



Minutes

Scrutiny Committee

Venue:	Committee Room
Date:	Wednesday 24 June 2015
Present:	Councillors J Crawford (Chair), D Buckle, Mrs E Casling, I Chilvers, D Mackay and D White.
Apologies for Absence:	None
Officers Present:	Jonathan Lund – Deputy Chief Executive, Karen Iveson – Executive Director (s151), Ralph Gill – Lead Officer Benefits and Taxation, Richard Owen – Assistant Director, Integrated Passenger Transport (North Yorkshire County Council), and Janine Jenkinson - Democratic Services Officer.
Press:	None
Public	None

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 March 2015 be approved for signature by the Chair.

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair welcomed new members of the Committee and Janine Jenkinson, the newly appointed Democratic Services Officer. He reported that Councillors had recently received an excellent Scrutiny training session from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS).

5. START TIME OF MEETING

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to commence meetings at 5.00 p.m. for the 2015/16 municipal year.

6. CALL IN

There were no items called in.

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Committee considered the Work Programme 2015/16.

RESOLVED:

- i. To activate the provisional meeting scheduled for 21 July 2015 and to consider Barlow Common (on site at 3p.m.) and Selby District Council Organisation Review (Civic Centre at 5p.m.)**
- ii. The following items be scheduled for the meeting on 22 September 2015:**
 - Health**
 - North Yorkshire Fire Service**
 - Selby and District Housing Trust**
 - 1st Quarter Corporate Plan Report**
 - Call in**
- iii. Councillors to scope the following suggestions for a Task and Finish Group prior to the 21 July 2015 meeting:**
 - Selby Town Enterprise Partnership (Councillor E Casling)**
 - Community Centres (Councillor D Buckle)**
 - Selby Leisure Centre (Councillors J Crawford and I Chilvers)**
- iv. To arrange a Councillor briefing session regarding Community Engagement Forums (CEFs).**

8. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED: To note the Forward Plan.

9. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES

Karen Iveson, Executive Director (and S151 officer) and Ralph Gill, Lead Officer Benefits and Taxation, provided an update report on National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) under Business Rates Retention (BRR).

The Committee was advised that the amount of NNDR retained locally (Business Rates Baseline) was subject to the Business Rates Retention Scheme, which from April 2013 replaced the previous NNDR pooling arrangements. The amount retained by the Council was based on the Government's assessment of the authority's need, as part of the overall Local Government Finance Settlement.

Under BRR the amount of NNDR collected was shared between Central Government (50%), Selby District Council (40%), North Yorkshire County Council (9%) and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (1%). These shares were then subject to a system of top-ups and tariffs which aimed to redistribute income in accordance with the assessed need.

Karen Iveson explained that in Selby, the power stations contributed significantly to the Council's NNDR collection fund. The presence of the power stations in the district meant the amount collected was significantly above what a district of Selby's size would typically expect to collect. Consequently, the Council paid a fixed tariff of approximately £14 million to Central Government to normalise its funding from NNDR. Income collected above the baseline was subject to a 50% levy payment to the Government and income below the baseline was subject to a safety net.

The Business Rates Retention Scheme had now run for two years and the Council's experience of the funds retained had been mixed, with a loss incurred in 2013/14 and growth in 2014/15.

Councillors were advised that future developments relating to renewable energy provided the potential for significantly increased revenues; however the potential of business closures and the inherent risk of appeal within the system meant future forecasting was extremely difficult.

To mitigate the risk of loss within the system the Council had created a Business Rates Equalisation Reserve with the intention of transferring Business Rates growth into the reserve to offset any future losses until experience of the system was gained.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

10. TRANSPORT UPDATE, INCLUDING PROPOSED REDUCTIONS TO BUS SUBSIDY

Richard Owens, Assistant Director (Integrated Passenger Transport, North Yorkshire County Council) provided an update on the proposed reduction in bus subsidy.

In April 2014 North Yorkshire County Council implemented proposals to reduce the amount spent subsidising bus services by £2 million per annum. Following further announcements by the Government over future funding, it had been estimated that a further £75.9 million saving needed to be found by the County Council overall between 2015 and 2019. To contribute to this

target, consultation was being carried out on the proposals to reduce the amount spent subsidising local bus services. The proposal had been designed to reduce the amount spent subsidising bus services to £1.5 million per annum.

North Yorkshire County Council's overall strategy was:-

- To use the budget allocation for support for bus services to ensure that as many communities as possible had transport services which contributed to alleviating isolation and loneliness and allowed people to live independently.
- To support the local economy, and where possible maintain access to the National Rail network and provide public transport links between key service centres.
- To ensure that the services subsidised by the Council gave value for money.

A formal consultation process had been launched and the consultation document was available to complete on North Yorkshire County Council's internet site.

Richard Owens outlined the following proposals for services in Selby:

150	Selby-Wakefield	Timetable revised
402/403	Selby - Leeds	The contracted journeys supplement a commercial service; subsidy for the contract journeys will be withdrawn.
492/493	Tadcaster– Sherburn in Elmet	Proposed Fleet Operation. New Timetable

Councillors were invited to comment on the proposals to reduce the amount of money used to subsidise bus services as part of the consultation process.

Richard Owens advised that as part of the consultation process, a number of public 'drop-in' sessions were being held to inform people of the proposals and seek their comments and views.

The consultation process had been scheduled for a 12 week period and would be ending on 14 August 2015.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

The meeting closed at 6.25 p.m.

Scrutiny Committee
24 June 2015