
Corporate Scrutiny Committee

10 November 2025

Report of the Chief Strategy Officer

Process to respond to Council Motions

Summary

1. This report invites the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to consider a revised process to support Full Council Motions.
2. The proposed revisions to the existing process will see responses coordinated by Strategy, working with Democratic Services, Council Management Team (CMT), and relevant service areas to coordinate timely, considered responses to Motions agreed by Full Council.
3. The objective of amending the process is twofold – first, to ensure motion resolutions are actioned in a timely manner and second, to ensure that City of York Council is proactive in articulating a clear position to UK Government on the issues that are most pertinent to York's residents.

Background

4. Full Council Motions are formal proposals put forward for discussion by the different Groups, to invite consideration and a vote by Full Council. If approved, the motion proposes actions for officers to deliver.
5. As set out in **Annex A** to the Monitoring and Tracking of Approved Council Motions report (Item 7), there are currently 20 motions, each with several resolutions, that are awaiting completion. These motions range from October 2022 to present.
6. Presently, Full Council Motions are recorded by Democratic Services with relevant chief officer notified.
7. Motions are reviewed by Corporate Scrutiny Committee twice a year with the next review scheduled for its meeting on 10 November 2025.

8. Occasionally, motion actions stall or actions are not recorded as completed or undeliverable leading to an incomplete assurance process that Motions are appropriately dealt with. In addition, correspondence is issued to ministerial teams from multiple council teams with no oversight of the relationship being nurtured with central government.

Proposal

9. Scrutiny is invited to consider revisions to the process, as set out below:
 - i. Groups are encouraged to engage officers when formulating motions to ensure they are within scope.
 - ii. Draft Motions continue to be considered by Director of Governance (with input from Strategy team as required and with enough time for assessment by CMT – see paragraph 10b) to deem whether they are within the Council's scope of influence.
 - iii. Democratic Services continue to maintain the record of Motions passed by Full Council and record the relevant chief officer accountable.
 - iv. Democratic Services issue Motions approved by Full Council (including any amendments to the motion agreed at Full Council) to the Head of City Strategy and Corporate Programmes.
 - v. The Strategy team conducts an analysis of the Motion and resolutions to confirm:
 - i. the role the Council can play
 - ii. the actions that could deliver the resolutions, whether deliverable within resource constraints or whether they can be incorporated into ongoing work
 - vi. The Strategy team works with the lead accountable officer to understand how the motion aligns to the Council Plan 2023-2027 (including in respect of the four core commitments) and develop a plan of activity including timeframes to confirm what will happen by who and when.
 - vii. Strategy team progresses approval of the plan of activities with the relevant Director(s) and then relevant Executive Member and Leader.

- viii. If the activities include correspondence to a relevant Minister or Government official, the Strategy team will draft this in consultation with the lead accountable officer, for issue via the correspondence@york.gov.uk to ensure any response is also appropriately dealt with. All correspondence will be logged and filed centrally in a Teams folder for CMT to refer to if required.
 - ix. The Strategy team will coordinate delivery of the activities, keeping the log of Motions up to date for Democratic Services to publish at Corporate Scrutiny Committee.
10. Corporate Scrutiny Committee are further invited to consider:
- a) Whether there should be a time limit to Motions (for example, whether they should be retained within administrative term, and then reset at the start of the next administrative term)
 - b) Whether Groups would provide proposed motions to Democratic Services with a longer lead in time for assessment of options and constraints before Full Council are invited to consider the Motion.

Consultation

- 11. Democratic Services have been consulted on the proposed approach and support its implementation.
- 12. An initial scoping conversation was held with the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to solicit views on the outlined approach with Corporate Scrutiny Committee now invited to consider.
- 13. Executive will be consulted following Scrutiny consideration.

Analysis

- 14. Maintaining the current process for motions would ensure although a record of motions is maintained it would continue the current system and risk a lack of proactive coordination for responding to them.
- 15. The proposal set out in this report, for the Strategy team to act as a convenor and coordinator of Motion responses aligning with other government relations activity, would support the furthering of the Council's ambitions and create a proactive process for motions.

Council Plan

16. The recommendation directly contributes to How we Operate as a Council, with part of the review of the Motion including its alignment to the council's policy and strategy framework, and Council Plan 2023-2027.

Implications

17. Internal process change using existing resource. No organisational implications.

Risk Management

18. **Reputational** – a risk of not responding to, or providing uncoordinated responses to, motions approved by Full Council, is that the Council's reputation is damaged. The proposed process will support the mitigation of this risk by creating a convening function to progress responses.
19. **Political** – failing to respond to Full Council motions is a political risk as they often relate to national/international issues that Councillors and residents want to respond to. Through identifying these motions and utilising Council processes to reach out to government, the proposed process helps to mitigate this risk.

Recommendations

20. Corporate Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider:
 - The proposed revision to the process
 - Whether a time limit should be applied to the process
 - Whether proposed motions can be provided with greater lead in time for assessment prior to Full Council

Reason: To inform the council's refreshed motion process.

Contact Details

Author:

Samuel Blyth
Head of City Strategy and
Corporate Programmes
samuel.blyth@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Claire Foale
Chief Strategy Officer

**Report
Approved**



Date 22 October 2025

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

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For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Previous review of Council Motions by Corporate Services, Climate Change
and Scrutiny Management Committee – Monday 10 March 2025
(<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s181871/Council%20motions%20report%20March%202025.pdf>)

Abbreviations:

CMT – Corporate Management Team

Annexes

Annex A – ‘Live’ Council Motions (see Annex A at Item 7)