

Traffic Congestion Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee

12 October 2009

Report of the Head of Civic Democratic & Legal Services

Traffic Congestion – Residents Survey

Summary

1. This report presents a draft of the planned residents survey, based on the findings of this scrutiny review, (produced by Marketing & Communications), and asks Members to agree any revisions in order that it can be put into production and issued.

Background

2. Members have spent a long time gathering information to support the ongoing Traffic Congestion Ad-hoc Scrutiny Review, as detailed in their draft final report shown elsewhere in the agenda for this meeting.
3. As part of concluding the review, Members recognised that it would be beneficial to engage the wider York community as well as particular interested parties. The Committee therefore agreed to issue a city-wide survey outlining the review findings and the possible solutions, as this was deemed crucial to identifying views on future transport policy, given both the difficult and critical choices to be made, and the need for York residents and businesses positive co-operation.
4. In January 2008, Marketing & Communications were consulted on the best methods for producing, distributing and analysing the survey and they provided a costing for this which was used to request the relevant funding. In June 2008 Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) agreed to provide the funding based on that costing (shown at Annex A), The budget allocated for carrying out the survey based on the original costings was carried forward from the scrutiny budget for the financial year 2008/09, into the scrutiny budget for the financial year 2009/10.
5. As part of the original costings, it was agreed that the survey would be distributed as an insertion within 'Your Ward / Your City' in order to limit the distribution costs, and at a meeting in June 2009, Members agreed the layout for the survey based on a previous survey produced as part of the consultation on LTP2.
6. However, subsequently it has been suggested that this would not be advisable as it may lead the public to believe that the Council is intent on taking up some of the more radical solutions identified within the scrutiny final report rather than them being only scrutiny recommendations for the Executive to consider. Therefore Marketing & Communications have been instructed not to distribute the survey as

an insert within a Council publication. Any change to the agreed distribution method, together with the delay in progressing the survey, has resulted in an increase in the cost of the survey and a revised costing is attached at Annex B.

7. At a meeting on 28 September 2009, SMC considered a update report on the progress made with carrying out the planned Traffic Congestion survey. They queried the delays in producing a draft of the survey for this Committee's consideration. They recognised the resulting delays to its production and distribution, and the knock on effects to the distribution of the LTP3 consultation document. With this in mind, they have instructed this Committee to ensure the survey is sent out no later than December 2009. In order for this to happen and to minimise the increase in costs resulting from the delays in progressing the survey, SMC gave their view that the survey should go out as an insertion within December's 'Your City' publication, which is clearly at odds with the instruction given to Marketing & Communications detailed in paragraph 5.

Consultation

8. Marketing & Communications were tasked with creating a draft survey for this Committee's consideration, and this work has now been completed in conjunction with key officers from City Strategy – see Annex C.
9. Most recently, an alternative suggestion has been put forward by senior officers within City Strategy, that the suggested traffic congestion survey be amalgamated into the planned LTP3 consultation process outlined below:
 - 'City Wide Issues & Priorities' consultation document – to be sent out at end of October
 - 'Potential Options For City' consultation document based on findings from two previous consultation – to be sent out as an insertion within 'Your City' in April 2010
 - Consultation on Draft LTP3 – to be sent out as an insertion within 'Your City' in September 2010
 - Preparation of Final Draft of LTP3 to be completed by December 2010
10. The suggestion is that the 'City Wide Issues & Priorities' consultation document be changed to focus more on the short to medium term requirements for the city. This would be followed by the Traffic Congestion Scrutiny Committee's survey which would focus more on the longer term strategic options.
11. The scrutiny survey would be clearly identified as being developed as a result of the scrutiny review work completed by this Committee, and would be sent out as an insertion within 'Your City' in December 2009 as planned. The findings from both the LTP3 'Issues and Priorities' and this Committee's survey would then be used to inform the content of the 'Potential Options For City' consultation document due to go out in April 2010.

Analysis

12. It should be noted that this latest suggestion contradicts the previous advice given that the scrutiny review survey and the Council's LTP3 consultation process should not be linked, in order to prevent any confusion as to the ownership of those processes etc as detailed in paragraph 6 above (particularly as both may be similar in style and content). It would however enable the LTP3 consultation process to proceed as soon as possible which would be advantageous to the Council.

Options

13. Having considered the draft survey attached, Members may:
 - Agree the content and layout of the survey as presented, and proceed with its publication and distribution
 - Amend the survey content and layout prior to its publication and distribution
 - Agree not to proceed with this Committee's survey and agree to a limited number of traffic congestion questions being included in the LTP3 consultation document

Corporate Strategy

14. The implementation of the recommendations arising from this review will support the delivery of the following corporate priorities:
 - 'Reduce the environmental impact of council activities and encourage, empower and promote others to do the same'
 - 'Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport'.

Implications

15. **Financial** - The financial implications of carrying out the survey are outlined in Annex B.
16. **Legal, HR, Equalities, Crime & Disorder, Property or Other** – There are no known implications associated within the recommendation within this report.

Risk Management

17. There is a risk that by not including the right level of information in a survey, it may limit the number of residents who choose to engage in the consultation. In this instance, this in turn may effect the strength of the argument for the Executive to agree to the recommendations arising from the Traffic Congestion review. Plus, the cost of carrying out a city wide consultation is high therefore in order to justify the expense the exercise would need to be productive. There is also a financial risk attached to carrying out the survey, in that the added value of the survey findings may not warrant the high costs involved in carrying out the survey, given

the delays in getting to this stage in the review and the already comprehensive nature of the final report and annexes.

Recommendations

18. Members are asked to decide whether they wish to proceed with their planned survey of York residents in order to evidence the findings from this scrutiny review and support the arising recommendations.

Reason: To evidence the value of the work of this Scrutiny Committee

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Report Approved

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Wards Affected:

All

Background Papers: Draft Final Report dated 12 October 2009 (shown elsewhere on this agenda)

Annexes:

- Annex A** – Original costings for Consultation
- Annex B** – Revised costings for Consultation
- Annex C** – Draft Survey