

Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	10 September 2018
Present	Councillors Williams (Chair), Galvin (Vice-Chair), N Barnes, Brooks, D'Agorne, Looker, Reid and Cuthbertson (Substitute for Councillor Fenton)
Apologies	Councillors Fenton and Gates

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### **19. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

### **20. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2018 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **21. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **22. Schedule of Petitions**

Members considered a report which provided information on new petitions received since the last meeting and details of those considered by the Executive or relevant Executive Member or Officer.

Members noted that one petition listed in the report had received no signatures and therefore requested that it be removed.

Resolved: That Members note the report and approve the recommended course of action for each of the petitions received.

Reason: To ensure the committee carries out its requirements in relation to petitions.

### **23. 2018/19 Finance and Performance Monitor 1**

Members were presented with the 2018/19 Finance and Performance Monitoring Report for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018.

Members questioned officers on the links between data presented and the direction of travel indicator for the item 'percentage of panel satisfied with the way council runs things'. Officers informed Members that this is approached in a systematic way using the last three data points and is the same standard methodology used across all indicators reported in the public domain and is a statistical quirk in this instance. Should the data continue to decline or increase, the indicator would show that in the next quarter.

Members also interrogated the data presented on sickness levels. Officers informed Members that the data was presented on a rolling 12 month basis and that, whilst the numbers presented an increase, there were signs of a more recent improvement occurring.

Under questioning from Members, officers explained that directorates do take into account the variables when forecasting the budget, for instance in relation to potential savings and pressures that may be exerted in the coming year. Officers also stated that directorates were looking at recurring pressures in detail to help with more accurate forecasting and planning. Forecasting is based on where we think we will be, some directorates may not make the savings they expect or not as quickly.

Officers also informed Members that the decline in Stage 1 & 2 corporate complaints adhering to the five day policy was due to the following reasons:

- Staff turnaround
- Short term increased volume

Officers informed Members that the potential income from the Leeds City Region business rates retention pilot scheme was not an on-going income as it was necessary to bid for this funding on a year-by-year basis.

Officers also stated that they believed York was staying within the Leeds City Region LEP but were unsure of the governance and decision making process with regard to that matter.

Resolved: That Members note the finance and performance information.

Reason: To ensure the Committee's continued oversight of Finance and Performance Monitoring

## **24. Annual Complaints Report 2017 - 2018**

Officers were in attendance to present the Annual Complaints Report for 2017-18.

Members requested the inclusion of benchmarking data and a focus on 'upheld' complaints for future reports.

Members noted in the statistics that 24% of complaints were upheld and officers informed the Committee that compared to national statistics, this put City of York Council in the middle of the rankings.

Under further questioning from Members, Officers explained their role in assisting children and young people in making a complaint, clarifying their role and how they work with Children's Services to facilitate the process.

Officers explained why in some parts of the statistics, the comment 'no response' was noted, referring to complaints which the complaints team had not received a copy of the response sent to the complainant. Officers also highlighted that in cases such as this, a response will be sent to the complainant, giving an option to continue a complaint if it had not been resolved.

Members requested that in these cases, they be alerted to which directorate has been responsible for not sending a copy of their response to the Complaints team.

Resolved: That Members note:

- The performance levels
- The cases where a finding of maladministration has been made
- The on-going work required to ensure the Council meets it's responsibilities under the relevant legislation for adults and

children's social care complaints and the corporate complaints policy

Reason: To keep Members informed of activity in this area

## **25. Social Value Policy**

Officers presented the revised Social Value Policy and asked the committee to comment on the report prior to the Executive Decision Session.

Members questioned whether the Council divides some of its larger procurement projects into smaller pieces to allow smaller companies to be involved in the business. Officers explained that the Procurement team will do this, where appropriate, and attends meetings and business events to engage with local businesses.

Officers noted that, whilst the policy would mandate that social value be sought for procurement over £100k, it would be sought at all levels of procurement and for clarity, this would be added to the draft policy.

Under further questioning from Members, Officers highlighted that they did not wish to prescribe what types of Social Value would be sought too specifically as this would hinder innovation. Instead, the Social Value provided is considered within evaluation of the 'quality' of a service against its monetary value.

Resolved: That Members approve the policy, subject to the agreed amendments.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the Social Value Act and that the Council has a clear and consistent approach to delivery of Social Value through procurement.

## **26. Scoping Report on Financial Inclusion**

Members discussed the potential of a Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Review into Financial Inclusion.

There were three officer updates to the report:

- In paragraph 2.11 – Officers highlighted the changes to Universal Credit that will come into force in 2019.

- Officers explained that residents can claim for discretionary housing payments online and are automatically considered for the Council Tax Discretionary Scheme
- It was noted that during a recent national audit report, more than 80% of people were satisfied with Department for Work and Pensions, 40% of people were found to be in financial difficulties, 20% of people could not claim and 20% of people were not paid in full.

One amendment was made to the objectives, to now read:

- iv) To understand how the various initiatives aimed at addressing the cause of financial ~~inclusion~~ *exclusion* funded by the Financial Inclusion Steering Group are awarded and measured.

One addition was made to the remit of the review:

- To look at the impact of Universal Credit on families with uncertain employment patterns within a volatile employment market.

Resolved: That Members agree to undertake a Scrutiny Review into Financial Inclusion and appoint a task group to undertake the review on the committee's behalf.

Councillors N Barnes, Brooks and Fenton were nominated to form the task group.

Reason: To comply with Scrutiny protocols and procedures

## **27. Scrutiny Operations and Functions Review Update Report**

Members received an update on the proposed remit for the review into Scrutiny Operations and Functions.

Resolved: That Members:

1. Agree the remit as proposed
2. Agree the timeframe for the review

Reason: To comply with Scrutiny protocols and procedures

## **28. Work Plan 2018-19**

Members discussed the Work Plan for 2018/19.

Members and Officers agreed to receive the Scrutiny Budget Report at November's committee meeting.

Resolved: That the work plan for 2018/19 be agreed, subject to the above amendment.

Reason: To ensure that committee's activities are planned and actioned.

Councillor Daffyd Williams, Chair  
[The meeting started at 17:30 and finished at 18:45]