

Annual Scrutiny Report

May 2006 - December
2008

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this the third annual report of Scrutiny Management Committee.

Introduced as part of the Local Government Act of 2000, Overview & Scrutiny Committees provide the necessary checks and balances which are vital to the executive decision making process and should play a major role in developing council policies for the future. They are made up of backbench members (i.e. non executive) who act as advocates for their communities and scrutineers on behalf of their electors. They can scrutinise anything they like on behalf of York residents – any issue they regard of concern.

Since 2000, the structure of Overview & Scrutiny in York has evolved. The period between May 2006 and December 2008, saw a number of changes and as a result, only a small number of reviews were completed during that time. Therefore, although it is our usual practice to produce an annual report, in this instance the decision was taken to produce only one report. Notwithstanding this, the completed reviews have all been worthwhile and have I am sure influenced the workings of the Council.

We are currently in the process of revising the scrutiny structure again to enable it to respond to forthcoming changes in Government legislation. These changes will enable Overview & Scrutiny Committees to scrutinise a number of the Council's partners and external service providers, and I hope that the opportunities afforded by these additional powers will be used to benefit the residents of York.

I look forward to the introduction of the new structure as I believe it will be a very effective Scrutiny regime, and I commend this report to you.

John Galvin,
Chair of Scrutiny Management Committee

CONTENTS

What is Overview & Scrutiny	4
Scrutiny & the Corporate Strategy	5
Completed Reviews	6
Health Scrutiny	7
Education Scrutiny	8
Holding the Executive to Account	10
Environmental Sustainability	12
The Future of Overview & Scrutiny in York	14

For further details on any of the information contained within this report or for copies of the final reports produced for each of the completed reviews, please contact:

Scrutiny Services
The Guildhall
York
YO1 9QN
Tel No. 01904 552063

What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Overview & Scrutiny is a process by which elected Councillors make sure that the Council's decision-makers are accountable to local people for improving the city and the lives of its residents.

Overview & Scrutiny Committees do not make decisions but seek to influence those who do, by considering the major issues affecting the city and by making recommendations to the Executive about how services can be improved.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee have a number of different roles:

- representing the views of York residents about the services they receive
- holding the Council's Executive to account and reviewing their decisions
- helping to introduce new policies and developing existing ones
- monitoring how services perform

Overview & Scrutiny Committees are made up of Councillors from all political parties who represent the city's wards. Meetings are generally held monthly and are open to the public. Currently the Council has the following scrutiny committees:

Health Scrutiny Committee can review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services in the area.

Scrutiny Management Committee co-ordinates the work of all the scrutiny committees. It considers all registered topics that fall outside of the remit of the two standing scrutiny committees listed below, and decides whether to establish an ad-hoc scrutiny committee to carry out a review. It also considers any decision 'called-in' for scrutiny in line with the powers set out in the Local Government Act 2000.

Education Scrutiny Committee can review and scrutinise the performance of the Local Authority in relation to the planning, provision and operation of any matter relating to Education.

Scrutiny & The Corporate Strategy

The refreshed Corporate Strategy sets out both the council's priorities for improvement over the next four years and a strong vision for the future to guide change over the next ten years.

How each scrutiny review relates to, and supports those improvement priorities is clearly defined in each scrutiny report produced.

In some cases the review will evidence the Council's 'Values' i.e.

- Delivering what customers want
- Providing strong leadership
- Supporting and Developing people
- Encouraging improvement in everything the Council does

In other cases the review will support a future direction planned for the Council e.g. 'The Council will seek to place environmental sustainability at the heart of everything it does'

This Annual Review is unique in that it covers a period from May 2006 to December 2008, during which time the scrutiny function in York has seen many changes.

Those changes include revisions to the protocol governing how we carry out scrutiny, the introduction of a new topic registration form for Members, and new ways of presenting information gathered during a scrutiny review.

One significant change requires Members registering a new scrutiny topic to indicate how it fits with three of the **eligibility criteria** set out in the new

topic registration form.

As a general rule, topics only proceed to review if they meet three of the criteria below:

1. Public Interest
2. Under Performance / Service Dissatisfaction
3. In keeping with Corporate Priorities
4. Level of Risk
5. Service Efficiency
6. National / Regional / Local Significance

However, where it is adequately demonstrated that a topic is of significant public interest and fits with the first criteria but does not meet three, Scrutiny Management Committee may still decide to allocate the topic for review.

COMPLETED SCRUTINY REVIEWS

HEALTH

- . Dementia Review

Plus, information on LINKs & the Annual Health Check

EDUCATION

- . Extended Schools Review
- . Home to School Transport Review
- . School Governors Review

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- . Inclusive Decision Making Review
- . Tanghall Area Asset Management Review

HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT

- . Highways Review—Part A
- . Highways Review—Part B
- . Barbican Review

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- . Street Lighting (Strategic Management & Procurement to Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Waste) Review
- . Recycling & Re-use Review
- . Reducing Carbon Emissions Review
- . Guidance For Sustainable Development Review

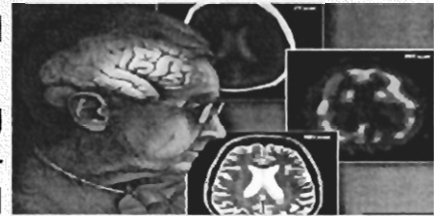
HEALTH SCRUTINY

Dementia Review

This review, completed in November 2008 looked at the experiences of older people with mental health problems (and their families/carers) who had accessed general health services for secondary care .

Supported by officers from the Council's Housing & Adult Social Services Directorate, North Yorkshire & York Primary Care Trust, York Hospital Foundation Trust, Yorkshire Ambulance Service, Local GPs, various voluntary organisations and local residents, it recommended to the York Hospitals Trust, North Yorkshire & York Primary Care Trust and Yorkshire Ambulance Service that they:

- Develop & implement the Psychiatric Liaison Service, review staff training;
- Review training for those working with people with dementia;
- Acknowledge the positive contributions made by a patient's carer & family;
- Work with the relevant voluntary organisations to develop new initiatives and promote awareness of dementia;
- Adopt a flexible approach during a patient's stay in hospital;
- Try to resolve ongoing issues surrounding the implementation of a universal 'Shared Care Record System';



The Dementia Review supported the following Corporate priority: 'Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest.'

LINKs

LINKs are independent, formally constituted bodies that have replaced Public and Patient Forums, previously attached to all local NHS Trusts. Government legislation has required local authorities to commission a Host organisation to enable support for LINKs and its activities. For the next three years, North Bank Forum for Voluntary Organisations have been commissioned to provide the LINK in York as from 1st April 2008. The Health Scrutiny Committee have been working closely with North Bank Forum to establish the LINK in York and a LINK Partnership Co-ordinator has been appointed.

Annual Health Check

The Annual Health Check is the system that the Healthcare Commission uses to assess the performance of all NHS Trusts in England. The declarations from each Trust are supplemented by third party comments from partners in the community, and in the past few years the Health Scrutiny Committee have taken part in this process.

EDUCATION SCRUTINY

Extended Schools Review

The aim of this review completed in July 2006, was to recommend how the Council could work with partners across the City and how schools could work together, to ensure that children and communities received the best possible Extended Schools service. As a result the Committee called for:



- . a review of the model of extended schools provision, in order that it align with and reflect the core offer of May 2006
- . the creation of profiles of local community need - this initiated an audit with parents across the city to support the planning of new Extended Services in schools.
- . Appropriate training and support for school staff and governors to ensure every school in York was working as an extended school by 2010
- . The council to bid to be a Pathfinder authority in order to improve parenting support and provide longer free sessions for 3-4 year olds in education, care and play

The review was supported by officers from the 'Early Years & Extended Schools' teams and a number of primary school Headteachers.

Home to School Transport Review

The remit for this review was to investigate what improvements could be made to the safety of buses transporting school pupils to primary schools. It aimed to make recommendations which in the long-term would improve the quality of the buses used, improve safety, improve behaviour, reduce traffic congestion and encourage the uptake of places on school buses. In April 2007 a number of recommendations were approved including:



- .where possible contracts should be let for more than 5 years in order to encourage contractors to invest in higher quality vehicles
- .A number of minimum standards for all future home to school transport buses should be set
- .The same high standards for bus contracts should cover all education establishments
- .The use of good behaviour contracts, designated seats and the use of bus prefects to discourage unruly behaviour by pupils

The contributions from transport companies, parents, governors and headteachers of the schools involved, were invaluable and enabled the Committee to identify clear achievable targets.



These completed reviews address the following Improvement Priorities:

- Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city
- Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport

They also supported a number of the Council's Direction Statements e.g.:

- We will promote cohesive and inclusive communities
- We will listen to communities and ensure people have a greater say in deciding local priorities

School Governors Review

This review was aimed at encouraging an improved level of community involvement in schools, maximising Governors' skills and improving the diversity of governing bodies.

As part of the review a number of surveys were carried out involving parents, schools and governors. The findings identified a number of improvements to working methods were . For example, an information guide identifying the most effective methods for finding and recruiting community governors was created and distributed to all York schools, and an 'Exit Questionnaire' was created for use in identifying governors motivation for leaving their post. Plus, improvements were made to the Governor Support & Development Service database.

As a result of the review, the annual governors' conference was reinstated and it was agreed that training would be made available either:

- via the generic core training
- Online, or;
- whole governor body



On completion of this review in July 2008, the Committee acknowledged the significant voluntary contribution of school governors and the work of officers in the Governor Support & Development Service team in supporting the review.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Inclusive Decision Making Review—completed March 2006

This review looked at how community groups participate in decision-making in order to establish a base for all sections of the community to become involved in the decision making process, ensure that access to the decision making process is clear, coherent and consistent and to feed into the constitutional review any recommendations about the future structure of decision making bodies.

The Scrutiny Panel co-opted a number of community representatives to sit on the panel, and others were invited to contribute to specific discussion topics.

As a result of the work of the review a Social Inclusion Working Group was set up to advise the Executive on all matters relating to equalities issues, promote awareness of those issues, and ensure improved access and facilities for all service users.

**DECISION
MAKING IN YORK
HOW TO GET
INVOLVED**

Tanghall Area Asset Management Review—completed July 2008

As part of this review, an audit of council owned property in the Tanghall area was completed to identify whether they and council owned land in the area could be better used in both community and resource terms. The review sought the involvement of local residents and school children and the findings informed the pilot Asset Management Plan produced for the area.

As a result of the review, it is now standard practice to include area based consultation at appropriate locations within the community in all instances (involving residents, key stakeholders, and the Ward Committee). The cost effectiveness of the consultation method and the particular circumstances of the area being considered are also taken into account as standard when making the decision in each case.

Each of these reviews supported a number of the direction statements set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy:

'We will listen to communities and ensure that people have a greater say in deciding local priorities'

'We will be clear about what we will do to meet the needs of our communities and then deliver the best quality services that we can afford' and ;

'We will improve the actual and perceived condition and appearance of the city's streets, housing estates & publicly accessible spaces'

HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT

Barbican Review

The review investigated the arrangements surrounding the sale of the Barbican site, with the purpose of learning some key lessons for the future, in the event of developments of a similar nature or scope being proposed. It was agreed that although it was realistic to take two years to formulate a proposal and not unreasonable for a new administration to exercise its democratic right and change the proposal, and although each decision taken in relation to the sale had been taken in good faith, the delays in making those decisions, the longevity of unforeseen legal action and the shift in land values, had resulted in a significant reduction in capital receipt to the Council. Therefore, taking the project as a whole it was found that best value had not been achieved, and there might have been a more effective way of working with the pressure groups.

As a result, a corporate approach for working with pressure groups was set and all future projects have a regularly reviewed, robust system of risk management which is updated throughout the period of each project.



Highways Review

Parts A & B, completed in April 2008

Part A of the review aimed to contribute to the development and establishment of a strategic and effective highways maintenance procurement strategy and understand the cost implications associated with the PFI bid and its outcome. The findings gave direction to the decision on whether or not to proceed with the PFI process, and identified the key issues that should be taken into consideration when deciding upon an alternative approach should the PFI outcome be unsuccessful.



In the second part of the review, the Committee examined how the Council could fund the PFI with the aim of gaining an understanding of the alleged financial loss to the council caused by delays in the procurement process since 2003. The findings showed that although there had been an impact on the repayments to the Venture Fund caused by the delays in implementing the actions agreed as part of the Best Value Review, those delays had been necessary. Also, that the total savings made in Highways Maintenance since the Best Value Review were significantly higher than those identified. Therefore, there had been no financial loss to the council caused by those delays.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Since 2005, Scrutiny in York has been promoting robust approaches to carbon reduction and more sustainable energy sourcing across the authority's own activities. A number of reviews have been carried out in support of these approaches, covering all sectors of the authority's operations except transportation fuel.

Street Lighting (Strategic Management & Procurement to Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions & Waste) Review

This review which developed a more robust and holistic strategic approach to delivering carbon reduction and energy sourcing, was completed in November 2006. An audited inventory of the street lighting stock was produced and used to renegotiate the contract for electricity supply. The Council also renegotiated the rate charged to the authority for the lamp stock electricity supply, to minimise financial costs and ensure that the contract to CYC included upwards of 20% renewable sourcing with a target of 100% where the supplier was able to provide renewable sourced energy.

The review also acknowledged the need to monitor, manage and achieve carbon savings in line with:

1. The Energy Hierarchy
2. Future development of a Climate Change Strategy
3. Recent changes to the National Planning Policy framework promoting greater sustainability
4. The Audit Commission's aims for increased sustainable assessment in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment
5. Gershon efficiencies reporting



These completed reviews underpinned the delivery of the Corporate Strategy. In particular they addressed the following Improvement Priorities:

- To reduce the environmental impact of council activities and encourage, empower and promote others to do the same
- To decrease the tonnage of biodegradable and recyclable products going to landfill,
- To Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport,
- To Improve the actual and perceived condition and appearance of the city's streets, housing estates and publicly accessible spaces
- To Improve the way the council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York
- To Improve efficiency and reduce waste to free-up more resources
- To Improve the quality & availability of decent, affordable homes in the city

Reducing Carbon Emissions Review

This review completed in November 2006, sought to develop an approach to reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from York's public and private sector housing.

The work focussed on finding ways to make York's overall SAP rating higher and our eco-footprint less. It looked at methods of insulating homes and ways in which householders, both in the public and private sector (rented and owner-occupied) could be encouraged to live in better insulated

and more sustainable accommodation and derive full benefit from the available grant support which could enable the less well off to keep up with this general change in national behaviour.

The Committee received invaluable assistance and technical support from internal officers, regional partners and other Authorities, and the findings showed that at that time, almost 1 in 4 households in York were living in fuel poverty, rising to almost 1 in three households in the poorest wards. The recommendations therefore referred to both reducing CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty.

Subsequently, the Council's Sustainability and Energy Champion reported back on work done by the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre and Energy Saving Trust for York's Strategy in response to the Nottingham Declaration, and on progress made with the Council's energy efficiency and renewable energy objectives.



Guidance For Sustainable Development Review

Completed in March 2007, this review represented two years' work by the Scrutiny Committee. It enabled Members to learn about the issues and in 2005 helped to inform:

- . the structure of the sustainable and renewable energy sections of the draft Local Plan
- . the draft Special Planning Guidance Report

It provided the opportunity for dialogue between the local and national heritage groups and the council on the subject of environmental sustainabil-

ity, and with architects and developers, particularly those involved in the restoration of old buildings. It also investigated how the city's Building Control team might be involved in encouraging more environmentally sustainable construction.

The Committee received invaluable assistance and technical support from Architects, Heritage Groups, Developers and Council Officers, and the review resulted in a wide array of recommendations e.g. that the city's planning documents, including the Local Development Framework, no longer simply encouraged action but required action on energy efficiency, water efficiency, and use of renewable energy for all new buildings and improved energy efficiency for historic buildings.



The Future of Overview & Scrutiny In York

City of York Council (CYC) has recently carried out a review of its arrangements for facilitating Overview and Scrutiny. It was felt that some changes to the scrutiny structure were required in order to bring it more in line with best practice at other local authorities and to improve its effectiveness, particularly with regard to its contribution to policy development.

As a result of the review, a decision was taken in November 2008, to replace the existing Scrutiny Committees with an increased number of alternative standing Scrutiny Committees, and remove Executive Member Advisory Panels (EMAPs) from the decision making structure.



A Working Group was set up to advise on the implementation of the restructure and the constitutional changes required. In regard to the Overview & Scrutiny function, it looked at the role of Scrutiny Management Committee and the common functions and terms of reference for the new standing Scrutiny Committees.

In January 2009, Full Council agreed the formation of the following **five** standing Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) Committees:

Health Committee

responsible for the scrutiny of:

- Adults (Older People, People with Physical Disabilities & Sensory Impairments)
- Adults Mental Health
- Adults Learning Disability
- the impact of the services and policies of key partners on the health of the City's population
- arrangements made by the Council and local NHS bodies for public health within the City

Plus, the committee will undertake all of the Council's statutory functions in accordance with section 7 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and section 244 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and associated regulations

Effective Organisation Committee

responsible for the scrutiny of:

- Marketing & Communications
- Human Resources
- Legal, Civic & Democratic Services
- Strategic Resources (inc Finance, ICT, Procurement and Property)
- Audit & Risk

City Development Committee

responsible for the scrutiny of:

- Economic Development
- Planning,
- City Development & Transport, Waste Management Strategy (Client),
- Licensing & Regulation
- Housing Landlord & Housing General

Community Safety Committee

responsible for the scrutiny of:

- 7 Environmental Health
- 7 Trading Standards
- 7 Highways Maintenance Services
- 7 Safer City Initiative
- 7 Street Scene,
- 7 Cleansing Services
- 7 Waste Collection Services
- 7 Building Cleaning Services
- 7 Street Environment
- 7 Bereavement Services
- 7 Youth Offending Team

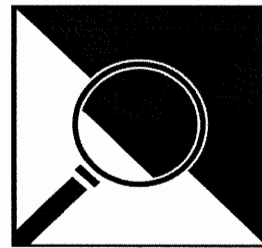
Learning & Culture Committee

responsible for the scrutiny of:

- 7 Early Years & Access
- 7 Schools & Communities
- 7 Education Development Services
- 7 School Governance Service
- 7 Special Educational Needs
- 7 Adult Education
- 7 Education Planning & Resources
- 7 Young People's Service
- 7 Arts & Cultural Services
- 7 Libraries & Heritage Services
- 7 Parks & Open Spaces
- 7 Sports & Active Leisure

Each of these O&S Committees have their own remit based on their areas of responsibility, and can:

- 7 Comment on the annual budget proposals and elements of the Corporate Strategy.
- 7 Scrutinise issues identified from the Executive's Forward Plan, prior to a decision being made
- 7 Monitor the Council's financial performance during the year
- 7 Monitor progress on the relevant Council Priorities and advise on potential future priorities
- 7 Maintain an annual work programme and ensure the efficient use of resources
- 7 Identify aspects of the Council's operation and delivery of services, and/or those of the Council's statutory partners, suitable for review
- 7 Carry out specific topic based reviews or set up a Task Group from within their membership to conduct a review on their behalf
- 7 Establish a joint Task Group with another Authority to undertake a joint review
- 7 Monitor implementation of approved recommendations from completed reviews



The changes to the Overview & Scrutiny function, and decision making restructure will come into effect at the beginning of the new municipal year in May 2009.

If there are any existing reviews still ongoing at that time, the Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee currently carrying out the review, will continue to do so until the review is finalised. Only then will that Committee be disbanded.



CITY OF
YORK
COUNCIL

Scrutiny Services
The Guildhall
York
YO1 9QN
Tel No. 01904 552063
Fax No. 01903 551035

This information can be provided in your own language.


我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim (Polish)
własnym języku.

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی میا کی جا سکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550