
MEETING	CORPORATE AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE	21 JANUARY 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS WISEMAN (CHAIR), BARNES, KING, MCILVEEN, POTTER, RUNCIMAN (VICE-CHAIR), STEWARD, WARTERS AND DOUGLAS
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLOR HEALEY
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR HORTON

31. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Agenda item 9 - 2012/13 Work Plan and Topic Registration Form re Credit Union

Cllrs Potter and Runciman declared personal non-prejudicial interests in this item as former members of the North Yorkshire Credit Union.

Cllr Barnes declared a prejudicial interest in relation to this item as a member of the Yorkshire Museums Trust who were the recipients of a grant.

Cllr Potter also declared a prejudicial interest in this item as a member of York Wheels who had a Service Level Agreement with the authority and as a member of the Bell Farm Adventure Playground Management Committee who were also in receipt of a grant.

Cllr Wiseman also declared a prejudicial interest in this item as a member of the Strensall Youth and Community Organisation who had recently received a grant from the Local Authority.

32. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 12 November 2012 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute 28 (Update Report – City Centre Access Ad Hoc Scrutiny Review) the addition of the following resolution:

- iii) That one further meeting of the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee be convened in order to collate a full summary of the Committee's findings for submission to the Cabinet Member prior to his final decisions in respect of the City Centre Footstreets Review. ¹.

Action Required

1. Arrange final meeting of Task Group to collate information for Cabinet Member DS.

TW

33. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/OTHER SPEAKERS

It was reported that there had been one request to speak from a member of the Council in respect of Agenda item 9 - 2012/13 Work Plan and Topic Registration Form re Credit Union.

Cllr Healey referred to the topic registration forms submitted by Cllr Runciman and himself both linked to the Credit Union and their subsequent agreement to merge the topics. Details of the merged topic were set out in the republished agenda and copies circulated at the meeting. The suggested review would look at better ways of monitoring grants/loans from the Council to outside organisations. Reference was made to previous discussions and to a number of issues which had come to light which suggested that this would be a worthy topic for the Committee to take forward.

34. MONITORING THE WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2012-15

The Head of Strategic Workforce Development and Resourcing presented her progress report on the Workforce Strategy 2012-15 since its launch in May 2012.

Since the last presentation of the Strategy to Members in July 2012 work had progressed on the delivery of the strategic priorities for the development of the Council's workforce through the following priority areas, with details of progress to date on each set out in the report:

- Skills and Behaviours Development
- Recruitment and Retention
- Pay Reward and Recognition
- Wellbeing and Engagement and
- Performance and Change

Members questioned a number of points raised including:

- Progress with development of leadership skills of Heads of Service – reported programme at half way stage. Although only a pilot, excellent feedback had been received from this voluntary programme which it was hoped would continue year on year.
- Following move to West Offices there would be less silo working - suggested possible need to examine issues arising from this cultural change for staff.

The Chair thanked the Officer for her comprehensive report and it was

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- i) Notes progress made against the Workforce Strategy in the eight months, May 2012 to December 2012; and
- ii) Agrees to receive a six monthly update in July 2013 which will include a review of achievements and a Strategy refresh in terms of future direction.

REASON: To ensure Members are kept informed of progress against the Workforce Strategy 2012-15.

35. STAFF SICKNESS ABSENCE DRAFT FINAL REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that it had been hoped to bring the draft final report of the Sickness Absence Management Task Group to this meeting however this had not been possible as additional work was required.

It was reported that the Group had met a number of outside organisations regarding staff wellbeing, the third objective of the review, with the findings being reported to the HR team, for a response on the issues raised. Although the draft final report had been prepared HR had requested the inclusion of additional information and it was therefore proposed to bring the final report to the March meeting to enable the health and wellbeing information to be incorporated.

RESOLVED: That the update on the draft final report of the Sickness Absence be received and noted.

REASON: To update Members on the current position of this draft final report.

36. BRIEFING ON OPERATION REACH

The Council's Communications Officer updated Members on Operation Reach. This project had arisen from the drive to reduce paper publications and the fact that a number of staff had no or limited access to email, internet and intranet facilities.

Information had been gathered on non-office based staff to establish who the hard to reach groups were and the best methods of providing communication and engagement with them. A steering group had also been set up with the intention of creating a hub of contact information across the Council to help reach these employees. Fuller details of the work to date and the methods of communication and proposed further work was included in the update circulated at the meeting and republished in the online agenda.

Members questioned a number of points in respect of the work, including:

- How the project aims would be evaluated – confirmed that this was the next stage with a survey to provide feedback on the service.
- The use of hub/spoke communication – confirmed this method was also in use with communication via spouses/relatives etc.

Officers confirmed that, following completion of the projects evaluation, feedback would be provided to Members in September 2013.

RESOLVED: That the update on Operation Reach be received and note.

REASON: To update members on the current work being undertaken on this project and to inform future work in this area.

37. SCRUTINY SUPPORT BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which set out the current position in relation to available Council funding for research for overview and scrutiny review work. The Committee were being consulted in respect of any recommendations they wished to make to Cabinet, prior to the budget setting process for 2013/14.

A small support budget of £5k had been provided for scrutiny work for the 2012/13 municipal year and to date only the Health Scrutiny Committee had committed to any relevant spend against this budget. It had also been shown over the last few years that historically spend against this budget had been low with one exception during 2009/10. Despite the comparatively low spend on external research support it did not appear to have had a noticeable impact on the undertaking of scrutiny reviews, details of recent reviews and works were set out in the report.

A number of Members confirmed that, although they had worked hard to provide the existing budget to support scrutiny work, if other Members wished to reduce the proposed figure based on spend in the last year this could be supported.

Other Members however supported the retention of the existing budget figure to ensure support for the scrutiny function and to raise the profile of scrutiny within the authority.

Following further discussion it was

RESOLVED: That Cabinet be recommended to retain the current budgetary support of £5k for external research and consultancy work for scrutiny in 2013/14 onwards.

REASON: To address the constitutional right of CSMC to comment to Cabinet on setting the above scrutiny budget.

38. IMPROVING ENGAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW

Cllr Runciman, as Chair of the Improving Engagement Task Group reported on progress to date on this review, following their last meeting in December. She confirmed the work centred around a comparison of the contrasting wards of Heworth and Rural West. With a large amount of information gathered confirming how residents contacted the authority it would now be possible to draw together conclusions for the Task Groups draft final report.

Members of the Task Group referred to the different methods of engagement by residents of these wards via Residents Associations, Parish Councils and Ward Committees. Reference was also made to the army of volunteers and goodwill within these bodies which could be used to communicate with residents. Officers confirmed that they hoped to have the final report and recommendations completed by the end of the municipal year. Members confirmed this would coincide with ongoing work around the Big Local Area lottery funding received for the Tang Hall area.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update on the work of the Engagement Task Group be received and noted.

REASON: To update Members on the work of the Task Group to date.

39. WORK PLAN 2012-13

Consideration was given to the Committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2012/13 municipal year. A new topic registration form which amalgamated topics submitted by Cllrs Healey and Runciman had been included in the republished agenda. Copies were also circulated at the meeting which suggested the broad area of how loans/grant from CYC to outside organisations were monitored as the topic.

Reference was made to an email, circulated at the meeting, from Cllr Alexander, regarding the recent collapse of the North

Yorkshire Credit Union. He outlined a number of reasons for the collapse and requested scrutiny examine these reasons and form recommendations for future improvements with South Yorkshire Credit Union.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that information had already been sought on the current monitoring processes for the various loans/grants of which there were many different types. During this examination it had become apparent that it also depended on the type of loan or grant as to the level of monitoring undertaken.

Some Members expressed the wish that any review in this area should look forward to provide guidance for any future grants/loans provided rather than apportion blame.

Other Members raised concerns at the issues raised in Cllr Alexander's email pointing out that there was a need for his attendance at a future meeting to expand on the issues raised. Reference was also made to the possible amalgamation of these topics.

It was pointed out that a separate investigation was being undertaken into the collapse of the North Yorkshire Credit Union. However, as the Cabinet Members were due to attend the Committee's April meeting to present their end of year updates they may also be in a position to update Members on the results of this investigation.

Following further lengthy discussion Cllr Barnes moved and Cllr King seconded, the amalgamation of the suggested loans/grants topic, with the points raised in Cllr Alexander's email, and using the North Yorkshire Credit Union as an example, to form the basis of the new review. On being put the vote the motion was lost and it was

RESOLVED: i) That a Task Group comprising of Cllrs Potter, Runciman and Steward be appointed to undertake a scrutiny review into how loans/grants from CYC to outside organisations are monitored, based on the amalgamated topic registration form submitted by Cllrs Healey and Runciman.

- ii) That a meeting of the Task Group be arranged prior to the next meeting to expand on the scrutiny topic and report to the next meeting of the Committee.
- iii) That the Chair provide a formal response to Cllr Alexander's email detailing the Committee's decision regarding the review, with the suggestion that he may like to submit a separate scrutiny topic and/or attend a future meeting to expand on the issues raised.
- iv) That the work plan be received and noted subject to incorporation of the following:

11 March 2013

- Addition of Scoping Report on Loans/Grants Review
- Staff Sickness Absence Draft Final Report

8 April 2013

- Addition to 'Attendance of Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Corporate Services - End of Year Update' *and Priorities for Forthcoming Year and Financial Inclusion Strategy*
- Update on Financial Services Authority findings North Yorkshire Credit Union (if available).

REASON: To assist in the formulation of the Committee's work plan for the remainder of the municipal year.

Councillor S Wiseman, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.25 pm].