
MEETING	SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE	6 DECEMBER 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS GALVIN (CHAIR), MERRETT (VICE-CHAIR), ORRELL, WAUDBY, SIMPSON-LAING, ALEXANDER AND TAYLOR
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLORS D'AGORNE AND POTTER
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR FIRTH

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. The following interests were declared:

Councillor Merrett declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (minute 14 refers) "School Travel Plans" as a governor of St Paul's Primary School and parent of a child at the school, a member of Cycling England, a member of York Cycle Campaign and an honorary member of Cyclists' Touring Club.

Councillor Simpson-Laing declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (minute 14 refers) "School Travel Plans" as a governor and parent of a child attending school.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the SMC meeting held on the 28 June 2010 and the Traffic Congestion Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee held on 18 May 2010 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there were no registrations to speak under the council's Public Participation Scheme.

9. EXECUTIVE REFERRAL - JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Members considered a report that asked them to consider a referral made by the Executive at their meeting on 21 September 2010 to refer the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to the relevant scrutiny committees for consideration.

Members agreed that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment would be best considered by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee but noted that the committee did have a very heavy workplan.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment be referred to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.¹
- (ii) That the Chair of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to invite all scrutiny members to listen to any presentation given and be offered the opportunity to ask questions.

REASON: To address the Executive referral in relation to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Action Required

1. Request inclusion on Health O&S workplan

TW

10. PROPOSED SCRUTINY TOPIC - EDIBLE YORK: CREATING FOOD GROWING SPACE ACROSS THE CITY

Members received a report that asked them to consider whether they would like to undertake a review into a proposed scrutiny topic – “Edible York: Creating Food Growing Space Across the City”, as outlined in Annex A to the report.

Councillor D’Agorne was in attendance and outlined his reasons for submitting the topic.

Members expressed their support for a review to be carried out but agreed that this should be completed within a four-month period rather than the six months indicated on the topic assessment form. This would ensure that the topic was completed within the current municipal year.

Members also agreed that the review should be carried out by an ad hoc scrutiny committee rather than a task group.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the topic be progressed to review.
- (ii) That each Group be invited to nominate, to Democratic Services, one Member who wished to volunteer to be part of the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee.¹

REASON: To address the topic set out in Annex A to the report.

Action Required

1. Seek nominations from group secretaries

JC

11. UPDATING WORKING PRACTICES IN SCRUTINY

Members received a report that provided an update on a series of planned changes to the way scrutiny reviews were approached in York, with a view to speeding up the processes and making the scrutiny experience more engaging to Members and public alike.

Members welcomed the proposed changes to the procedures, in particular the measures that would enable reviews to be completed within a shorter timespan.

It was noted that the Chair of SMC would be attending the main standing scrutiny committees in the coming months to hear about their collective experiences, with a view to using this information to further refine scrutiny working practices and performance.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the initiatives currently taking place be noted.
- (ii) That a further update on the new working practices be presented to the committee prior to the end of the current financial year.

REASON: To improve and make more engaging current working practices.

12. DESIGNATION OF STATUTORY SCRUTINY OFFICER

Members received a report that sought a recommendation to Council to designate an officer as the “statutory scrutiny officer”.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Council that the Democratic Services Manager be designated as the scrutiny officer for the purposes of the 2009 Act.¹

REASON: To ensure legal compliance and because the functions are within the existing role of the postholder.

Action Required

1. Include in SMC report to Council.

13. REGIONAL SCRUTINY NETWORK

Members received a report that gave an update on recent meetings of, and developments with, the Member Regional Scrutiny Network.

The Chair gave an update on his involvement in regional scrutiny events. He had been part of a regional delegation that was seeking backing to set up a scrutiny structure to scrutinise the work and policies of the new Local Enterprise Partnerships. The delegation had also put forward proposals to scrutinise common services on a regional basis.

Members stated that they welcomed the development of a regional network, as it was particularly important that decisions that had cross-authority implications were subject to scrutiny.

RESOLVED: That the involvement of the Chair and the Scrutiny Team at a regional level be noted

REASON: To participate in and enhance regional scrutiny.

14. SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS AD HOC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FINAL REPORT

Members received a report that presented the final report of the School Travel Plans Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee. Members were asked to comment on the arising recommendations.

Councillor Potter, Chair of the Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee, was in attendance and presented the report to Members. She expressed her thanks to the members of the committee for the work that they had carried out and to officers for their support. It was noted that details of issues that schools had raised in respect road safety improvements would also form part of the final report.

Consideration was given to the recommendations in the report. Particular attention was drawn to recommendations 4, 9 and 13.

Members made the following comments on the report:

- In respect of recommendation 11, more than one exemplar School Travel Plan should be made available on-line.
- In respect of recommendation 6, there should be greater clarity as to how the CCTV car would be used to support parking enforcement.
- When the report was presented to the Executive it should include more information on the financial implications of the recommendations.

Members stressed the importance of ensuring that the recommendations were actioned and gave examples of several near-miss incidents that had occurred in the vicinity of schools.

Officers drew attention to the new format that would be used for the final report. The booklet format would be used for the copies that were distributed to schools and other establishments.

RESOLVED: (i) That the contents of the final report and its annexes be noted.

- (ii) That the comments of the committee be fed into the cover report, and taken into account when the Executive considers the final report.

- (iii) That thanks be recorded to the School Travel Plan Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee for the work that they had carried out.

REASON: To fully inform the Executive of the outcome of the School Travel Plans Ad Hoc Scrutiny Review.

15. URGENT BUSINESS - SCRUTINY REVIEW SUPPORT BUDGET

Members were asked to consider whether, as part of the budget setting process, they wished to make a recommendation to Council as to future funding to support scrutiny reviews. The Chair had agreed to take this as an urgent item in view of the timescales involved.

Officers outlined current expenditure and the outturn prediction.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended that the budget to support scrutiny reviews remain at £15,000 for 2011/12.

REASON: To enable Council to set an informed scrutiny review support budget for the 2011/12 financial year.

Councillor J Galvin, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.20 pm].