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Meeting	Communities and Environment Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	15 March 2016
Present	Councillors Gunnell (Chair), Richardson (Vice-Chair), Funnell, Kramm, K Myers, Mason and Orrell

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#### **46. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests they may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

#### **47. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **48. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's public participation scheme.

#### **49. City of York Council Third Quarter Finance and Performance Monitoring Report**

Members gave consideration to a report that provided details of the 2015/16 Monitor 3 Finance and Performance for services within City and Environmental Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods.

Members noted that the position was similar to that at Quarter 2 with a significant overspend on waste, although this was being offset by additional income within Communities and Neighbourhood Services such as the income received from the crematorium.

Resolved: That the financial information contained in the report be noted.

Reason: To update the scrutiny committee on the latest finance position.

## **50. Update on The Community Safety Unit**

Members considered a report which provided an update on the work that is being delivered by the Community Safety Unit.

In response to questions from members, officers confirmed the following:

- Localised issues such as fly tipping would continue to be picked up through the normal Council processes although the Hub would be involved in monthly campaigns focusing on particular issues.
- In terms of the budget, it was confirmed that the Hub is working within budget constraints but more collaborative working across services will continue to improve efficiency. Funding bids were also being made to progress anti-social behaviour work.
- Ward level data is still available to Ward Members and the Police and Crime Commission has community funding which could be bid for.

Following a vote, members agreed that the Community Safety Hub update report could be brought to the committee annually rather than bi-annually.

Resolved: That Members noted the report and agreed that annual updates to the committee on the Community Safety Hub were acceptable.

Reason: To provide members with an update on the changes which have been introduced to the way in which crime and community safety is tackled in York.

**51. Update on Embracing Diversity: A Hate Crime Strategy for York**

Members considered a report which provided an update on the delivery of the hate crime strategy for York.

In response to questions from Members, Officers confirmed that at the time of the first strategy in 2013, designated hate crime reporting centres had typically been places where people met, such as libraries. As part of the 2016 refresh of the strategy, a review of the reporting centres was due to take place as it was recognised some of the centres were no longer fit for purpose.

Members suggested that the Equality Advisory Group should be presented with the draft refreshed 2016 Strategy and that Ward Members should be consulted on possible venues within their wards for use as reporting centres.

Resolved:            That Members:

- (i)      Commented on the report as outlined above.
- (ii)     Noted that the recommendations made within the North Yorkshire Police Hate Crime Problem Profile will be incorporated within the refresh of the Community Safety Plan.

Reason:              To update the committee on work being undertaken to tackle hate crime.

**52. The Housing and Planning Bill and Changes to Lifetime Tenancies**

Consideration was given to a report on the Council's Tenancy Strategy and sought members comments on whether the Committee should participate in it's future review.

Officers outlined the report and advised that The Housing and Planning Bill, currently working through parliament, was proposing changes which would remove the right to a 'lifetime

tenancy' and make it compulsory for all new council tenants to be signed up on fixed term tenancies.

Members raised concerns about the proposed changes and the possible implications for York's Council tenants. They agreed that it may be suitable for scrutiny review in the next municipal year once the Bill has progressed, with a focus on identifying what might be the appropriate number of years for a fixed term tenancy and suitable criteria for renewing a tenancy.

Members agreed they would like the committee to participate in a review of the Council's Tenancy Strategy once the Bill had passed and requested an update from officers at the appropriate time.

Resolved: That a further update be provided to the committee once the bill is passed to inform and identify an appropriate scrutiny review remit.

Reason: To proceed with the work of scrutiny in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

### **53. Housing Allocations and Choice Based Lettings Update**

Members considered a report which asked them to consider whether the committee would like to be involved in the next phase of a review of the housing allocation process 'Choice Based Lettings'.

Members queried a number of points regarding how the current system operated and felt it would be useful for the committee to be involved in the next phase of the review, to help shape improvements to the allocations process.

Members agreed that Councillors Funnell, Orrell and Richardson would form the task group.

Resolved: That Members:

- (i) Noted the findings from the officer review to date.

- (ii) Agreed that the committee would participate in the next phase of the review by way of a task group made up of the members outlined above.
- (iii) Agreed that the task group would meet for the first time in April/early May 2016.

Reason: To proceed with the work of scrutiny in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

#### **54. Goose Management Scrutiny Review Final Report**

Members considered the draft final report of Goose Management scrutiny review.

Members noted the amended report (attached to the online agenda for this meeting). Members were advised that the changes took into account further feedback from the Lead Officer and feedback on the associated implications in order to provide further clarity.

Councillor Kramm who had chaired the task group, addressed the committee to outline the findings of scrutiny review. The Scrutiny Officer advised members that the effectiveness of the proposed recommendations would need to be monitored over a number of years before any further decisions are taken regarding the management of geese.

Resolved: That the draft recommendations made by the Task Group, as detailed in paragraph 35 of the amended report, be endorsed.

Reason: To conclude the work on this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

#### **55. Update Briefing on Flooding Programme**

Members received an update on the on the programme of work following the floods of December 2015.

The Leader was in attendance for this item and provided the committee with an update on where the Council was currently at

with the arrangements for appointing a chair of the inquiry and panel.

Discussion then took place around the briefing note, in particular on the following points:

- Whether the flood inquiry would look at the cause of flooding in outlying areas of the City. Officers confirmed that the inquiry shouldn't be constrained to the city centre and it was likely that issues regarding outlying areas would arise as the inquiry progressed.
- Members queried if any changes to Council processes had already been implemented following the floods. The Assistant Director advised that the format in which the Council received map data from the Environment Agency had already been changed as a result of issues that arose during the floods.
- It was confirmed that the cost of the floods to the Council had not yet been finalised as it was still unclear how much central government would be providing in reimbursements.
- It was confirmed by officers that there wasn't an official register in place which recorded the names and contact details of volunteers willing to help in a civil emergency.

Following further discussions around the use of volunteers during the floods and the apparent lack of any health and safety precautions or training programme, it was agreed that 3 committee members would meet to draft a scrutiny topic proposal around the use of volunteers in civil emergencies and report back to the Scrutiny Officer in due course.

Resolved:

That Members:

- (i) Noted the briefing note.
- (ii) Agreed that Councillors Kramm, Mason and Myers would meet to formulate a scrutiny topic proposal for the committee's consideration at a later meeting.

Reason:

To keep the committee informed on issues falling under their remit and to proceed with the work of scrutiny in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

## 56. **Workplan**

Consideration was given to the committees work plan for 2015/16.

It was noted that the following items would be added to the agenda for the May 2016 meeting:

- Scrutiny Training
- Review of how the committee has worked in 2015/16

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: To ensure the committee has a planned programme of work in place

Councillor Gunnell, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.20 pm].

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