

Meeting	Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date	24 October 2023
Present	Councillors K Taylor (Chair), J Burton, Fenton, Healey, Hook, Merrett (Substitute), Nelson, Steward, Whitcroft and Mason
In Attendance	Councillor Kilbane – Executive Member for Economy and Transport Councillor Ravilious – Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency
Officers in attendance	James Gilchrist - Director of Environment, Transport and Planning Patrick Looker - Head of Service Finance Julian Ridge - Sustainable Transport Manager Andy Vose - Transport Policy Manager Mike Southcombe - Public Protection, Regulatory Support & Advice Manager
Apologies	Councillor B Burton

6. Declarations of Interest (17:34)

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

Cllr Merrett noted that he did not have an personal or prejudicial interest to declare, but wished to note that he was a member of both the Bus and Environment Forums.

7. Minutes (17:34)

Resolved: The Committee agreed the minutes of the 21 March 2023 be signed as a correct record with the chairs amendments and agreed that the minutes of the 26 September 2023 be signed as a correct record.

8. Public Participation (17:36)

It was reported that there had been 8 registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn raised concerns regarding York's new Local Transport Strategy & Plan proposed consultation. She stated that areas without parish councils were disadvantaged by the consultation. She also asked about progress against a number of Council documents and asked whether there would be published changes to the 2020 Highway inspection manual.

Niall McFerran confirmed that York Bus Forum welcomed the new Local Transport Strategy & Plan. He asked for confirmation on how much of the £17.3m BSIP funding had been spent and details of projects coming forward. He suggested that reliability for buses were key, tracked timetables and intermediary stops for park and ride buses would improve bus travel.

Anna Semlyen raised concerns that the new Local Transport Strategy & Plan lacked clear plans to reduce car travel by the required 20% identified to meet net zero for the city. She asked that the Committee seek options that demonstrate how the city would meet this reduction.

Andy D'Agorne stated that the Council needed to meet its objectives to reduce traffic and pollution. He noted that changes to bus policies in the city were needed which should include extending park and ride service hours and rerouting the 405 bus past the railway station. Finally he asked that the Council's residents parking schemes be revised to include all terrace streets in the city.

John Gannon highlighted that CO2 pollution on Gillygate exceeded maximum levels set by the World Health Organisation and asked that the Council complete the electrification of all buses and taxis, create additional penalties for idling, and only allow goods vehicles to drive down Gillygate at designated times.

Flick Williams raised concerns that within the Local Transport Strategy that in a priority for cyclists over buses created unsafe bus stops which prioritised cycle lanes on the road space. She noted that disabled people make 40% less journeys on average and dangerous to navigate road spaces would lead to people deciding they could not leave their homes. Jonathan Tyler confirmed that the York Civic Trust broadly welcomed the Local Transport Strategy & Plan. He noted that they were awaiting

modelling on some of the key objectives and plans such as the proposed 71% reduction in car travel.

Sharon Cheek spoke on behalf of York Cycle Campaign, they outlined that the city required a drastic increase active travel. Welcomed the proposal for a connected cycle priority network the reallocation of road space, she confirmed this work as well as speed reduction was vital to increase cycling in the city.

9. 2023/24 Finance and Performance Monitor 1 (18:13)

Officers provided the projected 2023/24 financial position and the performance position for the period covering 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023. The Committee considered the performance data included within the report. It was noted that some performance indicators would be changed between this report and the next as performance would be measured against the new Council Plan. It was also noted that all the Councils performance indicators could be considered on the Council's Open Data platform. Members also enquired as to how data was presented and officers confirmed that they could review whether additional years data could be included over quarters and how progress is identified.

The Committee noted the current spending in the highways budget on street lighting, and enquired about whether solar technology could be used, to both reduce cost and assist with the Councils climate ambitions. Officers confirmed that while solar technology was getting better there remained constraints relating to battery technology, they confirmed that a previous scrutiny committee had scrutinised the Council's street lighting policy and that they would email the Committee further detail on this.

Council incomes were also discussed. It was confirmed to members that in planning services significant income comes from major developments, therefore, it would be expected that with the finalising of the local plan that more major developments would come forward. Car parking was raised with the agreement by Executive to raise parking fees in the city. Members asked whether there was a concern that price rises for parking could reduce usage, and officers noted that while it was possible data from the previous year showed that a 10% price increase only resulted in a 1% usage reduction.

Finally the Committee discussed the highways maintenance backlog which was described as a long standing problem faced by local authorities. Officers confirmed that planned maintenance was prioritised and when new funding was available additional schemes for maintenance would be added

to the Councils program of works, if funding would be cut then some schemes would be removed taking into account the prioritisation of the work. It was confirmed that the Council had not yet had detail on proposed additional road maintenance from central government. The Executive Member for Economy and Transport confirmed that the Council lacked the budget to address the whole of the maintenance backlog, citing an issue of funding cuts to local authority funding since 2010.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the finance and performance information;
- ii. Requested that officers share additional detail on the ability to use solar technology to power street lighting;
- iii. Requested that officers provide additional detail regarding how much would need to be spent in year to prevent the highways maintenance backlog from increasing.

Reason: to ensure expenditure is kept within the approved budget.

10. York's new Local Transport Strategy & Plan (18:54)

Officers introduced the report outlining the need to prepare a new Local Transport Strategy and Plan. It was confirmed that the plan would be for York and would inform the statutory Local Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire, which will be the responsibility of the new Mayoral Combined Authority. Officers confirmed that the plan would go out for consultation before being agreed by Executive. The Executive Member for Economy and Transport asked the Committee for their comments on the plan and the proposed objectives.

The Committee enquired about how the consultation process would be conducted and how it can ensure the Council reaches hard to reach groups. Officers confirmed that once the consultation process was finished the Council would identify groups the consultation did not reach and would aim to reach out to these groups. Members highlighted the importance of encouraging modal shift and asked if motorists could be considered as an important group to reach in consultation, members also asked if there would be a specific channel for councillors to engage with the consultation.

Members highlighted the importance of the new Local Transport Strategy and Plan improving accessibility to the city. Suggested improvements included improving safety around the use of e-scooters and accessing bus stops and how these integrate with cycle lanes. Members therefore requested that future safety audits ensure disabled representation. The

Committee also discussed the need to require all private hire cars to be wheelchair accessible to support disabled users. Members enquired about blue badge parking and noted the proposed standard of ensuring parking would be within 150 meters of major attractions, members proposed that 150 meters could be too far for some blue badge holders and whether a 50 meter could be the standard. The Executive Member for Economy and Transport confirmed that they could explore amending the minimum distance required, but would wish to ensure a deliverable standard was set which followed legislation and guidance the Council would receive.

Improving bus travel was discussed, members suggested practices such as single ticketing, max fares, and electric timetables to improve bus travel. Tackling congestion and providing ways for buses and other forms of public transport to travel quickly was noted as key to providing an consistent service. The Committee also highlighted the need to improve bus travel in rural areas and it was confirmed that officers were exploring with providers how to maximise the use of park and ride sights, with the prospect of services not to York city centre using the sights including buses outside of the wider York area.

The Committee also discussed the proposed 2030 target for reducing car travel by 20%. Members enquired about whether other cities had had success in reducing car travel and how they achieved this, it was confirmed that many local authorities were at a similar stage as the Council in setting their targets. Leicester was highlighted as an example with a focus on active travel having shown some success in reducing car travel.

Resolved:

- i. To request that the Executive Member for Economy and Transport work with officers to ensure the consultation reaches hard to reach groups, including running face to face sessions where needed. Also to ensure the consultation uses accessible language throughout;
- ii. To request that the new Local Transport Strategy & Plan seek to set high minimum standards regarding accessibility for the disabled and to explain in instances where those standards could not be met;
- iii. To request that Councillor be included in the list of professionals who can respond to the consultation;
- iv. To request that the Council continues to work with North Yorkshire County Council and the new combined authority to develop transport links between York and North Yorkshire;
- v. To request that the British Transport Police be engaged in traffic management policy;

- vi. To request that greater detail be provided in the new Local Transport Strategy & Plan around targets and benchmarking to ensure the Council can monitor progress against the targets;
- vii. To request that the consultation include options on public transport including integrated timetables, single ticketing, and daily fares caps;
- viii. To request that there be disability representation on the Independent Safety Auditing Committee.

Reason: To provide the Committee's input into the new Local Transport Strategy & Plan prior to going out for consultation.

11. Work Plan (20:24)

Members considered the Committee work plan and discussed the prospect of forming a working group to review spending on the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 before the implementation of LTP4. It was noted that a number of other topics were being considered for potential working groups and that members would bring proposals to the Committee's November meeting.

It was also noted that delays to the creation of the combined authority could affect the proposed item on devolution schemes for the Committee's November meeting and could need to be postponed to a later date.

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee work plan be noted;
- ii. That Committee members bring working group topic proposals to the Committee's 28 November 2023 meeting for consideration.

Reason: to ensure that the Committee maintains a program of work.

Councillor Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.31 pm and finished at 8.39 pm].