
Meeting	Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	11 March 2015
Present	Councillors Waller (Chair), Healey (Vice-Chair), Barnes, Burton, Scott, D'Agorne (apart from Minute Items 50,51,56-60) and Riches (apart from Minute Items 50,51,56-60) (Substitute for Councillor Semlyen)
Apologies	Councillor Semlyen

50. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have had in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Barnes declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8 (Six Month Update on Major Developments in York) as he was employed by the main sponsor of York City Football Club who would be one of the occupants of the Community Stadium. He clarified that if there was any discussion that related to this he would excuse himself from the room.

Councillor Waller declared a personal interest in the same item as a governor of York High School which manages Energise. Energise is tied in with the Community Stadium contract. He was also the unpaid Chair of Energise.

No other interests were declared.

51. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 28 January 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

52. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn made a number of comments in relation to the remit of the committee and to specific items on the agenda.

Regarding Agenda Item 4 (Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development) she asked a series of questions about the new economic strategy. She requested that it be made public how the strategy would be reenergised, who would be consulted and that the performance of the current strategy in process be analysed. She added that when the last economic strategy was written it only appeared as an appendix to a scrutiny report many years after it had been written.

She commended the display of the major projects set out in Agenda Item 8.

Finally she made a comment about recent Cabinet Member Decisions that had been taken on Service Level Agreements and questioned how these could be monitored properly without figures.

53. Attendance and Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development attended the meeting and presented a written report.

Questions from Members to the Cabinet Member related to;

- The reasons for the drop in wages amongst various groups of employees.
- Which of his priorities had been tackled and which needed to continue.
- The lack of a strategic and practical 'front door' service offered by the Council for business start ups in York.
- The Service Level Agreement for Make It York.

The Cabinet Member responded that the drop in wages varied between different groups.

As to the reasons why he felt that this was he pointed to a national trend of two thirds of newly created jobs being paid below the living wage. He reported that unemployment levels had dropped over the past year and that a recent report had showed an increase in private sector jobs in the city.

Some Members questioned if this was because lower paid jobs had been added to the figures and stated that there was a need to look at the difference between the median and average wage. Officers stated that they would provide a sectoral breakdown of information on wages for Members.

In regards to his priorities, the Cabinet Member felt the most proud of York being the first city in Yorkshire to adopt the living wage. However, he felt that issues over flexible low grade office space, congestion problems and a strategic front door for business start ups would be issues that a new administration would have to deal with in the new municipal year.

On the 'front door' service offered by the Council for business start ups, some Members expressed concerns that businesses had previously said that the Council had been too large to navigate. Members felt unsure that Make It York would immediately pick this up and felt the practical issues related to taking on additional staff and extra space, were sometimes better done in house and it was unclear as to who Make It York would contact within the Council if they were unsure which department they needed to contact.

Members asked if there would be any clearly accessible measurable outcomes for the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Make It York. It was reported that the SLA was still in development and it was suggested that if Members wished to view the SLA and comment on it before the company came into existence on 1 April, then an additional meeting could be arranged. Officers confirmed that from 1 April, transferred staff would be funded to work at Make It York.

In regards to points raised under Public Participation, performance reports received by the Committee would include those from Make It York and Members would be able to scrutinise specific items. Members could also choose to invite certain individuals from Make It York to attend ECDOSC to answer questions.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for his report and attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the Cabinet Member be thanked for his report and that it be noted.

Reason: In order to keep the Committee informed of the Cabinet Member's priorities.

54. Attendance of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism to present update on Shambles Market and Tour de France

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism attended the meeting in order to present an update on the Shambles Market and the Tour de France.

Shambles Market

Questions, comments and requests from Members to the Cabinet Member included;

- Whether moving the Farmers Market from Parliament Street into the Shambles Market would see an increase in profit or not.
- Would special events still take place in Parliament Street?
- Had consultation taken place with stallholders, had it been recorded, and where was it recorded?
- More financial information on the income and outcomes for the Parliament and Shambles Markets.

In response the Cabinet Member stated moving the Farmers Market from Parliament Street and merging the Shambles Market would allow for the empty stalls there to be used. She felt confident that it would work and it would also free up space in Parliament Street for use by other events. Officers stated that specialist markets did not make a large amount of money and that the refurbishment measures would increase the occupancy rate of the Shambles Market.

The Cabinet Member informed Members that there would still be Christmas Festivals taking place within the city centre but responsibility for this would no longer be in the hands of the Council, but Make it York.

Consultation had taken place with traders and had been recorded in Cabinet papers. It was noted that the architects involved had also carried out their own consultation. Officers offered to provide a summary of this if Members wished.

The Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods informed the Committee about how the finances for the markets would be monitored through the Make it York Business Plan. Members were told that outcome data would be shared with the Committee but that if they wished to receive financial data that then they could request this.

Tour de France

The Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods informed the Committee that there had been 8.3 million visitors to York over the weekend of the Grand Départ during which 200,000 watched it in York and 92% of residents felt that its presence had been a good thing.

Some Members were concerned that the economic deficits had not been examined, such as the effect that the race had on city traders whilst the stage took place.

In response, Members were told that although there had been a drop in visitors at the National Railway Museum during the stage, numbers in the build up to the race rose and visitor numbers from abroad also increased.

Discussion took place around what had gone well and what had not gone well in regards to the Tour's visit to the city. It was felt that the stewarding and community engagement worked well. In the latter case this had been funded by local traders not by the Council.

In contrast, the Grand Départy and the camping had not gone well. The Director admitted that the decision to run the Grand Départy was made too late and suffered from bad marketing and bad weather.

It was reported that the costs for holding the Tour de Yorkshire had decreased from £750,000 to £250,000 as Officers now knew what the infrastructure costs would be (such as how many stewards would be needed).

The Chair questioned the comparable costs for Leeds and for York hosting a stage of the Tour de Yorkshire and requested further financial information from Officers in respect of this.

The Committee thanked Council staff for their hard work during the Grand Départ, they also thanked the Cabinet Member for her attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the Cabinet Member be thanked for their report and attendance.

Reason: So that the Committee are kept updated of the Cabinet Member's priorities.

55. Online Business/E-Commerce Scrutiny Review Draft Final Report

Members considered the draft final report of the Online Business/E-Commerce Scrutiny Review.

Councillor Cuthbertson, the Chair of the Online Business/E-Commerce Scrutiny Review presented the report. In reference to the previous discussion, he stated that some of the recommendations were put forward to the Economic Development Unit who were transferring from the Council across to Make it York. Therefore the Make it York Business Plan could affect the viability of the recommendations.

It was requested that the Cabinet include the review's recommendations in the Make it York's Service Level Agreement.

Resolved: (i) That the draft recommendations be endorsed as outlined in the report and;

(ii) The recommendations be amended to include a request that Cabinet include the review's recommendations in the Make it York Service Level Agreement.

Reason: To conclude the work on this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols thereby enabling the final report to be presented to Cabinet.

56. 2014/15 Finance Monitor 3 Report

Members considered a report which provided them with details of the 2014/15 forecast outturn position for both finance and performance in City & Environmental Services.

Officers highlighted that planning income had started badly but had picked up well, particularly amongst medium sized to major applications. All parking tariffs would be reverting to their previous levels from 1 April.

Members queried the following;

- How was the decision made to end free parking?
- The current situation in respect of repayment of Coppergate fines.

Officers responded that when free parking was introduced an end date was given as this was only a trial and therefore this could be reviewed. In respect of the Coppergate situation, a decision was awaited from the Traffic Adjudicator.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

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

57. Six Month Update on Major Developments in York

Members considered a report which provided them with an overview and updated in relation to current ongoing major development projects in York.

In response to a query about Southern Gateway, Officers explained that this was the Castle Piccadilly area and they gave a short background to development in the area. They informed Members about an all Member briefing that would be taking place regarding development in the area on 26 March and invited them to attend. It was noted that suggestions that had been put forward for use of the site had been for mixed residential and heritage usage.

Reference was made to the special planning meeting to consider the Community Stadium on 27 March 2015. Officers stated that they would circulate details about this to Members.

Resolved: (i) That the restructuring of the major projects be noted.

(ii) That the ongoing work being undertaken in order to deliver the various initiatives and developments as a matter of priority for the Council be acknowledged.

Reason: To provide the Committee with a regular update on developments in the city.

58. Further Update on Implementation of recommendations from the previously completed External Funding Scrutiny Review

Members considered a report which provided them with a further update on the implementation of recommendations arising from the previously completed External Funding Scrutiny Review.

Questions from Members to Officers related to York's attendance at the MIPIM global property fair, whether it was felt to be value for money and how long it was felt that they needed to attend.

Officers felt that attendance at the event came from the necessity to have conversations with investors over long periods of time. It was difficult to decide how long York needed to attend.

Members asked how much it cost the Council to attend the MIPIM conference and asked for Officers to circulate this information. They also suggested that an update to the recommendations be brought to the Committee in six months time along with information from the Make It York Business Plan.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted and the recommendations that have been fully implemented be signed off as complete.

(ii) That the recommendations be transferred to be used as part of the Make It York Business Plan.

Reason: To raise awareness of those recommendations which are still to be fully implemented.

59. York Economic Dashboard

Members received a report which provided them with a copy of York's latest Create Jobs and Grow the Economy Dashboard.

Officers reported that following a suggestion from Councillor D'Agorne, at the last meeting, they had added in a suggested indicator on the number of employers who paid the living wage in the city.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep Members informed about changes to the Dashboard.

60. Work Plan 2015 and Draft Work Plan 2015/16

Members considered the Committee's work plan for the rest of the municipal year and the draft work plan for 2015/16.

Discussion took place over an additional meeting to consider the commissioning arrangements for Make It York.

It was suggested that an additional meeting be held. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Following further discussion it was;

Resolved: That the work plan be noted and the following amendment be made;

- An additional meeting be scheduled for Friday 27 March 2015 to discuss commissioning arrangements for Make It York.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has a planned programme of work in place.

Councillor A Waller, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 8.38 pm].