

Scrutiny Committee

Venue:	Committee Room
Date:	Wednesday 25 June 2014
Present:	Councillors J Crawford (Chair), Mrs W Nichols (Vice Chair), I Chilvers, M Dyson, M Hobson, D Mackay and Mrs M McCartney.
Also Present:	Councillor M Crane.
Apologies for Absence:	Mrs L Casling and D Peart.
Officers Present:	Jonathan Lund – Deputy Chief Executive, Karen Iveson – Executive Director (s151), Gillian Marshall – Solicitor to the Council, Simon Parkinson – Lead Officer, Community Support Teams, Richard Owens – Assistant Director, Passenger Transport, North Yorkshire County Council, and Palbinder Mann, Democratic Services Officer.
Press:	None
Public	2

55. MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes from the last meeting.

RESOLVED:

To APPROVE the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 April 2014 and they be signed by the Chair.

56. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

57. START TIME OF MEETINGS

The Committee discussed the start time of meetings. It was agreed to keep the start time at 5pm.

RESOLVED:

To keep the start time of Scrutiny Committee meetings at 5pm.

58. CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There was no address by the Chair.

The Chair agreed to amend the running order of the agenda.

59. BUS TIMETABLES – VERBAL REPORT

Richard Owens, Assistant Director, Passenger Transport, North Yorkshire County Council was present to discuss the impact on bus timetables following the announcement of cuts to bus subsidies in North Yorkshire.

The Chair raised concern of two services in the Fairburn and Brotherton areas which had been reduced to one service every four hours and that residents were unable to attend medical appointments due to this. Concerns were also raised regarding the route these services took.

A resident of the village affected addressed the Committee and requested that the service should be brought back to the two hourly service. She raised concern that people were unable to travel to their employment and medical appointments. It was also stated that there were no shops in Fairburn and this meant that people had to travel outside of the village. The Committee were informed that the reduced frequency of the service was preventing people from travelling to the Fairburn Ings nature reserve. The resident also requested the re-routing of the service.

A further concern was raised regarding the Utopia service which travelled in Wighill and Healaugh and the lack of passengers which used this service.

Mr Owens offered to go back to the operator and discuss the concerns. It was explained that if there was any amendment to a timetable then eight weeks' notice needed to be provided unless a directive was received from the Traffic Commissioner.

RESOLVED:

To welcome the offer from Mr Owens to raise the above concerns with the relevant Operators and provide a further update to the Committee.

60. CALL IN – DECISION E/14/11 – EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES – NON KEY DECISION

The Committee were asked to consider the Call In of the decision made in respect of report E/14/11 – Executive Representatives on Outside Bodies which was made by the Executive at their meeting on 5 June 2014.

The Chair presented the reasoning behind the Call In and explained the view that officers should not be representatives on the Drainage Board unless they offered specialist expertise. Concern was raised that officers were being made to attend for political purposes.

The Chair referred to section 1.2 of the Constitution. The Solicitor to the Council explained that the section in the Constitution allowed the Council to appoint representatives to its outside bodies and this included officers. It was explained that this was the first time that the Council had appointed officers to the Drainage Board however it was common practice across other authorities. The Committee were informed that the officers who had been appointed brought a range of experience and expertise in areas including finance, governance, performance management, law, emergency planning, and environmental protection.

The Leader of the Council explained that the Council had always nominated individuals who were not Councillors onto the Drainage Board. It was explained that as the Council had 27 seats, these were always difficult to fill solely with Councillors, due to meetings taking place during the day. It was also stated that it was important the Council took up its whole allocation of places due to the importance of the issues being discussed. The Leader of the Council added that the officers were appointed by Selby District Council but they had an obligation to act in the best interests of the IDB when acting in their capacity as a board member. This obligation had been made clear to the appointees.

Following discussion about the possibility of reducing the size of the Internal Drainage Board, the Solicitor to the Council explained that any reduction would require an order by the Secretary of State.

RESOLVED:

- i) To take no further action concerning the decision.**
- ii) To ask the Executive to explore all avenues to reduce the size of the IDB and, as a consequence, reduce the Council's reliance on officer appointees in future.**

61. PROGRAMME FOR GROWTH

The Leader of the Council was present to provide an update on all Programme for Growth projects.

Concern was raised at the number of empty homes in Tadcaster. The Leader of the Council explained that the Council was looking to address the issue of empty homes across the whole district including Tadcaster.

In response to a further query concerning about when house building would commence on two sites in the District, the Leader of the Council explained that there were two sites in Tadcaster which had both received planning permission and it was hoped building would commence in the near future. A

query was raised regarding garage sites, the Leader of the Council explained that the Council was continuing to explore the potential of developing some housing on existing garage sites.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

62. A NEW LEISURE CENTRE IN SELBY

Jonathan Lund, Deputy Chief Executive was present to provide an update on the efforts to provide a new leisure centre to replace the fire damaged Abbey Leisure Centre at Scott Road, Selby.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that building was underway and was currently on budget and on time. It was expected that the building would open in February 2015. The Committee were informed that there had been a substantial reduction to the capital costs compared to the budget estimate and it was intended that the new leisure centre would be running at break even or surplus by 2018.

It was stated that a resident had complained about the noise emitting from the current gym location and it was queried whether this had been resolved. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Council was aware of one particular complainant and officers had installed noise monitoring equipment to monitor the noise however no adverse noise had been noticed. The Deputy Chief Executive agreed to find out if anything further had occurred regarding the complaint.

A query was raised concerning the skate park. It was stated that the Leader of the Council had announced that there would be a skate park however there would still be a decision on whether it would be indoor or outdoor. A possibility could be to make the skate park part of a regional venue to attract visitors from outside the district.

The Deputy Chief Executive outlined some of the activities that had taken place to deliver accessible community leisure and recreation during the rebuilding of the leisure centre. These included a Midnight Football League, Healthy Active Adults and Healthy Active Children.

RESOLVED:

i) To note and welcome the report.

63. ACCESS SELBY SERVICE PROVISION – COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Simon Parkinson, Lead Officer, Community Support Teams was present to provide information of the services offered by the Community Support Teams.

The Lead Officer, Community Support Teams explained that the Community Support service area was made up of three separate teams, these were:

- Customer Services Team
- Community Officer Team
- Housing Support Team

It was explained that the Customer Services team had met their targets for 2013/14 however had fallen slightly short currently in 2014/15. The Committee were informed that this was due the installation of a new phone system that had also taken away the ability to transfer calls to the Civic Centre in times of high demand. The Lead Officer, Community Support Teams explained that this was currently being looked into along with reconfiguring the new phone system so that it could achieve the best use at the Contact Centre. It was also added that the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system would soon be upgraded.

A Councillor raised concern at the customer service witnessed when visiting the Customer Service Centre. The Lead Officer, Community Support Teams explained that the operatives were trained and also had a script which they were meant to follow. The Committee were informed that staff were swapped from the contact centre to frontline reception and it was possible that some staff were suited to more particular roles.

With regard to the Community Officer Team, the Lead Officer, Community Support Teams explained that there needed to be better analysis of performance and what was delivered. It was stated that further work to identify performance measures was needed.

Concern was raised that some feedback had been received from members of the public that had raised concerns about the service. The Lead Officer, Community Support Teams explained that there possibly could be a concern that the roles of the Community Officers were too generic and that tasks were passed to them which did not fit into the roles of another service.

The Committee requested details of the areas each of the Community Officers were assigned to.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

64. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

The Committee considered the current Work Programme 2014/15. Discussion took place on possible Task and Finish Group review topics. The Committee selected the Community Support service area as a topic and it was agreed that the Democratic Services Officer would write a scoping document for the review and circulate this to the Task and Finish Group. It was agreed Councillors Crawford, Chilvers, Dyson and Mackay would form the Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To select the Community Support service area as a review with Councillors Crawford, Chilvers, Dyson and Mackay to form the Task and Finish Group.**
- ii) **The Democratic Services Officer to write a scoping document for the review and this to be circulated to the Task and Finish Group.**

65. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the latest version of the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED:

To note the Forward Plan.

The meeting closed at 7.12pm