

Report of the Chair of the Customer Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSCCSMC) – March 2024

1. We are now six months into the cycle of public scrutiny meetings in this municipal cycle and my sense is that members and officers have adapted well to the new approach. There are inevitably issues which need to be overcome, and in particular there is a need to standardise arrangements for inviting city partners to attend scrutiny meetings, as it is not working as smoothly as it could.
2. There have been relatively few formal pre-decision scrutiny discussions recently. Where these have happened, the discussions have been constructive and have hopefully informed decisions. I would welcome more of this, and there is also a role for scrutiny committee members to scrutinise the Forward Plan and highlight any issues that would benefit from pre-decision scrutiny.
3. It continues to be challenging to recruit members to take part in task and finish groups, which may in part be as a result of the lack of administrative support for these groups. A template proforma has been developed which members can use if they have an idea for a scrutiny task and finish group, which will hopefully be of use in making the process more manageable and giving members some assurance about the work involved.
4. In my November report I noted that one decision had been called-in, relating to the approach to the allocation of one element of ward funding. Since then, there have been call-ins in December (Castle Gateway), February (Waste Services) and March (Bus Services and Civic Protocols).
5. The Chairs of the scrutiny committees and Audit & Governance met with the Local Government Association's Peer Review team during their visit in February. It was a constructive discussion and I hope that our input was of some use. I look forward to seeing the report arising from the visit and in particular any recommendations relating to the scrutiny function.

CSCCSMC

6. At its 11 December meeting the committee focused on Combined Authority-related matters, with an update on the establishment of the York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority and a discussion on how York stands to benefit from the Net Zero Fund.
7. After some initial confusion ahead of the meeting, a draft of the Combined Authority constitution was published. There was not sufficient time available to discuss it at the meeting, and so members resolved to convene a joint meeting with Audit & Governance to properly review the document. Two joint meetings were subsequently held – on 15 January and 26 February – and detailed feedback from both meetings has been shared with members of the Combined Authority.
8. At its 29 January meeting the committee had a ‘deep dive’ into the issue of section 106 agreements arising from planning permissions, and received an update on steps being taken to support those most affected by the switchover from analogue to digital phone services. This followed on from a motion passed at Full Council last year.
9. At its 18 March meeting the committee will return to the Major Projects theme, with a discussion on York Central at which hopefully the lead developer will be present. There will also be some pre-decision scrutiny of the proposed approach to allocating an element of ward funding for 2024/25, following on from the call-in that took place in October last year.

Children, Culture & Communities Scrutiny Committee

10. At its 5 December meeting the committee received a report which provided an update on key issues in relation to Children and Young People in Care. Members also discussed issues arising from the Corporate Parenting Board annual report and the Virtual School annual report.
11. At its 23 January meeting members discussed the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) annual report and changes due to come into effect from April 2024 in relation to early years and childcare reforms. There was an in-depth discussion on the educational attainment gap, considering

school performance in the academic year 2022-2023, the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils, and the percentage gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

12. At its 5 March meeting members received the bi-annual report of the Safer York Partnership, received an update on the delivery of actions outlined in the SEND Operational Plan 2023-2025 and discussed plans to develop a Youth Strategy for the city.
13. The Chair reports that he and the Vice Chair are meeting with the Executive Member every few months to ensure that Scrutiny is being as proactive as it can be.

Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee

14. At its 28 November meeting members received an update on the progress to date with implementation of the York Economic Strategy, 12 months after adoption. Members also scrutinised the draft York Tourism Strategy, putting forward comments and suggestions for consideration ahead of a report to the Council's Executive in January 2024.
15. At its 22 January meeting members discussed the Make it York performance report and were joined by the MiY Managing Director for a discussion on challenges and opportunities for the organisation. Members also discussed Greenwich Leisure Ltd's performance report, with GLL colleagues taking part in the discussion. Members also received an update on the development of the York & North Yorkshire Economic Framework for the Mayoral Combined Authority.
16. At its 27 February meeting members had a wide-ranging discussion on the state of York's rivers, becks and drainage infrastructure. The scope of work to be undertaken by a Dial & Ride task & finish group was also approved.

Health, Housing & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

17. At its 13 November meeting members discussed current services available for people threatened with or experiencing homelessness including the winter night provision for rough sleepers. Members also discussed current reablement services and the commissioning approach for contract renewal.

18. At its 13 December meeting members discussed work being done to improve oral health in the city and to tackle smoking during pregnancy. Members also considered a report which provided an update on the work being undertaken as part of York's Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Delivery Plan.
19. At its 30 January meeting members discussed the findings of a CQC inspection of Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS FT services carried out in 2023 and the actions arising. Members also discussed the contents of the council's All Age Commissioning Strategy 2023-25 and received an update on the upcoming CQC adult social care inspection and assurance process for City of York Council as a Local Authority.

Cllr Fenton, Chair of the Customer Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSCCSMC)
11 March 2024