

24 July 2018

Report of the Executive Member for Transport and Planning

1. I have now had time to settle into this role and am pleased to report on a number of initiatives that are being progressed. In these, I have taken into account our policy to be a “listening Council”.
 - i. *The reversal of the one-way system in Fossgate proved to be successful in reducing traffic, and I approved the permanent Traffic Regulation Order at my decision session in April. Work to improve the roadway, as requested by business owners and others, will be undertaken in due course.*
 - ii. *At the same session, I agreed to the introduction of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order on Strensall Road, bringing the permitted speed between Towthorpe Cross Roads and Earswick down to 40mph. This had been requested by both Earswick and Strensall Parish Councils and it will be implemented on 23rd July.*
 - iii. *At the same session, I agreed to the demolition of the disused fountain in Parliament Street, which has now been done, and of the former toilet block in St Sampson’s Square. While this provoked much comment at the time, little has been said since the replacement of the fountain by new paving, and consultations are taking place to determine what should replace it. I support the view that the Castle Gateway Development, and the replacement of Castle Car Park with a new multi-storey car park in St George’s Field, will provide an opportunity for a new fountain adjacent to York Castle.*
 - iv. *At the same session, I approved the provision of a temporary contract to continue the operation of the York to Holme on*

Spalding Moor bus service, which had been deregistered by East Yorkshire Motor Services because it was running at a considerable loss. Part of this route runs through North Yorkshire (Selby District) and also through the East Riding of Yorkshire. Both NYCC and ERYC contributed to the subsidy. The contract was awarded to EYMS, who required the lowest subsidy. A recent tendering exercise for the longer term brought in two bids and officers have informed me that the lower bid is within budget; both NYCC and ERCC are expected to increase the amount of support they provide. In view of my former employment in this sector, I ensure that I am not informed of the identity of the bidders during the tender process.

- v. At the Annual Parking Review, I accepted proposals for a number of new and revised parking restrictions, and this included “no action” where public opinion was not in favour, and a further consultation with residents for a proposed Residents’ Parking Scheme in Lumley Road. Similar reviews undertaken subsequently include restrictions in Turner Close, Huntington Road, in order to assist the Ambulance Service whose depot is situated there (and which was also modified as a result of public consultation), and a request for a Residents’ Parking Scheme in the Rosedale Street area. In each case, and in line with the Listening Council strategy, I took account of representations from the public and from Ward Councillors.*

- vi. I also agreed to further study being undertaken on the North York Bus Scheme, which is intended to improve reliability on the Haxby Road/ Wigginton Road/ Clarence Street routes; and a revised boundary for the Strensall with Towthorpe Neighbourhood Plan which includes part of the Stockton on Forest Parish area (with that Parish Council’s consent) in order to include the whole of Towthorpe Moor Lane in the area of the Plan.*

vii. *At last week's Decision Session, I agreed (jointly with the Executive Member for Environment) to progress the introduction of a Dockless Cycle Hire Scheme for York, incorporating many safeguards in response to concerns expressed by Members and others. In particular, further consultation will take place with interested parties, including organisations representing people with mobility impairments, such as York Blind and Partially Sighted Society. Other interested organisations such as the York BID and cycling groups, will also be consulted.*

viii. *In view of representations from Councillors and others representing villages and conservation areas outside the historic core, I also decided to refer the proposed Street Lighting Policy to the Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee for comment. I also agreed to the Streetscape Strategy and Guidance policy being updated but required it to be brought back for further consideration before it is adopted as policy.*

2. As a proud native of York, my aims for the future are to ensure, as far as possible, that York retains its unique character and is still a City which is attractive for residents, businesses and visitors. While many of the factors making up this ideal are within the remit of other Executive Members, I believe that we must take every opportunity to attract employers and at the same time solve our housing crisis.
3. So far as my own responsibilities are concerned, I accept that we cannot solve the road maintenance problem overnight but realise that repairs and renewals this must be prioritised, especially in view of the recent tragic incident in Derbyshire.
4. In terms of transport, we must be realistic and not expect miracles to be performed where unrestricted access to the City's road network for everyone is simply not possible. We must balance the need for access, for deliveries to commercial premises, for parking and cyclists with the needs of the pedestrian.

5. The matter of City Centre Access has been referred to the Executive in view of the many factors involved, not least the terrorist threat.
6. Where public transport is concerned, I would like to see everyone have access to a reliable bus service, but this has to be set against cost and other options will be investigated if necessary. I applaud the work of Officers who have ensured, over the past few years, that Government funding for zero emission and low emission buses has been secured. More electric buses will enter service in the near future but, again, this cannot happen overnight.
7. Planning is, of course, highly regulated and most decisions are in the hands of the Planning Committees. I took no part in the Local Plan Working Group but strongly supported the need for York to submit its Local Plan within the deadline. I welcome the Castle Gateway and York Station Frontage/Queen Street proposals and, while I realise that York Central is in many ways controversial, I believe that it does give us an opportunity to have a much-needed housing and employment area that can give a real boost to the City's economy.
8. While I do not wish York to become a living museum, I believe that every development must at least be in harmony with the rest of the City. We must take account of the needs of present and future residents while acknowledging the City's past and building upon that.