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## **Executive**

10<sup>th</sup> July 2007

Report of the Director of City Strategy

## **REPORT OF THE FUTURE YORK GROUP – INITIAL RESPONSE**

### **Summary**

1. The report seeks to brief the Executive on the final report of the Future York Group and to consider an initial response from the City of York Council to its main findings.

### **Background**

2. The Future York Group was commissioned by the City of York Council to undertake an independent strategic review of the local economy, following a series of announcements regarding job losses in the City. The Group has been chaired by Christopher Garnett and has been well attended at its meetings by the group members. They have received a variety of presentations and background information to enable them to make their conclusions and recommendations. This authoritative report will provide the framework for future actions to be undertaken by the City of York Council and partners with regard to promoting the economic well-being of the City. Their final report was launched on 12<sup>th</sup> June when it was handed over to the City of York Council at a public event at the Mansion House. Copies of the executive summary of the report have been made available to all elected members and the full report has been published on the Council's web-site.

### **Consultation**

3. The report effectively entered the public domain on its handover to the Council on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007 and has been made widely available since then. Comments received on the findings of the Future York Group will be collated and reported to a future meeting of the Executive. Formal consultation on the report will take place through the Without Walls Local Strategic Partnership and its thematic groups. The initial views of the Economic Development Partnership Board were sought at its meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June and these will be presented verbally to the Executive. There will also be the opportunity over the summer/autumn period to consult on the findings of the Future York Group report as part of planned consultation for the review of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework core strategy. The consultation will enable the City of York Council to formulate a more detailed response to the findings of the Future York Group.

## Options

4. The option is to consider whether there are any immediate initial responses the City of York Council may wish to make to the Future York Group report. These are examined below.

## Analysis

5. This Future York Group is an authoritative analysis of the local economy based upon a wealth of data and presentations given to the group. There will be a process of consultation on the findings of the report has highlighted above. A detailed response on all the recommendations set out in the Future York Group will be presented to the Executive following consultation. This will take some time and the report is likely to be presented in late summer/early autumn. In order to take the report forward and build some momentum, the City of York Council may wish to consider an initial response to the Future York Group's findings. These are set out in the paragraphs below.
6. There are a series of recommendations in the report dealing with the importance of developing the economy (E1), taking forward the proposed vision of the long term economic future of York (VL1), developing this into a more comprehensive vision (VL2) and encouraging key stakeholders to commit to this vision through their future investment and policy decisions (VL3). As an initial response, it is recommended that the Council raise these issues with the Without Walls Local Strategic Partnership, with a view to seeing how they may be reflected within the revised Sustainable Community Strategy which is to be produced by April 2008. There is also the opportunity to reflect upon these issues within the Local Development Framework draft core strategy as this will effectively become the spatial representation of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
7. There are specific recommendations about re-invigorating partnership working on economic development, seeking a commitment from businesses and business organisations to work in partnership (P1), reviewing the working and membership of the Economic Development partnership Board (P2), particularly with a view to strengthening business representation (P3). As stated above, the Future York Group report will have been considered at the meeting of the Economic Development Partnership Group held on 19<sup>th</sup> June and views from that Group will be reported verbally at the Executive. It is recommended that officers consider ways to stimulate partnership working on economic development issues and report this back to an early meeting of the Executive.
8. There are also specific recommendations dealing with how the Council and partners can better engage with key businesses within the City (E2, E5, E9, S6). It is recommended that officers develop a programme for more effective engagement with the business community, with a view to this being included in the detailed response back to Executive later this year.
9. There are specific recommendations on how the Council continues to develop its partnership arrangements with respect to Science City York (E3, E7, S4) and tourism (E4). It is recommended that this partnership work continues at a pace in line with previous reports to the Executive and the Economic Development Board and that further reports are presented as and when required.

10. There are specific recommendation about developing a series of action plans on economic development , skills and inclusion, infrastructure and barriers to change (P7). It is recommended that officers, in conjunction with partners, develop action plans on these matters setting out detailed implementation proposals, specific targets, milestones and timetables, with a view to these being included in the detailed response back to Executive later this year.
11. There is a request within the report for the Council to provide additional resources to allow acceleration of the Local Development Framework so that it may be adopted by 2009. Officers are currently reviewing the opportunities that may exist for delivering to a faster timescale and the additional resources that will be required.
12. There are a number of specific recommendations to central government regarding financial support for dualling the northern ring road (IN12), maximising the benefits and impact of Science City York (E3), and encouraging parties to work together to develop rapidly opportunities at York Central (part of IN10). It is recommended that these issues form part of continued lobbying and dialogue between the City of York Council and central government.
13. There are specific recommendations regarding the role that York can play in developing t he regional and city regional economy (E8, IN4, IN5, IN12, VL4, P8). It is recommended that the City of York Council makes the Future York Group report available widely within its partnership working at a regional, city-regional and sub-regional working in the interest of maximising the opportunities for York to play in contributing to these economies.

## **Corporate Priorities**

14. The Future York Group report relates to the following objectives for the Council, the Economic Development Service Plan and the LSP Without Walls initiatives.
  - \* The “Thriving City” theme of the WOW Community Plan has the following strategic objective:
 

“To support the progress and success of York’s existing businesses and to encourage new enterprises in order to maintain a prosperous and flourishing economy that will sustain high employment rates.”
  - \* The Economic Development Service Plan sets identifies a number of corporate priorities:
    - DIP 5 Increase people’s skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
    - DIP 6 Improve the contribution that Science City York makes to economic prosperity.
    - DIP 8 Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city.
    - DIP12 Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York.

## Implications

15. Financial: There are no direct financial implications from the initial response to the Future York Group report as set out above. There may be direct financial implications for the City of York Council in responding to the findings of the Future York Group report and these will be considered as part of any future reports to the Executive or EMAP.
16. Human resources: None
17. Equalities: None
18. Legal: None
19. Crime and Disorder: None
20. Information Technology: None
21. Property: None

## Risk Management

22. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

## Recommendation

23. The Executive's input and views on the Future York Group report are requested.  
Reason: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

## Contact Details

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### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bill Woolley  
Director of City Strategy

Report Approved



Date 28/6/07

Specialist Implications Officers - None

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers:** The Future York Group report – an independent strategic review of the York economy, June 2007