Meeting	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Date	22 June 2026
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Merrett, Ayre, Coles, Watson, Widdowson, Whitcroft (Substitute) and Crawshaw (Substitute)
In Attendance	Councillor Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities
Officers Present	Pauline Stuchfield, Director of Communities Laura Swiszczowski, Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (remote) Eilidh Carricker, Head of Corporate Customer Services James Parker, Scrutiny Officer

Due to the absence of the Vice-Chair, Members nominated Cllr Merrett to act as Vice-Chair for the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence (5.33pm)

Apologies were received and noted from Councillors Baxter, Taylor and Nelson. Cllr Baxter was substituted by Cllr Whitcroft and Cllr Taylor was substituted by Cllr Crawshaw.

2. Declarations of Interest (5.34pm)

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests that they might have in the business on the agenda, if they had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

None were declared

3. Exclusion of Press and Public (5.34pm)

Resolved:

To exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following:

Annex 2 to agenda item 7 on the grounds that it contained information relating to the following:

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information); and
- Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office-holders under, the authority.

Reason:

The above information was classed as exempt under paragraphs 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

It was also considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

4. Public Participation (5.35pm)

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

5. Minutes (5.36pm)

Resolved: That the minutes be approved as a correct record for the meetings listed below:

- Corporate Scrutiny (Call-in), 05 May 2026
- Corporate Scrutiny, 11 May 2026.

6. Gypsy and Traveller Action Plan Annual Update (5.36pm)

Members considered a report which presented the annual update on the Gypsy and Traveller Action Plan, previously approved by Executive in May 2024. The Head of Communities advised that the Action Plan was intended to address inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities across a range of areas including housing, health,

education, community safety and access to services. It was noted that the plan was reviewed annually to ensure it remained current and responsive, and that it had been developed in partnership with the community.
Members were informed that the updated Action Plan would be considered at an Executive Member Decision Session on 7 July.

Officers noted an error within the report at paragraph 78, where Option B had been incorrectly identified as the preferred option. Members were advised that Option A, to implement the Action Plan, was the correct recommendation.

Members noted progress made in relation to housing, education and health and raised concerns regarding the prejudice experienced by the Gypsy and Traveller Communities. They asked a range of questions covering engagement with Roma Communities, unauthorised encampments, refuse collection and associated clean-up costs, notifying residents of designated sites, consultation arrangements, additional pitches, and education outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, particularly at secondary level.

Officers reported the following:

- Further survey work was planned to inform future investment in housing; engagement with residents would continue throughout the process
- Further work was planned in relation to negotiated stopping, hate crime, anti-racist practice, equality and human rights assessments, and engagement with Roma communities. Briefings for Members could be arranged.
- The provision of facilities, including bins, would be considered as part of the development of negotiated stopping arrangements.
- Officers agreed to develop and circulate an appropriate protocol for managing unauthorised sites, outlining processes and responsibilities.
- Provision for additional pitches was included within the adopted Local Plan, work on site masterplanning was ongoing.
- Roma communities were included within the scope of the work, with some actions delivered separately to reflect specific needs.
- Engagement activity at Our City Integration Festival was inclusive and feedback would be captured.
- Further work was required in the area of education, the Action Plan would be developed to include additional measures, including work relating to post-16 education and the tracking of children not in education.

The Executive Member confirmed that consultation would form part of the site identification process and would include both the Gypsy and Traveller community and local residents. It was noted that the full prevention of encampments was not always feasible due to the nature of some sites.

Resolved: That the Committee noted the report and the progress made and supported the proposed next steps in the development of the Action Plan.

Reason: To provide scrutiny oversight of the progress made against the action plan.

7. Fulford Cemetery / Bereavement Services (6.07pm)

The Director of Communities and the Head of Corporate Customer Services outlined the proposals for City of York Council to assume permanent management of Fulford Cemetery, subject to negotiations and completion of legal, financial and HR processes. Members were advised that the proposal aimed to secure long-term burial provision, improve operational resilience and reduce the Council's financial risk under the current arrangements.

Members asked a range of questions covering the deficit in 2024/25, learning from other cemetery management experiences, biodiversity objectives versus public expectations, memorial management and maintenance standards.

Officers reported that the service had been stabilised and returned to a surplus position; they agreed to review and confirm the contributing factors to the deficit. Officers agreed they would review protocols in relation to memorial management and seek to adopt best practice. They also confirmed that engagement with residents and stakeholders would inform future management arrangements.

The discussion that took place in private session focused on the timescales involved. Officers confirmed that this time was required to ensure that due diligence was thoroughly undertaken, reducing the risks to both CYC and Fulford Parish Council.

Resolved: That the Committee noted the report and supported the proposed approach in principle.

Reason: To provide scrutiny oversight of the proposal.

8. Work Plan (6.30pm)

Members considered the draft work plan for the committee and the overview scrutiny work plan for the scrutiny committees. The Chair advised that he and the Vice-Chair would be having a meeting with relevant Executive Members and Directors to develop the work plan for September onwards.

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: To ensure an overview of the scrutiny work plan.

Councillor S Fenton, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 6.37 pm].

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