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Meeting	Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	10 February 2022
Present	Councillors Norman (Chair), Douglas, Hook, Hunter, Pearson, D Taylor and Wann (Substitute for Cllr Daubeney)
Apologies	Councillor Daubeney

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## **12. Declarations of Interest**

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, that they might have in the business on the agenda. No interests were declared.

## **13. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 25 May 2021 and 27 July 2021 be approved as a correct record, to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

## **14. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## **15. Update on Carbon Reduction**

Members considered a report that provided an update on carbon reduction activity across the council over the last 12 months. The first York Climate Change Strategy (Annex A) provided the framework for collective action to realise the Council's ambition and strategic objectives that the city would towards.

The Chair noted that the date of the meeting had been changed to include the attendance of the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change and he recorded his frustration that the Executive Member had not

sent her apologies to him. He felt that this did not help the Committee undertake its statutory duties.

The Head of Carbon Reduction explained that the council was on track to reduce our direct emissions to net zero by 2030 with good progress being made on the programme of carbon reduction activity underway. He explained that the climate change strategy was built on a robust evidence base and included the requirement to have carbon in-setting and offsetting. He outlined the carbon reduction objectives noting that the climate change strategy was developed in line with the economic strategy and health and wellbeing strategy. He outlined consultation with stakeholders and the phases of consultation that had taken place as part of Our Big Conversation. He then detailed the projects undertaken as part of the carbon reduction strategy, including the new community woodland.

The Head of Carbon Reduction was asked and responded to questions as follows:

- A Member asked if the council was talking to the Environment Agency regarding other upstream sites for tree planting to further mitigate flooding. The Head of Carbon Reduction responded that the council was looking to increase urban tree planting to increase the tree canopy to 13% across the city.
- A Member asked if the council's direct emissions accounted for 4% of emissions. The Head of Carbon Reduction noted that the council was working to reduce emissions through partnerships.
- A Member commented that good progress was being made on the hyper hubs.
- A Member highlighted that scammers were contacting residents about energy and the Head of Carbon Reduction noted that the council was working with partners across the city to help vulnerable residents. This included working with York community energy and the council was looking to broaden this and could work with the scam busters team on this.
- A Member noted that the Committee wanted to look at the net zero aspects of York Central. The Director for Economy Regeneration and

Housing explained that the York Central outline planning permission included higher standards of sustainability than required by planning policy and included BREAMM excellent for commercial buildings. She added that the council's housing would be zero carbon passivhaus. She explained that the council was in discussion with the landowners of the site regarding the passivhaus standards and the discussions regarding that had been received positively by the Chair and Chief Executive of Homes England. She added that the ambition had been articulated to the York Central Partnership.

- A Member noted that there was no official strategy for York Central to be net zero. The Director Economy Regeneration and Housing noted that this would come through planning applications and she outlined the phases of engagement.
- The Head of Carbon Reduction was asked and explained that the council was a little behind with engagement. He explained that engagement was targeting minorities, young people and disabilities groups as part of Our Big Conversation, and this would take place during February and March 2022. He then explained how the phases of the economic development strategy and climate change strategy were interlinked.
- A Member asked what had been done to achieve net zero for council buildings. The Head of Climate Reduction explained that as part of public sector decarbonisation scheme grants, the council had to develop detailed decarbonisation plans and it was developing a tender specifically for the decarbonisation of buildings to help acquire funding through those grant schemes. He added in the council's portfolio of buildings it was looking at decarbonising 5-10 buildings which accounted for 80% of the council buildings carbon emissions.
- A Member asked what could be done to educate residents with gardens on planting low maintenance trees and shrubs. The Head of Carbon Reduction reported that the council had run its free 500 Woodland Trust tree giveaway the previous week. This included a maintenance guide which would also be published on the council website. He added that there may be another opportunity for a tree giveaway later in the year,

- The Head of Carbon Reduction was asked what the timetable for the hyper hubs was and he explained that there had been issues between the council and a third party and the utility company. He added that the work should be complete in two months.
- A Member asked whether there had been any attempts to encourage private rentals and landlords to have energy efficient standards. The Head of Carbon Reduction noted that private landlords were very hard to reach and he added that housing colleagues had received funding to enforce the minimum energy efficiency standards. The Director Economy Regeneration and Housing added that in addition to this, the council was in receipt of government funding for retrofitting for the private rental sector. She added that the licensing system for HMOs would help with standards for this.
- In response to a question regarding flooding upstream, the The Director Economy Regeneration and Housing noted that York has been picked by DEFRA as one of 25 projects nationally to look at flooding and as part of this they would look at the rivers Swale, Ure and Nidd, with tree planting being a part of this.
- Regarding the use of 100% renewable energy, the Head of Climate Reduction noted that at any one time the council used a power mix.

The Chair asked Members for questions to the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change. A Member noted that they would like the Executive Member to attend a meeting to explain the net zero aspect of York Central and for the committee to have information on this. A Member also asked what precisely was being cut from the climate change budget following the £100k budget reduction in climate change.

Members then;

Resolved: That the update on carbon reduction be noted.

Reason: In order to be kept up to date on carbon reduction.

## 16. York Central Update

Members considered a report that provided an update on the Highway Authority Regulatory Role in York Central. The York Central Development was moving into a key highway infrastructure delivery phase with the expectation that key elements of the new highway would be operational by 2024. The main highway infrastructure will be delivered by Homes England/Network Rail acting as the developer.

The York Central Highway Authority Lead explained that the York Central transport network should be fully complete by 2025, and as a result of a funding change the council would act as the Highways Authority as Homes England and Network Rail had responsibility for the transport infrastructure. He outlined the role of the council as the Highways Authority. He explained that the main transport impacts were covered by the outline planning application and there were changes to the highway network at the site to make sure that the site was as sustainable as it could be. The Executive Member for Transport advised that the infrastructure was being led by Homes England and Network Rail with the council as the Highways Authority. The Director Economy Regeneration and Housing and the York Central Highway Authority Lead noted the additions to the spine roads.

The Director Economy Regeneration and Housing and the York Central Highway Authority Lead and Executive Member were then asked the following questions by Members:

- A Member asked where the decision making regarding the spine roads (including use by buses and cycles) lay. It was explained that this was established by the outline planning permission, which the Highways Authority was involved in. As part of this, the Highways Authority had the ability to look at the way traffic was operating.
- A Member asked about the spine road being a through route and the Executive Member for Transport explained outlined the detail of the spine road included in the outline planning permission.

[At this point, Cllr Pearson declared an interest as an employee of the operator of York Station].

- A Member asked whether there had been any thinking on the repercussions of the integrated rail plan. The Director Economy Regeneration and Housing explained that the work on the station frontage was in progress and the connectivity with York Central was good. She added that the case for development remained. The Director Transport, Environment and Planning added that the immediate impact

of the integrated rail plan was not on the development and he noted the impact of the missing detail about what investment was coming instead of HS2. The Executive Member for Transport added that at a meeting of the Transport for the North (TfN) regarding HS2, there was widespread concern regarding the impact on different sections of the network, and regarding York Central, the new access and station frontage would connect with York Central.

Members then;

Resolved: That the update on Highway Authority Regulatory Role in York Central be noted.

Reason: In order to be kept up to date on Highway Authority Regulatory Role in York Central.

## **17. Work Plan**

Members considered the Work Plan for the remainder of the 2021-22 municipal year. The Democracy was asked and undertook to check the status of scrutiny task and finish groups with the statutory scrutiny officer and Monitoring Officer.

Members discussed and agreed the following agenda items for future meetings:

29 March 2022 (Forum):

To receive a verbal update on major projects including:

- Castle Gateway
- Guildhall
- York Station frontage

26 April 2022:

1. Make It York
2. Q3 Finance Monitor
3. Plans for net zero at York Central (Executive Member for Environment and Climate change to be invited)
4. Review Work Plan

Next Forum meeting:

Extension of Park and Ride timings

Bus Service Improvement Plan

Car Parking Update

Items for 2021/22 Municipal Year:

Bus Improvement Plan (to include bus operators and possibly a Scrutiny commissioned slot)

Park and Ride update (possible September meeting)

Resolved: That the work plan be updated to reflect the above change.

Reason: In order to have an up to date work plan.

Cllr G Norman, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.56 pm].