

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

27th April 2021

Report of the Director of Housing Economy and Regeneration

**Engagement Strategy – Economic Strategy, Skills Plan and My City
Centre**

Summary

1. City of York Council set out an engagement approach in a report to the Executive on 22 April 2021. This report set out how engagement activity places York's residents and businesses at the heart of plans to build an inclusive economy and aligns with this Council-wide Resident Engagement Strategy. A coherent engagement approach has been developed to address the overlapping themes of York's economy, the future of the city centre, carbon reduction plans and the city's local transport plan, reflecting a joined-up approach to policy development that will ensure consistency and alignment of our ambitions for the city.
2. Annexes 1 and 3 to this report set out the detailed approach to engagement for our Economic Strategy and its Skills Plan and for the My City Centre project. These two key pieces of work will set out the city's aspirations for economic development and for the regeneration of the city centre over the next 10 years, both key priorities for York's medium and long term future.
3. For the Economic Strategy and Skills Plan, we will focus on engaging with residents, employees and local businesses to develop approaches to growth that will make a real difference to people's lives.
4. The York way is to work directly with those we are seeking to help, building understanding and trust, while recognising that it is for them to choose how to grow. We work in partnership with the many networks and organisations that connect people and businesses, recognising that it is these community connections which make our economy resilient. It is an approach – a way – a set of principles that guide how we work with others in an inclusive way, and its results are better policy and fairer distribution of resources.

5. The York way can be seen in our response to the Covid pandemic. It was the York way to immediately call all the business networks together, to facilitate their direct connections to policy makers, to work with them to co-design our approach. The York way can be seen in our pioneering micro-grants scheme, our sector round tables, our communications, and most of all in the amazing work done to open up the city centre in a covid-safe manner.
6. It is the York way because all of those things were done by a city-wide partnership of the business community – through the Federation of Small Business (FSB), York Business Improvement District (BID), Institute of Directors, York Chamber, Indie York, and Make It York – working with Higher York and the Council. It is the York way to invest in business networks – we fund the Chamber, the FSB, Make It York, the BID and Indie York, and we invest in Traders’ Associations across the city. When we help these organisations to grow, we are making the economy stronger and more productive. That is the economic growth we seek – an economy that grows stronger and healthier, providing employment and income to support our City. An economy that provides green jobs in a sustainable economy. That is the York way.
7. For My City Centre, the time is right to recommence work to shape the use of city centre property and public space. A framework must be developed to guide that development, and we have already begun to engage with people, businesses and communities.
8. In the summer, we trialled different uses of public space and highways, and we built much stronger links to a wider-range of special interest groups and other communities. Before the pandemic, we had held a series of engagement events with stakeholders. The My City Centre project will build on all of this and work quickly to influence the vision for the city centre and create a framework to shape development.

Recommendations

9. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - 1) Approve the plans for public engagement on York’s economy set out in Annexes 1 and 3

Reason: To support economic recovery and growth and the development of a new economic strategy and skills plan.

- 2) Approve the recommencement of My City Centre project from May 2021.

Reason: *In order to generate a strategic vision for the City Centre through public engagement, to respond to place-based challenges and opportunities*

- 3) Approve the revised My City Centre project scope and thematic approach in response to the changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic

Reason: *To ensure that the project responds to the pandemic's impacts and prevailing (updated) challenges and opportunities*

- 4) Approve the amended My City Centre project engagement plan set out at annex 4, which responds to changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic

Reason: *To ensure effective and inclusive engagement, particularly during the period where some form of lockdown will still exist.*

- 5) Approve the budget proposals set out in Annex 3.

Reason: *To ensure that project activity is resourced appropriately to delivery project outcomes*

Background

10. The Council's approach to resident engagement was considered by Executive on 22nd April 2021 (see [Executive report and annexes](#)).
11. In the coming months, work will resume on developing our Economic Strategy and Skills Plan, and on the My City Centre project. Resident and business engagement will follow the principles set out in that report.
12. Detailed reports at Annex 1 – Economic Strategy and Annex 3 – My City Centre set out the details of proposed engagement and the further decisions needed to implement the projects. Each report covers its own implications.
13. Annex 2 provides details of the scope and extent of Economic Strategy engagement. Annexes 4 – 6 accompany the My City Centre report.

Consultation

14. The work set out will support broad engagement across York with communities, businesses and other stakeholders.

Council Plan

15. The Proposals support the core Council Plan objectives for well paid jobs and an inclusive economy, a better start in life for children and young people, a greener and cleaner city, creating homes and world-class infrastructure, and good health and wellbeing.

Implications

See Annexes 1 and 3.

- **Financial**
- **Human Resources (HR)**
- **Equalities**
- **Legal**
- **Crime and Disorder**
- **Information Technology (IT)**
- **Property**
- **Other**

Risk Management

16. See Annexes 1 and 3.

Contact Details

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Report **Date** 19th April 2021
Approved

Wards Affected: [List wards or tick box to indicate all]

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

[The Council's approach to resident engagement](#) - Executive 22nd April 2021

Annexes

- Annex 1: Economic Strategy and Skills Plan Engagement report
- Annex 2: Developing the Economic Strategy: Engagement Plan
- Annex 3: My City Centre Project: Recommencement of Project & Engagement Approach
- Annex 4: My City Centre engagement plan
- Annex 5: My City Centre 2020 summary feedback
- Annex 6: My City Centre: Threats, Opportunities, Challenges, Themes