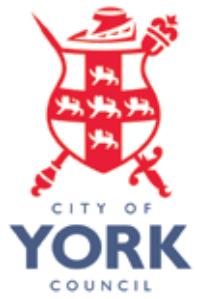


Excellent and sustainable services accessible to all



# Delivering for the People of York

The Council Plan 2011-2015





# Contents

# Contents



■ Foreword	4
■ Introduction	5
■ Understanding the plan	6
■ York today	8
■ Meeting the challenge	9
<b>Our priorities</b>	
■ Create jobs and grow the economy	11
■ Get York moving	14
■ Build strong communities	17
■ Protect vulnerable people	20
■ Protect the environment	23
■ Our core capabilities	26

# Foreword by Cllr James Alexander

I am delighted to introduce City of York Council's Plan for 2011 – 2015.

This plan sets out our programme for the next four years and the targets we are committing to meet in each of our key priority areas –

- Create jobs and grow the economy.
- Get York moving.
- Build strong communities.
- Protect vulnerable people.
- Protect the environment.

York, like all other Councils, is facing its greatest challenge for a generation. After years of growth and expansion across the public sector, York is exposed in shouldering its share of the reduction of the financial deficit.

However, we are better placed to respond to the financial challenge than many others – we're well managed and with an excellent track record in driving through transformation and change to deliver value for money services to local people.

I and my administration have a strong vision for the future of our city. We will use our resources, energy and assets to generate jobs, investment and growth. The local economy is my key priority and this plan sets out in detail how we will continue to lead the region in terms of economic growth. We will also seek to improve the prospects and opportunities for local people.

A key theme for me over the next four years is fairness. I want us to contribute towards developing an even fairer city where opportunities are available to all parts of the community. Because of this, I have established an independent Fairness Commission to help my administration identify the budget priorities for the city.

I am aware of the important role that staff play in delivering high quality services for our residents.

I want everyone to continue working together and with our partners to improve the quality of life in York and continue the journey towards being a truly great modern European city.

*I want us to contribute towards developing an even fairer city where opportunities are available to all parts of the community.*



Cllr James Alexander  
Labour Leader  
of the Council



# Introduction by Kersten England

Sometime in the 1960s, at the height of the NASA space programme, a TV crew was filming interviews with NASA employees. A journalist approached a janitor who was cleaning the corridors at NASA. When asked what his job was in the organisation the janitor is reported to have said: “That’s easy. I am helping to put a man on the moon”.

This story illustrates the fact that high performing organisations are associated with a strong shared sense of purpose and team spirit.

We, the people who work for the City of York Council, may not be helping to put a man on the moon. But every day, you and I, every one of us, make a difference in the lives of people in this city. We are a team working to deliver great services and to make this city the best to live in, work in or visit.

This plan spells out some important changes to the way we do business as well as to what we will be delivering. We know that we will all be involved in hard decisions about the future of the organisation – some of which will result in changes to the way we work.

To date we can point to many examples of strong individual team performances, but we have not yet harnessed the power of ‘Team York’.

This plan is a plan for us as a team – to focus our work on the things that will make the biggest difference to York over the next four years and to build a stronger sense of our belonging to one organisation.

Henry Ford said: “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” I want our customers to reap the rewards of Team York’s success.

*We are a team working to deliver great services and to make this city the best to live in, work in or visit.*

*Kersten England.*

Kersten England  
Chief Executive,  
City of York Council



# Understanding the plan

## Understanding what we need to do and how we will do it

The purpose of the Council Plan is to:

- Explain to staff what the Council's priorities are; the actions we plan to take to deliver them and the core capabilities that we need as an organisation, and also to develop in every member of staff
- Demonstrate to Members that we have a clear plan that will deliver the Council's priorities over the next 4 years

### What we need to do: our priorities

The plan sets out what the Council's five priorities are and describes our high level action plan for each. The priorities are closely

inter-connected and many of the actions contribute to the achievement of outcomes for more than one priority. It is important to understand this inter-relationship across all the activities in the Council Plan to gain a sense of the Council's overall purpose and direction. An illustration of some of the shared outcomes is included in the Shared Outcomes Matrix on the next page.

### How we will do it: our core capabilities

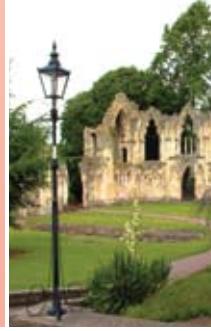
The core capabilities (see page 26) represent the essential under-pinning qualities that we need to develop in the way that the organisation operates and that will be guiding principles for all staff in how they approach their work.

## What we need to do and how we will do it

### Our five priorities



# Understanding the plan

<b>Our Priorities</b>	<b>Create jobs and grow the economy</b>	<b>Get York moving</b>	<b>Build strong communities</b>	<b>Protect vulnerable people</b>	<b>Protect the environment</b>
<b>Create jobs and grow the economy (see page 11)</b>		Tackling congestion and providing a modern transport system is good for business	Increase the role of the voluntary and community sector in service provision	Families will be supported to address financial inclusion and to take advantage of economic opportunities	Sourcing more goods and services locally will reduce CO2 emissions
<b>Get York moving (see page 14)</b>	Improvements to the regional and national rail network		Greater engagement of residents in problem solving will win hearts and minds and encourage less reliance on the car	Use of sustainable transport options can contribute to living a healthier lifestyle	Improvements to Park and Ride will make a saving of 2,000 tonnes of CO2 per annum
<b>Build strong communities (see page 17)</b>	Increase volunteering to develop community involvement and residents' skills	Development of neighbourhoods with all of the services they need will reduce the need for travel		Addressing housing need to ensure that vulnerable people have supply to meet their needs	Establishing a local community energy company will bring neighbourhoods together
<b>Protect vulnerable people (see page 20)</b>	Outreach work and apprenticeships will support people into learning and work	Better transport will improve access to services and facilities for all	The Fairness Commission will engage with residents to transform Council services and promote social justice.		Improvements in air quality will benefit residents with respiratory problems
<b>Protect the environment (see page 23)</b>	Improvements to local transport networks will encourage inbound commuters to use public transport	Increased use of sustainable transport options will reduce CO2 emissions	Neighbourhoods will be encouraged to focus on how they can collectively reduce their carbon footprints	Imaginative use of design will improve the safety and accessibility of the city's streets and spaces	

# York today



York is in good shape, with a strongly performing modern and mixed economy. The city continues to attract investment and with major development opportunities in the pipeline and a strong market economy, there is the potential to further enhance York's national standing. York, as an internationally recognised centre of excellence for education, has two great universities and an unparalleled education system that places the city amongst the leading authorities in the country for both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 results.

The city offers a superb quality of life to residents. It has an outstanding built and natural environment, with iconic world class heritage and a wide variety of cultural opportunities. Overall crime rates demonstrate sustained improvement, income levels are relatively high, deprivation is reducing and there is a good general level of health. Services for children with disabilities have been judged as amongst the best in the country and York is in the top ten nationally for its children's services.

In the drive towards cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the city is recognised as a leader in sustainable transport and recycling has increased by 350% over the last seven years. We now recycle nearly half of all household waste.

Nevertheless, York faces some significant challenges in the next four years, both from the government's agenda and from existing city issues and all within the tightest budget framework for years.

A key challenge for York will be to rebalance the economy by reducing the city's over dependence on public sector employment and to provide new opportunities for expansion of the private sector. This will include increased employment in the innovation and science sector, greater development of creative

industries and the financial and service sector and by supporting expanding and major businesses in the city so they thrive and develop.

Other challenges include the need to better anticipate future challenges and opportunities in terms of demand for services and workforce supply. Increased demand for services, linked to demographic change, particularly health and social care, will require careful planning.

The provision of adult social care services will present as one of the biggest challenges in response to the change in York's demography.

Increased growth and prosperity places considerable pressure on the city's transport network and has the potential to increase congestion delay by up to 200% by 2026. Congestion stifles economic growth – it is costly to businesses, and detrimental to the health and wellbeing of our population.

The city also needs to deliver the right type and mix of housing to meet the city's needs and make the best use of existing housing. Affordability is crucial given the significant gulf between average earnings and average house prices. Housing need, especially of vulnerable adults, older people and students will have to be considered in order to ensure supply to meet these needs.



## Meeting the challenges

The Council has much to be proud of in terms of the way in which services are delivered. We have one of the very best Children's Services in the country that provides a great start to life for young people in the city. We have a strong record on sustainability and have led innovation in transport and developed the infrastructure for cycling to thrive within our city and nationally recognised higher and further education facilities. We have a strong work programme to deliver further reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and are aligning this work with partners in the city. We maintain a strong bond with local businesses and are developing a new economic strategy to provide even more opportunity for business to prosper and enabling residents to secure employment. Our community based services are increasingly responsive to the needs of residents and our Housing Services continue to be judged by tenants as being among the best in England.

Despite these achievements, there is a need to drive consistently high performance from across all services. This challenge has to be met against a backdrop of reduced resources. It is a reality that over the next four years, some Council services

may have to stop, others might be provided differently and more will be done with partners and by working cooperatively with residents.

To respond to this challenge, we will invest in building the transformational skills required to change the way we work and deliver services. The number of staff employed by the Council has reduced because of the need to reduce cost yet staff are more than ever our most important resource; without them we would not be able to deliver our services or priorities. We are striving to make staff feel valued and engaged, to employ staff's dedication and innovation effectively, to ensure that staff morale is improved and to develop skills that will equip our staff to meet the challenges of the future.

We will embed as core capabilities a confident and collaborative approach to delivering results for our customers, a complete understanding of our communities and a relentless focus on our priorities. In other areas, like social work, where there are skills shortages nationally, focus should be on recruitment and retention, although this remains a challenging area.

# Our daily work

The Council provides a wide range of services around the clock to ensure that our neighbourhoods are clean and safe, our economy thrives, the most vulnerable members of our community are protected and there are opportunities to ensure that our children and young people receive the best start in life.

The Council's annual budget is approximately £114 million (net) and £444 million (gross) and is used to provide a wealth of services including:

## **Waste Management and Recycling**

The Council collects over 90,000 tonnes of household waste every year, with over 40,000 tonnes now recycled or composted. We also provide three household waste recycling centres, plus 51 public recycling points and kerbside recycling collections to over 73,400 households.

## **Children and Young People**

The Council works in partnership with 54 primary, 10 secondary and two special schools, with nursery education offered at one nursery and 18 primary schools. There are over 23,100 pupils in Council maintained schools, (13,160 in primary schools and 9,950 in secondary schools). Our excellent education services mean that York is one of the leading authorities in the country for both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 results.

## **Social Care for Adults**

The Council helps around 6,175 older people to live independently in their own homes and over 760 people are supported in residential or nursing care. Last year, York saw a 3% rise in the number of residents receiving adult social care and this trend is expected to continue to grow over the next 10 years.

## **Cleanliness of Streets and Highways, Environment and Transport**

We maintain approximately 17,500 streetlights, 600 miles of footpath, 470 miles of roads and

150 miles of public right of way. We also operate 14 city centre car parks. There are over 14.85 million bus passenger journeys in York each year and over 2.83 million journeys are made on our Park & Ride Services.

## **Housing and Benefits**

The Council manages and maintains approximately 7,926 homes in York and currently has 7,884 Council tenants. It processes around 24,000 housing and Council tax benefit claims per year.

## **Cultural & Leisure Services**

York is one of the UK's most visited tourist centres, with over seven million visitors per year. York's art galleries and museums receive over 641,000 visits each year, which is one of the highest visit per capita rates in the UK. Its year round festival programme covers international and community events. Last year local residents made 940,000 visits to our 14 libraries and had 799,000 swimming sessions (an increase of 26% since 2009).

## **Jobs and the Economy**

York contributes significantly to the economy of the region in particular in the fields of science, research and development, as well as through more established sectors such as tourism and rail.

## **In a typical working day the Council....**

- Collects 432 tonnes of household waste.
- Educates 23,100 children.
- Looks after 230 vulnerable children.
- Provides 852 hours of home care.
- Processes 97 housing benefit and Council tax claims.
- Provides help to over 1,000 customers at the visitor information centre.
- Responds to up to 1,200 calls per day to the York Customer Centre.



# Our priorities



## Create jobs and grow the economy

### Why is this a priority and what will success look like?

All of the city's residents will enjoy the opportunity to achieve their potential within York's economy. A strong and growing economy will provide new job opportunities and the ability for residents to achieve a high quality of life for themselves and their families.

York is the most buoyant economy in the north but it is an economy that faces challenges. As York's population continues to grow it will drive the need for jobs. This is in addition to the need to replace jobs lost during the recession and through changes to public expenditure. The opportunity for businesses to expand their markets, and create jobs, is challenging following the recession because of the risk-averse climate towards investment. York's businesses and their markets are increasingly subject to global competition and inward investment opportunities are limited as businesses seek to consolidate rather than invest elsewhere.

A successful York will have an enhanced

reputation as a respected European and international city, with a visitor economy recognised for its high quality that brings financial benefits to the city and its residents. York will benchmark itself against other successful European cities. To maintain its position as the most buoyant economy in the north we expect to create an additional 1,000 jobs per annum. We expect that the proportion of employment in high tech or science and financial, creative or professional services will increase each year to 2015. Our city will be at the forefront of digital connectivity and 95% of all businesses will have the opportunity to have minimum speed connections of 25 megabits per second by the end of 2014.

A revised economic strategy will provide the framework for future actions, including a strong focus on encouraging enterprise to add an extra dimension to York's economic strengths. We are seeking to increase the number of new business start-ups from 44 in 2008 to 57 in 2015 per 10,000 population, and see the proportion of new businesses surviving three years increase from 65% in 2008 to 70% by 2014/15.

Create jobs and grow the economy



## What actions and projects will make this happen?

### Positioning York on a global stage

York will devise an internationalisation strategy that will allow the city and its partnerships to be ambitious in improving its place in the world and to use its strengths to compete for international investment, visitors, expenditure and talent. At its heart will be proposals to promote York as a UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts, the hosting of international events and festivals and to secure enhanced levels of inward investment. In addition, we will position York as a gateway into overseas trade and maximise the visitor economy opportunities.

### Unlocking infrastructure to support investment.

There are a number of key development sites coming forward at the same time in the city which provide the opportunity for employment growth and attracting investment. The Council will play an active role in bringing

forward these developments, maximising their economic impact and creating opportunities for local residents. York's Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Transport Plan will be implemented to provide the right environment for business to flourish. This will include the provision of space to meet differing business needs and enhanced travel connections within the city. This will involve having an adopted LDF Core Strategy with a supporting Allocations Document (including employment allocations) in place by 2012. Environmental and public realm improvements will be prioritised to ensure that businesses and residents wish to remain and relocate to the city.

### Strategic Connectivity

York is well connected to the national motorway and the railway network. However, we will need to keep under review the railway network modernisation programme, and continue to influence government regarding East Coast Mainline modernisation. In particular, to ensure

## Key outcomes

- York will have an enhanced role as a World Class City recognised as a great place to invest, visit, do business and for talent to remain or locate to.
- There will be more sustainable jobs and wealth for residents in a rebalanced economy with reduced dependence on public sector employment.
- Existing businesses, both small and large, will grow and international, national and local investment will bring new businesses into York.
- Residents will be equipped with the tools and skills they need to take advantage of job opportunities and start up their own businesses.



inward investment opportunities. We plan to develop a website that brings links to information and other websites together for businesses. The website, driven by the needs of businesses, is under construction and will be fully in place by April 2012. Additional efforts will be made to encourage businesses to source more goods and services locally, encourage the development of export opportunities, and ensure there is a skilled workforce available to meet business needs. Whilst York has a highly skilled workforce, issues remain regarding local companies being able to recruit to some jobs, particularly in technically skilled positions.

### **Creating a culture of enterprise and encouraging more start-ups.**

Within York schools we will enhance existing activities aimed at promoting an enterprise culture by introducing enterprise and business opportunities in both primary and secondary schools. In addition, we will also promote business awareness and opportunities amongst York's under and post graduate population. We will also continue to develop ways of encouraging new business formation through the provision of advice, mentoring, support and premises.

### **Helping residents into employment and training**

We will continue to provide an information and guidance service to support people into learning and work through Future Prospects. This will take place at its city premises but also through an extension of its outreach work, targeting areas of greatest need. In parallel the York Training Centre will seek out funding to support and provide skills to those most marginalised from employment and they will provide additional apprenticeship opportunities.

that High Speed Train services connect with the East Coast Mainline and provide York's business travellers with the opportunity to access high speed trains. The benefits of enhancing rail connectivity to and from Leeds will be assessed and, if feasible, will be used to influence decisions regarding national investment.

High speed broadband coverage is a national objective, assisting businesses to increase the speed and security of information transfer and providing the opportunity for businesses to innovate. We will work with private sector providers to seek to achieve implementation of a high speed digital network.

### **Supporting Business**

Critical to the economic success of the city is the prosperity of existing business. Proposed changes to the national business support framework will lead to a more fragmented approach to both the provision of business advice and information to support local and



## Why is this a priority and what will success look like?

An effective transport system is critical to the success of our city. Through consultation on our Local Transport Plan residents and businesses pinpointed congestion as the most important transport challenge for York.

York's transport network faces considerable pressures from a growing population and economy. Key issues include high traffic flows on the outer ring road, congestion on the inner ring road, increasing levels of emissions and pollution and a situation where traffic is intruding on people's shopping, leisure or visitor experience in York, particularly in our city centre.

York is a compact historic city. Its rich heritage of historic buildings, open strays, city walls, railways and historic street layout all affect movement. In simple terms York doesn't have the space to fit more and more cars in. Trying to do this would have major negative

consequences on the quality and character of York as a place.

Supporting and developing public transport services and enabling and encouraging more walking and cycling provide a means to tackle congestion. An emphasis on these more sustainable transport options will bring wider benefits – air quality will improve, people will be healthier, pollution will reduce, access for disadvantaged communities will be better and our built environment will be enhanced. This will all support more sustainable economic growth and improve quality of life for local communities.

## Over the next four years we will Get York Moving by:

**Expanding Park and Ride Services –** this national exemplar service has been the foundation for reducing congestion. The current service provides the basis and opportunity for a more comprehensive system



“

*Nestle has been working with Cycle City York since 2009 and through a number of engaging initiatives, we have seen the number of employees cycling to work increase by over 15%.*



to move more people into and around York. We aim to secure external funding, through the Department for Transport, for Phase 1 of the Access York initiative which will increase the number of Park & Ride sites in the city. If the funding bid is successful we plan to start construction of a new site at Poppleton on the A59 and relocate the Askham Bar site in 2012/13. This will deliver over 30% more parking spaces, remove over 300,000 cars from the city centre and reduce annual carbon dioxide emissions by 1,400 tonnes. Alternative funding sources for a further site at Clifton Moor will be investigated.

### **Improving York's local bus services –**

this will increase the quality, reliability and punctuality of local bus services. Partnership arrangements will be agreed with the bus operators to develop all aspects of bus travel. This will include improvements to vehicle fleets, better timetables, and real-time information and more bus priority measures. Through ticketing will also be introduced,

which means passengers will only need to buy one ticket to complete a journey, even if they have to use more than one bus operator's services. All of these improvements look to support a 10% increase in bus based trips over the next four years.

**Developing York's cycling and pedestrian network** – as a 'Cycling City' York has introduced many new facilities and initiatives to encourage more cycling, including an orbital route. As a result, cycling numbers have increased from 2008 to 2011 by approximately 15%. We aim to develop this work further using the £4.6 million Local Sustainable Transport Funding. This will be used to identify gaps in the network and deliver improvements to routes that make the biggest difference to reducing car use.



# Get York moving

We will also continue to improve our network of cycling and walking routes. Improvements made over the next four years to persuade more people to make ‘smarter travel’ choices aim to support a 5% per annum growth in cycling trips and a 2.5% increase in walking trips.

## **Improving movement in the city centre –**

York led the way with the large scale pedestrianisation of the footstreets area. Further measures and investigations will help us move towards being a largely car free city centre. Over the next year we aim to identify proposals to reduce car traffic and increase the use of public transport, walking and cycling in the city centre. In the next year, we will extend the operating hours and extent of the central ‘footstreets’ area. Public realm improvements and bus priority measures will be central to improving movement through the city centre. As a result pedestrians will have greater priority in the centre of York and the effects of through traffic and vehicle emissions will be addressed.



**Establishing 20mph speed limits in York’s residential areas –** to improve people’s quality of life, make areas safer and encourage more walking and cycling. We will start by putting in place a programme to introduce 20mph limits in residential areas and minimise associated street clutter. By the end of 2011/12 we will implement 20mph speed limits in a ‘first phase’ of residential areas. Following this we will roll out 20mph limits across the rest of the city’s residential areas by 2013.

## **Key outcomes**

- Far more people will choose to travel by bus, train, bike or on foot in York.
- York will have a modern transport system, which offers quality alternatives to the car.
- It will be easier, safer and more efficient for York’s residents, businesses and visitors to move within and beyond the city.
- York’s communities and businesses will have better accessibility to economic and educational opportunities and day to day services and facilities.

**Winning hearts and minds –** information, education and awareness campaigns are vital to encourage people to be less reliant on their cars and make different transport choices. Local Sustainable Transport Funding will be used for marketing and communications work on the benefits of making ‘smarter’ travel choices. This funding will also be used to develop personalised travel planning and workplace based travel planning initiatives particularly in the city’s northern quadrant by 2013. Improvements such as new Park and Ride sites, better local bus services and an expanded cycle network will provide more quality alternatives to using the car. The target is to achieve a 2% reduction, by 2016, in the expected growth in the number of trips made by car.



## Why is this a priority and what will success look like?

Strong communities are the foundation of a thriving city. York wants to be a supportive and enabling Council that harnesses the enterprising spirit of local people. We want to be a city of active and self-reliant communities where everyone has an effective voice in local issues and where there is a strong sense of belonging.

Communities will increasingly be given power to influence and shape the services they receive and to know that any issues they raise with the Council will be responded to quickly and effectively. Service providers will work together to deliver efficient well coordinated services at a local level. York's already strong voluntary sector will increasingly play an essential part in community life.

All areas of York will be safe, tolerant and respectful and everyone will be treated

fairly. Strong communities are places that make healthy lifestyles possible and have a good choice of housing and community facilities, such as good schools, children's centres, thriving local shopping centres and opportunities for work and enterprise.

## What actions and projects will make this happen?

### **Community Engagement –**

We will introduce new ways for residents to interact with the Council, including better ways to request services through a 24 hour hotline and self service access via the website. Communications will be improved through the new "Your Voice" publication and through the use of social networking technology. Two-way engagement will also be transformed through new initiatives such as the 'Fairness Commission', which will enable residents to influence the Council's budget for 2012/14. Residents will be encouraged to help set local community priorities and monitor service contracts and performance.

# Build strong communities

In 2012 we will celebrate the 800th anniversary of York's City Charter, which first gave local people a voice in the management of the city, with a renewed focus on community engagement. York 800 will be a year long citywide programme of activities and events in celebration of our democratic heritage.

## **Stronger voluntary sector –**

We will work in partnership with the voluntary sector and decide together how to increase the role of the sector and strengthen its service provision. We will also develop a Volunteering Strategy to promote more volunteering and establish a better mechanism to ensure residents and employers across the city can be involved in community-based work.

## **Safer inclusive communities –**

To tackle crime and increase community safety we will raise the community profile of the Safer York Partnership and establish an annual crime summit. We will also work with the Safer York Partnership to engage residents in tackling antisocial behaviour in our neighbourhoods.

To develop cohesive and inclusive communities where no person or community feels left behind or disadvantaged we will achieve 'Excellent' in the Equalities framework for Local Government. We will encourage the involvement of traveller, BME, student and economically disadvantaged communities, which are identified as such in the One City Plan. We will also ensure that we have effective arrangements in place to safeguard our communities against terrorism.

## **Healthy sustainable communities –**

In order to promote healthy, active and sustainable lifestyles, we will encourage walking and cycling, increase access to public green spaces, increase allotment capacity and develop local food growing initiatives, such as Edible York.

We will work with local businesses to improve access to, participation in and support for the city's leisure and culture services to improve the health of our communities. In addition, we will use York's role in welcoming the Olympic torch to the city to include communities in the celebration of the 2012 Olympics and leave a lasting legacy for the city.

## **Create Communities where young people**

**flourish –** We want to make York one of the best places in England in which to grow up – with great schools, exciting things to do, new ways to get involved, and a range of professional support for those who need it. Every single child in York, whatever their background, deserves a chance to live their dreams. So we will continue to stretch and challenge the most able, while providing a helping hand where it is needed to those who start at a disadvantage.

We will build communities that reflect what young people need through improved consultation with them and we will enhance the role of the voluntary sector in providing stimulating opportunities for young people. We will establish a new City Centre Youth Café and support more ways for young people to get involved with the local community and volunteering by working with students and children.

## **Improved Community Infrastructure –**

we will establish appropriate community facilities, including housing, leisure opportunities, schools and work and enterprise units. In planning for our communities we will work in a more joined up way in order to better meet the infrastructure needs of each neighbourhood.

Specific projects that will add to or make better use of existing facilities on a citywide level include the delivery of the Community Stadium, the roll out of Explore Centres as community



hubs for learning and the development of a Swimming Pool Strategy.

To address the need for a greater supply of good quality, affordable housing we will refresh our Empty Properties strategy and make use of a

new homes bonus to bring empty properties back into use. We will decrease the number of under-occupied properties, increase affordable housing provision and introduce standards for private landlords in order to improve accommodation.

## Key outcomes

- **Community Engagement** – more residents will understand and be engaged in planning, budgeting, priority setting and problem solving in their communities.
- **Stronger voluntary sector** – there will be a strong volunteering infrastructure with increased levels of volunteering in the city and opportunities for not for profit organisations to deliver services.
- **Safer inclusive communities** – we will achieve safe, resilient and cohesive communities where no person or community feels left behind or disadvantaged.
- **Improved community infrastructure** – we will establish an appropriate infrastructure including housing, leisure, schools and businesses supporting opportunities for capacity building, work and enterprise.
- **Healthy sustainable communities** – we will create healthy and sustainable living options in communities.
- **Communities where young people flourish** – we will consult with young people to build communities that reflect their needs.



## Why is this a priority and what will success look like?

The population of older people in York is set to grow by 20.5% in the next nine years. The number of residents aged over 65 will increase from 33,000 to 40,000 by 2020. This growth is already placing greater demand on Council services and budgets with a 7% rise in the number of people seeking support from adult social care every year.

Over 7,000 vulnerable adults receive an adult social care service in York. At the same time York is facing reduced financial support, year on year, from central government.

For these reasons, the way the Council buys and directly provides services has to change. To continue unaltered would mean a £12 million rise in spending by 2020 to support the growing population of older people, and people with more complex learning and physical disabilities.

Our overarching objective is to safeguard such adults, to promote their independence, enable them to make real life choices, and give them control over their daily lives.

Although York's residents overall enjoy better health than the national average, there are still quite startling inequalities between different parts of the city. People's background and income still have the most significant influence over a whole range of outcomes, including educational attainment, employment, and health. We want to tackle the inequality and poverty that is at the heart of disadvantage for so many vulnerable people.

Finally, our care for our most vulnerable citizens starts with our youngest. Safeguarding their interests will always be a priority for us. It cannot be right that children from our more deprived communities start school already behind their peers in terms of their development. We want to improve the services we offer to families of pre-school

children through our network of children's centres, and continue that seamless support after they start school. Our limited resources will be carefully targeted on the families and children who need it most, identified at the earliest moment when they may be encountering difficulties. By spending wisely at this stage, we can save ourselves much greater social and economic costs in later life.

## What actions and projects will make this happen?

Over the next four years we will enhance the life chances of vulnerable people by:

### **Providing great facilities that support dedicated high quality care for people with dementia and other specialist**

**needs** for the next 30 to 40 years. We will respond to the views of citizens and develop a new generation of buildings that exceed current standards and provide care for life for their residents.

### **Investing in services to support people in the community;** we will invest £250,000

a year for the next four years in telecare equipment to help support more people to continue to live in their homes and promote their independence, choice and control. We will double the capacity of the Re-ablement Service to support 660 older people a year to regain their independence, preventing admission to hospital and improving people's experience of leaving hospital. This will reduce the number of older people who enter residential care at the wrong time and could save £1.3 million in residential care fees which can be invested in more services in the community.

York benefits from a rich and complementary array of voluntary sector



services. These seek to provide early advice, information and support that can often prevent the loss of independence, choice and control otherwise experienced by vulnerable adults. These services must be supported and expanded to meet a growing demand.

### **Operating effective safeguards to protect vulnerable adults whilst also promoting individual budgets so that people can exercise greater choice and control over their lives.**

We are satisfied that we monitor the quality of our in-house and private sector services but we are not complacent. We will increase our capability to ensure that we continue to safeguard the quality of care providers to our citizens as the population of older people increases. We will also protect vulnerable people on the lowest incomes from the rising cost of social care charges by reducing the recent increases with effect from April 2011.

# Protect vulnerable people

## **Establishing a Health and Wellbeing Board**

**Board** – the health reforms give us a unique opportunity to establish new arrangements for overseeing the development of health and social services in York, in conjunction with partners in the NHS and the private and voluntary sectors. This new Board will review and refresh our ‘Joint Strategic Needs Assessment’ and a new Health & Wellbeing Strategy that flows from it. We will do this in close partnership with the healthcare professionals that will be responsible for buying services, whom we hope to welcome into our new West Offices in a unique co-location arrangement. Our aim is to be ready to hit the ground running when we take on new public health duties in 2013, to target differences in levels of health between our poorest and most affluent people in our city, and to ensure all our services work more closely together so that people receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

**Supporting families** who may be struggling, through enhanced and integrated services designed to intervene early, such as Children’s Centres. We will target our programmes on York’s poorest wards. We will seek to address



financial inclusion, as well as introducing and implementing a Child Poverty Strategy for the city, which includes advice on benefits and debt relief. We will bring forward proposals for a ‘People’s Bank’. We will review changing national policy and programmes on welfare reform and make representations where it is felt they do not address local priorities in addressing inequality and protecting the most vulnerable. Our ambition is for York’s children to grow up in happy and stable environments, in family settings wherever possible.

**Establishing a ‘Fairness Commission’** to ensure that the Council’s difficult decisions on spending priorities and the way we deliver services are properly informed by the views of its citizens, especially the most vulnerable.

## **Key outcomes**

- More people will live for longer in their own homes.
- There will be a focus on independence and greater choice and control over their lives for vulnerable people.
- Year on year capacity of the community-based services will increase to support more people in the home of their choice and enjoy an improved quality of life.
- Health inequalities will reduce across York, especially morbidity and obesity rates.
- Incomes for residents will be maximised with year-on-year reductions in deprivation rates and the numbers of children living in poverty.
- More children will live with their own families throughout their childhood, with the majority of those who are looked after by the Council also living in family settings.

# Protect the environment



## Why is this a priority and what will success look like?

York has an outstanding built and natural environment, with iconic world class heritage. York's unique environment contributes significantly to its prosperity, with a high quality of life attracting business and commerce and supporting a buoyant tourism market. York must balance its reputation for its environment and unique heritage with its ability to secure the very highest standards of contemporary development. Only by maximising the opportunity afforded by York's existing assets can we ensure high levels of employment and a strong economy.

York's environment is a direct contributor to quality of life for its residents and visitors. We must ensure that every neighbourhood in York cultivates a sense of community ownership of its environment and has attractive and safe public spaces which promote healthy lifestyles.

York recognises its fundamental responsibility to future generations to promote and invest in sustainability. York must work at a local level to contribute to national and international

commitments to reduce carbon emissions, recycle or minimise the impact of our waste, tackle air quality hotspots and prepare for the impact of a changing climate on our communities. York will also look to renewable energy which can be generated locally to enhance York's resilience in the global market place.

York's communities are changing fast. We will work to protect what is valued and also to respond to the changing needs of our community by addressing such questions as, how can we modify our environment to ensure that an older population is able to maintain a healthy and participative lifestyle? And how can the environment of a historic city adapt to meet the expectations of modern creative industry, with technology that is accessible anywhere, is interactive, and informed by social networks?

We will continue to involve and empower our residents to determine and deliver local solutions for a world class environment, worthy of a world class city and will combine 21st century development, modern architecture and sustainable design that complements York's architectural legacy.

# Protect the environment

## What actions and projects will make this happen?

We will work to meet York's air quality targets which will directly impact on the health of residents and visitors. We will also progressively reduce our carbon emissions by continuing to deliver the Climate Change Action Plan and address the implications of procurement decisions. We will conduct a green audit, improve flood protection and work to embed sustainability in all strategic and service planning and corporate decision making.

We will enhance York's natural environment by managing green space to balance public, wildlife, habitat benefit and improve public access to green space. We will deliver a Green Infrastructure Strategy and a Bio-Diversity Action Plan which is a framework for the delivery of the improved stewardship of the natural environment. We will also implement a Tree Strategy for planting 50,000 new trees (over the next five years).

York will be known as a world class centre of excellence for conservation practice, archeological practice and heritage education. We will produce a Heritage Strategy which will improve access to information and records on York's heritage and will be available as a learning resource for people of all ages; we will conduct a city walls management review and improve heritage management by implementing recommendations to enhance the city's central historic core.

We will enhance York's built environment through a focus on imaginative conservation and improving the quality of York's streets and public spaces, with local streets and neighbourhood public spaces maintained to a high standard. We will develop a Public Realm Strategy that includes a list of potential improvement schemes and with improved management standards. We will run a



Royal Institute of British Architects competition for new development that has the potential to 'put York on the map'.

York will be one of the best-performing areas in the country for waste services; we will produce less waste overall. York will continue to promote the value of waste as a natural and viable resource, by:

- Re-using, recycling and composting the maximum practicable amount of household waste.
- Maximising opportunities for re-use of unwanted items and waste by working closely with community and other groups.
- Maximising the recovery of materials and/or energy from waste that is not re-used, recycled or composted so as to further reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

York will develop a Renewable Energy generation strategy and will consider the feasibility of a local community energy company so that the benefits of renewable energy can be delivered locally.

## Key outcomes

- York will be better prepared and more resilient in the face of a changing climate and will steadily reduce its carbon emissions
- York's natural environment will be enhanced by more green space managed to balance public, wildlife, habitat benefit and improved public access to green space
- York will be known as a world class centre of excellence for conservation practice and heritage education
- York's built environment will combine 21st century development, modern architecture and sustainable design that complements York's architectural legacy
- York will be one of the best performing areas in the country for waste services; we will produce less waste overall and re-use, recycle and compost more household waste
- York will have a clear energy strategy which prioritises local renewable energy generation

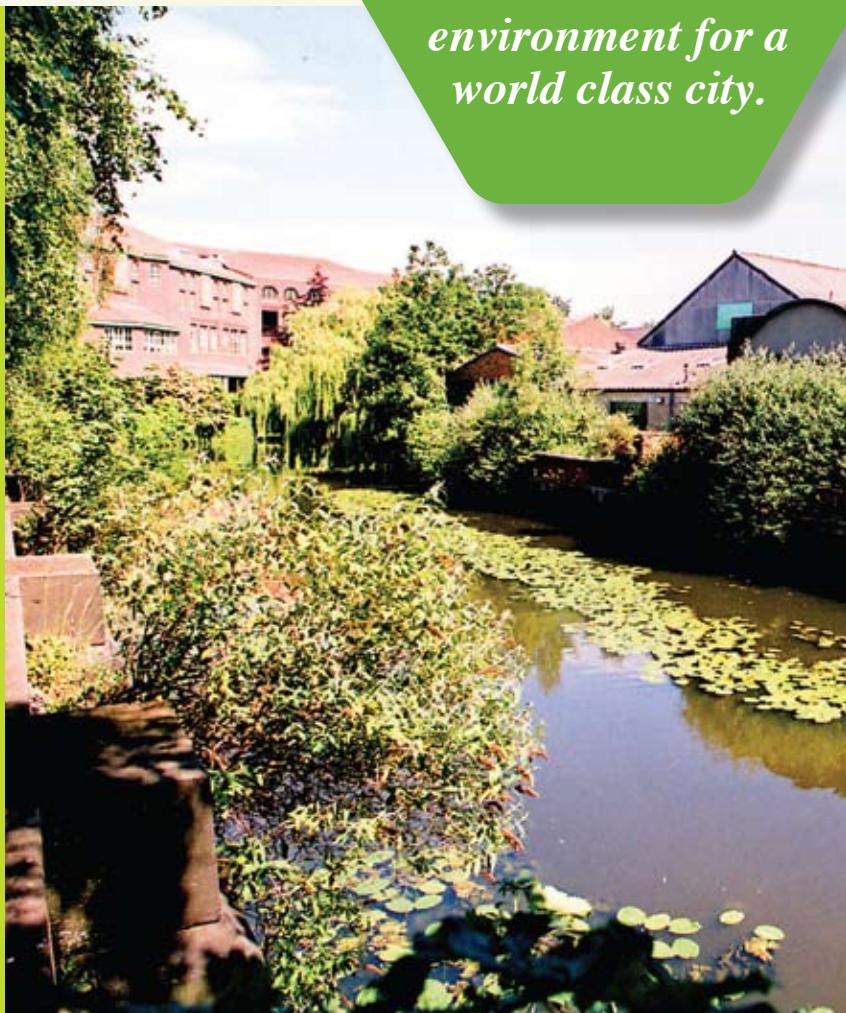


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*Create a world class environment for a world class city.*

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*We provide stewardship of the built, historic and natural environment of the city including: the city walls, 2,000 listed buildings, 35 conservation areas and 17,000 trees on Council land. We shape and influence building works and new development through the determination of around 4,000 planning and building applications.*



## Our core capabilities



The work of the Council continues to shift and change, more now than at any time in its history. The way in which the organisation and its people go about their business needs to change to ensure that we are working as effectively as possible. At a time of huge transformation it is necessary to look at how we operate and behave and identify what is good and needs to be encouraged, and what needs to change in order for us to deliver our priorities.

### What core capabilities will drive our work?

In order to deliver the Council Plan we need to develop three core capabilities:-

- A confident, collaborative organisation
- Completely in touch with our communities
- A relentless focus on our priorities.

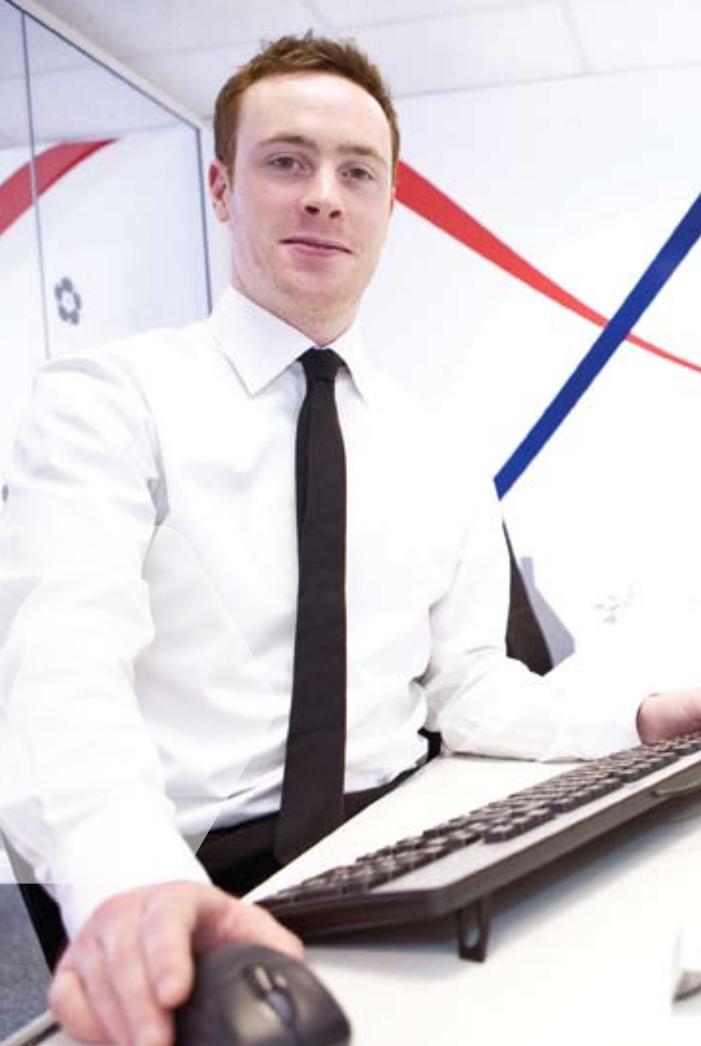
#### A confident, collaborative organisation

Delivering our priorities with limited resources requires us to be agile and joined up. The Council needs to be able to make good decisions swiftly, to operate with a

minimum of bureaucracy, to enable all staff to be responsive to customers and to work effectively across team and organisational boundaries. Confidence in our sense of purpose and our capability to take effective action will make us enterprising and innovative, ready, willing and able to respond to the challenges that face us.

### What actions will help us be confident and collaborative?

Develop and implement a **Workforce Strategy** to set out how we will develop



and harness the skills of our staff to deliver our priorities. We will:

### **Organisational development**

- Empower our staff to deliver the best outcomes for customers
- Encourage and value staff ideas for improvement
- Ensure that our staff understand their role and priorities and that they are supportively managed to perform well
- Provide a voice for staff to share their views and perceptions, in a forum that leads to action

### **Leadership and skills development**

- Strengthen our leadership throughout the organisation
- Develop our people's skills and capabilities

### **Recruitment and retention**

- Recruit and retain top quality staff
- Ensure our workforce more accurately reflects the community we live in

### **Pay, reward and recognition**

- Celebrate the excellent performance of our staff

### **Health, safety and wellbeing**

- Enable our staff to work flexibly in a way that balances work and home lives

Use the opportunities presented by the move to the **West Offices** to build collaboration across team and organisational boundaries. In the run up to 2012 we will:

- Introduce flexible working
- Develop partner and collaborative working in West Offices.
- Redesign elements of the organisation to integrate support services.

### **Equalities and inclusion –**

become an 'Excellent' local authority by the 2012 Equalities inspection, through the delivery of an Equalities and





Inclusion improvement plan which will ensure that we:

- Improve the co-ordination and inclusivity of staff and customer engagement.
- Improve our knowledge of the profile and perceptions of our staff.
- Assess equality impacts as part of our decision making.
- Deliver equal outcomes to our customers.
- Exploit the full potential of procurement to promote equality and diversity.

**Simplify internal business processes to focus on customers**, bring consistency and remove inefficiency.

**Improve communications** across the organisation through:

- Improved intranet content and innovative use of social media.
- Staff briefing cascades and CMT Digest
- Hold Question and Answer sessions for managers to access the Council's top team

- Develop Communities of Interest for priority topics

**Supplement the Member Support programme** to ensure it has a focus on community leadership.

**Launch 2012 A Moment to Shine** – In the year when the Olympic torch illuminates our city and we celebrate the 800th birthday of our city charter, we will launch a series of events which will harness the innovation, energy and creativity of our staff in Team York. We will build our joint ambition to excel, stimulate teams to perform, to achieve their personal best and we will actively celebrate our success.

## Completely in touch with our communities

The Council exists to serve the needs of our communities. In order to do so we need to

know who our customers are, where they are, what they are like and what their needs, wants and perceptions are. Our services are not one size fits all and we need to be able to shape the design and delivery of services to meet varying needs. This will also mean that we can focus our services on those customers who are most vulnerable. This requires better customer insight to be central to decision making and service design, and for all staff to be focused on meeting the needs of customers.

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*We want our staff to feel proud to work for City of York Council*

## What actions will help us to be in touch with our communities?

**Launch a Fairness Commission** to build a new relationship with customers, share with them the big issues and questions facing the city and understand their views, particularly to explore where national spending cuts will fall in York and how resources will be distributed fairly to services prioritised by the people of York.

## Implement a new Customer Strategy to deliver:-

- One point of customer contact in the West Offices.
- Increased self service channels for online access to services.
- Develop our customer insight data so that we can design our services around customer requirements.
- Use customer feedback and contact to learn and improve services.
- Share customer data with our partners to improve our customer focus and develop integrated services for customers.



## A relentless focus on our priorities

We live in straitened times where we have less money and resources are stretched. We cannot deliver what we delivered yesterday in the way we have always delivered it. We need to deliver efficiency savings and rationalise our organisation to make decisions about what services to deliver going forward and how they will be delivered. We will assess whether the assets we hold meet our needs and to make sure we deliver the outcomes we have prioritised; all our business planning and delivery mechanisms will focus on these areas.

### **What actions will help us focus on our priorities?**

#### **Build upon our strong financial management.**

**Develop the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy** to inform the preparation of a **two Year Budget** for 2011-2013, giving a structured approach to the planning of significant transformation activity that allocates available resources to our priorities.

**Asset Management Review** – Undertake asset management reviews to ensure our property assets are aligned with our priorities and meet our service and financial needs.

**Capital programme review** – to ensure that we are spending capital funds on our priorities and to identify new sources of capital and revenue financing to meet our objectives.

**Improve our procurement** activity to create savings and ensure we focus our spend on delivering our priorities.

**Establish a public sector company** that will enable us to provide services to other organisations which will bring reduced cost, economies of scale and income generation opportunities.

**Deliver an ongoing Business Change Programme.** This will transform our services for the future, drive out waste and rationalise the organisation. We will explore innovative models of service delivery and increase our skills to deliver shared service opportunities and management buyouts or social-enterprise models.

**Develop a business planning cycle** that creates a clear link from the Council Plan through to Service Plans and Personal Development Reviews, supported by a Performance Management Framework that demonstrates that we are putting our resources into the delivery of the things we need to deliver and that we are constantly monitoring our progress and resolving issues.





CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

THE GUILDHALL

YORK

YO1 9QN

01904 552027

[WWW.YORK.GOV.UK](http://WWW.YORK.GOV.UK)

