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Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	19 November 2013
Present	Councillors Semlyen (Chair), Watt (Vice-Chair), Burton, D'Agorne, Riches and McIlveen (Substitute)
Apologies	Councillor Hyman

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### **30. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, other than those listed on the standing declarations attached to the agenda, that they might have had in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

### **31. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 September 2013 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **32. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **33. Attendance of the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Services.**

The Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Services attended the meeting to update the Committee on the priorities within her portfolio area.

She stated that government funding had been awarded after officers had put an excellent bid forward to support a new dedicated FirstStop support service to help older people stay independent for longer. The FirstStop project was launched by the Housing Minister who had a successful visit to York.

As a result of questions raised by Members the Cabinet Member stated that:

- the Housing waiting list process had changed and officers now completed an annual review of applications.
- officers worked with outside bodies to locate some rent arrears.
- debt could be written off for tenants who became untraceable or deceased.
- officers would consider eradicating debt that was under £5,000 and anything over this would have to be approved by the Cabinet Member.
- the increase in Discretionary Housing Payments was a challenge but officers were advising anyone who came forward for debt or benefit advice.
- almost all affected households had been contacted and offered support and guidance on 'bedroom tax'.
- an Accredited Lodger Scheme was being devised to allow tenants, if agreed by CYC, to sub let a spare room with confidence.
- module builds were being considered as a way forward.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for attending the meeting and for her detailed report.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee informed on areas within its portfolio.

#### **34. 2nd Quarter Finance Monitor Report 2013/14**

Members received a report which provided details of the 2013/14 forecast outturn position for both finance and performance in City & Environmental Services and Housing Services.

Some members queried the continued shortfall in respect of car parking and officers confirmed that the budget set was inaccurate so a standing shortfall would be recorded until the end of the municipal year.

Members were pleased to see that new businesses within the City had increased and that city centre footfall had improved.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the scrutiny committee of the latest finance and performance position.

**35. Implementation Update on Previously Completed Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review**

Members received a report which provided them with their first update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previously completed Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review which were agreed by Cabinet in May 2013.

It was agreed to defer this item to allow the report author to attend the next meeting to answer the Committees questions.

Resolved: That the report be deferred until the next meeting due to take place on 28 January 2014.

Reason: To allow the Committee to raise any questions to the report author to progress this scrutiny review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

**36. Construction Skills Scrutiny Review - Update Report**

Members received a report which updated them on the work of the Construction Skills Scrutiny Review Task Group.

A member of the Task Group confirmed they were starting to investigate ways of increasing the supply of local people with building and construction skills by meeting the Property Forum of York's Chamber of Commerce and other contacts to investigate how local firms and organisations within the supply chain currently source new staff and apprentices.

They would also be sourcing information from representatives from training providers such as York College, Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and Job Centre Plus to map existing capacity and potential gaps and identify possible obstacles in the recruitment process.

The Chair thanked the Task Group and officers for the work done on this so far and welcomed the recommendations that would be brought forward to the Committee in January 2014.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To progress this scrutiny review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

### **37. Update on Newgate Market**

Members received a report which updated them on the progress on the refurbishment of Newgate Market.

Although the initial review took place almost three years ago officers were starting to move the process forward and confirmed that an architect had been appointed who was already working with traders on the designs.

The Committee's comments were noted and officers agreed:

- to engage students to bring in new ideas.
- that investigating markets in Europe would help to produce a good end product.
- the design needed to function well as a market, bring in the historic context that it resides in and have the 'wow' factor to create an ambiance to encourage visitors to stay longer.

In answer to Members questions it was confirmed that:

- due to the Tour De France the refurbishment would start in winter 2014.
- the market would be relocated in Parliament Street whilst the refurbishment was taking place and could possibly affect some of the specialist markets that use this area.
- the whole project and designs would be driven by the traders.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: In order to keep Members up to date the progress of the refurbishment.

### 38. **Work Plan**

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the municipal year 2013/14.

It was agreed to

- move implementation update on previously completed Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review to 28 January 2014.
- move the six monthly update report on Major Transport Initiatives and six monthly update report on Major Developments within the City of York Council to 25 March 2014.
- receive an update on the closure of Lendal Bridge Trial on 28 January 2014.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved to reflect the above changes.

Reason: To progress the work of the Committee.

Cllr Semlyen, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.20 pm].