
MEETING	EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	23 MARCH 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HORTON (VICE-CHAIR), D'AGORNE, FIRTH, BOYCE, GUNNELL, HYMAN, R WATSON AND HEALEY (SUBSTITUTE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR WATT

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor D'Agorne declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in item 4 due to his role as Careers Co-ordinator at York College.

Councillor Boyce declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in item 4 due to her employment.

36. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Committee held on 23 February 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

37. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

38. REPORT ON THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPRENTICESHIPS AND OTHER WORK BASED LEARNING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF YORK.

Members considered a report which provided details of what City of York Council currently offers in the area of 16 to 19 apprenticeships and the Council's plans to improve opportunities for training. The report had been produced at the request of the Committee, in order to assist members in deciding whether to pursue a scrutiny review of the existing arrangements for apprenticeships at City of York Council.

Officers presented the report and advised Members of the following information:

- The topic was multi-stranded with the focus around the Council's workforce and its demographics.
- The focus of the report was apprenticeships due to the Government drive at both regional and national level to increase the number of apprenticeships.
- Economically the drive for more apprenticeships had come at a difficult time, with a recruitment freeze at City of York Council.
- There are 18 apprentices at City of York Council at present although there could be more young people in work-based training across the Directorates that are not included in this figure. A central infrastructure to monitor young people would be beneficial as currently this is directorate led.
- City of York Council is not in the top quarter for apprenticeship targets and would need at least 26 apprentices to reach the top quarter.
- The need to meet the targets has been picked up and is part of the Workforce Development Plan.

Members queried how young people in training at the Council had been monitored to date, if they could not be identified outside of the Directorate they work in. Officers advised that data at regional level can be utilised and data is currently being collected for information management purposes. Details such as an employee's age are being gathered, and they hope to have some figures available within the next two months.

Councillor D'Agorne queried whether the Council had in place or had considered developing a network of major employers in the area who could take part in an apprenticeship programme. Officers advised nothing was in place but could be a possibility and they intend to work alongside the National Apprenticeship Service to focus in on major employers.

Members felt that having considered the report and Officers' comments, it was apparent that within the authority there was a need for cohesion over the matter of apprenticeships and that the Committee should proceed with the review.

Members agreed the review should identify improvements to the Council's provision of apprenticeships and other work based training, and set the following objectives for the review:

- Explore the current arrangements
- Identify any external funding opportunities, particularly the targeting of specific vulnerable groups e.g. those with learning disabilities and NEETs
- Identify a reporting structure to measure the effectiveness and outturn of apprenticeships and other work based training

RESOLVED: That Members agreed that a scrutiny review was appropriate and agreed the remit for the review, as detailed above.

REASON: To identify a strategic approach to the delivery and monitoring of training and apprenticeships across the Council.

39. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - DRAFT FINAL REPORT.

Members considered the draft final report of the review of the Effectiveness of the Executive Forward Plan.

The information gathered as part of the review was attached at Annex A to the draft final report.

Bearing in mind the Committee's findings, a Task Group made up of three of the Committee's Members had been created to draft the recommendations arising from the review. The Monitoring Officer's views had been sought on the suggested recommendations. She supported the basic changes identified to bring the operation of the Forward Plan in line with legislation and the Council's Constitution, but made specific comments in regard to changing the definition of a key decision and identifying corporately key issues to scrutinise.

The Monitoring Officer was in attendance at the request of Members and expanded on her comments contained within the draft final report. She advised Members that draft recommendations 4 and 5 were not required, as the legislation requires a 'key decision' to be defined as a decision which has to be taken in public and therefore appears on the Forward Plan. As this Council includes all decisions for Executive and Executive Members on the Forward Plan, she felt it was unnecessary for a distinction to be made.

In relation to recommendations 6 and 7 the Monitoring Officer advised, for reasons set out in her written comments on page 18 of the agenda, that these should also be removed.

For recommendations 10 and 11, the Monitoring Officer explained that those recommendations, in her opinion should be taken out and advised that steps were already in place to make changes to how Officers work with scrutiny and the Forward Plan.

In light of the Monitoring Officer's written response and comments made at the meeting, Members agreed to delete draft recommendations 4,5,6,7 and 10 and to amend the wording of recommendation 11 as follows:

xi. Support the move towards Scrutiny leads being identified within each directorate to work with the relevant Scrutiny Committees, their Chairs and Scrutiny Officers.

RESOLVED: Having considered the information within the report and its associated annexes, and after considering the Monitoring Officer's comments, Members agreed to delete recommendations 4,5,6,7 and 10 and amend recommendation 11 as detailed above.

REASON: To conclude the work of this review, in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols, enabling the final report and recommendations to be put forward for consideration by the Executive.

40. WORK PLAN

Consideration was given to the Committee's work plan.

In light of the decision to proceed with the scrutiny review on apprenticeships, it was agreed that the work plan should be amended to reflect additional meetings which will be required. The Democracy Officer would contact Members with provisional dates.

RESOLVED: That the Work Plan be updated to reflect additional meetings once agreed.

REASON: To assist in the planning of work for this Committee.

Councillor Horton, Vice Chair

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