



Scrutiny Annual Report 2005/2006

TO BE UPDATED FOR 05/06

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**ALL THIS INFORMATION
REQUIRES UPDATING FOR
05/06**

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report summarises the work of the City of York Council's Scrutiny Boards and Panels over the past year, highlighting progress and key achievements. It also looks forward to activities over the coming year.

The Report will be presented to the next full meeting of Council by the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee.

June 2005

**SCRUTINY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Throughout the year the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) has met monthly to overview the work and workloads of the Scrutiny Boards.

Following a member-led review in 2003/04, new procedures and guidelines for scrutiny topics were introduced. This included a newly designed Topic Registration Form to encourage wider participation and the introduction of a scoping and feasibility stage involving officers prior to approval of scrutiny topics by the SMC. The implementation of these changes has been very successful for the latest batch of registered topics.

The review also included lengthy discussion on how the Council could be more effective in its scrutiny and this led to SMC making recommendations for the current constitutional review, which are aimed at continuing to develop the role of holding the Executive to account.

Through the year the boards have completed fourteen topics and published twelve reports. Most topics have focused on policy review and development.

In addition three Ad-hoc Panel scrutinies have been completed, with accompanying reports. Eleven topics are continuing into the next municipal year.

During the year we were notified by the Post Office that seven post offices were to be closed in the York area by November 2004. Unfortunately, due

to the current structure of the Council's constitution, SMC was unable to scrutinise the proposals, but as Chair I organised a public meeting to question representatives of the Post Office on their proposals. The meeting attracted many members of the public and received a significant amount of press and radio coverage but sadly did not result in a reprieve for any of the proposed closures.

This year has seen considerable progress made in improving the effectiveness of the scrutiny process and I am hopeful that the constitutional review will see members working together on more cross-cutting issues in the future.

Quality Control

During the year we have continued to monitor the implementation of recommendations made to, and accepted by, the Executive. Executive Members are invited to comment on progress to the SMC and Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to use the Executive Member and Advisory Panel process as a monitoring tool.

Some topics have been particularly successful at involving members of the public and we have continued to encourage the involvement of co-optees. We now have five co-optees attending on a regular basis, in addition to the statutory co-optees on the Education Scrutiny Board.

Training

With the support of Democratic Services we have organised three training sessions for members on questioning and chairing skills, facilitated by Mel Nixon of Aware UK.

We have held bi-annual Chairs, Vice Chairs and Assistant Directors meetings which have facilitated

greater understanding of scrutiny and allowed members and officers to exchange ideas on best practice as well as being an ideal forum for networking.

We have developed a guide for people attending a scrutiny hearing and a feedback form to help us identify areas for improvement. We have also introduced a formal procedure for keeping those outside the Council informed of scrutiny outcomes and recommendations.

Media Coverage

We have received a significant amount of media coverage this year with several items, such as Housing Allocations, receiving a considerable amount of interest. Most of the coverage has been positive and we need to continue this in the future. We have also tried to actively encourage involvement in Scrutiny by using the press and radio to raise the public profile.

The Future

As you will see from this Annual Report, Scrutiny has had an extremely active and productive year. We are also beginning to feel the impact of previous reviews such as the Rivers scrutiny review which helped support a successful bid for funding from Yorkshire Forward.

We are now planning the work programme for 2005/06 which I have no doubt will prove to be another demanding but fruitful year.

Thanks

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to my former Vice-Chair, Cllr David Wilde for his support over the last year and to all those members and officers of the City of York Council involved in the scrutiny process.

Cllr Madeleine A Kirk
Chair, Scrutiny Management
Committee

SCRUTINY AD HOC PANELS

Inclusive Decision Making **Scrutiny Panel**

Awaiting text for 05/06

Cllr
Chair, Inclusive Decision Making
Ad-Hoc Panel

Economic Development and **Community Safety Board**

This year has been spent on just one topic – Drug & Alcohol Anti Social Behaviour, a long title and what turned out to be a long investigation.

The topic was first suggested in June 2004 and adopted in August of that year despite its very obvious broad remit. The Board and Officers, have worked at this topic over an 18 month period which has seen other investigations and legislation overtaking us. However, due to the importance of this subject in making York a Safer and Cleaner City for all, it was important that we continued in order to make some recommendations that we hope will have a beneficial impact.

During our investigations we had assistance from many outside sources and these have helped us form a solid base for our recommendations rather than having to work on our instincts about what we felt was happening in the City. Listing them all would take too much space but their help and input is greatly appreciated, and this information is shown in the report.

Two items which did come up throughout our deliberations were felt to broaden the topic even further and it was decided that it would be wrong

to continue investigating these as it may dilute the purpose of the report and also that they could probably merit a Scrutiny Report in their own right. These were Domestic Violence, which is a major topic in itself and has been the source of many reports in the past. Our intention was to look at the effects of Drugs and Alcohol on these situations but it was difficult to obtain concrete evidence of a link and therefore better treated as a separate matter.

The second item related to a more moving story regarding the taking of drugs and followed the showing of a film by local film maker Kevin Curren, Catch Me When I Fall. This was a very moving piece and showed some of the problems faced by youngsters living in the suburbs of York who used drugs at an early age as a way of escaping boredom. Although this did not fit within our remit it gave an insight into the future and how the situation can worsen without early intervention. This topic is certainly something I felt warranted its own investigation. Kevin's passion for this subject shone through and he is already trying to work with various agencies to bring this to the front of people's minds to ensure that these sometimes forgotten children are not ignored. We all wish him well in his endeavours.

As I said earlier, we were sometimes overtaken by events and one of the biggest was the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003 which came into force in November last year. The initial results from the introduction of the Act were very positive with a reduction in city centre incidents by 20% in the first couple of months, which included the Christmas and New Year periods. We have asked for further updates to be presented

when the first year's review has taken place.

Our initial recommendation to look at replacing the current City CCTV system, which had been in place for about 20 years was also part of a different review and it has now been agreed that a new 'state of the art' system will be implemented and funding has been found for this. One of the advantages of the new system is that it will be easier to add to as well as having better quality images. Several of the businesses that we interviewed expressed an interest in contributing to the system and our hope is that the expression of interest is translated into actions.

The report makes many recommendations which we feel will contribute to our aims for York and the level of co-operation shown by most organisations and individuals shows that this is a general wish for many others.

Our report last year into City Centre Retailing has been followed up and we were delighted that many of our findings were backed up by a team of consultants in the Roger Tym report which was produced to help guide the City and developers in future projects, the latest being the Castle/Piccadilly planning brief that was agreed by the Council's Planning Committee in March this year. We are still receiving further updates and are due to receive two more later in April relating to the City Centre Economy and progress on improving the City's toilet facilities.

Cllr Keith Hyman
Chair, Economic Development and
Community Safety Scrutiny Board

Housing Scrutiny Board

The topic of Reducing CO2 Emissions from York's Public and Private Sector Housing was selected at the end of the 2004-05 municipal year but only kicked off in 05-06.

In scoping the topic it was concluded that it should concentrate on improving existing housing stock rather than new build. The new build element was covered under the P&T topic. The topic was further refined during the scoping exercise to principally concentrate on private dwellings as the Council's own stock had been subject to gradual improvement over a number of years.

The topic itself fitted in alongside the aforementioned P&T topic on sustainable development and also the E&S topic on energy use. All three topics having the support of the same scrutiny officer ensured a level of consistency and cross-board dialogue.

I write this as the former Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Board, having moved on to another position and as such I am not privy to the final reporting of the topic which is expected to take place soon.

Cllr Ceredig Jameison-Ball
Former Chair, Housing Scrutiny Board

Resources Scrutiny Board

In this year the Resources Scrutiny Board concluded and approved its final report on Sustainability and Social Responsibility in Procurement for inclusion in the corporate procurement strategy. This was an exciting topic which looked at the various competing interests in procurement ranging from the barriers preventing the voluntary sector and smaller enterprises for tendering for procurement contracts to promoting a wide-ranging ethical procurement policy.

After concluding that scrutiny report the Scrutiny Board fulfilled its obligations in relation to the breaches and waivers which has been reported to it. With the restructure of the Resources Department and the constitutional change this function has now passed to the newly created Audit and Governance Committee. In the report to the Scrutiny Management Committee in March 2005, I expressed the desirability of continuity between the two committees to maintain the knowledge gained by the Scrutiny Board in the future.

The Scrutiny Board received an update on the recommendations of its report on Property Management. The Scrutiny Board were pleased with the progress that had been made.

Finally, the Scrutiny concentrated on the budget process and local government finance in a fact finding education process.

I would like to thank Members and Officers for the hard work and support

they have shown throughout the year. Their commitment to the scrutiny process in all its facets can be shown no better than in the work of the Resources Scrutiny Board in 2005/06.

Cllr David Scott
Chair, Resources Scrutiny Board

Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board

During the year 2005/06 the Board concerned itself with the future of the City of York Archives. The scope of the review was to make recommendations for:-

- How the City Archives can reach its full potential to deliver effective services to the widest possible community.
- How it can engage those currently least likely to benefit from our archival heritage: the non-specialist, community groups and students in school.
- The key factors to be taken account of in creating satisfactory accommodation for the historic material.

From the start of the Scrutiny it was decided that due to the urgency of the situation the Board should report its recommendations as quickly as was possible. Consequently, the scrutiny was intense with at least one specialist in the archives field addressing the Board at each of its monthly meetings. These "expert witnesses" from as far afield as Hampshire and Chester, gave their views of best practice and what the City of York Archives might aspire to. At the end of June the Board held a public conference at which all

interested parties were invited to contribute.

A number of Board members visited the North Yorkshire County Records Office at Northallerton to see their facilities and discuss records management. The Board also visited York University's Borthwick Institute.

At the November meeting the Board drew up its recommendations which were presented to the Executive in January. The main thrust of the recommendations was that the City should find a partner in order to care for its collections and reach a broader audience as possible.

Cllr Chris Hogg
Chair, Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY BOARD

AWAITING TEXT FROM CHAIR FOR
05/06

Cllr
Chair, Commercial Services
Scrutiny Board

EDUCATION SCRUTINY BOARD

The Board has focused its attention in two key areas this year. Firstly in reviewing the progress of recommendations of the two earlier topics of Early Years Education and Post 16 Inclusion. Secondly the Board undertook the new topic of Extended Schools provision in York.

I feel it is important to undertake reviews of previous topics in order for the Board to learn from the process. It is key to understand the outcome of the work and that the recommendations of previous topics were practical and had made a difference to people and learning in the City.

A review of the progress of its recommendations made in the **Early Years Education** and the **Post 16 Inclusion** topics was undertaken, the Board had made recommendations for improvements in this vital area. I am pleased to report that great progress had been made on the recommendations and the Board were very satisfied with the outcomes.

During 2005/6 the majority of the Board's time was spent on the new **Extended Schools** topic. Extended schools are those that provide a wider range of services and activities, often

beyond the traditional school day to help meet the needs of pupils, families and the community.

Extended schools are high on the agenda both nationally and across the City. There is an ever growing need for extended schools. York has set itself challenging targets to ensure every school is an extended school by 2010.

The topic had clear objectives on how well York is performing in the provision and if it is meeting the needs of the pupils, families and the community. It was carefully scoped to consider Primary schools because this was considered the most vital area in terms of need and was generally the school nearest to the communities.

The Board undertook a significant amount of evidence gathering from a wide range of sources including; officers reports and presentations, considering extended schools research papers, attendance of the York Extended Schools Conference and visiting seven different Primary schools including one from another Authority. It was a great pleasure to meet all those involved with extended schools.

At the end of the 2005/6 Municipal year, the Board was considering its draft recommendations as an example the Board are likely to recommend supporting the policy that all schools are extended schools by 2010 and that a local clustering approach be taken where appropriate. I would like to recognise that York has made great progress on extended schools to date and thank all those who have worked so well together.

I trust that the recommendations will help make a difference across the

City. I would finally like to give thanks to the people on the Board and those who helped with our evidence gathering for their commitment and hard work.

Cllr Glen Bradley
Chair, Education Scrutiny Board

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY SCRUTINY BOARD

Awaiting text from Chair for 05/06

Cllr
Chair, Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Board

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY BOARD

Awaiting text for 05/06

Cllr
Chair, Planning and Transport Scrutiny Board

SOCIAL SERVICES AND HEALTH SCRUTINY BOARD

The year started with a scrutiny topic (Access to Services for Care Leavers) outstanding from the previous year. The final report and recommendations have since been agreed and presented to Executive.

The Board participated in the Healthcare Commission's new annual 'Health Check' reports for the NHS, Ambulance and Primary Care Trusts. As an introduction to the process, each Trust prepared a draft report in October last and discussed it with the Board before formally publishing it. To be able to comment on the draft report in this way was a useful exercise. The Board confirmed its earlier comments on the draft "health check" reports (with one minor change for the PCT report) when the final reports were submitted.

The Board has worked with the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) during the year and members have attended CfPS events. At one such event, the Chair and Scrutiny Officer were asked to give a presentation which described the way the draft Health Check reports had been dealt with in York.

The Board responded to consultations on the reconfiguration of the SHA, Ambulance and Primary Care Trusts (we joined with N Yorks and E Riding in our response to the Ambulance Trust proposals). As expected, the result was that there would be no change to

what had been proposed. The SHA and Ambulance Trust changes take effect from 1 July, while the PCT changes are effective from 1 October.

This year has seen the development of closer relationships with the PCT, Ambulance and Hospitals Trust; Members have visited the Ambulance Control Centre and the hospital. Progress has been made in developing links with the PPIFs and with voluntary sector organisations.

At the end of the year, the PCT was about to announce its financial recovery plan; the Board has considered this and has opened a dialogue involving the PCT and Hospitals Trust. Much has been said about the targets which the PCT will have to meet, but little about the content of the recovery plan proper. Some changed commissioning intentions have been signalled by the PCT but the impact and financial implications of these have yet to be assessed. Some very technical details of the plan (referral advice to GPs) have been given. The changes to provision which result from the recovery plan are likely to have a strong influence on any areas which are chosen for scrutiny.

Under the new Constitution, the Health Scrutiny Committee will continue the work of the Board. There is a slightly changed emphasis in that its primary role is to scrutinise (NHS) health provision for York residents; the scrutiny of provision by Adult Social Services will take place as part of this.

Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
Chair
Social Services and Health Scrutiny Board

MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY BOARDS 2005-2006

Scrutiny Management Committee

Chair	Cllr Madeline Kirk
Vice Chair	Cllr Paul Blanchard
	Cllr Glen Bradley
	Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
	Cllr Sandy Fraser
	Cllr Mark Hill
	Cllr Irene Waudby

Commercial Services Board

Chair	Cllr David Livesly
Vice Chair	Cllr Irene Waudby
	Cllr Bill Fairclough
	Cllr Alan Jones
	Cllr Ken King
	Cllr Martin Lancelott

Economic Development and Community Safety Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Keith Hyman
Vice Chair	Cllr David Wilde
	Cllr Andy D'Agorne
	Cllr Tom Holvey
	Cllr David Merrett
	Cllr Jonathan Morley
	Cllr David Merrett
	Cllr C Vassie
	Cllr Richard Watson
Co-optee	Mr Don Parlabean (Older People's Assembly)

Education Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Glen Bradley
Vice Chair	Cllr Keith Aspden
	Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
	Cllr Janet Hopton
	Cllr Viv Kind
	Cllr David Livesley
	Cllr David Scott
Co-optee	Dr G M Clayton
Co-optee	Dr David Sellick
Co-optee	Miss C Duffy

Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Martin Lancelott
Vice Chair	Cllr Brian Watson
	Cllr Andy D'Agorne
	Cllr Richard Moore
	Cllr Ruth Potter
	Cllr Christian Vassie
	Cllr Mark Waudby

Housing Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Ceredig Jamieson- Ball
Vice Chair	Cllr Bill Fairclough
	Cllr Paul Blanchard
	Cllr Mark Hill
	Cllr David Horton
	Cllr Madeline Kirk
	Cllr David Livesley
Co-optees	Mildred Grundy
	Pat Holmes
	(Federation of Residents' Associations)

Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Chris Hogg
Vice Chair	Cllr Tom Holvey
	Cllr Martin Bartlett
	Cllr Dave Evans
	Cllr Alan Jones
	Cllr Madeleine Kirk

Planning and Transport Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Christian Vassie
Vice Chair	Cllr Derek Smallwood Cllr Martin Bartlett Cllr Chris Hogg Cllr Ceredig Jamieson-Ball
Co-optee	Cllr Tracy Simpson-Laing Don Parlabeau (Older People's Assembly)

Resources Portfolio Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr David Scott
Vice Chair	Cllr Richard Moore Cllr Glen Bradley Cllr Tom Holvey Cllr David Livelsey Cllr Janet Looker

Social Services and Health Scrutiny Board

Chair	Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
Vice Chair	Cllr Martin Lancelot Cllr Keith Aspden Cllr Sandy Fraser Cllr Janet Hopton Cllr Gil Nimmo Cllr David Wilde

REVIEWS COMPLETED AND REPORTS PUBLISHED June 2005 – 25th May 2006

TITLE	SCRUTINY BOARD	DATE
Drugs Alcohol and Anti-Social behaviour	Economic Development and Community Safety	April 2006
Confidentiality and Transparency Ad-Hoc Panel	Economic Development and Community Safety	?
Scrutiny of Housing Allocations Systems	Housing Scrutiny Board	May 2005
The Cleaning of Gullies, Gutters, Footpaths and Back Lanes on Terraced Streets	Commercial Services Scrutiny Board	?
Recycling and Reuse	Commercial Services Scrutiny Board	?
Sustainable Energy in Council Buildings: Energy Use, the City of York Council and Display	Environment and Sustainability	July 2005
Take-Aways; Powers of Enforcement	Environment and Sustainability	?
Sustainable Energy in Council Buildings: Generating the Future	Environment and Sustainability	?
Planning Guidance for Sustainable Development	Planning and Transport	?
Allocation of Police Resources in York and N. Yorks	Economic Development and Community Safety	?
Sustainability and Social Responsibility in Procurement	Resources Scrutiny Board	July 2005
Putting Libraries at the Heart of the Community	Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board	November 2005
The Future of York City Archives	Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board	December 2005
Social Services Scrutiny Board	Services for Care Leavers in York	November 2005

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