

Meeting	Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee (Calling In)
Date	21 November 2016
Present	Councillors Williams (Chair), Galvin (Vice-Chair), Crisp, Fenton, Gates, Levene (arrived at 6pm), Lisle and Reid
Apologies	Councillor D'Agorne

8. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda.

9. Public Participation

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

10. Called-In Item Pre-Decision: York Central - Consultation on Highway Access Options

Members received a report which set out the reasons for the call-in and the role of the Committee, together with options available to it under the agreed pre-decision call-in arrangements.

In accordance with those arrangements, three Members (Councillors Cannon, Crisp and Derbyshire) had called in the above item from the Forward Plan for the following reasons:

- To provide input on the consultation before its format and content is agreed;
- To understand the extent and scope of the consultation to ensure it properly engages all Holgate ward residents; and
- To gain assurance that all possible access options are being treated and considered equally within the consultation.

At the outset, the Chair reminded Members of the process for pre-decision scrutiny. He highlighted that this meeting had been delayed and, that whilst the reasons for this were understood by Members, he hoped this would not happen again and reminded Officers that they did not need to submit final reports scheduled to be considered by the Executive, as the purpose of pre-decision was to enable Scrutiny involvement at the earliest stage possible.

Councillor Cannon spoke on behalf of the calling-in Members explaining their concerns in relation to:

- consultation and engagement with residents.
- technical information about the project being made publicly available.
- an option being chosen for access which faced heavy opposition and, as a result, could potentially cause problems in the future.
- decision making on this issue being based on a wide range of factors such as amenity, loss of green space, air quality and social issues, as well as economic ones.
- clarification on which railway lines might need removing.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader) spoke in response to the points made by call-in members. In response to the Chair, he clarified why he was attending the meeting as the relevant Executive Member. Namely, because the focus of this particular call in appeared to relate to processes for full and proper community engagement and consultation, responsibility for which came within his portfolio. He then went on to add that significant progress had been made now with the Local Plan and that he appreciated the importance of working with and engaging residents throughout this project, acknowledging specifically concerns of local residents relating to potential access routes.

The Executive Member then responded to various questions from the Committee and confirmed his support for technical information being transparent and publicly available, as well as support being made available for Holgate Ward Councillors through their Ward Forums, where considerable time was rightfully currently being dedicated to addressing resident concerns around this issue.

Officers were then invited to address the Committee and responded to various questions confirming that early engagement would be an integral part of the planning process. The Corporate Director of Economy & Place emphasised the importance to the Local Plan of creating an access route for York Central. Showing such a commitment to the overall site was vital to helping unlock funding for the scheme. Although Route E had been taken through to Gateway 1 with West Yorkshire Transport Fund (WYTF), their funding would contribute to exploring the viability of proposed access routes, to determine which was most appropriate, based on technical evidence.

Members then debated the 'call in' fully and considered their options outlined in the report, namely whether to make any formal comments to the Executive or not in relation to consultation on a proposed access route. In formulating some comments and recommendations for the Executive to take into account, the Committee was keen to ensure that high level resident engagement and consultation, over and above statutory planning requirements, should be undertaken on an access route for the site and that the current status of Route E as a route proposed to 'unlock' WYTF funding be clarified as a part of that consultation.

At the end of the meeting, a Member raised concerns as to why this, and an increasing number of public meetings, had recently been held in the Guildhall and not the Council's primary base at West Offices. Officers advised that this was due appropriately sized rooms not being available at West Offices but undertook to discuss the position further with the Facilities Management Team.

Resolved: That the reasons for the pre-decision 'Call in' be formally noted and in accordance with Option 1 in the report, the Committee makes the following recommendations to the Executive:

- I. high level, ongoing engagement across the City in relation to the access route for York Central be undertaken, with particular regard being given to residents most directly affected; and

- II. arrangements be made to ensure that any further consultation processes, in relation to the route and site, clarify the current status of Access Route E as being part of the package to unlock funding from the West Yorkshire Transport Fund (WYTF).

Reason: To provide scrutiny's views on the issue in advance of consideration by the Executive.

Cllr D Williams, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.30 pm].