
Meeting	Economy & Place Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date	10 December 2019
Present	Councillors S Barnes (Chair), Daubeney (Vice-Chair), Baker, Douglas, Hook, Pearson and K Taylor
In attendance	Councillor D'Agorne

34. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, that they might have in the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared at this stage; however, Cllr Barnes later declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 (Apprenticeship and Skills Scoping Report), as he was currently undertaking an apprenticeship at York St John University.

35. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 be approved, and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the sentence after '*Discussion took place on Brexit*' in Minute 31 being amended to read as follows:-

"The representative from the retail sector in York noted that employees did not talk about Brexit every day as they had more pressing issues in their daily lives."

36. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

37. Highways Scrutiny Update (Overview report from Highways Team)

Members considered an update report from the Head of Highways which examined the council's performance on highway maintenance in the context of the assessments and repairs processes and the allocated budgets. The current maintenance backlog was estimated at £112m.

The report outlined the annual condition survey process and prioritisation of maintenance works on carriageways and footways categorised as functionally or structurally impaired (grades 4 and 5). Annexes 1-5 to the report showed the direction of travel on every grade (1 to 5) from 2016 to 2019. The current approach to highway asset management was detailed in the reports to Executive at Annexes 6 and 7; investment in the network since 2015/16 was shown in paragraph 8. The council used two frameworks for contractors to complement its own workforce. Quality criteria for assessing contractors to be placed on a framework were set out in Annex 8. The council was also represented on several national groups supported by the DfT and had involvement and / or interest in a number of innovative projects and trials of new materials, as detailed in paragraphs 11 to 19. The focus of the service was to develop the Highways Asset Management Plan and update the Winter Service Plan.

In response to Members' questions, officers provided further information, which may be summarised as follows:

- The backlog was increasing, as in all local authority areas; however, York did have some 'future proofing' in place.
- There was not enough information pre 2015 to determine when road conditions began to deteriorate.
- Alleyways were included within the highway network, unless un-adopted.
- Repairs were programmed for periods when they would have less impact on businesses, usually January to March, although optimum temperatures for some surfaces were in summer.
- Officers were obliged to prioritise main roads, in accordance with the national code of practice; ward funding could be allocated for repairs to local roads with a lower usage.
- The challenge of balancing these two areas of work was appreciated; new staff being recruited to the ward programme would help to improve the allocation process.
- Participation in the NYCC and Yorkshire Alliance frameworks (paragraph 9) had delivered savings of 28% and each piece of work was subject to a 2-year warranty.
- Efforts were being made to encourage the DfT to trial carbon-reducing innovations in the York area (para 18).
- Depreciation of the highways network was a national problem that would require additional investment to resolve.

Members thanked officers for the report and their input, and

Resolved: That the information provided in the report and at the meeting be noted.

Reason: To confirm that the committee has been updated on issues relating to highway maintenance.

38. Update of implementation of recommendations from York Residents' Priority parking Scheme Scrutiny Review

Members considered a report which provided their first update on the implementation of the approved recommendations from the scrutiny review into York's Residents' Priority Parking (Respark) Scheme.

The recommendations had originally been approved by Executive on 18 March 2019. At their meeting on 28 November 2019, Executive had approved further proposals to address issues identified in the review, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report. Details of progress made against each review recommendation were provided in Annex 1 and the report to Executive was attached at Annex 2. The Chair of the Task Group, Cllr D'Agorne (now Executive Member for Transport) was in attendance. Members were invited either to sign off the recommendations as fully implemented or to request a further update.

Members asked a series of questions on matters relating to the review and to parking in general. Officers and the Executive Member responded as follows:

- The current timescale for Respark requests, from receipt of a petition to implementation, was 12-18 months.
- The aim was to reduce this, with the additional resources allocated in June, a more flexible approach to consultation, and fast-tracking of requests where appropriate.
- However, where residents of individual streets within an area did not want Respark, this had to be taken into account.
- Concerning whether there could be any reduction in the cost of respark to resident parking schemes as a result of the measures (for example technical improvements) being looked at, the cost was determined by the annual budget and it was acknowledged that the cost was high compared to other areas such as North Yorkshire and Sheffield. It was recognised that the introduction of a new system would take time to embed and would potentially increase efficiencies. It was not presumed that this would make savings of a sufficient magnitude to make a big cut in the cost and unfortunately with government cuts and the amount received as an authority, the total budget from parking was a key element in the overall budget. Without this additional money this would mean making deeper cuts or increasing charges elsewhere. The council wanted to improve efficiencies and regarding the passing on of any

efficiency savings to residents was not deemed a priority in the review of repark.

- With regard to non-internet users, officers were working through a wide range of permit types, including Respark, to determine a 'digitally deprived' solution for each before reporting the results to the Executive Member for Transport.
- Parking issues, including encouraging the use of Park & Ride, council car parks and buses, needed to be examined in the process of refreshing the Local Transport Plan (LTP).
- The concepts of parking charges based on individual vehicle emissions and workplace parking levies, as introduced in some cities, could also be explored in the LTP refresh.

Resolved:

- i. That the content of the report be noted.
- ii. That a further update be received in 6 months' time.

Reason: To ensure that all recommendations from the review have been fully implemented.

39. Apprenticeship and Skills Scoping Report

Members considered a report which set out a suggested scope for a proposed scrutiny review of apprenticeships and skills in York and a remit and methodology for the review should it be agreed, in accordance with the request made at the meeting on 16 October.

The report outlined some issues relevant to the topic, including the decline in the number of people starting apprenticeships across the Leeds City Region and impending changes to employers' access to funding from the Apprenticeship Levy. The suggested aim of the review - to identify cost effective ways to encourage an increase in the apprenticeship starts in York – was set out in paragraph 11 of the report, along with proposed objectives.

Members were reminded that it would be a matter for the Task Group to agree their objectives and remit, for endorsement by the committee at a future meeting.

Resolved:

- i. That a Task Group comprising Cllrs Barnes, Douglas and Pearson be appointed to carry out a scrutiny review of Apprenticeships and Skills on behalf of the committee.

- ii. That the Task Group agree a remit for the review and bring it to the committee in February 2020 for endorsement.

Reason: In order to take this review forward.

40. Work Plan 2019-20

Members considered the committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2019-20 municipal year.

During the discussion an additional scrutiny review, of road repairs and maintenance, was proposed, following on from the Highways item considered earlier in the meeting. Officers explained that resources would not allow more than two reviews to be conducted at the same time and that all reviews should be confined to specific parameters. It was therefore suggested that a more focused proposal be brought to the January 2020 meeting, and that further consideration of the proposal be postponed to March.

Resolved: That the work plan be agreed, with the following additions:

15 January 2020

Proposal for a review of road repairs and maintenance (Cllr Taylor)

12 February 2020

Remit of the Task Group reviewing Apprenticeships and Skills

11 March 2020

Scoping Report on potential road repairs and maintenance review

Reason: To follow up on the decisions made at this meeting and to keep the work plan updated.

Cllr Barnes, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.03 pm].