

## Report of the Executive Member for Environment

The forthcoming year

### 1. Flooding and Flood Defences

The aftermath of the 'Boxing Day' 2015 floods of 627 properties (453 residential including council homes and 20 travellers pitches and 174 businesses) will be a major issue for the forthcoming year with work through the:

- 1) Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee - which oversees the spending of DEFRA funds to the region for flood defence
- 2) North Yorkshire Flood Partnership – which brings together the Inland Drainage Boards, Yorkshire Water, Environment Agency and York and North Yorkshire Councils (representative members and officers)
- 3) The work on the Foss Barrier is key to protecting large sections of the east and north of the city, and has obtained £17 million of special funding.
- 4) The additional £45 million for funding in York has been the subject of development plans by the Environment Agency working with officers to review work which will defend homes and properties from flooding. The council supported the two days on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> May where the initial plans, and independent review of the Foss Barrier failure were exhibited to members of the public. This information is on the council website for those who were unable to attend.

The areas being considered in the improvements plan are Bishopthorpe, Clementhorpe, Clifton & Rawcliffe, Foss, Fulford and Germany Beck, Holgate Beck pumping station, Naburn and Acaster Malbis, Osbaldwick and Tang Hall, Poppleton and City Centre. Each of these will involve considerable consultation with councillors, and the local community, and I shall be engaging alongside council officers in ensuring that the city gets maximum use from the available funding. One area of concern that I have expressed to Ministers is the volume of partnership funding which will be required by DEFRA from the city towards the £45 million investment – the national policy is that it is not less than 15% and therefore could be required against £37.2 million of the £45 million.



## **2. Resilience and surface water drainage**

The revised gulley cleaning policy has added roads to the annual gulley cleaning list and I am working with officers to ensure surface water drainage issues are followed through with a dynamic list of areas under investigation. If councillors know of locations where there are ongoing issues, I would be grateful if they could check with the list from the March 7<sup>th</sup> Executive Member Decision Session as new areas continue to be identified.

So far Resilience grant data shows

- i. 124 applications received by City of York Council
- ii. £338,815.90 of which 74 are approved
- iii. £136,593.10 (23 fully paid and 42 interim payments)

A support officer, who will be in post until September, has been jointly funded with the Two Ridings Charity to help residents to complete the resilience forms. Please could councillors let me know if there are any problems with getting these forms completed as the cut of point is being directed by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as the end of March 2017.

There is a parallel process with 'Make it York' for businesses. This has not had the call for resources that had been anticipated; however, there has recently been an increase in the number of applications and so the message is getting through to businesses with 25 applications being received from the Walmgate area.

## **3. Recent Surface Water Drainage events**

Intense rainfall fell on York on the 10th and 12 June 2016 (10mm and 13mm respectively were recorded in concentrated periods), we received

over 90 flooding complaints from a variety of sources mainly in the Tang Hall and Heworth parts of the city. I have asked for a review of the situation, and I met a number of the residents affected on the 11<sup>th</sup> June – which also was the same day as the ‘Festival of Ideas’ had a day dedicated to flooding at the University of York dealing with a wide range of studies in response to Climate Change and flooding.



*Jetting lorry 11<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in Wolfe Avenue*

For the June event; 64 investigations have been completed, 10 require parking suspensions for further investigation (currently being organised) and 18 issues are still being progressed. A range of roads were badly affected by flood waters, 2 properties suffered from internal flooding and 2 garages were flooded.

It is likely that highway and potentially property level flooding could have occurred due to the intense nature of the rainfall as the design capacity for drainage systems can be overwhelmed during intense localised storms. Local media sources in other areas of the country highlighted that the issues were more widespread than York. Therefore, during the year ahead I will be working with the EA to promote resilience work and advice.

City of York investigations have shown that the lack of routine maintenance has led to highway gully assets being blocked with debris and the lack of free drainage from the highway which may have increased the extent of flooding. Flooding was concentrated across 10 locations in the city and during investigations CYC have cleansed 377 highway gullies and their connecting pipework, this has necessitated excavation and high power jetting in most locations and liaison with Yorkshire Water to assess the condition of connecting infrastructure. Of the 377 gullies, 51% were found to be initially blocked.

A full review of the investigation will be provided as part of the gully management review paper to be brought to the Executive Member for the Environment Decision Session on the 5th September 2016.

#### **4. Waste Services**

The review of service provision continues as part of the overall review of Street Based Services which will be completed during the summer, this includes:

- **Vehicle procurement** – replacement of the old ‘fame’ vehicles used to collect recycling, works are ongoing to identify the most appropriate vehicle available and procurement will commence by the end of July, with an expected timescale of up to 9 months. This has been as a response to concern from residents about times when recycling is co-mingled due to the ‘fame’ vehicle being off the road. In this case the recycling is taken for sorting and is not landfilled.
- **Optimisation of refuse and recycling collection rounds** – All our collection rounds are being reviewed and with the use of existing software will be optimised to ensure we are undertaking the work in the most efficient manner.



- **St Nicholas Field** – The current Service Level Agreement for the collection of recycling in certain areas of the city will be replaced with a tendered contract, the areas to be collected will compliment our optimisation work, the new contract will commence by April 2017. I appreciate the close working that the council has had with St Nick's over many years
- **Working with the Business Improvement District (BID) team** – We are currently talking to the BID team regarding the trial of an improved Commercial Waste collection service; talks are at a very early stage with possible implementation of a trial in 17/18.

## 5. Public Realm

Again the review of service provision continues as a part of the overall review of Street Based Services mainly targeted at our work on devolved budgets, this includes:

- **Street cleansing schedules** - The introduction of new street cleansing schedules is due to commence in July, which will be trialled for three months. The new schedules reflect what is actually required in different areas of the city using the local knowledge of frontline staff, residents and councillors. Following completion of the trial, amendments will be made where required by wards within available resources.
- **Grounds maintenance** - Work continues to engage with volunteer groups to identify where and how they can assist in maintaining or where identified as being required by the local community, actually improve standards. We are in discussion with the CVS regarding the creation of a city wide volunteer "action" or project group, and / or increasing area or site based volunteering. This work will be funded from the £50k budget available to support this following the Executive Member decision session on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

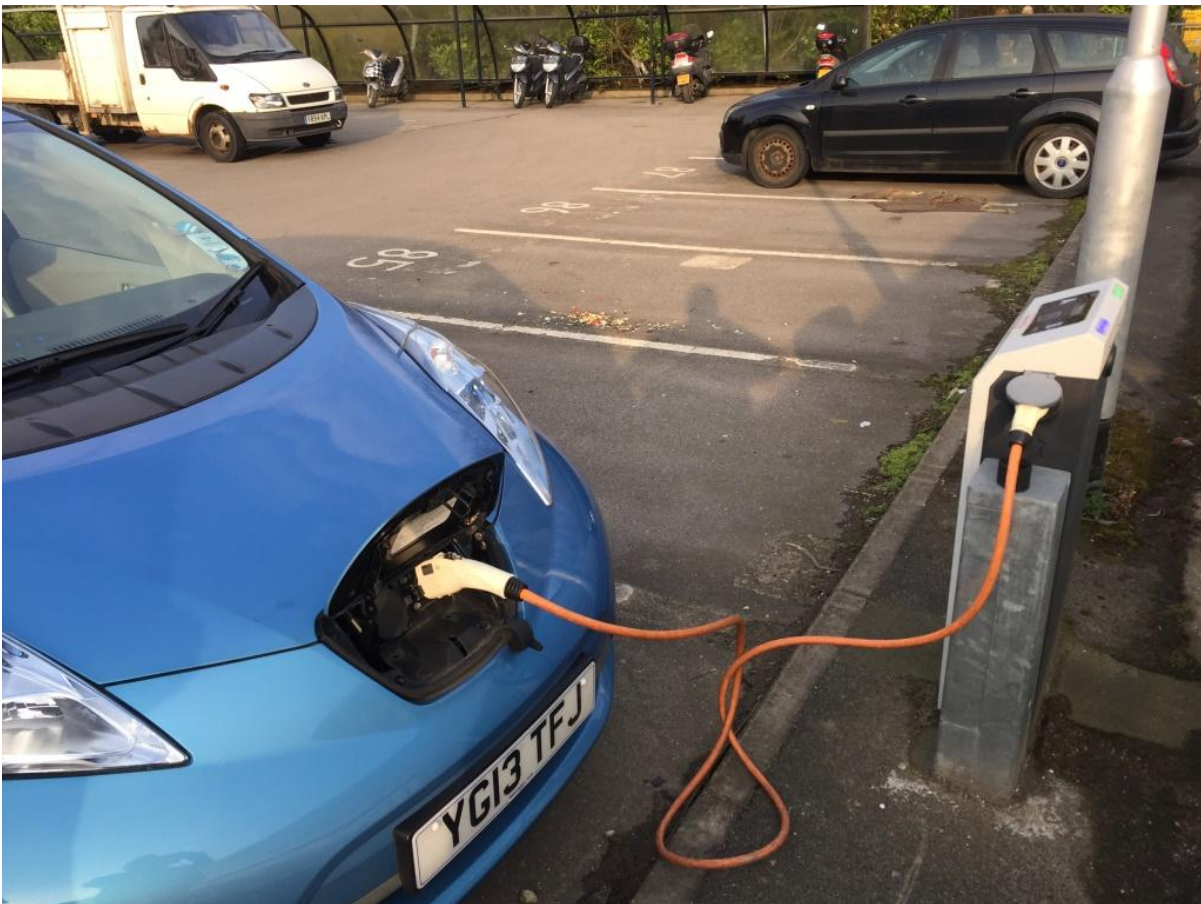
## 6. **Air Quality**

There will be an update report on the Annual Status Report for Air Quality in the city in early September. This will set out the performance and future plans for steps to improve air quality.

It is important that the targets are not diminished as a result of any structural changes, and that they are evidence based on actual measurements. The VW scandal, which has demonstrated the need for tougher regulation of manufacturers, has established precedence for more thorough real time monitoring of air quality.

I shall be meeting with local bus companies to see what they are doing to improve the performance of their fleets within the city. By continuing to target those vehicles which cumulatively have the highest impact on emissions within York, real improvement to air quality will be achieved. It is important that the city co takes the lead with its own fleet and will be liaising with other departments and Executive members to see what follow up there is to commitments via the 'One Planet Council' report agreed by the Executive.

The council was awarded £816,000 from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles earlier this year and York is one of only 8 councils in the country to achieve "Go Ultra Low" city status. The funds will be used to fund a city-wide network of hubs, providing ultra-fast electric charging points. There has also been the £308,000 from the DfT's Clean Bus Technology fund to retrofit 28 school buses used locally with the latest Selective Catalytic Reduction exhaust technology.



There will be a range of other schemes to target particular groups of vehicle emissions;

1. City Car Club for a pool of low emission cars for CYC staff

2. Switching of vehicle types for taxis which will encourage an improvement in the overall emissions performance of the vehicle fleet in the city with the local incentive scheme.
3. Working with bus operators to produce a report detailing the proposals to reduce emissions from buses for implementing a Clean Air Zone. This will include an economic impact test, details of funding, and impact on the environment and health.

Future reports will look at opportunities for expansion of the electric charging network, and will look at other low emission fuels as alternatives to petrol and in particular diesel.

Linking to the work of the 'Green Jobs Task Force' we will look at how improvements can be made to overall emissions, and through One Planet York for organisations to look at how they can improve their fleet or vehicles and pool cars to improve emissions across the city.

## **7. One Planet York and Sustainability and Carbon Management**

The council has set out how it will update its sustainability policies.

York has strong reasons to appreciate the impact of Climate Change through flooding and the Council has a responsibility to lead in the progression towards a sustainable use of resources based on the principle of 'one planet living'.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016, the Executive approved the implementation of [OnePlanetYork](#) (OPY) so that sustainability is put 'at the heart of everything we do' and drives wider progress towards more sustainable and resilient 'One Planet living'. The city-wide programme was officially launched on Earth Day on 22 April 2016 and a launch event held on 15 June 2016.

### **Actions for 2016 /17**

The council will play a key role in facilitating and supporting this programme in the early stages by:

1. Compiling the OnePlanetYork Prospectus, vision and 10 principles,



2. Secure endorsements of the OPY vision from 12 influential York organisations,
3. Showcase city leadership to inspire others and attract further endorsements,
4. Publish guides and resources,
5. Regular reporting, and
6. Explore city governance.

The Council also approved becoming a OnePlanetCouncil and will adopting a new strengthened approach to sustainability by:

1. The creation of a new OnePlanetCouncil policy and the adoption of 10 key principles,
2. New OnePlanetCouncil Action Plan,
3. Series of tools to support officers to embed OP principles and to deliver organisational change,
4. New Carbon and Resource Smart Council Management Programme – focusing on carbon and resource efficiency,
5. New internal communications,
6. New regular reporting on progress, and
7. New internal OPC Board to govern the council programme.

There are savings which can be made in terms of energy and water use which ensure the utilisation of resources for frontline services, which also in this case make a significant impact in reducing carbon emissions, and the use of limited resources.

I have asked officers to bring forward plans to develop a Carbon Management Programme which includes water usage but which will have measurable outcomes broken down by year. This will build on the success of the council's first Carbon Management Programme set in 2008. This met its goal of reducing carbon emissions by 25% by having a sound business plan with stretch targets built in.



## **Update July 2016**

The following will be presented at the 1/8/2016 Executive Member for Environment Session:

1. Draft OnePlanetCouncil Policy
2. Draft OnePlanetCouncil Action Plan – incorporating complete draft of the new Carbon and Resource Smart Council Management Plan
3. New Integrated Impact Assessment tool for all new council projects
4. Updates on renewable energy and district heating

There are opportunities for the council to encourage the local generation of renewable energy appropriate to the location. This can be either on council land/property or through new developments. I have asked that a report comes to the Executive this autumn to progress this work including feasibility studies.

## **Renewable Power**

The council in 2015 was exploring opportunities for solar energy generation across its estate, focussing mainly on larger sites. However, the Government in August 2015 consulted on changes to the Renewable Obligations and Feed-In-Tariffs. As a result CYC suspended work until the result of the consultation was known. The Government implemented the proposed changes in the winter of 2015 and therefore our schemes were no longer financially viable in the short term. CYC continues to look at smaller scale opportunities across its estate and is part of a regional [ELENA](#) (European Local ENergy Assistance) bid, led by Leeds City Region (LCR), to the European Investment Bank for technical assistance on a range of low carbon opportunities across the city, including council, wider public estate and community schemes (estimated support worth ~£1million for York). If successful, such support will be available in York from autumn 2016 – 2019. Clearly this is under threat due to the EU referendum result.

I have been in discussions with York Community Energy to review areas where the council can work in partnership to develop schemes for renewable power.

## **District Heating**

CYC has secured £50k from regional and central government to carry out a technical, low carbon district heat network feasibility study for York Central.

## **Businesses**

Through LCR, a bid for ERDF funding to support SME's in the city become resource efficient through energy, water and waste efficiency support has been submitted. Subject to a successful bid, this support is likely to be available to SMEs in York in autumn 2016.

## **Energy Switching**

Over a 1000 homes have now switched energy suppliers through the Big Community Switch scheme (via CYCs partner iChoosr). These people who have switched have saved up to £200 off their energy bills. CYC is also exploring options to provide a greater level of support to vulnerable, fuel poor residents and those on pre-payment meters. We are currently looking at various options including an option run by Leeds City Council (to be launched in summer 2016). Leeds City Council has identified an opportunity to form an energy services company (ESCo) in partnership with an existing licenced energy supplier. The council can use this ESCo to sell gas and electricity to domestic customers.

The main advantage of this ESCo arrangement is that the council can offer lower cost energy tariffs to all Leeds residents with fair, consistent, and transparent pricing policies. It also has targeted support for the fuel poor and pre-payment customers. This could save the average Leeds resident between £100 and £200 annually. They are now offering this service to other authorities across Yorkshire and Humber. CYC is reviewing this option to ensure any service offered would offer a fair price for customers in York and is transparent and would continue to offer competitive rates whilst helping the fuel poorest and those on pre-payment meters. A paper on this work and the results of the review will come to a future Executive Member for Environment session.

## **Green Jobs Task Force**

This group has been set up to explore opportunities to create greater levels of green jobs and training opportunities across the city. An action plan is being developed and will focus on high-value job creation.

Cllr Andrew Waller

## Annex 1

### **Actions to tackle climate change and reduce city-wide carbon emissions**

#### Council

- Developed a new OnePlanetCouncil –Carbon and Resource Smart Management Programme to reduce council expenditure relating to water and energy use. It aims to accelerate water and energy efficiency and the generation of low carbon energy across our estate. It will also embed wider sustainability across the council's operations.
- Continued to deliver energy efficiency programmes across our estate and schools via the council's Salix fund.
- Continued to explore renewable energy opportunities across our estate.
- Secured over £100,000 to investigate the potential for low carbon district heating schemes across the city.
- Through LCR, York will benefit from various European pots of funding to support SME's in the city become resource efficient through energy, water and waste efficiency support and support public sector partners and communities explore renewable energy opportunities across the city (ELENA).
- Developed the new city-wide OnePlanetYork programme to help create a new strengthen approach to sustainability across the city.

#### Housing

- Energy Switching - Over a 1000 homes have now switched energy suppliers through the Big Community Switch scheme and saved in total over £200,000 off their energy bills.

#### Social Housing

- Installed various air source heat pumps, boilers to A+ high efficiency, roof replacements with associated insulation and doors upgraded to composite draught proof, insulated doors.

## Private Sector Housing

- Continue to work with Leeds City Region and Better Homes Yorkshire to deliver various energy efficiency schemes across York. Including:
- New Central Heating Fund - Free Loft Insulation scheme.
- Completed a new BRE Integrated dwelling level housing stock modelling. The results of this identified concentrations of fuel poverty and homes with excess cold in the city. We will now develop targeted campaigns to support the introduction of whole house energy efficiency solutions.
- Supported the CAB to help deliver their fuel poverty programme
- Completed a new draft of the Private Sector Housing Strategy - including actions to create sustainable homes.

## Waste

- Collection point for vegetable oil recycling introduced at Hazel Court HWRC
- Garden waste collection season extended to the end of November/start December to allow residents to compost more autumnal garden waste

## Sustainable Transport

- Continue to deliver iTravel Programme
- Secured £800,000 through OLEV'S Ultra Low Emission Cities funding. This will support the promotion and roll out of electric vehicles infrastructure across the city.