

**Corporate Services, Climate Change and
Scrutiny Management Committee**

9 December 2024

Report of the interim Director of City Development

York Central Update

Summary

1. The Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee have requested an update about the York Central development, following the scrutiny meeting on 18 March 2024.
2. This is a short covering report to introduce the item; the developer partners will attend the meeting to give a presentation and verbal update about progress to date, supported by the project partners.

Background

3. The background to York Central was summarised in the March 2024 scrutiny report. Since then, the following has taken place:
 - In July 2024, Planning approval was granted for the six-storey government hub, with the intention this will be home for up to 2,600 civil servants.
 - The York Central partners have attended meetings with officers / members including:
 - York Central Lead Members Group held on 4 September 2024 and 18 November 2024
 - Public meetings held on 3 October 2024 (Holgate Road) and 8 October 2024 (Jubilee Terrace)
4. The council continues to have a legal role in delivery of York Central as both the Planning Authority and Highways. As a result, there remains a significant influencing role for the local authority as it supports partners deliver this critical scheme for the city.

Consultation

5. The previous Scrutiny reports detail the significant community engagement which took place over 2017/2018. More recently, the Riverside Path consultation, led by the Council, ran November – December 2024 and included on and offline survey together with drop-in events for residents.
6. Progress updates are via www.yorkcentral.info/ were highlighted at the last meeting. Since March 2024 the following activity has taken place:
 - Sponsored York College and University Centre's Construction Award - "Full time Electrical Student of the Year"
 - Sponsored a Snook as part of the Snook trail
 - Donated £150k to the York Community Fund
 - Presented to the York BID Annual General Meeting in July 2024
 - Presented at the FinTech North event in October 2024

Options

7. This is an update report. There are no options presented to Scrutiny.

Analysis

8. This is an update report. There are no options presented to Scrutiny.

Current Position

9. The current position is summarised below and Arlington/McLaren, the development partners, will cover this in more detail in their presentation to Scrutiny Committee.
10. Outline Planning Approval in 2019 confirmed the location for office space (up to 88,000m²) and a site allocation of up to 2,500 new homes of which a minimum of 20% must be affordable. **Annex A** provides the approved masterplan for ease of reference.
11. To help progress the site and ensure continuity over the next few years as different officers support the development, a new internal officer group, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, has been established. This group aims to resolve issues within the council's remit by working together across directorates, sharing updates and ensuring all parts of the council understand the part they play.

12. The project has now become a reality with major infrastructure works underway on site. Drone shots are provided to Homes England weekly to show the works underway, the most recent shots are presented to Scrutiny (**Annex B**). The area is visible from different locations, including Leeman Road, Water End and the station. The developers, Arlington/McLaren, will present an update giving a sense of the scale and ambition of the project, with Homes England, the landowner and programme director providing a brief verbal update about the current infrastructure works.
13. Arlington/McLaren are committed to the ambitions of the scheme and cementing it within the fabric of the city. They are identifying options to accelerate affordable housing, exploring improved health and care facilities that will serve the new residents and wider city, together with working closely with the Combined Authority and city leaders to consider economic opportunities that could be realised on the site.
14. The council remains committed to supporting the delivery of the York Central access infrastructure works with an agreed £35m contribution to the costs. This was originally approved by Executive in April 2022. This will be funded from drawing down Enterprise Zone funding in advance and is expected to be required in September 2025.
15. The Devolution Deal confirmed the benefits of the York Central Enterprise Zone status (local retention of Business Rates) would be continued for a further 10-year period to 2052.
16. With works gathering pace, inward investment marketing, funded by UKSPF, is being developed in collaboration with York's Economic Partnership inward investment task and finish group to attract additional businesses and potential occupiers to the city.
17. Key future milestones are expected to include:

(NB dates are current estimates and are subject to change):

- First key sections of new access infrastructure open – spring 2025
- Submission of further reserved matters planning applications for phase 1 development – summer 2025
- Completion of all infrastructure works including two bridges over the East Coast Main Line – Winter 2026

Council Plan / Local Plan

18. The delivery of York Central is key for the future of the city and region, providing a key economic growth component of York's emerging Local Plan and contributing to the wider regional economic growth ambitions.
19. The "One City, for all" 2023-27 Council Plan sets four core commitments, with York Central contributing significantly to these:

Equalities and Human Rights – the site will provide residents with a warm, safe, affordable place to live, built around strong connected communities, with the opportunity to work in new jobs at every level.

Affordable. The provision of affordable homes will help York be a more affordable place to live. In addition, there is a requirement for 5% of homes to be community / custom built and the small parcel of council land will provide 100% affordable homes, spread across the site to create balance and mixed tenure.

York Central has the capacity to provide over 1 million square feet of Grade A office space which will help local businesses grow within the city as well as attract inward investment from other locations, providing the economic growth needs of the city for the next 10 years. This will help create 6,500 jobs, boosting the local economy in the city and region, offering more employment opportunities within the city, rather than people needing to relocate to find work.

Climate The project will deliver extensive new public spaces including a new public park for the city, supporting bio-diversity net gain and climate change adaptation. The site is currently exploring options for a heat network across the site. It will also prioritise pedestrians and cyclists with excellent public transport, creating convenient and safe pedestrian and cycle access through the site to the city centre, railway station and surrounding communities and linking into citywide footpaths and cycle ways, to enjoy the wider York environment.

Health The council and developers are working with health partners to explore different health facilities, including primary care, that could be developed on the site to serve both the new residents, and, given the connectivity of the site, the wider population.

Implications

20. There are no implications. This is a project update for Scrutiny.

Risk Management

21. This is an update report to Scrutiny, with no decisions required.

22. This is a complex partnership project. A risk register is maintained by the delivery partners, which is actively managed through the project governance processes. The Delivery Coordination Board is chaired by the Homes England Programme Director and comprised of the delivery partners. It meets regularly to confirm actions and next steps to mitigate future risks.

Recommendations

23. Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee are recommended to receive the York Central update and York Central developer partners presentation.

Reason: To keep the committee updated on this key project for the city.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Ian Floyd, Chief Operating Officer

Report
Approved



Date 13/11/2024

Specialist Implications Officer(s) Not *applicable*

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report
Background Papers:

Executive Reports

- Preferred Access Route and Preparation for Planning [Agenda for Executive on Wednesday, 15 November 2017, 5.30 pm](#) item 11
- York Central Access Construction [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 15 March 2018, 5.30 pm](#) item 145
- York Central Master Plan and Partnership Agreement [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 21 June 2018, 5.30 pm](#) item 5
- York Central Western Access [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 30 August 2018, 5.30 pm](#) item 30
- York Central Enterprise Zone Investment Case [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 29 November 2018, 5.30 pm](#) item 66
- York Central Partnership Legal Agreement [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 17 January 2019, 5.30 pm](#) item 92
- York Central Partnership Update [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 18 July 2019, 5.30 pm](#) item 15
- York Central Update [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 24 October 2019, 5.30 pm](#) item 55
- York Central Update [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 23 July 2020, 5.30 pm](#) item 11
- York Central and York Station Gateway Update [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 22 April 2021, 5.30 pm](#) item 124
- York Central Enterprise Zone Funding Agreement [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 21 April 2022, 5.30 pm](#) item 117

Scrutiny reports:

[Agenda for Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee on Monday, 18 March 2024, 5.30 pm](#) item 39

[Agenda for Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee on Monday, 27 November 2023, 5.30 pm](#) item 17

Recent council media releases:

[Have your say: Riverside path project takes next steps – City of York Council](#)

Annex A York Central Masterplan

Annex B Drone shots of the infrastructure works