
Meeting	Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	13 January 2014
Present	Councillors Galvin (Chair), Fraser, Horton, McIlveen, Potter, Runciman (Vice-Chair), Steward, Burton (Sub for Cllr King) and Orrell (Sub for Cllr Jeffries)
Apologies	Councillors Jeffries and King

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in respect of business on the agenda.

The following Members declared personal non prejudicial interests in relation to agenda item 8 - Draft Final Report of the Loans and Grants Scrutiny Review:

Councillor Potter in respect of the Service Level Agreement for community transport services as an employee of York Wheels Ltd.

Councillor Burton as the Council's representative on York Wheels Ltd.

Councillor Fraser as his partner was employed by York Wheels Ltd.

30. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 11 November 2013 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

31. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme. The speaker had however subsequently been unable to attend the meeting.

32. MONITORING THE WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2012-15

Consideration was given to a progress report on the Workforce Strategy for 2012-15 in the six months from July to December 2013.

Officers reported on progress in the following priority areas together with three new priority areas for 2014/15:

- Skills and Behaviours Development
- Recruitment and Retention
- Pay, Reward and Recognition
- Wellbeing and Engagement and
- Performance and Change
- Managing Change (2014/15)
- Managing Performance (2014/15)
- Skills Development (2014/15)

Arising from the report Members questioned a number of points, including:

- A request for further information on the collaborative project on Talent and Performance Management in the next Committee report.
- If the Living Wage would be paid to those on the Graduate Internship Programme. It was confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the Universities regarding payments and that, at the present time, there was no policy or protocol in place other than for any payment to be fair, reasonable and transparent.
- Highlighted that a consolidated training budget could mask the lack of take up of training opportunities in some areas. Confirmed that the Workforce Development Unit would, for the first time, have an overview of take up, details of which would be included in future reports.
- Questioned whether thought should be given to a further staff survey in 2015 to confirm improvements following implementation of the strategy.

Following further discussion it was

- Resolved:
- (i) That the report outlining progress made against the Workforce Strategy in the six months, July to December 2013, be received and noted.
 - (ii) That a six monthly update be provided for the Committee in July 2014, to include a review of achievements and details of the agreed priorities going forward during the life of the Strategy.

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

33. 2013/14 MONITOR 2 REPORT

Members considered a report which analysed performance in 2013/14 and forecast the outturn position for the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee.

The net budget for the areas covered by the report were reported as £18,633k with £1,170k of these savings falling within these services. It was reported that performance delivery was analysed against the key delivery priorities of creating jobs and growing the economy and core competencies together with the new approaches of transformation and change.

Officers confirmed that there were no variations to report in this second monitor.

Members expressed their support for the work undertaken to date and progress in achieving Council Plan priorities. Officers reported on the waste and highway functions based at Hazel Court in answer to Members questions. Concerns were raised by some Members, regarding paragraph 9 of the report and the reference to owners and developers coming forward regarding 'Preferred Sites', prior to a full examination being undertaken of the consultation results and completion of the Local Plan.

Resolved: That the monitoring report be received and noted.

Reason: To update the Committee on the latest financial and performance position for 2013/14.

34. 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, circulated to Members prior to the meeting and republished with the online agenda. The Committee were being consulted in respect of any recommendations they wished to make to Cabinet, prior to the budget setting process for 2014/15.

A small support budget of £5k had been provided for scrutiny work for the 2013/14 municipal year and to date the only relevant spend against this budget had been £380, largely used for sessions held with a variety of consultees, in particular in relation to the night time economy. It had also been shown over the last few years that historical spend against this budget had been low with one exception during 2009/10.

It was noted that 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 and details of recent reviews and works were set out in the report.

With the use of IT and in particular the Internet as a research tool, it was noted that there was less need to 'buy in' paid external research.

Members agreed however that a budget reduction should not be supported in order to provide a continuation of assistance with the scrutiny function and to try and raise the scrutiny profile within the authority

Resolved: That Cabinet be recommended to retain the current budgetary support of £5k for external research and consultancy work for scrutiny in 2014/15 onwards.

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

35. PROCUREMENT AND COMMISSIONING SCRUTINY

Members considered a report which provided them with an overview of the strategic approach being taken by the City of York Council to procurement and commissioning and progress in its delivery. The report had been prepared in response to the Committee's identification of procurement as a scrutiny topic in 2012/13.

Officers introduced the report and the Procurement and Commissioning Strategy for 2012-2014, attached to the report at Annex A. The Strategy set out the transformational approach being pursued to ensure that the authority obtained best financial, social economic and environmental value from spend on goods and services.

With the scale of the Council spend on goods and services for 2012/13 in the region of £120m, it was acknowledged that this was a priority area when looking to reduce costs and deliver effective services at a time of severe financial constraint. It was noted that the introduction of Category Management would enable each Service Area to manage its commissioning requirements and achieve an optimum mix of social economic and environmental benefits.

Members questioned a number of points and highlighted issues including:

- Reference to the joint commissioning being undertaken by the YorOK Board and the Children's Trust Unit. Officers confirmed that discussions were underway with the Assistant Director, Children's Specialist Services.
- CYC's move to two buildings would assist in the strategic approach and provide efficiencies.
- Reference to difficulties suppliers had encountered in becoming a CYC supplier. Confirmation that a new contract management system would enable suppliers to update their information online and that procedures were being simplified to ensure that all suppliers had equal opportunities.

Members went on to question how scrutiny could add value to the procurement process.

Following further discussion it was

- Resolved:
- i) That the procurement and commissioning overview report be received and noted.
 - ii) That the following be put forward as a suggested area for review at the annual scrutiny planning event:
 - the procurement activities of health and voluntary services and their relationships in an effort to assist with their preventative works.
 - ii) That Officers be requested to provide a report back to Committee on work being undertaken to engage local businesses in procurement activity for the Council.

Reason: To ensure that there is effective scrutiny of the development of the commercial procurement and commissioning activity within the Council.

36. DRAFT FINAL REPORT OF THE LOANS AND GRANTS SCRUTINY REVIEW

Consideration was given to the draft final report of the Loans and Grants Scrutiny Review Task Group, with the remit of providing guidance on best practice for monitoring grants/loans provided by the Council.

Cllr Steward, as Chair of the Task Group, presented the final report pointing out that the Group had suggested a more common approach, the standardising of applications, with new thresholds and Officer guidance in an effort to provide a clearer, more transparent process for all.

It was noted that the final report to Cabinet would require a copy of a grant agreement template, for applications over £100k for completeness.

In answer to questions Officers confirmed that the decision to set the level for loans and grants over £100k for Cabinet approval had been taken in order to provide a balance between all decisions being taken by Cabinet, and those taken by Officers, to enable them to work effectively. It was noted that details of all grants/loans would be provided online.

Following further discussion it was

Resolved: That the draft recommendations arising from the Loans and Grants Scrutiny Review be presented to Cabinet for formal approval subject to the following amendments:

- i) Amend draft recommendation iv. to read 'All loans and grants over £50k to be agreed by Cabinet.
- ii) Attach a grant agreement template as an additional Annex to the report.
- iii) The addition of the following bullet point in Annex B – Proposed Officer Guidance for Issuing of Grants and Loans, in the section headed 'When deciding whether or not to award a grant the Council must;'
 - Ensure that a loan is more suitable than a grant.

Reason: To conclude the work on this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

37. WORKPLAN 2013/14

Consideration was given to the Committee's work plan for the 2013/14 municipal year.

Officers highlighted the extensive work required by the Committee at their March/April 2014 meetings to collate information received from the reviews carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's on the Night Time Economy. It was suggested that items scheduled on the work plan for these meetings may need to be slipped to later meetings to allow the Committee time to complete the work.

Following further discussion it was

Resolved: That the Committee's work plan for 2013/14 be received and noted subject to the following additions and amendments:

10 March 2014

Slip to 7 April 2014 meeting:

Third Quarter Finance & Performance Monitoring Report and Update on Staff Survey Results

7 April 2014

Add – Report back from Equalities Scrutiny Task Group

12 May 2014

Add – Attendance of Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee Chair: To report on the progress of the Committee's scrutiny reviews.

Reason: To update Members and provide an overview of the Committee's work for the 2013/14 municipal year.

Councillor J Galvin, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.35 pm].