

Council

6 October 2011

Report of the Assistant Director of Governance & ITT

Annual Scrutiny Report 2010-11

Summary

1. This annual scrutiny report is presented to Council by the Chair of Scrutiny Management Committee, on its behalf, and summarises the work of the five Overview & Scrutiny Committees for the period June 2010 – May 2011.

Background

2. This committee is charged with monitoring overall performance in relation to scrutiny review work and providing an annual report to Full Council. The last annual report was produced in June 2010 for the period June 2009 – May 2010.

Consultation

3. Consultation was not required for the production of this annual report. However, consultation is an important element of Overview & Scrutiny and is regularly carried out in support of scrutiny reviews.
4. The final reports produced for each of the reviews completed during the period June 2010 – May 2011 detail all of the work undertaken, including any consultation carried out. Those final reports and all supporting information can be viewed in full at:

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13029&path=13028>

Options

5. Having considered the Annual Report, Members may choose to:
 - agree any amendments required to the report
 - approve the report for presentation to the meeting of Full Council on 6 October 2011

Completed Scrutiny Reviews in 2010-11

6. The following scrutiny reviews were completed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committees in the last municipal year:
7. Taxi Licensing Policy Review

The Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee carried out their review of the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy between November 2010 and March 2011. The aim of the review was to ensure the council had an up to date policy which was robust and fit for purpose. The original policy is currently being re-drafted to take account of the recommendations arising from the review, and it will be presented for approval to the Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee before the end of this municipal year. The key outcomes arising from the review were the decision not to de-regulate taxis in York and to re-instate a 24 hour taxi rank in Duncombe Place.
8. Newgate Market Review

In January 2011, the Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee completed their review of York's daily market. The aim of the review was to identify improvements to the existing stall market and its surrounding area. Many of the recommendations from the review centred on improvements to the general cleanliness and visual aspects of the market. As a result of the review, a Service Level Agreement was implemented for cleaning the market and surrounding area, and a programme of reinvestment was agreed to achieve long term improvements.
9. Customer Complaints Review

Between November 2010 and March 2011, the Effective Organisation Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Council's handling of customer complaints. The purpose of the review was to inform the development of a new Customer Complaints Policy, improve the customer experience, and thereby reduce the number of common or repeat complaints, and complaints to the Ombudsman. The new policy was recently presented to the Corporate Management Team. The expectation is, that once implemented, a reduction in the number of complaints received and efficiency savings will be achieved.
10. Carers Review

Between November 2010 and March 2011, the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee carried out a review of support given to carers in

the city, with the aim of promoting the valuable work they do and improving the way the Council and its key partners identify them and provide access to information and support. The key outcomes sought were improvements in partnership working and a consistency in the way information is provided.

11. Edible York Review

An Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee was set up in December 2010 to carry out a review with the aim of improving the Council's support of community food growing, and identifying additional areas of land in the city suitable for such use. As a result of the review, Council policies relating to green space management (including amenity and communal housing areas) now encourage the use of available space for food growing and the Council now actively promotes local food growing by providing information on its website and in a number of its publications.

Supporting the Council's Corporate Strategy

12. All of the reviews completed during 2010-11 (identified above) took account of the Council's need to be inclusive and ensure equality in accessing the services being reviewed. Each of the reviews also supported a number of the council's other improvement priorities and direction statements:

13. Taxi Licensing Policy Review & Newgate Market Review

Both reviews supported the Thriving City theme of the Corporate Strategy 2009/2012 i.e. 'We will continue to support York's successful economy to make sure that employment rates remain high and that local people benefit from new job opportunities.'

14. The Taxi Licensing Policy review also supported the Safer City theme i.e. 'We want York to be a safer city with low crime rates and high opinions of the city's safety record'.

15. Customer Complaints Review

Supported the Council's Effective Organisation theme of the Corporate Strategy 2009/2012 i.e. 'We shall be a modern council with high standards in all we do, living up to our values and be a great place to work'.

16. Carers Review

Supported the Council's Healthy City theme of the Corporate Strategy 2009/2012 i.e. 'We want to be a city where residents enjoy long,

healthy and independent lives. For this to happen we will make sure that people are supported to make healthier lifestyle choices and that health and social care services are quick to respond to those that need them’.

17. Edible York Review

Supported the ‘Sustainable City’ theme of the Corporate Strategy 2009/2012 i.e. ‘We aim to be clean and green, reducing our impact on the environment whilst maintaining York’s special qualities and enabling the city and its communities to grow and thrive.’

18. In addition it was recognised that the Edible York Review supported the wider sustainability agenda and the Sustainable Community Strategy. Specifically, it supported the Sustainable City chapter which aims to reduce York’s ecological and carbon footprint and support local food growing initiatives, and the city’s climate change framework and action plan.

Performance & Finance Monitoring

19. Throughout 2010-11 the Overview & Scrutiny Committees each received quarterly monitoring reports relating to the council’s performance and finance management, in service areas specific to their individual remits. In some cases this led to individual Committees requesting detailed reports on some of the exceptional issues identified and the initiatives being put in place to address them.

20. In addition, they also received other monitoring reports specific to their individual terms of reference, as detailed below:

21. The Community & Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee received:

- Quarterly performance reports from the Safer York Partnership & North Yorkshire Police;
- Presentations from North Yorkshire Police & the Probation Service on their contributions to the Safer York Partnership;
- Updates on the Capable Guardian Pilot, and an overview of other CYC initiatives inc. the ‘Area Based Working Pilot’;

22. The Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee received:

- Bi-annual update reports on major developments within the city and on major transport initiatives and issues arising from them;

- Updates on a Visit York pilot scheme on the use and acceptance of Euros;
 - Progress reports on York Northwest, and traffic arrangements at York railway station.
23. The Effective Organisation Overview & Scrutiny Committee received:
- Presentations on Customer Services and ICT;
 - Briefings from Legal Services, Procurement and Equalities;
 - Updates on 'More for York' and the 2011/12 Budget;
 - Monitoring reports on the new Workforce Implementation Plan
24. The Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee received:
- Updates on NHS North Yorkshire & York's Universal Services Review (post maternity)
 - Presentations from the PCT on 'Transforming Community Services' & the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment;
 - Presentations from LINks & York Health Group
25. In addition, they were also consulted on a number of proposed service changes e.g. in children's cardiac services in the region and the Public Health White Paper.
26. The Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee received:
- Bi-annual service level agreement performance update reports from the York Museums Trust and York Theatre Royal;
 - Updates on the future provision of Youth Services in the city;
 - Reports on 'adult participation in sport in the city' and 'opportunities for public art at the Council's new headquarters';
 - A referral from the Executive on 'Looked After Children';
 - Updates on the Playbuilder Scheme;
 - A tour and presentation on York Explore and Archives

Acting as Critical Friend

27. During the municipal year 2010-11 each of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees met with the relevant Executive Members to hear about their challenges and priorities for the year. They also met with the council's appropriate statutory partners to discuss their contributions to achieving the 'Local Area Agreement' priority targets, and to hear about their priorities and challenges.

Monitoring Previous Recommendations

28. Finally, each of the committees received bi-annual updates on the implementation of any outstanding approved recommendations arising from the scrutiny reviews they had completed in the previous municipal year.

Calling - In

29. Throughout the municipal year 2010-11 there were 15 Executive/ Executive Member decisions called-in for consideration by the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC). SMC agreed to refer back 10 of those decisions for the Executive's reconsideration – see list of items at Annex A.

Implications

30. There are no known Legal, HR and financial implications associated with the recommendation within this report. The cost of producing and publishing the completed review booklets and this annual scrutiny report has been met from within the scrutiny budget.

Risk Management

31. There are no known risks associated with the recommendation in this report.

Recommendations

32. Having considered the information within this covering report, Members are asked to note the Annual Scrutiny Report which covers the period between June 2010 and May 2011.

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

Contact Details

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Report Approved ✓ **Date** 12 August 2010

Specialist Implications Officer(s) - None

Wards Affected:

All

✓

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – List of Executive / Executive Member Decisions Called-In
During Municipal Year 2010-11