

Meeting	Economic Development and Transport Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	29 June 2016
Present	Councillors Cuthbertson (Chair), D'Agorne (Vice-Chair), Cullwick, Gates, Looker, D Myers, K Myers and Warters
In attendance	Councillor Aspden (item 4) Councillor Gillies (item 5) Councillor Rawlings (item 4)

1. 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. Councillor Cuthbertson declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 6 (consideration of potential scrutiny topics), as a trustee of York Museums Trust.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of 18 May 2016 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

3. Public Participation

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

4. Attendance of Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement had been invited to attend the meeting to outline his priorities and challenges for 2016-17.

Councillor Aspden was questioned on the following issues:

- Referring to the references in the report to FERA, the Executive Member was asked how much of the European funding was secure in view of the outcome of the recent referendum. He stated that briefings were being held on this issue and there may be a need to look at the implications in a cross-party way. Officers stated that it was their understanding that funding that had already been committed was secure but the situation in respect of bids was less certain. Members agreed that, when the situation became clearer, the committee would wish to consider the impact on investment in projects such as York Central.
- Discussion took place regarding the changing character of the city centre, with an increasing number of premises becoming eating or drinking establishments rather than retail. Members noted that York remained a destination for shopping and that many visitors were looking for a leisure/shopping experience. Market forces largely determined the mix of premises within the city centre and the ability of the Council to influence this was limited. The Council was, however, continuing to work with the Business Improvement District and the business community. Referring to the possibility of the BHS premises becoming vacant, officers outlined the action that was being taken to ascertain ownership of this building.
- The Executive Member was asked what action was being taken to encourage new start up businesses and to recognise the contribution that small independent traders and the gig economy made to the city. The Executive Member stated that although he was keen to attract high paid jobs to the city, he also recognised the contribution made by other sectors and wanted to protect the mix of businesses. Make it York was working with local businesses to promote initiatives designed to encourage local trade.
- A request was made for trade union representation to be included in the work that was taken place in respect of the Council's ambition to become a Business Friendly Council.
- Following discussions regarding the Business Improvement District, it was agreed that it would be useful to invite the BID manager to attend a future meeting of the committee to provide an update to Members.
- Members queried whether more could be done to encourage local or smaller businesses to tender for Council contracts. Concerns were expressed that changes to civil engineering

contracts for work such as drainage repairs had deterred smaller businesses. This also increased the likelihood of employees and equipment having to be transported to the city which had an environmental impact. Officers explained that this change had been implemented because funding from central government required efficiency savings to be made. Collaboration across local authority areas enabled the procurement of services on a larger scale. The tension between achieving savings through economies of scale and supporting local providers was, however, acknowledged and the Council's procurement team continued to look at ways of addressing this issue.

- Members stressed the need to ensure that efforts to encourage business were not confined to the city centre. It was noted that Make it York was willing to support initiatives taking part in all parts of the city.

The Executive Member was thanked for his report and for his attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

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

5. Attendance of Executive Member for Transport and Planning

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

Councillor Gillies drew Members' attention to the written report that had been circulated and gave details of some of the major schemes that were planned, including station frontage improvements.

Members questioned the Executive Member on issues including:

- The proposals to reduce bus subsidies. Members expressed particular concerns in respect of the number 20 route. The Executive Member gave details of the level of the subsidises and explained that the cut to bus subsidy funding had been agreed at Full Council. He commented that he was aware of

the particular concerns that had been raised in respect of the number 20 route, including the fact that the route was used by pupils travelling to and from school. Councillor Gillies confirmed that the Executive would be considering a number of options the following day.

- Members expressed their support for the proposed work to Scarborough Bridge. The Executive Member outlined the funding requirements for the project.
- Discussion took place regarding the initiatives that were being made to reduce congestion in the city, including adjustments to traffic signal controls. Proposals would be announced within the next few months. It was agreed that a copy of the presentation that had been given at a recent Member Briefing on Transport would be circulated to Committee Members following the meeting.¹
- At the request of Members, details were given of the staffing reductions that had been made following the ending of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in March 2016.
- The Executive Member was asked about the foot streets operation. He outlined some options that were under consideration, including those in respect of Coppergate and Fossgate. Ways of tackling issues such as the lack of cycle parking in the city were also being considered.
- Members expressed support for the pay on exit car parking initiative but it was suggested that improvements could be made in respect of user interface.
- The Executive Member's support was sought in the efforts that a Member was making to improve the standards of media broadband providers working in his ward. The Executive Member acknowledged the visual impact that this provision could have on surroundings and supported the efforts being made to minimise this.

The Executive Member was thanked for his report and for his attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

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

Action Required

1. Circulate presentation

JC

6. Draft Work Plan 2016/17 and Consideration of Potential Topics for Review in this Municipal Year

Members gave consideration to the committee's draft work plan for 2016-17. Members were also asked to put forward suggestions for potential topics for review in this municipal year.

Members suggested that the following topics be considered for scrutiny review:

- The Arts and Cultural Sector's contribution to the city's economy
- What motivates a modal shift?

Members requested that they receive feasibility reports on these topics (the report on the Arts and Cultural Sector's contribution to the city's economy to be presented at the meeting in July).

Members noted that the interim report of the Protection of Grass Verges Task Group would be presented at the next meeting, with the final report scheduled for the meeting in September.

Resolved: That, subject to the inclusion of the items detailed above, the work plan for 2016-17 be approved.

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 7.25 pm].