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## **Scrutiny Management Committee**

**28 June 2010**

Report of the Head of Civic, Legal & Democratic Services

## **Traffic Congestion Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee – Revised Final Report**

### **Summary**

1. This report presents the revised final report of the Traffic Congestion Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee regarding their review on Traffic Congestion in York. Councillor Merrett, Chair of the Committee, will be attendance to present the report.

### **Background**

2. In coming to a decision to review this topic, the Committee recognised certain key objectives and the following remit was agreed:

### **Aim**

3. To identify ways including Local Transport Plans 1 & 2 (LTP1 & LTP2) and other evidence, of reducing present levels of traffic congestion in York, and ways of minimising the impact of the forecast traffic increase.

### **Objectives**

Having regard to the impact of traffic congestion (based on external evidence and those measures already implemented in LTP1 or proposed in LTP2), recommend and prioritise specific improvements to:

- i. Accessibility to services, employment, education and health
- ii. Air Quality, in particular looking at the five hotspots identified in the LTP2
- iii. CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions
- iv. Alternative environmentally viable and financially practical methods of transport
- v. Journey times and reliability of public transport
- vi. Economic Performance
- vii. Quality of Life
- viii. Road Safety

### **Consultation**

4. As part of the review the following organisations and individuals were consulted:

- Assistant Director of City Development & Transport
  - Environmental Protection Manager
  - Principal Transport Planner
  - Representatives from the local bus service providers
  - Chair of the Quality Bus Partnership
5. In addition, reference was made to national Government policy documents and the Council's mid-term reports on LTP2, and a number of consultation events were also held:
- 'Road User Charging' (presented by Capita Symonds)
  - 'Broad Strategic Options Available to York' Report (presented by the Assistant Director of City Development & Transport)
  - 'Quality of Life' (presented by Professor John Whitelegg)
6. Finally, a city wide consultation survey was undertaken to gather residents views on the possible options available to the city for tackling congestion.
7. The Committee agreed a number of recommendations as result of their investigative work on the objectives of this review, which were presented to this Committee in February 2010 and to the Executive in April 2010. However, they did not include any recommendation around the testing of the scenarios identified from the city-wide consultation, as the results of the survey were still unknown at that time.
8. Since then, the Traffic Congestion Scrutiny Committee have met again to consider the survey findings (shown at Annex E to the final report), and as a result have agreed an additional recommendation, shown below in paragraph 11. The revised final report is scheduled to be presented to the Executive on 6 July 2010.

## **Options**

9. Having considered the findings contained within the revised final report and its annexes attached, Members may chose to comment on the findings from the survey (shown in Annex E) and the additional recommendation shown in paragraph 12 below.

## **Analysis**

10. An analysis of all of the information gathered, is shown at Annex C to the final report. This now includes information relating to the committee's analysis of the findings arising from the residents survey at paragraphs 24-27.
11. The findings from the city-wide residents survey showed that in terms of a long term strategy, Option C (as detailed in Annex D of the final report), was the most favoured. However, the committee noted that the options with varying elements of charging (options A, B & D) received more support between them.

## **Additional Recommendation Arising from the Review**

12. The Committee agreed the following additional recommendation which relates specifically to the testing of the scenario preferred by a majority of residents, as identified by the results of the residents survey:

xxvi In regard to the broader strategic options available to the city, and as a result of residents' views arising from the citywide survey, the Executive to:

- Instruct officers to work up a strategic transport package based on Option C, including undertaking further engagement and consultation with York residents and businesses, and submit an application for government funding for this package of measures;
- give highest priority to improving bus services within the city, and lowest priority to the relative expensive and lower benefit rail solutions should the application for funding only be partially successful;
- examine other innovative and creative ways in which to deliver Option C should an application for the required funding fall short or fail.

## **Corporate Strategy**

13. This review related to a number of the corporate priorities contained within the Council Corporate Strategy i.e. the recommendations if approved, will support the council's aim of making the city a healthier, more sustainable and thriving city, where residents have improved access to education, employment and health services.

## **Implications Associated with Final Report**

14. **Financial** – The financial implications associated with implementing the suggested long term transport strategy are outlined in paragraph 55 of the final report. However in order to pursue these funding streams the scenarios will need to be tested rigorously to confirm the validity of the suggested strategy, which would require Council funding. At this stage it is unclear exactly how much funding would be required and these financial implications would need to be addressed in more detail in future reports to Members should the Executive approve the recommendations arising from this scrutiny review. There will also be costs associated with working up the strategic transport package detailed in paragraph 12 above.
15. **Legal** – As Local Highway Authority, Local Planning Authority, Local Environmental Health Authority and Road Traffic Authority, the Council has a wide range of functions it is able to discharge and powers it can exercise in dealing with congestion. In so acting it must adhere both to its own necessary authorisation procedures and all formal statutory requirements.
16. There are no known HR, Equalities, Property, Crime & Disorder, or other implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

## Risk Management

17. There is no risk associated with the recommendation in this cover report. However, there are risks to the Council with not adhering to all the legislation associated with the statutory functions listed within the legal implications paragraph above. There is also a potential risk to the Council's reputation if it fails to implement the necessary measures to address the expected increase in congestion levels.

## Recommendations

18. Members are asked to note the contents of the revised final report attached and its annexes, and provide comments on the additional recommendation arising from the review, so that these can be taken into account when the Executive considers the revised final report.

Reason: To fully inform the Executive of the outcome of the Traffic Congestion Ad Hoc Scrutiny Review.

## Contact Details

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## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Legal – Martin Blythe  
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**Wards Affected:** All

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

## Background Papers:

- 1 – Road User Charging Presentation by Capita Symonds
- 2 – Broad Strategic Options Report
- 3 – Quality of Life Presentation by Professor J Whitelegg
- 4 – LTP2 Strategy for 2006-11
- 5 – Summary of Regional and Local Transport Policy

Hard copies of these background papers can be obtained by contacting the report author. Alternatively, they can be viewed online at:

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12836&path=0>

## **Annexes**

- Annex 1 – Revised Final Report
- Annex A – Maps Showing Congestion Levels in 2005, 2011 & 2021
- Annex B – Information Gathered In support of Review
- Annex C – Analysis of Findings Including Table of Issues/Findings, Identified Solutions, Possible Impacts & Draft Recommendations
- Annex D – Broad Strategic Options - Individual Scenarios To Complement LTP3
- Annex E - Analysis of citywide residents survey results

## **Committee Members**

Councillor D Merrett (Chair)  
Councillor B Hudson (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor T Holvey  
Councillor K Orrell  
Councillor R Pierce  
Councillor T Simpson-Laing  
Councillor C Vassie  
Professor M Smith (Co-optee)  
Professor M Page (Co-optee)

## **Previous Committee Members**

Councillor R Moore  
Councillor J Morley  
Councillor C Hogg