



Scrutiny Annual Report June 2005

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INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report summarises the work of the City of York Council's Scrutiny Boards and Panels over the past year, highlighting progress and key achievements. It also looks forward to activities over the coming year.

The Report will be presented to the next full meeting of Council by the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee.

June 2005

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Throughout the year the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) has met monthly to overview the work and workloads of the Scrutiny Boards.

Following a member-led review in 2003/04, new procedures and guidelines for scrutiny topics were introduced. This included a newly designed Topic Registration Form to encourage wider participation and the introduction of a scoping and feasibility stage involving officers prior to approval of scrutiny topics by the SMC. The implementation of these changes has been very successful for the latest batch of registered topics.

The review also included lengthy discussion on how the Council could be more effective in its scrutiny and this led to SMC making recommendations for the current constitutional review, which are aimed at continuing to develop the role of holding the Executive to account.

Through the year the boards have completed fourteen topics and published twelve reports. Most topics have focused on policy review and development.

In addition three Ad-hoc Panel scrutinies have been completed, with accompanying reports. Eleven topics are continuing into the next municipal year.

During the year we were notified by the Post Office that seven post offices were to be closed in the York area by November 2004. Unfortunately, due to the current structure of the Council's constitution, SMC was unable to scrutinise the proposals, but as Chair I organised a public meeting to question representatives of the Post

Office on their proposals. The meeting attracted many members of the public and received a significant amount of press and radio coverage but sadly did not result in a reprieve for any of the proposed closures.

This year has seen considerable progress made in improving the effectiveness of the scrutiny process and I am hopeful that the constitutional review will see members working together on more cross-cutting issues in the future.

Quality Control

During the year we have continued to monitor the implementation of recommendations made to, and accepted by, the Executive. Executive Members are invited to comment on progress to the SMC and Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to use the Executive Member and Advisory Panel process as a monitoring tool.

Some topics have been particularly successful at involving members of the public and we have continued to encourage the involvement of co-optees. We now have five co-optees attending on a regular basis, in addition to the statutory co-optees on the Education Scrutiny Board.

Training

With the support of Democratic Services we have organised three training sessions for members on questioning and chairing skills, facilitated by Mel Nixon of Aware UK.

We have held bi-annual Chairs, Vice Chairs and Assistant Directors meetings which have facilitated greater understanding of scrutiny and allowed members and officers to exchange ideas on best practice as well as being an ideal forum for networking.

We have developed a guide for people attending a scrutiny hearing and a feedback form to help us identify areas for improvement. We have also introduced a formal procedure for keeping those outside the Council informed of scrutiny outcomes and recommendations.

Media Coverage

We have received a significant amount of media coverage this year with several items, such as Housing Allocations, receiving a considerable amount of interest. Most of the coverage has been positive and we need to continue this in the future. We have also tried to actively encourage involvement in Scrutiny by using the press and radio to raise the public profile.

The Future

As you will see from this Annual Report, Scrutiny has had an extremely active and productive year. We are also beginning to feel the impact of previous reviews such as the Rivers scrutiny review which helped support a successful bid for funding from Yorkshire Forward.

We are now planning the work programme for 2005/06 which I have no doubt will prove to be another demanding but fruitful year.

Thanks

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to my former Vice-Chair, Cllr David Wilde for his support over the last year and to all those members and officers of the City of York Council involved in the scrutiny process.

**Cllr Madeleine A Kirk
Chair, Scrutiny Management
Committee**

SCRUTINY AD HOC PANELS

Confidentiality and Transparency Scrutiny Panel

In April 2004 a Working Group of the Scrutiny Management Committee was set up to explore the following questions on behalf of the citizens of York:

How can citizens be sure the Council doesn't abuse confidentiality?

How do citizens know that the Council doesn't act in favour of vested interests?

How can citizens be sure that the Council has all the relevant information?

In order to answer these questions the group began in-depth enquiries into three particular areas of the Council's work where the citizens of York frequently tell Members that the decision-making process does not seem transparent.

1. Why are some Council reports or annexes confidential and could more information go public?

We have looked at guidance to officers about types of information the law tells us needs to be confidential. We used this to analyse reports written for the Executive over a six month period, then talked to Assistant Directors about ways to decrease the amount of confidential information. We held a learning session with officers from the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Team and the Member Champion for Freedom of Information to consider how our possible recommendations might fit in with the latest legislation.

2. The use of confidentiality in key public interest planning decisions such as Coppergate II and the Barbican.

We will be asking external bodies, such as the Audit Commission what they would expect an Authority to do to support citizens to have their say in and gain access to all the background information. We will compare the approaches taken by City of York Council with those adopted by other Councils seen as model in their approach. We will also talk to the Head of Legal Services at Doncaster Council about the process of restoring public trust and confidence after 'Donnygate'.

3. The use of confidentiality in commercial tendering and contracts.

In a similar way to planning we will be asking external regulatory bodies to tell us what they would expect to see a Council doing to ensure fair practice in the public interest. We will ask them which Local Authorities they believe to be models of excellence in this area.

The Working Group has now been established as an ad hoc panel and is due to complete its work in November 2005.

Cllr David Wilde
Chair, Confidentiality and Transparency Ad-Hoc Panel



Floods Scrutiny Panel

The Floods Scrutiny Panel (formerly the Scrutiny Committee (Floods)), was tasked with scrutinising the combined and individual responses of the various agencies both during the flood event, lessons learned and future emergency planning proposals. The Panel's Final Report was published in August 2004.

The Panel invited representatives from various agencies as witnesses, to respond to questions from the Panel and public. The information was considered by the Panel who cross-referred this information with the concerns of affected citizens and businesses and the response issues raised through media coverage.

The Panel believed that, even were there no other results from the review, the publicly-witnessed scrutiny of the agencies involved:

- supported improvement in the quality of the external agencies' assessment of their operations,
- supported the further development of partnership working between external agencies and City of York Council, and
- supported public access to and understanding of a field which ordinarily requires a high degree of technical expertise.

Considerable co-operation and openness was shown by all agencies

involved. They proactively highlighted many areas for improvement and advised the Panel of measures they had taken, or would take within set timescales, to ensure that the defence of York will be more robust than it was in November 2000.

The Panel's Report culminated in twenty-one recommendations, all of which were accepted by the relevant departments and agencies. The key ones were that the Chief Executive of the Council should write to the following agencies:

- the Environment Agency, expressing disappointment at the timescale of the strategy produced and seeking more detailed information regarding measures proposed to protect York, especially those currently undefended areas, both within the strategy, and while the strategy is being developed.
- the Director-General of the Association of British Insurers (ABI), expressing the Council's concerns at the inequality of treatment of residents, and the ABI's seeming reluctance to address the problem with its members.
- local MPs, seeking assistance in lobbying the Government to ensure an adequate funding stream for future improvements.
- the Environment Minister Elliot Morley expressing concern about the impact of the current cost:benefit criteria on progressing flood protection schemes, and the adverse effect that the fragmentation of responsibilities is having on the delivery of a

comprehensive flood defence strategy.

It is considered that, if the recommendations are implemented, the defence of York in a future flood would be more robust, and the impact on residents lessened.

Cllr Richard Moore
Chair, Floods Scrutiny Panel

Housing Repair Contracts Scrutiny Panel

Between November 2003 and October 2004 Members of the Housing Repairs Scrutiny Panel worked with officers in Commercial Services and Housing Management on the consultation and developmental work leading to the establishment of a housing repairs service delivered in partnership.

The Panel fulfilled the role of 'critical friend' to the partners, attending workshops and consultation events. They acted as an impartial third party and ensured that the views, rights and responsibilities of tenants were properly considered throughout the developmental process.

The report refers to the 'three partners' as a reminder of the fact that the success of bilateral work between the Officers of Housing and Commercial Services in delivering the repairs service in partnership is also reliant on the role of tenants.

The Panel would like to thank officers at all levels of operation within the Housing and Commercial Services teams for the open dialogue and support given throughout the review.

Whilst the Panel agree that it might take a little while for the partnership to bed down and result in readily measurable improvement for all parties, they fully support the work of officers to date and hope all Members and officers across the Council will give the new partnership appropriate backing and support.

Cllr Bill Fairclough
Chair, Housing Repair Contracts Scrutiny Panel



Young People in York Scrutiny Panel

The final report of the Scrutiny Panel was presented to the Executive in November 2004. The report contained some eighteen recommendations on issues ranging from inclusion of young people in the Council's decision-making process to the facilities available to young people across the city.

The Panel's findings were based upon consultation with young people carried out in nine of York's secondary schools (all were invited to participate). Councillors, both members and non-members of the panel, participated in school citizenship lessons to gather information about the principal concerns and desires of young people. In total over two hundred young people were involved in the work of the Panel. This exercise was supplemented by visits to a variety of facilities and programmes for young people in both York and the wider region.

In order to present a more memorable report to the Executive and the wider public, the Panel commissioned the Basement Youth Project to produce a short film based on the findings. The film enabled young people themselves to highlight, in a way they felt appropriate, the issues that mattered to them. Whilst the film did not cover

all the recommendations, it ensured that the Young People in York Scrutiny Panel made more of an impact at the Executive meeting than many other reports.

Six months down the line most of the recommendations remain 'work in progress'. However, some notable successes have arisen from the Scrutiny Panel's work. The position of Young People's Champion is to be established to ensure that young people have a voice in the city, and they will be given an opportunity to choose that Champion.

Most significantly, an additional £50,000 was allocated to tackle some of the street level problems related to young people in this year's budget-setting process. It is testament to the hard work of the panel and the contribution of the young people involved that this has been achieved in the current financial climate.

**Cllr Ceredig
Jamieson-Ball**
Chair, Young People In York
Scrutiny Panel

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY BOARD

Apprentice Training and Opportunities for External Trading in Commercial Services

The Board produced its final report on Apprentice Training and External Trading in the Commercial Services Directorate in March 2004. This coincided with the renewal of internal service contracts, the piloting of 'external' customer trading (i.e. non-Council) and the development of a local response to the national skills shortage in manual crafts such as joinery, building maintenance, gas fitting and plumbing.

The Board consulted York College, York Training Centre and the North Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council and conducted research exercises evaluating the existing local and regional response to work-based training including the in-house training 'academy' of Jarvis Rail and Scarborough Borough Council's apprenticeships scheme. The Board also considered the opportunities of new legislation allowing Commercial Services to trade externally.

The Board's Final Report to the Executive Member for Commercial Services made recommendations supporting the establishment of a training academy under the Council's control; promoting continued contact with the North Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council to explore sources of funding; and backing the Commercial Services directorate's exploration of opportunities for external trading.

Update reports have been received by the Board regarding the implementation of its recommendations. Three apprentices were appointed for the year 2003/04;

one motor fitter and two electricians. For the current year 2004/05, an additional four apprentices were appointed, one in the Grounds Maintenance section, an arboriculturalist for Street Scene, a heating engineer and an electrician for Building Repairs section. All the new apprentices are reported to have settled in well and are achieving or exceeding expectations.

The Cleaning of Gullies, Gutters, Footpaths and Back Lanes on Terraced Streets

Between June 2004 and April 2005 the Scrutiny Board conducted a review of 'The Cleaning of Gullies, Gutters, Footpaths and Back Lanes on Terraced Streets'. The Board set clear objectives at the outset of its review to ensure that the investigation explored not only the cross-directorate roles in achieving effective cleaning procedures, but also took into account the cultural climate for improvement and the roles and responsibilities of the terraced communities themselves.

The Board's final report includes six recommendations reflecting this approach balancing the monitoring of recent initiatives with some new proposals for working practices key to a partnership for improvement.

The final report has been considered by the Executive Members for Environment and Sustainability and Commercial Services. The Board will monitor the implementation of recommendations during 2005/06.

The Board has begun its new topic, looking at Recycling and Reuse.

**Cllr Irene Waudby
Chair, Commercial Services
Scrutiny Board**



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY BOARD

When the new Board was formed it chose two topics that were felt to be of interest to Elected Members and, more importantly, to the residents of York, the visitors and the business community. It also picked up an outstanding item carried forward from the previous Board.

Regional Government

The first topic was chosen in response to national Government's desire to promote regional government and to hold referenda in various locations in Autumn 2004. York was to be included in the Yorkshire and the Humber vote and various issues arose from this decision. The Board chose as its title 'Regional Government - Raising Awareness'. This was because, from initial enquiries, it became apparent that although some politicians, officers, organisations and other bodies were aware of the significance a 'Yes' vote would have, the public (who would be the ones to make the decision) were very much unaware. Also, it came to light that in the event of a Regional Assembly being elected, there would be potentially long-term effects for the area. These included the location of

the Headquarters of the Assembly. It was felt that siting a prestigious HQ in York may well be a benefit in attracting other businesses to the area.

In view of the tight timescales set by Government, a report was presented to the Executive in June 2004 making recommendations as to the appropriate communication channels to be used to raise the issue with the public and also with Members, as not all were aware of what may lie ahead. The recommendations included utilising Ward Committees, public events, the internet, the 'Your City' leaflet and through publicity in the local newspaper.

By September, the Government's proposals were beginning to lose some momentum and it was agreed that no action would be taken until it was decided if and when a referendum would take place. During this period the Board received regular updates from the City's Policy Development Team to allow us to monitor the situation. However, following the resounding 'No' vote in the North East referendum, it seems highly unlikely that a similar opportunity will be offered to Yorkshire and the Humber, and the Board agreed that this topic be closed. If, in the future, the possibility of regional government is resurrected, the work already carried out will enable us to move quickly.

City Centre Retailing

Our second topic was chosen following research carried out on a regular basis that showed York was apparently losing its appeal as a primary shopping location. The headline figure showed that people coming to York to shop, as their main reason for coming, fell from a high of

38% in 1998/99 to 7% in 2003/04. Obviously, if York is to remain a vibrant and thriving centre it needs to maintain its attractiveness in all areas. As shopping has become a major 'leisure' industry, this was vitally important information that the Board felt needed to be acted on.

The 'City Centre Retailing' topic occupied an enormous amount of officer and Member time involving more than fifty retailers ranging from major national and international companies to the small shops that abound in York and help to make it a unique place to visit. Also involved were the Tourism Bureau, out-of-town shopping centres, agents and market traders. This gave us a very broad view of the trends and future needs and desires for the City. The report was presented to the Executive in December 2004 and consisted of seventeen recommendations ranging from attracting a major 'flagship' retailer to making sure that a review of the City's toilets is carried out to improve standards; from providing a city centre shopping bus to bringing more art into the centre.

The update report is due to come back to the Board next month and besides updating us on how the initiatives are progressing, it will also include the positive comments we have received from the business community who welcomed our vision of improving the whole of the City in partnership.

Resources for Policing

The final item for this report is the one topic that was brought forward from the previous Board. This dealt with the way in which North Yorkshire Police continued to split their budget in three equal parts for their three zones. This despite the fact that the majority of

crime was taking place in the Central Area, which includes York. Over the years many attempts had been made to get agreement to a change in formula but each new Chief Constable insisted on using the old one. The present Chief Constable was invited on several occasions to attend a meeting of the Board so that the topic could be aired and both sides of the argument be put forward. She steadfastly refused to do this but finally agreed to meet the Chair and Vice Chair informally at her office.

Both sides were given the opportunity to raise their points and although the Chief Constable confirmed her awareness of the perception that funding was not evenly distributed between the areas she overcame this by the successful use of various initiatives in the Central Area that were helping to reduce crime levels in priority categories.

The topic was concluded in April.

Cllr Keith Hyman
Chair, Economic Development and
Community Safety Scrutiny Board

EDUCATION SCRUTINY BOARD

The Board, which is comprised of seven Members and four statutory co-optees, has worked very well together in 2003/4. We are fortunate in that the board has an excellent mix of people in terms of knowledge, skills and experience. The Board's officer support, particularly from Education Directorate, has been key to our success.

The board spent much of the year considering the topic of Post-16 Inclusion. This topic had been identified in an earlier scrutiny of pre-16 inclusion as a vital area to consider. The scope considered the outcomes for young people when they leave compulsory education. The scope of the topic was restricted to those people with a statement of special educational (SEN) needs in an age range of 14 to 19. Successful outcomes for young statemented people may include education, training or employment. The Board were involved with gathering a very wide range of evidence. Some evidence was taken from the Local Education Authority (LEA) and a large amount was gathered with other organizations outside the LEA such as Connexions, York College and the North Yorkshire Business and Education Partnership.

The Post-16 Inclusion topic report was recommended to the Executive Member for Education in March 2005 and published on the Council's web in April 2005. The report concluded that the City of York was better than the UK average at delivering a successful outcome for these young people. The report identified key SEN groups where outcomes could be improved and identified key points when action could be focussed. The report

included a total of fourteen improvement recommendations. I have made regular updates on progress to the Scrutiny Management Committee.

I am very pleased with the continuing hard work, commitment and enthusiasm of everyone on (and associated with) Education Scrutiny Board. Well done and congratulations on the year's contributions.

Cllr Glen Bradley
Chair, Education Scrutiny Board

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY SCRUTINY BOARD

Environmental Management Systems

From late 2003 until June 2004 the Board conducted a review of Environmental Management Systems. The need for such a system was highlighted in a report to the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability. This revealed that although much good work was being done across the Council in terms of reducing environmental impact, this was often on an ad-hoc basis within different departments rather than a co-ordinated, formal, Council-wide approach. The Board viewed it as imperative that a documented and managed corporate commitment to environmental improvement, reflecting nationally understood measures for achievement, was in place.

In identifying an appropriate system the Board considered the two most widely recognised environmental management systems: ISO14001, the international standard set of guidelines; and EMAS, the European Union's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme. The Board's consideration of a model for York benefited from the shared experiences of and consultation with officers in Kirklees and Leeds City Councils.

The Board's final report including six recommendations progressed to the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability in June 2004. The report supported the adoption of a system based on the EMAS model, prioritising areas to ensure that an 'invest to save' approach could be taken to targeting limited resources. Raising staff awareness and participation in good practices were

seen as immediate objectives, whilst external accreditation for the Council was viewed as a long term goal. A full cost:benefit analysis for the implementation of EMAS was recommended prior to roll out. The Board will receive update reports regarding the implementation of its recommendations at the June and November 2005 meetings.

Powers of Enforcement – Take-Aways

Between September 2004 and May 2005 the Board has conducted a detailed scrutiny of 'Powers of Enforcement – Take-Aways'. This topic was progressed in response to the concerns of York residents who live near to take-away outlets and suffered from late night noise, anti-social behaviour and the deterioration in street hygiene which a proportion of premises attracted.

During the course of its investigations the Board has considered the legislative framework governing take-aways including the role of, and enforcement of, planning conditions, licensing and the enforcement of Licensing regulations, environmental regulation and the likely changes under the new Licensing Act. In consultation with departmental officers the Board considered internal officer roles and responsibilities at the City of York Council prior to exploring the efficiency of partnership arrangements both internal and external including the Police and taxi operatives.

The Board is scheduled to complete its final report in June 2005.

Sustainable Energy in Council Buildings

At its September 2004 meeting the Board agreed to progress this topic in tandem with the urgent topic 'Powers of Enforcement – Take-Aways'. The

Board was provided with information on the current energy use (electricity, gas and oil) in Council buildings, with options for future actions and recommendations, which it endorsed for Executive attention at its January 2005 meeting.

The Board has created and circulated a questionnaire entitled 'Doing Kyoto' aimed at sharing best practice solutions to sustainable energy in public buildings with local authorities, UK and Europe-wide, and has become a member of Energie Cités, the 120+ member association of European Local Authorities for promotion of local sustainable energy policies.

The Board's continuing scrutiny of 'Sustainable Energy in Council Buildings' is likely to conclude towards the end of 2005 and will be the main focus of the Board's resources throughout this time.

Cllr Mark Waudby
Chair, Environment and
Sustainability Scrutiny Board



HOUSING SCRUTINY BOARD

Affordable Housing

Between Summer 2003 and Spring 2004 the Board considered the subject of affordable housing, including investigation of The York Housing Strategy, the Housing Needs Survey and the Council's policy relating to empty houses. Also included was the Regional Housing Strategy, Regional Housing Investment and the planning permission framework as related to affordable housing.

An informal seminar was held with housing developers and Registered Social Landlords to discuss the following issues:

- Affordable housing targets and thresholds.
- Pepper-potting of affordable homes.
- The size of affordable homes provided in York.
- The marketing of Discounted Sale and Shared Ownership homes.
- Affordable rent levels.
- The use of Greenfield sites.
- The release of Green Belt land
- Land banking.

The Board's final report made twelve recommendations and went to the Executive in May 2004. The Board believe its approach to the issue of affordable housing should help to

address the rapid increases in the price of housing in York in the past few years, which has created difficulties for those who cannot afford the established housing market rates placing pressure on the provision of affordable housing and the rented social housing stock.

In May 2005 the Board received an update report regarding the implementation of its recommendations, all of which were well received by the Executive. The first four of the Board's recommendations have now been fed into the Local Plan and the other recommendations actively implemented by officers in the Housing and Resources Directorates.

Housing Allocations Systems

Between June 2004 and January 2005 the City of York Council Housing Scrutiny Board conducted a detailed scrutiny of 'Housing Allocations'. The topic emerged from its previous scrutiny of 'Affordable Housing', and the reasoning and findings of the Board were seen as complementary.

The Board considered the sort of improvements suggested by tenants, future tenants and other citizens, exploring these against the practical issues of the legislative framework, supply, turnover and demand for social housing stock within the City of York Council's control.

The Board also considered the national drivers for non points based systems, considering in depth band and choice based comparator policies from Local Authorities, with an equivalency to York in respect of the low volume of housing stock available and high customer demand.

Members noted that change to the allocations system in York will almost certainly require changes to the support given to the most vulnerable, who may not have the skills, capacity or lifestyle to facilitate a proactive approach to home seeking.

Members were convinced however that carefully considered elements of choice could still be deployed in an allocations framework for York and that a move towards a choice based system might alleviate some of the pressure on York's low stock levels whilst supporting people to make more informed decisions about their housing needs.

The Board believes that the five recommendations made in their report should be fully absorbed into the officer review of the allocations system at York. Its final report goes to the Executive Member in May 2005 and the implementation of the Board's recommendations will be considered upon completion of the consultation exercise and drafting of the new Housing Allocations policy for York, due in Autumn 2005.

Carbon Emissions from York's Housing

In May 2005, the Board agreed to investigate how to reduce carbon emissions from York's housing stock.

Cllr David Livesley
Chair, Housing Scrutiny Board



LEISURE AND HERITAGE SCRUTINY BOARD

The board has had a busy year, completing the archaeology 'Looking Forward into York's Past' topic, which was presented to the Executive in December 2004, and moving forward with the investigation into York's library service.

Without the enthusiasm and commitment of the officers it would be fair to say that both of the subjects would not have progressed so far and covered as much ground. Therefore I wish to thank, not in any particular order, Charlie Croft, Patrick Scott, John Oxley, Fiona Williams, Rachel Rushforth and Barbara Boyce for their professionalism and enthusiasm and also their patience in dealing with members whose knowledge of the subjects was at best basic.

There has been an excellent response to the archaeological scrutiny report from the institutions and groups in the city. I understand that the York Archaeological Forum (which includes English Heritage and York Archaeological Trust) have welcomed the document confirming to some sceptics the City's commitment to its heritage.

The scrutiny review of the Library Service is almost finished. The Board has discussed the current provision with librarians and its partner service

providers, visited the branch library at Clifton and examined the work of the mobile library. It also travelled to London to explore one of the innovative 'info stores' created by the Borough of Tower Hamlets.

With increased Central Government expectations and the future of the City's existing Central Library in a state of flux, the review has come at an appropriate time. Consequently the Board has not only the chance to recommend improvements and new directions for the present service, but will put forward its vision for a new Central Library.

The Board has already embarked on its next topic, which will be looking at the future of the City Archives.

Cllr Chris Hogg
Chair, Leisure and Heritage
Scrutiny Board

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY BOARD

Over the course of the year the Planning and Transport Scrutiny Board has been progressing its topic on 'Planning Guidance and Sustainable Development'.

The topic is intended to review the ways in which planning guidance informs decision-making on the question of sustainable development and the implementation of better and more sustainable building development.

The Board invited Don Parlabeau, a representative from the Older People's Assembly, to join us for the topic and we have found this beneficial.

The first part of the Board's work involved contributing to the Fourth Set of Changes to the City's Draft Local Plan. The Board made a substantial contribution to changing various sections of the Local Plan, notably:

- GP4a Sustainability,
- GP5: Renewable Energy, and
- the Objectives listed at the start of Chapter 4, the chapter dealing with the Historic Environment.

Following that work, the Board has been studying the impact of building regulations and special planning guidance on sustainable development. We have visited Fieldside Place to look at one of York's best examples of sustainable housing development. We invited York Civic Trust, English Heritage and the Stockholm Institute to discuss sustainable development issues with us. Officers from Planning, Development Control and Building Control have also participated in discussions to explore how we

ensure more environmentally sustainable patterns of building construction in York. More recently we have discussed the issues with a property developer specialising in the renovation of historic/listed/old buildings.

The board has also worked with the Environmental Education Centre to see best examples of zero CO2 buildings.

In the previous year 2003-4, Members had completed a scrutiny topic on the subject of the provision of new rail halts in the York area. A recent update to the Board has confirmed the proposal for a new station at Haxby.

**Cllr Derek Smallwood
Cllr Christian Vassie
Chair and Vice-Chair, Planning and
Transport Scrutiny Board**

RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

The Resources Scrutiny Board has had a busy year. It completed the scrutiny review of Property Management that had been commenced in the previous year. This focused particularly on management of property considered to be surplus by a department within the Council. The Scrutiny Board developed a protocol to be followed before City of York Council disposes of property. In essence the Board recommended that before property is disposed of an assessment should be made as to whether:

- another department within the Council might have a need for it;
- then to consider whether a community use might be considered appropriate;
- and finally to consider sale of the asset.

It was recognised by the Board that there would be times when this protocol could not be followed. For example, it was recognised that it may not be followed if the capital receipts of the asset were required to fund another project. However, when such a decision was taken it should be taken openly, in public, so that the reasons why the protocol cannot be followed are discussed.

The Resources Scrutiny Board also continued to be the Council's *de facto* Audit Committee. In 2004/2005 it requested explanation from Directors of two Council departments for departures from the Council's financial regulations. It also wrote to other departments reminding them of the need to follow the financial regulation.

The Resources Scrutiny Board completed its enquiry into developing

a Sustainable Procurement Policy for the City of York Council. This exciting topic looked at ways of promoting 'sustainable procurement' in the wider definition. It recognised the importance of environmental, ethic and legal requirements for the procurement of goods and services of the City of York Council.

It also made policy recommendations to promote a mixed economy of supply, encouraging the use of local suppliers, Small to Medium Size Enterprises, Voluntary and Charitable sectors as well as larger national/multinational companies. It is hoped that its recommendations of policy will assist City of York Council to promote sustainable procurement, allowing greater access from local suppliers in the private, voluntary and charitable sectors whilst recognising that sustainable procurement is not incompatible with fiscal targets.

Cllr David Scott
Chair, Resources Scrutiny Board



SOCIAL SERVICES AND HEALTH SCRUTINY BOARD

The Board started the 2004-5 municipal year with a scrutiny topic (Access to Mental Health Services for the Homeless) outstanding from the previous year. The final report and recommendations were presented to Executive in October 2004.

The next topic, 'Leaving Care in York', commenced in November 2004 and the Board has received presentations on several aspects of the topic from professional and volunteer workers in both the statutory and non-statutory sectors. Much evidence has been gathered. Members are currently bringing together reports from those services which have to react to care leavers as 'new' clients; this will be added to material already gained from the services which support looked after children who are in and about to leave care on a more planned and proactive basis. It is hoped that the final report on this topic will be produced shortly.

Over the Christmas period, TENYAS announced proposals for making changes to the handling of non-serious (Category C) 999 calls. After discussing these proposals, the Board wrote to TENYAS, requesting an extension of the consultation period

and requiring a representative of the Trust to attend the next meeting to give further details of the proposals. The extension was duly allowed and the Trust's representative attended the next meeting to respond to Members' questions. Many of the concerns raised by Members were addressed but one or two matters remain and the Board will be pursuing these with the Trust at an early date.

Regrettably, there has been little progress in making arrangements for a joint scrutiny committee with North Yorkshire County Council, their lack of resources being given as the main reason for not pursuing this. The failure of the Out of Hours Emergency Doctor Service (which North Yorkshire did manage to scrutinise) might have provided a good topic on which to base such a joint scrutiny. A bid to CfPS for support in developing joint scrutiny has been made and we are waiting to hear the results of this.

A large part of the Board's time has been spent in making and developing relationships with Health Service trusts and other scrutiny bodies which are all involved in the statutory Health OSC agenda. Presentations have been received from Selby and York PCT, York Hospitals NHS Trust, TENYAS Ambulance Trust and York PCT PPIF. To further develop the Boards' statutory scrutiny role, a joint meeting with the Selby and York PCT PPIF is being planned for the near future. Members of the Board also attend York's (informal) Chapter 10 group which helps in keeping abreast of changes across a wide range of bodies. Further joint meetings with the Trusts are also anticipated.

Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
Chair, Social Services and Health Scrutiny Board

MEMBERSHIP OF SCRUTINY BOARDS 2004-2005

Scrutiny Management Committee

Chair **Cllr Madeleine Kirk**
 Vice Chair **Cllr David Wilde**
 Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
 Cllr Mark Hill
 Cllr Dave Merrett
 Cllr Christian Vassie
 Cllr Irene Waudby

Commercial Services Scrutiny Board

Chair **Cllr Irene Waudby**
 Vice Chair **Cllr Janet Greenwood**
 Cllr Bill Fairclough
 Cllr Alan Jones
 Cllr Ken King
 Cllr Mark Waudby
 Cllr David Wilde

Ad-Hoc Housing Repairs

Chair **Cllr Bill Fairclough**
 Vice Chair **Cllr Dave Evans**
 Cllr David Horton
 Cllr Mark Waudby

Economic Development and Community Safety Scrutiny Board

Chair **Cllr Keith Hyman**
 Vice Chair **Cllr Paul Blanchard**
 Cllr Andy D'Agorne
 Cllr Janet Greenwood
 Cllr Tom Holvey
 Cllr Viv Kind
 Cllr David Merrett
 Cllr Jonathan Morley
 Cllr Richard Watson
 Co-optee **Mr Don Parlabeau (Older
 People's Assembly)**

Ad-Hoc Confidentiality and Transparency Scrutiny

Chair **Cllr David Wilde**
 Cllr Andy D'Agorne
 Cllr Richard Moore
 Co-optee **Roger McMeeking**
 (Standards Committee)

Education Scrutiny Board

Chair **Cllr Glen Bradley**
 Vice Chair **Cllr Keith Aspden**
 Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
 Cllr Janet Hopton
 Cllr Viv Kind
 Cllr David Livesley
 Cllr David Scott
 Co-optee **Dr G M Clayton**
 Co-optee **Ms L M MacLeod**
 Co-optee **Dr David Sellick**
 Co-optee **Miss C Duffy**

Floods Scrutiny Panel

Chair **Cllr Richard Moore**
 Vice Chair **Cllr Brian Watson**
 Cllr Martin Bartlett
 Cllr Glen Bradley
 Cllr Dave Evans
 Cllr David Livesley

Young People In York Scrutiny Panel

Chair **Cllr Ceredig Jamieson-
 Ball**
 Vice Chair **Cllr Viv Kind**
 Cllr Keith Aspden
 Cllr Paul Blanchard
 Cllr Andy D'Agorne
 Cllr Tom Holvey

Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Board

Chair
Vice Chair

Cllr Mark Waudby
Cllr Brian Watson
Cllr Andy D'Agorne
Cllr David Horton
Cllr Martin Lancelott
Cllr Richard Moore
Cllr Christian Vassie

Planning and Transport Scrutiny Board

Chair
Vice Chair

Cllr Derek Smallwood
Cllr Christian Vassie
Cllr Martin Bartlett
Cllr Chris Hogg
Cllr Ceredig Jamieson-Ball
Cllr Tracy Simpson-Laing
Cllr Brian Watson

Co-optee
Don Parlabeau (Older People's Assembly)

Housing Scrutiny Board

Chair
Vice Chair

Cllr David Livesley
Cllr Bill Fairclough
Cllr Dave Evans
Cllr Janet Greenwood
Cllr Mark Hill
Cllr Ceredig Jamieson-Ball
Cllr Ruth Potter

Co-optee
Jack Archer (Older People's Assembly)
Mildred Grundy
Pat Holmes
(Federation of Residents Associations)

Resources Scrutiny Board

Chair
Vice Chair

Cllr David Scott
Cllr Richard Moore
Cllr Glen Bradley
Cllr David Evans
Cllr Sandy Fraser
Cllr Tom Holvey
Cllr David Livesley

Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board

Chair
Vice Chair

Cllr Chris Hogg
Cllr Tom Holvey
Cllr Martin Bartlett
Cllr Alan Jones
Cllr Madeleine Kirk
Cllr David Scott
Cllr Brian Watson

Social Services and Health Scrutiny Board

Chair
Vice Chair

Cllr Ian Cuthbertson
Cllr Martin Lancelot
Cllr Keith Aspden
Cllr Sandy Fraser
Cllr Janet Hopton
Cllr Kenneth King
Cllr Cllr Madeleine Kirk

REVIEWS COMPLETED AND REPORTS PUBLISHED June 2004 – May 2005

TITLE	SCRUTINY BOARD	DATE
Environmental Management Systems	Environment and Sustainability	June 2004
Regional Government	Economic Development and Community Safety	June 2004
Floods	Ad Hoc Panel	September 2004
Post Office closures	Public Meeting	September 2004
York city centre retailing	Economic Development and Community Safety	October 2004
Property management	Resources	October 2004
Cycling policy and provision of facilities	Planning and Transport	October 2004
Young people in York	Ad Hoc Panel	November 2004
Housing repair contracts	Ad Hoc Panel	November 2004
Mental health needs of the homeless with special reference to mental health needs	Social Services and Health	November 2004
Public access to archaeology	Leisure and Heritage	December 2004
Post-16 Inclusion in Education	Education	March 2005
The cleaning of gullies, gutters, footpaths and back lanes on terraced streets	Commercial Services	May 2005
Housing allocations	Housing	May 2005

ONGOING REVIEWS AND REPORTS AWAITING PUBLICATION AS AT JUNE 2005

TITLE	SCRUTINY BOARD
Young people leaving care	Social Services and Health
The Council's library service	Leisure and Heritage
The future of York Archives	Leisure and Heritage
Drug and alcohol-related crime	Economic Development and Community Safety
Planning guidance for sustainable development	Planning and Transport
Powers of Enforcement - Takeaways	Environment and Sustainability
Sustainable energy in Council buildings	Environment and Sustainability
Recycling and reuse	Commercial Services
Planning guidance for sustainable development	Planning and Transport
Procurement	Resources
The Council's approach to confidentiality and transparent decision-making	Confidentiality and Transparency Ad Hoc Panel

TOPICS REGISTERED BUT NOT PROGRESSED June 2004 – May 2005
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TOPIC TITLE	REASON NARRATIVE
Children's health: The role of Leisure, Education and partnerships with others	This was registered by Cllrs Kind and Jones and submitted to the Leisure and Heritage Scrutiny Board in June 2004. It was decided not to progress it at that time because of its cross-cutting nature. The topic is being considered by the Scrutiny Management Committee for progression by an ad hoc panel.
Age discrimination in Council services	This topic was registered by Cllr Potter in July 2004. With the agreement of Cllr Potter, it was not progressed at the time because of the work being done on York's Equality Standard.
Review and evaluation of domiciliary and recuperative care for older people in the York area	This was registered by Cllr Potter on behalf of the Older People's Assembly and was submitted to the Social Services and Health Scrutiny Board in July 2004. It was decided by the Board not to progress the topic at that time but to look at it again when it was considering the next new topic.
Parking policies and their objectives	This was registered by Cllr Smallwood in June 2004 and was submitted to the Planning and Transport Scrutiny Board. The Board decided not to progress the topic at that time but to look at it again when it was considering the next new topic.
Pot hole procedures	This was registered by Cllr Irene Waudby and was submitted to the Commercial Services Scrutiny Board in June 2004. The Board decided not to progress the topic.
Suburban shopping centres	This was registered by Cllr Looker and was submitted to the Economic Development and Community Safety Scrutiny Board in 2004. The Board decided not to progress the topic at that time because it was already dealing with a topic on retailing in the city centre.

SCRUTINY SERVICES TEAM

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Scrutiny Officers

**Ruth Sherratt
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