

Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	1 October 2014
Present	Councillors Semlyen (Chair), Barnes, Burton, Cuthbertson, D'Agorne, Riches and Watt (Vice-Chair)

18. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests they may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

19. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 23rd July 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute item 15 'York Economic Dashboard', 1st paragraph, a typo be corrected to state that 'York's current rate of unemployment is 2.2% below the national average'.

On the same minute item, Officers also confirmed the Centre for Cities report on wages had been circulated to the committee via email, as requested.

20. **Public Participation**

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

21. **Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Planning and Sustainability**

The Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Planning and Sustainability attended the meeting to give an update on his priorities and challenges for the municipal year.

Members queried a number of points including;

- The housing figures in draft Local Plan
- If a free circular bus service would be introduced in York
- The pro-active measures being taken within the Cabinet Members portfolio to help York's economy.
- The Cabinet Member's views on fracking

In relation to the question about the number of new houses in the draft Local Plan, the Cabinet Member informed the Committee that the figure was realistic in relation to Government Policy and was necessary in order for the plan to pass the inspection stage.

In response to a Member's question about the possible introduction of a free circular bus the Cabinet Member advised that while there had been experiments with a circular bus in the past, the service had been discontinued due to costs.

In terms of the economy, the Cabinet Member advised that his portfolio supported growth in York in a number of ways, particularly via planning to give planners confidence to invest in York. An ambitious Local Transport Plan was also in place to encourage growth.

In relation to the question about fracking, the Cabinet Member advised that there is a wider policy debate but more needs to be understood about the impact on water supply. In terms of licences for fracking, they are Government issued, but Local Authorities would have some control through planning applications for fracking support facilities.

Resolved: That Members noted the update report and the comments made by the Cabinet Member at the meeting.

Reason: So that Members are kept aware of the priorities within the Cabinet Member's portfolio.

22. Draft Framework for York's third Air Quality Action Plan

Members considered a report which presented to them the draft framework for York's third Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP3). The framework would be the main delivery plan for measures in the York Low Emission Strategy (LES). The draft framework takes into account the findings and recommendations of the York Low Emissions Zone (LEZ) study, the York anti-idling study and the York electric bus study.

Members' attention was drawn to the main points covered by the report. Officers were questioned about the areas in which progress had been made, in particular the introduction of electric vehicle charging points and the ongoing work for further charging provision in the city. It was also noted that significant progress had been made in electrifying York's bus fleet.

Discussion took place on the challenges facing the Council in its continuing efforts to improve air quality. It was noted that funding available to support work on the air quality agenda would be dependant on Government Policy and the result of the next election would be key going forward in terms of the grants available and funding given to Local Authorities. Members also commented that the level of support from the public in switching to electric vehicles was an issue and marketing work was an area which could be improved on, not only by the Council but by vehicle manufacturers.

Resolved: That Members noted the contents of the report.

Reason: To keep the Committee informed about progress of York's third Air Quality Action Plan.

23. Six Monthly Update Report on Major Development Schemes in York

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with an overview and update in relation to the major development and planning proposals in the city.

The Interim Director for City and Environmental Services was in attendance to outline the key points of the report and advised that intensive discussions were ongoing for all of the sites listed in the report.

Discussion took place regarding the York Central site, in particular the issues surrounding access and the proposed bridge. Officers advised that the site was of a complicated nature of which access was one of the issues. Work is ongoing with Network Rail to commence development at the site in 2015.

Members thanked officers for their hard work and progress made with all the development sites.

Resolved: That the Committee noted the present position in relation to major developments and planning applications in the city.

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

24. Six Monthly Update on Major Transport Initiatives in York

Consideration was given to an update report on major transport initiatives in the city currently being progressed.

Members questioned a number of points, in particular the 'pay on exit' trial at Marygate Car Park. Officers confirmed that the trial commenced in July and is currently ongoing. The objective of the trial was to establish if car park users stay longer if not tied to a return time. The management costs will be worked out at the end of the trial to work out viability of 'pay on exit' for the City car parks.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that work on the Haxby to Clifton Moor cycle route was due to start shortly.

Resolved: That the committee noted the present position in relation to major transport initiatives in the city.

Reason: In order to provide the committee with a regular update on initiatives in the city.

25. Single Equality Scheme Update and Refresh

Consideration was given to a report which outlined details of a refresh of York's Equality Scheme.

In terms of the Economic Wellbeing priority, Members made the following comments:

- It is important to facilitate inclusive access into the retail/cultural centre of the city.
- It is important not to neglect work on helping older people into employment due to recent focus being on helping the young.
- Priority should be given to helping the Gypsy and Travellers access to the labour market.

Officers advised that comments would be taken into account and that the next stage of the process would be to look at the priorities of the scheme in more detail.

Resolved: That Members commented on the draft priorities and outcomes as above.

Reason: To help ensure relevant equality issues are reflected

26. 2014/15 Finance and Performance Monitor 1 Report

Members considered a report which provided details of the 2014/15 forecast outturn position for both finance and performance in City and Environmental Services and Housing Services.

Officers advised that it was still early in the financial year and the areas showing an overspend may recover.

Members queried the figures for City Development and Sustainability and officers confirmed the variance should be +340 and not +540 as stated in the report.

In response to questions regarding low car parking income, Officers advised that the figures for first quarter of 2014/15 were unusually low and could be down to a number of factors such as Haymarket car park being closed and the new Vangarde shopping centre opening recently. Officers would continue to monitor the figures for the rest of the financial year.

Resolved: That Members noted the report.

Reason: To update Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny committee of the latest finance and performance position.

27. Work Plan 2014/2015

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the 2014-15 municipal year.

Members had no additions to the work plan but asked that for the next meeting, agenda item number 6 'Higher Value Jobs Scrutiny Review Draft Report' be moved higher up the agenda to item 2 and agenda item 2 'Finance and Performance Monitor' be moved to item 6.

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

- For the meeting on 12th November 2014 agenda items 2 and 6 are to swap places as detailed above.

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 7.20 pm].