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Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	10 June 2019
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Hunter (Items1-7), Melly, Rowley and Wann
Apologies	Councillors D Taylor and Vassie

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### 1. **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.

### 2. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 11 March 2019 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

### 3. **Public Participation**

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

Gwen Swinburn, a resident spoke on her concerns regarding scrutiny processes. She stated that task groups took place behind closed doors with no citizen input. She also discussed the review of the constitution that Members had requested, HR issues and the use of the Officer Decision Log.

### 4. **Attendance of the Leader (inc. Policy, Strategy And Partnerships) and Executive Member Finance And Performance**

The Leader (inc. Policy, Strategy and Partnerships) and Executive Member Finance and Performance attended the meeting to

discuss priorities and challenges for the forthcoming year. They stated that there would be an Emergency Budget taken to Full Council in July and that they would be going out to consultation on the new Council Plan.

In response to Member questions they stated:

- Children's Centres were an important issue. Under austerity Local Authorities had prioritised spending, but making sure no Children's Centre closed over the last 4 years through the Local Area Teams had been a priority;
- It was most important to maintain frontline services, or services for families and children most in need;
- The Council Plan would include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on Economy and High Value Jobs. There would be an annual report back on how CYC was performing against the plan;
- There were 5 in the economy section of the plan;
- The Monitoring Officer would bring forward a paper on the Constitution and committee structures to the first Full Council meeting of the year;
- The York Economic Partnership was created to look at strategic economic issues and gave business leaders a chance to steer strategy at an early level;
- There would be funding in the emergency budget for a level of investment in environment and sustainability; and
- The newly created Climate Change Scrutiny Committee would give guidance to the Executive on priorities.

Resolved: That Members note the report and verbal information provided by the Executive Members.

Reason: To further strengthen the positive relationship between Scrutiny and the Executive.

## **5. Financial Progress Information Report**

The Corporate Directors of Health, Housing and Adult Social Care and Children, Education and Communities attended the meeting, with the Head of Finance, to explain the financial forecasts within their Directorates, as requested by Members of the Committee in March. They tabled documents which were published as an agenda supplement following the meeting. Members expressed their disappointment that papers were being tabled on the day of the meeting.

The Corporate Director for Children, Education and Communities stated that there were significant pressures impacting all Local Authorities. To start to address this there had been a placement review, work on an inclusion review and she had implemented budget 'deep dives' at Management Team meetings. In response to questions from Members she stated:

- In relation to 'The Glen' the overspend had primarily been staffing costs, in relation to agency staffing and some issues around vacant posts. There was a new Manager in post and agency spend had significantly reduced. There was also a move to the Centre of Excellence which would help bring things back into line;
- There was no evidence of academisation having an impact, York was good at partnership working;
- Older Children were now coming into the care system, and often their more complex needs made them more challenging to place. There had been changes to the Local Care Offer, with increased training and support for Foster Carers so they were able to deal with more complex cases. However, there were currently no empty placements so there was a clear need to recruit more Foster Carers; and
- There had been a dramatic reduction in the Home to School Transport budget.

The Corporate Director for Health, Housing and Adult Social Care also stated that the national context was a factor and that in terms of Adult Social Care it was key to make sure demand was legitimate and 'eligible need' fell within legislation.

In response to questions from Members she stated:

- In terms of external residential care use this was due to increased demand and the closure of two homes. This had created a significant cost pressure;
- CYC intended to develop places where residents could live independently, rather than create more residential care places. There would however always be a need for residential care. A hybrid mode of care was therefore ideal, but this would take time and in year results would not be evident;

- There was a clear policy not to place outside of the City but in very specific circumstances this may have to happen;
- York was a very particular market and demographic with a high level of residents self funding. This meant that many providers would never deal with the Local Authority; and
- There were very low numbers of agency staff being used by the directorate. They were not experiencing the workforce challenges that the NHS and Direct Care were.

Resolved: That, in light of the data provided by the Corporate Directors, an update on the financial position of the two Directorates be brought to this committee in December.

Reason: To provide the Committee with assurances that financial controls are in place to mitigate any overspend.

## **6. Arrangements for Scrutiny In York**

Members considered a report which highlighted the structure for the Council's provision of the scrutiny function and the resources available to support it. It also detailed the current terms of reference for the individual Policy & Scrutiny Committees.

Resolved: That Members note the contents of the report and the specific remits of the individual Policy & Scrutiny Committees.

Reason: To inform Members of scrutiny arrangements

## **7. Food Poverty Scrutiny Review Scoping Report**

Members considered a report which asked the Committee to consider a request by Members the previous administration's Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) that the new Committee undertake an in-depth scrutiny review into the causes of and responses to food poverty.

During discussion on this report some Members felt that it was important not to lose focus on the wider Financial Inclusion work being undertaken. There was also a need to better understand

current provision and to spate out issues such as food waster and social isolation which were different issues to food poverty.

There was a suggestion that an ad-hoc sub-committee be set up to consider this issue, but as it was so complex it was felt a scoping report should first be considered by the full Committee.

Resolved: That Members:

1. note the information provided in the report; and
2. a scoping report on Food Poverty be brought to the next meeting of this committee

Reason: To understand and help tackle issues related to food poverty in the city.

## **8. Draft Annual Scrutiny Report**

Members considered a draft of the Annual Scrutiny Report, summarising the work of the various Committees for the municipal year June 2018 – May 2019, and asking that they agree the report prior to its presentation to Council in July 2019.

A minor error on page 62, para 12 was noted. This would be amended prior to Full Council as follows:

~~'A Task Group was appointed to carry out this work in October 2019-2018'~~

Resolved: That Members endorse the Annual Scrutiny Report, covering the period between June 2018 and May 2019, for submission to Full Council in July 2019, in accordance with constitutional requirements.

Reason: To enable its presentation to Full Council in July 2019, in line with Constitutional requirements.

## **9. Schedule Of Petitions**

Members considered a report providing them with details of new petitions received to date, together with those considered by the Executive or relevant Executive Member/Officer since the last report to the Committee.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

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

## 10. Draft Work Plan

Members considered the Draft Work Plan for 2019-20.

They suggested that the Finance and Performance Monitor Reports could be received on a 6 monthly basis to give a more in depth view. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the upcoming meeting of scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

Resolved: That the draft work plan be approved, subject to the following amendments:

- September – ICT Strategy update report
- December – Financial Progress Information Report

Reason: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair  
[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.00 pm].