
Meeting	Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	24 November 2020
Present	Councillors Kilbane (Chair), Daubeney (Vice-Chair), Baker, Douglas, Pearson, Hollyer and Hook
Apologies	Councillor D Taylor

1. Declarations of Interest

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 discloseable pecuniary interest that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. In respect of agenda item 5 [York Station Frontage] Cllr Pearson declared a non-prejudicial interest as an employee of LNER. Cllr Hook declared a personal non-prejudicial interest as the third member of her support bubble worked for Network Rail. Cllr Kilbane declared a non-prejudicial business interest as the landlord of a business interest who also owned Cycle Heaven at the railway station. He further noted that Members of the Committee also sitting on Planning Committee may look at a planning application for the station frontage and he expressed caution about this. There were no further declarations of interest.

2. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been 4 speakers registered to speak under the council's public participation scheme on item 5 [York Station Frontage].

Tony May spoke on behalf of York Civic Trust who were concerned about the failure to meet improvements in terms of sustainable transport. They questioned how the inclusion of long stay parking aided the council target of being carbon neutral by 2030 and suggested that the council needed to reduce car usage, introduce a bus interchange. He asked that the planning application be deferred until the design issues had been addressed.

Dave Merrett spoke on behalf of York Environment Forum, who welcomed the wish to change and improve the front of the station. He noted concern about the retrograde public transport proposals and additional multi storey car park (MSCP). He suggested that the proposal had been developed in isolation to the York Central proposal, Local Plan and Local Transport Plan.

He proposed that the council pause the current plans and include a bus interchange.

Alan Robinson spoke on behalf of York Bus Forum. The Forum urged the need for better public transport and had identified a number of improvements to reduce carbon emissions. This included improvements to the pedestrian experience, provision for buses with the inclusion of a bus interchange. They asked that the application be deferred to allow further discussion on the bus interchange.

Martin Higginson, Co-Chair of the York Civic Trust Public Transport Sub Group made a number of points in relation to the station frontage proposals which included the need for a bus interchange, clear signage, and for all park and ride services to stop at the station.

3. Q1 Finance and Performance Monitor

The Committee received the Quarter 1 Finance and Performance Monitor. Annex A of the report detailed the Economy and Place Core Indicators and Annex B detailed the Scrutiny Performance Scorecard. The Finance Manager, Assistant Director Transport, Highways and Environment and the Corporate Director Economy and Place were in attendance to present the report. The Finance Manager outlined the report, highlighting shortfalls in income. In response to questions from Members they explained:

- In relation to support for COVID, the council had received £12.6million from the government for general support and would receive three quarters of lost income.
- A report on support to businesses would be considered by the Executive in December.
- Support for Make it York (MiY) would not be included in the income compensation scheme and would come from general grants from the government.
- The number of planning applications had reduced in Q1 because of lockdown but had since, and there was strong confidence in the housing market in York.
- There was capacity in the planning department to process the backlog in planning applications.
- Road repairs were being maintained and the workforce was commended on its support.
- How road maintenance was planned to reach a balance of prolonging the lifespan of roads and repairing the poorest roads.
- The highways investment plan was progressing and would be updated and take to the Executive.
- The statistics on missed bin collections was clarified.

- The loss of parking revenue and the investment in electric vehicle charging in council car parks.
- The quarterly report to the Decision Session of the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning would include a detailed set of indicators for measuring inequality.

Resolved: That the latest finance and performance position be noted.

Reason: In order to be updated on the latest finance and performance.

4. Economic Strategy and Partnership

At the Decision Session of the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning on 21 October 2020, the Executive Member received a report detailing the revised approach to the Economic Strategy and Partnership. One of the recommendations from that report was to submit the document to Scrutiny for further review and to receive comments from Scrutiny before the next stage in the strategy's development. The Corporate Director Economy and Place, Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning, Head of Economic Growth and Interim Director of Place were in attendance to present the report and answer Member questions.

The Head of Economic Growth outlined the report presented at the Decision Session on 21 October explaining how COVID-19 had impacted the development of economic strategy and improved engagement and partnership work with businesses. He updated Members on the work undertaken as part of inclusive growth.

In response to Member questions officers explained that:

- There was engagement with businesses across the City of York area. The council worked with a range of organisations including Indie York and York Retail Forum. It was noted that 1100 micro grants had been given to businesses across the city.
- There had been discussions with the Leeds City Region Inclusive Growth Panel about the inclusion of different groups. The council was trying to find different ways of working with the two universities and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The two universities had a permanent role in business engagement with the council and had been providing guidance on the recovery strategy as part of the economic strategy. There was also engagement from the TUC on the skills panel. It was noted that these groups were formally constituted.
- The introduction of new ways of working following changes in working patterns and arrangements during COVID-19 had led to looking at the

new office offer with spaces for meeting on offer to address changes in working practices

- The targets for inward investment were primarily from the UK.
- Just transition was parallel to inclusive growth and was about making sure that transition was fair to all sections of society.
- An update on York Business week was given. The events during the week had been well attended as they were held online. Make it York (MiY) and partners were thanked for their input on this. The Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning thanked the Head of Economic Growth for his work on York Business Week.
- There was a need to respond to the needs of for a sustainable economy as well as good incomes for people in a variety of jobs in the city.
- An update on the ten year recovery plan and impact of Brexit was given.
- The biotech, agritech, and green economy were generating new skills and new jobs that didn't yet exist. The impact of devolution on this was noted as well as the impact of the component parts of devolution were acknowledged. The role of the council in supporting businesses develop 21st century jobs was noted. This included working with businesses on the circular economy.

Resolved: That revised approach to the Economic Strategy and Partnership be noted.

Reason: In order to provide feedback on the revised approach to the Economic Strategy and Partnership

5. York Station Frontage

Committee Members considered a report that would be received by the Executive on Thursday 26 November 2020 regarding York Railway Station Gateway project. The Executive report requested Members approval of a phased delivery approach and approval for a series of recommendations that allowed the project to progress.

The Corporate Director of Housing, Economy and Place, the Assistant Director of Transport, Highways and Environment, the Capital Programme Manager and the Executive Member for Transport were all in attendance to present the report and answer any questions.

The Assistant Director highlighted the background to the scheme and confirmed the report was setting out the delivery methodology and sought early funding for the enabling works for the project. He confirmed engagement continued with specific groups, including the Civic Trust and the Bus Forum and that Officers continued to work through the formal planning process to address the details that emerged.

Members noted that this scheme required extensive partnership working between the Council and the rail industry and that the improved bus arrangements had been supported by bus operators.

The Capital Programme Manager gave a summary of the report and highlighted the overall objectives. He confirmed that the Masterplan for the full scheme was first submitted in 2018 and then following public and stakeholder consultation an updated Masterplan was submitted in March 2019. He addressed the five Packages of work, as indicated in Table 1 in paragraph 21 of the report, and Members noted that the total cost of works was £26.6m, which would be funded through a combination of awards. The Capital Programme Manager went on to highlight the proposed recommendations to Executive, as indicated in Annex A to the report, and Members questions around funding, the Council's carbon zero commitment, an integrated transport approach, cycling provision, car parking, public engagement and the importance of the station and the railway industry were answered.

Members were informed that the York Railway Station Gateway scheme comprised a coordinated, multi-modal package of interventions in and around York Railway Station. The scheme complemented and connected the proposals being progressed to the west and east of the station and would transform the Station Gateway to York. The improvements to sustainable means of transport and public realm infrastructure provided by the scheme would improve both access to public transport in and around the City as well as improving public transport links to the rest of the country, which would lead to economic growth and wealth.

Officers and the Executive Member than answered questions raised by the speakers where it was noted that the proposals did increase bus stop capacity significantly and that the delivery of a multi-storey car park would be led, funded and delivered by Network Rail. Officers confirmed they would continue to negotiate with stakeholders to deliver a project that best supported the Council Plan.

The Chair thanked Officers for their report and update.

Resolved: That the Executive report and its annexes be noted.

Reason: In order to be updated on the progress of the proposals for the station frontage.

Suggestions for Corporate Scrutiny work planning

Members made a number of suggestions to feed into the corporate scrutiny work planning for the committee. These included:

- The formalisation of organisations in the inclusive growth element of the economic strategy
- Increasing the value in jobs in lower paid sectors such as retail, hospitality and care sectors
- It was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair would discuss the inclusion of different groups (for example advocacy groups, Citizens Advice Bureau) in the inclusive growth strategy

Resolved: That the above suggestions be fed into corporate scrutiny work planning

Reason: In order to keep committee work planning up to date

Cllr P Kilbane, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.54 pm].