

Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	23 July 2014
Present	Councillors Semlyen (Chair), Barnes, Burton, Cuthbertson, D'Agorne, Riches and Watt (Vice-Chair)

10. **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 in their standing declarations that they might have had in the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

11. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Economic & City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 June 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments;

- Minute Item 4 (Attendance of the Cabinet Member for Transport) delete the word 20 mph *zones* and change to 20 mph *limits*.
- Minute Item 8 (Report and Cabinet Member Feedback on Potential Scrutiny Topics for Review proposed at the Scrutiny Work Planning Event)- to include that a vote took place on a proposal to focus on Accessible Housing in regards to the Corporate Scrutiny Review on Supporting Older People. This proposal was lost.

Further discussion took place around Minute Item 8. Some Members highlighted that there had been no decision recorded on whether to conduct a scrutiny review on Public Transport Provision or Low Emissions Strategy.

It was highlighted that these topics, although not under consideration for the next scrutiny review were not rejected completely but that the two agreed topics were seen more as a priority.

The Chair suggested that the Committee had agreed to reconsider both the Public Transport and Low Emission Strategy in November. This was agreed and added to the minutes of the previous meeting.

12. Public Participation

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

13. 2013/2014 Finance Outturn Report

Members received a report which provided them with details of the 2013/14 outturn position for both finance and performance in City & Environmental Services and Housing Services.

Questions to Officers related to the repayment of fines for people who used Lendal Bridge at restricted times during the trial period. These included;

- What percentage of the cost in administration fees would the Council have to pay?
- How many refunds were expected?

In response it was reported that a decision was yet to be made whether to carry out the refund administration in house or via a contractor.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

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

14. **Supporting Older People Scoping Report**

Members received a report which provided them with a suggested scope for the Committee's contribution to the Council's corporate scrutiny review around supporting older people.

Discussion took place around the issues raised in the report. For example that people would have to work for longer and have to find jobs later in life. It was highlighted that in May 2014 the number of over 50s who were unemployed and claiming benefits were higher than those aged 18-24.

Members were informed about measures that had been put in place such as a commissioned project with York College to support unemployed people back into work. It was noted that 120 out of 148 of these referrals had been from people who were aged over 50. It was reported that not all of them were looking for full time employment, some wanted to be self employed and some were looking for voluntary work.

A paper was tabled at the meeting with the proposed remit for the review with an aim and series of objectives.

Some Members pointed out that the scope for the review did not cover the contribution that social capital made to satisfaction and wellbeing in employment. They felt this should be specified and taken into account somewhere in the review. Officers agreed and felt that the social and personal wellbeing of activities such as volunteering for example should not be underestimated.

It was also noted that the contribution to childcare by grandparents or foster parents and caring for elderly residents had not been investigated.

Further discussion took place into the timeframe of the review and membership of the Task Group. It was aimed to complete the final report for the review by January 2015.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That a Task Group be formed to investigate the topic of Supporting Older People in employment.

(iii) That the aim of the review be;

To ensure the city is adopting the most appropriate strategies to enable those older people who want or need to be in employment or otherwise actively engaged in the life of the city, to do so, thereby increasing opportunities for employers in the city and the city as a whole to benefit from the experience and expertise of older people.

(iv) That the objectives of the review be agreed as;

(i) To consider national best practice for identifying the support requirements of older people who are actively seeking work.

(ii) Identify national best practice and examples of good practice in York for attracting and retaining older people in employment.

(iii) Identify the challenges/barriers for businesses and support providers in the city.

(iv) Establish any unmet demand needs in York.

(v) That the Task Group be composed of the following Members;

- Councillor Cuthbertson
- Councillor Riches
- Councillor Watt

Reason: To progress the work of the Committee in line with Scrutiny procedures and protocols.

15. **York Economic Dashboard**

Members received a report which provided them with York's latest Create Jobs and Grow the Economy Dashboard.

Officers highlighted that York's current unemployment rate of 2.2% was below the national average. It had a high proportion of part time workers as opposed to other areas, although this was sometimes through choice rather than available jobs. It was also noted that some in part time work may also have more than one job. It was also felt that as York was a University city, this skewed the figures for part time employment.

Officers suggested that information from comparable cities with high end part time jobs be brought back to the committee. It was also noted that a Centre for Cities report on wages and opportunities would be produced in September. Officers stated that they would circulate this to the Committee via email.¹

Further discussion took place around the data including footfall, property enquiries and how the number of full time and part time jobs that York related to national figures. Officers agreed to update Members via email on the various essays raised.²

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That information on high end jobs in comparator cities be brought to the attention of Members.

(iii) That a Centre for Cities Report be circulated to Members via email.

(iv) That Officers provide an update by email on the issues raised at the meeting.

Reason: To keep Members informed about changes to the Economic Dashboard.

Action Required

1. Circulate Centre for Cities Report to Members. PW
2. Update Members on issues raised. PW

16. Update on Implementation of Recommendations from the previously completed External Funding Scrutiny Review

Members received a report which provided them with a further update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previously completed External Funding Scrutiny Review including specific target measures and progress arising from the review.

Questions from Members to Officers in relation to the recommendations included;

- When would the Investment Plan be published online?
- What would Leeds City Region (LCR) use to measure its success, particularly given that some of the money given to them would be hypothetical?

In response, it was reported that it was not known when the Investment Plan would be published online. However, Members would receive a timetable from Officers in regards to this recommendation. It was also noted that it was not clear as to how targets would be measured and monitored by LCR. It was reported that the national situation in regards to financing LEP projects was changing. For example a LCR Transport Fund which had been agreed in 2012 now had been scaled back.

Regarding recommendation (x), it was reported that a new Officer was working on the 'yorkmeansbusiness' website and further work had been carried out on the Council website.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

- (ii) That the following recommendations be signed off as complete;

Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9,10, 11

- (iii) That a further update on the implementation of recommendations 1, 2 and 8 be provided at a future meeting.

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

17. Work Plan 2014-15 including verbal updates on ongoing scrutiny reviews

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the 2014-15 municipal year and verbal updates on ongoing scrutiny reviews.

Discussion took place on the scrutiny review around Higher Value Jobs. It was reported that Members had clarified the remit of the review in order to focus on both higher value jobs and entrepreneurialism.

Further discussion took place around the proposed review on Bulk Buying of Energy. It was agreed that the Committee were unlikely to have sufficient time in this municipal year to undertake the review. The Committee therefore agreed to receive an overview report on Tackling fuel Poverty at their November 2014 meeting.

Resolved: That the work plan and verbal updates be noted including the following amendments;

- That the Draft Final Report on the Higher Value Jobs and Entrepreneurialism Task Group be considered at the October meeting.
- That a 6 month update on YorCity Construction and an Overview on Fuel Poverty be considered at the November meeting.
- That the final report for the Online Business/E-Commerce Review be considered at the January 2015 meeting.
- That the final report on the Committee's contribution to the Corporate Scrutiny Review also be considered at the March 2015 meeting.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has a planned programme of work in place.

Councillor Semlyen, Chair

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