



Minutes

Scrutiny Committee

Venue:	Barlow Common Visitor Centre and Committee Room
Date:	Tuesday 21 July 2015
Time:	3.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.
Present:	Councillors J Crawford (Chair), D Buckle, Mrs E Casling, I Chilvers, D Mackay and D White.
Apologies for Absence:	None
Officers Present:	Mary Weastell – Chief Executive, Karen Iveson – Executive Director (s151), Suzanne Sweeting – Core Project Officer, and Janine Jenkinson - Democratic Services Officer.
Press:	None
Public	9

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 June 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

There was no address from the Chair.

5. BARLOW COMMON LOCAL NATURE RESERVE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered Barlow Common Annual Report 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015 provided by Brian Lavelle, Living Landscape Manager (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust).

In response to a question regarding the lease to The Scout Association, the Living Landscape Manager reported that there had been a delay getting a new lease signed due to issues relating to the length of a break clause. The matter was currently being dealt with by Solicitors and he was unable to estimate when the issue would be resolved. Councillors' raised concern that the issue had been on-going and was costly for both parties. Karen Iveson, Executive Director (s151) agreed to ask the Council's Legal Department to look into the matter.

Some discussion took place in relation to the appearance of the site and some areas being 'too wild'. In addition, concerns were raised regarding access to the water area and the disabled access that was a steep incline from the car park. The Living Landscape Manager explained that options to move the disabled car parking area to the main visitors' car park and alterations to the access gate were being considered by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT).

The Living Landscape Manager, reported that prior to YWT taking over the management of the Reserve, two full time officers had been employed on site. He explained that members of the public that had been visiting Barlow Common for a number of years had an expectation that the site would look and be used in a certain way. He said the transfer of management to YWT and the reduction in staff resource meant this was an unrealistic expectation.

The Committee highlighted the importance of communication with the public and suggested that information be displayed on site, setting out the seasonal work programme of activities and priorities for Barlow Common.

Councillors asked if it was possible for the Committee to receive a financial report detailing the annual projected spend for Barlow Common.

In response to a query concerning the ownership of the access road to Barlow Common, the Living Landscape Manager advised that the access road was not included in the lease and therefore, the maintenance of the road was not the responsibility of YWT.

RESOLVED:

- I. To note the report.**
- II. The Council's Legal Department be asked to look at the lease negotiations between Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and The Scout Association.**

- III. **Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to provide financial information on the projected annual spend 2015-16 for Barlow Common.**
- IV. **Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to display on the Barlow Common site a work programme of scheduled seasonal activities and priorities for the site.**
- V. **Information regarding the ownership of the access road to Barlow Common be provided to the Scrutiny Committee.**

Note – The Committee adjourned at 4.00 p.m. and reconvened at Selby District Council, Civic Centre at 5.00 p.m. Councillor E Casling joined the meeting at this point.

6. ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW

Mary Weastell, Chief Executive provided the Committee with an update regarding the Council's Organisational Review.

In view of the Council's ambitious and challenging agenda over the next five years and beyond it was felt an appropriate time to review the current Core /Access Selby operating model to ensure it was fit for purpose and that the Council had in place the capacity to deliver its priorities.

In addition, the Better Together collaboration with North Yorkshire County Council had been underway for 18 months, the Review would take into account the Better Together programme and the potential impact this had on functions and structures going forward.

The Review would be inclusive and as part of the methodology there would be a fact finding/listening approach whereby all Councillors and staff would be invited to put their views forward. As part of the process the Council would be benchmarked against other similar local authorities. Consultation would also take place with all key stakeholders including trade unions and leaders of political groups.

An Independent Adviser, Hilary Brearley of HB HR Consulting Ltd had been appointed to support the Chief Executive. Officers and Councillors had received invites to take part in the Review and given an opportunity to informally meet with the Independent Adviser to share views of the model to date and any ideas for improvement.

It was anticipated that the final stage of the Review would be completed by September 2015; the Chief Executive would then present her recommendation and alternative options to Full Council for consideration.

The Chief Executive urged the Scrutiny Committee to reflect on previous work it had undertaken and how the information could be used to feed in to the Review process.

The Committee highlighted the importance of the role of the Councillor and the relationship between Officers and Councillors to any new model proposed.

Some discussion took place in relation to the Council's performance and public perception. Councillors' were keen to stress the importance of scheduling work appropriately and providing a good service to residents, particularly in relation to household repairs.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUP REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY OFFICER TEAM

The Committee considered a report that provided the results of the Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group Review of the Community Officer Team.

RESOLVED: To note the findings of the Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group Review looking into the Community Officer Team.

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

At the meeting of the Committee held on 24 June it was agreed that the following suggestions for a Task and Finish Group Review be presented for consideration:

- Selby Leisure Centre
- Council funded Community Centres
- Access Selby – roles and function

With regards to Selby Leisure Centre, it was noted that the Centre had only been open since March 2015 and therefore, it was felt that more time was needed to allow processes to embed before undertaking a review. It was agreed to invite a representative from Selby Leisure Centre to a future meeting, to provide an update.

In light of the presentation received from the Chief Executive, in an earlier agenda item, concerning the Organisational Review, the Committee felt a Scrutiny Committee review of Access Selby would duplicate the work already being undertaken.

A discussion took place regarding Council funded Community Centres. Some concerns were raised in relation to poor use of the centres, running costs and lack of community engagement. Councillors felt a review of Council funded Community Centres would be valuable.

The Committee considered the Work Programme 2015/16.

The Chair informed the Committee that he had received notification of concerns raised by a resident in relation to the recent road closures and resurfacing in Selby, inadequate notice and unclear signage. Councillors felt

it would be appropriate to invite a representative from North Yorkshire County Council's Highways department to discuss these issues.

Resolved:-

- I. That a review of Council funded Community Centres be scheduled to commence in September 2015.**
- II. A representative from Selby Leisure Centre be invited to attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.**
- III. A representative from North Yorkshire County Council's Highways department be invited to attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.**

9. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED: To note the Forward Plan.

The meeting closed at 6.25 p.m.