



Notice of a public

Decision Session - Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning

To: Councillor Waller (Executive Member)

Date: Tuesday, 22 December 2020

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Remote Meeting

A G E N D A

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democracy Support Group by:

5:00 pm on Thursday 24 December 2020 if an item is called in *after* a decision has been taken.

*With the exception of matters that have been subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of item on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm on Friday 18 December 2020**.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democracy Support Group by 5.00 pm Friday 18 December 2020.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020.

3. **Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at remote meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Friday, 18 December 2020.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact the relevant Democracy Officer, on the details at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Remote Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this remote public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The remote public meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Quarterly Economic Update (Pages 7 - 52)

This report provides a quarterly economic update for the period October 2020 to December 2020.

5. Skills and Employment Update (Pages 53 - 68)

This report provides an update on the skills and employment support available to people and businesses within York and how the Council is working with partners.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer

Name – Michelle Bennett

Telephone – 01904 551573

E-mail – michelle.bennett@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above

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City of York Council

Decision Session Minutes

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member For Economy And Strategic Planning
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Date	24 November 2020
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Present	Councillor Waller (Executive Member)
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1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Member was invited to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been one registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Cllr. Claire Douglas Ward Member for Heworth spoke on agenda items 4 and 5.

Regarding agenda Item 4, York's Inward Investment Approach, she expressed concern that of the 1,852 new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects the UK secured in Financial Year 2019/20, the Yorkshire and Humber region attracted 104 projects, of that York attracted only two projects over the same period, creating 18 jobs. She considered this to be below what should be expected for a city of York's stature, transport connectivity and highly trained workforce base.

Regarding agenda Item 5, the council's Apprenticeship Levy Strategy, she was in agreement with the need to transfer as much unused City of York Council levy to local SMEs as possible and expressed concern with the level of unused levy the council held.

3. SECTOR ROUNDTABLE UPDATE - OUTPUT AND NEXT STEPS

The Executive Member considered a report which provided an update on the Council's sector roundtable initiative, an initiative

established in partnership with York's key business support agencies.

The Economic Growth Manager, Economy & Place, was in attendance to present the report and to respond to questions.

Key points arising from discussion on this item included:

- Businesses had found the roundtable discussions beneficial and had welcomed the opportunity to have a two-way discussion with the Council. The intelligence gathered from these sessions had also helped the council to shape its response to businesses within the City.
- The Executive Member highlighted the ways in which he and the Council Leader had written letters on behalf of businesses who may have missed out on grants, along with other council's making similar representations, which will have played a part in the lifting of the bar on support for businesses with rateable value greater than £51k and therefore not eligible for the governments Covid-19 business support grants.
- The Executive Member was pleased to note the level of direct contact with local businesses. Over a thousand businesses had registered for the weekly business update with a further two thousand receiving this information through the various business network channels the Council worked with.
- Arising from roundtable discussions, it had been useful to gain further insight on the obstacles businesses were facing, looking towards long-term recovery. Aspects such as: utilising space for grow-on companies, providing support to assist businesses to re-locate within the centre of the city, and the expansion of companies to ensure that opportunities for job growth were maximised. The Executive Member requested that the next update report include the work undertaken to respond to such requests.
- The Executive Member was pleased to note the efforts to support businesses in the City in preparation for the EU exit. It was reported that the North Yorkshire LEP had received funding from BEIS to employ a further five Advisers to assist businesses in the City with direct, on hand support. Further information was available online from the Chamber of Commerce and Make It York, regarding accurate form compliance to ensure goods could get in and out of the country. The Executive Member requested regular updates closely monitoring this

transition, to be included in the quarterly economic updates received.

Resolved: The Executive Member:

- (i) Noted the contents of the report on the Council's sector roundtable initiative;
- (ii) Agreed to continue business engagement through the sector roundtable approach, recognising that levels of engagement would vary in accordance with available staff resource;
- (iii) Requested that the next update report include work undertaken in response to obstacles businesses were facing, in relation to long-term recovery; and
- (iv) Requested regular updates closely monitoring businesses transition in relation to EU exit, to be included in the quarterly economic updates received.

Reason: To support York's economic recovery from Covid-19 and to ensure that local business receive their fair share of support in preparation for the EU exit.

4. YORK'S APPROACH TO INWARD INVESTMENT

The Executive Member considered a report outlining York's Approach to Inward Investment. He had requested this report, conscious of the need to ensure York was in a strong position in respect of recovery. The Head of Economic Growth was in attendance to present the report and to respond to questions.

Matters arising from discussion on this item included:

- It was noted that there was current interest in moving businesses out of large cities. York was ideally placed for this. Where they work with our existing businesses such as Bio-sciences, rail tech, that would be an important feature of long-term recovery.
- It was noted that uncertainty of trade agreements in relation to the threat of a hard Brexit had had a significant cooling effect for foreign investment to the UK.
- Equally, uncertainty over York Central. The Executive Member thanked officers for their efforts in persuading Government to ensure significant funding for this project would be made.

- The Executive Member highlighted the need for all parties and organisations to work together to ensure that the work outlined in this paper is continued and to secure long-term, consistent investment that fits with the strengths of the City.

Resolved: The Executive Member:

- (i) Noted the contents of the report and approve The Council's approach to inward investment;
- (ii) Approved the creation of a York prospectus that outlines the city's inward investment offer and sector-specific propositions; and
- (iii) Requested regular updates are included within the regular quarterly economic reports to show what is being done to encourage people to perceive York as an area of long-term investment.

Reason: To attract inward investment to York, boosting economic activity and creating new jobs.

5. APPRENTICESHIP LEVY TRANSFER STRATEGY (CYC)

The Executive Member considered a report which recommended that the council promotes its apprenticeship levy transfer service to: support micro, SME, public sector and VCSE organisations to benefit from any of the council's unallocated levy funds, up to a maximum of 20% (threshold for reviewing allocated funds) and, encourage other local levy paying businesses and public sector organisations to do similar. This would help to ensure that any unallocated apprenticeship levy funding is reinvested in York to support local priorities, rather than it being lost to the city. The Skills Team Manager, Education & Skills and the Assistant Director – Education & Skills, were in attendance to present the report and to respond to questions.

The following key points were made during discussion of this item:

- Officers had recognised that they were unable to use all of the allocation due to Covid restrictions limiting activity and had been encouraging partners to access this.
- It was noted that there had been very strict restrictions from the outset, regarding how this funding could be spent. It had not been a general skills budget. It had been

intended to promote apprenticeship activity within organisations to encourage new or existing apprenticeships. That staff apprentice would still need to: receive a salary, be allocated a work based mentor and would need a time allocation to liaise with the provider. Many other local authorities had also not been able to spend their allocated levy.

Resolved: The Executive Member:

- (i) Confirmed the council's commitment to transfer any of its unallocated annual apprenticeship levy funds, up to a maximum of 20% (threshold for reviewing allocated funds), to local employers to support the city's economic recovery;
- (ii) Agreed the framework through which local micro, SME, public sector and VCSE organisations can apply to receive a transfer of the council's unallocated levy funds to support new apprenticeship starts within their organisation;
- (iii) Noted the expansion of the Council Apprenticeship Task Group's remit to include decision-making on applications for City of York Council Levy Transfer;
- (iv) Agreed that the City of York Council can actively promote the opportunity for local micro, SME, public sector and VCSE organisations to benefit from the council's apprenticeship levy transfer service and its support for other local levy paying businesses to do similar; and
- (v) Requested regular reports, through the quarterly business updates, on the outcomes and experiences of the apprenticeship team with the aim of addressing obstacles to accessing and utilising relevant grants.

Reason: To support local businesses (large and small) to make use of any unallocated apprenticeship levy funding, by reinvesting it in the city to support local priorities.

6. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT

The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No.2) Regulations 2019 requires a contribution receiving authority to publish an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) no later than the 31st December 2020.

Resolved: The Executive Member:

- (i) Noted the contents of this report and delegated to the Corporate Director of Economy and Place, responsibility to publish the IFS on the Council's web site in accordance with annual deadlines; and
- (ii) Would receive an annual report on this matter to this decision session.

Reason: To ensure compliancy and in order to monitor its progress.

Cllr Waller, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.58 am].



**Decision Session – Executive
Member for Economy and Strategic
Planning**

23rd December 2020

Quarterly Economic Update

Summary

1. York has come through the early economic challenges of the COVID pandemic in a comparatively strong position. Unemployment has risen, but by less than any other UK city, and some businesses have closed, particularly in highly-leveraged retail and hospitality chains. The city's efforts to distribute grant funding and support businesses have helped thousands of local employers.
2. Our economy has fared better than many other cities, with York proving a continued draw to visitors and the city centre adapting rapidly to support new ways of trading. Our pro-active response as a city has enabled our businesses to reopen and get money coming through the tills. But national lockdowns and the current Tier system are difficult for the city centre economy, and many businesses will find the reduced Christmas trade very difficult, with restrictions expected to continue through the coming winter.
3. The longer term economic impacts of COVID are not yet clear and though the news of the delivery of vaccines in the coming months will buoy up some businesses and provide hope for improvements during the coming months this may be hampered if the vaccination programme takes time to roll out. National forecasts suggest that recovery will take several years at least, and York will need to work hard to attract investment and find replacement employment if the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors take longer to bounce back. The partnership approaches developed in York over the past nine months, with the Council working closely with BID, Chamber, FSB, IoD, our Universities and colleges and Make It York, provide a strong platform for our city.

Recommendations

4. The Executive Member is asked to:

1) Note the contents of the report

Reason: To support York's economic response to the COVID -19 pandemic

State of the Economy

5. This report covers the period October 2020 to December 2020. Following a strong August and September in York City centre, the autumn saw the introduction of new social distancing rules through October, followed by Tier 2 local restrictions, and a national lockdown in November. The city emerged back into Tier 2 at the start of December, with the prospect of continued restrictions through to next March at the earliest.
6. In the wider economy, many companies have continued to trade well, with national surveys suggesting that around half of all businesses have seen decreased turnover, a third are unaffected by lockdown, and more than 10% have seen turnover increase.
7. The same survey¹ suggests that 30% of all businesses, and 44% of those in the hospitality sector, are carrying less than 3 months cash reserves, putting them at significant risk of failure in the months ahead. Much of the effort, both locally and nationally, to shore up the economy has focussed on providing grants to help business cashflow. York has continued to distribute such funds widely and quickly and has retained future funds for further lock down support should it be needed. This funding is clearly helping, however we must begin to consider the longer term impacts of the pandemic for employers in the local economy.
8. The Chancellor was clear in his November 2020 Autumn Statement speech that we are only beginning to see the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility, launched to support the Chancellor's statement, make sobering reading. At national level, unemployment is forecast to double in the first half of next year, while the 11% hit to GDP will not be regained for 5 years. Projecting these forecasts onto the York economy, we still

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/bulletins/coronavirusandtheeconomicimpactsontheuk/19november2020>

might see our claimant count hit 10,000 by next summer, while the impact of COVID can be estimated at £300m in the current year.

9. The Government’s Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) for 2019 was published in October. This data provides an annual snapshot of the number of jobs by industry, with a breakdown by full time (>30hrs per week) and part time (<30hrs). With the data being from October 2019, there is no insight into the impacts of COVID on the economy. Rather, it is an indicator of how the York economy was progressing prior to the pandemic.
10. The headline from BRES is that employment in York had grown to over 111,500 jobs, with increases in construction, education and administration and support services. While full time work remained stable, part time working had seen a further increase, as had self-employment. The medium term trend has seen 1,000 jobs per annum added to the York economy, and the proportion of part time roles has increased to 40% of all employment. This contrasts with the GB average of 32%. This reflects the relatively high living costs of York, leading many households to rely on multiple incomes from a mix of full time and part time employment, together with self-employment in micro-

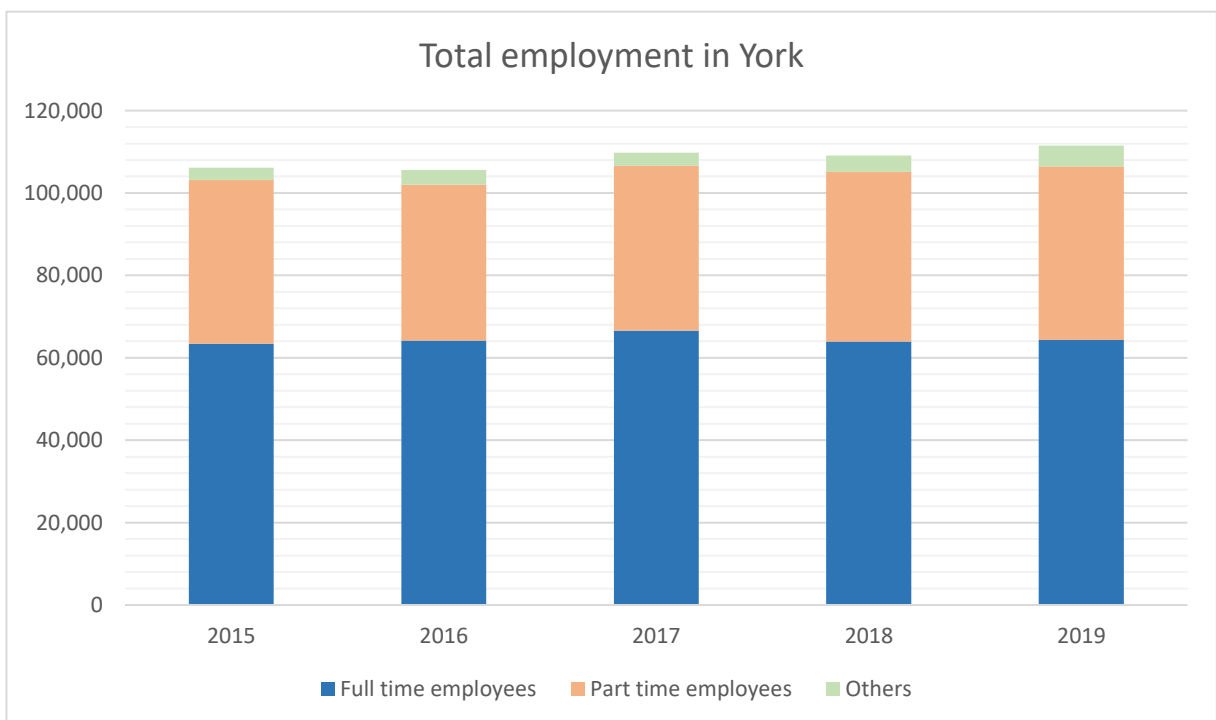


Figure 1 Employment in York, 2015 to 2019

businesses.

11. Further insight is provided by the Government's Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), with the 2020 update being published in October. These statistics provide details of hourly, weekly and annual pay and hours worked. In normal times, we would focus on median pay as a measure of progress in the economy. However, the survey was undertaken in April 2020, a month into the first national lockdown and prior to the development of grant mechanisms. It was this period which saw the York claimant count rise from 1,800 to 5,000 as employers sought to shed staff in the face of severely restricted trade.
12. The ASHE pay figures² show a 0.2% decrease in median full time pay for York residents, but with an underlying 12.4% increase in female full time pay. Looking beyond the average pay figures, ASHE reveals a clearer picture of job losses, with full time male works and part time female workers seeing significant reductions in the York economy. While ASHE figures should be treated with some caution as they are survey based, the figures show a reduction of 14,000 in the number of workers in York.

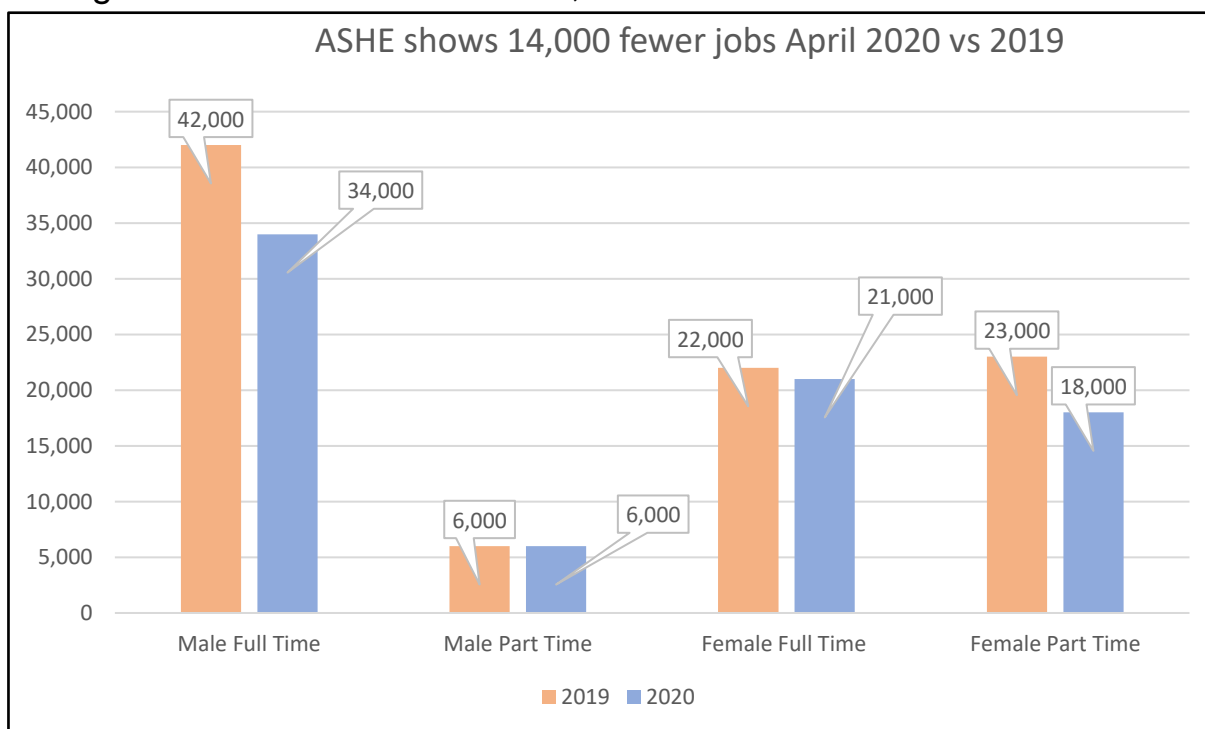


Figure 2 Changes in employment, April 2019 to April 2020

Unemployment (Annex 1 pp.12-13)

13. The impact of the COVID pandemic is shown very clearly in the claimant count³ (Annex 1 p12). This saw the largest increase in at least 35 years in the months since lockdown when the count rose from 1,800 to 5,000 in April, however the total has remained stable since then. This is despite

² <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/summary.asp?menuopt=200&subcomp=>

³ Data from <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?collapse=yes>

the apparent decrease of 14,000 in those working in York, shown by the ASHE figures discussed above.

14. Centre for Cities have been monitoring increases in unemployment across their cohort of 68 UK centres⁴. York is the city with the lowest percentage increase in unemployment, despite the influence of our retail, tourism and hospitality businesses.
15. Two factors are influencing our claimant count statistics.
 - We know that many of the city's students undertake part time work to support their studies, typically in the retail, tourism and hospitality sectors. As students were sent home at the start of lockdown, they do not show in the York claimant count.
 - As the claimant count measures those receiving out-of-work benefits, and its availability is influenced by other sources of household income, this is perhaps a consequence of the high level of part time work in the city, with many of those now out of work unable to claim benefits.
16. Updates figures for the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) and Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) have been published by Government⁵. These show a total of 6,800 people furloughed by York employers and a further 5,700 claiming self-employed support at the end of September 2020. The furlough figures have dropped substantially from the 30,300 reported for July, unlike the self-employed figures which have fallen only slightly from 6,500.
17. The Job Retention Scheme is set to continue until March 2021, and those furloughed on the scheme remain at high risk of losing their jobs in the coming months. Our unemployment support, set out in the Skills paper also reporting to this Decision Session, will need to support such workers, alongside those who have already lost work, whether they are able to claim benefits or not.

City centre economy (Annex 1 pp.3-9 + Annex 2)

18. Our Springboard footfall counter data, (Annex 1 p3), shows the overall pattern of the year to date. The initial lockdown in March, April and May saw city centre customer numbers consistently below 30% of normal levels. With the easing of restrictions in July and August, people

⁴ <https://www.centreforcities.org/data/uk-unemployment-tracker/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/self-employment-income-support-scheme-statistics-october-2020> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-november-2020>

returned, with the peak at August Bank Holiday seeing levels above 80%.

19. A slow but steady decrease across September saw levels in October down to around 60% prior to the second national lockdown in November, which brought numbers down to less than 40% of typical levels.
20. Just prior to the March 2020 lockdown, CYC and York BID agreed to trial new ways to measure footfall and spend in the city centre. Annex 2 provides the first report from the new Movement Insights system, which will continue to develop over the year ahead.
21. Footfall provides a good indication of how busy the city centre was, but for businesses in the city centre, the key question is how much were customers spending? This is where Movement Insights can begin to shed some light. In the last quarterly report, we looked at Centre for Cities data which suggested that spend was strong in York over the summer. Movement Insights presents a similar picture, showing strong sales in city centre restaurants, retail, supermarkets and clothing in the period July to September 2020.
22. Customer origin is also shown in Annex 2, with 68% of customers in the last week of October being from within 6 miles of the city centre, in contrast to the pre-COVID balance of one third locals/two thirds visitors. The balance of locals to visitors has thus changed significantly, while total numbers are well-down on pre-COVID levels. Spend in the crucial pre-Christmas period of November and December is not yet known, but hoteliers, the restaurant sector and hospitality are all concerned about the impact of both the November lockdown and the emergence into Tier 2.
23. Shop and restaurant vacancies have inevitably risen in York over the year. Our own figures, derived from the Business Rates system, show vacancies at 8.1%, up from 7.4% earlier in the year (Annex 1 p.4). As reported last quarter, Local Data Company's surveys show a larger increase, but with York still below the national average. What has been noticeable in recent month is the accelerating rate of closure among national and international retail and hospitality chains. This trend leads to sites in York being closed because of pressures elsewhere on owners.

Tourism (Annex 1 p4 + Annex 3)

24. Make It York's Tourism dashboard for October shows the scale of impact on that sector. While overall footfall remained at 60% or so through October, visits to our smaller attraction were down 80% on the year, and our hotels saw much reduced occupancy.

25. We have refreshed our relationship with Welcome to Yorkshire, agreeing a new Service Level Agreement with the organisation, and are working closely with Make It York to make the most of what scope there is to attract visitors to York. Marketing is beginning to focus on spring and summer 2021, when we hope to be able to welcome tourists back to York, supplementing campaigns to promote the use of local independent shops for Christmas spending.

Business start-ups (Annex 1, pp.10, 11)

26. In a typical year, around 1,000 businesses are started in York. The total for the current year, with 5 months remaining, is just below 400, 75% of what would be expected.
27. Looking at individual wards (Annex 1 p11), those with the highest clamant counts (Westfield, Clifton, Heworth and Holgate) are also showing higher levels of business startups.

Regional update

28. As discussed in September's Quarterly Economic Update, York and North Yorkshire LEP (Y&NY LEP) has developed a sub-regional Economic Recovery Plan titled "COVID-19 – A Plan to Reshape Our Economy" in response to the pandemic. Launched on 19th October 2020, this was followed by a ten day campaign based on each of the ten pledges. This showcased what response activity was being done, and what the LEP had pledged.
29. The LEP's Local Industrial Strategy and Reshaping the Economy COVID-19 Plan form the basis of its future work and priorities. Work is underway to turn the LEP's strategies and plans into clear delivery/implementation plans, setting out clearly the outcomes to be achieved and the actions needed. All of the LEP's strategies will be aligned under a single Economic Plan aimed at achieving their overall vision of a Greener, Fairer and Stronger Economy and becoming a carbon negative region.
30. Resources have also been secured by the LEP to provide additional support to businesses as the UK leaves the EU at the end of the year. This support will work closely with the Make It York team, and will include a mix of online workshops and 1-2-1 advice.

Update on work initiated at previous decision sessions

Economic Strategy

31. Work continues to take place on developing a new Economic Strategy for York, with the approach outlined at the Executive Member's October 2020 Decision Session. The approach to developing a new strategy was reviewed by the Council's Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee in October
32. Current activity is centred on reviewing and refreshing the existing economic evidence base which will underpin the development of the strategy. Gap analysis work is also being undertaken to ensure that the impacts of the pandemic are incorporated into this economic evidence base, as well as identifying additional themes requiring further research and analysis work and/or engagement. Activity is also underway to reflect on the data and trends emerging from the Council's resident engagement channel Our Big Conversation, as well as the intelligence from the Sector Roundtable initiative.
33. A more detailed progress update on the development of the Council's Economic Strategy is scheduled to be tabled at the Executive Member's January Decision Session. This will include a draft evidence base slide pack, draft plans around engagement activity and a summary of key strategic themes with accompanying text. Consultation on the Council's new Economic Strategy is planned for February to March 2021, with Executive sign off scheduled for May 2021. The strategy will also be considered again by Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee prior to completion.

BID update

34. The York BID presented a draft Business Plan to their Board on 25th November for their proposed 2021-2026 term. It was agreed that the threshold for the levy be raised from £12,500 to £17,500. This means a reduction of 192 hereditaments, and £28,500 less levy funding to be collected than now.
35. The broad themes for the BID have been set out in a draft Business Plan to act as a manifesto for their proposed term. This shows that the existing work that businesses have valued such as additional street cleansing, the Street Rangers and business support will continue, but there will be an additional element to include green, sustainable and environmental issues.
36. The processes required to bring the BID 2020 renewal ballot paper to the Executive for approval is almost complete, with Members set to consider

the report on January 14th 2020, with the ballot beginning the following month.

37. The BID has announced their Winter campaign of events for the City Centre to bring as many visitors as is safely possible back into York. These include the Make a World of Difference business support project which encourages people to shop locally, the Gift Card Advent Calendar and the Fantastic Fiction project at the vacant Debenhams store where all five shop windows be dressed to recreate popular children's stories.

Secondary shopping areas

38. The My Front Street project - looking at wider long-term impacts and economic growth in Acomb Front Street and the surrounding shopping area - was impacted by the second national lockdown in November, and work to engage with the public and other stakeholder had to be temporarily suspended shortly before the pilot was launched for health and safety reasons. The consultants will begin work again as soon as is possible, with the intention of completing the initiative by May 2021.
39. Both Acomb and Haxby now have Christmas lights in situ, designed to encourage footfall and engagement with the local areas. For the first time, Haxby and Wigginton Traders' Association has been able to make a capital investment in Christmas lights for the length of The Village due to the funding set aside by the Council for secondary shopping areas. This has been extremely well received by the local community, with several hundred positive interactions on social media about the project..

Business Support

EU Exit

40. Y&NY LEP have developed six-specific EU transition webinars taking place over November and December 2020, in partnership with professionals Garbutt & Elliot and Thrive Law. Subject areas include preparing for the end of EU transition; key legal changes; financial planning and managing cash flow; importing and exporting in 2021; and tariffs & taxation in 2021.
41. The LEP has also received additional funding from BEIS to deliver advisory support around EU transition up to 31st March 2021. Emphasis is being placed on impactful business support with speedy delivery and collaboration. The Council's Economic Growth team is working closely with York's key business support agencies and the LEP's Growth Hub to ensure that local businesses have the necessary support and advice to effectively prepare for the UK leaving the EU. A range of information is

available from the Make it York website to help businesses during the transition period and beyond.

York Business Week

42. November 2020 saw the return of York Business Week, marking the 10th iteration of the annual event. Taking place between 9th and 13th November, the week-long programme of free virtual events centred around the theme of “Build Back Better”, and focused on York’s economic recovery from COVID-19.
43. In keeping with the work undertaken to strengthen partnership working throughout the pandemic, a collaborative approach was taken to York Business Week with the Federation of Small Businesses, Institute of Directors, York Professionals, Make It York and the Council all putting on events during the course of the week. The programme also saw participation from York and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, York BID, Welcome to Yorkshire, BioVale, York’s two universities and Y&NY LEP.
44. The programme covered many of the common issues raised by businesses through the Council’s Sector Roundtable initiative, with events and business support seminars and workshops addressing the topics of EU exit, skills, adapting business models, and leadership development. There were also a series of health and wellbeing events taking place during the week for businesses of all sizes, as well as targeted support sessions for start-ups and tourism businesses.
45. Promotion of York Business Week took place through a number of regional and local media outlets, as well through social media channels. Social media activity around the event reached 123k people, with 2,040 registrations in total throughout the week. Make it York statistics show that website traffic during business week itself increased 19% on the previous year, reflecting the great work of Make it York and its partners in putting on engaging content for a wide range of business audiences.

Partnerships

Circular Yorkshire Month

46. November 2020 also saw the return of Y&NY LEP’s Circular Yorkshire Month, which brought together partners and stakeholders from across Yorkshire to accelerate region’s transformation towards a circular economy. This year’s campaign featured 27 partners (up from 16 last year) and an extensive social media and press campaign, the latter reaching over 200,000 people.

47. Throughout Circular Yorkshire Month, the LEP, its Growth Hub and partners raised awareness of how Circular practices – focusing on the reuse of materials and sustainable business practices - can help businesses prosper by providing a variety of information and guidance. The campaign included a series of webinars, the launch of a package of resources for businesses (including e-guides, animations and case studies), and a range of high profile communication activities. Along with BioVale and the University of York, City of York Council were active participants in Circular Yorkshire Month with the Council's Assistant Director of Housing and Community Safety taking part in a webinar exploring how practically towns and communities can adopt circular economy practices within the built environment. The Council's Housing Delivery Programme and the creation of zero carbon homes and inclusive communities drew widespread interest from attendees.

York Business Accelerator Project

48. September's Quarterly Economic Update report updated the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning on a joint initiative between the University of York and City of York Council to undertake a feasibility study into the establishment of a York-based technology accelerator. Such a facility would bring together emerging and growing technology businesses and aim to accelerate growth through an intensive programme of specialist advice and insight. The feasibility study would test whether the right conditions are in place for such an initiative in York.
49. Completed by Whitecap Consulting, the study assessed the appetite and opportunity for a business accelerator to deliver job growth, attract new inward investment and to support the expansion of York's innovation and technology ecosystem.
50. Following a consultative process involving approximately 100 stakeholders, the report concluded that an accelerator could enable and support tech start-ups to succeed in York and attract high value inward investment, with strong passion and commitment shown by all stakeholders to drive innovation in the city.
51. Key findings from the report include the need for more suitable physical spaces in the city for innovation and collaboration, a stronger relationship between start-ups and established businesses, a focus on retaining graduates and ensuring they have attractive local career opportunities in exciting growth sectors, and greater interaction between York's universities and start-ups and established businesses. It was also highlighted that York has multiple sector strengths that would benefit from alignment with key regional and pan-northern innovation activities.

52. A launch event took place on 30th November 2020 to promote the findings of the report and raise awareness amongst the wider York business community and key stakeholders. Further stakeholder engagement is planned through 1-2-1 meetings to gauge the level of support from key stakeholders for the York Accelerator in regards to funding, resourcing and developing a suitable accelerator business model. Additional work is required to assess the validity of the potential operating models such as neutral and independently run; in partnership with an existing accelerator; as a corporate accelerator.
53. In addition to co-funding the original report, Council support includes ongoing officer resource to support the development of the project and well as utilising our relationships across the city and beyond to move the initiative forward. The project has demonstrated citywide commitment to supporting both local employment and entrepreneurs who want to establish and grow businesses in York.

Consultation

54. Consultation on the economy and our COVID response has been through weekly intelligence calls with key partners, the civic partnership structures, 12 sector roundtables and regular meetings of the Executive Economic Recovery Group.

Council Plan

55. Our work addresses the following outcomes from the Council Plan:
 - Good health and wellbeing;
 - Well-paid and an inclusive economy;
 - A better start for children and young people;
 - A greener and cleaner city; and,
 - Safe communities and culture for all.

Implications

- **Financial** – no new financial commitments.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – no implications;
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** – our work positively supports the Council's equalities objectives;
- **Legal** – no implications;
- **Crime and Disorder** – no implications;
- **Information Technology (IT)** – no implications;
- **Property** – no direct implications

Risk Management

There are no specific risks identified in respect of the recommendations.

Contact Details

Author:

Simon Brereton
Head of Economic Growth
Economy & Place

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Tracey Carter
Interim Director of Place

Report **Date**
Approved

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes

Annex 1: Economic Recovery Data Pack – Dec 2020

Annex 2: York BID and CYC Movement Insights report

Annex 3: Tourism dashboard

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City of York Council



Economic Recovery Data Pack

December 2020

Economic Recovery - Contents

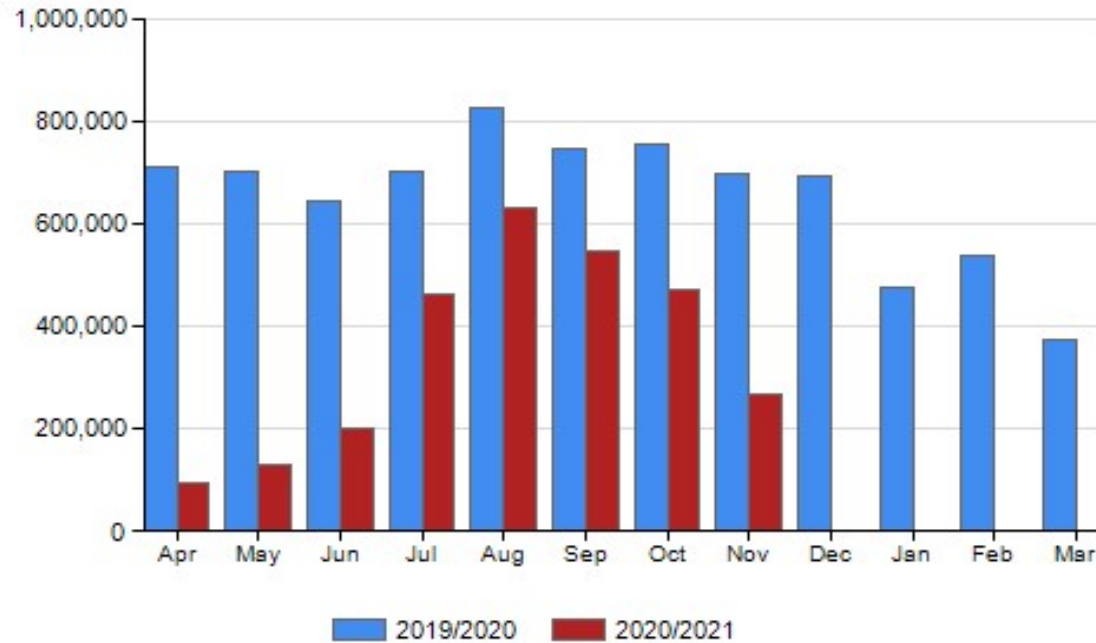
Table of Contents	Covering Data Period	Data Pack Updated
1. City centre and community mobility:		
Footfall	April-November	07-Dec-20
Tourism	April-October	07-Dec-20
Community Mobility	April-November	07-Dec-20
2. Parking:		
Income	April-October	07-Dec-20
Occupancy from CCTV counters	April-November	07-Dec-20
3. Transport:		
Bus Journeys	April-October	07-Dec-20
4. Business Start Ups:		
BankSearch figures	October	07-Dec-20
5. Job Seekers Allowance / Universal Credit:		
ONS Claimant Count 1986 to present	October	07-Dec-20
Claimant Count by Ward	October	07-Dec-20

Economic Recovery - City Centre

Footfall

- Following more positive footfall through the summer months a reduction can be seen at the end of the summer holiday period and further more during the second national lockdown.
- During November Parliament street footfall was around one third of the same period in 2019
- Footfall is predicted to be 47% down against the entire year

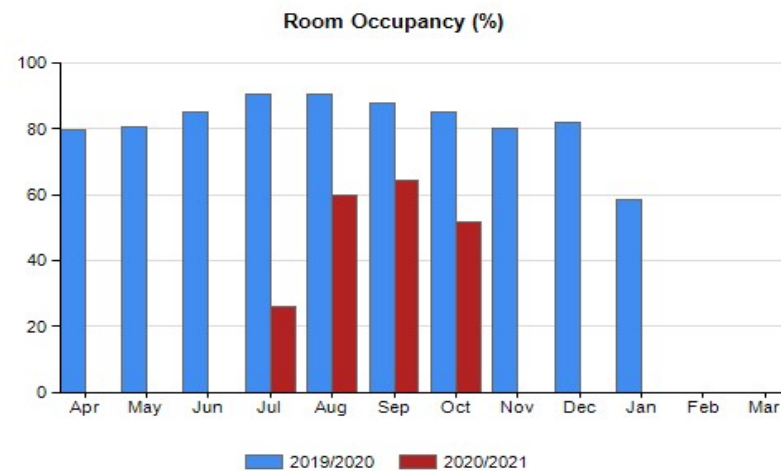
Parliament Street Footfall



Economic Recovery - City Centre

Tourism

- At the end of October 8.11% of shops within the city centre were vacant which is a small increase from 7.43% at the start of the year. The percentage vacant for the same period 2019 was 6.7%
- Hotel room occupancy is around two thirds of usual levels however some recovery can be seen following Q1 closures and the average room rate remains similar to 2019
- Visits to large attractions during October were around one third of the levels seen in previous years, this is due to operating at a reduced capacity with pre-booked visits only

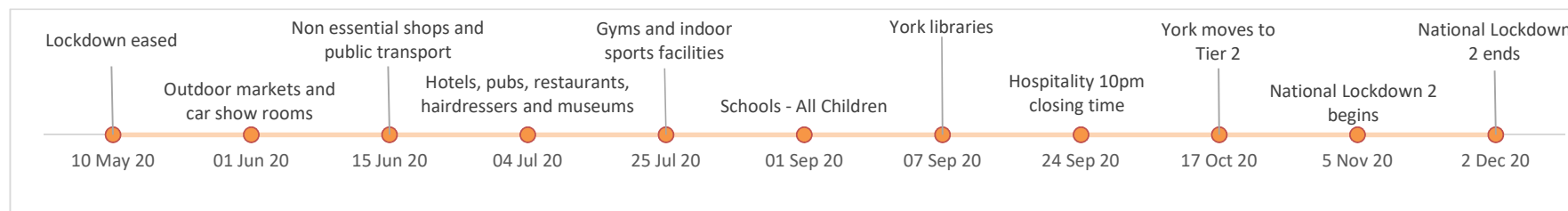


Economic Recovery - Community Mobility

Community Mobility

- Community mobility data has been available regularly from Google since the start of the pandemic to track how visits and length of stay at places such as shops and transit stations are changing.
- Data is sourced through phone location history where consented and changes for each day are compared to a baseline value for that day of the week taken during January.
- The following charts show monthly snapshots of activity at retail and recreation, supermarket and pharmacy, public transport and workplace venues since the start of lockdown.

Key Reopening Dates



Retail and Recreation:

York largely spent more time at these venues over the summer period compared to the national picture. Activity has steadily declined from the end of the summer period but has been greater than during the first lockdown.

Community mobility compared to baseline (%) - Retail and recreation (by Month) - 2020/2021



Economic Recovery - Community Mobility

Supermarket and Pharmacy:

Snapshots for the past 3 months show that time spent at supermarket and pharmacy venues has been around 10% less compared to baseline. Activity appears to have remained relatively high despite the second lockdown.

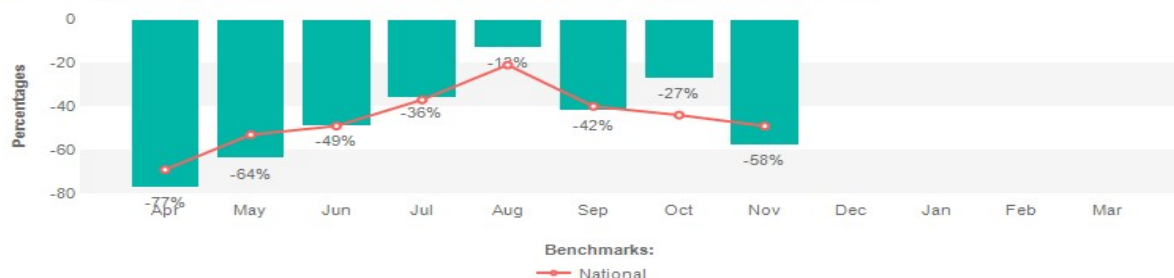
Community mobility compared to baseline (%) - Supermarket and pharmacy (by Month) - 2020/2021



Public Transport:

The November snapshot for visits to transit stations is the furthest from baseline since May. Further information on bus journeys for the authority can be seen later in this report.

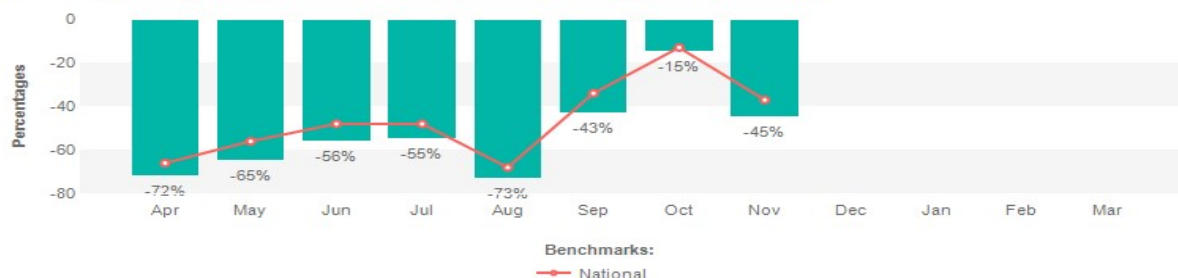
Community mobility compared to baseline (%) - Public Transport (by Month) - 2020/2021



Workplaces:

York follows the national trend for time spent at the work place whilst largely having less visits compared to the national data.

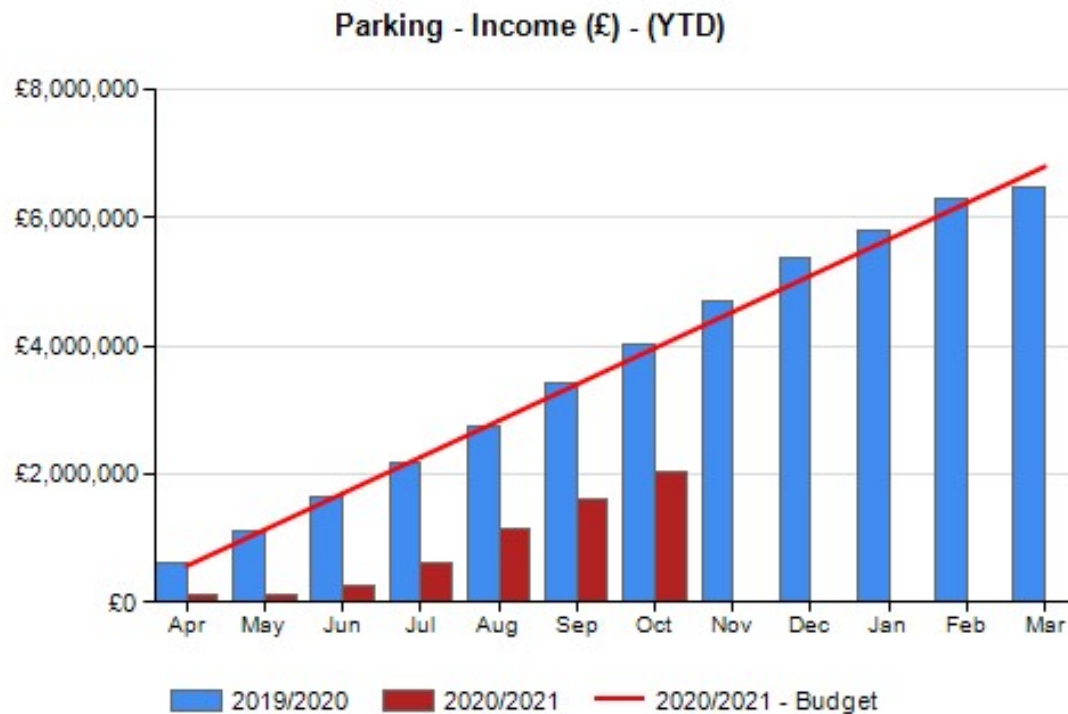
Community mobility compared to baseline (%) - Workplaces (by Month) - 2020/2021



Economic Recovery - Parking

Income

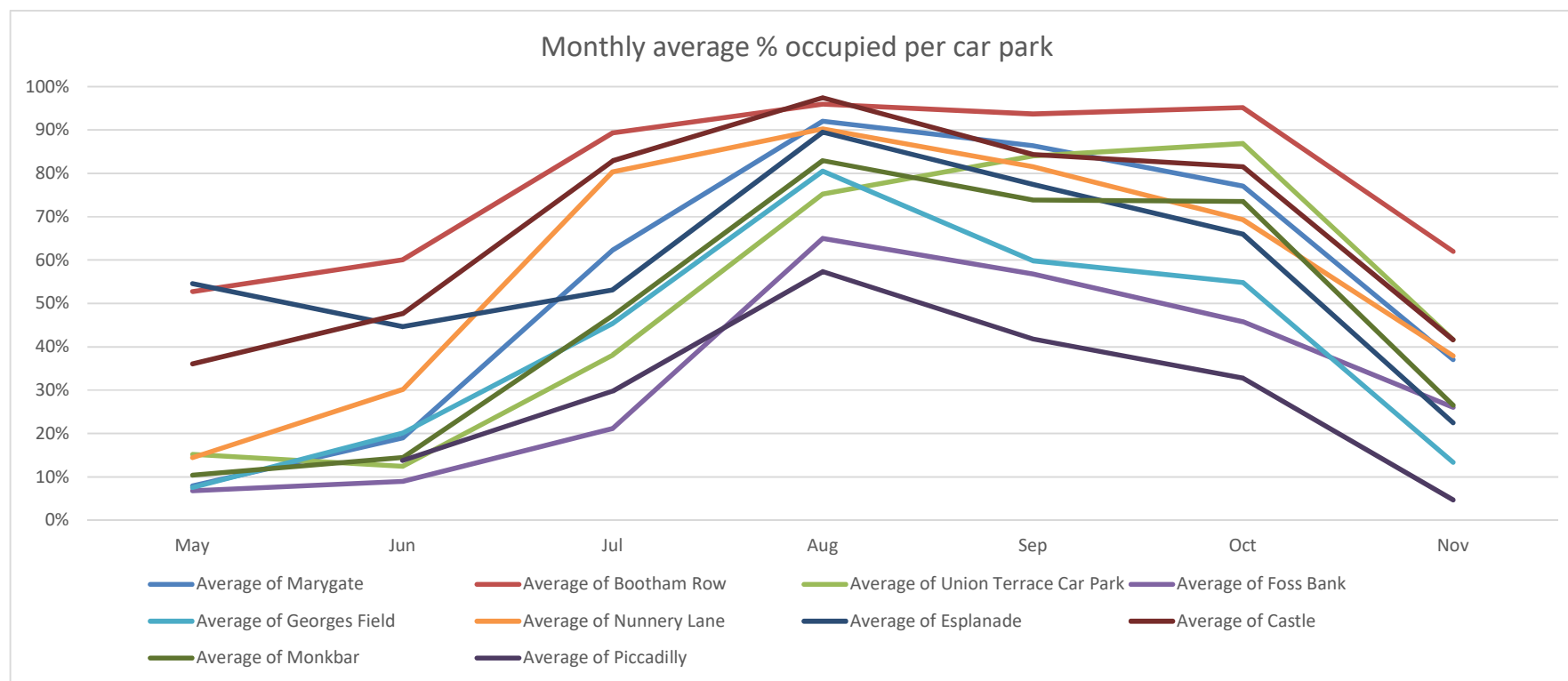
- YTD Parking income at October was £2,030,177 this is below the target amount of £3,967,197
- YTD Parking fines income at October was £116,788 which is also below the target amount of £362,163
- Parking is an area of income which will receive government funding for shortfalls due to COVID-19 and it is hoped the end of year picture will be more positive



Economic Recovery - Parking

Occupancy - CCTV counters

- Parking counts via CCTV counters are available daily
- The chart below shows average occupancy for May to November based on daily figures
- During November St Georges Field and Esplanade have been closed at times due to flooding. Piccadilly has been closed during lockdown.
- Average occupancy rates are now also available on the KPI Machine and can be accessed through a new Parking scorecard

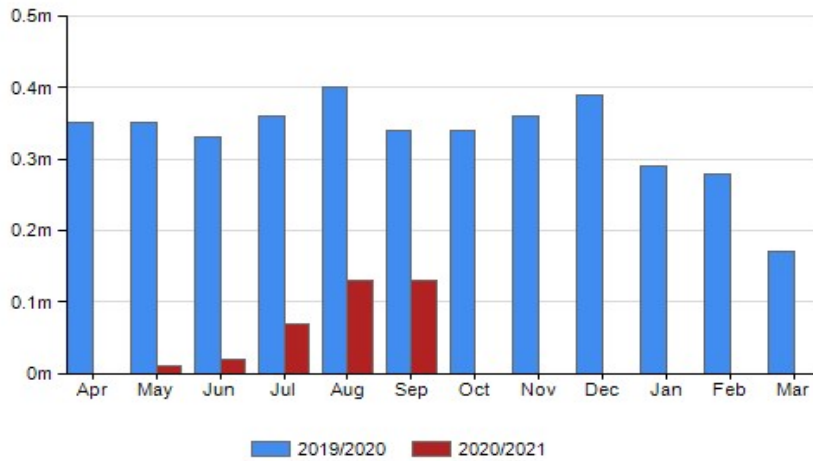


Economic Recovery - Public Transport

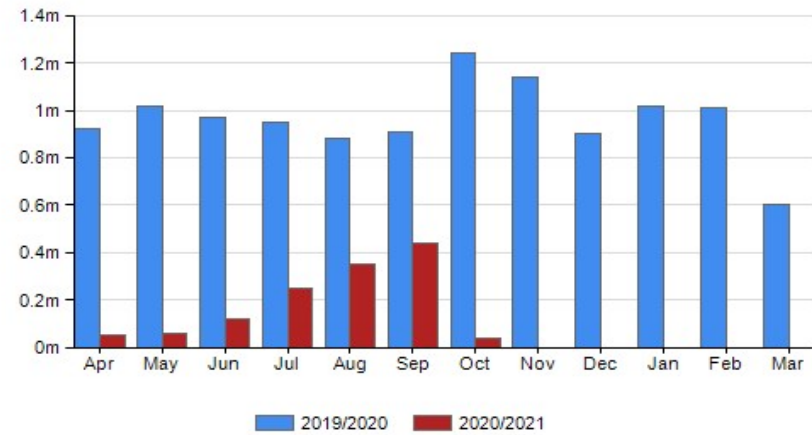
Bus Journeys

- The following charts show monthly patronage for bus journeys within the authority
- Discounted tickets have been on offer during the summer and following the end of the autumn lockdown to incentivise travel

P&R Passenger Journeys - (LI 3 b) - (2009 baseline: 3,941,852)



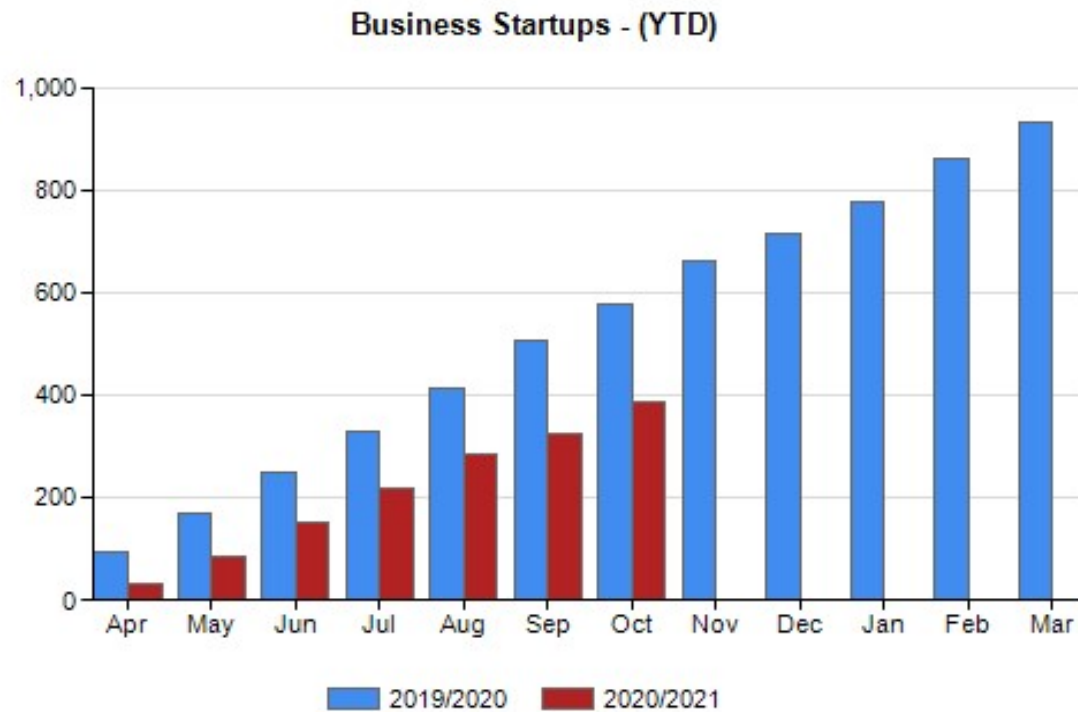
Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (excluding P&R) (LI 3 a) - (2009 baseline: 10,832,614)



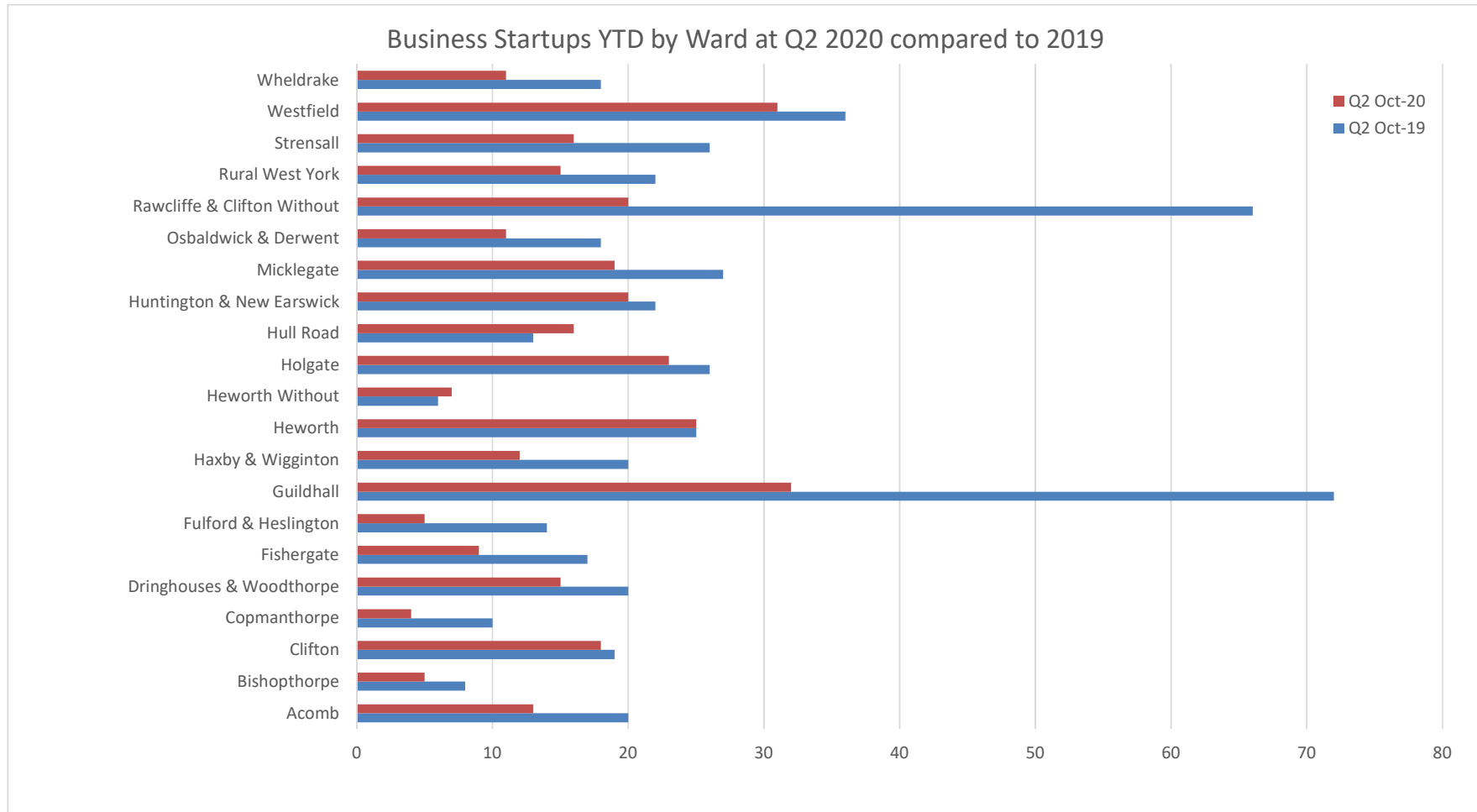
Economic Recovery - Business Startups

Business Startups - BankSearch

- The number of business startups YTD at October was 389 which is a rate of 28 per 10,000 working age population. Although a steady increase can be seen over recent months this is still below the 2019 figure of 580 (41.8 per 10,000 working age population) for the same period
- The chart on the following page shows the number of startups per ward at Q2 compared to 2019

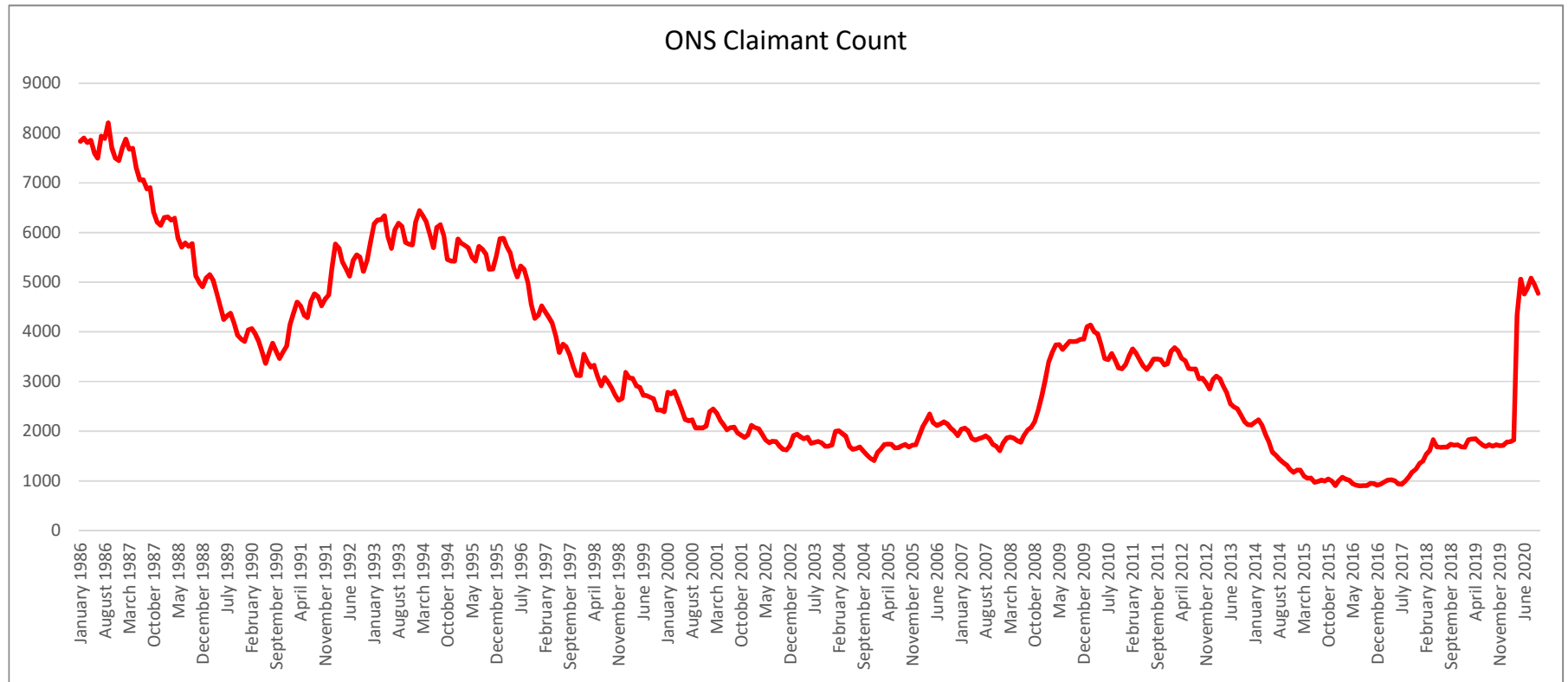


Economic Recovery - Business Startups



ONS Claimant Count

Long term measure of unemployment benefit claimants



Source: [nomis - official labour market statistics \(ONS\)](#)

This experimental series counts the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work and replaces the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance as the headline indicator of the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed.

ONS Claimant Count by ward

October 2020

Wards	Claimant rate (%age of 16-64 population)	All categories: Age 16+	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
Westfield	6.1	540	120	295	120
Clifton	5.1	365	95	195	75
Heworth	4.8	480	125	255	100
Holgate	4.4	385	75	220	90
Micklegate	3.9	370	60	215	95
Huntington & New Earswick	3.7	275	55	135	80
Acomb	3.6	205	45	120	40
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe	3.4	235	60	110	65
Guildhall	3.3	480	100	285	95
Rawcliffe & Clifton Without	2.9	225	55	105	65
Bishopthorpe	2.8	60	15	30	20
Heworth Without	2.6	55	15	25	15
Osbalwick & Derwent	2.6	120	20	75	25
Strensall	2.6	130	20	75	35
Fishergate	2.4	195	45	110	40
Fulford & Heslington	2.4	55	15	30	10
Hull Road	2.2	275	85	145	40
Rural West York	2.2	100	30	45	25
Wheldrake	2.2	55	15	30	10
Haxby & Wigginton	2.1	135	30	70	35
Copmanthorpe	2.0	45	15	25	5
York total	3.4	4,775	1,090	2,595	1,090

Source: [nomis - official labour market statistics \(ONS\)](#)

This experimental series counts the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work and replaces the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance as the headline indicator of the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed.

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How York city centre performed in 2020

Summary report looking at footfall, visitor origin and visitor spend data



Introduction



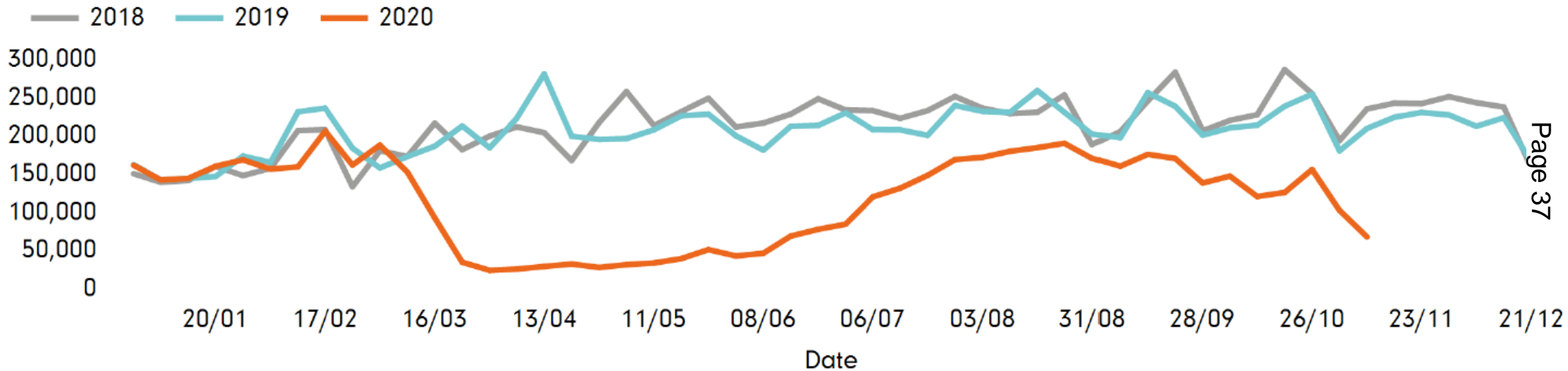
York BID and City of York Council have purchased information from Movement Insights to better understand the performance of York City centre. In summary;

- ❑ this report is by no means definitive – part of its purpose is to demonstrate the type of data the city now has the ability to analyse;
- ❑ all information is anonymous;
- ❑ data from O2 (one third of all UK mobile users) shows the origin of visitors that come to York city centre. This can be analysed weekly to compliment footfall data;
- ❑ data from Visa (accounting for £1 in every £3 spent in the UK) can be analysed quarterly;
- ❑ data analysis is primarily focused on the city centre, although data is available for York local authority area;
- ❑ analysis of data will be used to better understand city performance and help inform investment decisions e.g. targeted marketing spend;
- ❑ this report focuses on data from January 2020 through to November 2020.

Footfall

The drop in visitors coming to York city centre in 2020 is clear & stark!

Graph: Footfall in York Jan 2020 to 1st Nov 2020

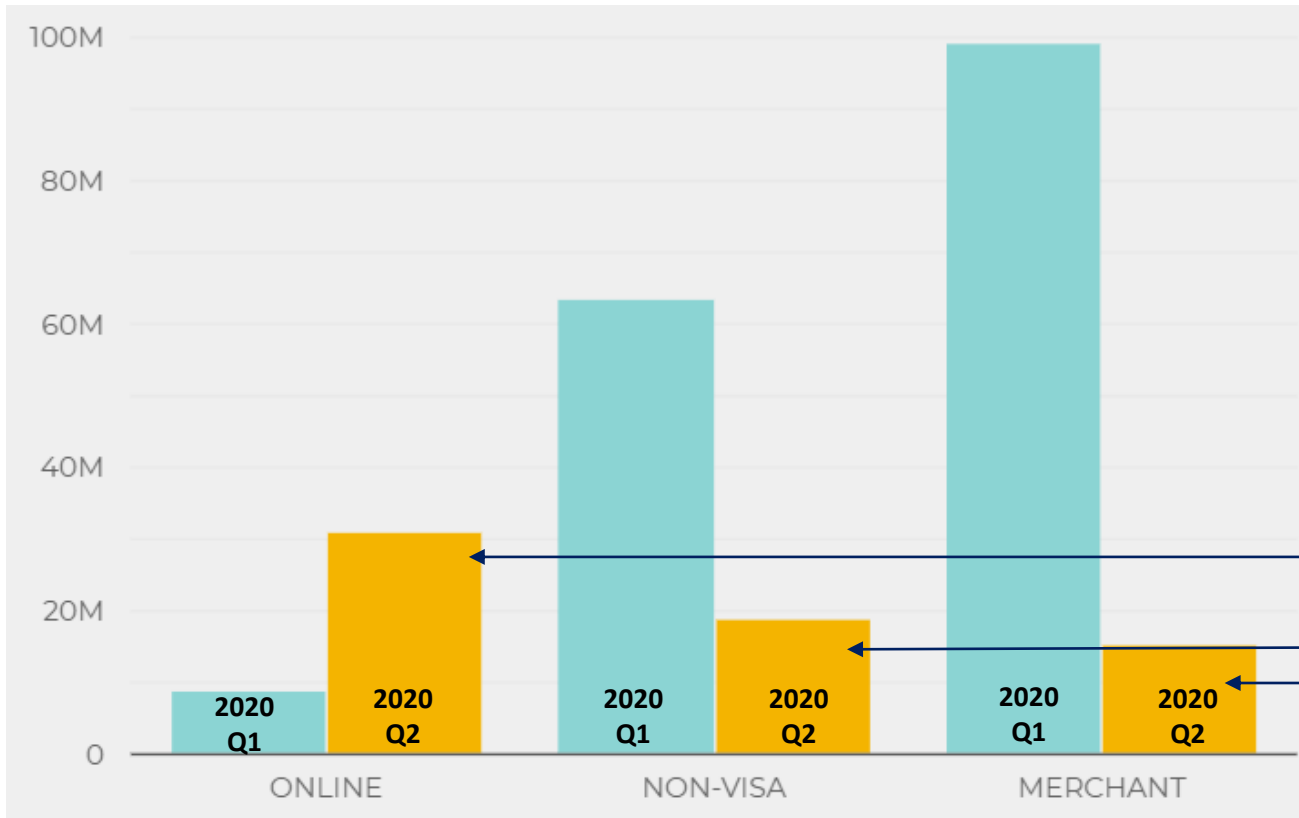


- ❑ Footfall in York was performing as normal before mid March. The graph shows a steep drop off during lockdown.
- ❑ Footfall started to recover from June, but year to date (1st Jan – 15th Nov) it is **43.4% down** on the equivalent time period in 2019. The UK average is **44.1% down**.
- ❑ York did perform better than many UK cities over the summer period, due to the demand for staycations. For example, when looking at the week ending 30th August, footfall in York was down -17% on the same week in 2019, where the equivalent UK average was -33%.

Spend

Drop in city centre spend in Q2 (lockdown) pronounced

Graph: 2020 Q1 vs Q2 spend for Visa online, Visa merchant and non Visa/cash



- Online spend increased 245%
- Non Visa and cash dropped -70% and Visa merchant -84%

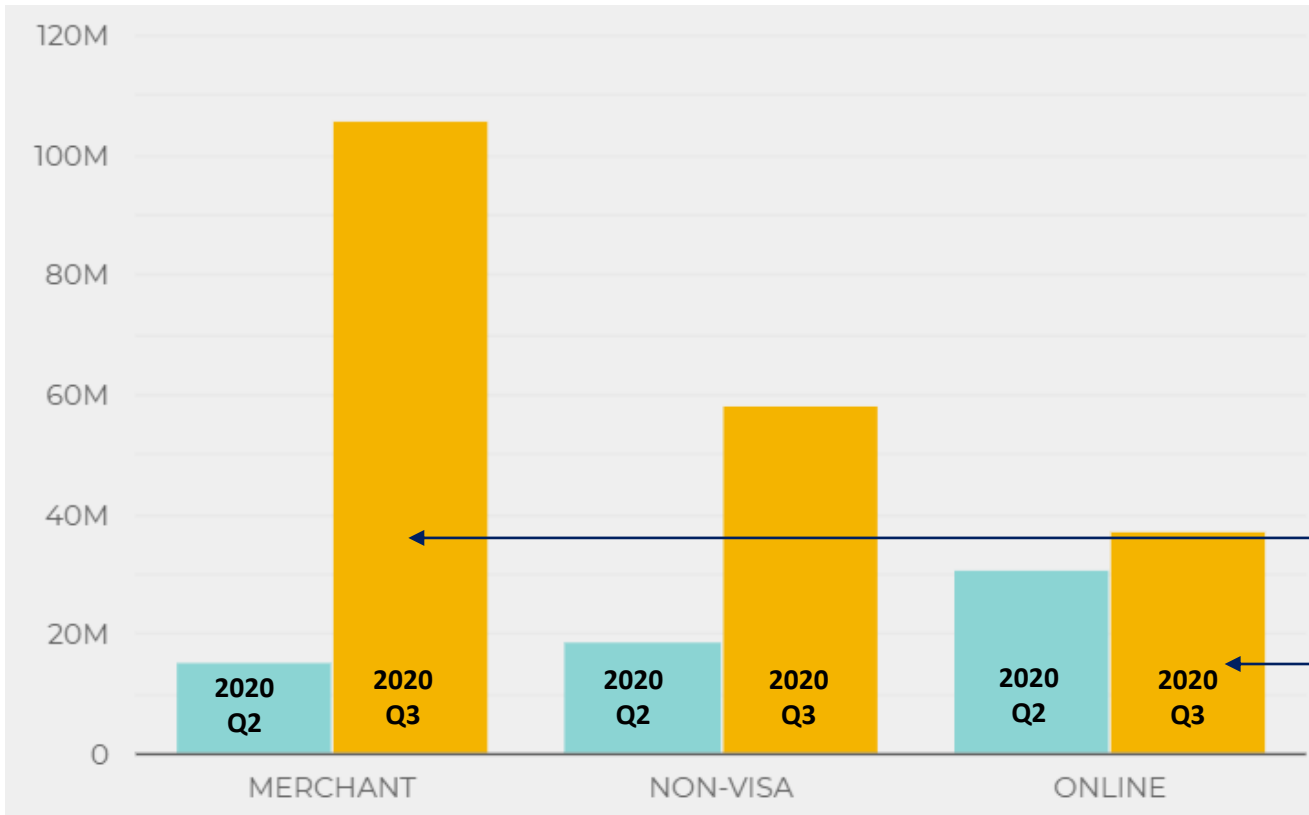
Notes:

- BID has access to VISA data for 2020 quarters (calendar year) 1-3, with some historical data for 2019.
- York city centre, defined as YO1 postcode (circa 1km radius from the centre).
- Note that UK entered full lock down restrictions 23rd March 20, with non essential retail opening 15th June.
- Merchant data = Visa spend in store / Non Visa = other card providers / online = internet spend for people living in YO1 postcode

Spend

The city centre recovered in Q3, but shift to online remained and increased

Graph: 2020 Q2 vs Q3 Spend for Visa online, Visa merchant and non Visa & cash



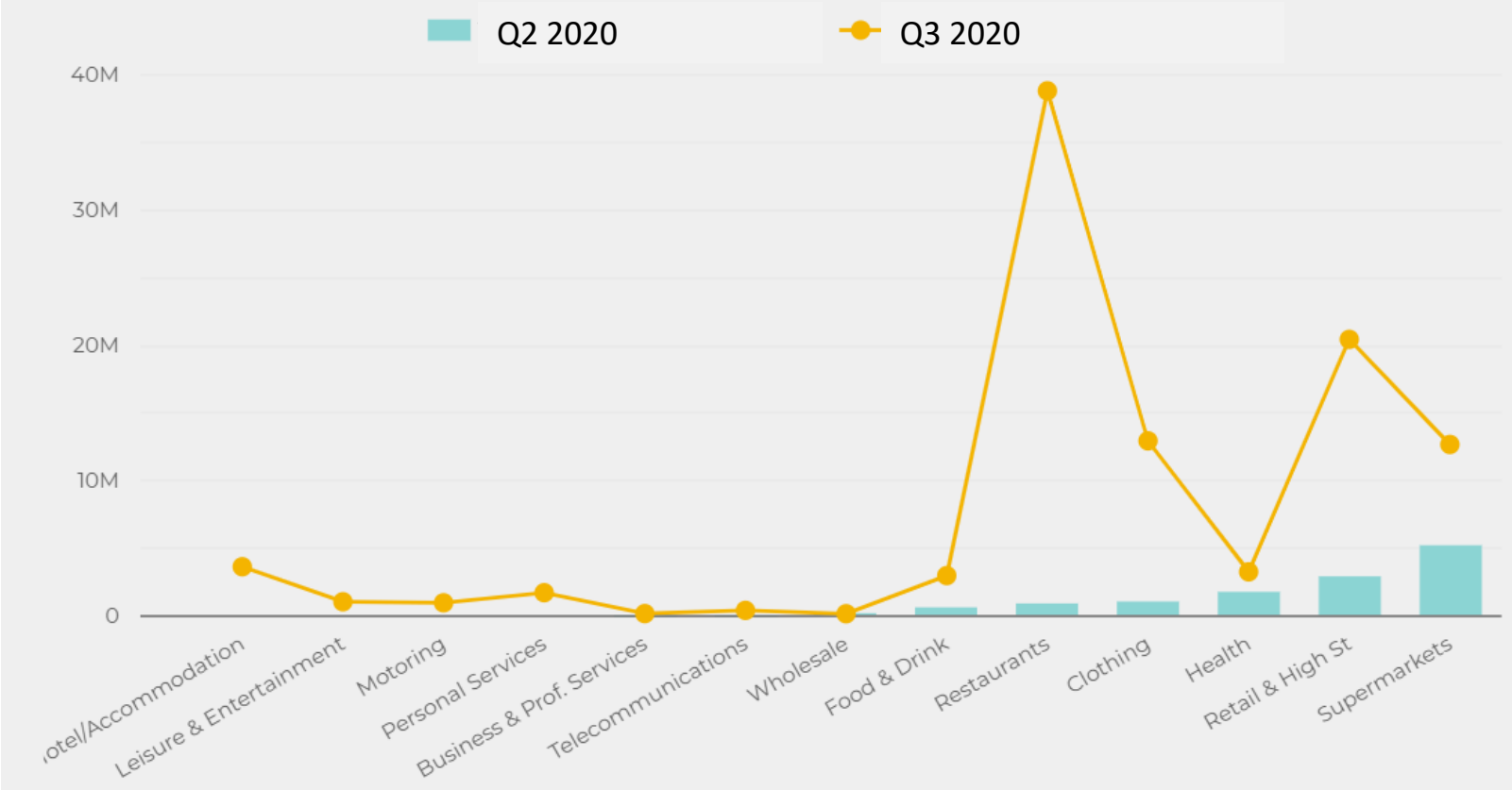
- ❑ Q3 Visa merchant up **582%** on Q2 at £106m spend. For comparison, Q4 2019 (run up to Xmas) saw £146m spent.
- ❑ Online remains strong 37m, 20% higher than Q2 (lockdown) and 315% higher than Q1 (pre-covid trading).

- ❑ Data gives an indication of **how the city centre recovered**
- ❑ Merchant data = Visa spend in store / Non Visa = other card providers / online = internet

Spend

The spending bounce back was significant for certain sectors

Graph: 2020 Q2 vs Q3 for Visa merchant only



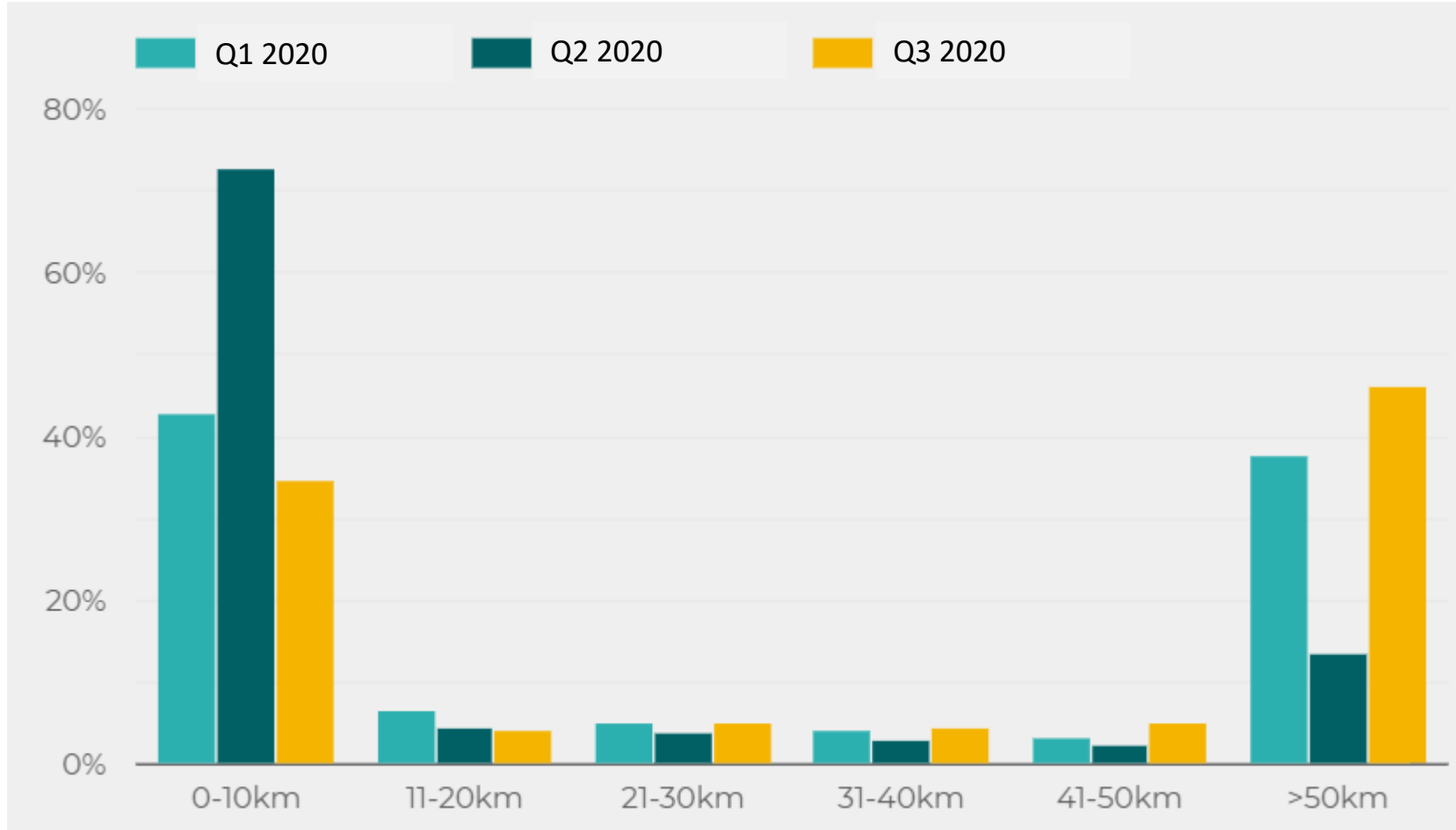
Big benefactors of the city re-opening clearly restaurants, retail and city centre supermarkets

- ❑ The table shows the VISA merchant data, Q2 vs Q3 broken down by category.
- ❑ NOTE: Categories such as professional services and hotel/ accommodation must be treated with caution, as payments often made online in advance, as opposed to with the merchant in the city centre.

Spend

There are two distinct 'spenders' in the city; locals and visitors from further afield

Graph: % Merchant spend by distance (Q1 – Q3 2020)



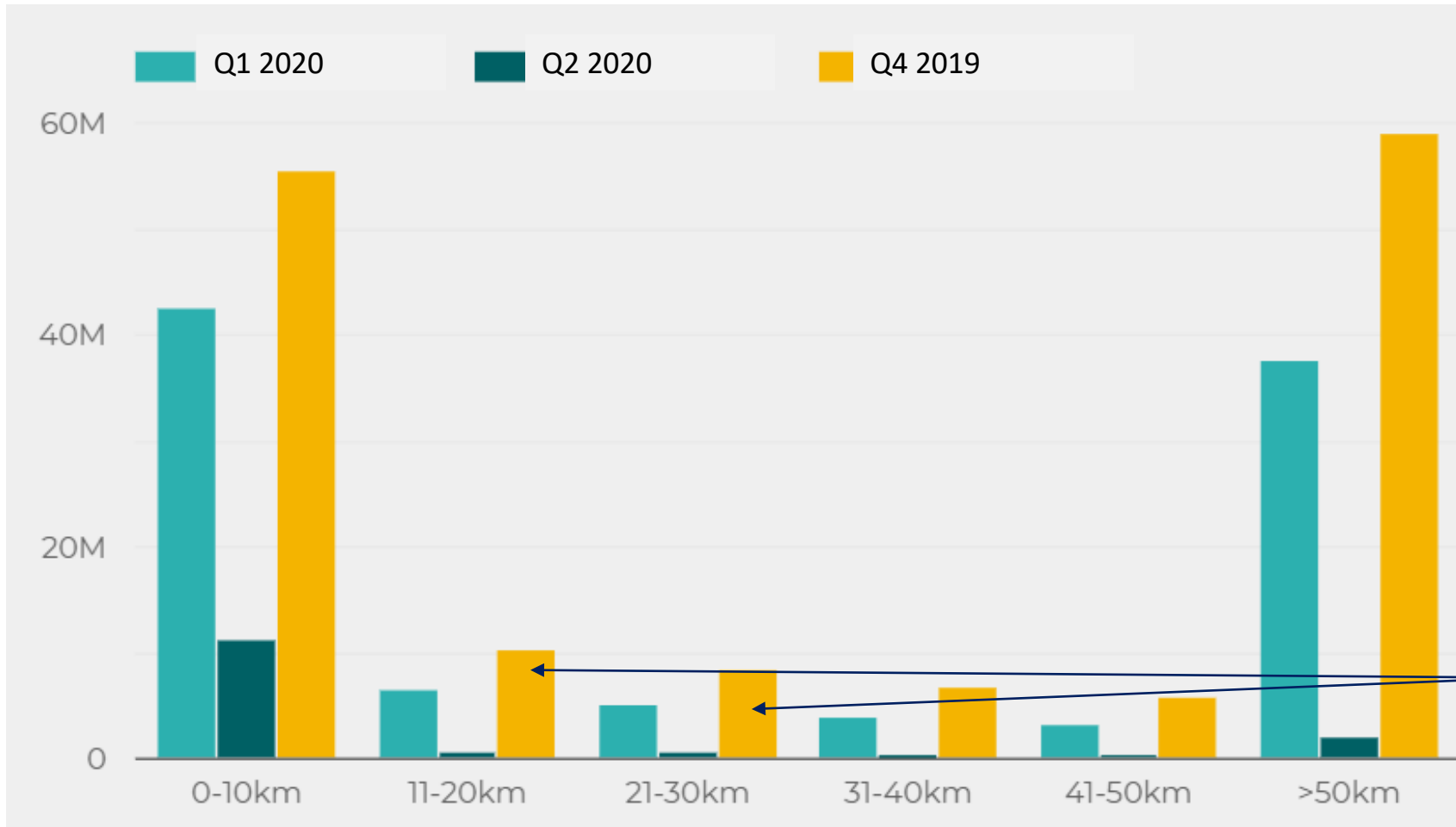
- ❑ Q1 (Jan – Mar) largest spenders in city centre were local people within 10km.
- ❑ During Q2 lockdown, 73% of spend came from locals.
- ❑ In Q3 (the recovery), 46% of spend came from visitors 50km + away.

❑ Data is for VISA merchant spend

Spend

Lost spend from visitors >50km means marketing to York hinterland crucial

Graph: £ Merchant spend by distance Q1 & 2 2020 & Q4 (run up to Xmas) 2019



- Q4 2019 (run up to Christmas, circa £59m spent by visitors 50km+. Large majority of these consumers likely not to come in 2020!
- £55m was spent by local people.
- A further £10m by those 11-20km away and £8m from those 21-30km away.
- Targeting these groups for Christmas 2020 essential!

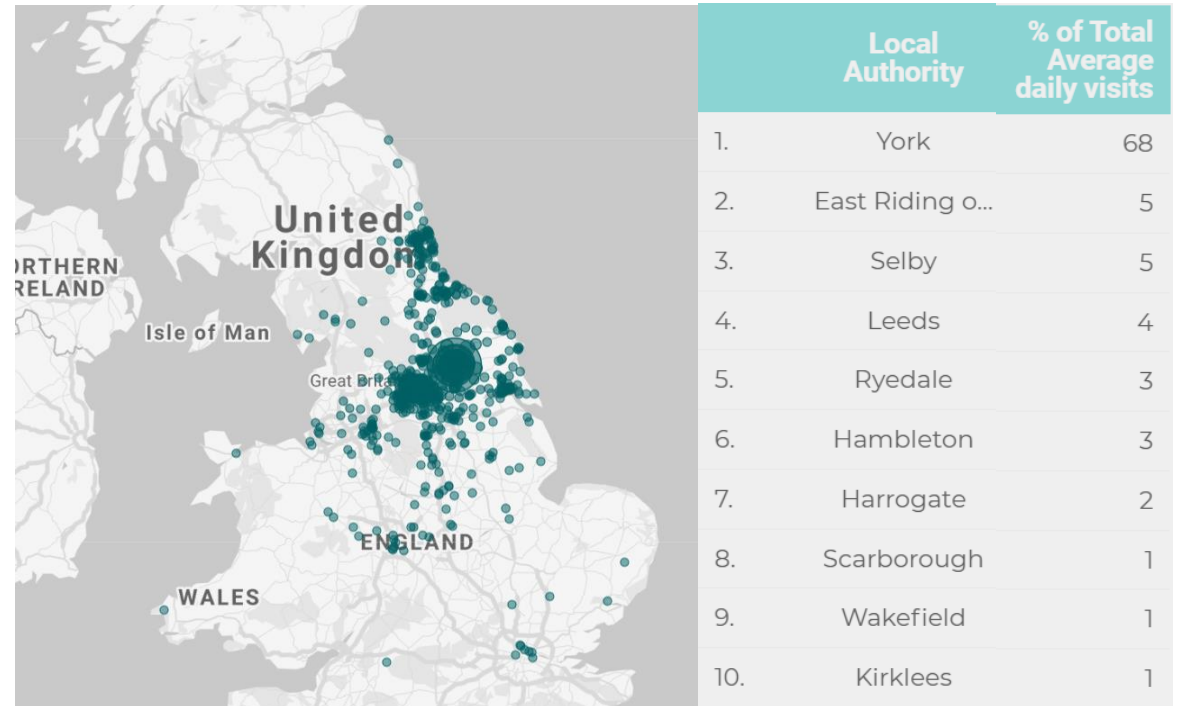
Visitor Origin

The main users of the city centre are local - even in half term holiday, 68% of people using city were from York

Map: Visitors to York week ending 25th October



Map: Visitors to York week ending 1st November (half term)

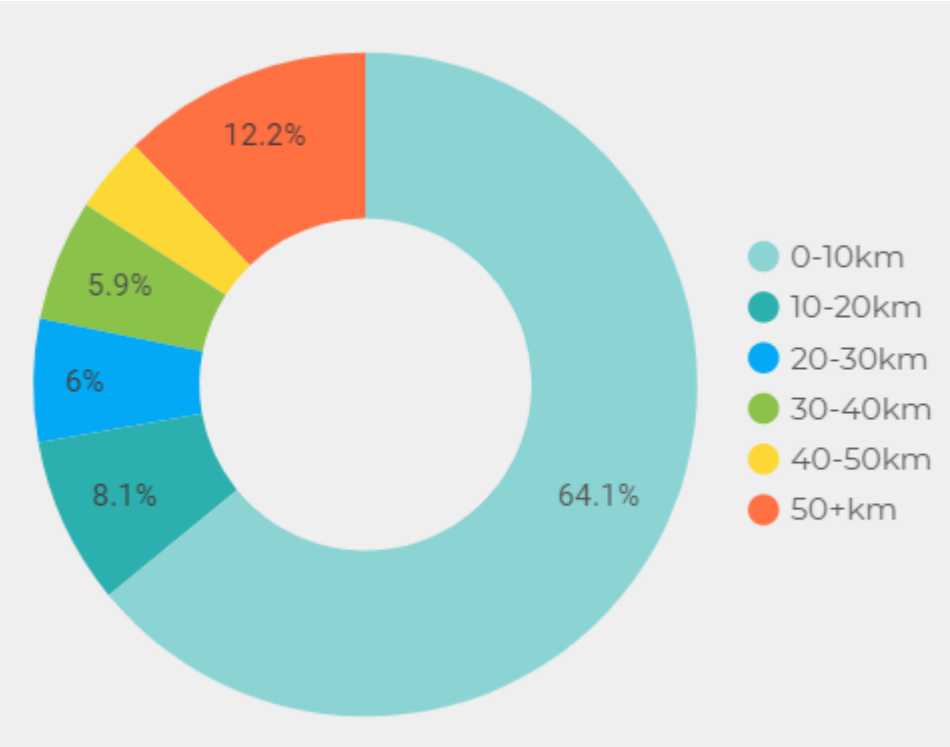


☐ Data from O2 is anonymous

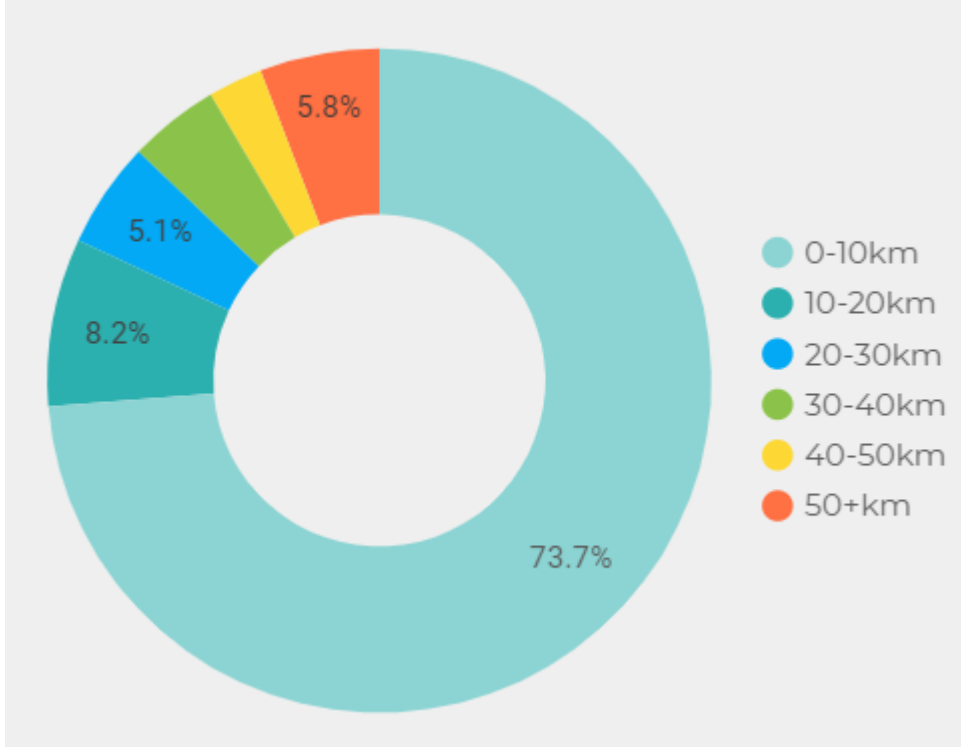
Visitor catchment distance

Holiday periods effect visiting patterns for those living 0-10km and 50km+; but patterns for those living 10 – 50km remains consistent.

Graph: Catchment distance wk/ ending 6th Sept 20
(last week summer holidays)



Graph: Catchment distance wk/ ending 25th Oct 20
(a 'non holiday week')

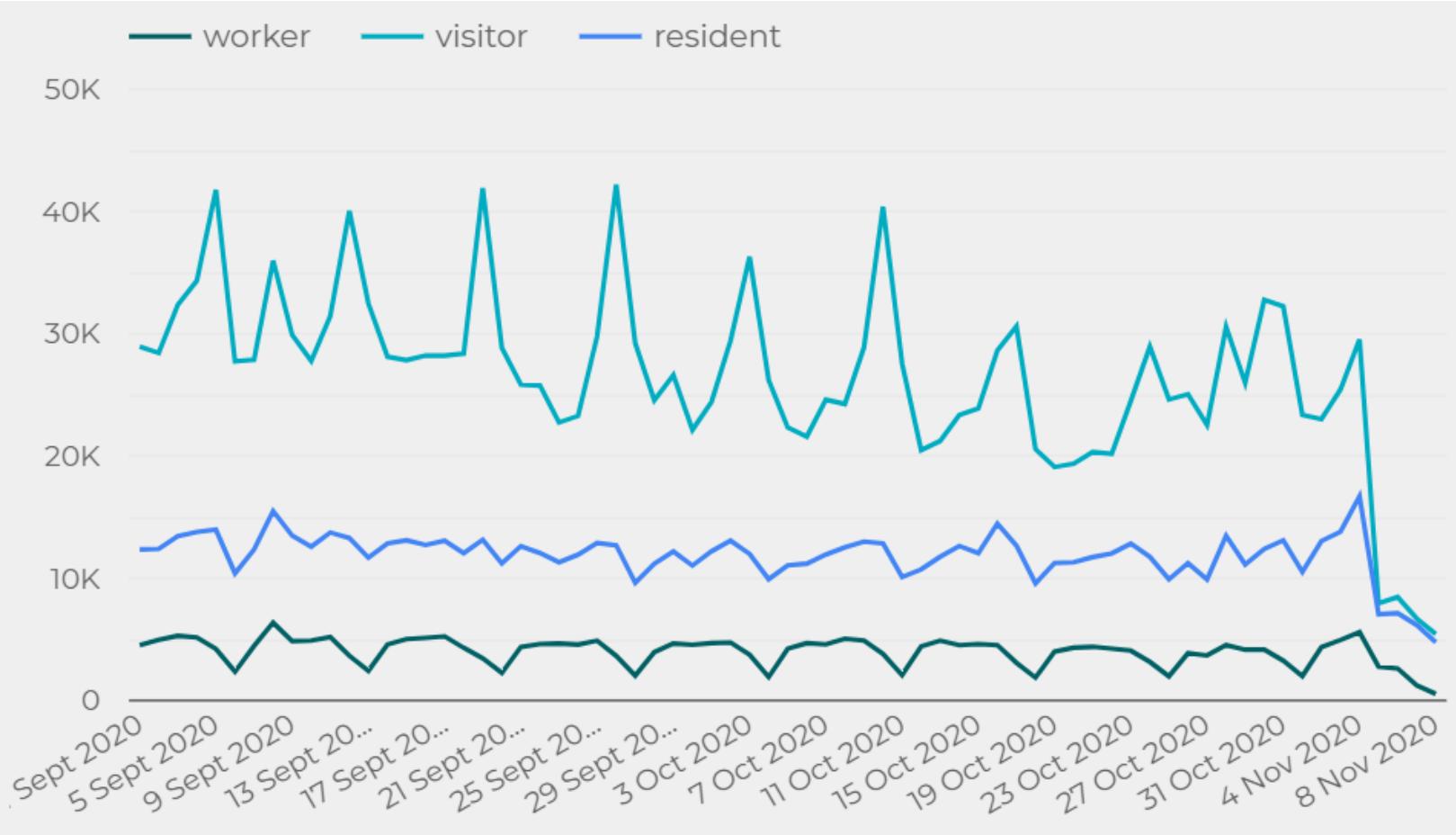


- ❑ Data includes residents, visitors and workers.
- ❑ The graphs show clearly that the majority users of the city centre are what would be classed as local i.e. within 10km of city centre.
- ❑ Data from O2 only starts 1st Sept, so no data available before this period i.e. unable to look at whole summer holiday period.

Visitor Type

Data shows that workers, visitors and residents have all respected second lockdown

Graph: Daily number of journeys by visitor type



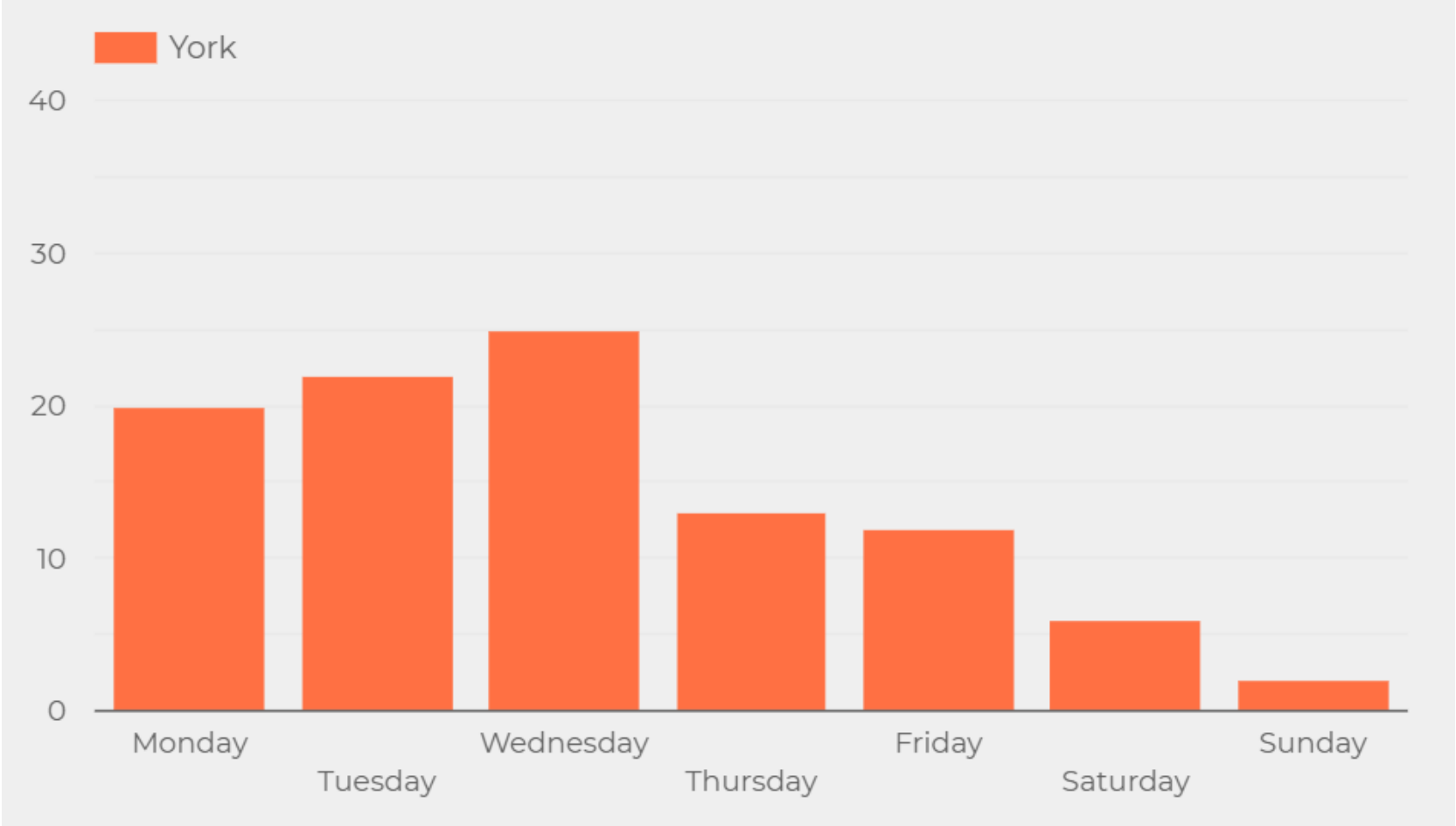
- Graphs shows clear patterns on usage, with visitors coming at the weekend (Saturdays in particular) where resident usage is consistent.
- Sunday is the day with least workers in the city centre.

- Time period is 1st Sept – 8th Nov 2020
- Resident** is classed as someone who lives within 1km of city centre
- Data collection only started 1st Sept, so there is no comparison information for what pre-Covid journeys by visitor type look like

Worker patterns in lockdown 2

Data shows that workers make more journeys into the city at the start of the week

Graph: % of journeys for workers/ commuters wk/ ending 8th Nov

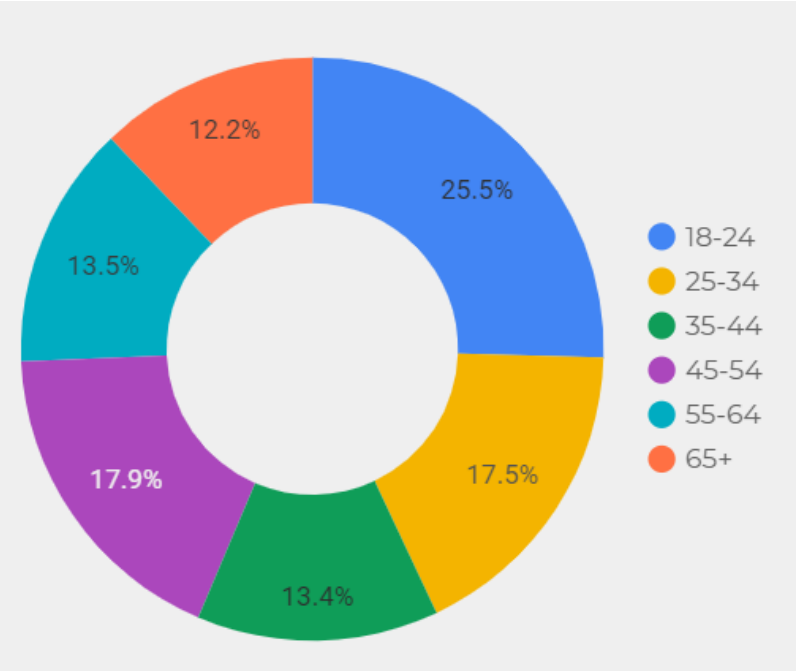


□ Time period week ending 8th Nov 2020
□ Worker locations are where users spend a substantial period during the working day (all data anonymised)

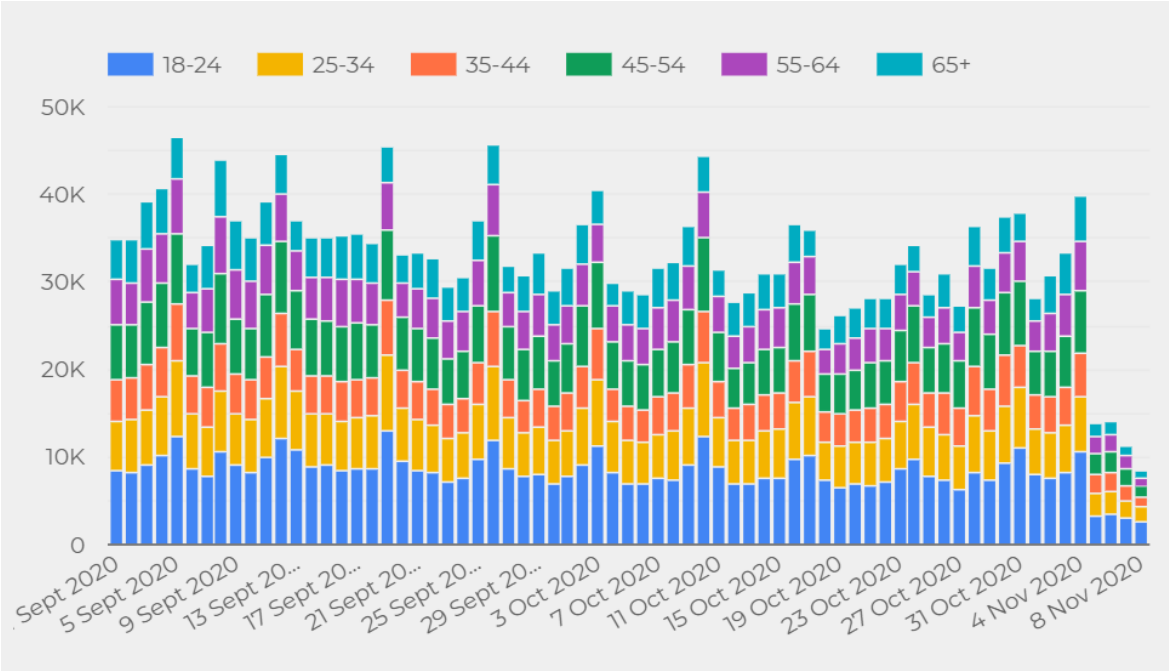
Visitor age

During Oct half term main users of city centre those aged 18 - 34

Graph: Visitor age for wk ending 1st Nov 20 (Oct half term)



Graph: Visitor by age 1st Sept – 8th Nov 20

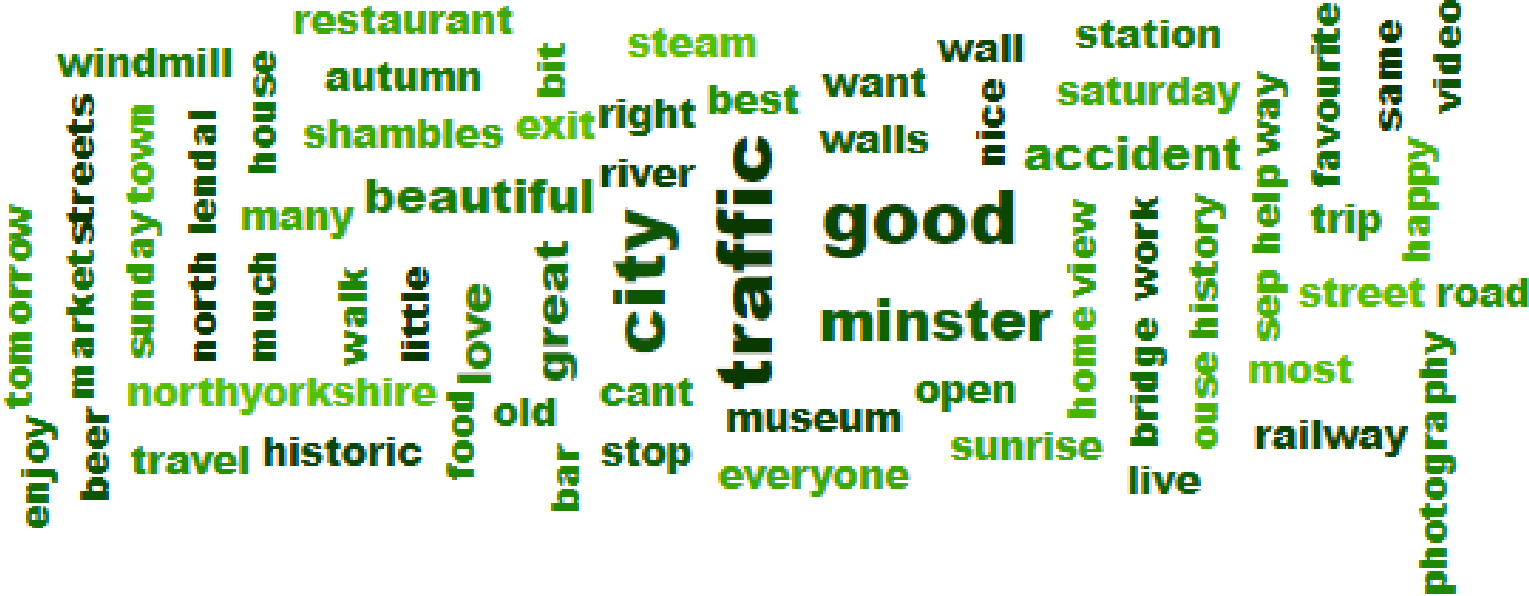


- ❑ Second national lockdown began 4th November 2020
- ❑ Individual days can be analysed to observe patterns e.g 18 – 34 percentage share of visits increases on Saturdays, probably linked to early eve economy.

Social media sentiment

Local 'tweets' can be analysed to ascertain positive/ negative stories in the city

Graphic: Most popular tweet terms Sept 2020



- ❑ Going forward, this can be looked at for distinct time periods i.e. one day, so if an event is put on, part of the measure of success can be looking at whether people talked about it on social media?
- ❑ Analysis can be viewed at different time frames; days, weeks, months.

Thank You

This analysis is brought to you by



MOVEMENT
INSIGHTS

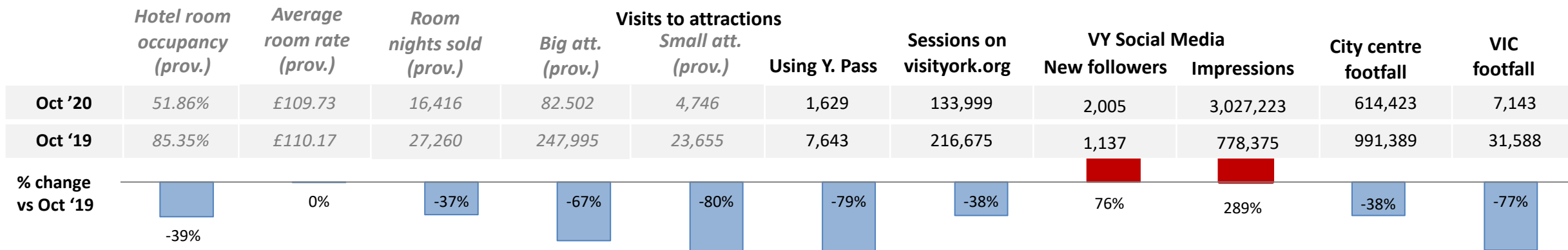


Co-funded by

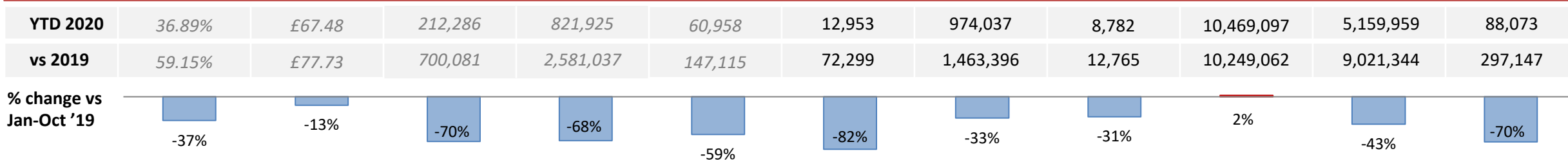


For more info contact info@theyorkbid.com

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- The provisional data for hotels shows a -39% decrease in hotel occupancy vs October 2019, however the average room rate is on par with the same month last year - thanks to the government’s support scheme allowing hospitality businesses to reduce their VAT from 20% to 5%. October 2020 has also continued the downward trend in terms of room nights sold, with a -37% decrease vs October 2019. Year to date all of the metrics continue to show a decline.
- Big attractions have had significantly less visitors in October vs the same month last year (-67%), while small attractions have seen a decrease of -80% in visitors. This is due to big attractions operating at a reduced capacity with pre-booked visits only and many small attractions deciding not to re-open in 2020 after the lockdown was lifted. October 2019 also includes numbers from school visits during half-term – group visits were not possible this year due to Covid-19. Year on year data continues to show a decrease with big attractions reporting a -68% drop in visitors and small attractions showing a -59% decrease when compared to 2019.
- The number of visits using York Pass is significantly down (-79%) compared to October 2019, which is due to a reduced number of visitors travelling to York.
- Sessions on visityork.org have decreased (-38%) vs October 2019. However, social media channels have seen a major rise in both number of followers (76% up) and impressions (289% up) vs October 2019. This is due to the paid social media campaign promotion of ‘Light and Dark’ and the October half-term/Halloween offer.
- City centre footfall is down by -38%, when compared to October 2019, while year to date the numbers are down -43%. Footfall into the Visitor Information centre has decreased significantly (-77%) vs October 2019.



Climate: Ave temp 10°C. **Events:** York’s Medieval & Magical Treasure Trail, York Mediale 2020, York Design Week

[Find out more about the profile of visitors to York and consumer sentiment here](#)

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**Decision session – Executive Member for
Economy and Strategic Planning**

22 December 2020

**Report of the Assistant Director Education and Skills
Skills and Employment Update**

Summary

1. At his Decision Session on 22 September, the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning received a paper setting out the key skills and employment related issues that York is facing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. It highlighted the need to strengthen the city-wide partnership approach that had been adopted during the early phase of the pandemic, to respond to the immediate needs and increased demand anticipated over the next 12-18 months.
2. The city-wide partnership approach and framework for developing a new skills strategy was agreed. This included the Terms of Reference of the City Skills and Employment Board and remit of Task & Finish Group, comprising partners from York's FE colleges, universities and the council.
3. The associated communications plan and suggested timelines for production of a one-year plan to 'Help people through change' and a 10-year strategy for '21st Century Jobs' were also agreed.
4. Whilst York's 10-year skills strategy will support York's longer-term strategy for economic recovery, the focus of the one-year plan needs to be on aligning existing and emerging provision to address the immediate needs and increased demands expected over the next 12 months.
5. This report provides an update on the skills and employment support available to people and businesses within York and how the council is working with partners to:
 - align and, where possible, adapt existing public-funded provision
 - shape local implementation of new national initiatives
 - communicate support available to residents, young people and businesses
 - signpost York's emerging and future skills needs to influence the development of York and & North Yorkshire LEP plans.

6. In addition to updating on actions to respond to the immediate economic impact of Covid-19, this report also provides an updated timeline for the development of the one-year plan and skills strategy, and covers the progress made by the Skills and Employment Board's Task & Finish Group to build an evidence base that will underpin these.

Recommendation

7. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - i. review and support the activity detailed in the skills and employment update report including, the formation of the Skills and Employment Board and the progress made by the Task and Finish Group towards building a robust evidence base.
 - ii. approve the approach taken to develop the one-year skills plan, which is to prioritise activity that will help support people and businesses through change. The approach will continue to maximise the impact of current support available and that to be implemented in 2021.
 - iii. support and approve the updated timeline for completion and sign off of the one-year plan, which allows for the latest Government skills and employment support to be reflected in the plan.

Reason: To continue to help support people and businesses through change over the next 12 months and highlight the role of skills in supporting York's economic recovery from Covid-19 in the longer term.

Introduction

8. Economic forecasts are still predicting a significant number of job losses across the global economy but with the recently announced extension to the Job Retention Scheme, the peak of unemployment is now expected in early summer 2021. For York, current estimates suggest a potential rise in benefit claimant count to around 10,000 at that time.
9. York's current benefit claimant rate is 4,775 and has remained relatively consistent in recent months (Oct 2020 Vs 4,995 July 2020). According to Centre for Cities, York has the lowest percentage of benefit claimants nationally, at a rate of 3.4%, a 2.1% rise since March 2020. Of this, around 1,100 claimants are in the 'youth' category (those aged 16-24), with a benefit claimant count of 3.1%

10. As work on the one-year plan continues through to end of January 2021, the council is already delivering on its commitment to help people through change by facilitating city-wide partnerships and communicating the support available to individuals and businesses.

Skills and employment support

Aligning and, where possible, adapting existing public-funded provision

Individuals

11. Public funded face-to-face skills support for individuals, including most Jobcentre Plus services, stopped during the first lockdown. The council's FutureGoals programme which supports those aged 15-24 into education and training and York Learning's adult, community and family learning offers quickly adapted to provide remote support.
12. Apprenticeship training providers also moved to delivering training online. The council's skills team utilised its apprenticeship provider network to gain an understanding of the emerging picture for learners, employers and the providers themselves.
13. Despite some providers needing to place their own business engagement and wider support teams on furlough, any apprentices made redundant during this time were supported. The council run York Apprenticeship Hub was also on hand to help source alternative employment and signpost to the National Redundancy Support Service for the small number who needed it.
14. The rapid move to digital learning and work has meant that work is continuing to address the challenges this has created for some learners. A key concern reported by a range of employment and skills providers continues to be that some learners do not have sufficient connectivity and/or access to access to IT equipment to support online learning. Where possible, providers have loaned equipment to their learners and as part of the council's digital inclusion strategy, a new city-wide scheme, designed to digitally connect residents through donated laptops or tablets, will provide further targeted support

Businesses

15. In February 2020, with the support of the Employment Related Services Association (ERSA) and Leeds University Business School, the council's skills team held a workshop with commissioners and delivery partners of public funded skills and employment support in the city. The ambition of

the ERSA project was to make engagement more effective for employers and through its York impact study, partners wanted to identify ways to make it easier for businesses to engage with and access support.

16. Whilst the pandemic disrupted the intended next steps for this project, the network continued to work together to identify the emerging needs of businesses and adapt provision in response. Providers across the city quickly moved to remote delivery and put much of their training for businesses online. Short-courses and topics such as business resilience, remote working and mental wellness were prioritised.
17. At the same time different national and regional initiatives were being announced so, in partnership with Make It York (MIY), the network developed '**The Skills Hub**'. The online hub is part of the Make It York website and brings together local, regional and national skills and employment support to make it easier for businesses to access the help they need, much of which is fully or part-funded.
18. At the same time, providers with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), European Social Fund (ESF) or European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) contracts considered the impact of the pandemic on their programmes and engaged with their commissioners to, where possible, make adjustments to benefit the needs of local people and businesses.
19. A welcome addition to the local network is the Business Partnership Adviser (BPA) under the Leeds City Region (LCR) ESF-funded **Skills for Growth Programme**. The role of the BPA is to work with individual SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) to help them identify their skills and training needs, signpost them to relevant provision and help develop strategic partnerships with colleges and universities to meet their current and future skills needs. Throughout 2020, the council's skills team worked closely with the programme manager at Leeds to support recruitment of the advisers and ensure the programme supports local priorities.

Shape local implementation of new national initiatives

20. Key to the government's economic and fiscal strategy is ensuring it meets the immediate need to support workers and businesses as the UK recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic. Under its 'Plan for Jobs', the Government unveiled ambitious plans to support people in finding jobs, enable them to gain the skills they need to get jobs and provide targeted help for young people to get into work. National initiatives that the council and partners are helping to implement in York include:

21. **Apprenticeships** - employer incentives of between £1,500 and £3,000 (dependent upon age of the apprentice) for hiring a new apprentice introduced and then extended, as part of the Chancellor's spending review, to March 2021
22. The council run impartial Apprenticeship Hub continues to support individuals, businesses and training providers in York to make the most of apprenticeships.
23. Whilst the split between advertised apprenticeship vacancies at different levels has remained about the same (the majority of opportunities at level 3, continuing a trend of very few at level 2, and the number of higher and degree remaining about the same), the overall volume of advertised vacancies is around half of that in previous years.
24. The availability of level 2 apprenticeships is a national concern following the transition from apprenticeship frameworks to standards. However, the impact of the pandemic on retail, hospitality and tourism sectors in York has consequently affected the apprenticeship market.
25. In the last 10 months the predominance of hospitality, retail and tourism related apprenticeships, at about 30% of the previous 1,400 per annum market, has declined to near zero. Traditionally, these are also sectors in which people would have accessed entry level (level 2) opportunities.
26. In recent months, advertised apprenticeship vacancies have tended to be in pharmacy, dental, early years and care roles. Whilst manufacturing, particularly in the food supply sector, has remained at previous levels. The Apprenticeship Hub is therefore proactively working with employers in these sectors to support the creation of new apprenticeship opportunities.
27. **Kickstart Scheme** – £2bn fund to create high quality work placements for those aged 16-24 at risk of long-term unemployment. For each six-month placement (until December 2021), the Government covers the National Minimum Wage, associated employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment contributions for 25 hours per week. In addition, £1,500 per job placement is available for setup costs, support and training, which includes helping participants to develop the employability skills and experience they need to find work after completing the scheme.

28. The council's skills team has been working with DWP and York & North Yorkshire LEP to shape local rollout of this programme. In particular, advising local organisations about the process of becoming a Gateway organisation and guiding businesses with fewer than 30 placements to appropriate support.
29. The early bids for placements by employers with 30 or more vacancies were the first to be reviewed and York was one of the first areas in the DWP district to receive live vacancies. Bids from Gateway organisations and those more recently submitted by employers are still being considered.
30. Kickstart is still in a very early phase but there are some encouraging signs of potential placements with large local employers, and support from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) as a Gateway organisation.
31. York Learning also submitted an early expression of interest to become a Gateway organisation and is working with local businesses to develop their employability support offer and initial bid of at least 30 placements.
- 32. Traineeships** – additional funding for traineeships in England to fund high quality work placements and training for 16-24 year olds. Trainees do not receive a salary but the Government will fund the employer £1,000 per trainee.
33. Traineeship opportunities in York are limited with fewer than 5, in a 10 mile radius of York, advertised via the national find a traineeship service. Through the Apprenticeship Hub, the council continues to work with providers and employers to promote the need for additional opportunities.
34. York Learning has recently secured additional funding to deliver a small number of traineeships in Business Administration and Customer Service for those aged 19 – 24.
- 35. Industry Placements: T-levels** - £162 million in 2021-22 to support the rollout of T Levels wave 2 and 3.
36. York College was selected to deliver T-levels for 16-19 year olds from launch in September 2020 and in 2021/22 will offer courses in digital, construction, education & childcare and health.

37. **Expanded Youth Offer** – increased intensive support offered by DWP in Great Britain to young jobseekers, to include all those aged 18-24 in the Intensive Work Search group in Universal Credit
38. To help make this support more accessible to young people, the skills team has been working with partners at Job Centre Plus and Aspire-igen on plans to implement a Youth Hub in York. The hub will look to bring together a range of youth services, starting with a dedicated Jobcentre Plus Youth Employment Coach and advisers from the council's FutureGoals and Aspire-igen's Accelerate programmes.
39. Plans to develop a physical hub in the city centre were impacted by the second national lockdown and DWP is now considering whether the hub should initially be launched as a virtual offer.
40. **Job finding support service** – £40m for private sector capacity to introduce a job finding support service in Great Britain. This online, one-to-one service helps those (of any age) who have been unemployed for less than three months increase their chances of finding employment.
41. Throughout November and December, York successfully trialled this service ahead of the national rollout planned for January 2021.
42. **New funding for sector-based work academies** – additional £17m this year to triple the number of sector-based work academy placements in England in order to provide vocational training and guaranteed interviews for more people, helping them gain the skills needed for the jobs available in their local area.
43. In York these are being well-received by employees across a variety of sectors and are supporting people to change sector through developing transferable skills. Academies have included training for roles in rail engineering, customer service, civil service, manufacturing and security.
44. **Flexible Support Fund** – increased funding by £150m in Great Britain, including to increase the capacity of the Rapid Response Service. It will also provide local support to claimants by removing barriers to work such as travel expenses for attending interviews.

Communicate support available to residents, young people and businesses

45. As detailed in the council's Skills and Employment Recovery Communications Plan, a key strand of work was to develop an online

information hub where residents and employees can find information about and access skills, training and employment support.

46. The Skills Hub, hosted on the Make It York business-facing website (see section 17), brings this information together for employers, whilst support for people looking for employment and training can be found on the council's website at <https://www.york.gov.uk/LetsBeYorkSkills>
47. A variety of council and partner channels are being used to signpost to these hubs to help build reach and engagement. These include the council's regular resident and parents' newsletters, and the Family Information Service for signposting to the Let's Be York webpage and FutureGoals programme. The Skills Hub and specific programmes are promoted to businesses via the council, business support partners and Make It York newsletters and social media channels.
48. The skills team also plays a key role in providing information to support positive transitions for those leaving secondary or further education. Working with education, training and business partners, in August, the council hosted a Facebook #AskTheLeaders Q&A for college and school leavers who had questions about local opportunities. The '*Planning your Future Post-16 - A guide for parents, carers and young people*' has also been updated to reflect the local impact of the pandemic and help those currently in Year-11 to make informed choices about their next step in education, training or employment.

Signpost York's emerging and future skills needs to influence the development of York and & North Yorkshire LEP plans.

49. The council continues to work closely with the skills team at York and North Yorkshire LEP to improve local delivery and shape recovery and skills plans.
50. To respond to the challenges of upskilling and reskilling our workforce, the council has already set out a need for £10m to support adult learning and skills development and enable 5,000 people to get better jobs.
51. Through 2020 the council and LEP skills teams have jointly engaged with providers, business support partners, DWP and ESFA to share updates on national initiatives and gather local feedback.

52. A shared priority is to understand and maximise the opportunities in our area for job creation as set out in the Government's 'Plan for jobs'. In particular, how to support the development of suitable expertise in the construction supply chain to deliver the Green Home Grants Scheme.
53. In addition, the city is to benefit from investment from the Government's Getting Building Fund, following a bid by the LEP in June which outlined a list of local projects capable of boosting economic recovery from Covid-19. Askham Bryan College's project to construct a Digital Skills Academy to support skilling and reskilling opportunities, and York College's plan to help increase technical skills capabilities in electric vehicle technologies support key priorities within the Council Plan 2019-2023.

Skills and Employment Board

The skills team Manager has supported Lee Probert, Chair of the Skills and Employment Board, to engage new board members. A list of members is provided (Appendix A) and the first meeting is planned for December 2020.

Task and Finish Group

54. Over the past three months, key skills and education partners in York – Askham Bryan College, York College, University of York, York St John University, York Learning and the council – have been working together as a Task and Finish Group to build an evidence base that will underpin the one-year skills plan and 10-year skills strategy.
55. This work has strengthened the city-wide partnership approach that had been adopted during the early phase of the pandemic, to understand and respond to the changing skills needs of people and businesses.
56. Chaired by The University of York, the Task and Finish Group meets on a monthly basis, with the Chair and City of York Council's Skills Team Manager having regular contact.
57. The main area of work for the Task and Finish Group has been shaping skills summaries for each of the sectors engaged through the roundtables earlier in the year. Building on the output of those discussions, each partner has drafted a localised summary for one or more of those sectors.
58. Where the partnership has strong connections into a sector, especially with microbusinesses and SMEs, they have spoken with those businesses to gather supplementary and 'real-time' qualitative feedback.

59. Seven teams of University of York students complemented this work by conducting in-depth, qualitative interviews with 17 prominent employers from across the city. However, to ensure a robust evidence-base, it's key that feedback is also gathered from those who are seldom heard or hardest to reach.
60. Recognising that many businesses are currently time poor and have areas of concern before skills (as outlined in the *Sector Roundtable Update – Output and Next Steps* paper presented at the Executive Member's Decision Session on 24 November 2020), a simple online survey has been created to gather quantitative data and provide businesses with an opportunity to opt in to sharing their views.
61. Key skills questions from the Make It York business survey (Q2 2020) were included to ensure consistent measures and where possible, allow themes or broad changes to be identified. To help reach businesses of varying sizes and sectors, the survey will be promoted via social media and shared directly with business support agencies and intermediaries.
62. Through the survey, businesses will be able to ask for support with their workforce, skills or training needs by 'opting in' to being contacted by an experienced (council skills team or Make It York) business adviser.
63. In line with the original strategy development timeline, this feedback along with other evidence (outputs of the roundtables and York Business Week discussions, LEP and sector skills academy reports) is being reviewed and a gap analysis prepared which will inform the next phase of the group's work.
64. During this period, the partnership also delivered an interactive **Talent and Skills Event** as part of York Business Week. Supported by local employers and stakeholders including the York & North Yorkshire LEP, Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), this was a key opportunity to raise awareness and connect businesses with the skills and training support available to them. The breakout sessions and panel discussion not only encouraged best practice sharing but provided the opportunity to gather feedback about the current and future skills needs of York's businesses.

Updated timeline – one year plan

65. The partnership remains strong but the capacity of partners has been reduced, particularly through the second period of lockdown. Priority was given to the research work streams to help build the evidence base and

procuring the support of a consultant to keep the development of the 10 year strategy on track.

66. Progress in developing the one-year plan has therefore been slower than set out in the original timeline. However, as demonstrated in sections 11 – 64, the city-wide partnership is working hard to respond to the emerging needs and to connect people and businesses with the skills and employment support that can help.

67. As the one-year plan will focus on maximising and aligning activity to help people and businesses through change, a benefit of the updated timeline (Appendix B) is that it allows for the latest Government skills and employment support (announced in the Chancellor's spending review) to be reflected in the plan.

Consultation

68. Members of the Task and Finish group and the Chair of the Skills and Employment Board are engaged in the work to develop the one-year skills plan, 10-year skills strategy and deliver activity on the ground. At its meeting on 4 December, the Task and Finish Group agreed the one-year plan would be drafted by end January 2021. Jobcentre plus and York Learning have also had input.

Council Plan

69. The Council Plan identifies eight priorities, four of which are relevant to this work:

- Well-paid and an inclusive economy;
- A better start for children and young people;
- Safer communities and culture for all;
- An open and effective council.

Implications

70. The following implications have been considered:

- Financial – no implications
- Human Resources (HR) – no implications
- Equalities – no implications.
- Legal – no implications
- Crime and Disorder – no implications.
- Information Technology (IT) – no implications.
- Property – no implications.

Risk Management

71. No risks identified.

Recommendations

72. The Executive Member is asked to:

- i. review and support the activity detailed in the skills and employment update report including, the formation of the Skills and Employment Board and the progress made by the Task and Finish Group towards building a robust evidence base.
- ii. approve the approach taken to develop the one-year skills plan which is to prioritise activity that will help support people and businesses through change. The approach will continue to maximise the impact of current support available and that to be implemented in 2021.
- iii. support and approve the updated timeline for completion and sign off of the one-year plan, which allows for the latest Government skills and employment support to be reflected in the plan.

Reason: To continue to help support people and businesses through change over the next 12 months and highlight the role of skills in supporting York's economic recovery from Covid-19 in the longer term.

Contact Details

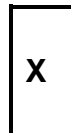
Author:

Alison Edeson
Skills Team Manager
Education & Skills

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Maxine Squire
Assistant Director – Education & Skills

**Report
Approved**



Date 13 December 2020

Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Appendix A_York Skills and Employment Board Membership 2020_21

Appendix B_One-year plan and 10-year skills strategy timeline

**York Skills and Employment Board
Membership for 2020/2021**

Stakeholder Group	Organisation	Member	Role
Local Authority – Executive Member	City of York Council	Councillor Andrew Waller	Executive Member - Economy and Strategic Planning
Local Authority	City of York Council	Maxine Squire	Assistant Director - Education and Skills
FE Colleges	York College	Lee Probert	Chief Executive & Principal
Universities	University of York	Professor Kiran Trehan	Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Partnerships and Engagement
Universities	York St John University	Professor Karen Bryan	Vice-Chancellor
FE Colleges	Askham Bryan College	Dr Tim Whitaker	Chief Executive
Department for Work & Pensions / Jobcentre Plus	York Jobcentre	Angela Stabeler	York & North Yorkshire Employer and Partnership Manager
Large employer representative	West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce	Mark Goldstone	Head of Policy and Business Representation
Small employer representative	Federation of Small Businesses (TBC)	Carolyn Frank	North Yorkshire Development Manager
Local Enterprise Partnership	York and North Yorkshire LEP	Jude Knight	Head of Skills
Employer	Simpson York Limited	Amanda Davidson	HR Manager
Employer	Netsells	Bethan Vincent	Marketing Director
Independent training provider	The Skills Network	Mark Dawe	Chief Executive
Trade Union	TUC (TBC)		

Appendix B: Timeline for the one-year plan and 10-year skills strategy

	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21
Developing the One-year (2021) Plan - Helping people through change							
Developing an Adult Learning & Skills Strategy (to 2030) - 21st Century Jobs							
Skills and Employment Board ToR, T&F Group remit and framework agreed							
Building the evidence base							
CYC and Partner intelligence sharing							
Sector summaries							
LMI and sector specific data (relevant to one-year plan)							
Engagement - Emerging skills and employment needs							
University of York Student Research & Feedback							
Enterprise skills survey							
Intermediary business survey							
Drafting							
Outline framework - one year plan							
Drafting							
One-year (2021) Plan - Helping People through change drafted							
Engagement - Future skills and employment needs							
University of York Student Research & Feedback							
Sector Skills Academies							
Workforce Development Groups							
Drafting							
Outline framework - 10 year strategy							
Drafting 2-5 year strategy							
Drafting 6-10 year strategy							
10-year Strategy - 21st Century Jobs drafted							
Governance							
Task and Finish Group							
Executive Member E&P Decision sessions							
Scrutiny Engagement							
Skills and Employment Board							

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