
MEETING	ECONOMIC & CITY DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	22 FEBRUARY 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HUDSON (VICE-CHAIR, IN THE CHAIR), D'AGORNE, HOLVEY, HYMAN, KIRK, POTTER, SCOTT AND B WATSON (SUBSTITUTE)
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLOR ALEXANDER
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR PIERCE

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting, any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Potter declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 3 (School Travel Plans and Safe Routes to School - Possible Review Topic) as a School Governor.

Councillor Scott declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 3 (School Travel Plans and Safe Routes to School - Possible Review Topic) as he lived close to a Primary School.

43. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

44. SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS AND SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL- POSSIBLE REVIEW TOPIC

Members received a presentation from Officers in the Transport Planning Unit on School Travel Plans and Safe Routes to Schools. The main themes of the presentation were as follows:

- School Travel Plans
 - What are School Travel Plans
 - Role of the School Travel Advisor
 - Key Drivers
 - Key Initiatives
 - Mode of Travel
 - Looking Forward 2010-2011
 - School Safety Schemes

- Safe Routes to Schools
 - School Safety Zones
 - School Cycle Parking
 - History of School Safety Schemes in York
 - School safety Programme
 - Safety Audit/Minor Works
 - Maintenance Issues

A School Travel Plan was a written document compiled by School Travel Plan Advisors in conjunction with individual schools. Plans are tailored to suit each school individually and aim to set out a package of measures to improve safety and sustainable travel choices. Officers expected there to be only two schools in York without School Travel Plans by the end of March 2010.

School Travel Plans are produced in consultation with both parents and children at schools, by asking which mode of transport they usually use to travel to school. The plans often look at problems that occur with transport to school such as the percentage of children who travel to school by car and parking issues that arise from this.

Discussions regarding School Travel Plans raised the following points:

- the percentage of children in secondary school in York travelling by car was between 7%-11%, and for children in primary school it was 30%. Parental income and location of the school affected these percentages.
- 20% of traffic around school nationally was produced by the school run.
- Officers said that the method of monitoring the effectiveness of School Travel Plans was through reviews by the School Travel Plan Co-ordinator in conjunction with the school. This, of course, could only take place once a Travel Plan was in place
- In some schools it was the responsibility of the School Governors to review Travel Plans annually.
- There was no legal responsibility for schools to have a Travel Plan although it was highly recommended and encouraged.
- Schools who use their Travel Plans effectively are often those who have members of the community willing to assist in implementing them i.e. by volunteering to take charge of a walking bus, or by car sharing.

Officers commented that one of the main difficulties encountered when discussing Safe Routes to School was that of the common perception that roads in the vicinity of schools are dangerous. Members were told how:

- There had been eight reported slight or serious accidents specifically on the route to school.
- There are currently twenty one operational school crossing patrols in York, although there are twenty seven registered sites.
- There was a need for additional staff to man school crossing patrols and that this was being promoted through the "Look Again" campaign.

Members were informed by Officers that there had been improved safety around schools with a number of cycling and walking to school schemes which had been formulated through School Travel Plans. The success of these initiatives were measured by the facts that:

- 65% of children in York complete their bike training whilst at primary school.
- The “Walk Once A Week” to school scheme would be replaced by “Walk to School Week” following the participation of 90% of York schools in the scheme in 2009.
- 100% of children in York undertake pedestrian training.
- More schools in York have been working with the new “Bike It” Officer and eleven schools have adopted a national Sustrans scheme, “Beauty and the Bike”, which was aimed at encouraging Year 6 and 7 girls to cycle to school.

Members were also told how more cycle events had been planned to increase public participation in using cycling as a safe way to travel to school such as; Biking Viking, Save our Bike Day and a Virtual Bike Race from Lands End to John O’Groats between the twenty one primary schools in York.

Following discussion Members felt that many of the issues raised were outside of the Economic and City Development Scrutiny Committee’s remit but still felt them to be important and worthy of review. The Committee therefore agreed that the best way forward would be for a cross cutting scrutiny committee comprising members of other relevant scrutiny committees to further examine this topic.

Members of the Committee agreed that should any review take place the focus should be on the following:

Funding

- Funding of the School Travel Co-ordinator Post after April 2011.

Review of Travel Plans

- What factors make a successful School Travel Plan, what difference do School Travel Plans make & how could this influence LTP3.
- How often are School Travel Plans reviewed/renewed and is there a policy around this.
- Best Practice (are there any outstandingly good School Travel Plans & how can the successful factors within them be shared).
- How can the profile of School Travel Plans be raised.

Health

- How can an increased use of School Travel Plans improve health benefits across the city.

Parking, Congestion & Safety

- How can this be improved near schools

The Chair thanked Officers for their very informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That, based on the above discussion, the Committee ask the Scrutiny Management Committee to consider setting up a joint cross cutting Scrutiny Committee to progress this topic to review.

REASON: To address the concerns raised in the topic registration form.

45. WORK PLAN 2009-10

Members considered the Committee's work plan for 2009/10 together with extracts from the Forward Plan related to the Committee's remit.

The Scrutiny Officer updated Members on changes to the plan which included an amended start time of 3.00pm for the Newgate Market review meeting on 24 March and the July meeting moving from 6 to 13 July 2010.

RESOLVED: That the work plan be amended to reflect the above changes.

REASON: To assist in the planning of work for this Committee.

CLLR B HUDSON, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.00 pm].