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Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	25 March 2014
Present	Councillors Semlyen (Chair), Barnes, Burton, Cuthbertson, D'Agorne, Riches and Steward (Substitute)
Apologies	Councillor Watt

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## 50. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, other than those listed on their standing declarations, that they might have had in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Burton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 (An Update Report on Major Transport Initiatives in York) as a bus user.

Councillor Semlyen declared a personal interest in the same item as an employee of 20's Plenty.

No other interests were declared.

## 51. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments;

Minute Item 39 (Declarations of Interest): Deletion of the following declaration of interest from Councillor D'Agorne.

*“He also declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4 (Night Time Economy Scrutiny Review (Retail & Transport)) as a supporter of 20 mph speed limits. He apologised that he had not declared this at a previous Task Group meeting when meeting bus operators, but underlined that the role of the Members at*

*the meeting was to respond to queries from the operators, rather to hold them to account.”*

Minute Item 45 (Scoping Paper on Support for Online Business/E-Commerce Skills): Addition of the following word

“Members considered a scoping paper *suggested* by Councillor Semlyen proposing a scrutiny topic on support for online business/e-commerce skills.”

Minute Item 46: (Update Report on the Lendal Bridge Trial)  
Correction on wording

“Whether Air Quality Data could be provided to ensure that the Council were not in breach of *Air Quality Directives*?”

Minute Item 47(Update on implementation of recommendations from the previously completed Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review): Deletion and addition of the following.

“Officers were pleased to report that the implementation of the recommendations from the review had supported a *47%* reduction in Youth Unemployment in the city and *64% reduction in long term unemployment.*”

## **52. Public Participation**

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

## **53. 2013/14 Finance Monitor 3 Report**

Members received a report which provided them with details of the 2013/14 forecast outturn position for finance in City and Environmental Services (CES) and Housing Services.

Questions from Members included;

- Whether the shortfall in car parking income had been as a result of the free parking day?
- What were the additional £50k savings made in the CES directorate?

In response to both questions, Officers commented that seasonal impacts had affected parking income for example the relatively mild winter that had been encountered. Officers clarified that the £50k in savings mentioned within the report were more anticipated savings in staffing. The report had been written whilst the Directorate was going through a restructure.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the Committee of the latest finance and performance position.

#### **54. Construction Skills Scrutiny Review - Draft Final Report**

Members received a report which presented them with the finding and recommendations of the Construction Skills Scrutiny Review Task Group.

Some Members felt there needed to be a plan in place for the education sector in the city to gear up for the creation of construction jobs that would emanate from up to 22,000 homes as mentioned in the Local Plan. In response it was suggested that to prepare for this, planning needed to take place when sites for development emerged.

Members asked how much influence the Council would have on specifying where construction jobs would be on major developments.

Officers made reference to the opportunities that would be created as a result of the Community Stadium project. It was noted development Officers made sure that a non negotiable clause about the use of a number of construction apprentices were inserted into planning permissions. They added that opportunities were specified at being at all levels. Finally they told the Committee that the Council's approach was to facilitate talent matching for employees and employers in the city.

Resolved: (i) That no additional work is needed to progress the report.

(ii) That the recommendations arising from this review as shown in paragraph 76 of the Officer's report be endorsed.

Reason: To progress this scrutiny review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

## 55. **Online Business / E-Commerce Skills Scrutiny Review Update Report**

Members received a report which presented them with an update of the work to date carried out by the Online Business/E-Commerce Task Group.

The Economy and Enterprise Manager attended the meeting and informed Members about how Officers were working on an online survey to identify what gaps existed in support for online business and commerce for city centre businesses.

Discussion took place around the aim of the Task Group, some Members felt that they should be looking at supporting businesses across a wider area in the city, not just in the area within the walls as agreed by the Task Group.

Some Members felt that the existence of strong internet connections such as fibre optic cables affected the capability and potential of businesses to work online.

Other Members clarified that the Task Group were concerned about functional support for businesses rather than having technology in place.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the wording of one of the aims of the review be amended to read;

Identify how City of York Council may better support *city businesses* to develop their online opportunities and improve their sales, marketing and profitability.

(iii) That the rest of the aim and objectives of the review be agreed.

(iv) That the timeframe for completing the work, on the review subject to any new reviews being

agreed by Members of the Committee following the annual meeting be agreed.

Reason: To ensure compliance with scrutiny procedures, protocols and workplans.

## **56. Briefing Papers on Potential Scrutiny Review Topics**

Members considered a number of briefing papers on potential scrutiny review topics.

### Universal Credit Local Services Framework

The Chair informed the Committee that she had asked for further information on this topic to be undertaken and suggested that this topic be discussed at a future date.

### Fuel Poverty/Bulk Buying of Energy

Officers informed Members on current work that was taking place around the issue of fuel poverty. It was noted that Officers were working on an energy map of York and were examining potential areas in which district heating projects could be applied. They added that once projects to generate energy were in place that bodies could be set up to sell electricity locally. It was noted that Local Authorities in Liverpool and Leeds were looking to set up their own energy companies. Members were told that regulations would be changing in 2016 which could give York opportunities to generate a certain amount of energy off site but that perhaps developers could be encouraged to help the Council on other sites.

Discussion took place around the topic. Some Members felt that it was confusing as to what a review should focus on. Others felt that as there were a number of sustainable energy schemes available to help reduce fuel poverty that a survey could be conducted to see what savings had already been achieved.

In relation to the proposed topic, it was suggested that Officers be invited back to the Committee's meeting in July.

## Local Productivity Levels and High Value Jobs

Discussion took place on the topic proposed by Councillor Semlyen. Some Members questioned the value that Members might add by conducting a review into a topic that was already being investigated by Officers. They added that they felt the topic was too broad and there was no reference to supporting existing businesses.

Others felt that there was a benefit to explore the topic as there would not be a resource issue, as work was currently being carried out by the Economic Development Team and that it would give a Task Group a broad scope to look at other issues that affected this such as the Living Wage.

It was suggested that a Task Group be formed to explore the topic and come back to the Committee with a defined scope for a review. Officers suggested that Members might wish to invite the Head of Economic Development to the Task Group's first meeting.

- Resolved:
- (i) That the briefing papers on potential scrutiny review topics be noted.
  - (ii) That the topic on Universal Credit be discussed at a later date by the Committee.
  - (iii) That the topic on Fuel Poverty/Bulk Buying of Energy also be discussed by Members at a later date and that Officers be invited to the Committee's July meeting in association with this.
  - (iv) That a Task Group be formed to explore the proposed topic around Local Productivity Levels and High Value Jobs.
  - (v) That the Task Group be composed of the following Members;
    - Councillor Burton
    - Councillor Cuthbertson
    - Councillor Semlyen

Reason: To enable the Committee to identify a remit for and make a start on scrutiny review in respect of Local Productivity Levels and High Value Jobs.

## **57. An Update Report on Major Transport Initiatives in York**

Members received a report which provided them with an overview and update in relation to the major transport initiatives in the city currently being progressed. Updates discussed by Members included;

### Bus interchange at York Railway Station

Members were informed that East Coast wanted to look at the station as a whole and that the Council would join them at improving the frontage of the station. It was reported that the tender for the study, which would also look at the retail offer, had gone out and that Network Rail would soon be taking over the responsibility for running the railway station from East Coast. Proposals to remove Queen Street bridge would also be included in the tender.

### Knapton to Rufforth Cycle Route

The Committee were told that final surfacing was being examined for the cycle route.

### Colour displays at bus stops including real time passenger information

Some equipment from bus stops in the city centre was in the process of being upgraded and being installed at stops on the outskirts of the city centre.

### Cycling improvements in the Barbican area

This was currently on hold as the traffic implications from the Fishergate Gyratory were being considered before any other improvements were taken forward.

## Establishing 20mph Speed Limits in York's Residential Areas

Regarding timescales for the roll out of limits in the North and East of the city, advertising would be put out in June 2014 with a letter sent out in April/May 2014.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To provide Members with an update on major transport initiatives in the city.

### **58. Six Monthly Update Report on Major Development Schemes in York**

Members received a report which provided them with an overview and update in relation to the major development and planning proposals at the city at this time. Updates discussed by Members included;

#### Terry's

There was little interest in the site from Small and Medium Enterprises so Officers were looking at a mixed use for the site.

#### York Central

It was hoped that building on a road bridge into the site would start in Spring 2016.

#### Germany Beck

In regards to a projected timescale for building an access road to the site and raising the level of the A19, Officers would have a project plan as soon as they were back in touch with developers.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: In order to provide the Committee with a regular update on developments in the city.

**59. Further Update on the Implementation of Recommendations arising from the previously completed Out of Hours Childcare Scrutiny Review**

Members received a report which provided them with a further update on the implementation of the recommendation arising from the previously completed Out of Hours Childcare Review which fell within the remit of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved: That the report be noted and all outstanding recommendations that have been fully implemented be signed off.

Reason: To raise awareness of those recommendations which are still to be fully implemented.

**60. Work Plan 2013/14**

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the rest of the 2013/14 municipal year.

It was noted that the Leader would give the Committee a verbal report when he attended in April.

Discussion took place on dates for the Scrutiny Task Group around Local Productivity Levels and High Value Jobs. It was suggested that the Scrutiny Officer checked the Economy and Enterprise Manager's availability before confirming a date.

It was also suggested that Officers involved in the potential Fuel Poverty scrutiny review be invited to attend the July meeting.

Resolved: That the work plan with the following amendments as detailed above be noted.

Reason: To progress the work of the Committee.

**61. Any Other Business**

Discussion took place on the proposal to put the Committee's Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review forward for an award. It

was also suggested that membership of Scrutiny Task Groups be deleted from Members' Register of Interests once the reviews had finished.

Councillor A Semlyen, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 7.00 pm].