
Meeting	Communities and Environment Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	17 November 2015
Present	Councillors Gunnell (Chair), Richardson (Vice-Chair), Funnell, Kramm, K Myers, Mason and Orrell
In attendance	Councillor Waller

26. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda.

- Councillor Richardson declared a standing personal interest in items on the agenda as Vice-Chair of North Yorkshire Fire Authority.
- Councillor Funnell declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 (Update on Implementation of Recommendations from Previously Completed Domestic Waste and Recycling Scrutiny Review), as a member and former Chair of St Nicks.

27. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

- It was noted that the Member visit to Hazel Court depot, which had been instigated by Councillor Richardson, had been very useful (minute 24 refers).
- Members were informed that the average saving achieved by households participating in the Collective Switch was £200 per annum. Whether this saving off set the impact of welfare reforms was dependent on the circumstances of the household (minute 19 refers).

28. Public Participation

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

29. Update on Implementation of Recommendations from Previously Completed Domestic Waste and Recycling Scrutiny Review

Members considered a report which provided an update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previously completed Domestic Waste and Recycling scrutiny review. Members were asked to consider signing off the review recommendations. Members noted that the remit of the review had been very narrow and that it had been difficult to identify the value for money achieved by different strategies because of problems in establishing control groups.

The Executive Member for the Environment was in attendance for this item. It was noted that he had commissioned a more comprehensive review of the service, which aimed to incorporate the recommendations of the scrutiny review. A report on this was due to be considered at a Decision Session on 18 November 2015 and was included at Annex A. Members questioned the Executive Member about aspects of the report and were asked to give feedback on its contents. Issues raised included:

- The need to ensure that environmental impact assessments were carried out when any changes to collections were considered.
- The role that Community Involvement Officers could play in raising awareness of issues in respect of recycling arrangements.
- There remained some issues regarding calendars not being delivered – officers would follow up these incidents.
- The work carried out by the Community Furniture Store had not been referenced in the report.
- The inequity in respect of green waste collections, as some areas of the city did not receive this service. The Executive Member confirmed that consideration would be given as to how to increase access to garden waste collection whilst working within budgetary constraints.
- Issues in respect of the recycling of plastics.

Whilst some concerns were expressed that more work could be done to address some of the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review and hence they should not be signed-off at this stage, most Members agreed that the way forward was for the remaining recommendations to be addressed through the planned development of the service.

The Executive Member was thanked for his attendance at the meeting.

- Resolved:
- (i) That the planned development of City of York Council Waste Services, as detailed in the Executive Member report (Annex A) be noted.
 - (ii) That the recommendations arising from the Domestic Waste and Recycling Scrutiny Review be addressed through the planned development of the service.
 - (iii) That the previous review recommendations be signed off and that it be agreed that no further updates specific to that scrutiny review are required.
 - (iv) That, as part of his regular reports to the Committee, the Executive Member provide an update on progress in promoting recycling in York.

Reason: To complete the work of the Domestic Waste and Recycling Scrutiny Review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocol.

30. Overview of Public Health Substance Misuse Services

Members considered a report that provided an overview of the role of the Public Health Team in relation to substance misuse, together with information about the public health commissioned substance misuse services.

The Chair stated that the committee had requested further information on this issue having been concerned to receive only limited information on the issue of drug misuse, and in particular legal highs, in the report from the Safer York Partnership that had been presented at the previous meeting.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report, which outlined local authorities' responsibilities for substance misuse treatment services and the funding arrangements. Officers gave details of the two service providers who delivered specialist treatment services within City of York. Members gave consideration to the performance outcomes, as detailed in paragraph 13 and Annex A of the report.

Members questioned officers about the cuts in funding to public health and how this would impact on the services provided. They were informed the reduction in funding would present significant challenges but would also present opportunities to redefine priorities and look at ways of improving outcomes. Attention was also drawn to the contribution made by community and voluntary sector organisations in improving health and wellbeing outcomes including substance misuse. It was proposed to reprofile some expenditure to focus more on intervention and reducing the need for specialist treatment.

Officers were asked how the public health team worked with the Police and other organisations in order to gauge the extent of drug use among young people. They stated that they were part of the Safer York Partnership and included in the membership of the AVANTE Board.

Clarification was sought regarding the new Alcohol Strategy. Members were informed of the reasons why progress had been delayed. However, further work and consultation would be taking place on the draft strategy and this would be completed before services were recommissioned.

Officers stated that they would welcome the committee's comments on the work that was being carried out to tackle substance misuse, as the focus would not be solely on the health issues but also the causal issues and how the misuse impacted on the wider community.

Referring to the issue that had been raised regarding legal highs, officers stated that accurate data on this matter and the information gained was currently largely anecdotal. There was a need to obtain better intelligence on this issue, including feedback from the voluntary sector and schools as well as the Police and Ambulance Services.

It was noted that a number of issues raised during the discussions had fallen within the remit of the Health and Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee, although other aspects, for example drug related crime and disorder, fell within the remit of this committee.

Members agreed that a further report be presented to the committee to provide an update on the work that was taking place on this issue.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That a more detailed report from the Safer York Partnership be presented to the committee.

Reasons: (i) To provide the committee with an overview of substance and misuse treatment services.

(ii) To update the committee on the work of the Safer York Partnership in respect of tackling substance abuse and its impact on crime and disorder.

31. Update on Implementation of Recommendations from Previously Completed A-Boards Scrutiny Review

Members considered a report which provided an update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previously completed scrutiny review on the use of A-boards.

Members noted the current situation and the consultation that would take place regarding a licensed approach.

Members commented that the scrutiny review task group had previously carried out consultation on the issue of A-boards and they queried whether further consultation was necessary. Officers stated the proposed consultation would focus on the proposed licensed approach and was also required because the intention was now to impose legally enforceable conditions.

Members expressed some concerns regarding the resource implications of ensuring that the conditions were enforced. It was agreed that the conditions would need to be clear and enforceable.

Resolved: (i) That the contents of the report, and the Council's agreed change to direction in regard to A-boards, be noted.

(ii) That the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review be signed-off as being no longer appropriate.

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

32. Horse Bailiff Scheme

Members considered a report which reviewed the impact of the council's new process for tackling horses that are fly grazing on council land through the work of the horse bailiff. Officers stated that the policy was working effectively. The aim was not to seize horses but to act as a deterrent.

Resolved: (i) That the work to date through the appointment of a horse bailiff be noted.

(ii) That no further update reports be presented to the committee on this issue.

Reasons: (i) To update Members on the arrangements in place.

(ii) Members were satisfied that the policy was working satisfactorily.

33. Stag and Hen Parties Scrutiny Review Interim Report

Members considered a report which presented the findings of the Stag and Hen Parties Scrutiny Review Task Group to date, together with a draft review remit for the committee's consideration.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 15 of the report, which detailed the original aim of the review. However, having attended a meeting of the Operation Erase Working Group which had been set up by the Alcohol, Violence and Night Time Economy Group (AVANTE) and having received feedback from CYC officers regarding the proposed work on the Alcohol

Strategy, the Task Group had agreed that this could be a more suitable topic for scrutiny to review and progress.

Members noted the suggested amended aim and objectives of the review as detailed in paragraph 15 of the report.

Members commented on the work that had been carried out as part of the Night Time Economy Scrutiny Review and suggested that aspects of this could be fed into the proposed review. It was also suggested that any review of alcohol related issues should include the off-licenses as well as other suppliers.

It was confirmed that Safer York Partnership was leading on the work to tackle alcohol related crime and disorder issues experienced across the city. Members therefore agreed that it would be useful to receive some detailed information from the Safer York Partnership on the resources available to deal with those issues, in order to assess whether or not those resources were appropriate and to inform the need for an associated scrutiny review.

Resolved: That a meeting be convened with the Safer York Partnership.

Reason: To inform the committee's decisions regarding a possible future scrutiny review.

34. Proposed Scrutiny Review on Goose Management

Members received a verbal update from the Geese Management Scrutiny Review Task Group.

The Task Group had discussed the issues on which they would wish a review to focus. They were proposing that the remit of the review should include investigation of different measures of urban bird management and collection mechanisms for deposits from urban birds. The Task Group would like to focus on two specific areas of York, with the intention of improving the experience of visitors. It was hoped to include co-opted members in the membership of the Task Group. The Task Group would also arrange a meeting with the Friends of Rowntree Park as had been agreed at the previous meeting.

Resolved: (i) That the verbal update be noted.

- (ii) That a review of Geese Management be approved.
- (iii) That the Task Group draft a remit for the review for sign-off at the next committee meeting.

Reason: To progress the review in accordance with scrutiny protocols and procedures.

35. Workplan

Consideration was given to the committee's workplan for 2015-16.

It was noted that an item had been included on the agenda for the next meeting on York Tenancy Strategy and City of York Council Allocations Policy. The Chair suggested that this might be an issue on which the committee would wish to carry out a scrutiny review.

Concerns were expressed regarding the process by which Members had been invited to contribute to the Executive Member report on Promoting Recycling in York and the fact that this had been an annex to the report on the recommendations arising from a previous scrutiny review. Officers explained the reasons why this had happened and detailed the usual procedures for pre-decision scrutiny.

Members requested that, if possible, the date of the planned meeting with the Safer York Partnership be before the next committee meeting.

Resolved: That the workplan be approved.

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

Councillor Gunnell, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 8.05 pm].