

City of York Council Plan 2019-2023

Making History, Building Communities

Introduction

City of York Council exists for one purpose – to support the best quality of life for our residents, now and in the future. We are fortunate to have a fantastic city which provides a great place to live for many of our residents. Our heritage is world renowned, our culture is unique and our economy is strong. For those of us who live and work in York, we know, however, that it is our communities that, ultimately, make York what it is.

There is a huge amount to be proud of in our city and at times, we need to be more positive about what we can collectively achieve. Despite our strengths, we know that life in the city is not always great for some of our residents and unfortunately, some people do not share in the successes of our city. Educational, health and economic outcomes, for some people, can be much improved. As a city, we cannot be satisfied until everyone has as equal a chance to achieve their ambitions. Seeking to address this issue has to be a key priority to make our city strong for the future.

We cannot overestimate the challenges that our city, the UK, Europe and the world faces over the coming decades. The Climate Emergency is an existential threat to us all. There will be difficult choices to be made and a need for us to reconsider how we live, work and do business in the city. But in doing so, we will become a more resilient, healthier and a more sustainable city, with the many benefits which this brings.

The council cannot address these challenges alone, nor should it try to. The best outcomes for the city can only be achieved through coordinated action between our residents, communities, businesses and local organisations. The council has a key role in coordinating, convening and shaping these discussions, working with all parties to deliver the best for the city.

This plan does not have all the answers to all the challenges. However, it sets out a framework for the outcomes we think we need to see for all residents to enjoy the best quality of life. We look forward to working with the whole city to build on our strengths and protect York's unique character for the future, whilst addressing the inequalities and creating the best quality of life for all our residents. We hope you share our ambition to make it happen.

About this plan

This plan has been developed to cover the next four years. It is intended to shape the activity within the council, acting as a guide for us to prioritise resources and to monitor progress made.

It is also intended as a guide for partner organisations, businesses, communities and residents to help identify shared objectives and areas of interest, so we can work together more effectively.

For most people, a 'good' place offers them access to quality education and opportunities, a decent job and standard of living, a sense of fairness and inclusion, good health and wellbeing, a high quality environment, sustainable transport, strong culture and a safe community.

The plan recognises this and is structured around eight core outcomes, which in turn reflect the key components of a good quality of life for our residents. These are:

- Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy
- A greener and cleaner city
- Getting around sustainably
- Good health and wellbeing
- Safe communities and culture for all
- Creating homes and world-class infrastructure
- A better start for children and young people
- An open and effective council

Based around and mapped to a range of international frameworks, these outcomes cover all the key aspects of life in the city. They are not prioritised in an order, as they all must be addressed and work in balance to give people the best quality of life.

The final outcome, "An open and effective council" describes how we will work, as a council, to deliver the other seven outcomes.

This focus on outcomes, rather than just on the services we provide, will help the council and our partners work better together, rather than as a collection of individual services and activities.

Lastly, the plan will guide us in measuring the city's success in ways that genuinely reflect the things people value most.

[View the Council Plan graphic online.](#)

An update since Covid-19

When this plan was written, nobody could have foreseen the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, affecting everybody and all aspects of life within the city. The context within which the council is working has changed and it is clear there are challenging times ahead for York.

We have great sympathy for those who have lost family and friends during this difficult time, and also to those who have lost their jobs and livelihoods. However, despite the difficulties, there has been a remarkable response from communities across the city. We would like to pay tribute to all those across the city who have helped to keep people safe and supported the wider efforts to minimise the effects of the virus. The city owes a debt of gratitude to the army of people who have gone above and beyond, including Council staff, NHS colleagues, carers, volunteers and keyworkers. The way the city has pulled together to respond has been incredible and something we are all proud to have been part of.

In response to such a terrible situation, we must take any opportunity we can to build back stronger, healthier and fairer to ensure York is as resilient as possible.

We believe that the core outcomes of this council plan remain correct and relevant, to support the best quality of life for all residents of our great city. Some of the context has changed, however, and this update to the plan reflects the need to adapt our approach or include new actions in order to achieve the best outcomes.

At the half-way point of the plan, much has been achieved, but new challenges have arisen. As we consider the next two years, the council will remain focussed on the outcomes within this plan to support York's recovery. This will include our continued work to address the threat of climate change,

particularly as we work to promote a sustainable recovery in our efforts to build back better.

The pandemic has illustrated in detail the strength of the city in responding to a serious threat and as a city we will continue to use the joint efforts of all our people, communities and organisations to create a bright future for York.

About this plan

Given the significant changes to context of the city in light of Covid-19, it has been necessary to review the activities which the council is delivering in support of the 8 outcome areas.

Against each section of the plan, a description of the new context is included for 2021, and any revised actions are included. For the original activities planned for council delivery, these have been updated to show progress – whether they have been completed, have changed or are ongoing. This revised list will then be monitored quarterly and updated again in 2022.

Key Performance Indicators

These indicators will be used to show us how we are progressing towards the outcomes as a city

Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy

- Median earnings of residents - gross weekly pay
- Business rates - rateable value
- % of working age (16-64) population in employment
- New jobs created
- % of vacant city centre shops compared to other cities
- % of working age population qualified - to at least L4 and above
- % of working age population qualified - to at least L2 and above
- GVA (Gross Value Added) per head (£)

A greener and cleaner city

- % of Talkabout Panel who think that the council are doing well at improving green spaces
- No of trees planted (city and council level Indicator)
- % of household waste that is sent for reuse, recycling or composting
- Residual (non-recyclable) household waste (kg per HH)
- Incidents - Flytipping / Rubbish / Cleansing (includes dog fouling, litter) / Graffiti - On Public/Private Land
- Citywide KPI on air quality
- Carbon emissions across the city
- Level of CO2 emissions from council buildings and operations (Net emissions)
- Flood Risk properties assessed at lower level than 2019 baseline

Getting around sustainably

- P&R Passenger Journeys / Local bus passenger journeys
- Area Wide Traffic Levels (07:00 -19:00) (Excluding A64)
- Index of cycling activity (12 hour) / % of residents actively cycling and national comparisons
- Index of pedestrians walking to and from the City Centre (12 hour in and out combined)
- % of customers arriving at York Station by sustainable modes of transport
- % of road and pathway network that are grade 4 and below (poor and below) - Roadways / Pathways

Good health and wellbeing

- Adults that are physically active for 150+ moderate intensity minutes per week
- % of children in Reception recorded as being obese
- Overall satisfaction of people who use care and support services
- Healthy Life expectancy at birth - Female / Male
- Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services living independently • Adult Social Care - attributable Delayed Transfers of Care

Safe communities and culture for all

- Number of Incidents of anti social behaviour within the city centre (ARZ)
- % of Talkabout Panel satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- % of Talkabout Panel who agree that they can influence decisions in their local area
- % of Talkabout Panel who give unpaid help to any group, club or organisation
- All Crime per 1000 population
- Visits - all libraries / YMT
- Parliament Street footfall & Secondary Centre footfall

Creating homes and world-class infrastructure

- Average number of days to re-let empty Council properties (excluding temporary accommodation)
- Net additional homes provided
- Net housing consents
- Number of new affordable homes delivered in York
- Superfast broadband availability / average broadband download speed (Mb/s)
- Energy efficiency: Average SAP rating for all council homes
- Number of homeless households with dependent children in temporary accommodation

A better start for children and young people

- %pt gap between disadvantaged pupils (eligible for FSM in the last 6 years, looked after and adopted from care) and their peers achieving 9-4 in English & Maths at KS4
- % of 16-17 year olds who are NEET who do not have L2 qualification
- Secondary school persistent absence rate
- Voice of the Child - 2 Indicators (Service usage / Life opportunities)
- % of children who have achieved a Good level of Development (GLD) at Foundation Stage
- GCSE Results (“% of pupils achieving 9-4 in English and Maths at KS4)
- Education Progression (Average Progress 8 score from KS2 to KS4)

An open and effective council

- Forecast budget outturn (£000s Overspent / -Underspent)
- Average sickness days per FTE - CYC (excluding schools)
- Number of days to process Benefit claims (currently Housing Benefit)
- Customer services waiting times (phone / footfall / webchat / satisfaction etc)
- % of complaints responded to within timescales

- CYC Apprenticeships
- Freedom of information and environmental information requests - % in time

UN Sustainable Development Goals



For the first time, our Council Plan is mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in order to reflect our priority to make York an exemplar sustainable city. These goals act as an internationally recognised blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all, allowing a different perspective on how we are developing as a city. It will also allow us to contribute to local or national reporting on the UN Sustainable Development goals.

The outcomes and the global goals correspond as follows:

Well-paid jobs and an Inclusive Economy	GOAL 1: No Poverty GOAL 2; No Hunger GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
A Greener and Cleaner City	GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production GOAL 13: Climate Action GOAL 14: Life Below Water (not relevant) GOAL 15: Life on Land
Getting Around Sustainably	GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
Good Health and Wellbeing	GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being
Safe Communities and Culture for All	GOAL 5: Gender Equality GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions

Creating Homes and World-class Infrastructure	GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
A Better Start for Children and Young People	GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being GOAL 4: Quality Education GOAL 10: Reduced Inequalities
An Open and Effective Council	GOAL 17: Partnership for the goals

Monitoring progress and updating the plan

Against each outcome are a set of key indicators which demonstrate the progress of the city towards the outcome. These are not all within the direct control of the council and a positive or negative direction of travel will not be purely associated with actions related to this plan. However, they will indicate whether the plan is looking at the right things and whether any changes or additional actions are needed.

These indicators form the core structure of the council's quarterly reporting framework.

There will be an annual review to identify progress and update any changes required.

Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy

Outcome definition: High-skilled and better-paid jobs in sustainable businesses, providing opportunities for all York's people in an inclusive economy.

The York economy is strong. There are more people than ever in work, with higher levels of productivity than the rest of the region. Our knowledge economy is growing and we have the highest level of skills of any northern city. A focus on creating highly paid jobs in the city has seen significant benefits.

However, we recognise the need for York's economy to support the quality of life for all our residents, now and in the future. For economic growth to be inclusive, its benefits must be felt by everyone, regardless of where they live, how they make a living, and who they are. Inclusive growth cannot have neighbourhoods that are left behind. It must also recognise the need to protect our environment and promote clean growth, as we look to tackle the climate emergency.

Over the next four years, we must address the key challenges if our economy is to be truly inclusive. These include:

- recent reductions in average pay caused by a growth of lower paid jobs
- part time roles being predominantly only available in lower paid sectors, driving down many household incomes
- independent retailers, the mainstay of our city centre economy, facing a wide range of challenges, but without the resources of their larger competitors
- decreasing opportunities for those without high levels of skills, leaving workers without qualifications, shut out from many of the emerging better paid roles.

There is a significant opportunity to use the major developments in the city – including York Central and Castle Gateway – to address some of these challenges and shape a more inclusive economy. In doing so, we must

recognise York's existing strengths in certain sectors – tourism and hospitality, agri- and bio-tech research and development, high-tech rail – and continue to support their growth in a sustainable way.

2021 Update

The scale of the economic challenge as a result of the pandemic is still playing out. The focus of the last 12 months has been to support the city's economy and will continue to be the case over the coming years. Our key efforts have been on supporting both residents and the business community. Grant support has been distributed to over half of York's 7,000 companies, getting mandatory rates-related grants swiftly and efficiently to those who are entitled to receive them, and focussing discretionary grants on the small and micro businesses that need them most. This takes the total financial support for businesses processed by the Council to nearly £180 million during the pandemic.

We are continuing our close work with the business community and are developing solid plans to support the reopening of the city when that can happen.

What is the council going to do?

- Develop a new Economic Strategy, with a focus on inclusive and clean growth, alongside the creation of a new Economic Partnership to oversee the strategy
- Review the council's approach to Financial Inclusion and continue to help energy companies target fuel poor or vulnerable households with energy efficiency measures
- Review the service level agreement with Make it York, aligning its business plan with the new Economic Strategy
- Create a community business representative role to involve local businesses in the ward committee process and supporting traders' associations and independent businesses throughout the city and renew our approach to being a Business Friendly Council
- Develop sustainable and ethical procurement policies which promote local supply chains and support inclusive, clean growth
- Align the Adult Skills agenda with the new Economic Strategy, working with partners across the city to maximise the use of and benefit from the Apprenticeship Levy and support Jobs Fairs.

- Promote opportunities for vocational education and training in sustainable building, for both the existing city work force and people new to these professions
- Work across the region to secure devolution at a meaningful scale for the benefit of the whole of Yorkshire and contribute to the Local Industrial Strategy, which will help to shape our regional growth
- Identify options for a tourist levy
- Create new commercial spaces for start-up businesses and small enterprises at York Central, Castle Gateway and the Guildhall.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Continue to prioritise investing more funding in the city and to seize opportunities to drive recovery
- Work with both Make It York and the LEP to consolidate and expand our inward investment teams, seeking to bring more investment to the city and increase opportunity for the people of York.
- Ensure that the Financial Inclusion policy review takes into account the new Covid landscape and recovery plans with the Digital Inclusion element of the emerging priorities having taken a large step forward with Explore York taking leadership in partnership with the council - a cross city/sector network has been established.
- Improve social value policy and consider the impact of proposed Government changes to public procurement.
- Lobby the Government for a fairer tax and benefits system that helps to lift our worst off residents out of poverty, including the potential for a Basic Income trial.
- Recognise the importance of a healthy population in achieving the economic aspirations of the city.
- Progress the work of the new York Skills and Employment Board to develop a one year plan on 'Skills for employment'.

What will be different in four years?

- A new and comprehensive focus on inclusive and clean growth
- Greater emphasis on employment opportunities for all, rather than just at the highly-paid end of the spectrum
- Better connections between businesses and communities
- The early occupiers of York Central will be in place to set the tone for inclusive and sustainable growth

- York's productivity advantage maintained, with GVA per hour worked continuing to be highest in the region
- A focus on lifetime skills
- Progress towards devolution at a Yorkshire-scale
- Greater recognition of the unique strength of York's independent retail sector and the specific challenges it faces.

A green and cleaner city

Outcome Definition: York's environment is protected and enhanced through investment in the council's frontline services working towards become a carbon neutral city by 2030.

York's rich built and natural environment underpins people's quality of life and attracts millions of visitors to the city each year. Protecting and enhancing these environments for existing and future generations is a key priority for the council and our residents. A range of frontline services help protect green spaces and improve the quality of streets, alongside the important contribution that citizens, community groups and local businesses make.

In March 2019, the council declared a climate emergency in response to global warming and the UN's IPCC report of September 2018 on climate change. In response, the council committed to reduce the city's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. The scale of the challenge cannot be overestimated. The council has a key role in creating an environment where people make sustainable choices about the way they live and work. We also have a responsibility to make our own services as carbon-efficient as possible.

We recognise that in order for people to help reduce emissions, services which support residents to reduce waste, recycle, save energy, travel safely and help to maintain clean and green neighbourhoods, have to be prioritised. As a city, we must work together to enhance our environment and communities.

Extreme weather events like flooding and heat waves are a consequence of global warming and York is no stranger to the devastation that flooding can

bring. As temperatures rise further, so too will the frequency of such events. York must continue to mitigate and adapt to minimise future impacts.

2021 Update

Since the pandemic began, residents across the city have relied upon the Council's frontline services, from collection of waste in a Covid-secure manner, to gritting and repairing the city's highways infrastructure, so key workers can continue to travel safely, even at the height of national restrictions. We will continue to prioritise support for these services, and identify ways how we can continue to improve the service residents receive.

With the introduction of national restrictions in order to control the spread of the virus, there have been many challenges, but there have also been many positives seen in the city. From improved air quality, greater take up of active travel, to reduced litter in the city centre. We will work to lock in some of the benefits seen throughout the last year to restore confidence in the city, build back better and make progress on our ambition to become a carbon neutral city by 2030.

A Head of Carbon Reduction has been recruited to facilitate progress against our climate ambitions, working holistically across council services and with partners to maintain the Council's ambitious carbon emission reduction and abatement aspirations. A Zero Carbon Pathway for York is also being developed and public consultation will begin shortly on the Council's efforts to tackle climate change.

What is the council going to do?

- Support a new Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee, which will develop a set of recommendations to support carbon reduction, alongside additional officer capacity to drive progress
- Develop a plan showing the council's own road map to net zero carbon, enhancing the energy efficiency of council owned buildings and assets, and increase the amount of energy generated from renewable sources on council owned buildings and assets
- Prioritise street level service and the street environments, such as street cleaning and enforcement activity against litter, dog fouling and graffiti, through additional staffing and increased resources

- Review waste collection to identify options to provide green bins to more houses, kerbside food waste collection and the range of plastics currently recycled
- Ensure the emerging Local Plan, Biodiversity Action Plan, Pollinator Strategy, Tree Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy and Local Transport Plans protect and enhance York's built and natural environment
- Develop supplementary planning guidance on zero carbon building
- Review how the council can reduce or remove all single-use plastic in its operations
- Ensure emerging plans and strategies have appropriate emphasis on mitigation and adaptation to an increased prevalence of extreme weather events.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Develop a 10-year City Plan with partners to develop a more collaborative approach to tackling the major challenges the city faces, including addressing the climate emergency.
- Deliver a new community woodland to increase York's tree coverage and provide a new outdoor green space for residents to enjoy.
- Undertake a new consultation and engagement programme to seek residents, businesses and local stakeholder views to develop a holistic strategy to tackle climate change and other challenges in the city.
- Continue to support frontline services, working with Trade Unions to ensure frontline teams can continue to serve local communities and businesses during periods of heightened national restrictions.

What will be different in four years?

- York's built and natural environment is enhanced through protected and improved green spaces, and improved quality of streets and public spaces
- Options for sustainable transport, including public transport and rail, are improved to help reduce the need for car travel in the city
- Significant tree-planting has created new areas of woodland, taking in CO₂ to support the city becoming carbon neutral
- Waste is managed more sustainably, through increased recycling, with a target of no single use plastics in any council operations

- A clear path to carbon neutrality by 2030 is understood with a focus on sustainable living
- Better air quality within the city that meets the World Health Organisation health based limits, supported by York's first Clean Air Zone
- Further mitigation and adaptation to extreme weather events, such as flooding and heat waves has been completed, with significant investment in York's flood defences.

Getting around sustainably

Outcome Definition: More people choose to travel by public transport, walking or cycling, benefiting from improved roads, footpaths and cycle routes across the city, cutting congestion, pollution and carbon emissions, as part of renewed efforts to tackle the climate emergency

York has a strong national reputation as leader in sustainable and smart transport. Our compact historic city allows residents and visitors to take advantage of walking and cycling, making sustainable transport a convenient and attractive option. Alongside our growing low-emission bus network and well established i-Travel programme, York has embedded sustainable travel as part of day to day transport provision.

Significant work is done to ensure all school pupils have the option to cycle to school and undergo bikeability training to level 3. Cycle parking provision is an important requirement in all new residential, business and educational developments within York and a network of off road routes and bridges connect many areas of the city.

For visitors and commuters to York city centre, there is an extensive Park and Ride system, which helps reduce traffic congestion and pollution as well as carbon emissions. Anti-idling measures and the introduction of low emission

buses including electric Park and ride buses will further improve air quality in the city.

Beyond the city centre, work continues on measures to improve traffic flow by upgrading roundabouts on the outer Northern Ring Road. Measures to give greater priority to public transport and increase safety for those walking and cycling will help making more efficient use of road space and promote healthy active travel modes.

The city remains at the heart of the rail network with fast connectivity to London in under two hours, Edinburgh in two and half hours, as well as direct links via cross country services to the North East or Birmingham and the South West. There are also frequent Transpennine services to Leeds and beyond, allowing sustainable alternatives for those travelling daily for work.

2021 Update

With national restrictions limiting regional and national travel, a great deal has been done to encourage the greater take up of sustainable travel in the city, from the introduction of new active travel schemes, to the expansion of footstreets in the city centre. Work continues to upgrade and improve the city's highways network, including cycling and walking beyond the city centre.

As restrictions begin to ease, the Council will continue to invest in sustainable transport measures, including restoring confidence in the local public transport network, following the impact of the pandemic. As part of York's economic recovery, the Council will also continue to support and lobby for greater investment in York station and rail connectivity, recognising our infrastructure key role in facilitating a strong economic recovery.

What is the council going to do?

- Review city-wide public transport options, identifying opportunities for improvements in walking and cycling, rail, buses and rapid transit, which lay the groundwork for the new Local Transport Plan
- Lobby for investment and improvement in rail connectivity for York, as a significant rail hub in the north, including the re-establishment of a station in Haxby

- Explore and deliver opportunities to move the council's vehicle fleet to low/zero carbon, while also promoting use of car sharing and cycling for work purposes
- Continue to expand York's electric vehicle charging point network, including the construction of hyper hub facilities
- Continue working in partnership to deliver low/zero carbon public transport services and improved walking and cycling infrastructure
- Deliver new approaches using digital technology to enhance transport systems
- Work with partners to develop sustainable travel for York Central and an interchange as part of York Rail Station frontage project
- Implement York's first Clean Air Zone and continue to closely monitor air quality
- Review and deliver enhanced resident parking and pay-on exit at council car parks
- Review the capacity and potential to extend operation of Park and Ride sites
- Work with bus operators and user groups to identify opportunities to make bus travel more convenient and reliable.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Work with partners across the city to build confidence back in public transport and support local operators in the city.
- Improve and encourage greater take-up of sustainable travel in the city through the delivery of active travel measures and investment in cycle / pedestrian infrastructure.
- Work with local stakeholders and interest groups to ensure accessibility for blue badge holders and disabled groups to the city centre.
- Undertake a new consultation and engagement programme to seek residents, businesses and local stakeholder views on how to best update the Local Transport Plan to create a more sustainable transport system in York.
- Continue the rollout of the TSAR improvement programme.
- Continue progress on York Outer Ring Road scheme, including new sustainable transport measures to complement the overall scheme.

What will be different in four years?

- A new Local Transport Plan prioritising sustainable means of getting around and creating attractive alternatives to car travel for residents in new developments
- Redevelopment of York Station Frontage will create an attractive enhanced setting for the city walls and welcoming first impression for visitors to the city with clear safe access to a new transport interchange
- More people will travel by sustainable means, such as walking, cycling and clean public transport throughout the year
- Anti-idling measures and a bus-based clean air zone will be improving air quality in the city centre, with attractive new public realm around Clifford's Tower and river Foss
- Improvements to the outer ring road will help reduce congestion on the city's highways network and reduce journeys made across the city centre
- Greater availability of electric vehicle charging facilities across the city Council's fleet of vehicles upgraded to electric or ultra-low emissions standard
- Partners across the city work more closely together to share expertise, reducing car travel and developing sustainable travel options such as workplace car share schemes.

Good health and wellbeing

Outcome definition: Every resident enjoys the best possible health and wellbeing throughout their life.

The residents of York are our greatest assets and their health and wellbeing is a top priority.

Residents are generally healthy and the strengths and abilities each person has are key assets in their own wellbeing, affecting their ability to participate fully in society and their productivity. It is important to recognise that everyone has gifts they can bring to enhance their own wellbeing and that of those around them. We know that 80% of a person's health is determined by wider factors rather than by health or care services. However, there are communities within our city whose health and wellbeing outcomes fall short of those enjoyed by the majority and we work hard to reduce those inequalities.

We seek to be a naturally healthy place, emphasising prevention through encouraging behaviour change and mobilisation of assets (people, buildings and place). We focus on community models of support, underpinned through volunteering and social action.

We work closely with our partners in the health and care systems, especially in the voluntary and independent sector, to plan for good health and care, to

meet challenges when they arise and to look to the future. We are also building on the strengths found in our communities which are many and varied.

We invest in the mental and physical health of our communities, helping them to build on what is already there with Social Prescribing, Local Area Coordinators, and Talking Points, which make help and advice quickly and simply available.

We also focus on safeguarding, especially for our most vulnerable people, in order to keep residents as safe from harm as possible.

2021 Update

For those that have lost loved ones and for those who have suffered, the pandemic will have a lasting effect. For the city as a whole, Covid-19 has had an unprecedented impact on how we interact with one another and our surroundings. Things that would have been normal before – getting on public transport, attending mass events, meeting family and friends – now take on an added complexity and come with a requirement to be cautious and abide by Covid-secure rules.

Some issues and inequalities that existed before the Covid crisis began have become more visible as a result of the impact of the pandemic.

To this end, further investment in mental health has been prioritised in the Council Budget and progress has been made in mental health support via the Mental Health with Accommodation support programme. The learning disability partnership has also worked with partners to consult people about their access to digital technology and to hear about their experience of the pandemic.

The pandemic has also shown how a localised approach to health and social care services can be instrumental in creating resilient communities with the overwhelming efforts of health and care staff, volunteers and community and volunteer organisations helping to re-emphasise York's community-based strength. This community approach has been supported by the Live Well York website which has become the primary source of information for social and wellbeing information for residents and which now has the highest usage per population compared to equivalent services in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Finally, reforms to how services are integrated continue to be progressed with the Council working with partner organisations to develop a York Health and Care Alliance, following the publication of a recent Government White Paper. The aim of the Alliance will be to strengthen health, care and public services in the city by building healthcare locally around residents, rather than around organisations.

What is the council going to do?

- Contribute to the development and delivery of Mental Health, Learning Disability and Health and Wellbeing Strategies
- Improve mental health support, including mental health first aid, and encourage volunteering, including our People Helping People initiative to help improve mental health and tackle loneliness
- Use innovative strategies to support individuals' independence, health and wellbeing, enabling people to stay in their own homes or communities for longer and significantly reducing admission rates to residential care
- Continue the roll-out of the older people's accommodation programme, to provide accommodation for whole life independence; supporting and promoting the Age Friendly York programme. This seeks to create an environment enabling people to live healthy and active lives and encourages communities to treat people with respect, regardless of their age
- Continue to support substance misuse services to improve public health and support some of the most vulnerable in our society
- Invest in ward level social prescribing to tackle loneliness and isolation. This will include the continued expansion of our Local Area Coordinators and Talking Points, making them accessible to residents in all areas of the city
- Open spaces will be available to all for sports and physical activity, including healthy walking, outdoor gyms and green spaces, which improve both physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Make York an 'Autism friendly' city by helping local businesses and facilities to achieve the Autism Access Award and support our communities to be Dementia Friendly.
- Support all areas of the council to embed 'Good Help' principles in the services that they deliver
- Ensure that effective safeguarding is made a priority for all Council services, in order to be sure people are safe across the city.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Continue to tackle health inequalities in recognition that the pandemic has exacerbated challenges faced by some of our most vulnerable residents
- Use the tools and assets at our disposal to create safe environments through which residents and visitors alike can re-engage with the city.
- Continue to ensure testing capacity to restrict emergence of Covid-19 flare ups in the city thereby maintaining the low infection rates comparable to the wider region and UK.
- Work with partners in the city and across wider geographies to promote better integrated health and social care aligned to the reforms proposed by the UK Government
- Continue with the Council's default locality focused, home first approach to care.

What will be different in four years?

- Our local asset-based approach will be fully embedded by organisations, health partners and communities
- There will be a broader recognition and commitment to improved mental health outcomes - from support in school, through to tackling isolation in older age, both from the statutory services and the voluntary sector
- We will increase the emphasis on the wider determinants of health, by understanding that how the city runs, how people live their lives and interact with one another and the way the Council creates, protects and enhances the environment which has positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of York's population
- Health and wellbeing will continue to be a key driver in everything we do as a city - from the design of housing and infrastructure through to ensuring that transport options meet the needs of the most vulnerable
- Greater integration of services will mean that those in need move seamlessly through a community-based system, taking advantage of innovation to ensure that the service users and their support networks receive the help they need

- A broader range of opportunities to support healthy lifestyles will be developed such as walking trails, sports facilities, exercise for all ages along with dietary advice.

Safe communities and culture for all

Outcome Definitions: Residents live safe from harm as part of strong and vibrant communities, participating in their local area and have access to a range of quality cultural activities

York's widely recognised status as one of the best places to live in the UK is in no small part down to its people and communities.

York's sense of community is important in enabling many aspects of city life, from creating neighbourhoods that children have the freedom to enjoy, to facilitating world class art and a genuine care for the local environment. It provides the foundation for community-led action and participation in culture and sport.

The city has a strong track record in this area, with high levels of volunteering, a vibrant network of cultural, sporting and third sector organisations, and well-

established community budgets and action on a ward basis. This is a priority of the council and something to build upon over the next four years.

More than 75% of residents tell us they feel part of their local area, however, we know this isn't everyone's story. It is vital that we continue to work with others to nurture inclusive communities, particularly for those that can feel isolated and vulnerable, in order to better connect them to others and the activities York has to offer. This will also have a positive effect in reducing crime and provide a safety net to protect those at risk of harm.

The council's support of the York Armed Forces Covenant is a strong part of the city's commitment to military families, recently given a Gold Award in the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme.

2021 Update

During the course of the pandemic, the strength of York's communities has shone through, helping to manage the prevalence of the virus in the city and ensuring that our most vulnerable residents have had access to support, in keeping with the pre-pandemic model of community-based working. Ward funding has contributed significantly to this support with over £55,000 of funding distributed to community groups so far supporting initiatives ranging from food deliveries to online learning to reducing social isolation.

Community hubs, over a thousand volunteers, and organisations have rolled out vital services to those that need them while the Council's resources, including staff, have been redirected to support efforts across the city.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on a city which typically attracts over 7 million visitors per year and on the significant number of people employed within the visitor economy, including within the city's world leading cultural sector. The loss of vital income sources has hit the sector hard and while these assets will hope to be at the forefront of the city's recovery they have suffered considerably over the last year. The Council has sought to provide support where possible, such as with Explore Libraries, YMT and GLL, and has been active in lobbying government for funding for the city's cultural institutions.

What is the council going to do?

- Enable communities to take ownership of improving their local area, through investing in community development and building on the ward committee model
- Expand the 'People Helping People Scheme' to encourage more volunteering which provides support for others in the city, embedding the principles of "Good Help"
- Explore social prescribing at a local level to tackle loneliness and isolation, alongside work with partners to make our communities dementia friendly
- Work for an improved city centre for local residents, using the MyCityCentre activities to involve the community and city centre businesses in developing solutions, and working to secure Purple Flag accreditation in York
- Create more ways for everybody to enjoy York's cultural offering, including a cultural entitlement for all young people and the development of significant community sporting experiences around the new Community Stadium
- Deliver on a cultural strategy that ensures that all York residents, irrespective of age or background, being proud to be engaged with York's arts and heritage offer.
- Support investment in our cultural assets to be inclusive and accessible to all, and to provide outstanding experiences for visitors and residents alike
- Work with the police and others to tackle the priorities for making York safer, such as keeping vulnerable people safe from harm and tackling county lines, outlining these in a new Community Safety strategy
- Consider the council's current approach to equalities, including taking a more active role in tackling discrimination across York, and continue support of York Armed Forces Covenant
- Work to ensure a Community Hub is in every ward, with a map of services and funding available to support them to be sustained in the community.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Work with ward committees and local organisations to ensure that post-Covid recovery meets the specific needs of local areas.
- Continue the provision of community hubs.
- Work with partners to tackle longer-term challenges, including the prevention of hate crime, to ensure York remains a safe, welcoming place for all.
- Finalise and embed a more robust Equalities Impact Assessment into the council's decision-making processes.
- Support efforts to get the cultural sector back on a level footing, implementing the recently launched Cultural Strategy, in recognition of its vital contribution to the economic and social life of the city.
- Support the development of initiatives like Purple Flag to develop a family-friendly city centre and work with North Yorkshire Police to increase community safety and provide greater support to victims of domestic abuse.
- Work with partners to lobby Government to provide fair funding for the city's cultural assets.
- Provide support for the 2021 Rugby League World Cup, to be hosted at the Community Stadium, and then build on its legacy in the city.

What will be different in four years?

- More people participating in the life of the city, feeling safe and connected to their community
- A citywide response to people feeling lonely, with a range of opportunities to prevent isolation
- To be a top 5 city for participation in culture and sport, with the cultural range in the city
- - from local sports clubs to cutting edge theatre and inclusive arts
- Communities and the voluntary and cultural sectors in York thriving, working alongside the council and partners to unblock barriers and attract further investment.
- Increased investment and resources for local communities via their Ward Committees
- A thriving Community Stadium, with a diverse and inclusive range of activities which provide interest, entertainment and wellbeing to our residents.
- Crime, both perceived and actual, to be reduced further as we work hard with partners to keep York one of the safest cities in the North.

Creating homes and world-class infrastructure

Outcome Definition The right housing is available, affordable and environmentally sustainable for everyone with good quality infrastructure that supports community and local businesses

Currently, York's housing market is characterised by high demand and low supply, which pushes up house prices and rents above the regional average, creating a challenging environment for York residents.

Delivery of the Local Plan will provide the framework for land use for homes and employment sites, whilst protecting York's special character and Green Belt boundaries. There are unique opportunities to improve the infrastructure and public realm of the city through the sustainable development of designated sites, including major brownfield, historic and neglected areas, such as York Central and the Castle Gateway. Digital connectivity, the development of the historic Guildhall, as a small business start-up centre and the completion of the Community Stadium will also bring substantial benefits to the city.

The delivery of higher levels of market and affordable housing through the Local Plan, combined with the council's own ambitious Housing Delivery Programme and support for community-led housing, will begin to provide more affordable housing options for York's residents.

Whilst York has fewer people presenting as officially homeless than many other cities, homelessness and street sleeping are still key challenges for the city with plans underway to extend our homelessness prevention and resettlement services.

The overall condition of our housing stock in York is relatively good yet significant numbers of York residents still live in fuel poverty. The Climate Emergency means that making York's housing stock (public and private, existing and new build) significantly more thermally efficient, providing warmer homes and lower energy bills, is a priority.

Another challenge is to provide sufficient and appropriate housing for York's growing older population. Our Older Person's Accommodation Programme will provide a range of accommodation to meet the housing and care needs of our older residents.

2021 Update

Recovery from the pandemic is critical to the city's economic future and the need to invest is key.

Despite the challenges presented over the last year, key capital projects, including the York Central scheme and improvements to the city's road network infrastructure, are progressing. The council's Housing Delivery Programme has also kept up the momentum, with the first phase of new homes sold at Lowfield Green and the second phase now coming to market - with priority sales on shared ownership properties for key workers. The next two sites in the programme have now received planning permission.

Lincoln Court has also seen the refurbishment of 20 apartments and the provision of 15 new fully wheelchair accessible apartments for social rent. In addition, the LNER Community Stadium has been completed and handed over to the operators GLL.

The budget for 2021/22 continues the Council's transformational £550m capital programme, to drive regeneration and accelerate the city's economic recovery.

Some areas of the existing capital budget have been reprioritised to invest in the Council's priorities, particularly housing, transport and energy efficiency, and to support the city's recovery from the impacts of Covid-19 with a focus on building back better.

The Council continues to work to ensure that housing stock in the city aligns with climate ambitions. Warm Homes Fund grants have been administered to assist customers on low incomes, living in fuel poverty and who lack central heating systems with a new boiler system helping to enhance the energy efficiency of homes. While York is one of 12 local authorities nationally to receive government funding to trial and help develop a national toolkit for use by local authorities to ensure private rented sector landlords comply with, or face enforcement action, to make sure private rented properties meet a national minimum standard rating of E on their Energy Performance Certificates.

Work to provide support to more vulnerable residents continues with accommodation available to accommodate rough sleepers in the city.

What is the council going to do?

- Deliver the Local Plan, the first plan in 48 years, with additional capacity to speed up supporting supplementary planning documents
- Deliver our significant capital programme and progress key developments such as the Community Stadium, York Central, Castle Gateway, the refurbishment and development of the Guildhall, and the first stages of the Housing Delivery Programme
- Deliver a greater number of affordable homes over the next four years, including Council-owned properties, using a range of models of delivery

- Use the council's new Housing Delivery Programme Design Manual 'Building Better Places' as a standard for future developments including delivering 100% Passivhaus homes in zero carbon neighbourhoods on council sites
- Develop an ongoing programme of improvements to our 7,500 council homes, reaching and exceeding the Decent Homes Standard and bringing all homes as close as possible to zero carbon by 2030
- Deliver age appropriate accommodation and specialist housing through the housing mix within the Housing Delivery Programme and Older Persons Accommodation Programme to meet the housing needs of our older residents
- Investigate the case to extend HMO licensing to smaller HMOs and work with partners to maximise energy efficiency in private sector housing
- Prioritise support for rough sleepers and work in partnership with the police and other agencies to develop new initiatives such as the 'Housing Navigators' and improved services for people with complex needs, such as substance abuse and mental health issues, including extended use of the Housing First approach
- Further progress Digital York and enhance connectivity in the city
- Work with the York Central Partnership to ensure the site delivers as much affordable housing as possible, delivers high quality jobs for York residents and delivers a zero carbon development.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Begin work on the station frontage scheme in the autumn following planning approval.
- Invest in the city's road network, including the outer ring road, including cycling and walking improvements.
- Invest in initiatives to tackle climate change, including funding to deliver active travel measures across the city.
- Initiate work on the Housing Energy Retrofit Programme to deliver energy retrofit works to 60 council homes, complete a new 'room in roof' Government funded energy efficiency programme in the private sector; lead regional bids for further energy efficiency funding and develop an Energy Efficiency Retrofit Strategy for the city in keeping with our zero carbon by 2030 ambitions.
- Support physical improvements to council housing land and property through the Housing Environment Improvement Programme

- Undertake a consultation on the potential designation of a targeted Additional Licensing Scheme for HMOs with 3 or 4 occupants.
- Complete and implement an improvement plan for the council's own Housing Management and Repairs services to enhance our services to tenants and leaseholders

What will be different in four years?

- The city will have its first local plan for decades, creating a framework which will provide the homes we need, whilst protecting York's special character and greenbelt
- A significant programme of housing delivery will be underway including council houses and affordable homes
- Joined up and city-wide approaches to meeting housing need, homelessness and working with people who have complex needs will be in place
- Significant improvements will have been made to the management and maintenance of the council's own housing stock, reaching and exceeding the Decent Homes Standard
- Opportunities will have been taken to improve standards and value for money in the private rented sector and reduce the number of empty homes in the city
- A plan will be established to bring the city's housing stock as close as possible to zero carbon by 2030
- York's digital infrastructure continuing to put us amongst the best connected cities, with an emphasis on access for all.

A better start for children and young people

Outcome Definition Families, carers and schools are supported so that every child and young person has the opportunity to develop, learn and achieve their aspirations

We want all our children to live in a city which enables and supports them, their families and communities, to achieve and celebrate success, adapt to change and be resilient.

The early stages of life determine a child's future chances. Most of York's children and young people have a healthy start, then thrive and grow into adulthood with confidence and resilience. But some of them are not so fortunate, grow up in challenging circumstances and are unable to make the most of learning and life's chances.

York's strong education system has some of the best performing schools in the country, two excellent colleges and two world-class universities. This enables most of our children and young people to reach levels of attainment above the national average, and the city's residents have the highest levels of graduate skills in the North.

Most children and young people here achieve and make progress with confidence to further and higher education, employment or apprenticeships, but a small number do less well. While results for our most disadvantaged children and young people are improving slowly, the pace must increase if we are to narrow the attainment gap between our most vulnerable children and young people and their peers.

The council and its safeguarding partners have a statutory duty to promote the welfare of children, keeping them safe and acting quickly if they are at risk of harm. Our children's services are on an ambitious improvement journey, seeking the best outcomes for York families, and putting the voice of our children and young people at the core of all we do.

Many aspects of children and young people's lives, from self-esteem and stress levels to coping with life, are influenced by their emotional and mental wellbeing. Nationally and locally, children's mental health issues affect their daily lives and learning more and more. The council works with our universities, colleges and schools to provide appropriate support for children and young people with mental health problems.

2021 Update

The impact of the pandemic on our children and young people cannot be underestimated. School closures for the majority of children has increased dependency on remote and on-line learning, restrictions on socialising with friends, and a pause in sports and recreational pursuits, outlets we know are important for our physical and emotional wellbeing, making every aspect of life different and more challenging.

Despite this, the response of education providers, families, and wider communities to adapt and overcome these challenges has been incredible. Settings, groups and organisations have worked tirelessly to operate within the safety guidelines and continue to put children's learning and welfare at the centre of everything they do.

We recognise that for some families the events of the past year have been particularly difficult, especially children in families living on low incomes, those facing job insecurity or on the furlough scheme. A situation which has increased the challenge of narrowing the gap in attainment between our most disadvantaged children and their peers.

Successful collaboration between Council staff, resident volunteers and voluntary and charitable organisations, such as with the community hubs programme, has provided practical and emotional support to families most at risk and those who have suffered particular hardships during the pandemic.

What is the council going to do?

- Continue to strengthen the work of communities, local organisations and agencies so that families become more resilient and able to find solutions rather than depending on services
- Continue the improvement of children's social care to provide excellent services for vulnerable young people and aim to be excellent corporate parents
- Continue to prioritise gaining improved outcomes for our most disadvantaged children and young people in the city
- Use opportunities with businesses, educators and skills providers to gain the right mix of apprenticeships and in-work progression, besides attracting new businesses and innovation to the city to create more high value jobs

- Work with our partners to identify and tackle issues relating to the rise in mental health problems in the city
- Continue to focus on the importance of the early years and the impact that this stage of life has on a child's development and future outcomes
- Develop a cultural strategy which sets the ambition for every child and young person to be able to access a full and rounded arts and cultural offer
- Increase the number of foster carers and adopters in York by improving take-up
- Improve play and sports provision for young people including play equipment at parks and suitable open spaces across York
- Develop a York citizenship offer in conjunction with schools in the city.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Focus on providing confidence and reassurance to children and young people as they transition back into school life and so that they feel positive and motivated for the future
- Reassert our efforts to address the inequalities facing some of our children and young people and target interventions to narrow the gap in attainment
- Work with partners to develop learning programmes and training opportunities that will provide our young people with the skills and experience they need to succeed in the labour market of the future
- Take the successes and best practice learned from the community hub model to support families and address challenges facing residents
- Continue our improvement journey, raising the quality and performance of our services
- Continue to develop the Healthy Child Service offer across the city to improve maternal and child health
- Evaluate the potential scalability of the Early Talk for York scheme

What will be different in four years?

- A strong, quality Early Years sector will engage our most vulnerable children, with increased take-up of the entitlement to free two year old education places

- Children and young people will have a more positive experience at key points of change in their life, for example, as they start school or transfer to a new setting or situation
- The attainment gap between our most disadvantaged children and young people and their peers will have reduced
- A continued emphasis on our great education system and strong multi-agency working helps all our children make a positive journey from school to adulthood
- Children and young people are confident and get involved in all that our great city has to offer, taking advantage of York's parks and open spaces, its play and sports facilities, and increasing participation in and enjoyment of its vibrant cultural offer
- There is a clear understanding of the importance of community cohesion and empowerment, so that families, children and young people are able to influence matters that affect their lives.

An open and effective council

Outcome Definition We work as an efficient, open, transparent, democratically-led and accountable organisation, in partnership with key stakeholders, to deliver on residents priorities and achieve the council plan outcomes for our city

As a council, we have an important role as a place shaper, a deliverer of services and as a point of contact for connecting people to support in the city. We also have to lead by example as an organisation, working to address our city's challenges within our own organisation.

We want to do things that matter for residents and communities, which means that we believe in giving local communities control over what's important to them, wherever possible, and involving them in delivering the solutions. We recognise in addressing challenges, the best approach is often to build on the strengths and the assets that we have in our communities.

We want to provide effective responses to customer enquiries, provide support to residents, and ensure they receive the best possible advice.

Our greatest challenges, such as addressing climate change, require the collective efforts of everyone in the city. The council, like other local authorities, continues to face a difficult financial position, in particular in respect of funding for adult care. Ensuring effective prioritisation and delivery of efficiencies will be critical in coming years.

We will focus on locality approaches to bring people together, with services at a ward or community level. We will continually work to make what we do transparent, to involve people in the decisions that affect them and make people's dealings with the council as positive as possible.

To achieve this, we must be an efficient and modern organisation, utilising technology, which can adapt to the changing needs of our city.

2021 Update

Many of the ways of working within the council have been completed revised following the need for most staff to work from home. Technology has enabled this remote working whilst change business processes have been implemented which allow decisions to be taken swiftly at the right levels of the organisations. In many cases, the necessity to make changes immediately has accelerated improvements to processes.

The council, as a whole, is considering which changes, made necessary by the pandemic, represent improved ways of working to provide better outcomes for customers. Where there is a benefit of keeping those practise in place, they will be retained, whilst those for which there are better solutions available when fewer Covid restrictions in place will be reconsidered.

What is the council going to do?

- Ensure strong financial planning and management, providing capacity to invest, and driving efficiency. As part of this we will undertake effective budget consultation
- Undertake an Organisational Development programme to ensure the way our organisation operates fully supports the delivery of our key priorities, whilst we act as a good employer to our staff
- Place a continued emphasis on absence management, ensuring our staff are supported in work
- Deliver the council's digital programme to make contacting the council as streamlined as possible, with information made readily available
- Maintain our commitment to the apprenticeship programme, the real Living Wage and our Public Sector Equalities Duties
- Ensure our processes are built around the needs of residents, businesses and communities
- Prioritise the delivery of schemes at a ward level, in order to support decisions taken locally at the ward level
- Utilise our procurement approaches to address the climate emergency and secure social value at every opportunity
- Review the council's current governance structures and consult on options for a more transparent and cross-party decision-making system, ensuring an effective and democratically-led council.

2021 Update

In addition to progressing the above, the Council will:

- Ensure the ongoing health needs of staff are recognised and supported, including the potential impacts of bereavement, mental health issues and long-Covid.
- Consider the best way to adopt a return to previous office-based processes where it is beneficial to do so, but retain the improvements made in many processes through more flexible working.
- Within the statutory regulations, ensure all council meetings are as accessible as possible through digital channels and that elected member representation is appropriately broad.

What will be different in 4 years?

- More streamlined digital channels to council services
- A more engaged workforce, greater job satisfaction and reduced absence rates
- A recognised emphasis on transparency
- A sustainable budgetary position
- Communities feel empowered to work with the council to deliver better outcomes for the city
- Carbon emissions from council owned assets and buildings are reduced significantly
- More apprentices are employed by the council, utilising the Apprenticeship Levy more effectively
- The Council's Constitution will be updated, with more effective governance procedures in place.

Working with partners

Successfully delivering the outcomes for the city and its residents set out in this plan cannot be done alone. There are a range of actions which the council can, must and will take as highlighted above. Yet many of the things which support the quality of life of our residents also rely on other organisations such as central government, Local Enterprise Partnerships, schools, businesses, NHS bodies, third sector organisations, as well as communities and residents themselves.

In this plan, we have sought to be clear in the setting out what we believe is important for the wellbeing of our residents and the future success of our city: doing so to help guide and direct others in the city as to what residents are saying as we aim to work together in the same direction.

But this is not merely passive on the council's part. Over the period of the plan, we will actively seek to nurture strong connections with those who will help to achieve the best for our residents. This will mean lobbying central government to invest in the things that make a difference for people in York, working with employers to support the mental wellness of their workforce or nurturing the voluntary sector in developing community led solutions to particular challenges.

We must continue being a listening council too, involving residents and communities in everything we do. This could look like giving real input into decision making at a local level through ward committees, enabling people to have a say over how budgets are used for their care and support, or getting ideas at an early stage to help shape major developments in the city.

York is rich with talent, passion, creativity and care for our city and each other. Through the coordinated efforts of our residents and communities, businesses and organisations we can achieve much over the next four years.