

Meeting	Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date	22 January 2024
Present	Councillors K Taylor (Chair), Pearson (Vice-Chair), B Burton, J Burton, Fenton, Healey, Hook, Nelson, Steward and Whitcroft
Officers in Attendance	Kathryn Daly - Head of City Development Andrew Laslett - Strategic Services Manager

16. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

17. Minutes

Resolved: The Committee agreed the minutes of the 24 October 2023 and 28 November 2023 meetings be signed as a correct record.

18. Public Participation

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

19. Make It York Performance Report

The Committee were joined by Sarah Loftus Managing Director of Make it York (MIY) and Tony Spinks Accountant (MIY).

Sarah Loftus outlined a positive report of MIY's current work. She confirmed that visitor numbers were high, that MIY was having a strong outreach on social media, and that member retention was also high. She also outlined improvements with the Christmas market and MIY's relationship with the Shambles market traders who had won a Travellers Choice Award for 2023.

The Committee discussed the work of MIY in and around York and enquired about whether MIY promote organisations and events outside of the city centre. Sarah Loftus confirmed that about 20% of MIY's membership were based outside of the city centre and are promoted by the organisation, she also confirmed that new member organisations were welcome.

Visitor numbers for 2023 were discussed as well as around promoting York as a city for visitors and residents. Visitor numbers were noted as having been promising in 2023 but that financial challenges and particularly bad weather in the summer had affected events in the city. It was noted that these were factors that likely contributed to the drop in York Pass' purchased compared to the high point of 2022, where the end to Covid-19 restrictions had seen a rise in visitors to the city.

Members discussed accommodation in York including the challenges associated with the rise in Airbnb style accommodation. Sarah Loftus noted that MIY supported regulation in the sector to ensure the right sort of quality accommodation in the city. Members also enquired as to whether MIY had close conversations with hotel chains about creating more accessible rooms in the city. Sarah Loftus noted that this was something MIY would support but that it was likely a question directly for those chains and noted that MIY and the Council could explore whether any form of funding would be available for smaller accommodation providers.

The Committee noted the improvements to the Christmas market in 2023. It was noted that there had been over 200 applications for stalls at the market and Members enquired how these were determined. Sarah Loftus confirmed that MIY had a criteria it could share with the Committee, which included criteria such as being a Yorkshire business selling Yorkshire made products. Members discussed the rise in the number of York stores which also had a stall at the market. It was confirmed that stores saw it as an opportunity to get a bigger footprint in the city at Christmas, Sarah Loftus noted that it was about maintaining a balance on the market.

Members enquired as to whether MIY were confident it would reach its target level of profit in its 3 year budget plan. The Committee were informed that MIY were confident of this, asked if there were any other challenges than those noted earlier such as bad weather, Sarah Loftus noted that the cost of road closure licenses had risen, interruptions in the train network and an increased amount of health and safety policy to abide by were challenges to the events industry. Finally, Members also welcomed the improved relationship between MIY and the Shambles market traders. Members enquired as to why two shared prosperity funds bids had not been successful, in relation to the market, officers confirmed that they

would need to review this and would update the Committee regarding the bids.

Resolved:

- i. The Committee asked that the Executive Member for Economy & Transport to work with MIY to promote that York remained 'open for business' on flood days;
- ii. The Committee asked that the Executive Member for Economy & Transport to work with MIY and hotel chains in the city encourage business' to increase the number of accessible accommodation;
- iii. To request that officers explore what barriers hotels and hospitality have in York at providing accessible accommodation and report back to the committee.

Reason: To promote York as a city.

20. GLL Annual Performance Report 2022-23

The Committee were joined by Paul Bickle Partnership Manager Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) and Tim Bestford Head of Service (North)(GLL).

Paul Bickle outlined to the Committee that GLL had invested a lot into its centres and had seen a 5% increase in patronage in 2023. He confirmed that GLL were exploring funding from Sport England to install solar panels on their facilities roofs. Finally, he noted that the community stadium had done well during the Women's Rugby World Cup and that they had more big events coming up at the stadium.

The Committee welcomed the report and the update on the work being undertaken by GLL. They did however believe that both GLL and the Council could do more to promote the work GLL are undertaking in the city. Therefore, Members requested that GLL press releases be shared with Councillors so that they could be promoted throughout the city.

Members enquired about the Sports Foundation GLL operate. Paul Bickle noted that the foundation aimed to remove barriers for young talented athletes to access things such as training facilities and afford travel. The Committee commended the work of the foundation and enquired as to whether a similar foundation was possible to support access to sports for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Paul Bickle confirmed that GLL

also work with sporting academies such as York City Football Club and York Knights and could explore whether the foundation could expand.

Members were informed that the Stadium Management Company was separate to both York City Football Club and York Knights. It was confirmed that this separation from YCFC had been the objective of setting up the management company and that relationships with tenants of the stadium was positive. It was noted that GLL were currently at capacity at the stadium and were expanding their team to support tenants of the stadium. The Committee enquired as to whether there was an ongoing cost to the Council in running the stadium. Officers confirmed the Council paid GLL an annual sum to manage the stadium but that there were close to breaking even on cost. Members also enquired about travel to and from the stadium both on match days and none match days. Paul Bickle confirmed that GLL were working with First bus on travel data and were happy to engage with the York Transport Plan.

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee requested that GLL's Sports Development Plan be shared with the Committee;
- ii. That the Committee requested that GLL explore expanding its Sports Foundation work to support access to sport for children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- iii. The Committee asked that all Councillors be added to GLL press releases to help promote and raise awareness of GLL's work;
- iv. To request that officers ensure GLL are included in the consultation on the York Transport Plan as a travel generator.

Reason: To keep the committee updated on the performance of the GLL contract, to promote sustainable travel, and to increase access to sport in the city.

21. MCA Economic Framework

The Committee were joined by Andrew Leeming from the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) and the Executive Member for Economy and Transport.

The Chair Cllr Taylor informed the Committee he would need to leave the meeting at 19:00. Cllr Pearson chaired the meeting from this point and Cllr Steward was elected vice chair.

Officers introduced the report noting that this was the draft Economic Framework for York & North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority as set out by the joint devolution committee. The Committee enquired as to whether the Mayor would be required to follow the Economic Framework, it was noted that the framework was a sign of ambition and it would involve cooperation between the Mayor and the two authorities to move forward. It is likely that the Mayor will wish to develop their own Economic Strategy once in post, the purpose of the framework is to try and inform and influence the content of that work in due course. Officers confirmed that York would maintain its own economic strategy. Officers also confirmed that they had communicated with other combined authorities and would seek to use the power the combined authority had to improve the economic position for York and North Yorkshire.

Members enquired whether the difference between York and North Yorkshire's economy and geography would create challenges for any economic strategy. Officers noted that as economic activity didn't stop at Council boundaries, it would be about supporting the economy across the region. The Executive Member noted that there was actually a fair bit in common with both authority areas such as affordable housing challenges, and that improvement in areas such as transport and internet access would be boosts for York and North Yorkshire.

Resolved:

- i. The Committee noted the York & North Yorkshire Economic Framework for the Mayoral Combined Authority.

Reason: To keep the committee updated on this key draft document for York and North Yorkshire and ensure that it reflects City of York priorities.

22. Work Plan

The Committee discussed the prospect of pursuing a number of task and finish group topics from full fibre broadband installation to community transport services. Members agreed to bring back an outlined proposal for the task and finish groups and agreed to begin work on an outline for community transport services.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the Committee work plan.

- ii. Agreed to bring back to the Committee task and finish group proposals on Dial & Ride.

Reason: To ensure the Committee maintains a programme of work.

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.31 pm and finished at 7.54 pm].