
MEETING	EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	23 FEBRUARY 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS WATT (CHAIR), HORTON (VICE-CHAIR), FIRTH, BOYCE, GUNNELL, HYMAN AND R WATSON

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

30. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the committee held on 12 January 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

31. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

32. THIRD PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITOR FOR 2009-10

Members considered a report which provided details of the headline performance issues from the third performance monitor of 2009-10 covering the period from 1 April to 31st December 2009.

The report covered the following three areas of performance:

- Performance – how well the Council is performing across a wide range of performance indicators at corporate and directorate level.
- Corporate Strategy Actions – update on progress against projects and actions which support the Council's corporate priorities.
- Finance – service and corporate budgets.

In relation to Finance, Officers advised that there had been an increase in forecasted pressures across the directorates particularly in Housing and Adult Social Services. Another notable reduction in income had resulted from the decrease in fees and charges, particularly from car parking due to the adverse weather conditions. A number of the pressures would be

addressed at Budget Council but any overspend this financial year would reduce the overall level of the Council's revenue reserves.

The report highlighted that 51% of the national performance indicators had data available at this point and that 53% had improved, compared to 56% at quarter two. Officers advised it was not essential for 100% to be improving, and pointed out there had been renegotiation of some of the targets at the last full Council meeting.

Officers agreed to email the Committee with responses to the following questions:

- What was meant by a restorative justice scheme as detailed in annex 1 under the Safer City theme.
- What is the amount of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) reward grant the Council is likely to receive.
- What is the real cost of achieving all the LAA targets and is it worth the required effort for the amount of reward the Council will receive.
- Do Officers have comparator information on NEETS.

RESOLVED: (i) That Members noted the performance issues identified within the report.

REASON: So that corrective action on these performance issues can be taken by Members and Directorates.

RESOLVED: (ii) That Members noted the finance issues identified in the report, in particular:

- The significant pressures arising due to the economic recession and social care costs that are still evident across the Council.
- The requirement for growth as part of 2010-11 Revenue Budget to build sufficient financial capacity for such areas.
- The work already undertaken within directorates to contain financial pressures.
- That work continues to identify and implement options to contain spending within budget by the end of the financial year.

REASON: So that the Council's expenditure can be contained within budget, where possible, by the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: (iii) That Officers respond to Members questions as detailed above.

REASON: To keep Members informed.

33. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - DRAFT FINAL REPORT.

Members considered the draft final report of the review of the Effectiveness of the Executive Forward Plan.

The information gathered as part of the review was attached at Annex A to the draft final report. The Committee agreed to focus the review on the following issues:

- Should the Forward Plan be limited to key decisions only
- The timing of items appearing on the Forward Plan.
- Identifying an optimum format for the printed Forward Plan.

Bearing in mind the Committees findings, a Task Group made up of three of the Committee's Members had been created to draft the recommendations arising from the review. The Monitoring Officer's views had been sought on the suggested recommendations. She supported the basic changes identified to bring the operation of the Forward Plan in line with legislation and the Council's Constitution, but made specific comments in regard to changing the definition of a key decision and identifying corporately key issues to scrutinise.

Members queried some of the comments made by the Monitoring Officer and requested that before the Committee agreed the recommendations of the review, they would like the Monitoring Officer to attend the next meeting to brief the Committee on the concerns she had raised.

RESOLVED: That having considered the information contained within the draft final report and its associated annexes and having considered the comments of the Monitoring Officer, Members requested the attendance of the Monitoring Officer at the next meeting to brief them on her concerns.

REASON: To progress the work of this review towards a conclusion.

34. WORK PLAN & SCRUTINY TOPIC REGISTRATION

Consideration was given to the Committee's work plan, including a Scrutiny Topic registration form which had been submitted by Councillor Gunnell.

Councillor Gunnell explained that in her opinion, as a Local Authority, York is not doing enough to recruit apprentices and provide work experience to individuals under the age of 25, in particular recruitment of trainees which are not in education or employment or training (NEET). As a result she had submitted a scrutiny topic registration form which had been attached to the agenda for consideration by the Committee.

The Committee felt that there could be two separate issues within the proposed topic, the first being how the Council as an organisation makes opportunities available to young people and the second issue of young people in York that are NEET. Members felt that some of the issues raised were outside of the Effective Organisation Overview and Scrutiny Committee's remit and that it could be beneficial for Learning and Culture Overview Scrutiny Committee to look at some of the issues raised by Councillor Gunnell.

Further discussions on the proposed scrutiny topic ensued and it was agreed that it would be beneficial for the Committee to receive a report from HR in order to identify what existing arrangements are in place for offering traineeships and to help them to define the possible scrutiny topic.

Members agreed that the work plan should be amended to reflect that the Monitoring Officer will attend the next meeting in order for the Committee to agree the final report from the review of the Effectiveness of the Executive Forward Plan and that HR will attend to provide the Committee with further information on traineeships at the Council.

RESOLVED: That the Work Plan be updated to reflect the above additions.

REASON: To assist in the planning of work for this Committee.

Councillor Watt, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.00 pm].