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Meeting	Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	11 January 2016
Present	Councillors Levene (Chair), Fenton, Flinders, Galvin (Vice-Chair), Gates, Kramm, Lisle, Reid and Williams

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#### **34. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interest which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. No additional interests were declared.

#### **35. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **36. Public Participation**

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

#### **37. Schedule of Petitions**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed current petitions received by the Council, details of which were set out at Annex A of the report.

Consideration was given to the options detailed in paragraph 7 of the report.

Resolved: That the petitions received and actions reported, as set out in paragraph 5 of the report and in Annex A, be noted.

Reason: To ensure the Committee carries out its requirements in relation to petitions.

### **38. 2015/16 Monitor 2**

Members considered a report which forecast the 2015/16 outturn position for the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

Referring to the request made at the previous meeting for comparative information for some of the key performance data, officers explained that some data had now become available which would enable comparisons with the performance of other local authorities. This would be circulated following the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

Members suggested that it would be helpful if future reports provided information which enabled trends to be identified over time.<sup>2</sup>

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the Committee on the forecast position for 2015/16.

#### Action Required

1. Circulate information

DM

2. Incorporate into future reports

DM

### **39. Procurement Update**

Members considered a report which provided an overview of current procurement activity across the Council.

Members were pleased to note the progress that had been made including the improvement in the reach of the Commercial Procurement Team, as detailed in paragraph 2 of the report.

Members questioned officers about the efforts that were being made to ensure that it was easy for small businesses to bid for contracts. Officers gave examples of some of the measures that had been implemented, including breaking down some contracts into different components to make them more accessible to smaller companies. A framework for building services was also being put in place. Officers stated that there was a need to ensure that better management information was available, as it was not currently easy to access data on the size of the companies that were being awarded contracts.

Officers were asked if comparative data was available. They stated that some historic data was available and that Local Authorities within the Yorkshire/Humber region were carrying out a benchmarking exercise. Members suggested that it would also be useful to receive information regarding council expenditure on procurement staff and supporting resources.

Members stated that smart procurement was one of the ways savings could be made and would be a worthwhile area for scrutiny. It would, for example, be useful to consider how other public bodies carried out procurement. Members did, however, agree that any decisions on such a review should be deferred until the benchmarking information and the data on local small and medium-sized enterprises being awarded contracts was available.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

- (ii) That a further report be presented to the committee when the procurement data referred to above became available or in six months time (whichever is the sooner).<sup>1</sup>

Reasons: (i) To update the Committee on current and planned procurement activity.

- (ii) To enable the Committee to determine whether they would wish to carry out a scrutiny review in respect of procurement.

#### Action Required

1. Include item on work plan

SE

#### 40. Consultation and Engagement

Consideration was given to a report which sought to clarify the difference between consultation and engagement and which provided an overview of how the Council carried out consultation. The paper had been prepared in response to a request by the committee at their last meeting following discussions about the consultation on older people's homes.

Members discussed the challenges posed in managing the expectations of those taking part in the consultation process.

At the request of Members, officers gave details of expenditure on consultation by the CYC Communications Team. It was, however, noted that other departments within the council also funded consultation exercises, including statutory consultation such as that in respect of the Local Plan.

Members commented that social media could be a useful tool when carrying out consultation but it had limitations, for example in terms of the groups it was able to reach. They also suggested that longer term engagement with residents was a valuable way of informing the Authority's direction of travel.

Members requested that the following additional documentation be circulated to them for information<sup>1</sup>:

- The guidance document that had been prepared for staff.
- Information about the review process.
- Information on the work carried out to engage with hard to reach groups.

Members agreed that the committee would continue to keep the issue of consultation and engagement under review.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To provide Members with details of the differences between the Council's consultation and engagement activities, as requested at the last meeting.

#### Action Required

1. Circulate information requested

SH

#### **41. Scrutiny Review Support Budget**

Members considered a report which set out the current position in relation to available Council funding for research for overview and scrutiny review work. Members were asked to consider any recommendations the committee may wish to make to the Executive prior to the budget setting process for 2016/17.

Members noted that funding for 2015/2016 had not yet been spent and the reasons for this. It was agreed that it would be useful for this funding to be allocated for a programme of scrutiny training, which should be open to officers and Executive Members as well as scrutiny committee Members.

- Resolved:
- (i) That it be recommended to Executive that the current budgetary support of £5,000 be retained for 2016/17 for external consultation/market research to support the scrutiny process.<sup>1</sup>
  - (ii) That it be agreed in principle that this year's allocation be spent on appropriate training in scrutiny for Members and Officers, subject to a detailed programme being approved by the Head of Civic and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee.<sup>2</sup>

- Reasons:
- (i) To address the Committee's constitutional right to comment to Executive on setting the above scrutiny budget.
  - (ii) To ensure that appropriate training is available to support effective scrutiny.

#### Action Required

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| 1. Include request within budget setting process              | DM |
| 2. Arrange training in consultation with Chair and Vice-Chair | DS |

#### **42. E-Democracy Scrutiny Review Task Group Report**

Members considered a report which presented an update on the agreed scrutiny review of E-Democracy, being undertaken by a Task Group from this Committee. The Committee was asked to

consider making recommendations to the Executive to help their discussions around the implementation of the new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

Councillor Lisle, Chair of the Task Group, went through the key findings and recommendations, as outlined in the report. He explained the context in which the review had taken place in that the CRM system had already been procured but had not yet been rolled out. Councillor Lisle also explained the reasons why the report was now being presented as a Final Report rather than an Interim Report.

Noting the reference in the report that, once the system had been rolled out there was an expectation that uptake of the “My Account” would be 70%, Members queried whether this figure was realistic. Officers explained that they believed this figure to be realistic based on data from other authorities that had implemented the system and on the statistics in York in respect of online banking and the percentage of residents who currently paid their Council Tax by direct debit.

Members commented on the specific requirements that Members would have of the CRM system, particularly in respect of the reporting and tracking of problems in their ward.

Members agreed that once the system had been fully implemented it would be useful to identify any barriers to its usage and consider how these could be overcome. This would only be possible once the statistics on the engagement with “My Account” were available.

The Chair expressed his appreciation of the work carried out by the Task Group Members and the officers who had supported the review. He stated that, because of the expertise within the Task Group, it would be useful if they were to carry out further work on public engagement/digital inclusion as had been suggested by the Committee. The remit of this work would be established once data on engagement with “My Account” became available.

- Resolved: (i) That the work of the review be noted.
- (ii) That the Task Group’s recommendations, as detailed in paragraph 74 of the report, be agreed.

- (iii) That, at the next meeting, a further paper be presented to the Committee on public engagement with the CRM system.<sup>1</sup>

- Reasons:
- (i) To inform the Committee of the work that had now been completed.
  - (ii) To inform the Executive's considerations around the new Customer Relationship Management system and to conclude this phase of the review.
  - (iii) To inform the consideration of the remit for the next phase of the Task Group's work.

Action Required

1. Include on committee's work plan

SE

**43. Work Plan 2015/16**

Consideration was given to the Committee's work plan for the 2015/16 municipal year.

The following suggestions were put forward for inclusion in the work plan:

- Electoral organisation
- Recruitment arrangements

It was agreed that the committee would wish to receive a report on electoral organisation.

It was agreed that information on recruitment arrangements would be circulated to Members but would not be included on the committee's work plan at this stage.<sup>1</sup>

At the request of Members, a briefing session on budget proposals was being arranged. Suggested dates would be circulated to Members.

Resolved: That the Committee's work plan for 2015/16 be received and noted, subject to the addition of an item on electoral organisation being included on the

agenda for the first meeting in the new municipal year.<sup>2</sup>

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

Action Required

1. Circulate information
2. Update work plan

PS  
SE

Councillor D Levene, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.25 pm].