also taking place for front line staff within the council and partner organisations to ensure they understand the background and specific needs of the community. Additionally, a number of specific projects are underway, including a York network for voluntary organisations working with veterans and work to make York GPs surgeries veteran friendly.

Local Area Teams - Youth Support Services

Youth Support and Community Partnership Officers:

Local Area Team Community and Partnership Officers continue to work across localities to support local groups and develop provision in response to local need. A range of contracts are in place covering: support for young carers, social activities for disabled young people,

support for parents with children under the age of 6, mentoring for young people, support to parents and carers of SEND children and young people, domestic abuse, parenting programmes, emotional resilience and support for refugee families.

York Youth Sector Partnership:

York St John University and Local Area Teams have worked together to form a new city-wide York Youth Sector Partnership. The first partnership event was held to coincide with national Youth Work Week in November 2018.

Area based solutions – Holiday food poverty:

Over recent months, work has been ongoing to develop a response to holiday food poverty in Clifton. The Community and Facilities Officer brought together partners including St Luke's Church, Clifton Residents Association, Women's Institute Volunteers, Yorcafe, Real Junk food project/Share house project, local volunteers, Co-op, Clifton Green Primary School and Marks and Spencer. This has established community run access to positive activities alongside food in the Clifton area.

Area based solutions – Youth provision:

Concerns were raised about lack of youth provision and increasing anti-social behaviour in the East of the city. The Community and Partnership Officer brought together partners including Tang Hall Big Local (THBL), Hull Road Ward Team, Derwenthorpe Residents Association, Osbaldwick Ward & Parish Council, Local PCSO, Community Involvement Officer and Joseph Rowntree Housing (JRH). Pooled funding was agreed between Hull Road Ward budget, Tang Hall Big Local and Joseph Rowntree Foundation, in order to tackle the issue.

Area based solutions – Anti-social behaviour problem solving:

As a result of some low level anti-social behaviour (ASB), the North Local Area Team have held Anti-Social Behaviour Problem Solving meetings monthly since April 2018. Professionals from the Local Area Team, North Safer Neighbourhood Police Team, Housing, Youth Offending Team and Education come together to problem solve around specific ASB cases, which are beginning to come onto the radar of services. The group does not case hold, but with consent, the group examine nominated cases in detail, share information and take a solution-based and sometimes innovative approach to addressing the issues being presented on an individual, family or group basis.