



WITHOUT WALLS PARTNERSHIP Minutes

DATE 8 Nov 2011

VENUE Marriott Room, York Explore, Library Square

PRESENT Board Members:

Cllr. James Alexander – City of York Council
Sir Ron Cooke - Chair
Kersten England, Chief Executive, CYC
Jill Gibson, External Relations Manager – Jobcentre Plus
Cllr. Ian Gillies – City of York Council
Angela Harrison, Chief Exec. – York Council for Vol. Service
Peter Kay – Chair, Economic Development Partnership
Fred Ring – York Racial Equality Network
Cllr Carol Runciman – City of York Council
Rita Sanderson – Inclusive York Forum Representative
Mike Slater, Chair York Environment Partnership
Aubrey Smith, Safer Neighbourhood Commander - NYP
Chief Superintendent Colin Taylor - North Yorks. Police
Asst. Chief Andy Trowsdale – North York. Fire Service
Dianne Willcocks – Chair, York@Large
Gary Williamson – Chief Executive, LYNYYCC

In attendance:

Hannah Brian – Yorkshire Forward

Secretariat:

Stewart Halliday – Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Comms
Denise Simms, Strategy, Partnerships & Planning Officer

APOLOGIES:

Jayne Brown, Chief Executive – NHS North Yorkshire and York
Brian Cantor, Vice Chancellor - University of York
Pete Dwyer – Director, Learning, Culture and Children
Nigel Hutchinson- Chief Fire Officer, North Yorks Fire Service
Grahame Maxwell - Chief Constable - North Yorks. Police
Colin Mellors, University of York & Higher York
Sue Metcalfe – Chair, YorOK
Lisa Winward - Safer Neighbourhood Commander

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jayne Brown, Brian Cantor, Pete Dwyer, Nigel Hutchinson, Grahame Maxwell, Colin Mellors, Sue Metcalfe and Lisa Winward. Aubrey Smith was welcomed to his first meeting. He was acting up as Safer Neighbourhood's Commander in Lisa Winward's absence.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2011 were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

The Chair started the meeting by recognising what was going well and referring to some of the significant achievements of the past year. A summary of awards and successes produced by Visit York would be circulated with the minutes.

Action – Secretariat to circulate summary of awards.

LDF Core Strategy – Consultation on the LDF Core Strategy Submission had closed on 7th November. In order to ensure that the Partnership had registered a view before the closing date, a letter was circulated to Partners requesting endorsement. No Partners had objected to the content of the letter and many had supported it, therefore it had been submitted.

Reinvigorate York – Ron Cooke explained that the scheme included a policy focus on enhancing the public realm in the city centre and roads around it. Detailed actions would need to be approved and adopted by the CYC cabinet. The inner city needed particular attention, given the 7 million visitors that come to York. Therefore this project was all about economic development and not about preserving the past. York was a desirable location but it was in competition with others and they were investing heavily, e.g. Liverpool. In addition, Bruges and other World Heritage Sites had got a grip on the quality of their public realm and vitality in retail, was fierce.

There were 3 strands to the project:

- Circulation in the inner city
- Restoration / enhancement
- Enhancement of retail and cultural business

These had been selected based on need identified through the following strategic documents:

- City centre movement & accessibility framework
- Inner city conservation area appraisal (Baxters)
- City Centre area action plan
- The Footstreets Review

The project brings together a Refurbishment / Restoration group, which has two tasks:

- To produce a design manual;
- To have oversight of proposed developments.

Since Reinvigorate York involved such a large amount of work and attention, it had been decided that Sir Ron would hand over Chairing responsibilities for the WOW Partnership to Cllr Alexander for the time being.

Comments from Partners regarding the scheme included:

- One small example of improvement was that planning and highways officers had got together with pavers and re-laid paving at Fishergate Postern and got rid of signs which weren't needed. The area outside the tourist information office had also been improved. Many of these small schemes multiplied up would make a big difference.
- Partners would be interested in getting a sense of the Reinvigorate Framework in a more formal way.
- The Theatre Royal was due to submit a bid to the Arts Council on 6th December. This would be for a capital scheme to improve the entrance. Working together through initiatives like Reinvigorate York may enable leverage.
- A paper on Reinvigorate York would be available Dec 2011 from the Council's decision making online database.
- Partners that were working to submit funding bids were invited to contact Stewart Halliday for support in gathering evidence to back up their bids.

3 STRATEGY FOR YORK AND CITY ACTION PLAN

Stewart Halliday explained that through this process we aimed to:

- Refresh the strategy & priorities
- Develop city plan key priorities, and
- Particularly identifying those issues that required partnership work to achieve.

At the last meeting Partners had discussed a draft plan which centred around three themes – Economy / sustainability / community. The Secretariat had issued a further version of the plan following the meeting and Partners had subsequently fed back their views on this. Amendments to the document had been highlighted and there were several areas that required their specific attention. Partners were asked if they were comfortable that:

- 1) The Vision had not been replaced by the Environment Partnership's as it had been developed on a citywide basis through the Festival of Ideas and was still thought relevant.
- 2) Economy & employment growth that reduced environmental impact was something to aspire to, but too big a commitment to include as guiding principle in this version.
- 3) Cultural vibrancy was already well reflected in the text and therefore need not be included as a guiding principle
- 4) The Ecosystem Services Approach would be addressed through the LDF and Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 5) The Low Emission Strategy was already a council priority and should not be duplicated through this process

Comments from Partners included:

- The word must was causing difficulty in the suggestion from the Environment Partnership that “all economic and employment growth must reduce their environmental impacts”. This could be replaced by to “mitigate” or “aspire” as a compromise;
- The Economic Partnership were happy with the suggestion not to incorporate the further changes;
- The idea of introducing guiding principles were that they would support all aspects of our work;
- There was already sufficient wording in the draft to support the suggestions made or they were already covered as a Council priority;
- The Low Emission Strategy would be adopted but to deliver it would need significant partnership working to deliver it;
- The text could be made clearer regarding emissions in the current text in priority 2;
- There was a commitment to improve congestion and balance with economic growth and also to look at trans-shipment;
- The inclusion of cultural vibrancy in the diagram would be a visual reminder of economic and social contribution of culture;
- The chart would need to change as a result of drafting amendments;
- More energy now needed to be put into action planning, the plan should be adopted and printed and the Secretariat would work with partnerships to develop a more detailed action plan;

- Previous (LAA) targets were given to us, the benefit of these was that they were locally determined;
- Rather than specifically referencing the city's growing BME population we should simply reference York's changing demographic;
- The plan should refer to social enterprises not Community Interest Companies;
- The document would benefit from improved investment text.

Action – The Secretariat would complete the plan and incorporate views expressed in the meeting where appropriate.

4 WITHOUT WALLS PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE - OPTIONS

Hannah Brian explained that WOW needed to be restructured in order to meet the priority actions that had been agreed. The Secretariat was still considering how to take this forward and the paper presented set out her initial thoughts.

The suggestions were designed to incorporate:

- 1) Advocacy
- 2) The Public Sector Managers group that was not currently included in the WOW Structure, but which carried out a role of coordination / sharing etc.
- 3) Three groups that would be focused on delivery of the priority themes.

This proposal was designed to bring people together from different Partnerships, which would be a different way of working.

Comments from Partners regarding the proposals included:

- The delivery partnerships need to know very clearly where they feed in to the process;
- Partners could sign up to the principle of 3 focused themes – then the Secretariat could flesh out the paper and show how others feed in;
- Partners needed clarity about how their time would be used to maximum influence;
- There was a great deal of support for the partnership, but this should be set against the need for action and prioritisation;
- Links between WOW and the political process was weak;
- If the main driver for structural change was to save money and be more effective, then the proposal didn't give a sense that this would

be achieved. Currently many people were committed to their particular boards – the restructure shouldn't lose that commitment;

- Three priorities and three boards were too simplistic. It was wrong to throw out the existing structures;
- The Public Managers Board role was to oversee how the City functioned on a daily basis, not to oversee the work of the delivery partnerships, therefore this should be amended in the roles;
- There needed to be a body within the structure that would oversee delivery and move things forward;
- In the Ideal world we would have fewer groups, perhaps this meeting and task and finish groups
- The Environment Partnership's key work was done in sub groups. E.g. Built environment and transport. This was particularly important when covering such broad themes, such as the suggested Promoting Growth theme in the city plan. Task & finish groups would be preferable to shoe horning everyone into 3 silos;
- Take a project management approach and let the Board feed into the strategic debates that are already taking place;
- We need to think about what we would deliver in the first year of the City Plan and see how that activity would fit with existing structures;
- Private sector members of YEP would warn against public sectorising the partnership – it would turn them off. They needed to be listened to or they wouldn't waste their time;
- Many business groups were not integrated into the current structure;
- The Business forum structure was not working and needed to engage better with the Economic Partnership;
- The report should be withdrawn and reworked for the next meeting, following further discussion;
- There was a lot of goodwill from the people who sat on boards and if structures were unpicked it might send the message that the views of the voluntary and private sectors were not welcome;
- It should not be assumed that the Economic Partnership could not be supported by others that aren't the Council – e.g. The Chamber could contribute secretariat support;
- The main focus of the plan was on economic growth, however, the city also wanted to be a leading environmental city;
- Look at our recent successes e.g. City in Bloom and UNESCO Creative City Bid and examine how we might recreate that success through the new structure;
- Future arrangements should look to share the knowledge of the partnership's business wider e.g. via social media, sharing agenda, minutes etc.

Action – The paper was withdrawn and the Secretariat were tasked with producing further proposals for discussion at the next meeting.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

York Archaeological Forum – Heritage Crime Initiative – YAF had submitted a letter to the Chair requesting that Without Walls support their Heritage Crime Initiative, which aimed to reduce crime against heritage. Partners agreed that they would support this project.

York 800 – Dianne Willcocks reported that there would be a year long celebration leading up to Charter Day, which would be a day of formality and fun, primarily for York Residents. York@Large would bring a paper to the next meeting to provide more detail regarding the events and how the Partnership could contribute.

Partners thanked Ron for his excellent chairing of the Partnership over the last five years.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:30pm.

Date of Next Meeting – 8 February 2012