

Cabinet

1st October 2013

Report of the Leader of City of York Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Customer Services

Delivering for the People of York

Response to the Peer Review, Residents' Big York Survey and Staff Survey

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to set out how the Council will respond to the feedback it has received from the LGA Peer Review, Big York Survey and its Staff Survey. The report sets out what specific actions the Council is going to take to enable the council, residents and communities to work together as equal partners to meet their future needs and priorities.

Background

2. During the summer, City of York Council undertook three important reviews.
3. The first was the LGA Peer Review that took place in June 2013. The purpose of the Peer Review was to subject City of York Council to external challenge by others within the Local Government Sector. This process included a validation of the systems and processes we have in place, but more importantly served as a mechanism to help us identify further improvements. The conclusions reached by the Peer Review, led by Dave Smith, Chief Executive Officer at Sunderland City Council are attached at Annex 1.
4. The second review was the Big York survey. This was part of an annual process to judge residents' views on the performance of the

Council. Around 3700 residents completed the survey, well over double the numbers in 2012. A summary of the Big York Survey can be found at Annex 2. The results are important in capturing the priorities for those living in the city.

5. The third review was the bi-annual staff survey. Again there was an increase in the proportion of staff completing the survey and it also provides an analysis of the work demands and performance of staff. The staff survey has also provided an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the programmes put in place to develop the skills of staff through the Council Plan objective to improve Core Capabilities.

6. What the Reviews Said

| Review | Strengths | Challenges and Areas for Improvement |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Peer Challenge | <p>Excellent partnership working</p> <p>Solid performance in Children’s Services with educational attainment good at all levels, including being in the top 20% at Key stage 4, and a strong education partnership</p> <p>One of the first Fairness Commissions in the country</p> <p>Super Connected City Status for broadband and Wi-Fi</p> <p>The relocation of Hiscox Insurance to York</p> <p>The GeniUS web forum</p> <p>The successful build and relocation of the new headquarters at West Offices. Clear, well reviewed two-year financial strategy.</p> | <p>Increased demand alongside reducing grant base necessitates a more transformational approach.</p> <p>Better alignment of budgets with council priority areas.</p> <p>Needs of residents needs to be more explicit in council strategies and plans.</p> <p>Need to develop our neighbourhood engagement and community capacity building.</p> <p>Future of Adult Social Care crucial to the Council.</p> <p>Be prepared to move from traditional solutions to embrace new and untested ways of working.</p> |

| Review | Strengths | Challenges and Areas for Improvement |
|------------------------|---|---|
| | Strong, visible leadership recognised by internal and external partners. | |
| Big York Survey | <p>Overall satisfaction with quality of life in the city high (90% of residents satisfied or very satisfied).</p> <p>Compares favourably with national average for quality of life (72%).</p> <p>Targeted work on job prospects, housing availability and opportunities for young people is having a positive impact.</p> | <p>Slight reduction year on year with overall satisfaction with the council.</p> <p>Clean and well maintained streets, good traffic flow and health services are becoming more important improvement areas for residents.</p> |
| Staff Survey | Overall results are positive with four out of seven categories of assessment showing positive improvement (control of work, management and peer support and working together) | Scores have deteriorated on areas related to staff workload reflecting the recent reductions in staff and increase in workload. |

Peer Challenge

Scope and focus

7. The Peer Challenge Team was asked to provide an external 'health-check' of the Council by considering the following:
 - City of York Council's understanding of the local context and priority setting: Does the council understand its local context and has it established a clear set of priorities?

- Financial planning and viability: Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?
 - Political and managerial leadership: Does the council have effective political and managerial leadership and is it a constructive partnership?
 - Governance and decision-making: Are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place to respond to key challenges and manage change, transformation and disinvestment?
 - To what extent is City of York Council a responsive and innovative organisation?
 - Is the approach to community infrastructure and capacity building working?
8. The peer team prepared for the peer challenge by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the Council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent four days onsite in York, during which they spoke to more than 150 people including a range of council staff together with councillors, external partners and stakeholders. The team gathered information and views from 50 meetings, visits to key sites in the area and after a period of research and reading. Collectively the team spent more than 220 hours to determine their findings.

The Findings of the Peer Review

9. The findings of the Peer Review, which are largely positive, highlighted that the Council is in a much better place than it was two to three years ago, with rapid improvement seen in a range of areas. It recognised that there is clear ambition amongst councillors and officers to do the best for both the people of York and the Council. The Leader and Chief Executive provide visible leadership and lead from the front, and their ambition for York is clearly recognised by partners and staff. The review recognised that the Council was aware of the challenges ahead and the organisation is starting to prepare for them, building on a strong desire for improvement and innovation.

Strengths

10. The Peer Review endorsed the strategy driving the Council's main priority of supporting the creation of jobs and growing York's economy. It supported, on an evidential basis, the decision of the

Council to establish its main allegiance with the Leeds City Region LEP. It identified that this approach is widely recognised and applauded by external partners, who describe it as a brave and necessary step in order to gain maximum opportunities for York. It noted that the Council would still seek out partnership opportunities with others where there are shared objectives. It was recognised that a thriving city with economic growth would provide opportunities for those trying to secure employment and would also open up opportunities to address housing shortages.

11. In terms of Financial Strategy, the Peer Review recognised that the 2 year budget is clearly set out, and is balanced, and it appears that opportunities are being maximised, including building up the council tax base in the long term. This is significant for CYC as it has an historic low council tax base and one of the lowest Band D council tax charges in the country. The Peer Review noted that the 2 year strategy had been subjected to a healthy degree of review and challenge. The capital strategy also was determined to be soundly based and included details of plant and machinery investments, as well as public realm improvements.
12. The Peer Review identified that the leadership provided by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive is strong, visible and widely commended both internally and externally. Their working relationship is positive and constructive, and both are energised about York and its future. Partners speak highly of being able to engage with the high level ambition of growth for York, and the Peer Challenge Team heard very positive views about the move to West Offices and improved dialogue with and between Council departments as a result. It was also noted that Cabinet members clearly have a good grip of the priorities and agendas affecting their portfolios, and a clear understanding of the priorities in the council plan.
13. The willingness of the Council to continue to change and improve was evident during the Peer Review, with staff and members highly positive about their roles and clearly motivated by working for the council. Favourable comparisons were made by staff about working in York rather than in other councils in the region, and some partners gave favourable comparisons about their working relationship with CYC.

14. The Peer Review found that equality and diversity has a high profile and is becoming mainstreamed in how the Council does its business, as well as being championed by a wide range of individuals, both members and officers, across the organisation. Consideration is also being given to how this will affect York's communities in the future, and how the Council will support this social change. The Council's intention to provide more pitches for the gypsy and traveller community, and the agreed anti-poverty strategy were cited as good examples of the mainstreaming of equality and diversity.

Challenges

15. The Peer Review identified many tangible achievements that have led to greater confidence, both within the Council and externally, raising the profile and standing of the Council in the eyes of others. However, the Peer Review mechanism was introduced by Government with the specific purpose of supporting councils to identify improvements. The following paragraphs set out the main improvement opportunities for City of York Council.
16. The Peer Review identified that the combination of increased demand for services alongside a reducing grant base from Government necessitated a more transformational approach to the design and delivery of services. Despite the success of a number of individual transformational projects evidenced by the Council, the Peer Challenge Team identified a significant risk to future projects. This risk was based on the lack of a council-wide approach to change and transformation. The peer challenge team recommended that a strategic transformation capacity be created, supported by a refreshed community engagement strategy. In this way, the organisation could jointly co-design services for residents in a way that would be able to meet their needs and be financially affordable.
17. The Peer Review also recognised the ambition that underpinned the Council Plan but considered that there needed to be further prioritisation of the plan. The priorities and opportunities in 2013 - 2015 were different to those in 2011 when the plan was approved and the Council should refine its proposals to ensure that they are deliverable and have impact. It was also recognised that the needs of residents needed to be more explicit in council strategies and plans.

18. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had been successful in delivering a balanced budget but the Peer Review demonstrated that there was little alignment between those areas that were considered a council priority and where budget reductions were made. There were examples where budget savings were being made to high priority services. The Peer Challenge Team recommended that in addition to better aligning priorities and budgets, the current year should be reviewed to determine the budget impact on the Council's longer term ambitions for community capacity and co-delivery of services. The longer term council budget strategy is focussed on generating income from growth, the Peer Challenge Team recommended that more investment be considered to create an environment for business to grow.
19. The Peer Review acknowledged that the future of Adult Social Care is absolutely crucial to the Council's and its partners' budgets. In York, it is anticipated that the number of older people in the city will grow by 40% by 2020. Issues such as assurance on transformation plans, quality and safety of care need to be planned for, as these will have an adverse impact on the budget if not handled carefully. They suggested that broader understanding and ownership of the challenges and complexities around Health and Adult Social Care was needed, so that it is not regarded as a departmental, but as a corporate and council-wide issue.
20. In light of the recommendations above, the Peer Challenge Team also considered that the Council reconsider the over-arching approach to neighbourhood engagement and capacity building. This was to ensure that relationships with communities are maintained as the council moves to a new service delivery model and relationship with the city. The Peer Review identified that the need to balance the budget has inevitably led to cuts in traditional, universal neighbourhood service areas as finances become more stretched. For example, as significant cuts have been made in area management, play development, and community development; there is a danger that the consequences of this may run counter to building community capacity to engage in co-production and design. The Peer Challenge Team thought that the council's approach to the transfer of assets to communities needed further development so that stakeholders and staff have a better understanding of what it means, and how it will work. Finally, it was recognised that improvements be made to how the Council consults with residents and communities. There was a perception from some communities

that they were neither properly informed nor able to influence decision making.

The key improvement opportunities for the Council were identified as:

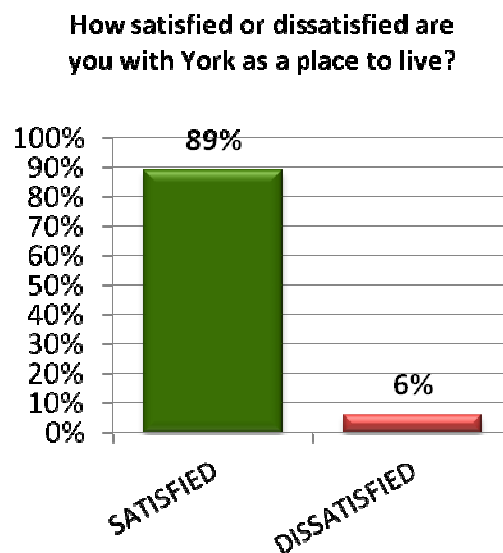
- A re-evaluation of priorities relative to the over-arching priority of economic growth
- Be more pro-active in determining non-priorities
- Create opportunities to share thinking and understanding about what the council's role and function will be in the future, including where and how transformation will take place
- Create corporate resources to programme manage your ambition
- Consider developing a mechanism for the exchange of best practice and learning across services
- Sustaining and encouraging member engagement in developing the new approach to transformation
- Review Overview and Scrutiny's role in supporting policy development Be prepared to do things differently, moving away from traditional solutions to embrace new and untested ways of working.

Big York Survey

21. The Big York Survey was completed by around 2700 residents, more than double the responses to the 2012 survey. A more extensive summary of the survey can be found at Annex 2.
22. Despite the challenging economic climate, the 2013 Big York Survey (BYS) highlights the high quality of life that York still offers to the majority of its residents. This year's BYS shows that overall satisfaction with York as a place continues to be very high with nearly 90% satisfied or very satisfied with the city overall. This value compares well against national average (from comparable surveys) of just 72% for overall resident satisfaction with their city/town as a place to live.
23. York is a city with high expectations. We know that residents pay a premium to live here through higher than average rental and house prices. They demand good schools, transport, green spaces, clean streets and wish to see the city's heritage assets maintained. It will always be a challenge to meet the increasing expectations of our

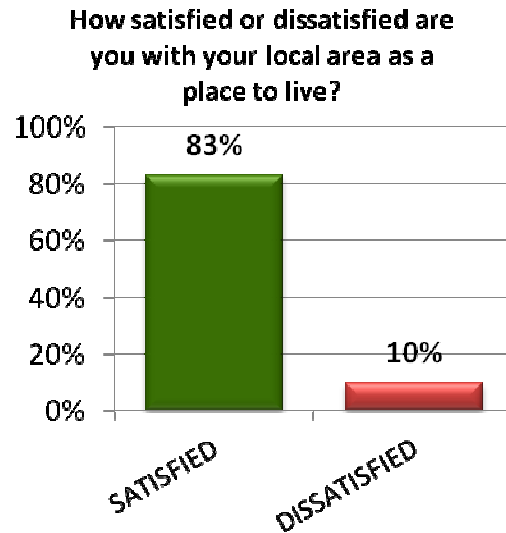
residents but the council needs to demonstrate that it is trying to achieve them.

24. The survey makes clear that there is confidence in the work we have done in partnership with North Yorkshire Police to make our city safe. There is also strong evidence that residents understand the need to protect the city’s environment and are embracing more sustainable transport methods and are engaging with us to improve energy use and recycling. However the following paragraphs illustrate the areas where attention needs to be urgently focused.
25. The survey does show a slight reduction (3%) in the overall satisfaction level when compared with 2012 BYS results. In a year where we have seen the introduction of the government’s welfare reforms, continually stretched household budgets and increased pressure on local services, it is not altogether surprising to see some reduction in resident satisfaction.



GRAPH 1 – overall satisfaction

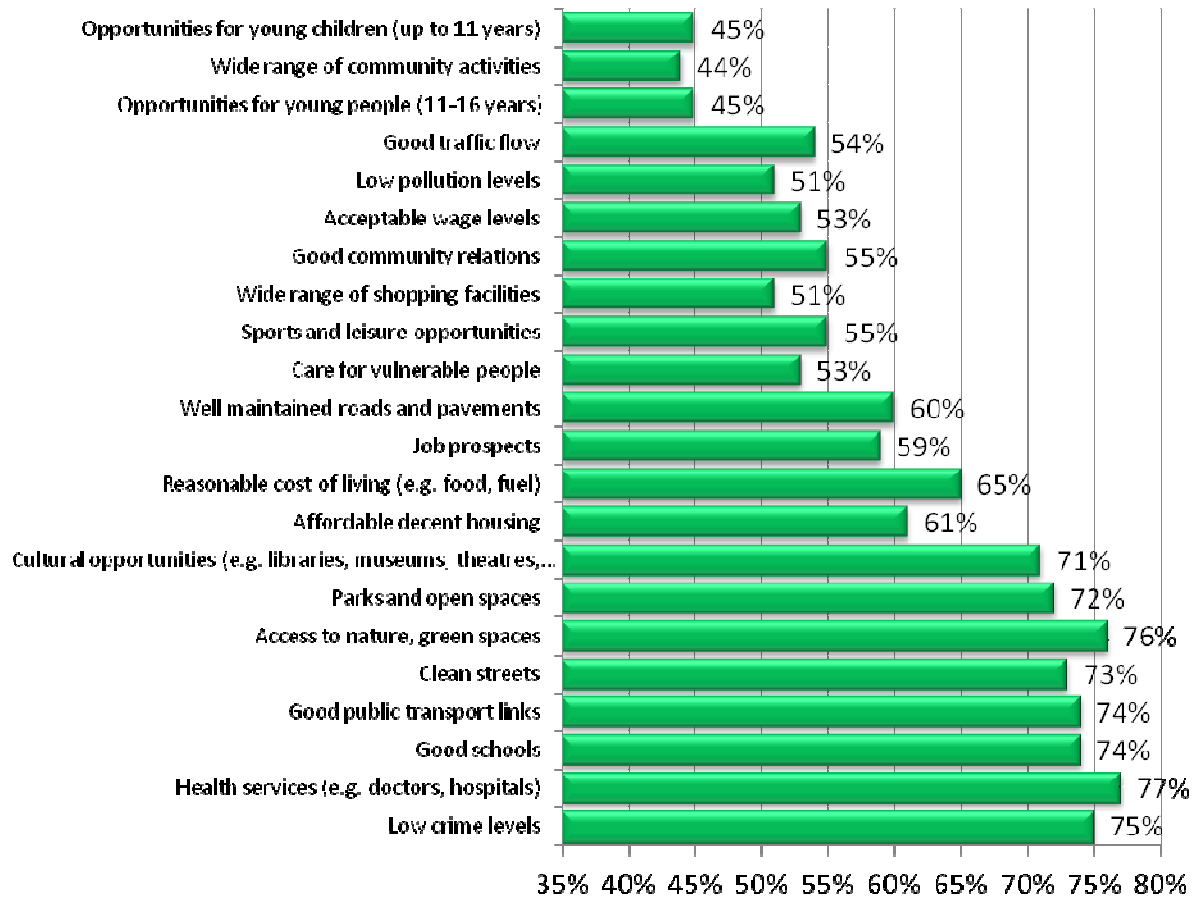
26. Within this data is a more notable reduction in numbers of residents satisfied specifically with their local area as a place to live (now at 83% compared to 91% in 2012) highlighting that whilst people continue to value the city overall, there is a sense that there are areas for improvement at a local level.



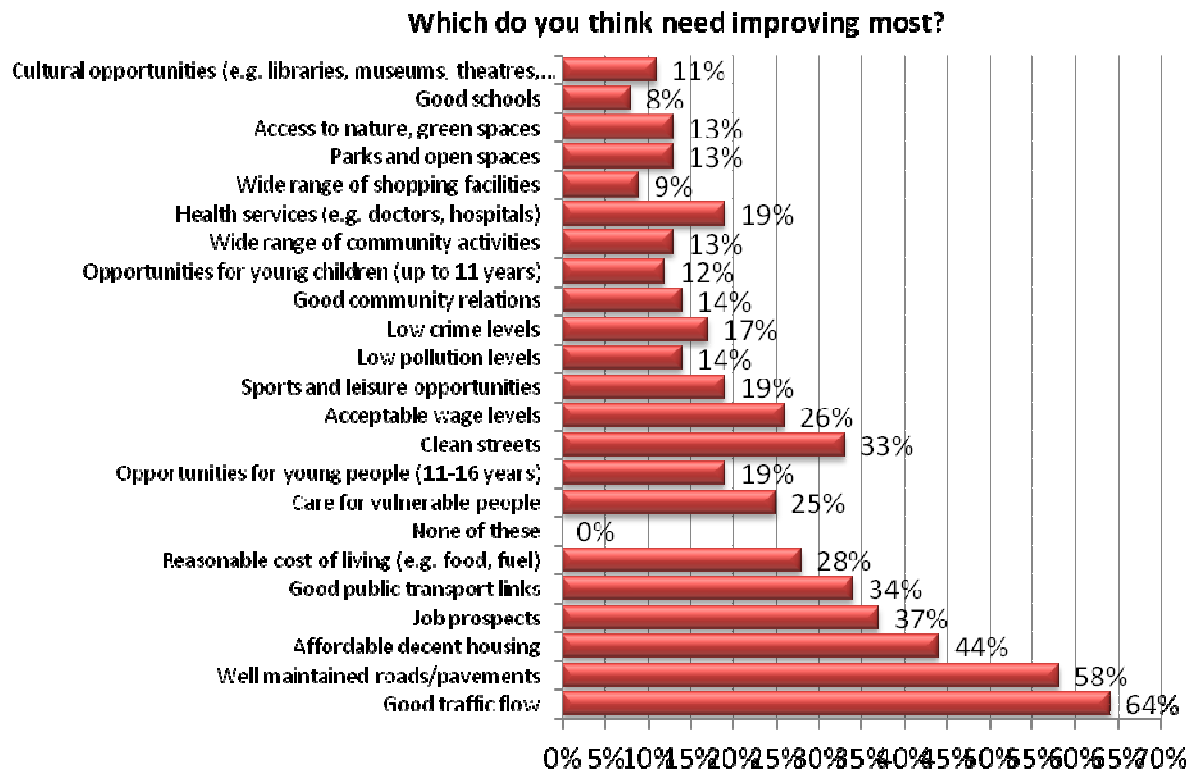
GRAPH 2 – local area satisfaction

27. The detailed results of the BYS also tell us what residents think is important and where they see a clear need for improvement. There are subtle changes in what residents think is most important to them since the last survey was undertaken but marked changes in what they think needs improving. We are now seeing a new set of priority improvement areas being highlighted through the survey, which corresponds with more anecdotal evidence. Later in this report are details of how the council will strengthen its work to improve the issues that residents have identified.

Which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live

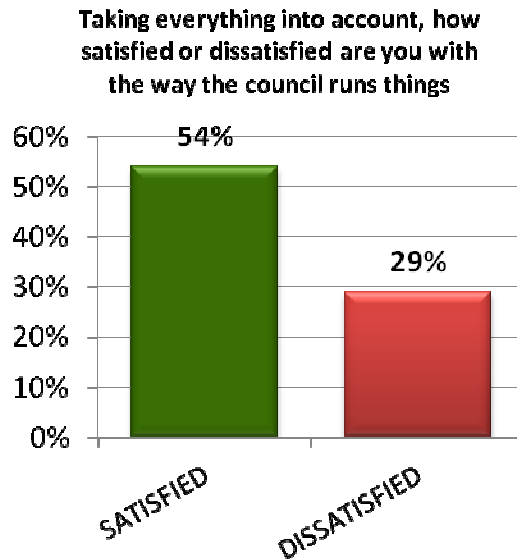


GRAPH 3 – most important features



GRAPH 4 – areas most need improving

28. The 2013 results show us that clean and maintained streets, good traffic flow and health services are becoming areas for improvement for an increasing number of residents. Previous key priority areas of job prospects, housing availability and opportunities for young people are now an improvement priority for fewer residents than in 2012, suggesting that targeted work in these areas is having a positive impact.



GRAPH 5 – satisfaction with council

29. The graph above indicates that overall satisfaction with the Council fell during the last survey. Reductions in satisfaction are consistent across the sector and do reflect the challenge of trying to meet increased demand with reduced resources. There is disaffection across the sector from residents who are concerned that councils are not providing the broad range of services that they have in the past. However, the Council has an ambition to see the vast majority of residents satisfied with the role its plays and will refocus its efforts to improve these ratings. We accept that the city needs to be cleaner and that we need to find better ways of engaging and involving residents in decisions about the city and their local areas. We need to get service delivery right first time for everyone. We also accept that customer consultation is not yet a mature enough dialogue with residents and is not inclusive enough.

City of York Council Staff Survey

30. The council undertook its bi-annual staff survey in June and July 2013. Participation in the survey increased by 5% from the previous survey and the response rate was 42%. The overall results of the staff survey are positive and do not indicate that there are significant areas of concern. Of the seven categories of assessment, four show improvement, one has remained the same and two show slightly reduced scores. The survey shows improvement in the control of work, management and peer support and the way in which staff are

working together. The score for managing change has remained the same. Given the need for effective change management skills within Local Government, work will be undertaken to improve this score. The final two categories relating to the work demands on staff have deteriorated. Given the reductions in staff and increases in many workloads, this is to be expected.

31. Overall, the staff survey shows a positive picture of a workforce who generally feel well supported in their jobs and are keen to contribute to making the organisation as good as it can be. Our transformation and change programmes will review the way that we do things to release capacity so that resources can be placed in areas of priority demand.

What conclusions can be drawn from this feedback?

32. A number of strongly interconnected messages emerge from these three key perspectives on the Council's current achievements, future priorities and capacity to deliver.
33. The overarching message is that we need to embrace transformational change – in how we operate more effectively as an organisation; in our relationship with our communities and in how we deliver services. We have the cooperative council vision. This is about making it a reality.
34. We need to really know, articulate and focus on our priorities – ensuring that they reflect community needs that we invest in achieving them and we are clear about eliminating effort on non-priorities. Listening to residents views in the Big York Survey points to a realignment of priorities to improve street cleanliness and maintenance, reduce traffic congestion and improve health services.
35. Key in both designing and delivering change is our relationship with our Communities – they are a resource that we need to harness through a different approach to community engagement which will build capacity for co-design and co-production of services. This needs to be supported by a different model of neighbourhood working.
36. We need to manage all of our resources more effectively – mobilising the community as a resource, equipping staff with a

transformation and innovation approach and aligning our budgets to our priorities.

How are we responding?

37. The Peer Review and Big York Survey highlight that in the current climate of austerity, the council needs to be realistic about what it can achieve. It is essential that resources are clearly targeted to where they are needed most to make best use of the capacity of the council and its partners. Despite the peer review having found the council's corporate health to be in pretty good shape, it is clear that a number of improvements need to be initiated. It is critical that the council set out what each of these will do and what outcomes they will deliver for our communities.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

38. As set out earlier, the Peer Review recognised the effectiveness of the Councils financial planning, and its approach to a two year budget process. However the challenges in the future, on the back of some £80m savings since 2007, mean that we need to continue to refine our approach to financial planning, and to ensure we continue to maintain of strong financial health.
39. Based upon current assumptions we are looking at savings in the region of £10m pa over coming years, and that whilst there is an expectation this will reduce to an extent post 2016/17, the scale of reduction will clearly be significant. A further more detailed report on this will come to cabinet in November. The savings for 2014/15 were set out in the February 2013 budget report, and will be reviewed and confirmed at the February 2014 budget meeting. The new challenge is to consider 2015/16 and beyond, and the Councils approach to achieving very significant savings.
40. In terms of the Councils long-term financial strategy, there is one critical strategic decision to make. That is to what extent Council views as priority the need for economic growth, and the extent to which it provides funds for the growth agenda, over and above the provision of short term services.
41. It is clear that ensuring self funding, and a successful economy, is critical to the ongoing viability of the council. In that respect, a shift in funding from day to day services, whilst initially perhaps been seen

as a cut in “frontline” services at the expense of more strategic services, may in the long term ensure much greater ongoing financial viability. To date, this has been the approach of the current administration.

42. Evidence shows that this is still the right course of action. A thriving local economy with a 1% increase in business rates, 1% increase in council tax base (i.e. additional properties) 1% increase in car parking income and 1% reduction in council tax benefit payments (through reduced claims) would, over a 10 year period, create an annual increase in resources of £11m per annum. A declining local economy with a 1% increase in unemployment, a static council tax base and 1% fall in business rate/car parking income would cost the council £4m per annum. It is a simplified calculation but it illustrates that pursuing a growth agenda has a clear significant financial return for the Council and that it will remain the priority objective over the next two years.
43. The second overriding Council objective will be to secure excellent outcomes for the more vulnerable across our city. Whether that be those who require Housing, Adult Social Care, Children’s Services or Health Services, the council will continue to invest in initiatives that deliver quality services for these individuals and communities.
44. However the budget process needs to be re-aligned to ensure we are able to both meet the challenging budget reductions that will be needed, and continue to invest in priority areas. Over recent years, budget reductions have been made in a fairly even way across services based on a percentage reduction in budget, albeit in some areas lower reductions have been accepted, recognising a need to protect and to invest in certain priority areas. In future it is proposed that the budget process will involve a three strand approach :-
45. Council Wide Efficiency Target – This will be a general 2% (£4m) efficiency target for all services to reflect the work that should be undertaken each year to improve the cost effectiveness of services. Service Managers will be expected to work with their staff, residents and portfolio holders to identify opportunities to reduce cost, improve income, and remove duplication in service delivery. These should be efficiencies that do not have significant direct impact on services to residents.

46. Priority Based Budgeting – The peer Review recognised that the Council had disinvested in some services but that the financial challenge meant that more needed to be considered in addition to radically reducing service levels in some areas. There has been some debate in York about the services that are not a priority and how they could be delivered without council funding. This is a challenge that many other authorities have faced and it is considered that around £3m pa in 2015/16 and continuing beyond this at a similar level will need to be found in council budgets through priority based budgeting. It is recognised that work with communities and partners will be essential in identifying opportunities for others to get involved in service delivery where it is unaffordable for the council to do.
47. Transformation Programme – a further £3-4m budget saving in 2015/16 will need to be achieved through a new transformation programme. The programme will need to continue to deliver similar savings post 2015/16. The Peer Review recognised that the council needed to establish a strong and coordinated approach to change. It recognised that to ensure that services are fit for the future and to meet the current needs of residents, there has to be a fundamental redesign of processes and systems. The council understands that to achieve the very best outcomes for residents it has to transform the nature and delivery of services.
48. It is anticipated that the approach detailed above will ensure that council budgets are targeted to priority areas of service. It will also ensure that budgets are balanced and that the foundations for further growth are built.

Transformation Programme

49. The Transformation Programme will support the council to achieve its budget savings but that will be just one outcome from its creation. Its main purpose is to reshape council services in a way that meets the current and future needs of residents. Its high level objectives are to -
- Increase quality of services for customers
 - Improve process efficiencies
 - Increase job satisfaction for employees
50. The Programme will embrace the concept of 'Co-design' from the outset. This means that residents will be invited to contribute to the

design of services. It is hoped that this will lead to further involvement from residents in the actual production and delivery of services. Partners will also be invited to collaborate with the council to identify the advantages of alternative service delivery models.

51. A more detailed initiation document will be brought to Cabinet in November. However at this stage it is proposed that the new programme will commence with three projects;
52. Health & Adult Social Care. It is proposed to take a systems approach to the review of all Health and Adult Social Care services to determine what outcomes residents really want and need. Work will then be identified to redesign services and functions.
53. Hazel Court Based Services. This project will review all services based at the council's Hazel Court Depot. The review will establish how street based services and those coordinated around 'place' can be delivered.
54. Business Efficiency. This project will consider three specific aspects of improvement. The first will look at how some of the council's more commercial services such as parking operate. The purpose of the project will be to work with residents to redesign these services in a way that makes them easier to access and to provide value for money. The second area of improvement will be around the control of council expenditure. Although the use of consultancy and interim staff is relatively low, as is the use of overtime, further work will be undertaken to reduce these costs. Finally work will be undertaken to consider where there are further opportunities for the council to consolidate services to remove duplication and improve responsiveness and effectiveness.
55. The Transformation Programme will:
 - Be really clear about the resources the council has going forwards ensuring that the organisation is balancing its ambitions with its capacity to deliver. This capacity will increase over time as communities are able to get more involved with service delivery.
 - Undertake an outcome based service review to ensure that we understand what it is that is currently being delivered and measure the quality and effectiveness of it.

- Undertake a thorough stock take of services to ensure that we really know ourselves.
 - Learn from elsewhere – gathering other council and organisation success stories.
 - Consider the advantages and disadvantages of alternative delivery models.
 - Consider the socio-economic factors that are shaping the city
 - Be underpinned by a culture change and workforce development programme
56. This report seeks approval for delegated authority to be given to the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder, Cllr Dafydd Williams, to establish a Transformation Team and sufficient capacity to deliver the change detailed above. The Transformation Team will need to recover its costs from better service efficiency and approval is sought to use the DIF and Venture Fund to finance the programme on a full repayment basis.
57. It is proposed that £250,000 be allocated from the venture fund, on a repayment basis through top slicing future savings. A further £250,000 will be allocated from the DIF, recognising the programme will have a strong focus on innovation. It is proposed that specific allocations from the overall Transformation fund will be agreed by the Chief Executive and Director of CBSS.

Management Structures

58. It is two years since the last senior management review. The peer review feedback demonstrates that the council needs to again consider how it organises itself to deliver its priorities. It is apparent that the council is looking towards different alliances and collaborations and needs to have an organisational structure that enables it to work effectively with others. There is also an increasing demand from residents to see better synergies between services to provide more focus on the achievement of outcomes for residents rather than the delivery of isolated services.

59. Therefore, as a response to the Peer Review Feedback and Big York Survey, approval is sought in this paper to delegate responsibility to the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals to restructure the council's management team in a way that will support the delivery of future services.

Resident Engagement and Capacity Building

60. The Peer Review and Big York Survey demonstrate that the council needs to put in place a more effective resident engagement model and processes. There has been much done over the last two or three years to improve the way in which the council is engaging with residents and community groups. However the improvements are not consistent and the model used is considered to be quite traditional. Now, more than ever, residents want to have more say in how their city works and want to be able to engage with the council on their terms. We need to see residents as co-decision makers and problem solvers. We need to draw on their local knowledge and expertise. The council needs to be more creative about the way in which it mobilises the talents in the city.

61. Three principles underpin what we are trying to do. Those are:

- We will place communities at the heart of everything that we do
- We will support residents and communities to find answers to local problems
- We will provide opportunities for all residents to take part in local decision making and to shape local services.

62. We do recognise the importance of community capacity building and the need to provide appropriate opportunities for customers and communities to participate at whatever level they wish in order to influence service delivery, decision making and policy development.

63. We will immediately start a broad 'conversation' with the city to determine how we capture what matters to residents and to shape the way we engage with them in the future. We will keep the best practice we have where residents also think it is best practice. We know that engagement means more than formal meetings and consultation exercises. We have to involve residents on an equal footing so that we can build trust, unlock community capacity and

help all the city's public services find collaborative solutions to the complex challenges they face.

64. As part of the work with residents to develop a better engagement model, the Council Leader, supported by Cabinet Members and the Council Management Team will hold a meeting in every ward in the city during the next year to give residents the opportunity to discuss what matters to them and their communities. This will be in addition to regular ward meetings. Autumn will also be the time when the council begins developing its budget. We know how important these decisions are for residents so this year we will provide an opportunity for residents to meet in every ward to talk to members and staff about their priorities in addition to the usual online information the council provides. We will talk about where our money is spent and what our financial pressures are to allow residents to participate in a meaningful way to the budget process. We will talk to residents about volunteering and collaboration on city events such as the Tour de France. In addition we will welcome residents into West Offices at regular intervals to meet those responsible for delivering council services. Having residents participate in the peer review was hugely valuable. We will therefore increase the opportunity for residents to get to know us and talk about services. We will push the concept of 'conversation' with each and every community in our city. And we will listen to what they have to say.
65. We will look at our customer services functions and seek to ensure that these are in tune with what residents need. As part of an existing Business Improvement Project (to be incorporated into the Transformation Programme), we will fully consolidate and streamline our phone, email and Internet customer contact points and systems to ensure we can provide consistent, timely and effective access to services and information. We will accelerate our plans to develop phone apps and 'do it online' services. Despite providing a huge amount of data on our website, we recognise that it is not as customer friendly as it needs to be. We are taking steps immediately to improve that and will work with a customer focus group to make more changes. We provide more information on how resident's money is spent than almost any other council because we want to be as transparent as we can about how we spend public funds. Every bill paid, every salary over £43k and every expense paid to senior staff and members is published. We recognise that we need to make it easier to work through this data and we will redesign the transparency and Freedom of Information Request pages on our website before

January 1st 2014 to do this. We will do so in partnership with residents.

Consultation

66. Residents are unhappy with the council's consultation processes. We know that we need to be much clearer about what we are going to do with feedback if residents are to have confidence in the process. A paper will be brought to November 2013 Cabinet setting out a new approach to consultation. It will include a model of several different consultation approaches depending on what the council is going to do with the information it receives. If we genuinely don't know what we want to do and are going to act solely on the feedback, we will say that. If we have made our minds up to do something and are consulting because we want residents to help shape the implementation, we will say that. If we are consulting because we are interested in what residents have to say but Cabinet are reserving the right to make the decision they see fit, we will say that. For every consultation, we will make clear why we want residents to engage with us and what we are going to do with the information they give us.

Scrutiny

67. The Peer Review identified that the Scrutiny Process within the council is not as strong as it needs to be. We will work with group leaders to determine what can be done to give confidence to residents that members from all parties are participating in a process to help shape and challenge council performance and the development of policy.

Big Clean

68. We will continue to address residents' clearly stated priority around cleanliness of the city through a concerted "Big City Clean" programme. This will build upon existing work being delivered through Smarter York, notably the Spring and Autumn Clean initiatives that have been piloted this year.
69. The Smarter York programme is currently sharpening up the Council's performance for example deploying new machinery to improve results including pavement scrubbers and rolling out a new generation of bins that look better, reduce litter and increase

recycling. The next steps include will increasing enforcement action against those who drop litter and developing the functionality of the Smarter York app so that residents make more use of it to report problems.

70. At the same time we will be signing businesses up to the Smarter Charter to do their bit to clean up their locality, encourage employee volunteering, and sponsor a park or open space, supporting community groups who are already doing their bit, and encouraging residents to become a Street Buddy and adopt a bit of their street, do some litter picking or weeding, or join a 'Friends of ...' group to look after a local space such as a park.
71. We are continuing to grow the 13,000 hours of Community Payback that are currently deployed in partnership with the Council, focussing on community priorities (in the Spring Clean CP collected over 1,600 bags of litter and rubbish from over 20km of highway verge). We will increasingly draw on resident priorities in each ward to create local Big Clean action plans.

Conclusion

72. We are in unprecedented times for local authorities. As this report identifies, over £80m will have been taken from council budgets by the end of the year. This has had a significant impact on the council and although some services and outcomes are exemplary such as education, employment rates, crime levels and life expectancy, others are in need of transformation.
73. The reviews that took place over the summer show that the council has delivered much and is strongly positioned within the sector. They show an organisation committed to doing the best that it can for the city. The peer review clearly signals that the council and its leadership are self aware and recognise that aspects of the council's approach and performance require improvement. It is recognised that the approach to customer engagement and consultation needs to move beyond formal meetings and papers and a language of permissions and rights to informal, talking, listening, sharing, collaborating model. The priority needs to be about what outcomes the city wants and where the council can collaborate, it will, but where it just needs to support residents and let them get on and mobilise delivery, then it will do that too.

Consultation

74. The Peer Review and Big York Survey involved partners and residents. This report has been shared with partners and stakeholders who work with us and will be discussed face to face with the panel of residents who met the Peer Challenge Team. The report has been shared with the Peer Review Team.

Implications

- **Financial** – *The report seeks approval to use £250k of venture funding and £250k of Delivery & Innovation Funding to fund the Transformation Programme. This will be on an invest to save model.*
- **Human Resources (HR)** – *The report seeks approval to initiate a Senior Management Review. It also recommends that a Transformation ‘capacity’ be resourced.*
- **Equalities** – *The actions in this report further the Council’s commitment to equalities.*
- **Legal** – *None*
- **Crime and Disorder** - *None*
- **Information Technology (IT)** – *The Transformation Programme will depend on ICT services to support a a new phase of on-line services.*
- **Property** – *None*
- **Other** - *None*

Recommendations

75. Recommendations are as follows

- Cabinet agree to establish a new Transformation Programme to prioritise and deliver the Council’s objectives.
- Cabinet agree to establish a repayable budget of £500,000, financed from the Delivery and Innovation Fund (£250,000) and the Venture Fund (£250,000), to finance the Transformation Programme on an Return on Investment of at least £3m pa. Further, to agree to delegate responsibility to the

Chief Executive and Director of CBSS to use that budget on transformation resourcing/activity as appropriate.

- Cabinet agree that the first three projects to form the Transformation Programme will be Health & Adult Social Care, Hazel Court Depot Services and Business Efficiency (to include Parking and the projects within the existing Business Support Review – Policy & Performance, Procurement & Commissioning, Facilities Management, Administration & Customer Services)

Cabinet also agree:

- That the council works with residents on a new engagement approach to deliver the principles in para 61 of this report.
- The proposals to undertake a 'big clean' of the city in Spring 2014 whilst seeking improvement in day to day service delivery.
- The Deputy Chief Executive liaises with Health Services in the city to address resident concerns about the availability of health services in York.

Cabinet note:

- The LGA Peer Review letter at Annex 1 of the report.
- The principle to co-design and co-deliver the new programme with residents
- The intention to bring an assessment of the future budget challenges to November Cabinet.
- The intention to create a new consultation approach (in partnership with residents) and to bring proposals to a future Cabinet meeting.
- The plans for the Leader to meet residents in every ward in the city.
- The intention to broaden the budget consultation in 2013
- The intention to seek support across Group Leaders to revitalise Scrutiny and overview to bring challenge and support to the Council's work.

Reason: In order to respond to the feedback the Council has received from the LGA Peer Review, Big York Survey and its Staff Survey.

Contact Details

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|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
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| | Report Approved | √ | Date 20 September 2013 |
| Wards Affected: All | | | √ |
| For further information please contact the authors of the report | | | |

Annexes:

Annex 1 - Peer Review Letter

Annex 2 - Big York Survey