

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

Executive

To: Councillors Douglas (Chair), Kilbane (Vice-Chair), Kent, Lomas, Pavlovic, Ravilious, Steels-Walshaw and Webb

Date: Tuesday, 11 March 2025

Time: 4.30 pm

Venue: West Offices - Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on **3 March 2025**. The attached additional documents are now available for the following agenda item:

9. Review of the City of York Council Scrutiny Function (Pages 3 - 8)

This report provides Executive with the final Centre for Governance and Scrutiny recommendations following the Scrutiny Impact Review, and a proposed action plan to address each of the recommendations, for members' consideration.

This agenda supplement was published on **11 March 2025**

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CYC SCRUTINY IMPACT REVIEW
PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

	ACTION	PROPOSAL	WHO	WHEN	SCRUTINY COMMENTS
1.	The Council should work to develop a shared vision and understanding of scrutiny	A working group be established, to develop proposals. The working group to then meet with the Leader & Deputy Leader to discuss and agree.	Current scrutiny chairs and vice chairs (May choose to co-opt others from time to time, e.g. Chair and deputy of A&G)	Commencing March 2025 and ongoing	Recommendation is supported by CSCCSM Cttee
2.	The Council should employ a dedicated Scrutiny officer to enhance the impact and practice of Scrutiny, in particular task group investigations. Skills for this role would include research, project management and policy development. On-going training and support for the Scrutiny officer should also be considered particularly if recruited internally, to support the role to achieve good Scrutiny	The structure of the DS team is being reviewed to add a dedicated Scrutiny Officer to the establishment.	LT/BR	Implement May/June 2025	Recommendation is supported by CSCCSM Cttee. Members were keen to understand the role and workload, and supported that it should be a true “dedicated” role, providing specialist scrutiny support to committees and Task & Finish Groups.

3.	Substitute members of committees should be limited in number and named individuals rather than allowing any Cllr to act as a substitute at any given time	Members to determine if they wish to change the current arrangement for CSCCSM which is that the requirement for named subs can be overridden by the COO, MO /HODG if requested.	Council, following recommendation by Executive with Scrutiny views taken into account	March 2025	Recommendation not agreed. Members were concerned at the lack of available named subs from smaller groups; last minute absence due to illness etc could mean no sub is available etc.
4.	Revisit and refresh the Cabinet/Scrutiny protocol, including the establishment of regular structured meetings between Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs and relevant Cabinet Member(s) to discuss collaboration and future mutual priorities and upcoming decisions and projects	Working group established under Rec 1 above, to take this work forward and discuss/agree with Leader and Deputy Leader once proposals have been developed.	Working Group/LT/DSO/Scrutiny Officer	Commencing March 2025 and ongoing	Recommendation agreed by CSCCSM Cttee. Members suggest amended action: Working group established under Rec 1 above, to take this work forward and discuss with Leader and Deputy Leader plus relevant Directors and Corporate Directors once proposals have been developed. Members were keen that the Forward Plan process be included in the work around this recommendation and recommendation 6.
5.	Scrutiny taking a more deliberate and planned approach to budget scrutiny throughout the year. This	Scrutiny cttees to develop proposals in consultation with Chief Finance Officer	Working Group/Scrutiny Cttees/DM/LT/Scrutiny Officer	Commencing March 2025 and ongoing	Recommendation supported by CSCCSM Cttee. Members agreed the working group should look at good practice elsewhere and develop a more

	should include a focus upon service delivery beyond finances				defined budget scrutiny process. Amend action to: "Scrutiny cttees to develop proposals in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and executive member for Finance"
6.	Review and enhance the scrutiny work planning process – supporting a Member-led work plan	Working Group to lead; other members, eg Leader /Executive members to be co-opted to the group as appropriate	Working Group/Scrutiny Cttees/LT/Scrutiny Officer	Commencing March 2025 and ongoing	Recommendation supported by CSCCSM Cttee.
7.	Undertake policy development in the form of task groups. This move would also require the timely awareness of scrutiny in issues that are being developed or decided upon, as scrutiny would need to undertake deep-dive work on areas where it could make a tangible difference.	As above – structured approach to TFG work throughout each year	Scrutiny/Executive	Commencing May 2025	Recommendation supported by CSCCSM Cttee. Members noted that the success of shifting the emphasis to scrutiny being undertaken by TFGs, this would be dependent on a dedicated scrutiny officer to support the work. There would need to be a clear process for agreeing to undertake a TFG, with some caveats on how many could be run each year. Members agreed that the work of TFGs needs to have

					accountability and transparency factored in.
8.	That the Council consider reviewing the alignment of committees to better reflect either the departmental organisation, or Cabinet portfolios. This would bring greater clarity as to which officers or lead members were accountable to which committee. As part of this work the Council should consider reducing the number of committees and possibly the number of councillors on those committees	Proposal to restructure: two scrutiny committees – • Overview and Place Scrutiny Committee (11 members) – this committee to have call in powers • People Services Scrutiny Committee (9 members) Elected member and wider resident and partner involvement to be strengthened and enhanced through participation in properly supported Task and Finish groups.	Council, following recommendation by Executive with Scrutiny views taken into account	March 2025	Members discussed this recommendation in conjunction with recommendation 9. There was no consensus as to whether to support the reduction to two committees or three. Members supported the principle of fewer members on the committees. It will be essential to build in a formal review process at milestone points, to determine whether implementation has been effective, whether changes are working or require amendments etc. Members commented that scrutiny could be strengthened by non-voting members being appointed to the committees.

9.	That the frequency of Scrutiny Committee meetings be reviewed with a view to having fewer formal meetings, but developing scope for greater focus, preparation, including briefings and review work	Formal meetings to be scheduled bi-monthly. Information reports to be made available by alternate means, eg bi-monthly briefing sessions (Teams/hybrid) and member portal library	Executive, with Scrutiny views taken into account	March 2025	Members discussed this recommendation in conjunction with recommendation 8. CSCCSM Cttee supported the principle of recommendation 9, i.e. reduction to bi-monthly meetings. It was noted that the process for adding reports to agendas would need to be very clearly defined. Items for noting, or for information, would be directed to a briefing. Members were keen that briefings should be recorded and made available for members to access.
10.	Introduce a formal process to track recommendations that Scrutiny makes.	Modern Gov action tracking functionality to be utilised	DSO team/LT/Scrutiny Officer	May 2025	Recommendation supported by CSCCSM Cttee.
11.	Reinstate the process of having an annual scrutiny report but update the format to focus on the impact and difference that scrutiny has made	Scrutiny Officer will liaise with scrutiny chairs to produce annual report detailing work undertaken throughout the year, benefits and value realised etc and a look forward to the coming year.	Scrutiny Officer/LT/Scrutiny Chairs	March 2026	Recommendation supported by CSCCSM Cttee.

12.	A programme of ongoing training for members in undertaking good scrutiny, which could include work programming as well as coaching for chairs	Working with LGA to develop training programme to encompass: • Scrutiny member training • TFG training • Executive member training • Officer training	LT/DSO team	To begin delivery May 2025	Recommendation supported by CSCCSM Cttee.
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