
Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	12 July 2021
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Hollyer, Hook, Musson, Pearson and Rowley
Apologies	Councillors Baker and Norman

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting, the Chair invited Members to declare any personal, pecuniary or prejudicial interests, which they had not already included in their standing register of interests. None were declared.

9. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes from the 14 June 2021 of the Committee be signed as a correct record, subject to, the amendment in relation to Committee places be amended to 'It was noted that following disagreement over assigned seats and substitutions at Annual Council for this Committee, Cllr Wann was asked to leave the meeting before it started.'

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

11. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE ON COVID-19

The Director of Public Health provided a presentation to the Committee on public health in York in relation to Covid-19. It was noted that both York's cases and positivity rate were rising and that additional pressure was being identified in schools and in health and social care settings, with the latter described as

being as busy as usual winter levels. Updates were provided in relation to contact tracing and vaccinations, as well as, the lifting of legal restrictions by central government expected on 19 July, apart from the requirement to quarantine when testing positive or returning from a red listed country.

Members enquired about the use of Lateral Flow and PCR tests and it was confirmed that if a Lateral Flow test is positive this needs to be followed up by a PCR test to confirm the result. Positive case data is calculated from positive PCR tests. It was noted that the vaccination status of covid positive patients admitted to hospital is not routinely collected but Public Health were in discussions to acquire this data.

Members enquired about the increasing number of Covid-19 cases and whether these would increase the risk of new variants developing, especially as the burden of responsibility was moving from government led restrictions to the individual. It was confirmed that in circumstances where there are high levels of Covid-19 infection circulating in the community there is a greater chance of new variants emerging. This is why it is important to try and keep case numbers down. In relation to the ending of restrictions members were informed that the Council was working with partners about how to promote good public health post 19 July 2021. It was noted that social distancing and face coverings should still be encouraged when indoors and in poorly ventilated or crowded places to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and other respiratory infections.

Hospital pressures were discussed especially in relation to the potential number of cases predicted by central government. It was confirmed that this pressure on the NHS was a major concern and could once again affect the delivery of elective surgery and treatments. Members were also informed of concerns regarding the broader health impacts of the pandemic such as long covid, late cancer diagnoses, mental health and that modelling in relation to these health impacts could be brought to the Committees next meeting.

Resolved:

- i. That the update provided by the Director of Public Health be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee informed of the impact of the pandemic across the city.

12. **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE OUTTURN 2020-21**

Officers introduced the report outlining the Finance and Performance Outturn 2020-21 for the Council, it was noted that the Council had used money from its general and earmarked reserves after an overspend of £1.2 million. In relation to performance data it was noted that Covid-19 had impacted the data but officers considered that a relatively positive picture had still be achieved for the councils performance in 2020-21.

The Committee thanked officers for providing additional detail this year regarding spending and mitigations in Adults Social Care and requested that similar detail be provided for Children's Services.

The performance data provided was discussed as to how well the Council was performing, with certain data streams relating to areas such as sustainable travel, positive responses to green spaces in the city, and crime figures had all moved in a negative direction over several years. Officers did highlight that the general direction of data did not show poor performance but agreed specific areas had declined in performance.

Members enquired about the phasing out of central government grants and how robust the Council expected its revenue income to be. Officers confirmed that the end of grants related to Covid-19 would have an impact on the Council's finances and while business rates' relief would end, the Council's 2021/22 budget does not assume any increase in business rates income. They also confirmed that revenue income would likely remain as robust as the overall economy in York. In relation to the Council's reserves officers confirmed that the reserves remained robust, but that if used the Council would need to put measures in place to replenish the reserves and continued pressures in Adult and Children's Services were a concern. Members discussed the role the Contain Outbreak Management Fund had had to offset overspends in Adult Services in 2020/21 but agreed that central government policy change was required to tackle the long term funding issues of Adult Social Care.

Resolved:

- i. Note the report;

- ii. That the Committee requested that the Children, Education, and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee engage with the Reducing Service Costs Board and invite officers to a meeting of their Committee to discuss mitigations against the overspend in Children's services;
- iii. That the Committee requested that the Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee review the Council's performance data in relation to improving green spaces, the sustainable transports and low user satisfaction and declining use as report on the Open Data platform.

Reason: To ensure significant financial and performance issues can be appropriately dealt with.

13. WORK PLAN 2021/22

Members noted the Scrutiny Committee work plans provided in the agenda and noted that a work plan for this Committee would be brought to the Committees next meeting.

Resolved:

- i. That the work plans for the 2021/22 Scrutiny Committees be noted.

Reason: To ensure Scrutiny Committees continue to have a plan of work for 2021/21.

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.35 pm and finished at 7.07 pm].