

Impact of the Arts and Culture Sectors on the Economy of York Scrutiny Review

Information Gathered from Consultees

1. In support of the review, the Task Group held a number of meetings to meet individually with City of York Council's Chief Executive; the Corporate Director Children, Education & Communities, and the Assistant Director Communities and Equalities.
2. Previously **the Council (CYC)** had a defined leisure and culture function with a dedicated team delivering those services, but this is no longer the case, and it is not the Council's responsibility to ensure the provision of the city's cultural offer. The Council contributes both to Make It York and Welcome to Yorkshire and the Council's role is now that of a participant and collaborator – influencing and linking into the networks that are in place. Those arrangements are important as they enable CYC to have a voice; they ensure that a coherent approach is taken and that the city's cultural offer does not become too disparate.
3. The Council is a member of a new Cultural Leaders' Group, which is emerging as a vibrant leader in the cultural sector (see paragraph 10 below). Through this the Council has an important role to play in providing a strategic steer and helping to set a shared vision for the city. The Council has also signed up to the York Economic Strategy, through which it can influence clear priorities.
4. The cultural sector in York, as in other cities, is quite competitive, and the Council has been successful in helping develop some areas, such as the sharing of data. It is also showing leadership through the design and master planning of regeneration projects and has a strong custodial role to ensure the quality of those products is not lost.
5. Discussions have been taking place to identify whether the city could do more to maximise the benefits of working on a regional basis to promote tourism. This could involve York joining up with Hull, Harrogate and other destinations, to benefit from major events on offer in across the region.
6. **Issues Raised**
 - There is a concern that the city is not setting its sights high enough and that if it is not agile enough it will be left behind. For example,

there are events being held across Yorkshire in which York could play a part, and it is important to look at the opportunities to be gained through the Yorkshire brand without losing York's own brand. The city should also consider how it can benefit, if Leeds is successful in its bid to be the European Capital of Culture for 2023.

- York should extend the range of its visitor experiences - there is huge potential in developing the early evening economy and there are aspects of the city's heritage which could be better promoted including the city walls, St Leonard's Hospital, York's Roman history, and opportunities to increase footfall on the Micklegate side of the river.
- The city could attract world class events but the variable quality of festivals held in the city may be undermining the brand.
- The biggest risk is if the Council did not continue to have an influence in the city's cultural offer.

7. Later in the review, the Task Group met with the Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism who agreed the Council needs to give more of a strategic lead.

8. Issues Raised

- The Council could strengthen its cultural leadership and facilitate ways of bringing various organisations together. It could also look at what it wants from Make It York; better articulate what we do as a city, and be clear about York's position locally, regionally and nationally.
- York needs clarity about its role in the wider Yorkshire offer and steps could be taken to get Make It York and Welcome to Yorkshire to work better together.
- The city's cultural offer is a driver for attracting economic investment.
- It is felt the city is not making the most of its valuable attractions.

9. Early in the review the Task Group met with the Chair of **York@Large**.

York@Large is the city's cultural partnership. Its members work together to communicate what's happening in York as a way of increasing participation. They also encourage investment in the city's attractions and new events in order to support the local economy and to make York a more lively, creative and active city.

The operational plan for York@Large has two general objectives – to raise the wider awareness of contemporary culture and creative industries as strengths of York, and to build more effective structures for delivery.

10. A 'Cultural Leaders' Group' was recently formed which pulls together high-level creative and cultural leaders and managers from the larger organisations in York, including English Heritage, York Museums Trust, Aesthetica, Make It York, the National Trust, the National Railway Museum and the new Guild of Media Arts (for further information on the Guild, see paragraphs 13-15 below).
11. When York was designated UNESCO City of media Arts in December 2014 the motivation was to raise the social, cultural and economic standing of the city. The bid promoted York as a place that is culturally-rich and creatively-pioneering, a place where technology and art is used to breath new life into its heritage, where this strength has been cultivated through £100m investment in media arts infrastructure and by becoming one of the first UK's first Super-Connected Cities, and described how York was committed to using creativity and culture to develop the city further.
12. Issues Raised by York@Large
 - In terms of future development, UNESCO accreditation is very important and the city should get behind this as it presents a huge opportunity to portray York not just as a heritage city but as a contemporary city.
13. The **Guild of Media Arts** was created to recognise and build on York's status as the first UNESCO City of Media Arts in the UK and became the first entirely new guild in York for around 700 years. It began holding formal meetings in late 2015 and now has more than 200 members including media artists, the heritage sector, cultural makers and creative industries. While big companies are involved, the Guild also focuses on businesses that need help to grow and develop.

The aims of the Guild are to unlock the full benefits of the city's UNESCO designation ensuring that the UNESCO obligations are met in full; to champion York's growing creative credentials and strengthen York's cultural and creative industries; to ensure all York citizens' benefit from the opportunities offered by being part of the global Creative Cities Network; to retain the incredibly talented creative people attracted to York by the city's universities; and to provide a platform for members to help solve each others' problems.

14. Working with Make It York, one of the Guild's primary objectives is Mediale, a major international biennial festival to showcase media arts – for further information on Mediale, see paragraphs 114-116.
15. The Guild has links with other UNESCO cities throughout Europe and this international framework provides York with the opportunity to be seen, via the Guild, as a city capable of growing the creative sector alongside its other cultural sectors.
16. As a body, the Guild is able to cross technology and the arts to create a strong way forward for economics and business. The kind of jobs it tries to promote are in the high wage bands, although many of its members are self-employed so are not captured through PAYE data.
17. The Guild is creating an environment in which businesses and creative enterprises can flourish using culture and creativity as a driver. Big companies are involved but a focus is also at grassroots level of business that need help to grow and develop. The city's universities attract incredibly talented people and the aim is to keep them in York.
18. Issues Raised by the Guild
 - The Guild considers the city's Local Plan to be strong on heritage but less strong on other cultural sectors and it wants to join that up.
 - The Council has an important role to play in creating the right policy framework to bring additional resources into the city. It needs to facilitate the development of employment opportunities and promote the city as a brilliant place to live.
 - The Council should be more rigorous about understanding why people leave the city - York is a small and beautiful city with a good quality of life that people want to live in and businesses value being in York because they can find good, talented recruits. However, many younger people leave the city to pursue their careers.
 - One of the barriers to keeping young start-up businesses in the city is thought to be its inability to provide good premises with the capacity to grow and develop.
19. Early in the review the Task Group met with the Chair of **Make It York (MIY)** and later with its Managing Director.

Make It York is the city's destination management organisation and has the overarching remit to market the city and its surroundings as an exciting place to live, study, visit and do business. Its remit covers leisure and business tourism, city centre management, festivals and events, business support and inward investment. Visit York is a part of MIY and is the leisure tourism brand. Under the brand Visit York, MIY's aim is to market the city as a must-see world-class destination to the leisure visitor and ensure investment to develop the quality of tourism in York. The Council's service level agreement with Make it York is due to be renewed in 2018.

20. Part of MIY's role is to ensure the three key themes it is developing complement each other in order to give a clear view going forward on what is good for residents, tourists and cultural visitors. These three themes are:
 - A refresh and update of the tourism strategy
 - An events and festivals strategy
 - The establishment of a cultural strategy through the Cultural Leaders' Group.
21. MIY works with a number of other bodies. It supports the work of the Cultural Leaders' Group and carries out its administration functions. It has also done a lot of work with York@Large on cultural usage within the built environment, to ensure the way this works is integrated and that there is a shared vision for the future.
22. Data produced by MIY using the latest annual data available, shows that:
 - There were 3,057,097 visits to York's attractions;
 - 207,706 were educational visits (7.37%);
 - 57% of York's residents have visited a museum / gallery in the last 12 months (51.5% is national average);
 - 91% of leisure visitors to York enjoy the ambience of the city;
 - 71% visited the attractions;
 - 10% took in a festival or event while in York;
 - 4% went to a cultural performance;

- 190,000 attended performances at three of York's National Portfolio Organisations (NPO)¹ – York Theatre Royal, the National Centre for Early Music and the Pilot Theatre Company;
- 50.3% of adults in York attended / participated in an arts event / activity at least three times in the last 12 months (national average 43.8%);
- 77% of visitors return to York;
- Annual investment in York Theatre Royal, the National Centre for Early Music and the Pilot Theatre Company is £5,092,608 of which 57% is earned income, 8% is private giving and 37% is public subsidies;
- 71% of York residents say that cultural opportunities are important in making somewhere a good place to live;
- York's cultural, sporting and recreational economy is annually worth £75,092,608;
- £84.80 is the average spend per staying visitor per day;
- £8.81 is the median hourly wage for someone working in arts, entertainment or recreation in York (compared to £8.50 in the retail sector, which employs more people than any other sector in York);
- Across 21 attractions there are estimated to be 2,100 volunteers in the tourism sector in York;
- There were 1,700 volunteers in the 2012 Mystery Plays and more than 700 in both Blood and Chocolate in 2013 and Fog and Falling Snow in 2015;
- There were 1,483 full time equivalent places on further / higher education courses relating to culture in York's universities, 677 of the students graduated;
- 412 businesses in heritage, creative industries and art sub sectors (6,489 York businesses = 6.4%)
- 3,200 jobs in heritage, creative industries and arts sub sector (101,300 total employee jobs = 3.2%).
- There are more than 2,000,000 visitors to visityork.org annually;
- 500,000 visitors a year use the Visitor Information Centre.

¹ Prior to June 2017 there were five NPOs based in the city. In addition to York Theatre Royal, the National Centre for Early Music and the Pilot Theatre Company, the city is the headquarters of the National Rural Touring Forum and J-Night, one of the leading producers of world jazz in the North of England. In June 2017 York Museum Trust was added to the list of National Portfolio Organisations.

23. MIY considers its relationship with Welcome to Yorkshire to be sensible without being too close. MIY co-exists with tourism bodies such as Visit Britain, Visit England and Welcome to Yorkshire although they all operate at different levels. Welcome to Yorkshire do big events to get people to Yorkshire, MIY's job is to attract them to York but it does all it can to work with other tourism bodies, recognising it is in everybody's interest to have good working relationships and to collaborate.
24. Make it York it responsible for the city's festival programme, which it has refreshed for 2018 to include:
 - York being a cycle hub for the Tour de Yorkshire;
 - 'Bloom', a horticulture festival celebrating 250 year of York Florists;
 - The Great Yorkshire Fringe;
 - A pop-up Globe Theatre which for two months will present the opportunity for Shakespeare's plays to be performed in the city in a full-scale working replica of the Elizabethan playhouse;
 - The Wagon Plays;
 - Mediale (see paragraph 14 above)
25. Issues Raised by Make it York
 - In terms of economic strategy for the city, tourism and culture do not feature that strongly even though they are important sectors which promote the city as a good place to live.
 - One of the weaknesses of the city's cultural offer is confusion - if the Cultural Leaders' Group can work as a cohesive unit signed up to a cultural strategy, the work of MIY would be much easier.
 - If there was a cultural strategy the city would stand a much better chance of gaining additional funding - at present when organisations bid for money from the Arts Council they make their applications themselves. They do not wait to discover if other city organisations are making similar bids.
 - At present the city is on a treadmill of doing the same festivals every year and it is important to get fresh events on the agenda.
 - MIY is trying to organise ambitious events within an infrastructure that needs attention and in small spaces that are not suitable - There are difficulties around the public realm in the city centre and the poor physical state of some areas, particularly around pavements. It is important that the city takes an overview of its performance space, whether this is developed at Castle Gateway or York Central.

- Way-finding is an issue in the city and more space needs to be freed up if visitor numbers are to increase - MIY is keen to promote the idea of trails in order to guide visitors to different locations; an ice trail at Christmas featuring 40 venues across the city; a ghost trail; a chocolate trail and an Advent calendar trail. It is also keen to promote the idea of quarters within the city to encourage people to different places with each quarter being a destination in its own right. However, there is no quick fix for the way-finding issue despite the increase in digital and mobile technology and the growing use of apps.
- One of the city's biggest challenges is anti-social behaviour. MIY gets more feedback about incidents of ASB on Saturday nights than it does anything else. York would welcome well behaved hen and stag parties but this is not the reality and these create a clash of culture. MIY has noted a decrease in footfall in the city centre on Saturdays and an increase in footfall on Sundays as many residents boycott Saturday visits to the city centre.
- CYC could enter into a cultural partnership with the youth of the city - A cultural initiative could be created to give every child in York a cultural passport, to encourage them to walk the Walls and visit the Minster and museums to help them learn to appreciate the heritage and cultural assets available within their own city.

26. In July 2017 the Task Group met **Welcome to Yorkshire's (WTY)** area director for North Yorkshire & York.

Welcome to Yorkshire is the official tourism agency for the traditional county of Yorkshire (the UK's largest county), promoting Yorkshire tourism both nationally and internationally. It was formerly known as the Yorkshire Tourist Board until 2009, when it underwent a rebranding: a key component of which is its website. It has received international recognition for its work on marketing campaigns and continues to work on initiatives with cultural partners across the region. The stated aim of the organisation is: 'to grow the county's visitor economy'.

27. In many ways the Yorkshire region has a similar problem to York in that it has too much to offer and the challenge is one of focus. To achieve the best results WTY has adopted a themed approach – coast, country and heritage. But the priority is to get people to Yorkshire and they can then concentrate on the sectors they are interested in.

28. WTY accepts York is a key brand within Yorkshire and wants to engage more with York and act as a medium to promote and market York's key areas. If the city has something it wants to push then WTY can showcase that as part of its overall offer.
29. WTY holds quarterly meetings with MIY to talk about key areas and meetings take place at various levels to make sure York is fully represented.
30. Issues Identified by WTY
 - The relationship between York and Welcome to Yorkshire is not what it was.
 - York is nationally and internationally renowned but it cannot afford to rest on its laurels and will have to be careful not to fall behind as other areas in the country are promoting extensively. There appears to be competition, rather than collaboration, between Visit York public relations and their WTY counterparts. At present there is not a connection. WTY and MIY need to complement each other - it would be a plus if WTY helped with marketing and promotion as it can spread the brand further.
 - York needs to increase its awareness about new markets - It is important to make sure York is and remains, a key player.
 - Businesses want to see a strong Yorkshire brand through marketing and promotions, by raising the region's profile and sharing assets, while at the same time retaining their individual identities.
 - While the council no longer has the largesse of funding it once had there is still a key role it can play. A strengthening of the partnership with WTY can help because partnership working can help deliver outcomes individual organisations find it difficult to achieve themselves because of lack of funding.
31. In late January the Task Group met with the Regional Director of the **Arts Council** as they were keen to explore the impact that CYC's decision to reduce its contribution to the city's cultural offer has had when the Arts Council are determining funding applications.

The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. They support activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Between 2015 and 2018, they will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million

from the National Lottery to help create art and culture experiences for everyone, everywhere.

32. The Arts Council supports cities which are themselves investing in arts and culture. Historically, the amount of funding the Arts Council granted was dependent on a city's ambition and commitment, the match funding it was prepared to put forward and the quality of its bid. However, the number of local authorities' completely withdrawing funding is increasing due to reducing Local Authority budgets. The Arts Council recognises that this is likely to lead to closures as it cannot meet the funding gap, and it is having to reconsider how it judges a Local Authority's ambition and commitment.
33. In York there is much less matched funding than in some other areas. There are also quite high levels of engagement against the national average and this reflects education, the economic situation in the area and childhood experiences. Therefore, in terms of engagement, York is not a priority. However the Arts Council still invests more funding in York than in some other places e.g. Doncaster, which is in the bottom 10% in terms of engagement. Previously it has provided:
 - Funding of £1.2m per year for YMT
 - Granted funding of £250,000 per year to the city's Music Education Hub
 - Given capital funding of £6m to YMT and York Art Gallery
 - Provided funding of more than £26.7 over the past five years, an average of £5.3m a year
34. This equates to £27 per head of population. If capital expenditure is removed (an average of £4m a year) the investment per head would be £20.41.
35. In late June 2017 the Arts Council named York Theatre Royal, Pilot Theatre, York Museums Trust and the National Centre for Early Music among 831 York National Portfolio Organisations which will share a total of £1.6 billion over four years, with museums and libraries coming into the portfolio for the first time.
36. The Arts Council funds National Portfolio Organisations for four-year periods and as a consequence, between 2018 and 2022, York Museums Trust will receive a total investment of £6,275,928; York Theatre Royal a total of £2,349,016; The National Centre for Early Music – £1,081,868;

Pilot Theatre – £1,318,880; National Rural Touring Forum – £346,332 and J-Night – £274,996 over the same period.

37. Issues Raised by the Arts Council

- The speed at which CYC has reorganised its funding for some cultural institutions e.g. York Theatre Royal has caused those institutions real concern. While the Arts Council recognises this is due to the reducing local authority budget, it feels CYC has not paid sufficient regard to the impact that this has had on those institutions.
- The impact of culture on quality of life cannot be disaggregated and is a factor that has to be recognised - The Arts Council referenced a major company in Huddersfield that had relocated from the town as it did not believe that there was a sufficient cultural offer to attract good staff.
- It was important for York not to be complacent because of its historical offer. The Arts Council gave Venice and Amsterdam as examples. Venice has chosen to hold a number of major international festivals throughout the year even though it has much to offer in terms of history and environment. Amsterdam held a Light Festival from 26 November 2015 to 17 January 2016 attracting 850k visitors. This was driven by its Chamber of Commerce to increase hotel bed night occupancy during the quieter winter months.
- Much more could be made of the Illuminating York event. The budget for Illuminating York has remained static and while the quality has gone up, the critical mass has gone down spread thinly over many more high-quality destination points than in other cities.
- Other cities have been successful in securing private investment and local businesses have been supportive, recognising its benefits for their city and its reputation. York could seek the same.
- While the intentions of setting up Make It York were good and it was important to look at new models of working, it has been seen by some as an abdication of ambition and responsibility for culture, by CYC.
- Its relationship with MIY has been 'rough' in terms of funding, with the exception of National Portfolio Organisations listed above.

38. In summary, the Arts Council suggested that York needs to have:

- i. Real aspirations around culture and what it can do for the city, not just economically but educationally and socially.

- ii. A much clearer strategy about where it wishes to focus.
- iii. An understanding of CYC's role, and the part that it can play in investment in arts and culture.

Business View

39. In March 2017 the Task Group met with the Chairs of **York BID** and **Indie York** to gain further knowledge of the impact of the arts and culture sectors from a business perspective.

York BID is a business-led partnership which aims to deliver improvements to the centre of York. It was voted in by 76% of businesses in the BID area who pay a levy towards improving the centre of York. It is not a local authority led scheme and its programmes are in addition to the services provided by CYC. Key benefits of the BID are that it gives businesses a voice to shape the environment around them and provides opportunity for continued investment in the city centre.

40. The BID has used some of its own funding for its Winter Lights project which saw the city wall bars at Micklegate, Monkbar, Walmgate and Bootham lit up from December 2016 to February 2017. As it proved so successful it is to be repeated and expanded for 2017-18.

41. Issues Raised by BID

- BID have some anxiety over the role of MIY - MIY should develop a narrative about what York is, and have a role to play in terms of:
 - Co-ordinating and promoting events - there has been a tendency to view events on an ad hoc basis rather than as a collective enterprise.
 - Collaboration between business and event organisers - there has been some good examples of this so far but not enough e.g. 'Vespertine' informal links were made between businesses and the event organiser which demonstrated a willingness to co-operate, and 'Illuminate York' which lit up York Minister, marrying cutting-edge technology and history - It is important that the city is both cutting edge and contemporary.
- The city centre would benefit more if arts were held in the public realm rather than in venues such as the theatre and museums - Holding events in locations such as Parliament Street made them visible rather than being seen as a niche activity. It was noted that the

Shambles Market is beginning to do this but use of that particular space is limited due to the electricity supply being insufficient.

- The number of visitors to York puts pressure on the city centre and a maintenance programme for public realm in York city centre is important for the long-term future of some outdoor events. For example, the state of the paving in Parliament Street is poor, putting at risk current major events such as the Food Festival and the Great Yorkshire Fringe because there is a danger they cannot be delivered in a safe environment.
- In regard to the number of festivals in the city, the BID Chair stated that there are key festivals which bring greater benefits to the city e.g. the Food Festival in Parliament Street, which generates a £1m income, and there are others of more local interest to residents e.g. those arranged by retailers in Fossgate.
- It is essential the visitor experience is joined up. It is difficult to find your way round York, and there are problems with signage and way-finding. The BID is trying to formulate an approach to these problems to promote particular events.

Indie York was formed, with the support of York BID, in the aftermath of the Boxing Day floods of 2015. It was officially launched in November 2016 to link and bring together independent businesses in the city.

42. Because of the historic nature of the city there are lots of small properties which are better suited to being used by small independents, and this has led to a strong independent business scene. As many visitors come to York for its independents, as come for the Walls and the Minster.
43. Indie York brings together those independent businesses in one guide, available both online and in printed form. The map aims to signpost individual companies and independent clusters such as Fossgate, Walmgate, the Minster Quarter, Micklegate, The Shambles, Shambles Market and Gillygate. This could be extended in the future to include art and culture attractions, as events are important in attracting footfall.
44. Issues Raised by Indie York
 - York is being held back partly due to complacency and partly due to lack of nerve and confidence.
 - York needs a more contemporary view of the arts - It is a weakness that there is not more contemporary or cutting-edge art, and many

young, talented artists are leaving the city because there is nowhere for them to express their talents.

Creative Industries

45. Creative Industry is the fastest growing business sector in York with more than 250 creative companies employing 4,500 people. Below are the Business Register & Employment Survey (BRES) figures for 2015 and 2016. The 2016 figures now include solely PAYE based businesses with employment counts of less than 20. This improvement in coverage is estimated to have increased the national business survey population by 95k businesses between December 2015 and January 2016 and is reflected in the new BRES 2016 figures for York below. The creative industry categories listed are based on the Department of Culture, Media and Sports definition.

Creative Industries	Number of Jobs 2015	Number of Jobs 2016
Manufacture of jewellery and related articles	10	0
Book publishing	0	10
Publishing of directories and mailing lists	0	0
Publishing of newspapers	50	100
Publishing of journals and periodicals	10	40
Other publishing activities	5	45
Publishing of computer games	0	0
Other software publishing	10	75
Motion picture, video and television programme production activities	25	175
Motion picture, video and television programme post-production activities	0	0
Motion picture, video and television programme distribution activities	0	10
Motion picture projection activities	75	125
Sound recording and music publishing activities	5	20
Radio broadcasting	10	50
Television programming and broadcasting activities	0	0
Computer programming activities	225	350
Computer consultancy activities	1250	1500
Public relations and communication activities	10	15
Architectural activities	300	400

Advertising agencies	500	250
Media representation	150	20
Specialised design activities	125	175
Photographic activities	30	40
Translation and interpretation activities	35	15
Cultural education	0	10
Performing arts	250	350
Support activities to performing arts	10	20
Artistic creation	75	40
Operation of arts facilities	0	0
Library and archive activities	10	100
Museum activities	400	350
Total	3500	4500

46. More than £100 million has been invested in media arts facilities and resources to support the sector by York's two universities, resulting in the new Department of Theatre, Film and TV on the University of York Campus. In addition, the University of York launched their Digital Creativity Labs (DC Labs) in April 2016 – a major £18 million initiative for innovative research in the convergent area of digital and creative technologies.
47. Figures used in the development of York's Economic Strategy launched in July 2016, show that:
- According to Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data from 2014, 3% of York's population were employed in the creative, digital and media sectors. This accounted for around 2,470 people;
 - This sector has higher wages than the national average, typically over £15 per hour;
 - The creative, digital and media sectors make up 8% of York's Gross Value Added (GVA) ;
 - York's digital, creative and media sector (information & communication) is forecast to grow by over 20% during the five year period of the Economic Strategy;

Cultural Providers

48. Two of York's museums, the National Railway Museum (NRM) and York Castle Museum, are rated among the best cultural attractions in the

country, with the NRM featuring in Trip Advisor's top ten museums for 2017.

49. In early November 2016 the Task Group met with the Chief Executive of **York Museums Trust (YMT)**, which runs York Art Gallery, York Castle Museum, Yorkshire Museum, St Mary's and the Museum Gardens.
50. YMT employs about 100 FTE staff at any one time and all staff are paid at least the Living Wage. YMT uses its assets to enable significant partnership events that bring people and their spending power to the city. In 2015 the impact of YMT's spend was more than £13m, and their impact on the tourist economy was worth more than £15m. Statistics show that 70% of visitors to York Art Gallery come from more than 20 miles away, 1.7m people a year use Museum Gardens, which has won a Yorkshire in Bloom award four years running, and the 2nd Eboracum Roman Festival based in the Museum Gardens was attended by 30,000 people, many of whom came to York specifically to attend the event.
51. The Museum Gardens, Art Gallery, Yorkshire and Castle Museums are all cultural attractions that impact on investment decisions. YMT plays a role in commissioning high value jobs such as designers, architects and engineers while helping develop talent through initiatives such as Aesthetica and Mediale, and by working with universities and businesses. These projects provide a safe testing ground to help develop scientific and creative talents, such as the collaboration between YMT and the University of York to create a Viking Virtual Reality environment.
52. YMT believes in strong collaboration between Arts and Culture organisations and are currently working with York Chocolate Story and York Cocoa House on a project for the Castle Museum.
53. Issues Raised by YMT
 - The city should improve its approach to unlocking funds through strong partnership working and showing the value it places on culture.
 - One of the challenges in York is property prices. The use of heritage buildings for businesses rather than apartments has a beneficial impact on the economy. More investment to create work space will benefit the economy, transforming heritage buildings into flats will not.
 - Major infrastructure and capital projects that create anchor attractions have been shown to support regeneration and growth.

- Whilst some festivals are known outside of the city e.g. Aesthetica Short Film Festival (for more information see paragraphs 112-113), many of them are not and do not attract the number of visitors that similar events elsewhere do. As a tool for community engagement they may be useful, but festivals that disappoint could devalue other festivals. Consideration should be given to whether it would be beneficial to hold fewer but better quality festivals.
- Make it York has an important role in terms of drawing people to the city, but because it is responsible for such a wide cross-section of organisations, it is difficult for them to be strategic.
- It is important to set the direction in order to inform decisions, so CYC should take a strategic role and decide what the city should be like.
- Consideration should be given to establishing two separate groups; one of which would be a broad group of representatives and another smaller group based around Arts Council funding. It would also be useful to appoint someone who can identify funding opportunities and bring a group together with the relevant skills.
- YMT views York as a low income city and believes the city is disadvantaged by the Arts Council in a number of ways i.e. the Arts Council:
 - Views York in a different way to other cities e.g. those with high unemployment.
 - Does not take account of York's 7m plus visitors each year, it only considers the size of the city's population.
 - Is concerned about the reduction in revenue funding from the Council even though they understand the reasons for this - YMT are seeking to persuade the Arts Council that the CYC contribution is reasonable.

54. The **National Railway Museum (NRM)** is part of the British Science Museums Group of National Museums and has won many accolades including the European Museum of the Year Award in 2001.
55. It is the largest museum of its type in Britain and in a typical year attracts 725k visitors - its five year average is 750k visitors while the highest annual total is just short of a million.
56. Of its visitors, 10% are international visitors, 65% are regional from Yorkshire and the Humber and 25% are from the remainder of the UK. NRM has a broader draw than many other attractions and a surprisingly

high number of visitors to York come solely to visit the NRM. The museum employs 180 individuals with a seasonal employment pattern – it needs more people during the school holidays – and operates within the Science Museum management matrix structure. Catering, security and estate management are operated by third party firms.

57. The NRM works with various organisations including Make It York, York Museums Trust and the Theatre Royal, for events such as Illuminating York and Aesthetica. It also works with Welcome to Yorkshire and hosted the launch of the 2017 Tour de Yorkshire.
58. Issues Raised by NRM
 - There is a sense that there is not a strong coherent view of the cultural offer in the city, and NRM would like to see more collaboration.
 - Because of the NRM's location at the rear of the railway station it gets no passing trade – people are there for a specific reason – so more needs to be done in terms of way-finding.
 - The NRM also has concerns about anti-social behaviour which presents a threat to the general ambience of the museum.
59. In late November 2016 the Task Group met with the chief executive of **York Archaeology Trust (YAT)**, whose portfolio includes city attractions such as the Jorvik Viking Centre, York DIG based in St Saviour's Church, Barley Hall, the Richard III Experience at Monk Bar and the Henry VII Experience at Micklegate Bar.

YAT was set up in 1972 to help preserve the vast collection of archaeological deposits in response to threats posed to the city's archaeological heritage at the time. Today, most archaeology happens as a result of developments and the Trust works with developers on the cultural impact of these developments.
60. YAT employs around 200 people across the Trust with some 110/120 being employed in York itself. The Jorvik Viking Centre attracts around 400k visitors a year with the combined portfolio attracting around 500k visitors a year. The Trust also runs the annual Viking Festival, Europe's largest Viking festival, which attracts an estimated 40k visitors to the city.
61. To extend the scope and reach of its activities into Yorkshire, YAT merged with the Sheffield archaeological unit, ArcHeritage, and in 2011 the Trust became even larger with the inclusion of Northlight Heritage in Glasgow and Trent & Peak Archaeology in Nottingham under its ownership, allowing it to spread its expertise across Northern Britain.

62. The Jorvik Viking Centre came into being as a result of a major development in Coppergate which gave archaeologists the opportunity to excavate an area of 1,000 square metres through 2,000 years of history. The Jorvik Centre is located on the site of the Coppergate dig.
63. YAT sees York as an extraordinary example of a city with a rich history that is also modern and vibrant with a vision for the future. As such, the Trust is not about stopping change, it is about managing change. The Trust is happy to collaborate with other organisations and this was reciprocated by other attractions such as the Minster, YMT and the Opera House who all offered their help after the Jorvik Centre suffered badly in the Christmas 2015 floods.
64. To help take things forward YAT is looking for further local authority support on projects that will be favourable for the city. For example, the challenge of trying to understand and uncover the city's Roman history - York's international status is built on its Roman foundations and it is believed the city walls stand on the original Roman walls, although this has not been tested for a long time. A project to raise the profile of York's Roman past could have huge benefits for the city. YAT considers it unlikely that a city in which Constantine the Great was acclaimed emperor of the Roman Empire in 306AD would not have had a major palace somewhere within its boundaries, although any remains will be around nine metres below the current ground level.
65. Work to redevelop the city's Castle Gateway could also open up exciting possibilities as the banks of the Foss would have been used by the Vikings and would have been an international gateway during York's Viking era.
66. Issues Raised by YAT
 - The past is a huge enabler of the future and York is a world-class archaeological city, so it should use this as a driver for economic development.
 - Collaboration and joint promotion is key if the city is to continue to flourish as a destination. For example, YAT decided to promote the attractions at two bars – the Richard III Experience at Monk Bar and the Henry VII Experience at Micklegate Bar – on one ticket and the result was that footfall at Micklegate Bar increased enormously.
 - Instances of anti-social behaviour in the city centre, particularly at weekends, is concerning.

67. **York Theatre Royal (YTR)** was built on the site of the medieval St Leonard's Hospital and dates back to 1744, which makes it the oldest producing house outside London. Its core relationship is with the citizens of York and 70-75% of its customers are from the city. The most recent data puts YTR customer spend at £3.75m, with day and overnight visitors contributing £1m to the economy. YTR employs 91 FTE staff with 70% living in the CYC area and indirectly provides employment for an additional 21 FTE positions.
68. YTR procures as much as possible from the city area with 55% of goods and services, some £1.6m, bought locally. The cafe is stocked exclusively by suppliers in the county. Last year YTR reopened after a £6m restoration and the main contractor responsible for the redevelopment was a local company. In addition, YTR hosts theatre companies from around the UK and when they perform they live and spend money in the city. This equates to 950 nights in the city for visiting companies, bringing £800k spending into the local economy.
69. Through its work with others such as visiting theatre companies and designers, YTR has developed a creative economy in the city. Students graduating from the universities who want to stay in the city are drawn to YTR, and a number of young theatre companies have been born as a result. With the aim of making sure talented young people stay in the city, YTR has developed ways to support young companies at no cost to itself and it helps with cash flow and box office management.
70. YTR gets no revenue support from CYC and has lost discretionary rate relief.
71. Issues Raised by YTR
- There are some dynamic places around Yorkshire, and York has to compete against them - there is a need to shift from traditional to contemporary activities to avoid the risk of complacency.
 - It is important that CYC continues to demonstrate its support of arts and culture or the city risks losing financial support from the Arts Council.
 - CYC should show it has a strategic view with regards to the city's cultural offer and should facilitate through Make It York, greater co-ordination, co-operations and collaboration in the city. The Cultural Leaders' Group should take a leading role in this.
 - Make It York should provide a co-ordinating role for joint funding bids to ensure the city makes the most of what is available.

72. The **National Centre for Early Music (NCEM)** is an educational music charity based in St Margaret's, a converted medieval church in Walmgate. The church was restored and converted in 2000, winning a variety of major conservation awards, and is promoted as a significant venue for music and creative learning, embracing over 100 folk, jazz, digital and contemporary music concerts. The opening of the NCEM has helped to transform the Walmgate area and has helped increase footfall tremendously.
73. Over a million listeners tune in to early music concerts presented by the NCEM and broadcast through BBC Radio 3 each year, and an International Young Artists Competition takes place biennially in York drawing in applications from the UK and across the world – the 2017 competition attracted groups from Belgium, Switzerland, France and the Netherlands.
74. The NCEM summer festival lasts 10 days each July and audience analysis from July 2016 showed:
- 31% were aged 55-64; 55% over 65;
 - 12% were in full-time employment; 10% self-employed; 64% retired.
 - 61% came to the festival and stayed overnight – 29% in B&B; 28% in hotels; 22% self-catering.
 - 70% said they came to the festival because of the performers/repertory
 - 69% of the 2016 audience had been before; 28% were new.
 - 36% lived locally; 13% from Leeds/Beverley; 10% North West; 5% North East & 32% from across the rest of the UK and America, Canada, Poland, Taiwan, Portugal, Slovenia, Russia, Hawaii, Norway and Australia
75. The NCEM's audience for its world, jazz, folk, contemporary programme is much more localised. It sells an average of 14k tickets for promotions annually. Through its on-going partnership with BBC Radio 3 it is helping to promote the York name across Europe. An increasing use of digital technology has enabled concerts to be streamed where appropriate and where rights allow e.g. on 21 March 2017 (the European Day of Early Music) a concert was streamed via Facebook Live which attracted 22k visitors (FB yorkearlymusic). The concert was broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 and taken by the European Broadcasting Union (based in Switzerland) for broadcast in Sweden; Spain; Romania; Czech Republic; Switzerland; Lithuania; Iceland; Denmark; Austria; Belarus and Seoul in South Korea. This attracted well over 1 million listeners.

76. Locally, in addition to using St Margaret's Church, Walmgate, the NCEM also organises events in a wide variety of other venues in the city including York Minster.
77. Issues Raised by NCEM
- While the NCEM is celebrating York internationally, it is not seen as doing so in the city itself.
 - The way the Arts Council views York - NCEM was turned down for Arts Council funding and were turned down again when they applied with the Theatre Royal.
 - In recognising the value of the Arts Council, it is important that CYC gets back to being a strategic player and does not abdicate responsibility to Make It York.
 - MIY is competing with cultural organisations for Arts Council money rather than supporting them.
 - CYC could take a more strategic overview and give a voice to the city by working with cultural organisations to celebrate and promote what the city has to offer; and to attract higher-end visitors who will come to York, spend in the city and speak of their experience when they return home.
 - Anti-social behaviour and the limitations of Park and Ride (buses not running later into the night) are making it harder to attract visitors to York.
78. In May 2017 the Task Group met the director of the **Yorkshire Air Museum**.

The Museum sits on the site of former RAF Elvington, a World War Two airfield used extensively by Allied bomber crews during the war. It is the largest independent air museum in Britain and is the most original Second World War RAF Bomber Command station open to the public. It is also the home of the only Allied Air Forces Memorial in Europe. It operates as a registered charity and not-for-profit business and receives no state or local government funding. It attracts 100,000 visitors a year and is continually expanding, with corporate business being one of its major growth areas, involving clients such as car manufactures; Motability; City of York Council; Environment Agency; Yorkshire Water; Mercia Group; BBC Question Time; ITV Touch of Frost; Yorkshire Building Society; Barclays Bank and International Rotary.

79. The museum has a good international reputation and profile with established branches in North America and France and is supported by over 4,000 registered "friends" across the world.
80. The aircraft museum attempted unsuccessfully to create an 'air experience' at the former Airspeed factory in Piccadilly (later Reynard's Garage) based around Amy Johnson and Neville Shute. If it had been successful, the attraction would have been the first major new tourist attraction in the city for 30 years.
81. Issues Raised by Yorkshire Air Museum
 - While the museum is recognised nationally and internationally as a major national attraction, it is not necessarily recognised in York itself. And while it has good relations with City of York Council it does not have much involvement with Make It York.
 - Since the formation of Make It York communications have 'gone on the back foot' and the museum deals more with Leeds than it does with York.
 - As the tourism economy helps keep York on the map, CYC/MIY should sell the whole city instead of simply promoting city centre attractions.
 - Anti-social behaviour in the city centre is a problem for museum visitors arriving at the railway station, particularly on a weekend, and when the museum exhibits its aircraft in the city centre.
82. In April 2017 the Task Group met the Head of Events and Learning from **York Minister**, one of the finest medieval buildings in Europe.

The site of the Minster has always been an important one for York and the remains of the basilica, the ceremonial centre of a Roman fortress, was found beneath the building. The first Christian church on the site has been dated to 627 and the first Archbishop of York was recognised by the Pope in 732. A stone Saxon church survived the Viking invasion in 866 but was ransacked by William the Conqueror's forces in 1069. William appointed his own Archbishop, Thomas, who by the end of the century had built a great Norman cathedral on the site. The present Gothic-style church was built over 250 years, between 1220 and 1472.
83. The Chapter of York, the governing body of York Minister, has 154 FTE staff and 430 volunteers fulfilling 647 roles. In 2016 the Minister

attracted 610,000 visitors; was the 60th most visited attraction in the UK and the 4th most visited cathedral in the country.

84. The Minster is not funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and all income is generated by the Minster itself. However, it received a £10.5m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) as part of a major £20m restoration and conservation project on the Minster's East Front housing the Great East Window, which also helped develop new visitor attractions including the Minster Undercroft, which allows visitors to explore 2000 years of history at the cathedral site from its Roman past to present day. The HLF funding was matched by fundraising from the York Minister Fund.
85. The Minster also received two recent grants which were not match-funded by York Minister Fund. The first of £390k from the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund for repairs to the Camera Cantorum stonework and roof. The second of £150k from the Art Council's Museums Resilience Fund to develop the Minster's Historic Collection housed in the Old Palace in Dean's Park, which includes, books, silver, textiles and glass covering more than 2000 years of life at the Minster and in the city of York. The Minster was eligible for Art Council funding because it is the only cathedral in the country with an Accredited Museum status.
86. The Minster has good relations with Make It York and the Theatre Royal manages the Minster box office. The marketing department worked closely with Visit York and York Mystery Plays Supporters Trust when the event was held in the Minster, and both the interior and exterior of the cathedral have been a major focus of Illuminating York.
87. Looking to the future the Minster wants to be involved with Mediale (see paragraphs 114-116), and in 2018 will host an international stone festival featuring 60-80 stonemasons from throughout Europe.
88. Issues Raised by the Chapter of York
 - One of the challenges for the Minster is engaging with the community - they want to more people to come into the building and they want them to feel comfortable with the space.

Church and Faith Communities

89. Task Group member Cllr Cullwick produced a paper on the contribution of churches and faith communities to the city's cultural offer and its

economy. The paper focused on the contribution of churches and faith communities in the city centre, but recognised the not insignificant contribution they make in the suburbs and outskirts of York.

90. The paper considered the contribution of churches and faith communities to the economy of the city under two headings:

91. Cultural Attractions

The Minster may be the jewel in the crown of York's tourism offer, but there are other ecclesiastical jewels and hidden gems offering fine examples of architecture and craftsmanship, with a large number of listed buildings, many Grade 1. Some are primarily operated as visitor attractions such as Holy Trinity Goodramgate and the ruins of St Mary's in Museum Gardens, but others play their part in the York visitor experience whilst thriving as places of worship. The Monks of Micklegate exhibition in Holy Trinity Micklegate (the traditional starting point of the York Mystery Plays), the Bar Convent Museum on Blossom Street and the Shrine of Margaret Clitherow in the Shambles to name but three.

92. There are many medieval churches in the city centre of note that are open throughout the week and footfall is constant e.g.:

- All Saints North Street famed for its wealth of 14th century glass
- St Michael le Belfrey where Guy Fawkes was baptised.
- All Saints Pavement the Civic and Guild Church famed for its lantern tower and the burial place of 34 Lord Mayors
- St Martin Cum Gregory, the Stained Glass Centre
- St Cuthbert's in Peaseholme possibly predating the Minster
- St Helens opposite the Mansion House
- St Martins by City Screen, bombed in WW2 and only partially restored, stands as a symbol of peace and reconciliation.
- Unitarian Chapel (c1692) in St Saviourgate grade 2 listed and first two storey brick building in city.

93. As businesses and employers:

The church and faith communities are significant in terms of the employment opportunities they give rise to ranging from those directly employed by their communities; those employed in maintaining and managing church buildings i.e. stone masons, glaziers, electricians, joiners etc and administrators, cleaners, curators, youth workers, musicians, actors, counsellors and project workers etc.

94. Historically York has benefitted from a close link between faith and business, along with education and health care. It is worth noting their significant contributions to the city e.g. Rowntrees (Quaker), York St John University (CoE) and Retreat Hospital (Quaker).
95. Today the church still represents significant business interests. For example, since 1989 St Michael's Spurriergate has operated as a fair trade café, shop and counselling centre employing both paid and volunteer staff and operating as a venue for a wide range of social and cultural activities. St Sampson's similarly operates as a venue for the over 60s.
96. Other churches operate city centre businesses such as the café in Walmgate Bar operated by Calvary Chapel or the Bar Convent with its retail, restaurant, bed and breakfast and conference centre in addition to the museum and religious community. The Salvation Army Citadel on Gillygate is now the base of York City Church from where it seeks to serve the city e.g. food bank point. Even where premises become surplus to requirements they are often utilised for other purposes. In some cases buildings are leased for commercial ventures such as Biltmore and Oscars in Swinegate (owned by Elim).
97. Parts of buildings might be used for other purposes such as the John Cooper Theatre at Trinity Methodist Church or the office space released at Central Methodist and St Columba's Priory Street.
98. There are also examples of churches and faith based charities taking on buildings previously used for other purposes. Riding Lights Theatre Company created the Friargate Theatre which was formerly the wax museum. Spurriergate operates several charities from its adjacent building including its counselling centre.
99. Alongside church run businesses there are significant numbers employed by faith based organisations in the third sector, such as housing charities (e.g. Restore), work with rough sleepers (e.g. Carecent, Big Breakfast), schools workers, medical charities (e.g. Integretas) and co-ordinators of volunteers in a range of projects from street angels to food banks to charity shops. Full and part time posts in such projects are measured in the hundreds and high-quality volunteer posts in the thousands.

100. There are also many examples of the church engaged with business through chaplaincy, job clubs, rehabilitation placements with offenders and work experience placements with schools and colleges.

101. Issues Raised

- The York City Centre Churches app could be better integrated with other visitor marketing tools.
- Many of the city centre churches play a part in attracting footfall, which could be used to promote parts of the city centre considered in need of new life. For example, in promoting the regeneration of Micklegate the proximity of two museums (Holy Trinity and the Bar Convent) to the Micklegate Bar Museum could be exploited much more.
- The use of church buildings for cultural events could be better co-ordinated and exploited.

Ancestral Tourism

102. In May 2017 the Task Group met the Keeper of Archives from Borthwick Institute for Archives, at the University of York.

The Institute is home to many of Yorkshire's archives including church records going back to medieval times, wills and family records. It is part of Archives for Yorkshire which, along with The National Archives, launched a project involving local authority archive services and the National Railway Museum to promote Ancestral Tourism. Its aim is to encourage visitors, particularly ex-pats, to visit Yorkshire and retrace their family history. This ties in with the family history industry which has grown tremendously over the past 15 years or so, coinciding with the rise of the internet and online sites such as 'FindMyPast' and television programmes such as 'Who Do You Think You Are?'.

103. The internet had changed the way people approach family history. They want more than a simple family tree and are much more interested in who their ancestors were. They now want to visit places where their ancestors once lived and worked, walk the streets they once walked and learn why an ancestor went to a work house or became a merchant tailor. The archives are not simply looking after documents, but the life stories of people who are represented in those documents which present the opportunity for people to find out who their ancestors were.

104. Scotland has already made a big push to develop the business of ancestral tourism which experts say is worth tens of millions of pounds a

year to the economy. It is estimated there are 50 million people worldwide for whom Scotland represents a place of origin. According to Visit Scotland, in 2012 visitors whose ancestors lived in Scotland included 113k from Canada and 59k from the United States, worth £106m and £69m respectively. Of these 36K from Canada and 11k from the United States carried out ancestral research during their trip. When asked about their reasons for taking a holiday in Scotland, 72% of North American visitors gave sightseeing as the primary reason, followed by genealogy/researching ancestors at 68%.

105. York is exceptional in the way it is documented and is blessed with both its history and archives and as such can create bespoke family history tours around industries such as the railways and chocolate, as both the NRM and Rowntree have extensive archives which could give York a unique selling point.

106. Issues Raised by the Borthwick Institute

- One of the challenges is making the public aware that such archives exist and that they are able to access them - Improved input and collaboration with tourism organisations will be required to overcome this. In the future, a family history week could be organised in the city but it would require the right sort of support.

107. In May 2017 the Task Group met the Chief Executive of **Explore York Libraries and Archives**,

Explore York is an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status, managing City of York Council's library and archive services.

108. Explore York Archives contains thousands of documents, plans and photographs that tell the story of 800 years of York's history. Documents dating back to 1155 from City of York Council and its predecessors are held in the civic archive. The community collections include personal and family papers as well as the records of York-based charities, businesses and community groups, providing an insight into York life through the ages and allowing researchers from all over the world the opportunity to uncover the stories of the city's inhabitants and search online for their York ancestors by name, location and date.

109. York Explore has received funding from Wellcome for a 24-month project to catalogue the records of the York Poor Law Union and Workhouse, York Medical Officer of Health, Department of Health, and Department of Housing and Environmental Health. These archives, dating from the

1830s through to the early 2000s, document changing approaches to the provision of healthcare and alleviation of destitution in York over two centuries.

110. York is a developing hub for heritage tourism. Explore York gets worldwide requests for information all the time and their archives have huge tourism potential.

111. Issues Raised by York Explore

- There is a lack of available exhibition space in the city –Explore York works with other organisations that have some limited space e.g. York Museum Trust and Fairfax House.
- More should be done to discourage anti-social behaviour - Explore York is actively trying to encourage more people to use the library lawn because the more people that are around, the less anti-social behaviour there is.

Major Arts & Culture Related Festivals

112. **Aesthetica Short Film Festival** is a celebration of independent short film from around the world. It supports emerging and established filmmakers by giving them a platform to showcase their work. It is a hub for the film industry and a must-attend festival in the film world calendar. For those working in the industry, it provides a chance to hear from leading international film organisations, discover emerging talent and build future collaborations.

113. The BAFTA qualifying festival returned for its sixth year in November 2016 and screened 400 films as part of its Official Selection and presented a number of Showcase Screenings from leading cultural institutions.

114. **Mediale** is the flagship initiative of York's UNESCO designation. The first is to take place in autumn 2018 and every two years thereafter. It is designed to bring the UNESCO media arts to life as a community focused event, and plans for the inaugural festival include major light commissions alongside interactive pavilions and exhibits that utilise the backdrop of the city. Its 20-day programme will be underpinned by year-long development activity with schools, communities and businesses.

115. In enabling as many people as possible to experience the transformative power of culture firsthand the aim is to build media arts into everyday life in York and to reposition the profile, ambition, excellence and impact of

the UK's programming in media arts. A commitment to the next generation of talent will be at the heart of the festival as they work alongside leading artists.

116. Above all, the proposed festival is about the city coming together to make a statement about its future. A festival of partnerships, it will take a united York to the world and bring the best of the world to York. Partnership with the UK Mediale 2018 offers the opportunity to present world-class arts programming, build relationships and international brand awareness, inspire staff and customers, and be a part of an exciting moment in York's history.
117. **Vespertine** is a two year project to stimulate the early evening economy through a series of musical performances, light projections and art installations which come to life as shops are closing. The aim is to provide more reasons for people to spend more time in the city in the early evening to get to know its culture in greater depth.
118. Launched in May 2015, the project is the result of a partnership established by York@Large, York Theatre Royal and Make It York encompassing 20 of the city's cultural organisations and managed by York Archaeological Trust. Such an event was held in October 2016, combining architecture, archaeology, technology, music and art in a virtual reality experience at the National Centre for Early Music at St Margaret's Church in Walmgate.
119. **Illuminating York** is the city's biggest annual night-time festival. It enables residents and visitors to explore the city through the imagination of artists, using the medium of light in all its forms. The festival opens up some of York's most famous, most interesting and intriguing buildings by night, to experience them in a completely new way. Outdoors, buildings, spaces and places host installations using light and projection.
120. **York Viking Festival** is recognized as the largest Viking festival in Europe and it a city-wide celebration of York's Viking heritage. Taking place every February half-term, the festival programme of family-friendly events, lectures, guided walks and battle re-enactments attracts 40,000 visitors a year from across the globe.
121. The festival has its roots more than 1,000 years ago when York was under Viking rule and celebrations took place to herald the coming of spring and the end of winter hardships. These celebrations were long forgotten until the 1980s when York Archaeological Trust revived the tradition. It is now in its 32nd year and has become a firm fixture in the York calendar.

122. **York Mystery Plays** have entertained residents and visitors to the city since the 1300s. In 2016 the Mystery Plays returned to York Minster for only the second time in their near 700-year history and attracted more than 26,000 people over the course of a five-week run.
123. The plays are essentially a community production, featuring just one paid actor working alongside an army of volunteers, and previous years have seen outdoor performances on pageant wagons at various locations throughout the city.
124. **Eboracum Roman Festival** was first held in 2016 and saw more than 28,000 people attend. The second staging attracted over 30,000 visitors, many of whom came to York specifically to attend the event. Based in the York Museum Gardens, the festival included fighting displays, children's army drills, a Roman camp showing domestic Roman life, stalls selling themed goods, book readings, guest lectures, guided walks to various venues around the city, and a Roman march through the streets of the city.
125. As part of the festival the Yorkshire Museum, home to some of Britain's most important artefacts, ran various activities and workshops. The festival is due to return to York from 1-4 June 2017.
126. **York Festival of Ideas** was launched by the University of York in 2011. The Festival is a partnership between the University and cultural, social and business organisations in the city and at a national level.
127. The objective of the Festival of Ideas is to enhance York's reputation as a city of ideas and innovation by offering the highest calibre of public events to local, regional and visitor audiences and to demonstrate to the widest possible audiences the transformative power of education and ideas.