

Meeting:	Executive Member Decision Session
Meeting date:	09/09/2026
Report of:	Director/Chief Officer name
Portfolio of:	Councillor Peter Kilbane: Executive Member for Economy and Culture Councillors Deve Merrett and Anna Perrett: Executive Members for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities Councillor Kate Ravilious: Executive Member for Transport

Decision Report: Walmgate Improvement Scheme

Subject of Report

1. Officers have developed a programme of projects to allow delivery of the South Walmgate Masterplan, following an Executive Member Decision¹ to allocate £250k to a Neighbourhood Improvement Programme for Walmgate. A decision is now sought to approve the final version of the South Walmgate Masterplan, agree to implement a first phase of projects, and amend the existing delegation to procure the design and construction contractors needed. This will allow the development and implementation of a first phase of the South Walmgate Masterplan.

Benefits and Challenges

2. The Masterplan identifies a programme of work that reflects community priorities and would deliver wider estate regeneration in addition to the redevelopment of Willow House. Projects have

¹ Neighbourhood Improvement Programme, Executive Member Decision Session, [27 January 2026](#).

been developed to improve economic vibrancy of the high street area, help reduce anti-social behaviour, improve safety and perceptions of safety and strengthen community capacity. Upgrading communal public spaces around the council's housing will create more attractive environments that encourage community wellbeing and pride.

3. Funding has been allocated that would enable the delivery of an initial phase of work. There are challenges around delivering projects within funding availability and timescales.
4. Some elements have implications for ongoing maintenance. The intention is to develop schemes to have no additional impact on maintenance budgets. But it has to be acknowledged that this could be challenging.
5. Equally, ongoing support from Neighbourhood Teams is likely to be required after delivery to support residents to co-manage shared spaces and garden stewardship schemes.

Policy Basis for Decision

6. The Masterplan aligns with the ambitions in the Council Plan (*One City, for All, 2023–27*) to work closely with communities and target support where it is most needed, including through community engagement processes.
7. It delivers benefits against all four core commitments of Equalities & Human Rights, Affordability, Climate Change and Health, with a range of projects that will improve accessibility and access to services, provide environmental improvements, and encourage greater health and wellbeing improvements through an improved public realm.
8. Complementing this is the York Neighbourhood Model, a wider place-based service delivery approach to create integrated neighbourhood teams that bring together professionals from health, care, housing, voluntary groups, and residents to provide joined-up early intervention, prevention and community support tailored to local needs. This model aims to strengthen collective action at neighbourhood level, build on residents' strengths and assets, improve coordination of services, and focus on outcomes that matter locally, while also encouraging coproduction with communities and partners.
9. The Masterplan's projects and ambitions emphasise community empowerment, multi-agency collaboration, place-based,

preventative working, and investment in local spaces and services to improve liveability, safety, wellbeing and resident influence over how their neighbourhoods develop.

Financial Strategy Implications

10. An initial phase of projects has been devised within the available budget:
 - a) The NIP is part of the HRA Capital Programme and is dedicated to improving the physical environment of the council's estate, influenced by neighbourhood planning priorities and city-wide opportunities. £250k was approved at an Executive Member Decision Session in January 2026.
 - b) £217.3k MCA Vibrant High Streets funding has been offered to the council for improvements focussed on the Walmgate Parade shopping area.
 - c) £500k has been allocated from the Local Transport Grant for improvements in the Walmgate area.

Recommendation and Reasons

11. The Executive Member is asked:
 - a) To approve the final version of the South Walmgate Masterplan.
 - b) To approve the initial project prioritisation of phase 1 and subsequent phases
 - c) That approval be given to carry out a procurement process to procure multi-disciplinary design and project delivery teams to deliver the South Walmgate Masterplan in line with the existing financial approvals, and that authority be delegated to the Director of City Development or Director of Housing & Communities as relevant in accordance with their respective functions (in consultation with the Executive Members for Housing, Planning & Safer Communities, the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance or their delegated officers) to take such steps as are necessary to procure, award and enter into the resulting contract(s).
12. Reasons:
 - a) To enable delivery of a first phase of projects.

- b) To ensure transparency and clear decision making around the South Walmgate Masterplan programme.
- c) To ensure all grant funding and contractual arrangements are in compliance with the Finance Regs, CPRs, the Procurement Act, PCR, Subsidy Control Act 2022 and related legislation.

Background

13. Executive agreed to progress the design of the Willow House site and a wider South Walmgate masterplan in February 2023. In October 2025 approval was given to allocate NIP funding towards the Walmgate Improvement Proposals. The Masterplan has since been finalised. It sets out eight themes and 13 projects to help improve existing spaces within the wider South Walmgate area alongside the redevelopment of Willow House. Proposals were developed through extensive engagement with the local community. Projects range from small interventions on housing land to create secure space, shared garden spaces, and a heritage trail, to more ambitious projects to create new homes on in-fill sites and improve surrounding streets through the provision of trees, rain gardens and active travel infrastructure improvements. The allocation of this funding was delegated to the Director of Housing and Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Community Safety.
14. In November 2025 Executive accepted the Local Transport Grant from the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA). £500,000 has since been allocated for transport improvements in the Walmgate area alongside the Masterplan. This funding must be spent by March 2027.
15. In January 2026 £250,000 Housing Revenue Account funding was approved as part of the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan for Walmgate. The primary focus of the funds is to support wider estate regeneration work, reduce Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – for example through new lighting, security gates and the closing off of unsafe passageways – and build community capacity to co-manage shared spaces. This funding will not be used for building repair tasks, which will be funded from general repairs budgets. To comply with the HRA ringfence requirements, the expenditure must be on council house land and buildings, for the benefit of council house tenants.

16. In May £217,300 Vibrant High Streets funding was awarded by the MCA to deliver improvements focussing on the Medway House shopping parade. This funding must be spent by December 2027.
17. An initial phase of work has been developed and includes projects that are priorities for the local community and are deliverable and affordable within the awarded funding criteria and timescales:
 - a) Junction improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. It is likely that a revised Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) may be required for these works.
 - b) Public realm improvements outside Medway House shopping parade, including improved accessibility
 - c) Security improvements – stopping up cut-throughs
 - d) Development of a communally managed garden scheme
 - e) A heritage trail
 - f) Potential public art
18. The Regeneration team is leading the overall programme to act as a conduit between the community, council services and external funding bodies, working with the Willow House team to ensure that neighbours are fully engaged.

Consultation Analysis

19. Community engagement has shaped the South Walmgate Masterplan proposals, resulting in projects that residents have prioritised. It is intended to continue this engagement as the projects are developed. A co-ordinated engagement approach with the Willow House redevelopment will be taken.
20. A commitment has been given for the NIP element of funding to consult with ward councillors annually on proposals for consideration.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

21. Do nothing – do not implement the Masterplan proposals. This would mean that funding would need to be returned to the MCA

and internal funding reallocated. There would be no wider improvements delivered in the Walmgate area.

22. Do something – only progress some of the identified projects. The initial phase of projects has been developed to be deliverable within timescales and the available budget. A reduced programme would deliver fewer benefits and reduce the impact of a place-based approach.
23. Do maximum – implement phase 1 and developed subsequent phases of projects (recommended). This would deliver the maximum outcomes available within timescales and budget.

Organisational Impact and Implications

24.

- **Financial**, The recommendations in this report will be funded by a mix of HRA budget and external grants. As previously stated, the HRA budget element must fund developments and services on council housing land, provided to council tenants.
- **Human Resources (HR)**, There are no HR implications contained within the report. Should there be any requirement for additional resource as the proposals are implemented these will be established and resourced in accordance with council policy.

Legal, Any agreements required for any supplies of goods/equipment, services and/or works following any approval processes will require advice and input from Legal Services.

Any procurement/commissioning for any supplies of goods/equipment, services and/or works will require advice from Legal Services and Commercial Procurement on the different routes and the associated advantages and risks of each route to ensure compliance with relevant legislation (such as the Procurement Act 2023 and others), as well as the Council's own CPRS.

In the event of any grants any agreements (following approvals) must be drafted and concluded with input from Legal Services to ensure compliance with the Council's CPRs, the Council's Financial Regs, and the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Legal Services, Commercial Procurement and Finance must be consulted with regards to any CPR and Financial

Regs implications and any transparency and disclosure requirements under the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

- **Procurement**, any procurement will be taken in line with the council's regulations.
- **Health and Wellbeing**, Public Health supports the recommendations made in the report.
- **Environment and Climate action**, The proposed masterplan supports the ambitions of the York Climate Change Strategy in several ways, by improving active travel networks, increasing electric vehicle charging infrastructure and enhancing the natural environment. The climate change team will continue to engage with the phased development of the masterplan to ensure further opportunities for climate change mitigation and adaptation are identified and achieved."
- **Affordability**, contact: Director of Customer and Communities.
- **Equalities and Human Rights**, contact: Assistant Director of Customer, Communities and Inclusion - every Decision Report must consider whether to have an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) and this section will include the key recommendations from the EIA or explain why no EIA is required.

An initial HREA has been completed. This document will be updated as the programme develops. The initial findings suggest...

- **Data Protection and Privacy**, Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) form an important part of the council's accountability obligations under UK data protection legislation. They are a key tool for identifying, assessing, and mitigating privacy and data protection risks associated with proposed processing activities, and for demonstrating compliance with the council's statutory data protection responsibilities.

A DPIA is intended to ensure that data protection and privacy risks are appropriately considered and managed. Whilst it may not be possible to eliminate all risks, the assessment process enables the council to implement proportionate safeguards, reduce risks where necessary, and determine whether any residual risk is acceptable considering the

intended purpose and anticipated benefits of the proposed activities.

The DPIA undertaken to date has identified that, although the proposal involves the processing of personal data, including special category personal data where applicable, the processing is not currently considered likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. This assessment reflects both the controls already in place and the additional mitigating measures identified to further reduce and manage any potential risks. Subject to approval of the recommendations and preferred option(s) set out in this report, the DPIA will be reviewed and updated at the appropriate stages of implementation. This will ensure that any new or emerging data protection and privacy risks are identified, assessed, and managed appropriately, and that the council continues to meet its obligations under applicable data protection legislation.

- **Communications**, The communications team is working with colleagues across the council to support the development and delivery of improvements in the Walmgate area. This work will require the implementation of a significant communications and engagement plan to ensure that residents and businesses are kept informed and engaged with before, during and after any construction work, as well as giving the local community opportunities to help shape some of the improvements in the area. This work will also need to involve the partners and funders in these projects
- **Economy**, the masterplan will help to deliver the council's ambitions for a fair, thriving, green economy for all by providing an improved setting for the businesses and residents in the Walmgate area.

Risks and Mitigations

25. There is a risk that cost increases mean that Phase 1 cannot be delivered in its entirety. In mitigation a range of projects that could be scaled down or omitted have been developed to ensure this phase remains within budget.

26. Public support to date has been positive. By building on previous engagement the local community and stakeholders should remain supportive and feel listened to.

Wards Impacted

27. Guildhall

Contact details

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Background papers

[9 February 2023 Executive](#) – Approval to allocate £1m for the design development of Willow House and the wider South Walmgate area.

[16 November 2023 Executive](#) – Housing Delivery Programme update. Approval to seek planning permission at the Willow House site

[7 October 2025 Executive](#) – approval of Willow House design to RIBA4 and procurement of an enabling contractor to prepare the site for development

[27 January 2026 Executive Member Decision Session](#) – Neighbourhood Improvement Plan approval of £250k for Walmgate Proposals

[26 April 2026 Executive](#) – approval to appoint a long-term Strategic Delivery Partner and to delegate the procurement of contractor to demolish the Willow House buildings

Annexes

- Annex A: Human Rights and Equality Assessment (HREA)
- Annex B: Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
- Annex C: South Walmgate Masterplan