
Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	11 March 2019
Present	Councillors Williams (Chair), Galvin (Vice-Chair), N Barnes, D'Agorne, Douglas, Fenton, Gates, Looker and Reid

Part A - Matters Dealt With Under Delegated Powers

45. Declarations of Interest

At this point, members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

46. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 14 January 201 and the minutes of the call-in meeting held on 17 December 2018 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

47. Public Participation

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

Jo Millner spoke, on behalf of Chill in the Community, on the Financial Inclusion Scrutiny Review. She stated that there was a lack of appreciation for the work of CICs (Community Interest Companies), who were providing assistance and a safe space for vulnerable residents across the City. She also felt the extent of need was being underestimated and explained that there had been a huge increase in those seeking food support, particularly amongst working families. She also highlighted the impact that the Universal Credit was having on the most vulnerable residents. Finally she acknowledged that the Financial Inclusion scheme had put in place additional support but suggested that it

would have been better to offer support to the already successful schemes being run by volunteers.

Rosie Baker spoke, on behalf of York Food Poverty Alliance, on the Financial Inclusion Scrutiny Review. She stated that food insecurity was a very real problem across the City and welcomed a deeper scrutiny review on the causes of Food Poverty as recommended in the review report. She explained that the organisation she was representing would not be able to continue in its current form and were in need of support from within the Council. She stated that the Alliance supported recommendation 4 of the report, as a multi year budget would allow for the planning and delivery of multi year projects.

48. Schedule of Petitions

Members received the regular update on the Schedule of Petitions in line with the agreed responsibilities of the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure the committee carries out its requirements in relation to petitions.

49. 2018/19 Finance and Performance Monitor 3

Members considered a report which presented the overall finance and performance position for the period covering 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2018, together with an overview of emerging issues. This was the third report of the financial year and assessed performance against budgets, including progress in delivering the Council's savings programme.

The Corporate Finance & Commercial Procurement Manager and Head of Business Intelligence attended the meeting to present the report and answer Member questions.

In response to Member questions they stated that:

- The closer it got to the end of the financial year, the harder it became to provide updates but that they still expected to be within budget;

- In the two directorates with significant budget issues, this was due to additional pressure on services and was not necessarily a matter of financial control;
- Some of the latest sickness absence figures (January) showed a slight improvement which suggested that new processes were having an impact, but that it would be prudent to say there was still a way to go; and
- They were unsure of exact details but believed that procurement of an external wellbeing team was still on track.

Resolved:

1. That Members note:
 - the finance and performance information
 - the position on the overall budget and the need to retain some of the additional business rates income to cover potential cost pressures.
2. That Members request the Directors of the two Directorates with significant budget issues attend the next meeting of CSMC

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

50. Financial Inclusion Scrutiny Review - Draft Final Report

Members considered a draft final report presenting them with information gathered by the Task Group set up to review Financial Inclusion in York, together with the Task Group's conclusions and recommendations.

Members of the Task Group thanked the groups who had taken the time to meet with them, and stated that everyone they had spoken to had been driven and passionate, but with a deep sense of frustration with a system which they saw to be failing. They felt that the Council had not yet 'got it right' in relation to financial inclusion and there was more work to be done by the next Administration.

They also highlighted that this review had been limited by time and suggested there was strong case for a follow up review looking more closely at food poverty and the significant impact this was having on the lives of residents.

The Chair stated that, whilst it was clear that this review had run out of time, the work that had been done was an excellent way to signpost areas that needed to be looked at in more depth by the next Committee.

Resolved: That Members endorse the draft recommendations contained in the report, for presentation to the meeting of Executive on Monday 18 March 2019.

Reason: To conclude the work of this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols and enable this review final report to be presented to the Executive.

51. Single Use Plastics Scrutiny Review - Draft Final Report

Members considered a report which provided them with information gathered by the ad-hoc Sub-Committee appointed to investigate the use and disposal of single use plastics in York, together with their conclusions and recommendations.

Members of the Task Group spoke on the review and explained that the recommendations were a mixture of internal recommendations, to enable staff at CYC to take ownership of reducing use of single use plastics, and ways to work with partners such as Make it York and York BID to reduce use more widely.

There was also discussion on recycling and the ongoing issues with co-mingling of kerbside collections.

Finally Members highlighted the way in which Bristol City Council was working with its Festival Team to create a policy where only reusable or deposit scheme cups could be used at city festivals. Following debate, the Committee agreed to amend one of the recommendations within the report to explore ways that CYC could work with partners in a similar way at events across the City. The amended recommendation is set out below.

Finally Members thanked the Scrutiny Officers who had supported the review.

Resolved: That Members endorse the draft recommendations contained in the report, for presentation to the

meeting of Executive on Monday 18 March 2019,
subject to the following amendment:

iii. The Council:

a) Works with partners such as Make It York to explore opportunities (such as licensing arrangements) to reduce the use of single-use plastic cups and food trays at events held on Council land, and the possible introduction of a 'code of conduct' for such events

Reason: To conclude the work of this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols and enable this review final report to be presented to the Executive.

52. Scrutiny Operations and Functions Review - Draft Final Report

[See also under Part B]

Members considered a Draft Final Report which presented them with information gathered by the Task Group set up to undertake a review of scrutiny operations and functions, together with its conclusions and recommendations.

During discussion of the report, and the review more widely, Members stressed that the proposed recommendations were not controversial, but a key conclusion was that a cultural change within CYC was needed if Scrutiny was to function more effectively moving forward.

One Member felt that removing pre-decision call-in was a mistake, as no replacement for this function had been proposed in the report. Other Members felt strongly that, whilst well intentioned, pre-decision call-in had proved a frustrating process. They stated that 'Calling-in' an item was considered adversarial and that, if Members were involved at an early stage, and scrutiny was working effectively, this function was not necessary.

The Committee acknowledged that whilst scrutiny was 'owned' by Members, the review had been concerned with achieving greater engagement with the whole process by all.

Finally, they commented that the move to monthly meetings would allow Members the time to engage with topics earlier and in greater depth.

The Committee thanked those Members involved in the Task Group and the Officers who had supported them.

Resolved: That Members endorse recommendations 44 (iii) to (xi) and 44 (xiii) – (xv) for referral to, and consideration by, Executive at its meeting on 18 March 2019.

Reason: In order that the Executive consider the relevant recommendations contained in the report.

53. Chair's Remarks

The Chair took this opportunity to thank the Officers and Members who had supported him during his time as Chair of the Committee. He asked that it be recorded in the minutes that the review of Scrutiny Operations and Functions was incredibly important as, when used effectively, scrutiny was a very powerful tool. He also stated that, if non-Executive Members chose to engage with scrutiny, they could really make a difference to the lives of residents.

Part B - Matters Referred To Council

54. Scrutiny Operations and Functions Review - Draft Final Report

[See also under Part A]

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During discussion of the report, and the review more widely, Members stressed that the proposed recommendations were not controversial, but a key conclusion was that a cultural change within CYC was needed if Scrutiny is to function more effectively moving forward.

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The Committee thanked those Members involved in the Task Group and the Officers who had supported them.

Recommendation: That Council approve the following changes, in line with constitutional requirements:

- i. That the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee be split into:
 - Health and Adult Social Care policy and Scrutiny Committee; and
 - Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

Reason: The Committee's extended remit is too large to allow effective scrutiny.

- ii. That the Economy and Place Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees are rejoined.

Reason: To end the uncertainty around the roles of each committee and to provide Economy and Place with a comprehensive scrutiny function.

- iii. That the Pre-Decision Call-In process be removed from the Constitution.

Reason: To encourage a more timely and pro-active approach to pre-decision scrutiny.

Councillor Dafydd Williams, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.35 pm and finished at 6.50 pm].

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