
**WITHOUT WALLS LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
YORK ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP**

Minutes

Meeting: Thursday 18th September 2014, 15:00-16:45

At: Network Rail Workforce Development Centre

PRESENT:

Stirling Kimkeran – Chair, York Economic Partnership

Tim Hedley-Jones – East Coast

Stephen Hind – Network Rail

Alison Birkinshaw – York College

Colin Mellors – University of York

David Cox – Federation of Small Business

Susie Cawood – Chamber of Commerce

Peter Clinker – Nestle

Cllr Chris Steward

Cllr James Alexander

Cllr Keith Aspden

IN ATTENDANCE:

Katie Stewart – CYC

Charles Storr – CYC

Phil Witcherley – CYC

Mark Alty – CYC

Katie Peeke-Vout – CYC

Sharon Brown - CYC

APOLOGIES: Sarah Tanburn, Angela Darlington, Jane Gibson,
Kersten England, Keven Parker, Emma Smailes,
Andrew Follington, Phil Verster

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE:

1. Welcome and Apologies

Stirling Kimkeran (SK) passed along apologies from Roger Marsh as he was unable to attend the meeting. His visit has been rescheduled for the December meeting, and it was discussed and agreed that Barry Dodd should also be invited to attend. A potential focus for their visit could be on each of the LEPs skills agendas. Cllr Alexander also offered to provide a skills update for the Leeds City Region as he sits on the skills board.

Action (PW): Invite/Confirm Roger Marsh and Barry Dodd for December meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising– 19th June 2014

Minutes were circulated with the agenda and were agreed by the board.

MAJOR STRATEGIC DISCUSSIONS:

3. Update on York's Economy

Phil Witcherley presented a report on York's economy and focused on three highlights and three issues:

1. Record fall in Jobseeker Numbers
 2. Record footfall
 3. Service Sector Export Growth
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1. A hollowing out of intermediate jobs
 2. A lack of grade A business accommodation
 3. Productivity over the past 10/15 years declined

Discussions:

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- Nestle have committed to apply the living wage over a number of years to direct workforce and also sub-contracted workforce. They have a number of youth employment initiatives which they would highly recommend to other companies as being a good initiative for both the individual and the company.
- There is office space for new small businesses in the city, but there is no room for growth. Also noted that on the back of the local plan and upcoming superfast broadband offer, York needs to make the most of having a significant change and improvement, and make York's offer well known.
- Two urgent issues that need to be acknowledged are the over reliance on public sector jobs in York, critical at a time when there are cuts, and also mental health is impacting people of all ages, impacting productivity.
- Businesses are struggling to find suitably qualified and capable workforce in York.

A report is to be produced alongside the local plan to outline 'what if' scenarios for office space for developers to spark interest.

Equalities

Sharon Brown reported on the equalities issues in the city. It was noted that there is not enough focus on getting people off benefits. Mental health services capacity is not enough and more needs to be done to tackle problems before offering job opportunities.

- **Question raised:** Figures focused on 50+ age group having a disproportionately high number of people on out of work benefits, however they don't appear to be a group of particular interest.

4. YEP Businesses as Champions for attracting inward investment + inspiring talent

Need a list of influential individuals in York to act as ambassadors for inward investment, promoting the city and shaping skills development and progression. Go beyond just current York Businesses but also

graduates from York schools and universities who may have an interest in helping York to be prosperous.

Action (KS): Share current list of inward investment targets for York with YEP businesses to identify any relationships that could be taken advantage of to highlight the York offer.

Any contacts around the table going to or know of people going to MIPIM UK 2014 or MIPIM 2015 in Cannes – Contact Katie Stewart to create a York Contingent at the event.

Living Wage week: (2nd-8th Nov) Call to companies to get involved to be advocates for paying the living wage.

5. Delivering a high quality inspirational Business Conference for York

Instead of a business week, there will be a Business Conference with one day of events. The Conference is being held at City Screen. However, if anyone is hosting any other similar events can advertise them on the 'York Means Business' website as part of the Global Entrepreneurs Week.

- Plea was made for sponsors for the event with two categories of sponsorship benefits.

- **Question rose as to what the money was needed for:** Venue, lighting and sound, coffee and lunch etc.

- **Suggestion:** There should be a focus on showcasing York products and services. This would be beneficial in terms of marketing York businesses and also reduced costs of provision. An example of this suggested by TH-J suggesting looking into special rail tickets for those needing rail transport to the event.

- **Suggestion:** Approach the LEPs for sponsorship and also Sky and Talk Talk as they both have interest in the City.

- **Suggestion around event:** To keep attendees engaged in the event, use voting buttons throughout the panel and Q&A as people will want to express opinions.
- **Issue:** To attract media attention there needs to be an 'angle' or an 'attraction' not just a generic invite.

6. Lift Pitch updates from taskgroups (Productivity, Business Engagement and City Team)

- Productivity:** Handout passed around on "Tackling Lower Productivity in York: Action Plan". To be brought back at the next meeting for discussion. Of particular interest is Action 4, around creating a Tourism & Hospitality Centre of Excellence. The key issue is funding, between £0.5m and £1m needed.
Suggestion: Skills capital funding through the LEPs.
- Business Engagement Group:** It was confirmed that Emma Smalles has been appointed the new chair of the group.
- City Team:** Main area of interest is the Business Improvement District. Business survey has been sent out to 800 businesses in the proposed area, so far only 54 responses, so please respond!

7. Refreshing York's Economic Strategy: An introduction

The current economic strategy is due to be completed in 2015, so need to start thinking about the next economic strategy to be produced summer 2015.

The focus of the new strategy is to bring together and use the resource in the city. Within this, it is also important to join up current and future strategies to ensure all groups, boards and departments are focused on achieving the same aims. The Economic strategy will become the parent strategy and other strategies will link off this, for example the skills strategy and the NewCo strategy.

Important to note strategy needs to have clear measures that can be tracked.

8. Update on key sites and projects in the city and NewCo.

NewCo: Paper going to Cabinet on the 7th October to become legal entity. Executive director will be appointed around Nov-Dec time, and officially launched January 2015.

The split of focus will be sales and business support in NewCo and physical development, including infrastructure and site development will be the economic development team in the council.

<p>Action (KS): Distribute the advertisement for the role of executive director of NewCo for board to distribute through their networks.</p>

Agenda Item for next meeting: Board to take decision for NewCo to be represented at the board.

Key Sites: Identified need for commercial space, both large grade 'A' and also smaller technical workshop space.

- a. **York Central:** Working with Network Rail to become catalyst for York Central site. Viability report shows evidence is strong for both residential and office space. Need to attract 'anchor tenant'.
- b. **Guildhall:** Didn't get original funding but being approached by both LEPs for potential funding.

To maximise the use of already existing accommodation it is essential to tailor for the diverse need and work with individuals to find suitable solutions. Often acting as facilitator to join up a number of individual or two person businesses is the most successful and suitable response.

9. Any other business

Date of the next meeting to be rearranged as it is too close to Christmas. Currently the 18th December 4-6pm.

Action 1: (PW): Invite/Confirm Roger Marsh and Barry Dodd for December meeting

Action 2: (KS): Share current list of inward investment targets for York with YEP businesses to identify any relationships that could be taken advantage of to highlight the York offer

Action 4: (KS) Distribute the advertisement for the role of executive director of NewCo for board to distribute through their networks

Agenda Item for next meeting: Board to take decision for NewCo to be represented at the board.