
Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	10 August 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Hollyer, Rowley, Pearson, Kilbane (substitute for Cllr Barnes), Douglas (substitute for Cllr Musson), Hook (substitute for Cllr Hunter) and Baker (substitute for Cllr D Taylor)
In Attendance	Councillor Aspden (Leader of the Council, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships), Ian Floyd (Interim Head of Paid Services), Will Boardman (Head of Corporate Policy and City Partnerships), Sharon Stoltz (Director of Public Health), Debbie Mitchell (Head of Corporate Finance & Commercial Procurement (interim s151 officer)), Janie Berry (Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer) and Dawn Steel (Head of Civic and Democratic Services)
Apologies	Councillors Barnes, Hunter, Musson and D Taylor

8. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

9. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held at 2:00pm on 6 July 2020 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair at a later date.

At this point in the meeting the Chair confirmed that the Corporate Management Team restructure would be considered

by Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee on 24 August 2020. He expressed his disappointment that this Committee had missed their opportunity to engage in the proposals. The interim Head of Paid Services explained the process and stated that Members could have an opportunity to consider the wider proposals, once the first phase had been implemented.

10. Public Participation

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

Following comments made on social media, the Chair clarified that Scrutiny Committees were bound by the Council's Constitution and that the Constitution precluded any questioning of public participants.

11. Update on the Devolution Proposals / Implications for Local Governance Arrangements

The Committee received an update on the devolution proposals for the City of York and North Yorkshire. The Leader of the Council, the Interim Head of Paid Service and the Head of Corporate Policy & City Partnerships provided the update on the submissions to Government.

The Leader highlighted the principles behind devolution and it was noted that Government had rejected the One Yorkshire proposal deal but had offered a 4 sub-regional deal and based on all messages from Government, a York and North Yorkshire deal was the only option on the table for York at present.

The Leader emphasised the context behind the proposed deal and it was noted that a White Paper on devolution was due to be published in the autumn. He confirmed that devolution wasn't yet mandatory or essential but it was directly connected to funding and investment in the following ways:

- Devolved areas were often guaranteed a share of national funding pots announced by Government.
- Typically, devolved areas had seen twice as much investment from these funds than non-devolved areas.
- As more areas were devolved, the remaining funding for non-devolved areas to bid for would shrink and become more competitive.

- The certainty of funding over 30 years allowed longer-term strategic decisions to be made locally, rather than in line with cyclical Government Spending Reviews over a few years.

Members were informed of the 'asks' that had been submitted and the next steps were explained, where it was noted that a devolution deal for York and North Yorkshire could potentially unlock significant investment for York, with a focus on improving the economic prosperity and future long term opportunities for all residents.

The Interim Head of Paid Services highlighted the benefits the 'asks' would bring to York and its residents and it was noted that as part of the Executive process, Executive agreed to request two additions to the 'asks', these were:

- The need for the skills and employment sections to represent the current and future requirement for the health and social care workforce, recognising this was a sector with significant career opportunities but also likely to have shortage of workers.
- That York's strengths as a rail tech city were recognised and that opportunities were taken to support this sector to enhance these strengths as part of York's future economy.

In answer to Members questions regarding the devolution models, the complexity of the process for unitary and non unitary authorities, timelines, the 'asks', public consultation and the proposed local government structures, it was noted that

- The Council was committed to working with partners and neighbouring local authorities through the process to pursue the best deal for York and North Yorkshire but that ultimately the Government would decide the best and most viable model.
- Consultation with residents on the detail of the deal proposed by Government would be included as part of Our Big Conversation and the responses would be part of the final submission.

The Committee thanked the Leader and officers for their update and the Vice Chancellor of the University of York was also commended for his commitment to delivering the bio-tech and agri-tech centres.

Resolved:

- (i) That the update be noted.
- (ii) That Scrutiny be actively involved throughout the whole devolution process and that the Leader of the Council be invited to attend a future Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee to present the published White Paper.

Reason: To ensure that the devolution proposals can be monitored and scrutinised throughout the whole process.

An adjournment took place at 3:04pm till 3:13pm.

12. Update from the Director of Public Health

The Director of Public Health was in attendance to update Members on the current situation in York relating to Covid-19.

She gave a brief overview and confirmed the key data that was observed on a daily basis to help control the pandemic locally. Members were informed that the numbers fluctuated on a daily basis so a rolling seven day average of coronavirus cases were monitored. It was noted that the numbers in York were low and York's positivity rate was currently below 1%.

The Director highlighted the data from the national test and trace program and Members noted that there had been 97 laboratory confirmed Covid-19 cases in York registered with the test and trace scheme, of which 82 were contacted, identifying 176 contacts, of which, 113 had been traced. It was confirmed that the Council and the Outbreak Management Advisory Board were lobbying for additional local flexibility and that a letter had been sent to Government to request the resources to establish our own local contact tracing service.

Members were also informed that:

- There was currently no coronavirus cases reported in any of the care homes or schools located in York and work would continue to ensure robust infection control procedures were in place.
- Hand washing, social distancing and the wearing of face coverings was still crucially important to control the virus,

as well as self isolating and testing should symptoms develop.

- The Outbreak Management Advisory Board's priority areas included care homes, universities, colleges and schools and they would continue to consider the measurements put in place in preparation for students arriving in September.
- Work was ongoing with NHS colleagues regarding winter planning.

Members thanked the Director for her update and in answer to their questions she confirmed:

- Additional measures were being considered for the winter months.
- The Council's communication team and local partners were considering an innovative campaign to encourage more people to wear face coverings.
- A local test and tracing service would not operate completely separately to the NHS system, but would work alongside the universities and schools as a first point of contact, to very quickly do a local triage and share contact tracing data that was collected locally.

Members noted the importance of York having its own localised track and trace system and

Resolved:

- (i) That the update be noted.
- (ii) That the Leaders letter to Government be circulated around the Committee and then the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer and Head of Civic and Democratic Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair consider the most appropriate way to convey the Committees support for greater funding for a localised track and trace system.

Reason: To ensure that Members were aware of the current situation in York relating to Covid-19.

13. Finance and Performance Update

The Head of Corporate Finance & Commercial Procurement (interim s151 officer) provided the Committee with a finance and performance update relating to the 2019/20 outturn report.

She confirmed that the 2019/20 key achievements were considered by Executive on 23 July 2020 and although the year end position was positive some areas still had significant pressures, particularly in children and adult social care.

Members were reminded that the Council was facing significant financial challenge this financial year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and they were updated on the Council's current financial position, where it was noted that:

- Measures to restrict non-essential spending were being considered and the potential financial impact beyond this current year would also be reviewed in preparation to update the budget strategy for 21/22.
- Government were considering a mechanism to compensate Council's for lost income from Council Tax and Business Rates.
- York had received a further £1.3m from Government.
- There would be a 3 year Spending Review in the autumn.
- Technical guidance for the income compensation scheme would be announced shortly.
- All business grant schemes would finish at the end of August.
- Officers would continue to lobby Government for additional funding.

Members thanked the Head of Corporate Finance & Commercial Procurement (interim s151 officer) for her update and in answer to Members questions regarding the impact of Brexit in future budget strategies she confirmed that officers were working with suppliers to ensure continuity of contracts and were considering any future risks in the supply chain. It was also noted that the council's general reserved funds would be reviewed every four to six months and that the first monitoring report was being prepared for Executive to consider at its meeting on 1st October 2020.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the Council's finance and performance
outturn can be monitored.

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair
[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.06 pm].