

York Economic Strategy: 2022 to 2032

Executive Summary

“...a prosperous, progressive, and sustainable city, giving the highest priority to the wellbeing of its residents, whilst protecting the fabric and culture of this world-famous historic city.”

“well-paid jobs in an inclusive economy”

York has a strong economy, with high employment, wages above average, productivity among the highest in the North, a great education system and the reputation as a great place to live. But we are also an expensive city for housing and too many people in York are struggling to get by. This strategy sets out what we plan to do over the next 10 years to enable our people and our businesses to thrive while playing their full part in meeting our net-zero ambitions.

For the past 20 years, York has had a consistent focus on growing well paid employment on the back of university-driven sector growth. We have seen the Science City York initiative expand science jobs in the city, the focus on Media Arts bring business opportunities across sectors, and widespread growth in our knowledge-based industries. These have transformed York’s economy, adding 20,000 highly skilled jobs to the city.

Through the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic we have refocused on the importance of our city centre, and of employment in tourism, retail and hospitality. We have also been reminded just how important health and social care employment is to us. These sectors are not driven by University research, and offer flexible jobs, often with part-time hours, which are very important to many households in York. However these jobs are also lower paid, offer fewer opportunities for career progression, and have been seen in previous strategies as problematic. In particular, we have seen the strength of our retail and tourism economy as an “over dependence”, implying that the city would prefer to have fewer jobs in these sectors.

York is already the most productive and well-paid city in Yorkshire, with an excellent education system, green transport routes and a firm commitment to becoming net-zero by 2030. And yet we are at or below average when compared to the whole of the UK. This shows the case for Levelling Up in York: the north needs York to be in the top 25% of UK economies and that means increasing productivity and pay while continuing to grow new skills in our workforce. These are the headline ambitions of our strategy – we want York to be a place where productive businesses are good employers, where our residents thrive.

To achieve this ambition, we want to build on our existing strengths. We see York as the centre of globally significant clusters in rail and bio-technology, leading the way in demonstrating the benefits of the green economy, and a beacon for flexible, productive jobs that enable our people to make the most of their abilities and live well. Through growing the productivity of our tourism, retail and social care businesses, we believe they can be even better providers of employment for York’s people. We were the first Good Business Charter city, and we encourage all York’s businesses to be part of the initiative.

Economic prosperity depends not just on levels of income, but also on household costs. Whether renting or purchasing, York is a relatively expensive city for housing, and this means that despite pay in York being higher than in surrounding areas, many households rely on more than one income to get by. As a consequence York has a very high economic activity

rate, with 5,000 more households than might be expected relying on flexible work through part-time and self-employment, balancing earning with caring to add to household incomes. Two thirds of those in part-time roles in York are female. For this reason, we will focus on supporting the growth of well-paid part-time and flexible employment and supporting small and micro businesses. We will also place particular emphasis on supporting women to make best use of their skills and qualifications, whether that is in employment or through running their own businesses.

York's Local Plan seeks to make the most of our existing employment land while protecting the greenbelt and the fabric and culture of the city. York Central will soon add 1.2 million square feet of office space, but beyond this there is a little scope for expansion of employment sites within the city boundary. Our main opportunities lie in making better use of city centre commercial property, including offices, and in renewing our city fringe employment sites such as Clifton Moor and Huntington. Built in the 1980s, these sites are beginning to show how much the city has changed over the past 40 years, and do not currently provide scope for many of our growing industries to move up the property ladder. It is "densification" which will help York's economy to grow – increasing the productivity per square foot, rather than expanding our productive area. The planning system is an important tool for economic development and we will work with that system to ensure that businesses can thrive in York.

York is a global city, welcoming people from across the world to work, study and visit, and proud to be known across the globe. We want to add to that reputation, working with our Universities and industry to further grow York as a centre for rail, the bio-economy, insurance, assured autonomy, science, technology and creativity. We are a UNESCO City of Media Arts, famous for our high-tech museums and our Viking past. There is more of this story to tell – York has been the region's capital throughout much of our 2,000 years. The city of Constantine and the 8th Legion, and of Edwin, Alcuin, and the Kingdom of Northumbria. Building our city's economy to be more productive and to pay higher wages means making the most of our city's assets – our heritage, our environment, and our people.

Our Principles

To deliver our ambition we will be guided by five principles. You will see these applied throughout this strategy, in the actions we take, the relationships we build and in how we openly share plans and data to help others:

We will **increase collaboration and cooperation** by working with partners across York's economy to support growth of opportunity and prosperity. We will develop a new Economic Partnership to guide the development of the economy and implement this strategy. It will be an inclusive partnership, providing a voice for York's diverse communities as well as the businesses and organisations on which the economy is built.

We will do everything we can to **support businesses adapt to climate change**, building the green jobs of the future, helping businesses to play their full part in York's net-zero future, and focussing on the small and micro businesses which are the foundation of our economy.

We will **build inclusive, healthy and sustainable communities** by promoting the positive social and environmental benefits of economic development. With more and better employment and business opportunities, retraining and reskilling opportunities for growing

sectors, and great transport infrastructure to get people to and from work sustainably we will help to improve the wellbeing of our residents. We will work with people across the local economy to build prosperity for all.

We will work with businesses to **help deliver York's climate change strategy**, strengthening the economy through our work with local suppliers to building local "green" skills such as retrofitting houses and supporting the bio-economy. We will proactively seek alternative funding streams and attract additional investment, to support businesses as they adapt.

Good **governance** will guide our actions ahead. Our new economic partnership will take accountability for delivering actions. We will provide accurate information that allows us to review progress and adapt actions if required.

Our Themes

York as a global city

How our economy relates to the world beyond the York boundary; import, export and trade; inward investment; attracting customers from elsewhere. The importance of links with places outside of York, whether international or much closer to home. Our global strengths – a unique rail cluster, the emerging bio-economy, our UNESCO designation as city of media arts – are at the heart of our ambitions.

A greener economy

As our Climate Change Strategy shows, York cannot become net-zero without businesses playing their part. The city can help businesses as they seek to reduce their carbon footprints, understand their environmental impact, reduce energy use and keep short and long term costs down, and it is vital that we do so. The green economy is growing and can provide new opportunities through initiatives such as BioYorkshire, building the green jobs of the future that will support our city's net-zero ambition.

A thriving workforce

Our Skills Strategy has already set out a clear vision to helping the people of York develop the skills and attributes needed in the 21st century economy. We need to focus on the work-life blend, helping businesses to get the most from their employees and enabling the people of York to find the best opportunities to make a decent living. Thriving isn't just about earning money, and health and wellbeing are equally important. Businesses are vital to supporting wellbeing, both as employers and providers. We need to further strengthen links between education and business to help young people thrive while maximising the potential of career changers and retraining to provide the workforce of the future. Supporting women to gain the most appropriate part-time work and to start and grow businesses is particularly important as we seek to grow the productivity of flexible work in York.

Thriving businesses

As businesses change and grow, there is much that York can do to guide and enable decisions that fit with our city's vision. The role of infrastructure – our transport networks, our built environment, our education and health systems, our digital networks – is to support York

and its economy develop. We need to enable workspace to develop for in a post pandemic world, enabling businesses to adapt to new models of hybrid and flexible working. Future proofing York's economic space, from the city centre to our business estates, are at the heart of our ambitions, and the Planning system is key to guiding change. In the Covid-19 pandemic, we have recognised the importance of our small and micro businesses, developing innovative approaches to supporting their role in helping our people to thrive. Continued help is needed for this vital part of our economy which is overlooked in national and regional support.

An economy driven by good business

Whether it is supporting our net-zero commitments, helping our residents to thrive, or inspiring the next generation, good business is at the heart of our strategy. In becoming the first Good Business Charter City, York has demonstrated that we embrace the benefits of ethical business, and we want to continue to grow that model. We can help to strengthen links between business and community, and show how working together in business networks and associations can help both businesses and their employees to thrive.

Engagement So Far

To help build our new Economic Strategy, we wanted to hear from the residents and businesses of York. July 2021 saw widespread engagement with York's residents, workers and businesses placing them at the heart of plans to develop an inclusive and greener economy. More than 2,000 residents and businesses got involved in the Council's 'Our Big Conversation', which brought together the overlapping themes of economy, carbon reduction and transport. Extensive engagement was also at the heart of the 'My City Centre' survey and throughout the pandemic we have had ever-closer contact with our business community, with much insight into the importance of business across our communities coming from the independent evaluation of our micro-business grant scheme.

The key findings of the surveys were:

- The vast majority of residents and businesses support York's ambition to become a net-zero carbon city by 2030;
- More than two-thirds of workers are expecting to work from home more in the future;
- 2 in 3 workers are interested in learning new skills, with advanced/specialist IT skills and management/leadership skills being most in demand;
- 40% of residents working part-time do so to have a better work/life balance;
- Businesses cite the availability, suitability and cost of land and premises as the biggest challenge for operating in York;
- 2 in 5 businesses are rethinking their workspace requirements, with the majority looking to either revise their current layout or relocate to larger premises.

Alongside these surveys, we have worked hard to understand the perspectives of those whose voices are less often heard. There is still more to be done, but we welcome the role of Citizens Advice York who have surveyed their clients' experience of Covid-19 and employment. The survey found that clients already in employment and those without a disability/health problem were most confident about their employment prospects. But those

with long-term health conditions faced difficulty in finding employment and their health was suffering.

Alongside the *Our Big Conversation* survey, a series of focus groups on key themes and issues were commissioned. These explored attitudes and perceptions with regard to the emerging Economic Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Transport Plan. The brief was to engage with traditionally under-represented or hard to reach groups including:

- Students in York
- 16-24-year-olds in York
- Members of York's LGBTQIA+ community
- Lower paid workers in York
- Parents of children aged 0-10 in York
- Disabled People in York
- Members of York's Black Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) community
- People in York who are currently not in education, employment or training

The focus groups explored two specific economic issues – the availability of suitable employment and the affordability of housing. Participants highlighted the value to family and personal life of flexible working that was made clear during the Covid-19 pandemic. Skills, apprenticeships and support for those seeking employment, particularly for those with young children, were seen as central to those wishing to re-enter the jobs market, seek avenues for training and reskilling. There was a strong view that York offers only a narrow range of work opportunities, with only the lower paid sectors appearing to actively recruit in those communities. The opportunities afforded across the York economy are clearly not being communicated to those who were part of the focus groups, highlighting an area for future activity.

York's Economy in 2022

We must begin our strategy with a solid understanding of York's economy, and the challenges and opportunities it presents to our businesses and our residents. The survey and engagement work outlined above sits alongside an evidence base of economic data which is set out in the Technical Annex to this strategy. The Annex explores York's levels of productivity and wage levels, employment mix (sectors, skills, and types of roles), numbers of business start-ups, skill levels, housing affordability, the economic impacts of Covid-19, and forecasts for growth and employment (including 'green' jobs).

The data shows that York's economy is performing strongly with higher levels of productivity than the rest of the Yorkshire and the Humber region. It also shows that our prevailing economic strategy since the 2008 financial crash – to focus on growing high-paid jobs - has borne fruit:

- Productivity per hour worked in York is higher than in the surrounding area, being close to the UK average and with York in the top third of local authority areas on this measure (56th of 168 areas)

- Pay in York is close to the national median (across full-time and part-time roles), and higher than much of Yorkshire and the Humber, with York 97th of 204 authorities for full-time weekly pay and 58th of 203 authorities for part-time hourly pay;
- York has many highly skilled residents, with 59% of the working age population educated to NVQ Level 4 or higher, with York in the top 10% of local authorities by this measure in the most recent figures;
- We have a strong knowledge economy which has grown strongly, with 21,000 high skilled jobs created in York since 2004.

With significant new developments coming forward in the city such as York Central and the Guildhall redevelopment, we can expect further growth in well-paid jobs. We have also seen strong growth in hospitality, retail and social care employment. These lower-paid sectors provide much of York's part-time work, contributing to household incomes, but also providing some challenges. Our Local Plan recognises the contribution that these sites will make to supporting economic growth, and also highlights the need to make best use of York's limited supply of employment land.

Data on York property price to earnings ratio shows that while York's housing affordability is at England's average level, we are less affordable than much of the North. In terms of property rents, rental prices in York are equivalent to those in the East and South East of England, and higher than the national average when looking at homes with two bedrooms or more. Relatively high values for residential property are driving conversions from office to residential, both in the city centre and on employment sites such as Clifton Moor.

Despite the relative strength of the York economy, there are many in the city who face significant challenges and an emphasis on inclusive growth in our new Economic Strategy is paramount. York is undoubtedly a working city, with stronger self-employment, lower unemployment, and lower economic inactivity levels for those who don't want a job compared to the UK averages. Whilst part-time employment has increased overall in York, these jobs are predominantly in lower paid sectors. Two thirds of those in part-time work are female, and we know that part-time work is a gender issue. Focus therefore needs to be placed on growing the amount of part-time work available in higher paid sectors, providing opportunities to upskill and retrain, improving individual mobility, on increasing both productivity and pay in sectors such as retail, tourism and social care, and on helping women to make best use of their skills and qualifications.

Self-employment is also important in York with around 14,000 running their own micro businesses. These businesses are vital providers of income to households across the city, with 60% being the main source of income in a household, and 40% providing second incomes. Helping these micro businesses to be as productive and successful as possible will make a real difference to the prosperity of neighbourhoods across York. Again, the role of self-employment among women will be a particular focus of our work.

Encouraging new businesses and enterprising culture in York will be key to our new strategy as entrepreneurship is the lifeblood of our economy. New ideas, new people, new technologies and new businesses have all driven York's progress and made it the best place to both live and work in the UK. On average around 1,000 businesses start each year in York, although in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, the rate is currently closer to 800.

Helping entrepreneurs from all background to get their businesses off the ground and survive the early years of trading will also make a big difference to the York economy.

Attracting 'green' jobs and growing the low carbon and renewable energy economy (LCREE) will also be a key focus of our new economic strategy. Not only will it help us achieve York's net-zero ambitions but also help forge an economy ready for the future. Research from the Local Government Association forecasts Yorkshire and the Humber as being the second highest region, after the North West, to receive direct jobs in the LCREE, with a potential for 99,000 direct jobs by 2030 and 168,000 direct jobs by 2050. For both 2030 and 2050, the majority of jobs in the LCREE are set to be based in the development of 'alternative fuels', which the report refers to as bioenergy (anaerobic digestion) and hydrogen production. The report refers to the jobs in 'alternative fuels' as highly-skilled and requiring the NVQ4+ level qualifications with which York is well supplied.

York has consistently been ranked the most skilled city in the North of England over the past 20 years and in the most recent figures (Dec 2021) nearly 60% of the working age population are qualified to NVQ Level 4 or higher. This has meant that York residents have been able to obtain high-skilled jobs that are well-paid and that businesses want to set-up in our city so they can tap into this talent. It will be important to maintain this status and support those who seek to learn more skills, as detailed in consultation work, so that our residents are ready for new industries in our future economy.

Since 2004, roughly 21,000 high-skilled jobs have been created in the York economy as we have shifted from a manufacturing city to one based on service industries, with these new jobs balanced by a reduction of employment in the construction, manufacturing and transport sectors.

Today, York has strong sector specialisms in rail, insurance and museums, alongside a growing bio-economy sector and an important cluster of media arts firms. These form the basis for further growth, supplementing our important visitor economy and other strengths such as IT and technology, food manufacture and professional services. New industries are developing to support the zero-carbon agenda and it is clear that there is overwhelming support from our resident and business community to transition to a greener economy by 2030.

In summary, York has a wealth of assets that mark our city as one of the leading economies in the North of England. We can build on these strengths, but must also pay attention to working inclusively to support all of our residents to thrive.

Section 2: What we want to achieve

York in 2032

The overarching aim of this strategy is to take action that enables York to sit among the top 25% of local economies in the UK in terms of productivity, pay and skills. By 2032, our aim means is that:

- York will be among the top 25% most productive local economies as measured by Gross Value Added per hour worked, requiring a 3.8% increase in productivity
- York will be among the top 25% local economies for pay levels as measured by full-time median weekly pay and part-time median hourly pay, requiring an increase of 11% in median full-time weekly pay and 1% in median part-time hourly pay
- York will continue to be among the top 25% local economies for skill levels as measured by percentage of working age population who are qualified to NVQ Level 4 or higher, requiring the proportion with Level 4+ qualifications to remain above 50%

This overarching aim is driven by the evidence set out above – both the economic data and the views of our residents. The data tells us that we must do more to increase productivity, from our current position of leading the Yorkshire & Humber region but being average in UK terms. And at the same time, our residents tell us that they want more skills to adapt to future economy, better part-time work opportunities to support their responsibilities beyond work, and action to meet the net-zero ambitions we have set. Many women need more options for part-time work where they can use their skills and qualifications to contribute and earn more, or can develop and grow their businesses.

We recognise that the economic strategy is part of a suite of strategies and plans, and must do its best to simultaneously support our ambitions for net-zero, our Local Plan, and the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy among others. Therefore, we have established 5 headline commitments that not only embed the overarching aim of the economic strategy, but include important objectives that we seek to achieve as a local authority.

The 5 Strategy Themes

York as a global city

How our economy relates to the world beyond the York boundary; import, export and trade; inward investment; attracting customers from elsewhere. The importance of links with places outside of York, whether international or much closer to home. Our global strengths – a unique rail cluster, the emerging bio-economy, our UNESCO designation as city of media arts – are at the heart of our ambitions.

Objectives:

- Develop York's reputation as global leader in rail and the bio-economy, seeking out new partnership opportunities from across the world

- Grow the value of tourism with a quality offer for visitors and locals
- Attract inward investment, making York the place of choice to locate in the North
 - Deliver on key Council projects such as York Central and Station Gateway to showcase York as the economic hub of the North
 - Use key regeneration projects such as the Guildhall, Castle Gateway and the Riverside project to promote York as place aware of its role as a custodian of its heritage, but with an eye on the future needs and potential of the City
 - Ensure that York is the best place to work in the office or from home, to cement York’s reputation as a workplace for the 21st Century
 - Promote York’s status as the UK’s first Gigabit City, using our outstanding connectivity is to create jobs, attract investment and improve lives for people who learn, work in and visit the city
- Maximise existing academic, civic and business links between York and the rest of the world for the benefit of trade, investment and local job creation
 - Develop deeper economic ties with our twinned cities
 - Support businesses to take advantage of new trade opportunities and expand in new markets

Key policy and strategy alignments:

City of York Council’s Council Plan 2019-2023	International Trade Committee report of FDI (2021)	UK Government’s post-Brexit new overseas trading relationships
The de Bois Review & City of York Council Tourism Strategy	UK Government’s desire to have the UK as a science powerhouse	City of York Council International Relations Strategy
City of York Council’s draft Local Plan	City of York Council’s Climate Change Strategy	UK Government’s ‘Growing the Bioeconomy’ strategy

Case Studies

AgriSound is a young agri-tech business delivering automated solutions for monitoring insect biodiversity. Founded in January 2020 by Casey Woodward, the company aims to deploy 1 million listening devices across the globe and, creating the world's largest insect biodiversity database.

The company's technology uses low-cost audio and environmental sensors to understand the number and type of insects within a local environment. This helps farmers and landowners to monitor insect biodiversity, improve pollination, and increase crop yields in a sustainable manner.

AgriSound chose York because of the burgeoning agri-tech community, great national rail links, plus the support available locally. AgriSound has been helped to purchase new equipment and has been made to feel part of the business community, showcasing York's high quality advice to support the resilience, growth and prosperity of local businesses and entrepreneurs.

AgriSound is preparing for their next fundraising round to give them the resources to really start to build their deployment efforts, scaling up their manufacturing process to reduce unit costs, and develop new partnerships to get their devices out to hundreds of UK farms.

Marcryst International Ltd. is a family-run manufacturer and developed of tools for cutting, grinding and drilling. A focus on [innovation and technology](#) has enabled Marcryst to produce first-of-its-kind tools such as diamond edged blades and 4M cordless tools. The next round of innovation for the company is in moving to a direct sales approach, and they have chosen York as the location for their new digital team to look after the website, content creation, e-commerce and manage product data.

York was a natural choice for Marcryst's very first digital office due to our thriving tech sector, educational institutions and the high quality of talent and skills that the company needs to grow their business. Great hospitality and accommodation, plus rail and public transport links are also a factor.

Marcryst is customer driven and they place high importance on end-user satisfaction, but also understand the impact and value of employee satisfaction on productivity and wellbeing.

ETAS Ltd is a subsidiary of the German company Bosch, with ETAS York employing 120 staff and housing the Centre of Excellence for Embedded Software development and the headquarters for real time applications.

The company provides innovative solutions that drive the development of embedded systems for the automotive industry in software engineering, test and validation, measurement, calibration, and diagnostics, real time applications and cybersecurity.

The York location started as a spinout from the University of York and has been part of ETAS since 2003. It is responsible for the development of real-time operating systems and basic software for the automotive industry – almost every car across the planet that has onboard computing uses their software and operating system. To date more than 1 billion copies of the ETAS York operating system have been deployed and are driving on the roads globally. ETAS York embedded excellence now powers new global business units responsible for embedded software consultancy and implementation services, and supports global ETAS product development wherever high levels of embedded software competence are required – for example, supporting the ETAS subsidiary ESCRYPT GmbH in the development of embedded security products.

ETAS is keen to emphasise the important role that the University of York plays in providing the company with a highly skilled workforce as it is unique in terms of the degrees it offers. They include Computer Science which addresses real time safety as well as other hardware topics, and an Electrical Engineering degree that focuses on software. York has all the resources that ETAS needs. It has a great pool of new talent; the price-talent ratio and price-performance ratio in York are excellent.

A greener economy

As our Climate Change Strategy shows, York cannot become net-zero without businesses playing their part. The city can help businesses as they seek to reduce their carbon footprints, understand their environmental impact, reduce energy use and keep short and long term costs down, and it is vital that we do so. The green economy is growing and can provide new opportunities through initiatives such as BioYorkshire, building the green jobs of the future that will support our city’s net-zero ambition.

Objectives:

- Support businesses to decarbonise and make a positive contribution to the city’s net-zero ambitions
 - Enable businesses to decarbonise through signposting capital grants, sustainable goods and materials and establishing local supply chains
 - Putting York and the region on the map for investors and investment in low carbon technologies and industries
- Supporting the growth of green jobs and the bio-economy
 - Ensure the workforce is equipped with skills for the ‘green’ economy by mapping out what those industries and skills will look like in York
 - Develop York’s emerging bio-economy cluster through the BioYorkshire initiative
 - Pioneer green construction and retrofit, working with York College to make the appropriate courses and qualifications available
- Delivering a green transport network
 - Establish the use of electric vehicles as commonplace, and providing an accessible, fit for purpose superfast charging network in the City
- Improving public and active transport to employment sites through the Local Transport Plan
 - Increase cycling and active travel to work where appropriate as modes of commuting, along with increased safe cycle parking provision

Key policy and strategy alignments:

City of York Council’s Council Plan 2019-2023	City of York Council’s Climate Change Strategy	City of York Council’s 10 Year Skills Strategy
City of York Council’s <i>Our Big Conversation</i>	CYC’s Active Travel Plan	CYC’s Active Transport Plan
City of York Council’s Local Plan	UK Government’s Net Zero Strategy	UK Government’s Heat and buildings Strategy

{INSERT CASE STUDIES: Novalux; BioYorkshire; York Gin; Food Circle}

A thriving workforce

Our Skills Strategy has already set out a clear vision to helping the people of York develop the skills and attributes needed in the 21st century economy. We need to focus on the work-life blend, helping businesses to get the most from their employees and enabling the people of York to find the best opportunities to make a decent living. Thriving isn't just about earning money, and health and wellbeing are equally important. Businesses are vital to supporting wellbeing, both as employers and providers. We need to further strengthen links between education and business to help young people thrive while maximising the potential of career changers and retraining to provide the workforce of the future.

Objectives:

- Work within and across communities to provide access to skills for employment and self-employment for all
 - Support entry-level and basic skills (including maths, English, digital skills, employability and transferable skills)
 - Enhance skills opportunities and information, advice and guidance for entrepreneurs and those seeking self-employment with a focus on hard-to-reach communities
 - Utilise talent more effectively so that people from all backgrounds get better chances to access good jobs
- Support local businesses to increase productivity and build resilience through training and upskilling their workforce
 - Invest in the sectors that drive prosperity in York
 - Support businesses to access talent, tailored provision and support for upskilling
 - Focus on helping small and micro businesses to thrive
 - Encourage York businesses to offer a broader range of part-time roles
- Work in partnership to create a flexible city-wide skills system that responds to local needs
 - Work across the city to join up skills provision and deliver a united and streamlined skills offer
 - Ensure skills provision is aligned to future growth sectors and skills needs in the city
 - Embed the business voice into provision and planning by fostering more links between Further Education, Higher Education, Independent Training Providers and businesses
- Through high-quality skills provision and a culture of lifelong learning, ensure a pipeline of talent that meets business needs and attracts, trains, retains and re-trains people in the city
 - Focus on occupations in highest demand (eg nurses, caregivers, software developers) and help people who are underrepresented in high-value professions to enter them
 - Increase apprenticeships especially at higher levels and in science and technology-based industries
 - Ensure the talent pipeline of graduates and people with higher-level skills is enhanced and aligned with priority sectors

- Support those seeking part-time work to make the most of their abilities and find good flexible jobs
- Providing a range of affordable housing opportunities fit for a growing local workforce and their families, making York a clear choice for talented people to build a career and a home

Key policy and strategy alignments:

City of York Council’s 10 Year Skills Strategy	The Government’s Lifetime Skills Guarantee	The Government’s Further Education White Paper
City of York Council Climate Change Strategy	Draft Local Plan for York	City of York Council’s Council Plan 2019-2023
UK Government’s Levelling Up White Paper	City of York Council’s Health & Wellbeing Strategy	City of York Council’s Housing Strategy

{INSERT CASE STUDIES: York St John; Ardent Financial; Skills Board; SC Nutra}

Thriving businesses

As businesses change and grow, there is much that York can do to guide and enable decisions that fit with our city’s vision. The role of infrastructure – our transport networks, our built environment, our education and health systems, our digital networks – is to support York and its economy develop. We need to enable workspace to develop for in a post pandemic world, enabling businesses to adapt to new models of hybrid and flexible working. Future proofing York’s economic space, from the city centre to our business estates, are at the heart of our ambitions, and the Planning system is key to guiding change. In the Covid-19 pandemic, we have recognised the importance of our small and micro businesses, developing innovative approaches to supporting their role in helping our people to thrive. Continued help is needed for this vital part of our economy which is overlooked in national and regional support

Objectives:

- Work with the Planning system to protect existing employment sites by incentivising the redevelopment and enhancement of sites and buildings
- Deliver major regeneration projects to reinvigorate the employment landscape in York, including York Central and the proposed central Government Hub, Innovation Hub, BioYorkshire and the Great British Rail Headquarters
- Work with city centre businesses, landlords and stakeholders to bring the My City Centre vision to life

- Create conditions for flexible businesses to thrive and survive including improving out of town employment land and transport links, public transport provision, workspace, housing and high quality education
- Capitalise on our diverse sectoral strengths by pushing forward with pipeline initiatives in the rail, biotech and life sciences, insurance and creative sectors
- Ensure that businesses and entrepreneurs receive high quality advice to support resilience, growth and prosperity, and that the specific needs of female entrepreneurs are recognised and catered for
- Help York businesses to access the full range of talent available across the city, particularly in communities that job adverts are not currently reaching
- Work with City landlords and property owners to bring fallow buildings back into use as affordable employment space
- Strengthen the business community’s digital infrastructure and cyber security levels
- Build on our Growth Hub to provide quality business support for all, including the voucher scheme approach we have trialled through the pandemic

Key policy and strategy alignments:

City of York Council’s Council Plan 2019-2023	City of York Council’s Climate Change Plan	City of York Council’s 10 Year Skills Strategy
City of York Council’s <i>Our Big Conversation</i>	UK Government’s Further Education White Paper	City of York Council’s Microbusiness Grant Scheme evaluation
City of York Council’s draft Local Plan	City of York Council’s Active Transport Plan	City of York Council’s My City Centre Survey
City of York Council’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy	UK Government’s Levelling Up White Paper	

{INSERT CASE STUDIES: Hiscox; CYC Voucher Scheme; ?}

An economy driven by innovation and good business

Whether it is supporting our net-zero commitments, helping our residents to thrive, or inspiring the next generation, good business is at the heart of our strategy. In becoming the first Good Business Charter City, York has demonstrated that we embrace the benefits of ethical business, and we want to continue to grow that model. We can help to strengthen links between business and community, and show how working together in business networks and associations can help both businesses and their employees to thrive.

Objectives:

- Create an Economic Partnership and work with the business to deliver our Economic Strategy

- Encourage more businesses to sign up to the Good Business Charter, embedding responsible and ethical business practises, ensuring York remains the leading Good Business Charter City
- Support businesses to act as place leaders in their community, with strong links between businesses and communities working to inspire the future workforce
- Work collaboratively with the childcare sector so parents are supported in taking on employment, children’s development is progressed and providers are able to sustainably grow
- Fully embed the 10 year Skills Strategy with full commitment to priorities and strong engagement with and between all employers, including anchor institutions such as our Universities, Colleges, City of York Council, the NHS, Aviva and Nestlé, and their supply chains
- Work to improve the ethnic and cultural diversity of business boards to better reflect their employee base and the communities they serve
- Invest in and support our thriving independent traders, and recognise the importance of Traders’ Associations and local champions such as Indie York and the York BID
- Work with employers to ensure that job opportunities are available to all communities across York and that recruitment advertising reaches all potential applicants

Key policy and strategy alignments:

The Good Business Charter	Government agenda to ‘Build Back better’	City of York Council’s 10 Year Skills Strategy
City of York Council’s <i>Our Big Conversation</i>	The Cornwall Consensus to promote inclusive growth	City of York Council’s Health & Wellbeing Strategy
City of York Council’s Climate Change Strategy	Skills for Jobs Policy	City of York Council’s Council Plan 2019-2023

{INSERT CASE STUDIES: Galtres Lodge; Good Business Charter; Simpson SYL; CYC MicroGrants}

Section 3: Key Actions

Develop a new Economic Partnership

To achieve the aims set out in this strategy we will establish an Economic Partnership. The partnership will comprise employers, entrepreneurs, education providers, employee representatives, industry leaders, business networks and City of York Council representatives. The board of the partnership body will meet every 6 months and will offer advice and recommendations to the Council in its efforts to achieve the aims of the strategy.

Deliver the key developments in the city

The aspirations set out in this strategy will be supported by forthcoming developments that will accelerate growth in York. Highlights include York Central, Castle Gateway, York Station Frontage, Riverside development and Haxby Station. The importance of replenishing our city's assets cannot be underestimated and will not only help restore pride in place but continue to make York the best place to live and work in the UK. It is crucial that these developments come to fruition and maximise their economic contribution.

Use the Planning system to drive the right growth

As our Local Plan emerges from the current Enquiry, we will strengthen our planning system to protect employment land, encourage a denser use of existing space, and stop housing uses from encroaching on our vital employment sites. We will also make the best use of new employment sites, and incentivise property owners to improve or redevelop their sites to better match the future economy.

Help our micro businesses to be as productive as they can

Build on our pandemic response, with York businesses helping York businesses through our voucher scheme model. Celebrate the micro business community in York and the opportunities that our city provides for businesses to start and grow.

Grow flexible working options in all sectors

Promote the benefits of flexible working to employers, helping them to see that redesigning job roles to match the needs of the workforce will help them to recruit and retain employees.

Support our workforce to adapt for the future

Align skills provision on our key sectors and opportunities, enabling young people, career changers and those returning to the workforce to get involved in the sectors of the future. Ensure job opportunities are better communicated across the city.

Build our global clusters

Work with our rail, bio-economy and heritage-based media arts clusters to attract more employment, promote our city and its businesses to the world, and support levelling up across the North.