

Report for Communities and Environment Policy and Scrutiny Committee 27th
June 2016

The forthcoming year

1. Flooding and Flood Defences

The aftermath of the 'Boxing Day' 2015 Floods of 627 properties (453 residential including council homes and 20 travellers pitches and 174 businesses) will be a major issue for the forthcoming year with work through the;

- 1) Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee which oversees the spending of DEFRA funds to the region for flood defence
- 2) North Yorkshire Flood Partnership – which brings together the Inland Drainage Boards, Yorkshire Water, Environment Agency and York and North Yorkshire Councils (representative members and officers)
- 3) The work on the Foss Barrier is key to protecting large sections of the east and north of the city, and has obtained £17 million of special funding.
- 4) The additional £45 million for funding in York has been the subject of development of plans by the Environment Agency working with officers to review work which will defend homes and properties from flooding. The council supported the two days on 20th and 21st May where the initial plans, and independent review of the Foss Barrier failure were exhibited to members of the public. This information is on the council website for those who were unable to attend.

The areas being considered in the improvements plan are Bishopthorpe, Clementhorpe, Clifton & Rawcliffe, Foss, Fulford and Germany Beck, Holgate Beck pumping station, Naburn and Acaster Malbis, Osbaldwick and Tang Hall, Poppleton and City Centre. Each of these will involve considerable consultation with councillors, and the local community, and I shall be engaging alongside council officers in ensuring that the city gets maximum use from the available funding. One area of concern that I have expressed to Ministers is the volume of partnership funding which will be required by DEFRA from the city towards the £45 million investment – this national policy is that it is not less than 15% and could be required against £37.2 million of the £45 million.



2. Resilience and surface water drainage

The revised gulley cleaning policy has added roads to the annual gulley cleaning list and I am working with officers to ensure surface water drainage issues are followed through and a dynamic list of areas under investigation. If councillors know of locations where there are ongoing issues I would be grateful if they could check with the list from the March 7th Executive Member Decision Session as new areas continue to be identified.

So far Resilience grant data shows

- i. 124 applications received by City of York Council
- ii. £338,815.90 of which 74 are approved
- iii. £136,593.10 (23 fully paid and 42 interim payments)

A support officer has been jointly funded with the Two Ridings Charity to help residents to complete the resilience forms. Please could councillors let me know if there are any problems with getting these forms completed (there is a parallel process with Make it York for businesses which has not had the call for resources that had been anticipated).

3. Waste Services

The review of service provision continues as part of the overall review of Street Based Services which will be completed during the summer, this includes:

- **Vehicle procurement** – replacement of the old ‘fame’ vehicles used to collect recycling, works are ongoing to identify the most appropriate vehicle available and procurement will commence by the end of July, with an expected timescale of up to 9 months. This has been as a response to concern from residents about times when recycling is co-mingled due to the ‘fame’ vehicle being off the road. In this case the recycling is taken for sorting and is not landfilled.
- **Optimisation of refuse and recycling collection rounds** – All our collection rounds are being reviewed and with the use of existing software will be optimised to ensure we are undertaking the work in the most efficient manner.
- **St Nicholas Field** – The current Service Level Agreement for the collection of recycling in certain areas of the city will be replaced with a tendered contract, the areas to be collected will compliment our optimisation work, the new contract will commence by April 2017. I appreciate the close working that the council has had with St Nick’s over many years
- **Working with the Business Improvement District (BID) team** – We are currently talking to the BID team regarding the trial of an improved Commercial Waste collection service; talks are at a very early stage with possible implementation of a trial in 17/18.



4. Public Realm

Again the review of service provision continues as a part of the overall review of Street Based Services mainly targeted at our work on devolved budgets, this includes:

- **Street cleansing schedules** - The introduction of new street cleansing schedules is due to commence in July, which will be trialled for three months. The new schedules reflect what is actually required in different areas of the city using the local knowledge of frontline staff, residents and councillors. Following completion of the trial, amendments will be made where required by wards within available resources.
- **Grounds maintenance** - Work continues to engage with volunteer groups to identify where and how they can assist in maintaining or where identified as being required by the local community, actually improve standards. We are in discussion with the CVS regarding the creation of a city wide volunteer “action” or project group, and / or increasing area or site based volunteering. This work will be funded from the £50k budget available to support this following the Executive Member decision session on 10th May.

5. One Planet York and Sustainability and Carbon Management

The council has set out how it will update its sustainability policies.

York has strong reasons to appreciate the impact of Climate Change through flooding and the Council has a responsibility to lead in the progression towards a sustainable use of resources based on the principle of ‘one planet living’.

On the 17th March 2016, the Executive approved the implementation of [OnePlanetYork](#) (OPY) so that sustainability is put ‘at the heart of everything we do’ and drives wider progress towards more sustainable and resilient ‘One Planet living’. The city-wide programme was officially launch on Earth Day on 22 April 2016 and a launch event held on 15 June 2016.

Actions for 2016 /17

The council will play a key role in facilitating and supporting this programme in the early stages by:

1. Compiling the OnePlanetYork Prospectus, vision and 10 principles,
2. Secure endorsements of the OPY vision from 12 influential York organisations,
3. Showcase city leadership to inspire others and attract further endorsements,
4. Publish guides and resources,
5. Regular reporting, and
6. Explore city governance.



The Council also approved becoming a OnePlanetCouncil and will adopt a new strengthened approach to sustainability by:

1. The creation of a new OnePlanetCouncil policy and the adoption of 10 key principles,
2. New OnePlanetCouncil Action Plan,
3. Series of tools to support officers to embed OP principles and to deliver organisational change,
4. New Carbon and Resource Smart Council Management Programme – focusing on carbon and resource efficiency,
5. New internal communications,
6. New regular reporting on progress, and
7. New internal OPC Board to govern the council programme.

There are savings which can be made in terms of energy and water use which ensure the utilisation of resources for frontline services, which also in this case make a significant impact in reducing carbon emissions, and the use of limited resources.

I have asked officers to bring forward plans to develop a Carbon Management Programme which includes water usage but which will have measurable outcomes broken down by year. This will build on the success of the council's first Carbon Management Programme set in 2008. This met its goal of reducing carbon emissions by 25% by having a sound business plan with stretch targets built in.

Update July 2016

The following will be presented at the 1/8/2016 Executive Member for Environment Session:

1. Draft OnePlanetCouncil Policy
2. Draft OnePlanetCouncil Action Plan – incorporating
- complete draft of the new Carbon and Resource Smart Council Management Plan
3. New Integrated Impact Assessment tool for all new council projects
4. Updates on renewable energy and district heating

There are opportunities for the council to encourage the local generation of renewable energy appropriate to the location. This can be either on council land/property or through new developments. I have asked that a report comes to the Executive this autumn to progress this work including feasibility studies.

Renewable Power

The council in 2015 was exploring opportunities for solar energy generation across its estate, focussing mainly on larger sites. However, the Government in August 2015 consulted on changes to the Renewable Obligations and Feed-In-Tariffs. As a result CYC suspended work until the result of the consultation was known. The Government implemented the proposed changes in the winter of 2015 and therefore our schemes were no longer financially viable in the short term. CYC continues to look at smaller scale opportunities across its estate and is part of a regional [ELENA](#) (European Local ENergy Assistance) bid, led by Leeds City Region (LCR), to the European Investment Bank for technical assistance on a range of low carbon opportunities across the city, including council, wider public estate and community schemes (estimated support worth ~£1million for York). If successful, such support will be available in York from autumn 2016 – 2019. Clearly this is under threat due to the EU referendum result.

I have been in discussions with York Community Energy to review areas where the council can work in partnership.

District Heating

CYC has secured £50k from regional and central government to carry out a technical, low carbon district heat network feasibility study for York Central.

Businesses

Through LCR, a bid for ERDF funding to support SME's in the city become resource efficient through energy, water and waste efficiency support has been submitted. Subject to a successful bid, this support is likely to be available to SMEs in York in autumn 2016.

Energy Switching

Over a 1000 homes have now switched energy suppliers through the Big Community Switch scheme (via CYCs partner iChoosr). These people who have switched have saved up to £200 off their energy bills. CYC is also exploring options to provide a greater level of support to vulnerable, fuel poor residents and those on pre-payment meters. We are currently looking at various options including an option run by Leeds City Council (to be launched in summer 2016). Leeds City Council has identified an opportunity to form an energy services company (ESCo) in partnership with an existing licenced energy supplier. The council can use this ESCo to sell gas and electricity to domestic customers. The main advantage of this ESCo arrangement is that the council can offer lower cost energy tariffs to all Leeds residents with fair, consistent, and transparent pricing policies. It also has targeted support for the fuel poor and pre-payment customers. This could save the average Leeds resident between £100 and £200 annually. They are now offering this service to other authorities across Yorkshire and Humber. CYC is reviewing this option to ensure any service offered would offer a fair price for customers in York and is transparent and would continue to offer competitive rates whilst helping the fuel poorest and those on pre-payment meters. A paper on this work and the results of the review will come to a future Executive Member for Environment session.

Green Jobs Task Force

This group has been set up to explore opportunities to create greater levels of green jobs and training opportunities across the city. An action plan is being developed and will focus on high-value job creation.

Cllr Andrew Waller