

**Notice of a public meeting of  
Decision Session - Economic Development and Community  
Engagement (Deputy Leader)**

**To:** Councillor Aspden

**Date:** Tuesday, 12 April 2016

**Time:** 1.30 pm

**Venue:** The Shute Room - 1st Floor West Offices (F023)

**AGENDA**

**Notice to Members - 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:

**4:00 pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016** 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 Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of item on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2016**.

## 1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members 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 - 2)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

## 3. **Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak at the meeting can do so. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016**.

Members of the public may register to speak on an item on the agenda or an issue within the Cabinet Member's remit.

### **Filming or Recording Meetings**

Residents are welcome to photograph, film or record Councillors and Officers at all meetings open to the press and public. This includes the use of social media reporting, i.e. tweeting. Anyone wishing to film, record or take photos at any public meeting should contact the Democracy Officer (whose contact details are at the foot of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at

[http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3130/protocol\\_for\\_webcasting\\_filming\\_and\\_recording\\_of\\_council\\_meetings](http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3130/protocol_for_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings)

## 4. **Acomb Front Street** (Pages 3 - 6)

This report asks the Executive Member (Deputy Leader) to consider a request to transfer the Acomb Front Street budget to Acomb Alive.

## 5. Business Friendly Council

(Pages 7 - 26)

This report provides an update on the work that has been undertaken to progress our business friendly ambitions since the last report to Executive in December 2015.

## 6. Urgent Business

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

### Democracy Officer:

Name: Laura Bootland

Contact Details:

- Telephone – (01904) 552062
- Email [laura.bootland@york.gov.uk](mailto:laura.bootland@york.gov.uk)

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

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Decision Session - Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader)
Date	8 March 2016
Present	Councillor Aspden

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## 8. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member was asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests he may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

## 9. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last Decision Session held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

## 10. **Public Participation**

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

## 11. **Listening to Residents: Review of Neighbourhood Working Arrangements**

The Executive Member considered a report which provided an update on the implementation of the Council's new approach to community engagement through working with local neighbourhoods and the establishment of revised ward committees.

Officers outlined the report and advised that feedback had been received from Members via the scrutiny process and also from Officers working on the new ward team arrangements. The feedback indicated that although it was early days in the new process, Members were beginning to understand the new ways

of working and that there were already examples of individual wards making a success of the arrangements. Although it was too early to draw final conclusions, it was recognised that an ongoing review process was necessary.

In response to questions from the Executive Member, Officers confirmed that the Community Led Local Delivery and Ageing Well projects would be integrated into main approach and as wards start to look at problem solving and work more holistically at community level they would be very much interlinked.

In regards to how the scrutiny process could look at some impact measures it was suggested that a number of things could be considered such as the style and of types of ward meetings, case studies on the outcome of projects and how to reach people who don't usually engage and measures to encourage engagement.

Resolved: That the Executive Member:

- (i) Noted the progress to date.
- (ii) Agreed criteria (as discussed and to be reported in the minutes) by which impact may be evaluated.
- (iii) Identified input that scrutiny could make into future development of the approach
- (iv) Agreed to receive a further report in due course.

Reason: To support the Council's commitment to working with local communities and devolving power and budgets to residents

Cllr Aspden, Executive Member (Deputy Leader)  
[The meeting started at 1.30 pm and finished at 1.40 pm].



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**12<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

**Executive Member Decision Session**

**Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader)**

*Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services*

**Economic Development for Acomb Front Street**

**Summary**

1. At Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013, a fund of £30,000 was approved to be spent on improving the economy of Acomb Front Street.
2. Since this agreement, £12.2k has been spent or committed on a range of activities in Acomb Front Street, including planters, christmas trees and electrics and benches. Currently, there is £17.8k remaining in the fund.
3. It has been requested whether the Council may transfer the budget for improving Acomb Front Street to the Acomb Alive group to allow for a business focus on delivery. Acomb Alive is a group of local traders in this part of the city. This report asks the Executive Member to consider this request.
4. In order for the money to be transferred, details of the creation of Acomb Alive as an accountable body, including ongoing minutes outlining action against the Acomb Front Street fund, should be supplied to the Group Manager, Policy and Strategy Team (Economy and Place) so the Council has a record of this.

**Recommendations**

5. To achieve the Executive Member's ambitions to move resources closer to Acomb Front Street Businesses to focus on delivery, he may wish to agree to:

- (i) The transfer of the remaining Acomb Front Street budget to Acomb Alive

Reason: To empower the business community in Acomb to improve the area.

- (ii) Appropriate governance arrangements being adopted by Acomb Alive, to include the Council receiving regular updates on how the money has been spent and the outcomes achieved.

Reason: To ensure that Acomb Alive will be adequately placed to manage the budget on the specific purposes outlined in the original paper to Executive in October 2013.

### **Acomb Alive**

- 6. Acomb Alive is a group of local business and community activists with an interest in improving the area around Acomb Front Street. It is currently chaired by Councillor Sue Hunter.
- 7. The body is a community group, but it is not currently an accountable body and will need to achieve this status with appropriate governance arrangements in order to be registered on City of York Council supplier systems and receive a payment. This is to ensure that any transfer made is consistent with any grant made by the council to an external body.
- 8. It will also be recommended that the organisation ensures that it provides appropriate evidence for any decision taken that requires the resource to be spent in the local area.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial**

- 9. This decision is revenue neutral

#### **Human Resources (HR)**

- 10. No implications



**Equalities**

11.No implications

**Legal**

12.Acomb Alive is not currently an accountable body and will need to achieve this status with appropriate governance arrangements in order to be registered on our supplier system and receive a payment.

**Crime and Disorder**

13.Not applicable

**Information Technology (ICT)**

14.No implications

**Property**

15.Not applicable

**Other**

16.Not applicable

**Risk Management**

17.Any governance risks should be managed as per the legal arrangements outlined above.

**Contact Details**

**Author's name**

Phil Witcherley

**Title**

Group Manager,  
Policy and Strategy Team  
(Economy and Place)

**Dept Name**

City and Environmental  
Services

**Tel No.**

553343  
551506

**Executive Member responsible for the report:**

Cllr Keith Aspden  
Economic Development & Community  
Engagement (Deputy Leader)

**Report**  **Date** 4<sup>th</sup> April  
**Approved**  2016

**Chief Officer's name**

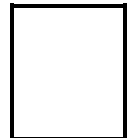
Neil Ferris  
Director, City and Environmental  
Services

**Report**  **Date** 4<sup>th</sup> April  
**Approved**  2016

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

Not applicable

**Wards Affected: Acomb, Holgate & Westfield**



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

Background papers:

Executive Report October 2013

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MId=7641&Ver=4>



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12<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**Decision Session  
Executive Member, Economic Development and Community  
Engagement (Deputy Leader)**

*Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services*

***Business Friendly Council: progress update***

**Summary**

1. City of York Council wishes to create an environment where businesses feel that engaging with us is a productive process, and that it is easy to access business advice through the right channels whenever it is needed.
2. A consultation exercise was undertaken with businesses in November 2015 to gauge how the Council is viewed by the business community, and to ask them how they wanted their relationship with the authority to look and feel. The results of this are provided in Annex 1 to this report.
3. Cllr Aspden and council officers have already presented feedback from consultation with businesses and proposed next steps to the Chamber of Commerce.
4. This document sets out the work that has been undertaken to progress our business friendly ambitions since the last report to Executive in December 2015.

**Recommendations**

5. The Executive Member is asked to:

- a. Note the work that has been undertaken to reach the objective of becoming a Business Friendly Council.

**Reason:**

To ensure that the administration is aware of the work being carried out towards becoming a Business Friendly Council.

- b. Advise which, if any, of the options set out in this paper are preferable to Members as 'next steps', and decide timescales for this work to be undertaken.

**Reason:**

To develop options agreed by Members within a structured initial timescale, and to provide an update report for discussion by the Executive Member in Autumn 2016.

**Background**

6. The Council Plan, agreed by Executive in October 2015, includes the ambition to become a Business Friendly Council. This is included as a priority in the joint administration's twelve point plan.
7. A subsequent report in December 2015 reported the results of a consultation survey with businesses, and their experiences of dealing with the Council.
8. Since then various different activities have been undertaken, with more planned, to try and establish what the essence of 'business friendly' is, and how we might achieve this.
9. This report sets out the findings of the consultations, input from partners, staff, and local business, and sets out potential discrete projects that might be undertaken to develop our capacity in this area.

**Consultation**

10. We have been working closely with a number of partners, to seek opinions, ideas and suggestions from those who deal with business and the local authority on a daily basis, and who, therefore, would be best placed to support the project. The list includes our staff, as well as business groups in the City:
  - Chambers of Commerce,
  - Visit York,
  - The Federation of Small Businesses and;
  - York Professionals
  - Our survey went out to over 1,000 local businesses

**Options**

11. The table below is a non-exhaustive selection of comments, ideas and suggestions taken from the various sources with whom we have consulted. Some will require financial and staff resource to implement, as well as possible training.

12. There will certainly be time requirements to ensure that the options taken forward are fully investigated and suitable for absorption into Council policy and practice.

13. Advice and notes have been added to aid the Executive Member discussion, without being too prescriptive, although it is felt that an audit of existing business support services and activities is fundamental to the work we are undertaking.

14. In addition, the options have been divided into three distinct themes to ensure that there is clear delineation between them.

### **Theme 1 – COMMUNICATION**

15. This theme considers how we communicate both internally, as well as with business, our information and signposting processes, and what we might do to improve these things.

16. This is by far the broadest category, and therefore the one that has the potential to deliver the greatest impact for business. Over the last few months we have already begun work in this category, and examples of best practice and engagement include:

- The Procurement Team have been working closely with the SME Growth Manager at Make it York, and recently delivered a presentation at a business breakfast seminar entitled 'The Procurement process and engaging with SMEs'. The scope of work they have been undertaking extends far beyond this one session, and their reputation with business is growing in trust and confidence.
- The Customer Service Centre is working with colleagues in ICT to try and streamline the check-in process at West Offices, and links have been made with Make it York to begin work aligning their website content with that of the Council.
- The Public Protection team are heavily involved in a programme of engaging with business to raise awareness of their services and to build strong working relationships. They regularly attend seminars, work with the LEP, Make it York and others, and arrange bespoke presentations for businesses which need support and advice, most recently running a business compliance session.

Outline suggestion	Basic description/ action	Notes/ advice
Audit of engagement methods	Are there consistent methods of approach set out for officers to adhere to? What types of engagement are we using, and are using them well enough? i.e. Newsletters, forms, surveys, website, face to face, email, phone, infographics	Any examples of best practice, supported by user numbers and feedback?
Audit of existing business support arrangements	Baseline of people, processes and services already in place to support business	Fundamental to the project. Can we streamline what we have? What would enhance our current offer? e.g. staff training, shorter processes
Communication Plan	Is there a Council Communications Plan? If so, what is our 'offer' for businesses?	If there is a Comms Plan, is it fit for purpose, or does it need to be reviewed to ensure a business inclusive approach?
CYC Intranet and Internet	Is it user friendly and does it provide an easy to use channel through which businesses can access what they need?	Intranet also to be looked at, for example, to make sure that everyone has their profile page set up.
Directory of Council Services	An interactive guide to the business services we provide: outline of service, officer name, profile (from COLIN?) and contact details.	Foundation for dovetailing key pieces of work and expertise across the authority. Look at what work teams are doing and investigate the collaborative links between them all.
Information	Requests for information come from a number of different sources. How is information sought and provided? Are there any common themes. Accessibility, usefulness etc	Leaflets, online, face to face. Idiot guides, info for all types, size and age of business.
Make it York	Clarify the working relationship between make it York and CYC. What is it that each organisation does, what are the links and areas of specialism?	Clear, consistent message needed to remove confusion. What are the discrete purposes of each?
Networking events	'Meet the buyer', face to face sessions for example. What can realistically be done here to benefit business?	Consider invitation only to tailor to specific audiences and to prevent 'hijacking' (Planning events problems)
Signposting	Look at better signposting of people, services and information.	What do we do now, and what more can we do?
Social media	Make better use of the technologies available. Can Facebook and Twitter really be of tangible use to businesses in making connections, networking and finding out about events relevant to them?	What are the rules on local authority use of Linked In?

## Theme 2 – CONSULTATION

17. How and why do we consult with business? Do we need to? What do we do with the feedback we receive?

Outline suggestion	Basic description/ action	Notes/ advice
BFC Performance scorecard	Establish a suite of KPIs to measure how we currently perform and how the changes we make impact on outcomes	12 months after any changes are implemented, share with original survey group and seek feedback. Have we made a positive impact?
Consultation with business	How robust are our procedures? Do they consider who, how, when, why, what?	What do we do with feedback? Are services reviewed as a result?
Staff grown improvement	Circulate a list of suggestions for ideas, change and practical solutions for officers to comment upon and to add to.	Staff deal with business on a daily basis. What do they think needs to happen to achieve our BFC objectives?

## Theme 3 – BEHAVIOURS

18. Options under this theme particularly consider existing working practices, cultures, gaps and weaknesses, and what might be done differently or more effectively.

Outline suggestion	Basic description/ action	Notes/ advice
'Bespoke' business offer	Consider what a bespoke offer to businesses of all shapes, sizes, ages and areas of expertise might look like	Is this feasible and what might we do to support this?
Business Co-ordinator role	Should we consider a Business Co-ordinator type role within the authority, for example to advise Members?	Is that covered sufficiently by MiY? Alignment of our services with theirs and clear role specifications are essential.
Business Friendly Charter	Develop a short and simple Charter setting out our commitment to supporting business, backed up by a robust, measurable Action Plan	Would a Charter be of any use, or do we just need small changes to our business processes, internal culture and procedures?
Governance	What kind of governance mechanisms run through business related issues?	E.g. who is responsible for agreeing contract awards, transparency and honesty etc. Is governance even an issue?
Interdependencies	A number of other considerations run in parallel with enabling a business friendly approach, and should be set out and considered.	Might include development of the Local Plan, new/ sustainable/ affordable housing, major infrastructure and transport networks, education, skills and training, GVA, high sector salaries.

## **Analysis**

19. The number of options available is broad and will impact differently on the services that we provide, and how we deal with business.

20. The recommendation is that a small number of options which the Executive Member feels to be of greatest priority are selected, with the remainder to form part of a longer term action plan or disregarded altogether.

21. There is also scope for some 'quick wins' to be carried out that would take little time and officer resource, such as listing the interdependencies which could be set out for consideration when business related decisions are made.

### **Next steps:**

22. Our work plan is multi-faceted:

- We will take the prioritised actions outlined in the three themes above.
- We will repeat the Business Friendly Council survey of November 2015 every two years (minus the business support element of question five as this now the remit of Make it York), with the intention that feedback from business reflects the continuous service improvement we aspire to provide.
- Through the repeat survey, we aim to show that we have raised perceived levels of satisfaction with the Council, and by the end of the current administration, no service area will have less than 50% satisfaction.
- In particular, Procurement has made great improvements to their working practises and, as a result, their working relationships with the business community have strengthened. We believe this model can be applied to other service areas, and we will look to work, initially, with Planning, Environmental Protection and Licensing teams to try and embed similar working values.
- We intend to standardise our approach to consultation with business, and intend to work to two fundamental principles in order to engage at the right level, and with the right people. These are:
  - Before any survey or consultation is sent out to the wider business community, we will engage with local business



groups to ensure that it is appropriate to do so and fit for purpose

- No survey should take more than ten minutes of local business time to complete
- We will take our action plan proposals and outline the Business Friendly Charter to the Federation of Small Business event at the University of York St. John on 18<sup>th</sup> April to gauge reaction from businesses directly, and allow them an opportunity for further input on our proposals.
- We will further engage with local business advocates to report progress on the project to date, and to seek continued support for our work at a grass roots level. Organisations will include the Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and York Professionals.

### **Council Plan**

23. The Council Plan, approved by full Council in October 2015, includes a priority to ensure that York becomes a business friendly council. It is also in line with the Council Plan objectives to create a prosperous city for all where local businesses can thrive.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial**

24. Some of the recommendations to deliver against a business friendly council could require further funding, but there will also be potential changes to processes and culture that could be made in a revenue neutral way in the context of the current local Government funding environment.

#### **Human Resources (HR)**

25. Not known at this point, will become clearer the further the chosen options are developed.

#### **Equalities**

26. Not applicable

#### **Legal**

27. Not applicable

#### **Crime and Disorder**

28. Not applicable

**Information Technology (ICT)**

29. There are changes required from an ICT perspective, some of which are currently ongoing and have already been outlined in this report.

30. There is potential for more work with ICT implications to come forward, depending upon the options chosen by Members.

**Property**

31. Not applicable

**Other**

32. Not applicable

**Risk Management**

33. There are no known risks at the time of writing this report.

**Contact Details**

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**Tel No.**

551506

**Chief Officer responsible for the report:**

**Executive Member responsible for the report:**

Cllr Keith Aspden  
Deputy Leader,  
Economic Development & Community  
Engagement

**Report**

**Approved**



**Date**

4/4/2016

**Chief Officer's name**

Neil Ferris  
Acting Director, City and Environmental  
Services

**Report**

**Approved**



**Date**

4/4/2016

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

Not applicable

**Wards Affected:**

All



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

*Business Friendly Council –  
Report to the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2016 Executive decision session from the  
Office of the Chief Executive*

**Annexes**

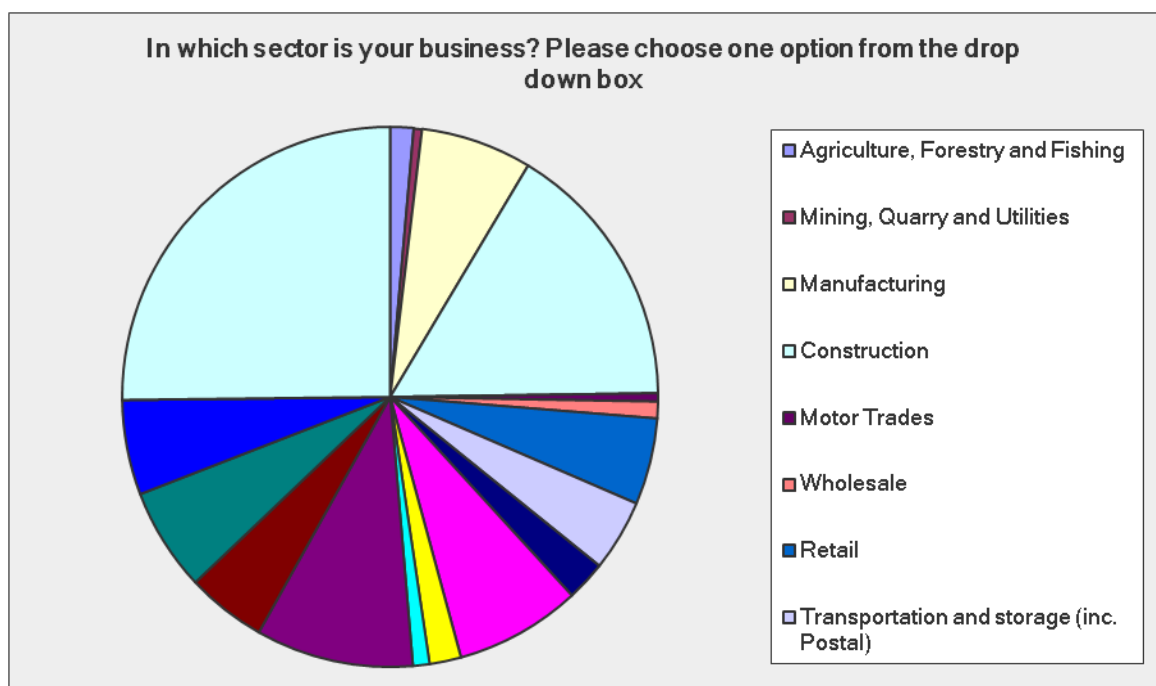
*Annex 1: Business Friendly Council Survey (November 2015): Results  
from a total of thirteen questions*

## Annex 1

## Question 1

In which sector is your business? Please choose one option from the drop down box

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1.4%	3
Mining, Quarry and Utilities	0.5%	1
Manufacturing	6.7%	14
Construction	16.2%	34
Motor Trades	0.5%	1
Wholesale	1.0%	2
Retail	5.2%	11
Transportation and storage (inc. Postal)	4.3%	9
Accommodation and food service	2.4%	5
Information and Communications	7.6%	16
Finance and Insurance	1.9%	4
Property	1.0%	2
Professional, Scientific and Technical	9.5%	20
Business administration and support services	4.8%	10
Education	6.2%	13
Health	5.7%	12
Public administration	0.0%	0
Other	25.2%	53
<b>answered question</b>		<b>210</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>0</b>



**Question 2**

How many people are employed by your company?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0 - 5	50.0%	104
5 - 10	17.3%	36
10 - 20	11.5%	24
20+	21.2%	44
<i>answered question</i>		<b>208</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>

**Question 3**

How long has your business been established?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0 - 6 months	2.9%	6
6 months to a year	3.8%	8
1 - 2 years	6.2%	13
2 - 5 years	14.8%	31
5 - 10 years	16.7%	35
10+ years	55.7%	117
<i>answered question</i>		<b>210</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>

**Question 4**

How many times in the last year have you contacted the Council on behalf of your business?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Never	39.9%	83
Once	7.7%	16
1 - 3 times	23.6%	49
3 - 7 times	10.6%	22
7 - 10 times	1.4%	3
10+ times	16.8%	35
<i>answered question</i>		<b>208</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>

## Question 5

As a business, how would you rate your experience of the following:

Answer Options	1 - Poor	2	3 - Good	4	5 - Excellent	Response Count
Broadband - access to and advice on	15	18	32	13	9	87
Business rates - accessing rate relief information easily and quickly online	20	17	27	8	5	77
Business support and advice - effective neutral signposting	20	23	14	12	0	69
Continuity planning - flooding, fire, cyber security	20	17	17	5	0	59
Health and safety - advice on compliance at work and with employees	18	14	17	8	5	62
Licenses and permits - information and guidance on what, where, why and when	23	14	21	6	6	70
Planning and Building Control - guidance and advice	21	25	21	7	6	80
Consultation - clear outcomes that arise from dialogue and consultation with the business community	26	15	24	4	1	70
York Apprenticeship Hub Service - Service for smaller businesses/ SMEs	18	14	21	6	5	64
Links to Education - to develop young people's skills, career aspirations and employability	16	21	17	4	3	61
<i>answered question</i>						115
<i>skipped question</i>						95

## Question 6 -

Is anything you could suggest that might help us be more business friendly?

<p><b>Council behaviours/ cultures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Don't promise what cannot be delivered or make a political debate over everything</i></li> <li>- Council seen as inactive rather than proactive</li> <li>- Avoid mixed messages</li> </ul>	<p><b>Consultation, information and engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would have been useful to have an LDF and stuck to it prior to Vangarde development</li> <li>- Was not aware of York Apprenticeship Hub or Links to Education so these could be better publicised</li> <li>- Engage with businesses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Council support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving City Office powers to stop mega-amplified buskers, which has been damaging our small business for 8 years</li> <li>- Anything that promotes York as a good place for meetings (formal or informal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supportive and entrepreneurial approach to community and voluntary sector start ups</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Social enterprise is the growth area in all sectors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication and relationship building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start listening to businesses - - <i>Just talk to us</i></li> <li>- Have never been contacted by anyone from Business Friendly Council.</li> <li>- Communicate with businesses on a regular basis with a suitable platform</li> </ul>	<p><b>Customer service issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low levels of responsiveness to emails</li> <li>- Continuity of staff</li> <li>- Staff education in their work field</li> </ul>	<p><b>Procurement processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Pro SME policy on tendering and partnerships</i></li> <li>- Reduce rates</li> <li>- Less restricted tendering for Council contracts</li> <li>- Framework for consultants should be split into construction cost bands</li> </ul>
<p><b>Misconceptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The same three firms seem to win all the contracts</li> <li>- Tried to become involved in the procurement process for tendering for construction work. Was told that the council mainly uses three firms and independent building firms will not be seriously considered.</li> <li>- The more open tendering process which is encouraged by central Government does not seem to be carried out by York council</li> </ul>	<p><b>Suggestions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One point of contact</li> <li>- Think how modern social-media can assist SMEs</li> <li>- Business seminars</li> <li>- Create a free wifi zone across York City Centre</li> <li>- Promote meeting venues and facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publicise York Apprenticeship Hub or Links to Education</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Better support community and voluntary sector start ups</li> <li>- CYC to be more visible</li> <li>- The Council should have</li> </ul>	<p><b>Keep it local</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Stop spending money on external experts who do not understand York</i></li> <li>- Allow York based smaller businesses access to Council contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work closely with local businesses and support them by buying from them</li> </ul> </li> <li>- You don't need one firm from outside of the area doing small alterations to Schools, public buildings, etc.</li> <li>- Cost bands mean smaller local firms with local</li> </ul>

<p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recycling waste</li> <li>- School Transport - don't put all your eggs in one basket</li> <li>- Waste and Recycling Collection</li> </ul>	<p>business sector in all of their committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The tendering procurement process needs to be better publicised and <b>give everyone a chance</b></li> </ul>	<p>knowledge, who employ local people could actually get local employment</p> <p><b>Equality and fairness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Treat all business same</li> </ul>
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\*The 'Suggestions' box draws together all themes from across the table, so there will be some duplication elsewhere. Not all question responses have suggestions

### Question 7 -

**Does your business provide goods or services to the Council?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.6%	57
No	58.4%	80
<i>answered question</i>		<b>137</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>73</b>

### Question 8

**Does your business provide goods or services to a contractor of the council?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	18.0%	24
No	82.0%	109
<i>answered question</i>		<b>133</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>77</b>



### Question 9

How would you rate your experience of procurement in the Council?

Answer Options	1 - Poor	2	3 - Good	4	5 - Excellent	Response Count
Pre contract process	27	15	26	6	6	80
Contract management	17	15	27	9	7	75
Payment terms	12	9	27	13	17	78
<i>answered question</i>						<b>84</b>
<i>skipped question</i>						<b>126</b>

### Question 10

Are there any points on procurement that you would like to make, and where you would like to see the council's services improved?

<p><b>Communication and relationship building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would be good to be contacted as a local business when our type of services are required</li> <li>- More support for start-ups in consideration for contracts particularly those that are creative in finding solutions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Customer service issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have contacted the council on a number of occasions to try to see if we can become a supply partner and have not received a reply.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stick to timescales</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Sort out your systems and pay people on time</li> </ul>	<p><b>Consultation, information and engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clearer signposting to opportunities to provide services to the council               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More transparent procurement information</li> </ul> </li> <li>- More information at the outset</li> <li>- Provide clear guidance on who to contact with issues</li> <li>- Distribution of procurement matters to all businesses in the region               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I work predominantly in local government on transformation and future service modelling. If York City Council are undertaking this type of role (and I assume you are), then I would like to understand why I have not seen it advertised.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Keep it local</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local companies should be used</li> <li>- I would like the council to seek out local suppliers</li> <li>- <b><i>You just don't support local businesses</i></b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Equality and fairness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><i>Fairness not favourites</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A fair process</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Be clear that everyone is pricing the same</li> <li>- Added value and social impact is important               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As a sole trader it is difficult to meet the criteria set. Smaller types of opportunities are infrequent so I presume you already have preferred deliverers of these services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Council related comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><i>Often seems that CYC is trying to control the market when in reality it should be facilitating it.</i></b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Suggestions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Directory of businesses by type so they can be contacted directly when a tender of interest is due</li> <li>- Council needs to be more proactive in seeking out local suppliers instead of them coming forward               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More local procurement events would be good.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Procurement Team to take a more prominent role in facilitating</li> </ul>	

Procurement processes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The regional contracting system is such a pain we've abandoned trying to take part.</li> <li>- The recent changes have made it more onerous</li> <li>- A simplified process</li> <li>- A realistic lower limit for tendering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Yortender process does not facilitate effective dialogue.</li> <li>- Too much paper work</li> <li>- Exact specifications of goods to be supplied.</li> <li>- The system to us seemed to work quite well before all the PQQs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Too much information required at PQQ stage</li> <li>- Procurement dept processes disbar better performing companies from the tender process</li> <li>- unrealistic timescales are given for completing jobs</li> <li>- Standardise PQQs</li> </ul>
Small business issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make it easier for smaller business to engage with the Council</li> <li>- <b><i>We used to work for the Council but the work was amalgamated. We were too small to tender for the contract.</i></b></li> <li>- Smaller businesses are pushed out of the tender process when contracts are made too big.</li> <li>- There is positive bias towards large, long established businesses in the questions and financial information required</li> <li>- More options for small businesses to provide services to CYC</li> <li>- When the Frameworks/ Term Contracts and Approved lists were introduced, as we were not one of the 'big boy' contractors and did not have an ISO9001 or 14001 or similar, we were not considered an appropriate contractor to work with, even though we had provided a good reliable service for many years.</li> <li>- References from the last three years are always requested in PQQs. We are unable to provide these as we are not on a framework or an approved list and have not got the opportunity to carry out the works and gain the experience. <b><i>It's like the chicken and egg scenario.</i></b></li> <li>- Actively support small businesses better and make the process easier to navigate.</li> </ul>		
General		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open up highway and civil works to competitive tendering rather than using DLO</li> <li>- Would like to be able to bid when you have training requests</li> <li>- More opportunities to quote for printing</li> <li>- Make those on benefits do some of the traditional public sector jobs, gives them focus and saves public money</li> <li>- General public should be given choice to purchase services they want by fostering an open market.</li> </ul>		

**Question 11**

**Can you share an example of where you have had a positive experience with the Council?**

\*Number of respondents who said they had not had a positive experience with the Council (of 48 answers) 16, or 33%

<p><b>Specific service areas and people positively acknowledged</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Superfast broadband</li> <li>- Alcohol Licensing Licensing Business Rate</li> <li>- Adam Grey and Simon Middleton.....very supportive to a new SME</li> <li>- Building Control</li> <li>- Youth Festivals</li> <li>- Highways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning permission</li> <li>- Councillors and staff             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small business advisor</li> <li>- Providing order numbers</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Dealing with Trading Standards</li> <li>- Ann Spetch, WDU contact for Early Years</li> <li>- Esther Priestley, Dan Calvert and Harvey Lawson (Planning)</li> <li>- Waste collection</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support services and staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In previous years when budgets were available, staff were happy, committed and professional</li> <li>- As a whole I have lost faith in City of York Council, but some great individual people work there</li> <li>- People are friendly and willing to offer help</li> <li>- Generally most contacts have been very positive</li> <li>- No engagement</li> </ul>
<p><b>General comments</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am closely involved with a local college and intend to employ an apprentice next year because the council brought this opportunity to my attention.</li> <li>- You were polite and positive when discussing failure to reimburse a fine for travelling over Lendal Bridge</li> <li>- Have attended meet the buyer events These would be improved if reps from different council departments were present rather than central procurement</li> <li>- Recent communications with Make it York have been positive, previously ineffective</li> <li>- We were invited to tender for the works to the Central Library which was surprise as we do not understand how we came to be invited for this tender.</li> <li>- Support with setting up and housing a new business. Involvement in key city strategies.</li> <li>- We have done some work for a member of east riding council who deals with us directly. We always have to tender against a reasonable amount of contractors, however I feel it is fair.</li> </ul>		

**Question 12**

**Can you tell us about a bad experience you may have had?**

<p><b>Contracts, pricing and costs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council only ask for money for taxes and memberships</li> <li>- I applied for a pitch at the St. Nicholas Fair this year but was turned down. <b>As a new and small SME based in York I felt a let down. .... I think it was because I couldn't offer as much money for the pitch as other businesses.</b></li> <li>- (A new member of staff) decided to cancel the work which had already commenced and refused payment. Hence, I don't look for work with the council anymore</li> <li>- Lost a contract we had been doing successfully for several years with the council because the contract was merged with other similar contracts throughout the council</li> <li>- Procurement professionals need to understand the businesses they engage with. Could make significant cost savings if they engaged with those who could assist them.</li> <li>- Driving for miles to see a tiny job, pricing it rock bottom only to find there are eight other people in for it.</li> <li>- Money still owed to us for services provided because of a dispute as to who ordered and who was paying.</li> <li>- Struggling to get paid and being passed around with no one prepared to take ownership</li> <li>- Disagreement over final accounts</li> <li>- <b>We were awarded a print contract after a long tender process, which was almost immediately cancelled due to the council's "cost cutting" measures.</b></li> <li>- I have been wrongly accused regarding council tax issues and lost time and money sorting out the councils mistakes</li> <li>- We won a tender to compost green waste. This was cancelled and given to your internal contractor</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In previous years when budgets were available, staff were happy, committed and professional</li> <li>- As a whole I have lost faith in City of York Council, but some great individual people work there</li> <li>- People are friendly and willing to offer help</li> <li>- Generally most contacts have been very positive             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No engagement</li> <li>- <b>Staff not taking the initiative to find things out</b></li> <li>- My contact was made redundant, leaving me to deal with a senior member of staff who was rude and unprofessional</li> <li>- Everybody seems to be ill all the time or can't wait to get home in the afternoon.</li> <li>- Hopeless communication</li> <li>- Some staff changes have been for the worse                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No engagement</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Timing and delays</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of activity over recent years on the York plan</li> <li>- Courses cancelled at short notice due to lack of take up</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>General comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Its a broken council</b></li> <li>- Debacle over Vangarde has led to the forecast footfall drop the city centre</li> <li>- Start-ups dismissed out of hand by communities team</li> <li>- Tenant's choice</li> <li>- Allowing some business advertising around city, yet hassling us</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Support services and process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have contacted the council on a number of occasions to try to see if we can become a supply partner and have not received a reply.</li> <li>- <b>If we are contacted and we submit a price, we have no further contact even if we call or email</b></li> <li>- I had to contact you 3 times over several months to get reimbursement for a fine for travelling over Lendal Bridge</li> <li>- Council losing important</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Specific service areas and people negatively acknowledged</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flytipping</li> <li>- Planning – not enough staff, so slow, time consuming and frustrating</li> <li>- Internet cabling for an office took five months</li> <li>- Signposting to specific information is unclear unless you physically visit Council Offices</li> <li>- Make it York is slow</li> <li>- Local flooding not dealt with</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficultly trying to provide our services to the council</li> <li>- I've not seen many well-publicised opportunities to work with the council</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">paperwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tendering, delay with projects, poor briefing</li> <li>- Procurement process is not fulfilling its potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legionella Control</li> <li>- Business rates</li> <li>- Council Tax</li> <li>- Procurement</li> </ul>
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**Question 13**

**Are there any other general comments that you would like to make?**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Local business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please buy from local suppliers, I am a growing business employing more and more people and I only supply York council a very small amount</li> <li>- Everybody (York based) should get chance to quote on requirements if they meet the standard</li> <li>- Support your local service providers</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waste of time nothing ever happening after filling this type of form in its only a paper exercise !!!!!!!</li> <li>- I think the council are doing a great job. I'm currently enjoying a good experience working with Make it York.</li> <li>- Keep up the good work.</li> <li>- How long have you got ?</li> <li>- Keep trying what other choice do we have!</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Business Support and Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The staff could only work for the council. They wouldn't last five minutes in the real world.</li> <li>- People move around from one department to another so you lose the contact of who you were dealing with</li> <li>- The feeling that comes to us is that the council are only interested in working with large business</li> </ul>
<p><b>Business needs and economic growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Council's policies or lack of them, is driving firms out of the City</li> <li>- What can CYC do to help my business?</li> <li>- We are looking for open-plan office space. 100m.sq.with 2 parking spaces within the inner ring road. We've been looking for 6 months. There isn't any, its either retail or residential. The Council's policies or lack thereof, is driving firms out of the City Centre and you will lose the diverse economy that makes places buzz.</li> <li>- York is a fantastic place but too much emphasis on tourism &amp; housing. More focus on business development and support.</li> <li>- It's great to see the Council taking more steps to be pro-business.</li> <li>- In general....very pleased with the support, seminars and guidance from CYC.</li> </ul>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Service specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning of pavements in Coney Street and St Helen's Square leave a lot to be desired</li> <li>- Find a way to control the buskers, recent negotiations between council and buskers - we weren't even told of the meeting! And the buskers "won". We may have to leave Davygate.</li> <li>- We use planning office regularly and they always very helpful</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please continue with the developing programme of improving a business approach to help in the generation of increase economic development for all</li> <li>- The council needs to be innovative, creative, professional and respectful no matter how big the organisation is they are dealing with.</li> <li>- We could do with some meet the buyer meetings to know how to tender and get jobs from the council</li> </ul>	

**Contracts and finance**

- No real value for the rates we pay, no recognition for creating employment, £30k paid out zero return
  - The tendering process (Yortender) seems to favour existing contractors / suppliers
  - Look at the cost/benefits forecasts prior to decisions, then again after decisions have been implemented, i.e. traffic closures for events like Skyride and the York marathon.
- \*Local company\* was providing a Legionella Control service to part of the council, providing employment for 3 local people. Contract was made much much bigger and given to a larger company out of the area.
  - Worked for the council for 32 years, now not getting work in favour of large companies
- Would be great to work with the Council in York, but would help if sensible decisions could be made around tendering and payment terms.
- We used to get an order for window cleaning for the year but now have to request an order each month which is obviously more time consuming.

**Communication and information**

- Documents need to be brief, exclude unneeded sections.
- Guides need to be written in layman's terms and avoid or explain legal terms.
  - I had no idea the Council supported businesses or where I might find information
- I avoid contacting the council if at all possible as I expect to be given the run-around by different departments, before either giving up or being promised a call back that wouldn't happen.
- Communicate:, we cannot build a relationship if we don't speak

**Council**

- Council has a long way to go to make up for its shortcomings over the last few years.
  - Trying to build a business to help support the local community, don't feel we are given opportunities from the council
- I can see an improvement, but it needs to be vast
  - Council offices lack private meeting rooms
- The system works very well as far as we are concerned. Any issues we have had have been handled very well by whichever council member of staff has dealt with us.
- The council typically does the best it can in constrained circumstances

**Submission to Deputy Leader Decision Session – Acomb Front Street Funding**

We support the transfer of the council's remaining economic development budget for Acomb Front Street together with the conditions around governance and outcomes reporting as set out in the report. As regards governance, we would hope that all affected ward councillors will, in future, receive invitations to meetings of the group and have access to minutes of meetings.

This represents the next step in the financial commitment of £30,000 that Labour made to Acomb Front Street during the last administration, prior to our making a similar commitment to other shopping areas outside the city centre through our alternative budget in February.

Investment in the public realm by the council is important for the long term sustainability of shopping areas in wards outside the city centre, alongside a strong commitment from local traders to make the most of that investment. This is the model and objectives developed in Acomb in 2013, which Acomb Alive has been pivotal in taking forward.

Although unfortunately I cannot be there in person today, I would like to ask what progress has been achieved since the initial funding commitment, in terms of planned capital improvements and event activity. I would also like to seek clarification that this proposal does not devolve the responsibility to Acomb Alive for administering the distribution of any future economic development funds across the broader Acomb ward area.

The ward consists of many areas of economic activity which would and should benefit from economic stimulus to assist them, from Beckfield Lane, the Green and Boroughbridge Road. It is my belief that the much needed economic development that must be delivered to these areas of the Acomb Ward would not necessarily be served best by Acomb Alive and that other options should be explored for traders in these areas to determine the means through which these areas could best drive forward the changes they feel necessary to boost economic activity.

Councillor Stuart Barnes  
Acomb ward

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