



Notice of a public meeting of

Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee

To: Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Baker, Fisher, Hollyer, Musson, Norman, Pearson and Rowley

Date: Monday, 3 October 2022

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: The George Hudson Board Room - 1st Floor West Offices (F045)

AGENDA

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 05 September 2022.

3. **Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is **5:00pm on Thursday, 29 September 2022.**

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During coronavirus, we made some changes to how we ran council meetings, including facilitating remote participation by public speakers. See our updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. 2022/23 Finance and Performance Monitor 1 (Pages 5 - 16)

The report contains details of the overall finance and performance position for the period covering 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022, together with an overview of any emerging issues.

5. Progress of the Organisational Development Plan (Pages 17 - 28)

This report provides an update on the Organisational Development Plan.

6. Customer Centre Performance (Pages 29 - 40)

This report provides detailed information on the current telephone performance pressures in the Customer Centre within the council's Customer Services Team.

7. Digital Inclusion Update (Pages 41 - 48)

This report provides an update for committee members covering the digital inclusion partnership led by Explore York and the council, as well as the digital connectivity landscape in York for both residents and businesses.

8. Work Plan (Pages 49 - 50)

To consider the Work Plan.

9. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 **(01904) 551550**

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	5 September 2022
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Baker, Hollyer, Musson, Pearson, Rowley and Douglas (Substitute for Cllr Norman)
Apologies	Councillors Norman and Fisher
In Attendance	Councillor Aspden, Executive Leader (incorporating Policy, Strategy & Partnerships)
Officers Present	Ian Floyd, Chief Operating Officer Will Boardman, Head of Corporate Policy and City Partnerships

1. Declarations of Interest (5.33 pm)

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

No additional interests were declared.

2. Minutes (5.33 pm)

Resolved: That the minutes of the Customer and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 May 2022 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. Public Participation (5.33 pm)

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Geoff Beacon welcomed the new combined authority. He suggested that CYC should not go ahead with the draft Local Plan. This was due to

concerns about affordability of homes and climate which had not been addressed by the Housing Development Action Plan.

Peter Richardson was due to speak via telephone. Due to technical difficulties, he was unable to speak to Members. The Chair invited him to submit a written statement which would be distributed to the Committee on receipt.

4. Pre-decision scrutiny of Devolution Reports to Executive, September 2022 (5.40 pm)

Members reviewed the draft reports on the Devolution Deal (the Deal) and questioned the Executive Leader (incorporating Policy, Strategy and Partnerships), the Chief Operating Officer and the Head of Corporate Policy and City Partnerships on a variety of aspects of the agreement.

A joint presentation was given at the meeting. Firstly, the Executive Leader outlined the process of the Deal and explained that the level 3 devolution deal was the highest level of deal and equivalent to the devolution deals agreed for South and West Yorkshire. He highlighted that the Deal gave access to powers and funding levels that were of great benefit to the city.

The Chief Operating Officer then went on to outline the financial gains;

- £18 million per year in Gainshare funding over 30 years.
- Revenue moved to capital so as to front load expenditure and capitalise major projects.
- An additional £50m (subject to the final business case) would be delivered to the York Central project.

The Head of Corporate Policy and City Partnerships then explained the governance arrangements for the Combined Authority (CA).

The presentation was followed by comments from some key stakeholders.

Helen Simpson, Chair of the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (YNY LEP) explained that the national Government were completely committed to the Deal. It would transform the region's perception and improve the potential for economic growth. Decision making would be transferred to the community with transport, in particular, benefiting from this. The creation of a sizeable investment fund was the starting point to access other additional funding streams. The Deal meant inclusion in central government decisions and a growth in opportunities for the region.

James Farrar, Chief Operating Officer, YNY LEP, added that the Deal was an investment in business. Businesses needed certainty and rather than spending time writing complex bids for additional funding, the Deal meant that they could plan strategically for the long-term future and work with Higher Education and other partners.

Professor Charlie Jeffery, Vice Chancellor and President of University of York (UOY), explained that the Deal provided opportunity for growth and integrated partnerships. He highlighted the Bio Yorkshire programme as an example of the integrated approach that had been taken in the fields of agriculture, food and biotechnology with the aim of generating energy and reducing plastics. The UOY and Askham Bryan College had developed courses to provide trained graduates in these fields. The programme was leading the industry in the UK and internationally.

Carolyn Frank, the North Yorkshire Development Manager for the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) explained that the FSB had consulted regularly with members on devolution. The Deal was expected to bring skills to the region through access to a quality workforce and efficient business support with decisions made in West Offices rather than in Westminster. She identified the opportunity to involve all local businesses to develop a strategic partnership approach.

The stakeholders individually responded to a variety of questions from Members covering Local Authority (LA) planning for investment opportunities, confidence in the Deal in terms of future proofing, policy changes at national government level, possible areas of conflict between York and North Yorkshire and the region's Bio economy.

[The meeting was adjourned from 18:55 to 19:05 to allow for a short comfort break and to enable the stakeholders to leave.]

Following the adjournment, the Head of Corporate Policy and City Partnerships explained the next stage in the process for the Deal and noted that the funding and parameters of the Deal had already been set. A consultation period had begun on the scheme, concerning the mechanism for how the combined authority (CA) would work. Officers and the Executive Leader, responded to numerous questions on; transport and highways, funding details, governance and scrutiny, the consultation process and set up costs and housing.

[19:53 Cllr Baker left the meeting. 20:16 Cllr Musson left the meeting.]

Following a lengthy debate, the Chair summarised the Committee's comments on the Scheme, as outlined in the report and further presented at the meeting, as being:

- To note the proposed recommendations to the Executive/Council subject to recommendation 16.1 (c) being amended to reflect the cost risk being 'shared' across both authorities;
- To request a briefing note to be circulated to all Councillors on the consultation process to seek their views upon it to ensure it satisfactorily addressed the needs and formats for all;
- To request the Executive Leader and Chief Operating Officer keep all Members informed of any future developments as the Deal progressed.

Resolved: That the content and recommendations of the Devolution Reports be noted, subject to the above additional requests.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on the Devolution Deal.

5. Work Plan (5.38 pm)

Members considered the corporate scrutiny work plan covering the next meeting of this Committee and the meetings of the other Scrutiny Committees up until 07 November 2022.

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has a planned programme of work in place and an overview of the other Scrutiny Committees.

Cllr J Crawshaw, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 8.30 pm].



**Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee**

3 October 2022

**Report of the Chief Operating Officer
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects**

2022/23 Finance and Performance Monitor 1

Summary

- 1 To present details of the overall finance and performance position for the period covering 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022, together with an overview of any emerging issues. This is the first report of the financial year and assesses performance against budgets, including progress in delivering the Council's savings programme.
- 2 This report highlights a number of known pressures that need to be carefully managed throughout the year, with mitigation strategies being in place and regularly monitored across all directorates. Through ongoing monitoring and identification of mitigation alongside a review of reserves and other funding, the Council will continue to make every effort to reduce this forecast position but it is possible that it will not be reduced to the point that the outturn will be within the approved budget. The Council has £6.9m of general reserves that would need to be called on if this were the case.
- 3 We continue to see significant and ongoing pressure across both children's and adults social care budgets in particular. Within Children's these pressures are mainly in relation to Out of City placements and the continued use of agency staff. With Adults, the main pressures include the cost of care beds and also an inability to recruit to vacancies leading to the use of more expensive agency staff.
- 4 As outlined in the 2021/22 outturn report, considered by Executive in June 2022, many of the budget pressures are recurring whilst the mitigations that have allowed us to balance the budget were one off. Given the recent increases in interest rates, rising inflation and the ongoing pressures in both adults and children's social care it is therefore unsurprising that the early forecast is a significant overspend. Inflationary pressures are a particular challenge, adding some £4.5m to the overall forecast outturn. Further pressures are expected in respect of the budget

for pay award. Negotiations for the 2022/23 pay award are yet to begin, however the higher rates of inflation and cost of living crisis have emerged since the budget was set in February. Latest indications are that the 2022/23 pay settlement will be higher than the 2% allowed for in the budget.

- 5 Whilst the council's overall financial health provides a strong platform upon which to meet these financial challenges and good progress is being made with the achievement of savings, the forecast outlined in this report remains a matter of concern. The ongoing pressures within social care will again need to be addressed in the 2023/24 budget setting process.

Recommendations

- 6 The Committee is asked to:
- note the finance and performance information and the actions needed to manage the financial position

Reason: to ensure expenditure is kept within the approved budget.

Financial Summary

- 7 The gross financial pressures facing the council are projected at £8.7m but after mitigation and further action it is considered that this can be brought down to a net position of £6.7m.
- 8 As previously reported, there are serious underlying budget pressures across both adult and children's social care. Both adult and children's social care is operating in an extremely challenging environment and as a result additional funding of £7.6m was allocated across the People directorate in the 2022/23 budget.
- 9 This report highlights a number of known pressures that need to be carefully managed throughout the year, with mitigation strategies being in place and regularly monitored across all directorates. Through ongoing monitoring and identification of mitigation alongside a review of reserves, the Council will continue to make every effort to reduce this forecast position but it is likely that it will not be reduced to the point that the outturn will be within the approved budget. The Council has £6.9m of general reserves that would need to be called on if this were the case.
- 10 A number of mitigations and cost control measures will need to be considered to ensure that there are additional expenditure controls in place to ensure a reduction in expenditure. Given the scale of the financial challenge, and the expected impact on budgets in future years due to inflationary and other pressures outlined above, it is vital that every

effort is made to balance the overall position. It is recognised that this will require difficult decisions to be made in order to protect front line services to vulnerable residents.

- 11 York is maintaining both sound financial management, and delivering priority services to high standards, during a continued period of significant financial challenge. Whilst the Council's track record of delivering savings and robust financial management provides a sound platform to continue to be able to deal with these and future challenges there remains a significant risk to ongoing service delivery and achievement of Council priorities that needs to be managed effectively.

Financial Analysis

- 12 The Council's net budget is £135m. Following on from previous years, the challenge of delivering savings continues with £6.4m to be achieved in order to reach a balanced budget. Early forecasts indicate the Council is facing net financial pressures of £6.7m (after mitigation) and an overview of this forecast, on a directorate by directorate basis, is outlined in Table 1 below. The main variations and any mitigating actions that are proposed are summarised in Annex 1.

Service area	Net budget	2022/23 Gross Forecast Variation	Mitigation	2022/23 Net Forecast Variation
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children & Education	22,365	7,280		7,280
Adult Social Care & Integration	49,544	1,750		1,750
Place	21,748	1,247	-500	747
Customers & Communities, Public Health & Corporate Services	24,655	1,193	-500	693
Central budgets	18,072	-2,729		-2,729
Sub Total		8,741	-1,000	7,741
Contingency	-1,000		-1,000	-1,000
Total including contingency	135,384	8,741	-2,000	6,741

Table 1: Finance overview

Directorate Financial Summaries

Corporate Services, including Customers & Communities and Public Health

- 13 Overall the remaining Council services are forecasting an overspend of £1,193k.
- 14 Internal Business Support is forecast to overspend by £240k due to reduced income from schools for payroll services and not achieving the budgeted vacancy factor (which overall stands at £163k). Other variations include the non-achievement of approved budget savings in ICT (£200k), additional staffing costs not yet fully offset by income in Registrars (£126k), forecast impact of inflation on contracts for leisure facilities and libraries (£251k) and the continued pressure on Housing Benefit overpayments (£150k) as outlined in the 2021/22 outturn report. These overspends were offset by underspends in policy & partnerships (£67k) and finance & procurement (£62k) due to staff vacancies. In respect of the shortfalls in income, it is acknowledged that this is an early stage in the monitoring and it is anticipated that income generation may improve as they year progresses.

Corporate Budgets

- 15 These budgets include Treasury Management and other corporately held funds. A net underspend is forecast due to the early and increased delivery of a corporate saving. In addition, due to slippage on the capital programme, there has been a saving on interest and the cost of borrowing.

Reserves and Contingency

- 16 The February 2022 budget report to Full Council stated that the minimum level for the General Fund reserve should be £6.8m (equating to 5% of the net budget). At the beginning of 2022/23 the reserve stood at £6.9m and, as part of the budget report, approval was given to maintain this level of reserve in 2022/23 thus giving some headroom above the minimum level to take account of the continued risks facing the council, in particular the scale of future reductions on top of those already made.
- 17 Should the mitigation outlined in annex 1 not deliver the required level of savings in the current financial year then this reserve is available to support the year end position. However, in light of the ongoing financial challenges being faced by all councils it is now more important than ever to ensure the Council has sufficient reserves. Therefore, should it be the case that we need to draw down a substantial amount from this general

reserve in 2022/23, some growth will need to be included in the 2023/24 budget to ensure that reserves can be maintained at an appropriate level.

- 18 In addition to the general reserve of £6.9m there are a range of other earmarked reserves where funds are held for a specific purpose. These reserves are always subject to an annual review and these funds will again be reviewed on a quarterly basis and where appropriate to do so will be released to support the in-year position. Whilst this is a prudent approach that will ensure the financial resilience of the Council it is not a substitute for resolving the underlying overspends but instead allows time to develop future savings proposals in a planned way.
- 19 As in previous years a contingency budget is in place and this is currently assumed to be available to offset the pressures outlined in this report. The unused budget of £0.5m from last year, added to the base budget of £0.5m totals £1m available to offset the forecast overspend.

Loans

- 20 Further to a scrutiny review, it was agreed that these quarterly monitoring reports would include a review of any outstanding loans over £100k. There are 2 loans in this category. Both loans are for £1m and made to Yorwaste, a company part owned by the Council. The first was made in June 2012 with a further loan made in June 2017 as agreed by Executive in November 2016. Interest is charged on both loans at 4% plus base rate meaning currently interest of 5.25% is being charged. All repayments are up to date.

Performance – Service Delivery

- 21 In spite of the many challenges that the organisation and City has faced over the last two years, performance across the wider organisation, not just the Council plan indicators, has continued to remain high and continues to compare favourably when benchmarked against other areas with similar characteristics to York. Whilst Covid and the actions taken to tackle the global pandemic have in places affected performance in the short-term, the general pattern for data and information monitored by the Council is that levels of resident and customer satisfaction, timeliness and responsiveness, as well as various directorate and service based indicators, have remained positive.
- 22 It is likely that due to impacts of COVID, a number of the Council Plan indicators will continue to see a change both in terms of their numbers and their direction of travel in future reporting periods. The majority of the performance measures within the Council Plan have a lag between the

data being available, and the current reporting period and therefore impacts will not be immediately seen, and may occur over several years as new data becomes available.

- 23 Over recent months, the cost of living has continued to rise, due in part to the following:
- The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast inflation to be above 7% until at least Q1 2023-24. For 2022-23, the OBR forecast inflation to average 8%, more than double its previous forecast of 3.7%. Inflation reached 9.1% in May 2022, which indicates that inflation for Q2 2022 will almost certainly surpass the forecast. In response to higher inflation, interest rates have been raised from a low of 0.1% to 1.25% in mid June 2022.
 - In the year to May 2022, domestic gas prices increased by 95% and domestic electricity prices by 54%, due in part to a return of global gas demand as pandemic restrictions are lifted and lower than normal production of natural gas.
 - In a mid-June report, the Institute of Grocery Distribution anticipated annual food price inflation to be around 11% in 2022, peaking at 15% this summer.
 - Benefits increased by 3.1% in April 2022, which is less than the current (and expected) level of inflation.
- 24 This crisis will have an impact on residents, particularly those from lower income families, and businesses in the city. A number of performance indicators across all eight council plan themes will be affected in the short term, with both financial and reputational impacts. These indicators will be monitored and reported on through performance management framework processes over the coming months.
- 25 The Executive for the Council Plan (2019-23) agreed a core set of strategic indicators to help monitor the council priorities and these provide the structure for performance updates in this report. The indicators have been grouped around the eight outcome areas included in the Council Plan. Some indicators are not measured on a quarterly basis and the DoT (Direction of Travel) is calculated on the latest three results whether they are annual or quarterly.
- 26 Performance items around the Council plan topic “Open and Effective Council” are reported below, as historically other topics in the Council plan are reported to the other various scrutiny setups. See background documents for links to where this data has also been published at Executive.

An open and effective Council						
	Previous Data	Latest Data	DoT	Frequency	Benchmarks	Data Next Available
Forecast Budget Outum (€000s Overspent / -Underspent) - CYC	£2,638 (excluding contingency) (2021/22)	£7,741 (excluding contingency) (Q1 2022/23)	➔	Quarterly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
Average Sickness Days per FTE - CYC (Excluding Schools) - (Rolling 12 Month)	11.73 (2021/22)	12.68 (Prov) (May 2022)	➔	Monthly	Public Sector (Y&H) 2020/21 8	Q1 2022/23 data available in August 2022
Customer Services Waiting Times - Phone / Footfall / Webchat	00:01:28 (Phone) (2021/22)	00:02:07 (Phone) (Q1 2022/23)	➔	Monthly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
	72.80% (Footfall) (2021/22)	73.00% (Footfall) (Q1 2022/23)	➔	Monthly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
	75.90% (Webchat) (2021/22)	NC (Webchat) (Q1 2022/23)	➔	Monthly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
Number of days taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events (DWP measure)	3.14 (2020/21)	3.19 (2021/22)	➔	Monthly	Not available	Q1 2022/23 data available in August 2022
% of 4Cs complaints (grade 1 and 2) responded to 'In Time'	84.15% (2021/22)	94.23% (Q1 2022/23)	↑ Good	Monthly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
% of 4Cs complaints (grade 1 only) responded to 'In Time'	80.71% (2021/22)	88.73% (Q1 2022/23)	➔	Monthly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
CYC Apprenticeships	24 (2021/22)	25 (Q1 2022/23)	↑ Good	Quarterly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022
FOI & EIR - % In time - YTD	81.20% (2021/22)	84.90% (Q1 2022/23)	➔	Quarterly	Not available	Q2 2022/23 data available in October 2022

The DoT (Direction of Travel) is calculated on the latest three data points whether they are annual or quarterly.
All historic data is available via the Open Data Platform

Average Sickness Days per FTE - CYC (Excluding Schools)

- 27 At the end of May 2022, the average number of sickness days per FTE (rolling 12 months) has increased to 12.68 (provisional) days. In 2020-21, sickness had reduced in the authority by approximately 2 days per FTE, to 8.8 days per FTE, which is close to the LGA public sector for Yorkshire and Humber authorities average of 8 days. Since the start of Covid, although exact comparative figures are not yet available, all authorities in Yorkshire and Humber are reporting a significant increase in sickness levels within the whole workforce due to both Covid cases and increased pressures in frontline services.
- 28 On top of day-to-day managerial practices for sickness cases, additional work is underway to assist and remind managers of the support and services that employees can access as well as the managerial role in ensuring the wellbeing and absence management of those employees absent, or those who remain at work but showing signs of reduced resilience. Managers are being reminded of the importance of timely absence support for individuals and teams, and employees are reminded of the self care that they need to exercise to ensure that they are able to perform their roles effectively.

29 CYC saw a significant increase of Covid cases towards the end of the quarter, which although now falling will continue to increase the overall sickness figure in further quarters. Internally, business continuity plans are in place to ensure that services are able to be resilient to the fluctuating peaks and troughs of Covid infections, and it is likely that absence levels associated with Covid will return in the late Autumn / Winter, when combined with other reason for absence, which will further impact on our absence levels.

Customer Services Waiting Times (Phone / Footfall / Webchat etc)

30 Customer Service is the main point of contact for residents and business visitors. Similar to previous years, throughout Q1 demand increased as expected due to seasonal demand such as; Council Tax annual billing, queries relating to the £150 energy rebate and commencement of garden waste collections. The number of calls received increased to 56,253 (53,574 in Q4 2021-22), with 74.5% answered (41,925). 30.1% of calls were answered within 20 seconds.

31 During Q1, 452 (517 in previous quarter) customers booked an appointment with Customer Service at West Offices and a further 5,382 (3,361 in the previous quarter) 'dropped by' and received support. This figure includes Probation Services, Registrars and Blue Badge assessments. The majority of people 'dropping in' can access services without having to come to West Offices. In addition to speaking to customers over the phone, the customer service team also responded to 13, 492 e-mails (an increase from 12,781 in the previous quarter). Customer satisfaction data is still to be validated following the introduction of a new, automated way of capturing customer feedback.

32 Customers are continuing to opt to access services using alternative means:

- 9,651 customers made payments using the auto payments facility
- 15,350 people used the auto operator
- 57% of issues available to report online were reported by customers on-line
- There were around 1.2 million pages of the CYC website reviewed

Number of days to process Benefit claims (currently Housing Benefit)

33 The average number of days taken to process a new Housing Benefit claim, or a change in circumstance, has remained stable, being just over three days during 2021-22. York performance is above the most recent national average of 4.98 days (2020-21).

34 The first quarter of 2022-23 saw the introduction of the Energy Rebate (£150), the second Household Support Fund (HSF) and payment to qualifying businesses of the Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF). The YFAS fund aimed at keeping residents in the community, and providing emergency payments, continues to operate as normal. Business and Welfare support provided during Q1 2022-23 includes:

- Household Support Fund – 3,600 applications for payments to families and pensioners in receipt of Council Tax Support, and also customers in receipt of Enhanced rate PIP/DLA - totalling £500k
- 57,000 Energy Rebate payments of £150 totalling £8.5m which accounts for 77% of qualifying residents
- Discretionary Energy Rebate payments will be open for applications in July
- CARF payments to 1,000 businesses totalling £4m
- 66 Discretionary Housing Payments totalling £55k

% of 4C's Complaints responded to 'In Time' / % of Grade 1 4C's Complaints responded to 'In Time'

35 In Q1 2022-23 over 94% of corporate complaints/the 4Cs (grade 1 and 2) were responded to within their required timescales which is a very positive improvement from 84.15% in 2021-22. The grade 1 corporate complaints/the 4Cs, responded to in time, also showed a marked improvement from 2021-22 (up from 81% to 89%). The Corporate Governance team continues to work across the council to maintain this improvement.

CYC Apprenticeships

36 The number of CYC stand-alone apprenticeships only, which excludes those within schools or being completed alongside existing roles, was 25 at the end of Q1 2022-23. This figure increased throughout 2021-22 from 13 at the start of the year to 24 at the end.

37 Starts and completions on apprenticeships currently feature as part of the proposed metrics to measure the 'spreading opportunity and improving public service' objective in the Levelling Up agenda. As this is likely to be an area where data collection occurs locally, some additional reporting may be required by CYC in the future and as such, any supplementary information will also feature in future monitors.

38 Within York, increasing apprenticeships at higher levels and in science and technology-based industries was also recently included within the draft Economic Strategy for the city as an objective to support the 'Thriving Workforce' theme.

FOI/EIR and SAR - % In time

- 39 In Q1 2022-23, the council received 342 FOIs (Freedom of Information Act requests) and EIRs (Environmental Information Regulation requests) and 42 SARs (subject access to records request). The timeliness of these requests was 84.90% for FOIs/EIRs and 76.70% for SARs which is an improvement on the same quarter in the 2021-22 financial year.

Annexes

- 40 All performance data (and approximately 1,000 further datasets) within this document is made available in machine-readable format through the Council's open data platform at www.yorkopendata.org under the "performance scorecards" section.

Consultation

- 41 Not applicable.

Options

- 42 Not applicable.

Council Plan

- 43 The information and issues included in this report demonstrate progress on achieving the priorities set out in the Council Plan.

Implications

- 44 The implications are:
- **Financial** are contained throughout the main body of the report.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** There are no HR implications related to the recommendations
 - **One Planet Council / Equalities** Whilst there are no specific implications within this report, services undertaken by the council make due consideration of these implications as a matter of course.
 - **Legal** There are no legal implications related to the recommendations
 - **Crime and Disorder** There are no crime and disorder implications related to the recommendations
 - **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications related to the recommendations
 - **Property** There are no property implications related to the recommendations
 - **Other** There are no other implications related to the recommendations

Risk Management

- 45 An assessment of risks is completed as part of the annual budget setting exercise. These risks are managed effectively through regular reporting and corrective action being taken where necessary and appropriate.

Contact Details

Authors:	Chief Officer Responsible for the report:		
Debbie Mitchell Chief Finance Officer Ext 4161	Ian Floyd Chief Operating Officer		
Ian Cunningham Head of Business Intelligence Ext 5749	Report Approved	✓	Date 05/09/22
Wards Affected: All			✓
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

Glossary of Abbreviations used in the report:

CARF	COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund
CYC	City of York Council
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
EIR	Environmental Information Regulation requests
FOI	Freedom of Information Act requests
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HSF	Household Support Fund
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LGA	Local Government Association
OBR	Office for Budget Responsibility
PIP	Personal Independence Payment
SAR	Subject Access to Records request
YFAS	York Financial Assistance Scheme

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Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

3 October 2022

Report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Progress of the Organisational Development Plan

Summary

1. This report provides an update on the Organisational Development Plan (OD Plan) which was revised and approved in March 2022 and presented to this Committee on 14 March 2022.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note the progress made on the OD plan as outlined in **Annex 1**.

Reason: The above recommendation contributes to the effective delivery of a resilient, skilled and capable workforce to deliver the Council Plan.

Background

3. The key themes, actions of the OD Plan and Lead sponsor for the themes were agreed in March;

OD Plan Theme	CMT Lead Sponsor
Strong Leadership	Ian Floyd – Chief Operating Officer
Engaged Staff	Claire Foale – AD Policy and Strategy
Embed a performance culture	Bryn Roberts – Director of Gov. & Monitoring Officer and Debbie Mitchell – Chief Finance Officer and s151
Adjust to new ways of working	Pauline Stuchfield – Director of Customer and Communities
Improve skills and knowledge	Neil Ferris - Corporate Director of Place

Encourage staff retention and recognition	Jamaila Hussain Corporate Director of Adults Social Care and Integration
Improve health and wellbeing	Sharon Stoltz – Director of Public Health

Narrative on Progress Made

4. Good progress has been made on the majority of the action plan (**Annex 1**), many aspects will not be complete in the short term or as a one off action, as a key part of the challenge is embedding good leadership, culture, the values and behaviours. The Values have been promoted and starting to be more visible on key messages.
5. The themes of the OD plan are also alive in all directorates. Place Services have started a cultural piece of work which includes reinforcing and embedding the Council Values and behaviours, as well as working together as we embrace new ways of working. Succession planning and addressing the recruitment challenges that this service and other parts of the Council are facing are also key priorities.
6. In Adult Services a resilience exercise is underway to support the workforce as they support our vulnerable residents. There is also a focus on ensuring we attract and retain key social care staff.
7. The new Children's Director roles are now in post and the directorate are focusing on workforce priorities and elements of the OD plan.
8. Corporate focus has been on projects such as the Working as One programme, performance and governance improvements, the implementation of the new Constitution (and member and officers code of conduct), continued development of Microsoft Teams, review of equalities and members inductions.
9. There are also a number of sizeable projects underway including the review of processes to ensure that managers are able to deal with the ongoing challenges of a workforce under pressure, the development and roll out of the manager programme, review of terms and conditions and ensuring that we are an employer of

choice in the competitive and challenging recruitment and retention climate that we currently face.

10. Since the writing of the plan in March as a Council we are facing the added challenge of cost-of-living increases, as are our residents and employees who we need to support. This is not an easy challenge and puts pressure on our physical, human and financial resources and delivery of the already agreed agenda. Efforts are being made to ensure that our workforce are aware of the support that they can access the same way as our residents can.

Manager's role

11. Managers are key to delivering many aspects of an employee's experiences and journeys within their employment. Good or bad, the manager is key as they shape the service, influence culture, drive change and have a role and responsibility to manage employee's behaviours, expectations and to develop them in their roles. Therefore, the Council's employer brand and image rests largely with managers and the management team.
12. Employees leaving the Council will always reference their manager as a key reflection of their employment with the Council. If we do not equip our managers with the resources to manage employees; this can directly impact on employee's performance and motivation and the investment that we place on recruiting and inducting can be lost quickly or eroded over time. Employees often, leave their managers rather than wanting to leave an organisation.
13. We will, therefore, continue to reinforce the managers role and their importance to deliver the Council plan, the OD Plan and Values.

Next Steps

14. Keeping the OD plan and themes alive are key, Corporate Management Team continue to champion themes of the OD plan and progress workforce improvements.

Implications

15.

Financial – costs associated with the implementation of any aspects of the OD plan will be considered on an ongoing basis and be fed through CMT

Human Resources – The OD plan fits with the HR Service plan and is key to developing and ensuring that the Council has a workforce fit to deliver all

Equalities – any aspects of the OD plan that require equality impact assessments will be considered on individual basis as part of the project planning process

Legal – the Director of Governance and legal Team will provide any legal challenges associated with the individual actions associated with the OD plan.

Crime and Disorder – there are no known crime and disorder implications

Information Technology – the Head of ICT will be contacted where there are any actions require ICT intervention and considerations

Property – there are no known property implications, those projects such as the working as one already have an established engagement and consultation process where any of the Council's estates are impacted.

Other – there are no other implications identified to note

Risk Management

16. There are no known risk implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Ian Floyd
Chief Operating Officer

Report Approved



Date 08/09/2022

Wards Affected:

All



**For further information please contact the author
of the report**

Annex 1: Summary of OD Plan Achievements by Theme

Background Papers:

Review of the Organisational Development Plan (14 March 2022)
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s157548/OD%20Plan%20Report.pdf>

Abbreviations

HR – Human Resources

OD – Organisational Development

CMT – Corporate Management Team

HHR&OD – Head of Human Resources and Organisational
Development

COO – Chief Operating Officer

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Summary of OD Plan Achievements by Theme

September 2022

Strong Leadership Achievements

Strong Leadership runs through all levels of management to empower staff to deliver Council priorities Sponsor: Ian Floyd – Chief Operating Officer

- Work progressed to reinforce and embed the Council Values and behaviours including Circulars sent to managers and cascading key themes
- Corporate Induction has been reviewed and updated
- Performance Development Reviews format revised to aid strong discussion and direction for employees re succession planning and key priorities
- Equality and diversity priorities have been identified for the workforce and the new AD Customer and Communities will take forward equality agenda for community and workforce alongside other key officers
- Engagement with services via departmental newsletters and Departmental Question time sessions (Place, Customer and Communities and People Services)
- COO visibly continues with senior managers across the Council including attendance at team meetings.
- Employee staff event in June 2022 was a success but also set the scene on where are going as a Council and how we can work together.
- Two sessions of LT group taken place and further 4 to deliver in current programme. Focus on key skills for leaders, new ways of working and current leadership challenges.
- Programme of soft skills for managers currently in progress and branding for this as a programme that managers and future managers can access is being created
- Key role for leaders to promote and embed strong leadership behaviours and manager programme clarifies the role of managers – ‘York Manager Programme’ in development

Staff Engagement Achievements

Actively engage staff in a meaningful way to help shape and deliver priorities

Sponsor: Claire Foale – Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy

- HR Brief established to give consistent key messages for the workforce on topics
- MS Teams training rolled out including the usage of Team Channels for group engagement to reduce emails, further developments coming online soon, and time and usage should embed this as a method of communication.
- The Working as One programme will also have a workstream on Teams as part of communication strand to manual workforce.
- Looking at roll out of Employee survey end Sept 22.
- We are actively encouraging all hybrid meetings via Teams and not other platforms and now have hybrid meeting rooms available with OWL technology
- Review of equalities related groups stalled pending AD Customer and Communities and Access Officer appointments however discussions have started.
- Wellbeing group has been re-established and work assigned to group members
- Menopause guidance to be issued and a support group established soon
- Health and wellbeing champions identified and promotion via monthly email and Teams channel.

Performance Culture Achievements

Embed a performance Culture – build high performing teams motivated to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges

Sponsors: Bryn Roberts – Director of Governance and Debbie Mitchell – Chief Finance Officer and s151

- Work has started on the review of the PDR process but need to be looked at further, can also be looked at in line with the review of services plans, embedding the values and expected behaviours of all employees. Need to make sure that this is not an onerous exercise, the importance is the quality of conversations and development
- HR continue to support and advise managers on probation, capability and performance issues but some work required in some

areas to 'reset' some issues that have not been managed. Link with managers training

- Services should also be data driven and access the information that they have available to drive outcomes – some managers may need training on this
- Managers to be provided with standard agenda items for meetings to include wellbeing, health and safety, sickness absence, performance and finance

Adjust to new ways of working achievements

Adjust to new ways of working and continue to build on the new ways of working experienced through the pandemic

Sponsor: Pauline Stuchfield – Director of Customer and Communities

- Good progress has been made on the working as one programme (the Council's hybrid working programme) on all workstreams. As the programme continues to grow, we are now moving into engagement with services based at Hazel court whilst still enhancing the offer at West offices.
- Our culture and ways we work are already changing and evolving now that we are working differently to support our residents and 'living with COVID'. Recruitment challenges are changing the dynamic of our culture and we need to ensure that we have strategies in place to attract and retain quality staff. This challenge is ongoing and one size approach will not work and needs creative approaches.

Staff Learning and Development Achievements

Staff learning and development – continue to build capacity, skills and develop staff to increase staff's commitment to deliver the Council's priorities

Sponsor : Neil Ferris – Corporate Director of Place

- Corporate induction reviewed and now online option, and alternative face to face and one line available from September
- Mentors embedded as part of new starter induction
- Training delivery changes where possible to virtual or other alternative platforms with some success
- Mandatory training has taken place during pandemic and ongoing reviews of training needs and the training offer

- Good uptake of upskilling of staff via Apprenticeships and CYC achieved the Public Sector Target for Apprenticeship starts in 2021/2022

Encourage staff retention and recognition Achievements
Encourage staff retention and recognition – Attract, retain and recognise our staff now and for the future.

Sponsors: Jamaila Hussain - Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Integration

- Promoted values and behaviours as part of recruitment exercises
- Some successes on recruitment campaigns but continue to operate in a difficult recruitment market which is posing challenges
- Recruitment campaigns appearing on Facebook and been sent to range of community groups. Currently reviewing who applies for CYC jobs with protected characteristics and % of who is appointed.
- Promotion of the whole employment offer, including to WWY staff
- The review of the pay structure has started as has the review of terms and conditions.
- Looking at Employer Branding and promotion of the T&C that make CYC an attractive employer. HR and Comms working together on Employer Brand and what makes CYC a good employer
- Started conversations with local universities and what will attract graduates to stay in York after their studies. Looking at National Graduate Development Programme and intern placements recommencing now services are returning from working from home

Improve staff health and wellbeing Achievements
Staff Health and Wellbeing – Continue to improve and develop health and wellbeing culture which proactively and positively contributes to the delivery of the council's priorities and builds a resilient workforce

Sponsor: Sharon Stoltz – Director of Public Health

- Continuing to improve and develop health and wellbeing culture which proactively and positively contributes to the delivery of the council's priorities and builds a resilient workforce
- HR reinforcing and supporting managers to manage absence and HR and BI ensuring that timely and effective reports are sent.

- HR have refreshed the absence training and rolls out to new managers and those with high absence as part of reminders of their responsibility to manage wellbeing.
- Wellbeing monthly update created and Teams Channel. Progressing mental health support and resilience in teams and promotion of the Counselling service (and other support services too).
- As officers start to return to the office evidence that different level of face-to-face peer support returning which is positive.
- Managers need to allow time for peer contact on an informal basis and encourage wellbeing conversations at team meetings etc. Reminders have been sent around this as part of sharing values and OD plan themes – suggestions for discussions at team meetings been sent. Health and safety dashboard and people safe devices rolled out recently reinforcing H&S reporting and H&S protection whilst lone working.

Abbreviations

COO – Chief Operating Officer

WWY – Work with York

HR – Human Resources

BI – Business Intelligence

CMT – Corporate Management Team

Was1 – Working as One

OD – Organisational Development

H&S – Health and Safety

PDR – Performance Development Review

T&C – Terms and Conditions

CYC - City of York Council

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**Customer & Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee**

3 October 2022

Report of the Director of Customer & Communities

Customer Centre Performance

Summary

1. This paper provides Customer & Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee with detailed information on the current telephone performance pressures in the Customer Centre within the council's Customer Services Team.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Committee are asked to note the report and consider any further work to report back to the committee as part of its work programme.

Reason: To secure scrutiny of council service performance where it impacts on customer experience

Background

3. The strategic direction of Customer Services prior to the covid-19 pandemic was to provide residents with 24/7 transactional access to the council's key services channel shifting phone traffic to internet transactions where possible in order to create efficient processes, but also to focus remaining resources on those residents who could not access services in any other way. With this in mind 7.5 full time equivalent posts were held vacant with one redundancy (Customer Services Team Manager) as part of corporate savings targets during 2019 at a time when service level was at nearly 80% (calls answered within 20 seconds) and total calls answered 99%. The saving was eventually used to replace a growth bid to create the web services team and it transpired this was a critical decision given the web services team's key role during the pandemic. This left the Customer Centre very lean as it moved into 2020/21 and the two years at the height the covid-19 pandemic.

4. In terms of further context, initiatives related to the pandemic followed by further government support in respect of the cost of living crisis has generated a high volume of ongoing phone contact from residents. To add to this, council driven changes including the introduction of the new digital parking system has further increased the volume and complexity of calls. High staff turnover following the end of lockdown and difficulties in recruiting to vacancies has exacerbated the situation.
5. Despite these ongoing challenges staff within the Customer Centre have continued to work hard in providing a high quality and professional service to all our residents. The following paragraphs provide more detailed information.

The Service & Workforce

6. The Customer Centre is the main point of contact for all residents by phone, face to face and web chat for the services below. The Web Services Team provide the council's website, corporate web governance and a number of successful galaxy sites also sit within Customer Services. The phone paths cover the following services:
 - Switchboard
 - Council Tax
 - Housing Benefit
 - Waste
 - Highways
 - Environment
 - Registrars
 - Electoral
 - Concessionary Travel
 - Parking
 - Planning.
7. The Centre was badly affected at the end of the final pandemic lockdown when a large number of staff left the organisation as has been experienced by other council services and employers across all sectors, due to opportunities and pay offers elsewhere. Recruitment has been ongoing since summer 2021 and there are still 7 vacancies with 3 vacancies recruited to but not yet occupied (August 2022) which is 25% of the workforce. There is also a rolling recruitment programme that has been in place since the end of 2021.

8. This only tells part of the story, at the end of the pandemic as staff started to leave, there was an experienced workforce of approximately 40 staff. As of August, this year there were only 10 long term experienced staff remaining in the cohort which has greatly impacted on the ability to cover all the phone paths effectively with a depth of knowledge previously provided. The current lack of experienced staff along with vacancies still being carried means they require more support and the complex calls are being dealt with by a smaller group of officers.
9. In addition to the immediate impact on the phone paths the Customer Centre has always been seen as an introductory incubator providing a way into a council career for applicants. It provides good grounding as new staff learn about the organisation, what it does and the key departments as well as working with elected members. This flow of staff also helps the organisation keep a lower age profile as for many working in customer services was their first job after leaving education. The current lack of experienced staff along with vacancies still being carried may well have an impact on other services in the future.
10. Due to the nature of the role it has been accepted over the years that there will always be some turnover however more recently staff have moved out of the organisation into retail or leisure where the pay is comparative or higher. As recruitment is ongoing even when all posts are filled it will take time for staff to be fully trained across all the phone paths and longer still to replace the lost experience.
11. The increased number of abusive and difficult calls has also not helped with staff retention. Due to the wait times calls can now be longer as staff need to apologise and at times diffuse frustrated customers before then addressing the purpose of the calls. The number of abusive calls is not recorded but staff report the issue to their managers, and the service has captured some anecdotal comments shown below. These are from 2021 but more work from a Health & Safety perspective is now being undertaken to understand the size and shape of the issue and to look at risk mitigations to protect staff as far as possible:
 - The number of unpleasant customers has increased.
 - Not brilliant at the moment it is difficult taking abuse from customers.
 - Found this past week very hard and energy draining as have had a few challenging customers.

12. The complexity of calls has also increased arising from providing an offline solution to digital processes which requires additional form filling. Examples of this include the Energy Rebate, the new parking system but there are many others.
13. Whilst the points above reflect the current position the service remains optimistic as it continues with recruitment and training. The training hour each Thursday morning introduced in late 2021 is helping with the training of new recruits, team building and continues to be greatly appreciated by the staff.
14. The effect of retention payments for existing and new staff introduced from April this year seem to have had little impact in retaining staff however without it the service may have lost even more and would be in a worse position. This was a one-off initiative and cannot be repeated due to affordability.

Performance

15. In terms of the overall performance some context is required around the current figures. For example, during the month of July 2022 a number of high demand issues affected performance in addition to the vacancies including:
 - The issuing of 16,000 letters to customers who had not claimed the government's energy rebate (£150 per household in Band A-D council tax bands).
 - Writing to over 3,000 pensioners who became eligible for the Household Support Fund for the first time.
 - Issuing of 5,000 summonses for the largest council tax court of the year.
 - Managing calls following an error on a large statutory canvass.
16. The effect of the issues in July set out at paragraph 15 above are clearly shown in the telephone service level graph set out at the Annex to this report.
17. The impact on customer wait times overall on two specific phone paths is shown in more detail compared to the pre-covid position in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Description	2019/20 (financial year)	12 th July 21	11 th July 22
All Calls			
Service Level	77%	10%	4.4%
Total Calls Answered	97%	55%	57.3%
Average time to Answer	42 Seconds	11 Minutes	18 Minutes
Council Tax			
Service Level	55%	3%	1%
Total Calls Answered	91%	45%	63%
Average time to Answer	1.2Minutes	17.4Minutes	26.5Minutes
Housing Benefits			
Service Level	43%	4%	1%
Total Calls Answered	84%	52%	56%
Average time to Answer	1.5Minutes	16.3Minutes	31.5Minutes

18. When heavily used individual phone paths e.g. Council Tax and Benefits are looked at, the impact of the lower and less experienced staffing level is much more apparent. The impact of this is that customers may be queueing for up to and on occasion beyond 2 hours on these specific phone paths at the busiest times of the day. The reason the overall average wait time is lower is because calls are handled more quickly on less technical phone paths e.g. the council switchboard where only signposting or transfer occurs.
19. There is no doubt that the pressures set out at paragraph 15 caused performance to deteriorate further during July 2022, but some recovery is expected as we move through the school summer holiday period. Table 2 below shows a snapshot for week commencing 8th August 2022 where average wait times have fallen on both the Council Tax and Benefits phone paths:

Table 2

Description	8 th August 2022
Overall Calls	
Service Level	13.7%
Total Calls Answered	63.7%
Average time to Answer	13 minutes
Council Tax	
Service Level	4.9%
Total Calls Answered	67%
Average time to Answer	21 minutes

Housing Benefits	
Service Level	1.8%
Total Calls Answered	59.6%
Average time to Answer	25 minutes

20. Table 3 below provides detail of the call volumes at the end of Quarter 1 2022/23 in comparison to previous financial years (the July and August figures sit outside Quarter 1). Whilst the overall call volume has increased over the past 3 years it is still lower than 2019/20. What is noticeable is the increasing call volumes across key complex paths e.g. Council Tax and Benefits. Table 4 shows the increasing call volumes continuing into July (Quarter 2 2022/23).

Table 3

	Quarter 1 phone calls							
	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Operators	23048	20590	20717	22719	20788	16021	15886	15522
Council tax	16691	18125	11466	9354	9533	4248	7585	12915
Benefits	8114	6912	6206	4694	4167	2611	2423	3400
Elections	5541	1762	3948	242	2346	78	1274	378
Parking	5328	4999	4443	4817	3312	1764	5214	6109
Concessionary travel		1139	1081	894	737	362	1464	1405
Cans	3281							
Waste, highways and environment	8956	12591	11311	10322	11995	13554	14325	9405
Planning	1740	1571	2055	2027	2139	812	1431	1013
Registrars				6645	4477	1967	3293	3375
Energy rebate								2396
Totals	72699	67689	61227	61714	59494	41417	52895	55918

21. In addition to call handling the Customer Centre also deals with several customer access channels within the existing staffing cohort. Table 4 below shows the work volumes for the first 4 months of the 2022/23 financial year:

Table 4

	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022
Emails	4,368	4,865	4,259	3,813
Webchat	0	0	0	0
Calls	17,883	18,877	19,465	24,684
In person sign-posted (incl. partner appointments)	1,618	1,783	1,981	1,755
In person appointments (customer service)	123	140	189	142
Business visitors	513	894	984	912

22. As mentioned at paragraph 21 Table 4 shows the increasing phone traffic this year through to the end of July. During the covid-19 crisis the Customer Centre also provided the help line support and signposting. It is also worth noting that due to the current level of resource the council tax pilot web-chat channel has been closed as there is insufficient staff to provide this service.

Summary

23. The strategy of channel shifting residents online to provide 24/7 access continues and over time this should reduce the phone traffic in new areas such as waste. In addition, the use of multi-channel robotics is being looked at for use on council website and phone lines to deal with the most common queries raised by residents to further channel shift away from human-led phone calls and provide a more interactive 24/7 service. This again will allow available staff members to focus on those callers who cannot access other channels and to deal with more complex needs.

24. In the shorter term the rolling recruitment programme is starting to produce further candidates for the existing vacancies. The Customer Centre opening hours are also being brought in line with all council services in September 2022 moving from 8.30am – 5.30pm to 8.30am – 5pm. This is a small change but will help in ensuring better phone cover across the core part of the day in removing the need for multiple shift patterns worked by staff and it will also help with staff morale.

Consultation

25. There are no decisions in this report that have required consultation. Staff comments are from a staff survey undertaken in 2021.

Options

26. Members can choose to simply note the report or develop thoughts for further scrutiny enquiries or reports.

Analysis

27. There is no analysis as there is no formal council decision to be made on the content of the report.

Council Plan

28. This work contributes to the following Council Plan priorities:
- Safe communities and culture for all
 - An open and effective council.

Implications

29.

Financial There are no financial implications

Human Resources (HR) There are no HR implications other than the ongoing implications for staff of the matters reported here.

Equalities There are no Equality implications.

Legal No implications

Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property No implications

Risk Management

30. There are no risks associated with this report. The performance problems currently are an issue and are being managed through recruitment. Further risk mitigation is to continue to use recruitment and retention strategies, plus further automation including the use of robotics and digitalisation of waste services for residents.

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Chief Officer responsible for the report:

Pauline Stuchfield
Director of Customer & Communities

Report Approved

Date 22/08/2022

Specialist Implications Officer(s): None

Wards Affected:

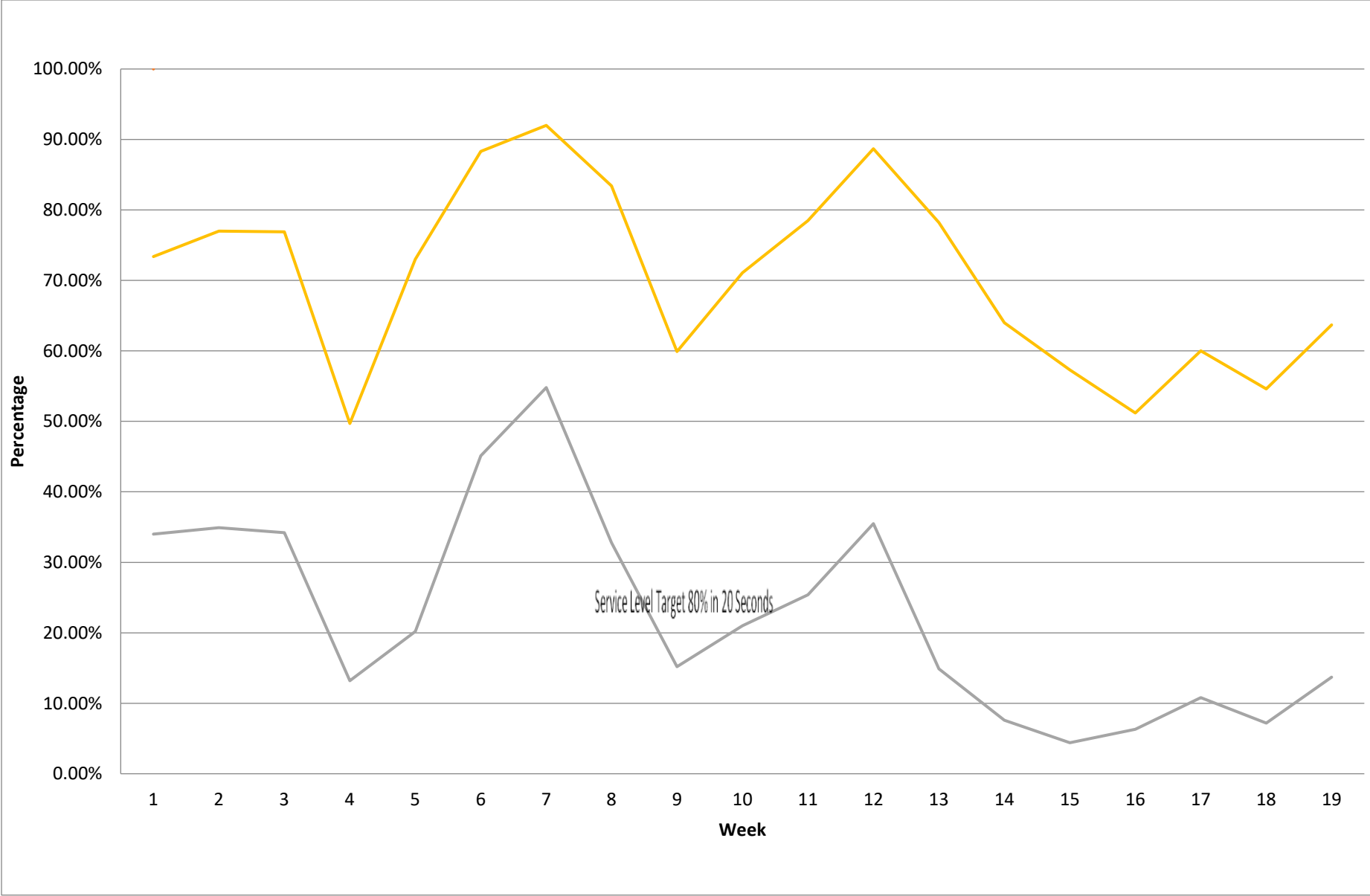
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For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annex A: Service Levels.

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Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee

3 October 2022

Report of the Director of Customer & Community Services

Digital Inclusion Update

Summary

1. This report provides an update for committee members covering the following areas:
 - The digital inclusion partnership led by Explore York and the council;
 - The digital connectivity landscape in York for both residents and businesses.

Background

100% Digital York Partnership update from Explore York

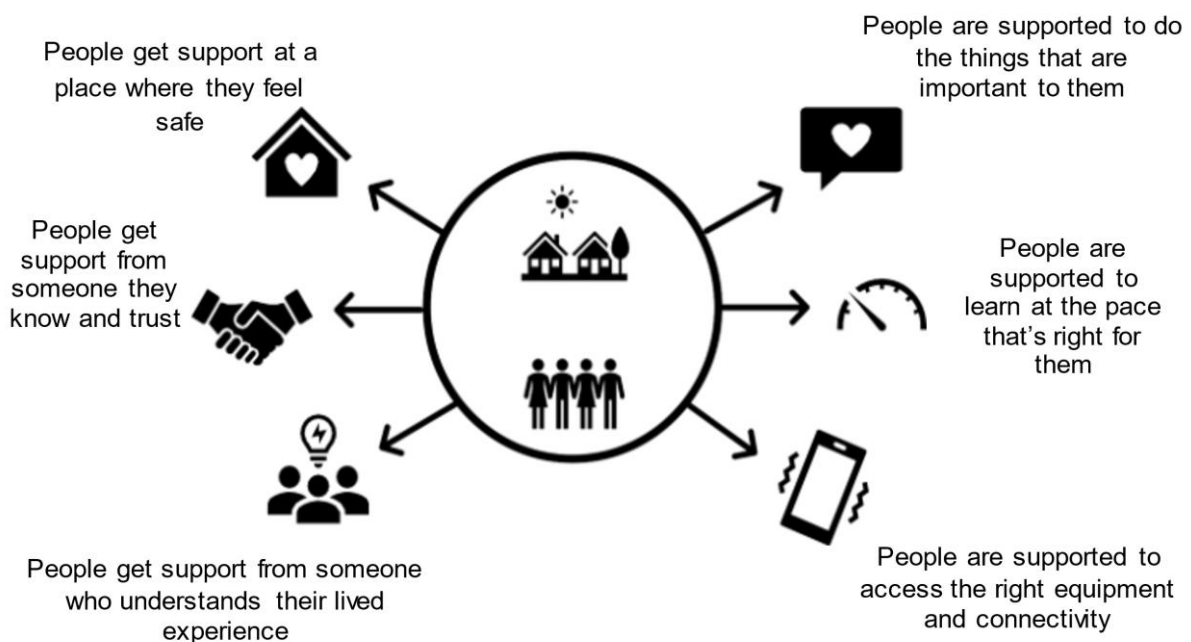
2. Workstreams have been identified from the priorities agreed by over 80 people representing communities and organisation across the city.
3. Of these priorities the IT Re-use scheme was already in development through the work of some of the partners so is the most developed and a great success story.
4. With CYC funding to create a part time Digital York Partnership Network Co-ordinator we are now able to ensure all the work that is happening across the York to support digital inclusion is captured and gaps identified, ensuring a cohesive, person-centred approach.
5. Our co-ordinator was introduced to the partnership at a meeting in early August where we discussed and agreed to re-focus our approach. This was also an opportunity to invite 100% Digital Leeds to share their success and this really re-energised our enthusiasm for what could be achieved.

6. As agreed, our key priorities for the next 6 months are:

Digital Champions Network

This will focus on both individual volunteers and community organisations:

- **Volunteers**
Recruited by Keeping Digital (a digital inclusiveness charity) and the Co-ordinator in partnership with York CVS. Volunteers will deliver Digital Café drop-in sessions across the city in community venues, launching this month (September). Volunteers will be matched with need and follow-on support will be provided by York Learning and Explore.
- **Community organisations**
We will adopt a community-based approach with the person at the centre, strengthening the place to empower the person. We will work with community groups and organisations, understand the impact and outcomes they are seeking to achieve and use digital inclusion as a tool to support those aims. We are intending to take a pilot approach in Acomb and this is what it could look like:



In Acomb we have started to map community organisations, supported by the Local Area Co-ordinator. The learning from this pilot will inform next steps,

will provide impact stories to support advocacy and we hope will generate peer to peer advocacy across the city.

Marketing and Communications

- All digital support has been brought together on one page on Live Well York website, linked from the home page for greater prominence.
- Social media feed will be linked to Live Well Website for latest news and updates.
- Printed and digital newsletter to send to organisations within the pilot area and beyond.
- Key promotional event: Get On-line Week 17 – 23 October, this will provide profile raising opportunity for partnership and with a specific campaign for the IT Re-use Scheme.
- Presentation to all Local Area Co-ordinators for awareness raising late August.

Accessibility and Inclusivity - This is an overarching priority that needs to be considered in all we do

- Develop a venue accessibility checklist.
- Key promotional opportunities for focused activity such as International Disability Week including partners such AbilityNet.

Evaluation - For advocacy/Future funding & Sponsorship/Volunteer support and buy-in

- Focus on People: Make a difference Stories. Volunteer and community organisation outcomes and impact.
- Provide longitudinal tracking opportunities with specific groups / individuals.
- Identify key metrics: numbers.

Funding for sustainability

- Produce a wish list for funding for specific projects eg IT Re-use Scheme and for 100% Digital Inclusion partnership.
- Focus on funding opportunities for outcomes that digital inclusion can support such as reducing social isolation, improving health and wellbeing, reducing re-offending etc.

7. To provide additional support and expertise for the partnership we have developed a strategic steering group this will help to keep momentum.

Representatives from organisations, including CYC are supporting the steering group.

Digital Connectivity Update.

8. Please see below for an update on the current and planned programme of work around York's fixed Digital Connectivity Landscape that CYC are involved in:

Superfast West Yorkshire & York (SFWY&Y) Programme

9. York is part of phase 3 of the SFWY&Y programme that is targeting rural intervention areas within this combined region to help enable access to improved levels of broadband.
10. Following some recent work by Quickline Communications who are the delivery partner for phase 3, approximately 130 properties within Skelton can now access much improved broadband services which helps to address the previous imbalance within Skelton. We are now working with Quickline to help raise the awareness of this recent network expansion with residents and businesses.
11. The villages of Naburn and Deighton are next in line to benefit from the SFWY&Y programme. The current delivery plan is indicating late Autumn and should provide access to improved levels of broadband services for approximately 300 properties. A marketing and community engagement plan will take place nearer the time of the network going live.

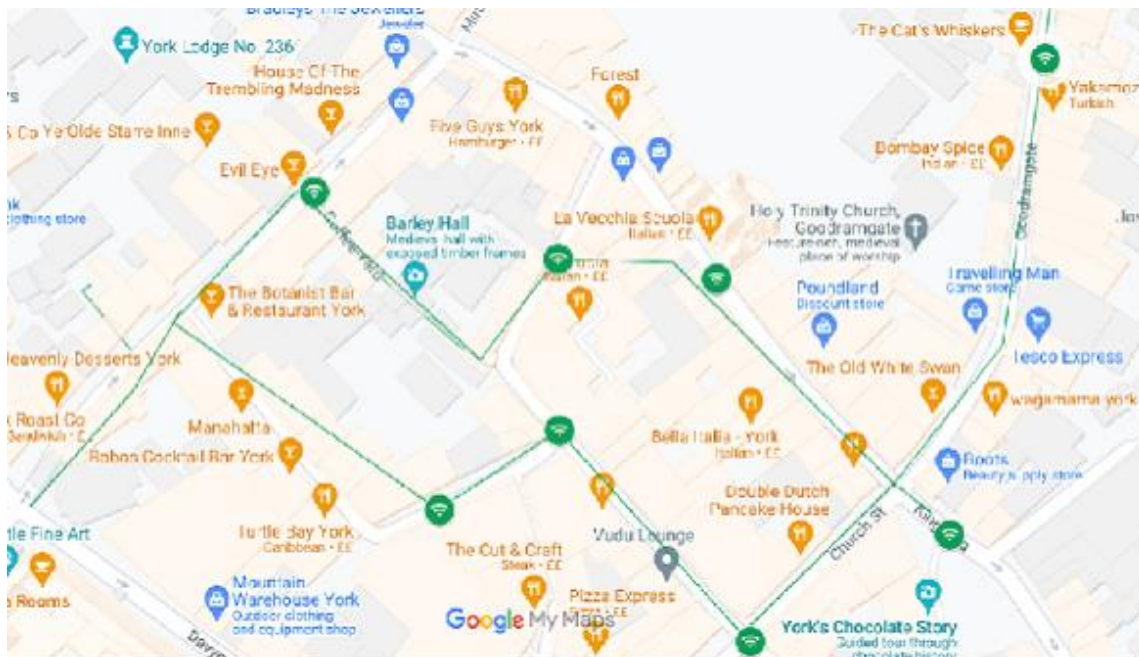
Elvington Full Fibre Broadband rollout

12. Continuing with an update on our more rural parts of the city, we are able to confirm that the new fibre based network, funded through the Building Digital (BDUK) rural gigabit voucher scheme, is now live and taking orders from residents and businesses in the village.
13. The first customers are now using the full fibre network, with installation slots filling up fast. In addition to this, Elvington Village Hall now have full access to the fibre broadband at no cost, as a gesture from FACTCo (the ISP or Internet Service Provider) that has already made a huge difference.
14. The current village hall chairman is quoted as saying 'The huge increase in broadband speeds, both download and upload, has been immediately

apparent, and with an increase in bandwidth, will enable us to offer a greater variety of services to our users’.

City Centre

15. Our City and town centres are traditionally seen as hard to reach places in terms of private sector investment initiatives due to the higher build costs and lower take up opportunities.
16. With the help of funding however through the Digital Enterprise programme, which offers eligible businesses up to £3k towards improved digital connectivity, UK Fibre Networks are looking to build upon their existing network (please see the map below) and expand their city centre fibre network, subject to street works permit approval process.



17. We are also working another telecommunication provider FactCo, who we previously worked with to provide access to fibre based ultra-fast broadband down The Shambles, as they are also looking to expand their fibre network in the city centre alongside their rural programme as mentioned above.
18. The current areas for this expansion include both Gillygate and Hungate, both of which are still in planning stage and subject to street works

permit approvals with a view to start the work as soon as possible to meet the registered high demand.

19. A recent good example of the difference access to improved broadband services can make is Buckingham Court in Skeldergate, that has approximately 30 apartments that now have access to ultrafast broadband. One of the residents quoted “This is absolutely amazing – we have both struggled for a long time now trying to work from home. We used to have to constantly close down apps and leave just one running. This caused us both a great deal of frustration whilst talking on video calls to work colleagues. Thankfully, this is now a thing of the past and we can even watch Netflix in the comfort of our own home – thank you FactCo!!”

CityFibre update

20. Digital York/ICT and Streetworks are proactively engaging with CityFibre to ensure we are all working together efficiently as they are due to restart their main construction work to connect a further 14,000 homes in the Autumn alongside further infill work.
21. CityFibre are committed to ensuring communication maintains at the forefront of their work from letter drops and social media posts to ward Councillor updates.
22. In addition to this, CityFibre have recently announced the new ISPs that have joined providing a choice of Service Providers to our residents and businesses.

Openreach 2-5 year plan

23. Openreach plan to expand its fibre presence within the city that should provide access to improved broadband services for approximately 4300 properties, with a current committed timeline of April 2024.
24. Fibre equipment and cabling will be installed, with Openreach utilising the existing duct network, poles and street cabinets with the aim of keeping the civils works disruption to a minimum.
25. These plans are currently all still subject to survey, however Openreach’s target is to deliver to over 80% within each exchange area, and we will provide further details and updates as the building programme is firmed up.

Virgin Media

26. As part of its UK 'Project Lightning' programme, Virgin Media are upgrading parts of its network to provide ultrafast broadband, TV and phone services to more residents and small businesses. We are in discussions with Virgin Media to confirm the details and phasing of York's inclusion with their upgrade project that was highlighted as approximately 1500 properties in their recent announcement.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) – Project Gigabit

27. York are included within Lot 8 of the DCMS of a £5 billion government infrastructure project that has been established to provide access to ultrafast/next generation broadband services for the hard to reach homes and businesses.
28. The overall programme is running behind its initial schedule, and the current timeline for Lot 8 is indicating that the associated consultation, defined areas of intervention, procurement and award process activities will continue through to 2024 ahead of the build work starting.
29. Further updates and progress reports will be provided on all the above projects within this wide and varied programme of work.

Consultation

30. This report forms part of updates to scrutiny to inform its future work plans.

Options

31. Members can choose to simply note the report or note it and develop thoughts for further scrutiny enquiries.

Analysis

32. There is no analysis as there is no formal council decision to be made on the content of the report.

Council Plan

33. Any recommendations resulting from related scrutiny reviews in this area will contribute to the following Council Plan priorities:
- good health and wellbeing
 - well paid jobs and an inclusive economy

- a better start for children and young people
- creating homes and world-class infrastructure
- safe communities and culture for all
- an open and effective council.

Implications

34. There are no implications of this report as there are no formal decisions to be made.

Risk Management

35. There are no known risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

36. Members are asked to note the report and its content as an update on digital inclusion activities to inform views on any future scrutiny work in this area.

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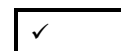
Report
Approved



Date 05/09/2022

Wards Affected:

All



Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee - Work Plan 2022/23

Scrutiny Area	Meeting Date	Meeting Type	Agenda
CE	04/10/22	Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Climate strategy (post public consultation) 2) Presentation from York Civic Trust: A Transport Vision for York 3) Action plan
Commissioned	10/10/22	CSMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) University Car Parking & Section 106 Agreements
CEC	12/10/22	Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Financial Monitor Q1 2) Corporate Director of Children and Education, Introduction and Ofsted update 3) Q1 & Q2 Safety Valve agreement update 4) Safeguarding
E&P	18/10/22	Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bus Service Improvement Update, including post Covid impacts (if ready, if not, Jan - TBC) 2) Highway maintenance programme (or Jan) 3) Community Levy (SIL money in parished areas) 4) Purple Flag
CSMC	07/11/22	Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) City Centre Access Strategy Update 2) Legal Services Restructure & Governance Arrangements Update 3) Budget Setting Process Overview (inc F&P Update?) 4) Scrutiny Research Budget

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