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Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	10 February 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Hunter, Musson, Rowley, D Taylor, Vassie and Wann

#### Apologies

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#### **59. Declarations of Interest**

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

#### **60. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 13 January 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record, subject to the following addition to the resolutions to minute 54 (Attendance and Wellbeing - Day One Attendance Management) as set out below:

‘(iii) That the Chair and Vice Chair would agree what aspects of the Day One Absence reporting they wished to be reported back to the Committee, in conjunction with the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee and Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee, to ensure that work was not duplicated.’

#### **61. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been one registrations to speak under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme on item 5 York Central Briefing.

Chris Barrett spoke as a member of York Central Action, he raised questions about the public accountability of the York

Central Strategic Board and asked how do the City of York Council keep the York Central Project accountable?

**62. Supporting and Engaging Local Councillors**

Members considered a report that introduced what existing practices were in place to help and support Members in their roles and in engaging their communities. Members highlighted the potential benefit of further tailored training opportunities for Councillors throughout the year. Officers raised the need for greater support and training around areas such as, the safeguarding of Members when handling data and private information of their residents.

Discussion was held about the potential barriers to residents, specifically those from underrepresented groups from considering and becoming Councillors. Members also considered the role of Members Enquires, how it was currently being used, and how it could be used moving forward.

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee noted the information provided regarding the current support Members receive.
- ii. That discussions be held with the political groups and across council officers about the potential barriers faced by prospective and current Councillors to be able to perform the various roles and duties associated with being an Elected Member.
- iii. That discussions be held with the political groups about the current role of Members Enquires and how it should operate moving forward.

Reason: To be confident that Members are being thoroughly supported in their various roles including that of community involvement and engagement.

**63. York Central Briefing**

Members considered a report on the status of the York Central Project in relation to it being the largest project in the Major Projects portfolio, this report was requested by the Committee following on from reports the Committee had considered in October and December 2019 regarding project management.

Officers introduced the report highlighting City of York Council's role with the different partners, how the Council influences the project, and the Council's role in decision making. Discussion took place around a perceived lack of accountability, Members emphasised the specific responsibility City of York Council had to residents regarding York Central, and noted concerns about the project potentially moving away from the vision held by residents and Members.

Members raised concerns regarding the amount of cars York Central had planning for and highlighted their desire for a low to no car development. Members also questioned the argument around York Central not being commercially viable as a low car development, emphasising the location of the site potentially being able to offset the need for a large volume of cars in the development. Officers noted City of York Council's role as the planning regulator in ensuring the development meets what is outlined in the design guide. However, they also reminded the Committee that Members of the Planning Committee had already approved the Outline Planning Application.

York Central's role in the city's target of becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030 was raised. Members highlighted the different strategic objectives shared by the different partners and whether there was sufficient clarity in the project about tackling the climate emergency. Members also raised questions about wider issues highlighted in Annex 5A of the report, specifically in relation to who was responsible for decision making.

Resolved:

- i. It is noted that the Terms of Reference for the York Central Delivery Co-ordination Board makes a commitment at paragraph 10.19 to "Monitor, review and amend its own Terms of Reference as the project evolves". With this in mind, can the CSMC be advised of:
  - i.i. How does the Board propose to monitor its terms of reference?
  - i.ii. When were the terms of reference reviewed and if so what were the outcomes and how were these communicated to CYC and partners/stakeholders? If a review

has not yet taken place, when does the board propose to undertake a review?

i.iii. If any changes to the Board's terms of reference have been or are to be made, will there be a review of the terms of reference of the associated boards charged with the global delivery of York Central so as to ensure alignment of aims and commitments for example towards climate change?

- ii. Can the CSMC be provided with quarterly updates on the York Central project performance with the first report to include an updated issues schedule (page 59 of the agenda dated March 2019) with details of the actions taken and any resulting new risks given that the project is now almost 12 months further on.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee can continue to monitor the performance of the York Central project.

#### **64. 2019/20 Finance and Performance Monitor 2**

Members considered the overall finance and performance position for the period covering 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019, it was noted that due to the 2019 general election and purdah that this report had been delayed, the Committee were therefore updated on the forecast variation for Monitor 3.

Members raised questions about the overspends the in Children, Education, and Communities Directorate and in the Health, Housing, and Adult Social Care Directorate, highlighting that these departments had received additional funding in the previous financial year. Officers outlined areas that attributed to the overspends including resources being used to improve governance and decision making in these departments. Members noted that the areas attributed to parts of the overspends could have theoretically been avoidable as they had been overspends year on year.

Further questions were raised around the underspends, it was suggested that future reports could provide greater detail as to

how underspends were achieved, identifying windfalls against regular underspends. The Chair encouraged other Scrutiny Committee Chairs to scrutinise the reasons for underspends as well as overspends, when they consider the monitor reports for their areas.

Resolved:

- i. That the finance and performance information be noted.

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

**65. Report of the Chair of the Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

The Chair of the Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee presented a report providing the Committee with a six-monthly update on the work of the Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee. He highlighted the Committees focus on speaking to bodies outside of the Council to contribute to debates and inform the work of the Committee. He also noted that the Committee had reviews scheduled to look into apprenticeships and in-work poverty moving forward.

Resolved:

- i. That the Chair's report and update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on the work of the Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

**66. Food Poverty Scrutiny Review Interim Report**

Members considered the interim report on the food scrutiny review. Discussion took place around the impact of stigma attached to individuals claiming what they were entitled too, such as free school meals. The associated costs that attending school could have on those in poverty were considered, with attention placed on the barriers that expensive and restrictive uniforms could have. Members of the Sub-Committee noted that they would further consider the role of schools in tackling food

poverty. There was also support to a report suggestion that there was continued funding for the Welfare Benefits Unit and Citizens Advice York in order to help ensure full take-up of what benefits residents were entitled too.

Resolved:

- i. That the content of the report be noted.
- ii. That the Sub-Committee were invited to consider to investigate the role that schools had to food poverty.

Reason: To inform Members of the progress of the Scrutiny Review into Food Poverty and to ensure the Scrutiny Review considered all areas of food poverty in the city.

#### **67. Work Plan 2019/20**

Members considered the Draft Work Plan for 2019-20.

Resolved:

- i. That the draft work plan be approved.

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

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.33 pm and finished at 7.54 pm].