

Meeting	Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	9 December 2024
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Merrett (Vice-Chair), Ayre, B Burton, Coles, Crawshaw, Healey, Rose, Widdowson, Whitcroft, Steward (Substitute for Cllr Rowley), K Taylor (Substitute for Cllr Melly) and Vassie (Substitute for Cllr Waller)
In Attendance	Cllr Lomas, Executive Member, Finance and Major Projects
Officers Present	Claire Foale, Interim Director, City Development Debbie Mitchell, Director of Finance Ian Cunningham, Head of Business Intelligence Shaun Gibbons, Head of Carbon Reduction

36. Apologies for Absence (5.31 pm)

Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs Melly, Rowley and Waller.

37. Declarations of Interest (5.31 pm)

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on the agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

None were declared.

38. Minutes (5.31 pm)

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 November 2024 were approved as a correct record.

39. Public Participation (5.33 pm)

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Debby Cobbett spoke on Item 7, York Climate Commission Update. She raised some concerns regarding the accuracy of the report, noting some omissions to the working groups and highlighting that the Commission's website was out of date. She also urged the city to sign up to the fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty.

40. York Central Update (5.38 pm)

The Interim Director, City Development, presented the update to the committee and, together with the external partners, responded to questions from Members.

Members asked questions covering issue resolution, the provision of housing, including affordable housing, office space, including civil service accommodation, progress against funding and payback period, ward councillor and resident communications and sustainability.

It was reported that:

- An internal officer group had been put together to speed up the resolution of issues within the council remit.
- The provision of commercial space was needed, as the city lacked a central business district; the office accommodation was designed to provide for the core technologies already present in the city, to enable industry growth and to provide jobs for graduates in these industries.
- The Government Property Agency (GPA) act of behalf of various government departments, to arrange the co-location of departments to share costs. These offices operate at around 40% occupancy.
- The funding position was on track and the payback period had been extended, as part of the devolution deal, to 2054.
- Partners were aiming to achieve at least 40% affordable housing, subject to a government spending review due in 2025.
- Phase one would deliver 1,000 homes over two years.
- There would be a consultation to decide how to invest the community fund. They would continue to work Ward Cllrs and with residents on the consultation and to communicate safety messages.
- Sustainability was a particular focus for all the project partners, the submitted plans were baseline proposals. Timber frame buildings were an aspiration for the whole scheme. The development was planned to be 'car light', to create a modal shift away from cars.

- The 6,500 jobs to be created were permanent and unrelated to the construction phase of the development.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on the progress of the York Central project.

41. Finance and Performance Monitor 2 2024/24 (7.05 pm)

The Director of Finance presented her report on the projected financial position for 2024/25 and the performance position for April-September 2024. The Head of Business Intelligence noted that previous Member requests relating to benchmarking for energy performance certificates, carbon emissions data and freedom of information requests had been included in the report.

Members asked a range of questions which covered carbon emissions, customer call centre response times, housing benefit processing times, staff numbers and response times to complaints and FOI requests.

Officers reported that data was held on department wait times for call response, this information could be included in future reports. Response times had increased recently due to the garden waste initiative. The housing benefit measure related to the Department of Work and Pensions performance; officers agreed to liaise with customer services to look at CYC processing times. The risk increase for large projects related to the York Station Gateway.

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects reported that there was a system in place to add additional resources to customer services when a higher level of demand is anticipated. She also stated that the rise in staff numbers was a result of a cost saving strategy to reduce agency workers. A permanent work force also meant that the council was a good employer.

Resolved:

- i. That the finance and performance information be noted.
- ii. That the continued work to identify savings be noted.

Reason: To ensure that expenditure was kept within the approved budget.

42. York Climate Commission Update (7.24 pm)

The Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency was unable to attend the meeting and the Chair therefore asked Members to consider what should be included in a future report which would be rescheduled in the new year. Members made the following suggestions:

- Provide the Terms of Reference for the York Climate Commission (YCC), to provided context.
- Examples of good practice.
- How scrutiny could support the work of the YCC.
- The role of the Combined Authority.
- Reports from the working groups on what had been achieved to date.

It was also noted that the website was out of date and should be updated.

Resolved: That the item be added to the work plan and brought back to the committee at a future date, to be agreed by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has an opportunity to review the work of the YCC.

43. Work Plan (7.40 pm)

Members considered the committee's work plan and the scrutiny work plan for the four scrutiny committees.

Resolved: That the work plans be noted.

Reason: To ensure an overview of the scrutiny work programme.

Cllr S Fenton, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.41 pm].