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Meeting	Economic Development and Transport Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	7 September 2016
Present	Councillors Cuthbertson (Chair), D'Agorne (Vice-Chair), Cullwick, Looker, D Myers, K Myers, Warters and Lisle (Substitute for Councillor Gates)
In attendance	Councillor Carr (item 4) Councillor Fenton
Apologies	Councillor Gates

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#### **15. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. No additional interests were declared.

#### **16. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development and Transport Policy and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 20 July 2016 and the Pre-Decision Calling In minutes of 18 May 2016 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

#### **17. Public Participation**

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

## **18. Attendance of Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods**

The Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods had been invited to attend the meeting to outline his priorities and challenges for 2016-17.

Councillor Carr highlighted the following issues:

- The impact of the emerging Local Plan
- The Housing and Planning Act 2016 and its potential impact

Members questioned the Executive Member on the following issues:

- The Affordable Housing Policy and how this would be reflected in the Local Plan. The Executive Member stated that there had been no change to the Affordable Housing Policy. He gave details of some of the initiatives that the Government had put in place including Help to Buy and shared ownership arrangements. The Executive Member stated his commitment to encouraging home ownership and informed Members that the Council had made an application for grant support. The Executive Member stated that raising the finance for a deposit was often a key factor in deterring people from home ownership. Referring to the social housing owned by the Council, the Executive Member drew Members' attention to the changes in HRA and stated that consideration would need to be given to new ways of managing the estate, although consideration of this was still at a very early stage. In response to Members' comments, the Executive Member acknowledged that some residents preferred to rent rather than purchase their own property.
- In response to questions regarding higher value sales, the Executive Member stated that the Council was awaiting the detail of this Government policy before determining how best to respond.
- The efforts that were being made to address homelessness. The Executive Member stressed the importance of intervention strategies such as working with tenants to help them to access benefits, and negotiating with landlords in order to avoid, if possible, residents becoming homeless. The Executive Member confirmed that an emergency fund was available, although it was not inexhaustible.

- Housing need, including numbers on the waiting list for council owned housing.
- Housing density, including the fact that a number of apartments were being built in York which, although often attractive to older people who wished to “downsize”, were sometimes purchased by people moving to York from other parts of the country and hence did not necessarily release housing accommodation for local residents.
- The action that was being taken to reduce the number of rough sleepers. The Executive Member stated that, although there had been an increase in the number of rough sleepers, the numbers involved were very small and the warmer weather may have been a contributory factor. The Council operated a “No Second Night Out Policy” and accommodation was available for all the rough sleepers in the city. It was, however, acknowledged that some rough sleepers did not wish to use this facility or accept the help that was available, and they often reverted back to rough sleeping.
- Referring to the data on “additional homes provided”, it was suggested that as the figures included bed spaces in student accommodation it was not a true reflection of the additional homes that had been made available to York residents. The Executive Member stated that he believed that the private halls of residents that were being built would have a positive impact and address some of the concerns that had been raised regarding HMOs. Students made a valued contribution to the city and its reputation.

The Chair suggested that it would be helpful if the Executive Member provided information on the “average void period” when he next met with the committee.

Councillor Carr was thanked for his report and for his attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is kept updated on the Executive Member’s priorities and challenges.

## 19. Attendance of York Business Improvement District (BID) Manager

Mr Andrew Lowson, Executive Director of the York Business Improvement District (BID), had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the work of the BID team.

An update was given on the following issues:

- The membership of the Interim Board
- Levy collection
- The work that was taking place to implement the plan and the areas of focus. Details were given of projects that had been put in place including the York Greeters Scheme, Street Cleansing Teams and BID Rangers. Members were informed that it was also intended to use some of the BID funding on festive lights.
- The small grant scheme that was in place to support ideas put forward by businesses.

Members suggested that when the Executive Director of the BID next met with the Committee, it would be helpful to receive information on the following issues:

- Clarification as to whether the street cleansing that was carried out by the BID Team overlapped with the work of the CYC street cleansing team.
- The democratic arrangements for the BID Board, including the voting arrangements.
- Any provision that had been made to ensure that signposting was in place to indicate the location of small independent businesses.
- Any action that was being taken to address the issue of street begging and chugging.
- A breakdown of costs in respect of the BID Rangers and the plans for them to have powers of enforcement.
- Any plans for improvements to flower beds and floral displays.
- Any plans to address the issue of litter within the BID, including the provision of recycling bins in the city centre.
- The relationship between the BID and Make it York in terms of planning for festivals and events.

The Executive Director was thanked for his attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the update on the work of the BID team be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is kept updated on progress.

## **20. Protection of Grass Verges Scrutiny Review - Draft Final Report**

Members considered a report which presented the information gathered in support of the Protection of Grass Verges Scrutiny Review, together with the review conclusions and draft recommendations. Councillor Fenton, Chair of the Task Group, was in attendance and went through the key issues in the report.

Members were asked to consider what additional work, if any, was needed to conclude the review, and to consider the draft recommendations detailed in paragraphs 83-85 of the report, prior to the report being presented to the Executive.

Members discussed the arrangements by which the Committee would wish to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, subject to these being approved by the Executive. They agreed that it would be appropriate for the committee to receive the first update in six months time. Members also agreed that it would be helpful for the recommendations to be brought to the attention of the Local Plan Working Group and the Planning Committees.

Thanks were expressed to the members of the Task Group for the work that they had carried out.

Resolved: (i) That the report be agreed and presented to the Executive for consideration.

(ii) That an update on the implementation of the recommendations be presented to the committee in six months time.

Reason: To conclude the work of this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

## 21. **2016/17 Finance and Performance Monitor 1 Report**

Members considered a report which provided details of the 2016/17 forecast outturn position for both finance and performance across services within City and Environmental Services Directorate. The paper incorporated data to June 2016, as reported to the Executive on 25 August 2016.

Members were informed that there had been a significant improvement in the income generated from Marygate car park. The main shortfall in parking income was now related to St George's Field where an area of the car park was being used by the Environment Agency as part of the works undertaken in respect of the Foss barrier. Negotiations were ongoing regarding compensation for the loss of income.

Members questioned officers on a number of the indicators detailed in Annex 1 of the report. In response to a question from a Member, officers agreed to circulate information regarding the appointment of specialist advisors for the York Central Project.<sup>1</sup>

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that Members are kept updated on the latest finance and performance position of services within the committee's remit.

### Action Required

1. Provide information for circulation to the committee

PL

## 22. **Impact of the Arts and Culture Sectors on the Economy of York - Update Report**

Members considered a report that provided initial information and the draft remit proposed by the Task Group set up to examine the Impact of the Arts and Culture Sectors on the Economy of York.

Councillor Looker, Chair of the Task Group, updated Members on the discussions that had taken place at the first meeting of the Task Group and drew Members' attention to the draft remit.

Resolved: That the draft remit, as detailed in paragraph 4 of the report, be approved.

Reason: To enable the Task Group to proceed with work on the agreed scrutiny review.

**23. Feasibility Report into Delivering Modal Shift to Sustainable Forms of Transport**

Members considered a report which suggested ways in which the committee could examine strategies to deliver a modal shift to sustainable travel to minimise congestion and the effects of pollution in the city. Members were asked to consider whether there would be added value in undertaking a scrutiny review on this topic.

Councillor D'Agorne explained the reasons why he had submitted this topic registration form and explained that he believed that a review at this stage would be timely in view of the work on the Local Plan. Members noted the suggestions put forward by officers as to ways in which a review could contribute to the work that was already taking place.

The Chair informed Members that he had spoken with Professor Tony May, who had considerable expertise in this area. He had suggested that Members may find it useful to attend a seminar which he would be delivering on this issue or for a similar presentation to be made to Members.

Members agreed that, to avoid duplicating work that was already taking place, a decision as to whether or not to proceed with a scrutiny review on Delivering Modal Shift, should be deferred to enable time to explore what issues may emerge from One Planet York over forthcoming months.

Resolved: That the decision as to whether or not to proceed with a scrutiny review on Delivering Modal Shift, and the remit of any such review, be deferred.

Reason: In recognition of the committee's current workload and to allow further consideration as to whether a review could usefully contribute to the work that was taking place on delivering modal shift.

## 24. **Work Plan 2016-17**

Members gave consideration to the committee's work plan for 2016-17.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved subject to the following additions:

- Implementation of recommendations arising from the Grass Verges Scrutiny Review (updates to be presented on a six-monthly basis)
- Further consideration as to whether to proceed with a scrutiny review on Delivering Modal Shift to Sustainable Forms of Transport

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

Councillor Cuthbertson, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.40 pm].