

York Access Forum (YAF)
28th August 2024, 10:30–13:00
Thornton Room, West Offices and on Teams
Notes

Attendees

Name	Organisation (if applicable)
Dave Smith (DS)	Access Officer, (CYC)
Christine Kyte (CK)	Support Worker (CYC) – note taker
Diane Roworth (DR)	Chair Independent
Anne Norton (AN) [Online]	York Disability Rights Forum
Dionne Grover-Jacques (DG) [Online]	York ME Community
Belle Whitely (BW) [Online]	Sight Loss Council
Janet Dale (JD)	Shop Mobility York
Shan Braund (SB)	Support Worker to JD
Marilyn Crawshaw (MC)	York Human Rights City Network
David Carr (DC) from 12.20pm	York Carers Action Group
Chris Steward (CS) [online]	Councillor
Lou Cook (LC)	Interim Democratic Services Mgr
Harry Nathan (HN)	Election Officer
Lindsey Tomlinson (LT) [online]	Head of Democratic Governance
Ben Jewitt (BJ) [online]	Democracy Officer
Andy Vose (AV) [online]	Transport Policy Manager
David Mercer (DM)	Highway Engineer + Design Manager

No.	Item
1	Welcome and introductions
	<p>DR Welcomed all and asked them to introduce themselves.</p> <p>DS General housekeeping re room and etiquette for hybrid meeting re questions, use of mic etc.</p>
2	YAF updates. York Station Gateway (YSG)
	<p>DS Brendan Murphy will host an online workshop on 8TH October to summarise updates to YSG. Invites will go to all existing stakeholders and anyone else who wants to attend. Please forward to interested parties. Map presented at workshop 3 is still accurate.</p> <p>Most of the suggestions made at previous workshops will be implemented. Remaining issue is colour of cycle lane tarmac which will be green for consistency with other York cycle lanes.</p> <p>Brendan is showing Esther Priestley of the Design and Conservation Team the red stone for controlled crossings today.</p> <p>Process now in place for advance notice of road closures.</p> <p>First countdown crossing will be trialled at the super crossing in front of the station.</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>DS will circulate SISK update newsletters to YAF members.</p>
3	Survey re YAF meeting times and content.
	<p>DS About 12 responses received so far. Closing date is end of September.</p> <p>DR encouraged all to complete survey.</p>
4	Community Transport Cllr Chris Steward
	<p>CS said he understood that all present had seen report completed by Task + Finish group on community transport including Dial a Ride. Cllrs Fenton, Burton and Steward formed a task group following the collapse of Dial a Ride in Dec 2023.</p> <p>CS outlined the remit, information gathering process, and recommendations of the report. He explained that the process included speaking to a lot of people, (bus operator, other councillors, NHS, CYC staff previously involved in Dial a Ride),</p>

and articles in the York Press. Cllr Fenton spoke directly to people who used Dial a Ride.

CS In short York doesn't do Community Transport well. Neighbouring authorities do better. Executive has approved the report, now waiting to see how quickly they commission a replacement and what that will look like.

DR No real consultation with disabled people

CS Via the press the group encouraged people to get in touch. This was the main thing without going to official bodies. He didn't have full details of everyone that was contacted. As Cllr Burton is disabled she is involved with various organisations so the group spoke to them wherever possible.

DS expressed disappointment that YAF only found out about the group's work when the report was circulated. Cllr Burton's perspective is only that of one disabled person. York Older Person's Assembly and Age Friendly York are 2 of the community groups YAF networks with. They were consulted about this work, but disabled groups were not. This means a group which are significant users of community transport were not part of this process. We now need to understand how we can be involved in the process going forward.

CS One of the recommendations was expanding the service. Role of community transport is not about isolated communities. It is about older people, and older as well as disabled people. These were the core groups we were looking at, he was sorry that the group didn't feel you were contacted. Cllr Fenton contacted the organisations, He advised he wasn't aware of this forum and is happy to engage in the future. He did state that he felt that the T&F had spoken to disabled people although acknowledged they could have spoken to more.

CS went on to say that Cllr Jane Burton was speaking in her capacity and would quote various organisations she was involved with. The T&F spoke to the MS forum and older people's assembly. Very good coverage in York Press.

MC The list in the report suggests that the T+F have actively sought contact from a range of groups but not disabled groups and not the community transport group in York which is an active group and convened by Carl Wain. Concern that **CS** didn't know about YAF so maybe need to alert all councillors again about it. Also asked what will happen following the report?

CS Expressed that he had not known about the YAF in any of his roles, (this task group, ward councillor) He is very happy to work with YAF via calls or email. The T+F are not experts on access. He went on to describe how meetings were set up and the lack of shared knowledge between the groups which were consulted.

DR Requests details of Council's next actions re community transport following the report.

CS Executive have accepted the report. There is budget allocated for the current and future years for community transport. Kate Ravilious, member for transport will determine how things are taken forward. The group want to work with partners that can make this work and go out to consultation. It will not be rushed.

DS Reiterates need for councillors to be aware of YAF and the desire of YAF to work with the Council on developments of any community transport scheme. The task group has done valuable work, but it is older people oriented and there is no evidence of engagement with disabled people. YAF represents thousands of disabled people Disappointed with lack of commitment to the Social Model of Disability in practice. Concerned that Carl Wain didn't contact YAF. As Access Officer it is **DS'** role to identify gaps in awareness of councillors and this project was on his job plan. Also, there is a lot of existing data collected from consultations within the local transport plan earlier this year by MIMA. This should be considered before going out to consultation.

AN Were there examples of good practice that you picked up whilst doing this work? E.g. a specific way of interacting with the community. And will there be an interim service whilst the new service is being set up?

CS York Dial a Ride has been too focussed on getting people to the city centre. In the future community transport needs to do more than this. Aim is to get something up and running as soon as possible.

JD Was Shop Mobility involved? If Dial a Ride is reinstated it could liaise with Shop Mobility. They had permission to use the bus lane in Gillygate and Coppergate.

DR Disabled people and organisations can contribute to this process e.g. knowledge of pros and cons of previous systems. Therefore, the T+F welcome being involved in any future actions.

	<p>CS Recommends DS/YAF contacting Cllr Ravilious</p> <p>DS Suggests inviting her and Carl Wain to a future YAF meeting.</p>
5	<p>Access to Democracy</p>
	<p>DR 2 key areas to consider– being able to cast your vote, and access to Council meetings.</p> <p>LC Democracy services are committed to CYC meetings being inclusive and accessible to all and welcome your views on this. Re Council meetings -people can register to speak, join a webcast or submit written statements.</p> <p>DR When registering to speak a person can indicate access needs, but sometimes the chair of the meeting hasn't understood what this means or adapted the meeting arrangements suitably. Also is it possible to put together guidance for chairs on how to make meetings inclusive.? For example, in a meeting all the councillors may know each other but it is still important that they introduce themselves. Change in mindset needed.</p> <p>LC Currently the training programme for members which is accessed via an online portal is being reviewed. So we can strengthen the training that is offered with feedback from you. Written guidance for chairs should be able to be incorporated into that. Reading out written statements is down to the chair's discretion.</p> <p>DS Adhering to the principles of the Social Model of Disability means that if someone has provided a written statement as a reasonable adjustment because they can't speak/attend in public, the statement should be read out.</p> <p>LT We want to make meetings as accessible as possible. But rules re meetings are underpinned by the Public Participation Protocol which sits within the Constitution Act. We are undertaking a constitution review at the moment, and we will have to go through the relevant procedures to make meetings more accessible.</p> <p>DS It is important to identify where there is unintended indirect discrimination.</p> <p>MC CYC has committed to disability equality training for elected members and this needs to come first in terms of training.</p> <p>JD Asks about sign language at meetings.</p>

BJ CYC has a British Sign Language (BSL) video relay service which is clearly signposted on all agendas. This can also be advertised on the CYC website.

DS explains footplate is the accessibility and alternative languages statement at the end of Council documents. If a person who attends the meeting requires an interpreter. CYC has a list of interpreters who will provide BSL at meetings.

BW Raises issue on behalf of MySight York. A person couldn't follow the instructions about changes in how to register for a postal vote as the information wasn't in an accessible format. So they went to the Council to try and register for a proxy vote but weren't able to due to some regulations. This has been taken to the Council and My Sight would like an update on how voting information is being made accessible.

LT Due to the Elections Act there have been some changes in the way people apply for absent votes (previously called postal or proxy votes), There is now an additional identity check built into the absent vote application process. This must be done via government portal so a local element is taken away from CYC. However, we can do more to have more accessible formats on our website. We will work with the Access Team to do this. In relation to this particular issue for a disabled voter that has been raised, get in touch with us via electoral services generic email address or ring and arrange an appointment to pop in. It may also be worth that person contacting their MP.

DS During Mayoral elections May 2024 an access audit of all the polling stations was carried out. This information is now being shared with the Democratic team.

MC What about difficulties with inaccessible information that comes via the post?

LT If individuals let us know their access needs, we will do what we need to do to send the information in an accessible way. We can make a note on the system about this. The annual household canvas is about to start. This is an opportunity to work with **DS** and ensure our communications are as accessible as possible. Some things have to be sent by post according to statute. We will be doing a full polling place review before the next election and this will include a public consultation.

MC We could put something in our organisations' newsletters on how to notify the Council of access needs.

	<p>DS Can we set up a system whereby once a resident has informed CYC they have specific access requirements, all future communication from CYC uses their preferred format. i.e. their access needs are recorded centrally?</p> <p>HN We can talk to a software developer to see if this can be flagged up automatically.</p> <p>DR The option to download large print versions from the CYC website would be very helpful.</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>LC to send a summary of points to take forward to DS.</p>
6	Tactile Paving David Mercer and Andy Vose
	<p>AV Currently working on prioritising backlog of pedestrian crossing and dropped kerb requests.</p> <p>DR raises area of shared use at end of on Navigation Rd and Severus Rd (photos of the latter shown to the group). In both cases pedestrians or wheelchair users are directed into a cycle path.</p> <p>DS Similarly tactile paving should always be buff colour at uncontrolled crossings, but this is not being planned consistently in CYC projects. How do we stop these instances before they happen?</p> <p>DM Agrees that shared use area shown in photos is not good. This is a historical scheme which was incorrectly serviced. Maintenance need to open up discussions with transport to ensure that repairs etc are done correctly. Capital transport and highway maintenance schemes are funded separately and have different agendas.</p> <p>DS Raises a similar issue in front of Haxby surgery where a pavement had been retarmacked, but tactile paving had not been replaced.</p> <p>AV My team has asked for a list of schemes from highway maintenance on an annual basis to improve active travel. This should reduce the incidence of non-compliant infrastructure. Council policy is to automatically put in dropped kerbs when they are missing during resurfacing and reconstruction. Severus Road issues should have been picked up when the stage 3 safety audit was done to show there is conflict between movement of pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists.</p> <p>He requested that YAF send him information of sites where there are issues such as those raised today. Highways</p>

inspectors are looking at the state of the surface rather than compliance with current legislation.

DS Asks if the cycle lane on the corner of Severus Road will be removed.

AV There is probably an improvement that could be made so this area is more compliant, and thereby remove some of the conflicted space.

MC Requests a paragraph of information that can go out to member organisations advising them of how to contact CYC to report any footway issues affecting accessibility. Also asks **AV** how confident he feels about following up work that needs to be done, and preventing future signing off of unsuitable highway works?

AV This is down to the brief given to designers. These need to be more forthright instructing them to do design checks.

DM Long term aspiration is a new highway design guide as a template for all works on the highway. This would include colour of tactiles and cycle lanes so there is a consistent approach. This will be made available to external companies.

AV Ian Stokes of the Highway Development team confirmed that they started a review of the highway design guide but didn't have the resources to complete it so it will probably go out to consultants to do. It is a supplementary planning document (SPD).

DS There was supposed to be an accessibility supplementary planning document which has turned into a guide. The guide will refer to how the Council should consider accessibility in all the work it does. This is disappointing as it was going to be SPD. Highways have rejected it because they have the red book.

AN Raises concern about the width of the cycle lane on Severus Rd. Re tactile paving there is national guidance- red for controlled crossings and buff for uncontrolled crossings. Brass studs have been put at the top of Stonegate which can be a slip hazard.

DS National guidance just says a suitable colour for non-controlled crossings. It recommends buff. There was a clear commitment from Cllr Lomas that that we would work with planning, highways and development teams to ensure that accessibility is considered from the very beginning.

	Actions DM to update DS about new highway guide. YAF to inform AV about access issues on highways and footways.
7	Next Meeting Tuesday 5th November 10.30am -1pm

