

Meeting	Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	11 November 2024
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Merrett (Vice-Chair), Ayre, B Burton, Coles (until 8.33 pm), Crawshaw, Healey, Melly, Rose, Rowley (until 7 pm), Waller, Widdowson (until 7.58 pm) and Whitcroft
In Attendance	Cllr K Lomas, Executive Member, Finance and Major Projects
Officers Present	Lorraine Lunt, Information and Governance Team Manager Cath Murray, Corporate Governance Operational Manager Helen Whiting, Chief Officer – HR and Support Services Debbie Mitchell, Director of Finance, Section 156 Officer Lindsay Tomlinson, Head of Democratic Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer

26. Apologies for Absence (5.32 pm)

None were received.

27. Declarations of Interest (5.32 pm)

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on the agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

None were declared.

28. Minutes (5.33 pm)

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 October 2024 and the Joint Meeting with Audit and Governance held on 24 February 2024, were approved as a correct record.

29. Public Participation (5.34 pm)

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

30. City of York Council Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report April 2023 - March 2024 (5.34 pm)

The Information and Governance Team Manager presented the report and summarised the key findings, noting that a fall in the number of complaints would trigger an investigation to ensure that the complaints process remained accessible to residents.

The officer, together with the Corporate Governance Operational Manager, responded to questions from members covering a range of topic including the availability of comparative data, trends in the data, quality assurance, team resources, use of social media and compliments.

It was reported that data could be benchmarked against other LAs through the ombudsman network, as well as through previous reporting. Adult Social Care complaints relate to errors rather than care levels, service areas use the complaints data, and the corporate director must sign off on corporate findings. The team was holding a 0.5 vacancy which would not be recruited to deliver cost savings. Whilst there would be impact on the number of complaints received, this may impact the number of out of time responses. Compliments go to individuals and teams as soon as possible and are reported to CMT.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure a robust review of the complaints/compliments process.

31. Progress on the Workforce Strategy and Workforce: Performance Update Report for Information Only (6.21 pm)

The Chief officer – HR and Support Services presented her report on the Workforce Strategy, noting that it was designed to deliver the council plan and monitored by the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

Members asked questions covering performance development reviews, employee survey and feedback, measures of success, the LGA peer challenge, trauma-informed approach, recruitment and retention and the inclusion of background papers.

The officer reported that managers should implement employee suggestions where possible; the themes covered in the peer challenge had been identified and were already captured in the strategy; the employee survey included a space for free text to encourage more detailed answers; retention had improved and there was an ambition to ensure that vacancies were filled on the first time of advertising. It was agreed to report back on the trauma-informed approach that was being taken.

Resolved: That the Workforce Development Strategy and the monitoring of performance and measures of success be noted.

Reason: To ensure the effective delivery of a resilient, skilled and capable workforce to deliver the Council Plan.

[6.25 – 6.29 pm, the meeting was adjourned.]

32. Budget Scrutiny (6.56 pm)

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) presented her report on the proposed approach to balancing the 2025/26 budget, noting that the report contained a number of assumptions and proposals. The process was at an early stage and yet to be agreed. Also, there were a number of variables not yet determined, including the council settlement figure.

Members reviewed the draft Budget Consultation no. 2 document, at Annex 1 of the report, suggesting amendments to the wording of some questions and to the questions themselves.

The CFO explained the difficulties of developing a sufficiently detailed consultation while being constrained by the need to ensure that it could be accessed by those with a reading age of ten and above. The aim of the consultation was to provide Executive with additional information which would be used to assist in the decision-making process.

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects noted that whilst residents' views were being gathered, they were not being presented with choices. It was further noted that workshops would be held, subsequent to the survey, to gather more detailed information.

[7.58 pm, Cllr Widdowson left the meeting.]

The CFO reported that a temporary post had been created to lead a team across the service directorships. The aim was to bring in some capacity to resource the programme for change.

Both the CFO and the Executive Manager thanked Members for their input.

Resolved: That the information report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee informed of financial issues and provide an opportunity to comment on the proposals.

33. Monitoring and Tracking of Approved Council Motions (8.19 pm)

Members considered a report on the approved Council motions since May 2024. A number of Members raised concerns around the procedures in place for tracking of Council motions.

Resolved: That the Chair and Vice-Chair meet with the Head of Democratic Governance to agree a process for future tracking of motions.

Reason: To ensure a robust process for the tracking of Council motions.

34. Schedule of Petitions (8.30 pm)

Members considered the Schedule of Petitions, noting several areas for improvement, including whether to record a petition with fewer than 10

signatures, general improvements to consistency and the need for more information on some of responses.

The Head of Democratic Governance advised that petitions 222 and 213 had been closed.

Resolved:

- i. That the report be noted.
- ii. That the Chair and Vice-Chair meet with Democratic Services to review changes to the reporting mechanisms.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee carried out its constitutional role in relation to petitions.

35. Work Plan (8.38 pm)

Members considered the Scrutiny work plan for the four scrutiny committees.

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: To ensure an overview of the scrutiny work programme.

Cllr S Fenton, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 8.38 pm].