

Six-monthly Update Report by the Chair of the Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee

The Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee have met twice since the beginning of the new administration.

In June the Members were given an introduction to Scrutiny and the roles of Scrutiny Members. They were then given a briefing by the Assistant Director for Transport, Highways and Environment and the Assistant Director for Planning and Public Protection on the priorities of the Economy and Place Directorate that relate to the remit of this Committee. Members were also invited to suggest potential items for the work plan going forward.

In July the Committee welcomed the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning and the Executive Member for Transport who informed the Committee of their challenges and priorities for the coming year. Members also received the annual report from the Executive Director of York Business Improvement District and the bi-annual report from the Managing Director of Make it York who outlined the progress of the two organisations over the past year and their ambitions going forward.

In September the Committee will again hear from the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning and will welcome the Executive Member for Environment. They will also receive a bi-annual update report on City of York Council's Flood Defences Action Plan. In addition Members will continue their discussion on work plan items for the year and among the suggestions to be prioritised are:

1. **High value jobs.** How York has performed in recent years and whether we can make the most of the developments at York Central to ensure growth of high-skilled jobs and growth of high-skilled jobs in the green sector.

2. **Work around an inclusive economy in York:**

- Pay in work poverty;
- Gender pay gap;
- Apprenticeships and skills – how we use apprenticeship levy in the council and also its use around the city;
- Low paid industries – hospitality and tourism – and how we encourage career progression in those industries
- Graduate retention;
- Stem the loss of skilled people;
- Sustainable growth and social values;
- Community wealth

3. **Performance on road repairs.** This is an unavoidable issue across the city. Deep dive into repairs – road surfaces, not just pot holes

4. **Review of Business rates system** to see if it is fit for purpose

5. **Bus services** in outlying areas

6. **Parking across the city.** Increasing use of park and ride to reduce the number of people parking on city centre streets.

7. **Apprenticeships and skills.** To include apprentice levy and staff progression.

8. **Hospitality and tourism.** Creating a high-value offer that benefits residents and businesses.

9. **University collaboration** and graduate retention.

10. **Opportunities and barriers to business growth.** Innovation and productivity including business support services, physical constraints such as lack of office space etc.

11. **Positive growth.** Sustainable growth, social value and community wealth building.

12. **Clean air zone.** Next steps towards clean air.

Additionally, the Committee has been asked to consider:

Economy

- i. **Low pay:** The nature, prevalence and impact of low pay in and on York's economy.
- ii. **Skills:** Apprenticeships and in work progression: Provision of apprenticeship and skills training, student market or economic growth driven? The effective use of the apprenticeship levy in CYC and other large York employers. Review of opportunities for in work progression for York's workforce.
- iii. **Productivity:** Focus on Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Sectors: How do we create high value offers in these sectors leading to increased productivity and higher wages for York workers? Good for businesses and workers.
- iv. **York's Large Employers:** A study of York's large employers: The nature of their work forces, their involvement in their local communities, how they support business development in their local communities, what more could they be doing?
- v. **Inclusive Growth:** What should Inclusive Growth look like for York? To include all areas within city boundary, not focussed on city centre.

Place

- vi. **The changing face of the high street:** Understanding and tackling the economic problems of long term empty commercial units in York's city centre.
- vii. **Planning and Planning Conditions Enforcement:** How do we build the houses and commercial units our city needs while protecting the standard of living of surrounding communities?
- viii. **Section 106 assessment, spending and enforcement:** How do we make sure our communities are adequately resourced under section 106 and that developers follow through on delivery?

In November the Committee will be meeting representatives from Leeds City Region and York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnerships for round table discussions around the Local Industrial Strategy.

Finally for this report, the Committee will in November consider updates of the recommendations from two previously completed scrutiny reviews – York Residents' Priority Parking Scheme and the Economic Health of York City Centre.

Councillor Stuart Barnes,
Chair, Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee
29 August 2019