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MEETING	DECISION SESSION - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING
DATE	27 JULY 2021
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR WALLER

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## 6. **Declarations of Interest**

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that he might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

## 7. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member, subject to the replacement of the word 'quantum' under Minute 4 with 'scale'.

## 8. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there were no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 9. **Update on Progress of the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan and the Proposed Main Modifications**

The Executive Member considered a report which informed him of the main modifications required to be made to the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan following Submission to Secretary of State and the associated Hearing Sessions held during Spring 2018 and January 2019. The report also provided information on the main modifications public consultation taking place for 8 weeks between Wednesday 21st July and 5pm on Wednesday 15th

September 2021, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Development Officer was in attendance to present the report and respond to questions.

Key points raised during the presentation of the report included:

- That the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan had been produced jointly by the City of York Council, North Yorkshire County Council and North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority.
- That the key main modifications were required due to:
  - National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 209a had been quashed following a High Court challenge by Talk Fracking.
  - A moratorium issued by the Government in November 2019, which ordered a presumption against issuing any hydraulic fracturing consents until more evidence is gathered on seismic activity.
  - The joint authorities had undertaken work in terms of the Habitats Regulation Assessment on the Joint Plan in response to a decision of the Court of Justice of the European Union which led to a reassessment of a series of sites, although none of these were in the City of York area, but were in the North Yorkshire County Council authority area.
  - Statutory consultations with the Environment Agency and Natural England.
- That the full schedule of the main modifications were set out at Annex A of the report, but the modifications most pertinent to the City of York were:
  - Policy M16 and M17 which relate to hydrocarbons.
  - Additional references in relation to climate change, the green belt and York's historic heritage and setting.
  - Additional review/monitoring of the plan.
  - The retention of the challenged 500m buffer zone around sensitive receptors.
- That the 8 week Main Modification Consultation Stage was underway, which began Wednesday 21 July 2021 and will end on Wednesday 15 September 2021. A poster explaining the consultation had been posted in all York libraries and a press release had been released to local papers. Letters and emails to consultees on the Local Plan database had been sent out, as well as information on social media. Paper copies were available in principal

offices of City of York Council, North Yorkshire County Council and the North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority.

- That the results of the consultation will be sent to the Inspector, whose report will be passed to the Local Plan Working Group, Executive and Full Council for consideration.

The Executive Members stated that:

- He thanked officers for their report and presentation.
- The Government's moratorium of November 2019 in relation to fracking could easily be reversed, so it was important to raise awareness of the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan.
- He was grateful for the effort which went into proving and confirming the 500m buffer zone around sensitive receptors.
- He acknowledged the work done to raise issues of climate change around the issue of fracking.
- Potential seismic activity would pose a danger to historic buildings in York which were not built with significant foundation.
- He recognised the importance of collecting the opinions of York residents, and encouraged completion of the consultation.

Resolved:

- i. That the Main Modifications to the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan and subsequent period of public consultation are endorsed.

Reason: To inform interested parties of the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan main modifications and associated public consultation.

## **10. Quarterly Economic Update**

The Executive Member considered a report which provided him with the quarterly economic update for the period of April to June 2021. The Director of Housing, Economy and Regeneration and the Head of Economic Growth were in attendance to present the report and respond to questions.

Key points raised during the presentation of the report included:

- That the two largest economic challenges faced by the city were the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.
- York's economy had responded well to these challenges and was experiencing a strong recovery, with footfall back to pre-pandemic levels, patterns of local spending by residents of the city and surrounding areas and significant investment interest in the city.
- However, significant challenges existed in recruitment of staff in all sectors across the city and in supply chain effectiveness. Furthermore, although unemployment had increased less than in other places in the UK, it was at its highest level since 1997.
- That the claimant count of those accessing unemployment welfare was below the 2009 recession peak and dropping sharply, now below 4,000 claimants in the city.
- That 1 in 5 York workers were paid below the real living wage of £9.50 per hour – including 10% of full time workers, and around 50% of part time workers, and that the council was encouraging employers to examine wages through the Good Business Charter.
- Regarding furlough and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, between January and May there was a 40% drop in the amount of people relying on those schemes, with around 12,000 in York reliant on payments at the end of that period.
- That traditionally there demand was outstripping supply of apprenticeships in York, however that trend had been reversed with 180 apprenticeship vacancies in and around the cities and a lack of candidates for them. It was reported that there would be a focus on apprenticeships in Adult Learning Week (week beginning Monday 6 September 2021). A full report on the apprenticeship levy transfer was to be brought to the next Decision Session.
- That work had been progressing well on the draft 10 Year Skills Strategy, which the City Skills and Employment Board had considered at their 21 July meeting. In terms of the One Year Skills plan, brought to Executive in June 2021, there were volunteers being trained at Foxwood Community Centre to offer information, advice and guidance on skills and employment to residents.
- That strong recovering in spend was being seen in the city centre, and that a modernisation of recording activity in terms of how many people are in the city centre, where

they have come from and what they are spending had been undertaken. This had demonstrated a reliance on people from over 50km away.

- That there were an increasing number of businesses considering expanding their operations in the city.
- That the consultation exercise, 'Our Big Conversation' was open until the end of July, and businesses and residents were encouraged to participate.

The Executive Member noted that:

- He would like to see shortfalls in areas such as HGV/LGV drivers and hospitality addressed by the skills work mentioned in the report.
- Lockdowns had caused people to reassess how far they are willing to commute, and that therefore it was essential to more fully utilise the workforce within York and its surrounding areas.
- He would like the next quarterly report to include an update on the impact of the current economic situation on communities in the city, including an analysis of wage levels.
- It was important to keep young people engaged in decisions made around York's economy, and he advocated consultations via the Youth Council.

Resolved:

- i. That the contents of the report be noted.
- ii. That an update on the community impact of the current economic situation be included in the next Quarterly Economic Update, including information on Skills work and an analysis of wages in York.
- iii. That an update on the impact of recombining the Economic Development Team with Make It York be included in the next Quarterly Economic Update.
- iv. That an update on the changes to the Local Enterprise Partnership and its impact on the Economic Strategy and the work of the Economic Development Team be included in the next Quarterly Economic Update.

Reason: To support York's economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CLLR A. Waller, Executive Member  
[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.44 am].