
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Transport
Date	5 December 2024
Present	Councillor Ravilious
Officers in Attendance	Michael Howard - Head of Highways and Transport Darren Hobson - Traffic Management Team Leader Tom Horner - Head of Active and Sustainable Transport

24. Apologies for Absence (10:03am)

There were no apologies.

The Head of Highways and Transport advised that he would be presenting reports on behalf of the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning.

25. Declarations of Interest (10:03am)

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any disclosable pecuniary interests, or other registerable interests she might have in the respect of business on the agenda, if she had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. None were declared.

26. Minutes (10:03am)

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 12 November 2024 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

27. Public Participation (10:03am)

It was reported that there had been 7 registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Cllr A Waller spoke on item 6; he supported the petition, noting that route 16 was the only bus serving many of the streets along its route and was a

“lifeline” for many residents. He said changes had made it increasingly difficult for the operator to adhere to timetable leading to cancellations, and that cancelling buses on a service with hourly intervals had led to a lack of faith and consequent decline in users, which needed to be remedied.

Peter Roddam spoke on item 6, representing regular passengers on the route; he echoed the points raised by Cllr Waller regarding the current timetable not working. He explained the frustrations of regular users, particularly elderly residents wishing to use bus passes.

Cllr D Merrett spoke on item 8; he strongly supported the proposed trial in Gillygate noting that he was pleased to see flexibility in the recommendations. He sought assurance that the council would double check diffusion tubes had been placed on residential streets which would be subjected to diverted traffic from Gillygate.

Cllr R Melly spoke on item 8; supporting officer recommendations. She stated that she had been supporting residents monitoring traffic and air quality and would be returning to help them with this after the decision session.

Cllr S Fenton spoke on item 8; he asked why the report was being brought forward now rather than after the Council’s Movement and Place plan had been progressed as part of the Local Transport Strategy. He felt Option 2 fitted best with the comprehensive scheme to move forwards. He also asked whether the Combined Authority had been approached to assist with funding – noting that there were other areas within North Yorkshire such as Knaresborough and Malton which face similar challenges.

Paul Gannon spoke on item 8; he emphasised the critical importance of taking action to reduce traffic on Gillygate and neighbouring streets to significantly reduce air pollution. He stated that local residents were keen to help the Council and York Civic Trust, and that traffic reduction was essential to reduce pollution.

Professor Tony May spoke on item 8, representing York Civic Trust; he commented on Option 1 – noting that this collaborative approach would require council data to be shared with partners. He said that the council should not wait for the conclusions of this trial before reducing traffic on Gillygate and should begin immediately. He stated that the Local Transport Strategy clearly sets out the council’s traffic management obligations and future reports from officers should make clear reference to this.

28. Consideration of Statutory Consultation responses for the removal of Glen House from the Residents' Parking Zone (10:26am)

The Traffic Management Team Leader presented the report; he advised that this application had been brought forward to remove the site from the Residents Parking R30 zone. He advised that three residents had objected that they would no longer be eligible for a parking permit.

The Executive Member noted that she was happy to approve the recommended option, since this presented fair options for existing permit holders. She noted that between car clubs, local on-street parking and sustainable travel options, there were many mitigations for affected residents.

Resolved: To approve Option 2, which will allow the making of an Order to remove the site from Residents Parking R30 (Layerthorpe/East Parade) zone and will allow existing permit holders to keep their permit until it expires, and to renew until the end of 2025 if required, but not to renew beyond this date.

Reason: The removal of the area from the Zone allows the development to meet Condition 13 of the Permission with the site no longer eligible for new permits. This will allow the existing permit holders to keep their permits until they expire, or until the end of 2025 if needed, which will provide current permit holders with an availability of parking amenity and time to find an alternative solution.

29. Response to Bus Service 16 Petition (10:30am)

The Head of Active and Sustainable Transport presented the report; he explained the recommended option and alternatives, and he discussed the historic disruption to the service, which was in part caused by the unanticipated closure of a lane on the A64 earlier in the year.

The Executive Member acknowledged this explanation, adding that every year major events such as the Christmas Market also caused significant disruption to traffic around York and in the past, additional services had been added to timetables to accommodate such disruption which consequently led to cancellations and timetabling issues through quieter periods.

The Executive Member stated that she was reluctant to take an extreme reaction which may not be necessary in the long term. She noted that Option 2 satisfied a regular timetable, while also accommodating people getting on board in the morning using free bus passes.

Resolved:

- i. To approve the implementation of the revised hourly frequency timetable outlined in option one and delegate authority to the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning (in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Head of Procurement) to take such steps as are necessary to implement the revisions.

Reason: To resolve the occasional need for some passengers to stand and to maintain a timetable that is easy to understand for passengers.

- ii. To instruct officers to undertake a route assessment to identify areas where there may be local obstructions to bus movement, approve the progression of any required changes using the BSIP small bus priority schemes fund and delegate authority to the Director of Environment, Transport & Planning (in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Head of Procurement) to take such steps as are necessary to implement the changes.

Reason: To seek to improve journey time variability on the route of bus service 16.

30. Proposed diversion of public bridleway, Heworth (Without No 1 and 2 (10:26am))

The Executive Member advised that this item was being deferred to allow Rights of Way Officers to continue discussion with the landowner.

Resolved: To defer this item to a later decision session.

Reason: Further discussion with the landowner is required before the report can be presented to the Executive Member.

31. Gillygate Air Quality Trial (10:37am)

The Head of Highways and Transport presented the report, assisted by the Head of Active and Sustainable Transport. The Executive Member thanked Officers, Members, York Civic Trust and other volunteers for their hard work on this trial.

She acknowledged that Gillygate had the worst levels of pollution in the city due to its canyon-like layout, which had been observed to trap pollution at ground level. She noted that while air quality had improved recently, one year's improvement did not give enough evidence to constitute a trend, and without reliable improvement over the past five years, Gillygate's pollution levels exceeded national safety standards, obligating the Council to act.

The Executive Member noted that the proposed change to the traffic signals would shift traffic to surrounding residential streets, but that these streets did not have the same canyon-like environment. Acknowledging public participation, the Executive Member stated that assurance would be sought from relevant officers to ensure that the side roads remained within safe levels of emissions.

The Executive Member acknowledged that the trial could lead to longer queues on some streets such as Lord Mayor's Walk and Clarence Street but these would hopefully be short term as people would find other routes and means of transport. If not, adjustments could be made to the trial to ensure the trial is not detrimental to travel around the city.

Responding to Cllr Fenton's suggestion of waiting for a fuller modelling study – the Executive Member advised that the level of pollution on Gillygate meant that doing nothing at this stage was not an option; immediate action was required. It did not mean that this was the only thing the Council would do and further assistance, especially with nitrogen dioxide particulates would be welcomed, given the financial constraints on the Council.

The Executive Member recognised that officer resource and funding control had not yet been allocated to the trial but advised that she would investigate these areas.

Resolved: To approve Option 1, which is to undertake a trial of traffic signal gating on Gillygate for 12 months with air quality and basic transport impact monitoring.

Reason: To understand the impacts of traffic signal gating on Gillygate and surrounding areas in order to inform future air quality and traffic management policies.

Cllr K Ravilious, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 10.03 am and finished at 10.52 am].