
Meeting	Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	25 July 2016
Present	Councillors Levene (Chair), Galvin (Vice-Chair), Crisp, Fenton, Gates, Lisle, Williams, Cuthbertson (Substitute for Councillor Reid) and Kramm (Substitute for Councillor D'Agorne)
In attendance	Councillor Steward
Apologies	Councillors D'Agorne and Reid

10. 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 interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

11. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2016 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

12. Public Participation

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

13. Attendance of the Executive Member for Finance and Performance

The Executive Member for Finance and Performance had been invited to attend the meeting to outline his priorities and challenges for 2016-17. Councillor Steward went through the key issues which had been outlined in his written report.

Discussion took place on the following issues:

- Challenges in the portfolio including reduced grants and increased costs (particularly in relation to adult social care)
- The devolution of business rates
- The processes that were in place to ensure that budgets were controlled, including regular monitoring reports and meetings between Executive Members and Directors.
- The 4-year budget plan. Responding to questions, the Executive Member stated that no direct representations had been made to central government seeking improved funding.
- Referring to paragraph 16 of the 2015/16 draft outturn report (agenda item 6), the Executive Member was asked why website feedback had ceased to be collected in Q1 after the launch of the new CYC website. The Executive Member stated that he would look into this matter, as it was important that feedback continued to be received from service users.
- One Planet York, including issues such as energy efficiency within West Offices. The Executive Member stated that he would give consideration as to whether it would be appropriate to put in place a One Planet York Action Plan specific to his portfolio area.
- The Talkabout Panel. Members requested further information regarding the questions that were put to the Panel and whether these were changed.
- Human resources and whether the Council had the necessary staffing and expertise to deliver the planned projects. The Executive Member stated that action was being taken to reduce the number of consultants employed by the Council and to instead have this expertise on the Council's payroll.
- York Financial Assistance Scheme – the Executive Member stated that more needed to be done to promote the scheme. He confirmed that the budget had been reduced but stated that this was to reflect uptake of the funding.
- The work that was taking place to change the way in which residents did business with the Council, including increasing opportunities for online transactions. The Executive Member stated that he was pleased that the E-Democracy Task Group would be working with officers to promote the take-up of online services.

- The Executive Member was asked about the resource implications when schools were converting to academies. He stated that significant work was involved, for example in legal and property services. Although this was an additional workload, the authority was equipped to deal with the issues raised.

Resolved: That the report of the Executive Member for Finance and Performance be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is kept updated on the priorities and challenges which fall within the committee's remit.

14. Schedule of Petitions

Members considered a report which provided the Committee with details of new petitions received to date, together with those considered by the Executive or relevant Executive Member/officer since the last report to the Committee.

Members considered the following petitions received and actions reported:

- Petition 48 – Mill Lane, Heworth
- Petition 50 – Proposed Cuts to Bus Services
- Petition 51 – Bishopthorpe Road near Campleshon Road Junction
- Petition 53 – Buffer Zones for gas drilling sites

Members supported the proposed actions in respect of the petitions.

Members expressed concern that there had been no update to the committee on Petitions 46 and 46a – Ban Lettings Board although an update had been requested at the meeting in May 2016.¹

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

Reason: To ensure the committee carries out its responsibilities in relation to petitions.

Action Required

1. Obtain information to update Committee

JP

15. 2015-16 Draft Outturn Report

Members considered a report which provided a year-end analysis for the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee, which includes all corporate, strategic and business services.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the committee on the 2015/16 outturn.

16. Overview Report on Electoral Organisation

Members considered a report which presented an overview of the electoral organisation in York and issues needed to be considered by the elections team. The report had been requested by the committee at their meeting in January 2016. Information had also been circulated on count times and numbers of counters used in other areas.

Members noted that electoral arrangements were the responsibility of the Returning Officer and were carried out in accordance with guidance from the Electoral Commission and the relevant electoral legislation.

Members acknowledged that overall the electoral arrangements in York were working effectively but they expressed concern at the time taken for the count to be completed. They suggested that this had reputational implications as well as impacting on the wellbeing of those involved in the count. Officers explained that the priority was accuracy rather than speed and they detailed some of the reasons why the counts in York took longer than in some other authorities including, the lack of a larger building in which the count could take place which meant that fewer counters could be accommodated. Although consideration had been given to holding the count in more than one venue, there would be risks involved in such an arrangement because of the need to ensure that appropriate expertise was available at the count.

Members also discussed whether more could be done to ensure that everyone who was eligible to vote was able to do so. They noted the difficulties that had arisen because of the new registration system.

Members considered whether it would be appropriate to carry out a scrutiny review into some of the issues that had been raised. After discussion and a vote it was

- Resolved:
- (i) That the report be noted.
 - (ii) That an Elections Scrutiny Review be carried out to consider:
 - Ways of maximising the number of people eligible to vote.
 - Improving performance at the count whilst maintaining high standards of accuracy.
 - (iii) That the members of the Task Group be:
 - Councillor Fenton
 - Councillor Kramm
 - Councillor Lisle
 - Labour Group representative (to be confirmed)
 - (iv) That the first meeting of the Task Group be held prior to the committee's meeting in September 2016.

Reason: To comply with scrutiny protocols and procedures.

17. Procurement Update Report

Members considered a report which set out a range of performance information for procurement. The report also included comparative information from other councils, as requested by the committee at their meeting in January 2016.

Officers drew attention to the data from the regional Strategic Procurement Group. Members suggested that APSE may also be able to provide national benchmarking data.

Officers were asked about the feedback from suppliers regarding the Yortender system. Members were informed that there had been a mixed response from businesses and it was acknowledged that some smaller businesses did find the system difficult. Officers outlined the benefits of the system and gave details of the training and events that had been held for businesses to encourage them to tender.

Officers were asked how the Council demonstrated that it achieved good value for money when carrying out projects, as there was sometimes a perception that the costs it incurred were higher than in the private sector. Officers stated that authorities were required to demonstrate that they were achieving best value and hence arrangements were in place such as the obtaining of three quotes. There were, however, some costs which the Council incurred which may not apply in the private sector, e.g. in respect of the living wage and checks to ensure that the suppliers used were financially viable.

Members commented on the work that had taken place and the improvements that had been made in respect of procurement. They agreed that there was no longer a need for the committee to receive regular reports on procurement and that it would be sufficient for the information contained in paragraph 4 of the report to be incorporated into the regular monitoring reports that were presented to the committee.¹

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the Committee on current procurement activity.

Action Required

1. Arrange for data to be included in future monitoring reports DM

18. Future Ways of Working in Scrutiny

Members considered a report on future ways of working in scrutiny. The report had originally been presented to the committee in March 2016 but had been updated in response to the recent announcement of forthcoming changes to directorates. The report presented options for the revision of scrutiny committee remits, taking account of national best

practice. Members were asked to agree which option they wished to propose to Council.

Members considered the following options as detailed in paragraphs 38 to 84 of the report:

- Option (i) No change to current arrangement other than to remit i.e. Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee plus four standing Policy and Scrutiny Committees
- Option (ii) No change to current arrangement other than bringing remits in line with Executive Member portfolios
- Option (iii) No change to current arrangement other than bringing remits in line with directorates
- Option (iv) New – One parent committee and three standing committees:
 - Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee
 - Policy Scrutiny Committee
 - Select Scrutiny Committee
 - Statutory Scrutiny Committee
- Option (v) New – Scrutiny Management Committee plus three standing Policy and Scrutiny Committees in line with Corporate Priorities
 - A Prosperous City for All
 - A Focus on Frontline Services
 - A Council that Listens to Residents
- Option (vi) New – Scrutiny Management Committee only with ad hoc Task and Finish Working Groups set up to carry out Policy and Development and Scrutiny Reviews as and when required.

Discussion took place regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the options. Most Members supported either Option (iii) or Option (iv). Members did, however, agree that, as the future ways of working in scrutiny would have implications for all non-executive Members, it was important to ensure that

their views were sought before a recommendation was made to Full Council.

- Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That consultation take place with the political groups regarding future ways of working in scrutiny, with particular focus on Options (iii) and (iv) in the report, which were the committee's preferred options.

Reason: To fulfil the scrutiny management role of this committee in line with the current scrutiny arrangements.

19. Work Plan 2016-17

Members gave consideration to the committee's work plan for 2016-17.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved.

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

Councillor D Levene, Chair
[The meeting started at 6.25 pm and finished at 8.35 pm].