

Meeting	Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	18 March 2024
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Merrett (Vice-Chair), Ayre, Baxter, J Burton, Healey, Kelly, D Myers, Rowley, Steels-Walshaw, K Taylor, Widdowson and Vassie (Substitute for Cllr Waller)
Apologies	Councillor Waller
In Attendance	Cllr Lomas, Executive Member for Finance Performance, Major Projects and Equalities Cllr Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities
External attendees	Tom Gilman, McLaren Group Stephen Hind, Network Rail Tom Devine, Carter Jonas Surveyor for National Rail Museum
Officers Present	Tracey Carter, Director, Housing, Economy and Regeneration David Warburton, Head of Regeneration Helen Whiting, Head of Human Resources Pauline Stuchfield, Director, Customer and Communities Ian Cunningham, Head of Business Intelligence Patrick Looker, Finance Manager, Corporate Dawn Steel, Head of Democratic and Scrutiny Services

36. Declarations of Interest (5.33 pm)

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

None were declared.

37. Minutes (5.33 pm)

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 29 January were approved as a correct record.

38. Public Participation (5.34 pm)

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

Cllr Hollyer, Ward Councillor for Haxby and Wiggington, spoke on item 6, Ward Funding. He raised concerns regarding the formulas used, stating that the recommended options A and E bring forward an error, in that they do not take into account Ward population size.

39. York Central Update (5.38 pm)

The Head of Regeneration introduced the report on the York Central project and provided a brief update to Members, noting the changes which had followed since November's scrutiny meeting and contained within paragraph 2 of the report.

Tom Gilman, Managing Director McLaren Regeneration, gave a presentation on the first phase of the project, Museum Square, and outlined the timeline, stating it should start in 2025, with delivery in 2027.

There followed a number of questions from Members covering parking provision for the residential properties, sustainable design, affordable housing, custom build, community engagement, the park design and office development.

It was reported that:

- Car parking standards were set by the National Planning Policy Framework.
- The design guide set the minimum standards for the homes being built; the developers had high aspirations in terms of design and sustainability.
- All of the CYC owned land within York Central would be allocated to affordable housing; A minimum of 20% affordable housing had been set, based on the council's current housing policy.

- Custom build enabled a cohesive design and cost savings; the community would provide input on the design and the developers undertake the work.
- Community engagement would continue through workshops and presentations.
- 5% of the developers profits would go into a community fund to manage the park.
- High quality office developments with high environmental standards are in short supply and therefore this type of development would be in demand.

Resolved: That the York Central update be received, with a further update to be scheduled for a future date.

Reason: To keep the committee updated on a key project for the city.

40. Workforce Development Plan and Attendance Management (6.29 pm)

The Head of HR presented a report which updated Members on the workforce development plan and provided an overview of attendance management. As the report had been due to be considered at January's meeting, she offered to bring a further report to the Committee's meeting in May, with a view to providing an update to the Workforce Development Plan following the Corporate Peer Challenge and the results of the staff survey.

Members asked a number of questions relating to the staff survey, learning and development, office utilisation, managing workloads, staff welfare issues, living wage increases and pay structures, Trade Union (TU) working agreements, staff vacancies and commissioning of services.

The following was reported:

- The staff survey took place annually, it showed that hybrid working was valued by staff; 50+ officers were in WO every day.
- Learning and Development was provided by York Learning, there was no expectation for staff to give up their own time.
- The average days sickness per full time equivalent (FTE) of 11.3 days, across the organisation, was not considered to be especially high.
- The cost control panel was managing the vacant roles by examining how jobs can be done differently and challenging overtime. Agency

spending had been reduced as permanent employees had been recruited. There were some key technical areas where this had proved more difficult.

- The uplift in the living wage, social value contracts and the pay structure were live issues that were being monitored closely.
- There were no plans to change TU working agreements.

Resolved:

- i. That the report be noted.
- ii. A further update be brought to May's Committee meeting.

Reason: To ensure that the workforce was supported in the challenges of the workforce plan and, from a well-being perspective, to minimise absence.

[7:02 pm Cllr Taylor left the meeting. 7.04-7.12 pm, the meeting adjourned]

41. Ward Funding (7.12 pm)

The Director of Customer and Communities outlined the report on Ward funding models, noting that the key data, the Index of Multiple Deprivation, had not been updated nationally. She confirmed that options A, E and F met the council objectives and the options would be considered at April's Executive meeting.

There followed a discussion around the options where the Head of Business Intelligence clarified some of the technical information. There was a general consensus that there was no perfect solution, with options having positives and negatives, none of which outweighed the other.

The Exec Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities thanked Members for their input. He also confirmed that changes were being made to the sign off process for Ward funding, with some amendments being made to the application form and guidance for Members. He also emphasised that any unspent money would not be carried over to the next financial year. Any unspent money would be used to support the York Financial Assistance Scheme. Where approved applications had not been actioned due to project timings, it had been confirmed with the section 151 officer that monies allocated in the current financial year could be spent the following financial year.

[7.44 pm, Cllr Myers left the meeting.]

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep up to date with the possible ward funding models.

42. 2023/24 Finance and Performance Monitor 3 (7.50 pm)

The Corporate Finance Manager presented the Finance and Performance report for Quarter 3. He noted a significant pressure on benefits due to being unable to recover payments for temporary accommodation, also, funding levels had not increased for a number of years. However, an increase of 25% in the local housing allowance rate had been announced for next year which would reduce future pressure but remain an ongoing issue.

[7.51 pm, Cllr Ayre left the meeting; 7.53 pm, Cllr Widdowson left the meeting.]

The Finance Manager and the Head of Business Intelligence responded to questions on housing benefit, coroner related pressures and the number of full time equivalents.

They reported that the housing benefit figures come from the Department of Work and Pensions; they were not outside the usual benchmarking figures. The coroner related pressures were in relation to body storage and therefore outside CYC control. A more detailed report on staffing numbers was provided to the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee on a six monthly basis.

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects confirmed that the necessary repairs for the Mansion House were being carried out and options for the building were being explored.

Resolved:

- i. That the finance and performance information be noted.
- ii. The Head of Business Intelligence would provide additional information to Members on the housing benefit claims.

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

43. Work Plan (7.59 pm)

Members considered the Scrutiny work plan for the four scrutiny committees. The Chair noted a new template for task and finish groups and requested that the template be circulated to the committee so that templates could be completed for the following task and finish groups:

- S106 agreements
- Council Communications

[8.00-8.02 pm Cllr Rowley left the meeting.]

Resolved:

- i. That the work plan be noted.
- ii. Democratic Services would distribute the new task and finish group template to Members.

Reason: To ensure an overview of the scrutiny work programme and a process is in place for task and finish groups.

Cllr S Fenton, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 8.03 pm].