

Minutes

Policy Review Committee

Venue:	Committee Room
Date:	15 September 2015
Time:	5.00 p.m.
Present:	Councillors J Deans (Chair), M Hobson (Vice Chair), K Arthur, K Ellis, D Hutchinson, R Packham and Mrs J Shaw-Wright.
Apologies for Absence:	None
Officers Present:	Jonathan Lund - Deputy Chief Executive, Jodie Taylor – Lead Officer (Finance), Tim Grogan – Senior Enforcement Officer, Michelle Dinsdale – Policy Officer, Chris Watson – Assistant Policy Officer, and Janine Jenkinson - Democratic Services Officer.

10. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

To receive and approve the minutes of the Policy Review Committee held on 14 July 2015 for signature by the Chair.

12. CHAIR'S ADDRESS

The Chair informed the Committee that the PLAN Selby item due to be presented at the meeting had been rescheduled and would now be considered on 21 October 2015.

Councillors' attention was drawn to the Licensing Policy briefing note provided by the Solicitor to the Council, which was circulated at the meeting.

13. PR/15/7 – MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Jodie Taylor, Lead Officer (Finance) and Executive Councillor Lunn presented an update report regarding the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The MTFS set out the framework for the 2015/16 Budget and the 2015-2017/18 Medium Term Financial Plan. As part of the Budget and Policy Framework of the Council, the Policy Review Committee was asked to review and provide comments to the Executive.

The Lead Officer explained that three scenarios had been modelled to prepare for the possible cuts in Government funding. The Committee was advised of the uncertainty regarding the New Homes Bonus and the risks associated with the Business Rates System.

In response to a question regarding the Programme for Growth Project Board, the Deputy Chief Executive informed the Committee that details of each project were set out in a briefing document and these could be made available to Councillors. Minutes of Project Board meetings were reported at Executive meetings.

In relation to Interest Rates, Councillor Lunn explained that the Bank of England base rate remained at 0.5%. The base rate was projected to increase slowly and gradually thereafter, reaching 1.00% by March 2017. Current returns were below 1% and the MTFS had been updated to reflect the latest forecasts.

With regard to Business Rates, the Lead Officer (Finance) explained that the Council's Business Rates income was volatile due to a small number of businesses providing the majority of income received. The current approach to Business Rates Retention income was to set aside gains above baseline funding into the Business Rates Equalisation reserve; the reserve could then be used to off-set the impact of any loss of income.

In response to a query in relation to the introduction of a Green Bin Charge, Councillor Lunn explained that a number of local authorities in North Yorkshire applied a Green Bin Charge and the schemes worked well. He advised the Committee that the introduction of any scheme in Selby would be fully discussed and decided by Council.

RESOLVED:

To endorse the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in the report.

14. PR/15/8 – REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Michelle Dinsdale, Policy Officer, presented a report that set out the scope and timetable for the review of the Corporate Enforcement Policy.

The Corporate Enforcement Policy and individual policies within the current Policy were in need of updating due to a shift in the regulatory framework and best practice.

The revised Policy would include all relevant regulatory compliance and enforcement services, with the exception of debt control and Regulation of Investigatory Powers. These enforcement areas presented complex and in-depth issues; therefore, specific policies would be developed separately.

Consultation would be undertaken with a broad range of relevant organisations, including the public, via North Yorkshire County Council's Citizen's Panel, the Police, the Department for Work and Pensions and other regulators.

Councillors raised some concern regarding fly tipping. In response to a query, the Senior Enforcement Officer reported that the majority of complaints received related to fly tipping, litter and dog fouling. He reported that his workload in relation to fly tipping enforcement had increased. In addition, he outlined the difficulties of prosecution and said York Magistrates' Court often took a lenient approach towards offenders.

A discussion took place regarding a publication by North Yorkshire County Council that indicated the number of fly tipping incidents in Selby had decreased. Councillors queried the source of the information. It was suggested that further information be sought from North Yorkshire County Council and the Committee be provided with an update.

RESOLVED:

- I. To note and endorse the proposals for the review of the Corporate Enforcement Policy, as set out in the report.**
- II. To send a letter to York Magistrates' Court, outlining the concerns raised during the discussion and inviting a representative to attend a future meeting.**
- III. To agree that dog fouling, litter and fly tipping be considered as future enforcement priorities and campaigns of awareness.**

15. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Committee considered the current Work Programme 2015/16.

RESOLVED:

- I. To confirm the provisional Committee date, 21 October 2015 for consideration of PLAN Selby.**
- II. To confirm the provisional Committee date, 17 November 2015, for consideration of the revised draft Corporate Enforcement Policy.**

The meeting closed at 5.45 p.m.