

Scrutiny Management Committee

20 November 2006

Report of the Head of Civic, Democratic and Legal Services

Proposed Scrutiny Review of Traffic Congestion in York

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to ask members to reconsider a registered scrutiny topic which was deferred from the meeting of 23 October. Members may make a recommendation as to whether it can be the subject of an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Sub-Committee either immediately or in the future.

Background

2. At their meeting on 23 October members considered Topic 120 on the subject of Traffic Congestion in York (for registration form see Annex A) which was originally submitted by Cllr Tracey Simpson-Laing. It was decided to defer a decision to enable a draft remit to be produced and discussions to take place with the relevant officers
3. Cllr Simpson-Laing has suggested a draft remit for the review which is attached at Annex B.
4. At the meeting of 23 October the Head of Financial Services mentioned funding sources specifically aimed at reducing congestion on roads. Further investigation of this has revealed that this has been allocated to funding a review by consultants Kendrick Ash and that there is no additional funding via that route.

Officer Response to Draft Remit

5. Discussions with the Head of Transport Planning about the feasibility of carrying out a review based on the draft remit attached at Annex B revealed that current and anticipated future congestion problems have been identified in LTP2. Lists of current schemes are reported to the Executive every three

months.

6. Traffic has been found to be the main contributor to air quality problems in York, however the Council has developed an Air Quality Action Plan which is currently being managed by officers in Environmental Protection.
7. The Head of Transport Planning is of the opinion that work to encourage sustainable travel is already being done by the Transport Planning Team and that projects to promote modal shift are being carried out with colleagues from Lifelong Learning and Leisure.
8. If members wished to research good practice in other authorities they would need to clarify the nature of the good practice they wished to examine as the issues around traffic congestion are very wide. For example, are they considering traffic management, air quality, consultation procedures etc?
9. It was stressed that there are no quick solutions to traffic problems. However there would be value in carrying out a scrutiny review as to how traffic problems could be reduced around an individual event or situation. Such a review would have a limited scope and a relatively quick outcome and could involve the participation of interested parties.
10. Particular traffic problems occur on race days, at car boot sales and around events such as the motor caravan show. Members may be interested in investigating possible tactics to reduce problems around one of these, or another situation which their local knowledge makes them aware of.

Consultation

11. Consultation with relevant officers was carried out when this topic was originally registered and further detailed discussions have been held in order to provide the information presented in this report. This should enable members to decide if it would be useful to take this topic further.
12. In light of the above officer response, Cllr Simpson-Laing, the member who registered the topic, has been re-consulted to ascertain whether she wanted to amend her submission accordingly. At the time of writing no response has been received.

Options

13. Having regard to the topic registration form, draft remit and comments in this report members may decide to:
- a. Not progress the topic further, giving reasons
 - b. Retain the topic on the list of those available for progression to an Ad Hoc Sub Committee pending resources becoming available at a later date.
 - c. Form an Ad Hoc Sub Committee to consider the topic and make amendments to the remit as they consider appropriate. Also establish a timescale for any such review.

Analysis

14. If members decide to create an Ad Hoc Sub-Committee immediately, this will mean the resources of Scrutiny Services will be working to their full capacity. Brief, clear remits and short to medium timescales should ensure that all current reviews are completed during the current municipal year.

Corporate Priorities

15. Members might consider that this topic would contribute to Corporate Priority no 2 – Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport.

Implications

16. There are no known Financial, HR, Equalities, Legal, Crime and Disorder, IT or other implications associated with this report. Should Members decide to proceed with a review of this topic, naturally, there will be usual costs associated with resourcing the review, depending on its agreed remit.

Risk Management

17. In compliance with the Councils risk management strategy, there are no known risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

18. Members are asked to consider the outstanding scrutiny topic in line with the options above, and to agree a remit and timescale for any review which might be authorised.

Reason: In order to carry out their responsibilities in managing the Scrutiny function in York

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Report Approved



Date 10.11.06

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *None at this stage*

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A – Scrutiny Topic Registration Form for Topic 120
Annex B – Draft remit for Topic 120

Background Papers

None