

## Minutes

### Scrutiny Committee

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Venue:	Committee Room - Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9FT
Date:	Thursday, 25 January 2018
Time:	5.00 pm
Present:	Councillor W Nichols (Chair), Councillor S Duckett (Vice-Chair), Councillor D Buckle, Councillor I Chilvers, Councillor D Mackay and Councillor D White
Officers present:	Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development and Improvement, James Cokeham, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration, Peter Williams, Head of Finance, Suzanne Sweeting, Partnerships Manager, Chris Kwasniewski, Housing and Regeneration Manager, Alex Dochery, Economic Development Officer and Victoria Foreman, Democratic Services Officer
Others present:	Councillor C Lunn, Executive Lead Member for Finance and Resources and Councillor R Packham
Public:	0
Press:	0

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#### **29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **30 MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 November 2017.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**To approve the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 November 2017 for signing by the Chair.**

### **31 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **32 CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair proposed that the order of the agenda be amended to allow Agenda Item 8 – Housing Development Programme to be considered first. This was agreed by the Committee.

### **33 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2017-20 - S/17/11**

The Head of Economic Development and Regeneration introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the contents and make any comments on the Housing Development Programme.

The Committee noted that the programme was based on three 'delivery pillars' that included direct development on SD owned sites, the acquisition and development of new sites and the acquisition of affordable homes constructed by other developers. The programme would generate revenue streams for SDC as a result of loans provided to the Selby District Housing Trust (SDHT).

Following a query from Members, Officers confirmed that homes under the SDHT were not subject to right to buy schemes.

Some concern was raised by the Committee regarding the potential use of garage sites around the District for housing; whilst the principle was supported, it was felt that a managed approach needed to be taken in emptying the garages of tenants at an appropriate time. Members felt it was not efficient to leave garages vacant, as it meant that rental income was lost and tenants were moved unnecessarily.

Members suggested that Officers look into the rental use of Council owned garages in more detail; some were used only for storage or completely empty. Members requested that data on the rental of Council owned garages be circulated to the Committee.

Lastly, the Committee noted that the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration was leaving Selby District Council. Members thanked him for his contribution and wished him well in the future.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) To note the contents of the report.**
- ii) To ask Officers to send data on the rental of Council owned garages to the Committee.**

### **34 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE Q2 – 2017/18 (JULY TO SEPTEMBER) - S/17/8**

The Head of Business Development and Improvement introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the contents and make any comments on the Council's corporate performance.

It was noted that the quarterly performance report provided a progress update on delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-20 as measured by a combination of progress against priority projects, high level actions and performance against KPI's.

Members asked questions on the report, including on the recovery of sundry debt and the time taken to re-let vacant Council homes, particularly rural bungalows which were proving harder to let. The Committee felt that there were a number of reasons that the rural bungalows were not easy to re-let, including garden size, number of bedrooms and location. Members emphasised the need for long-term planning of homes and asked that this matter be fed into the work of the Housing Development Programme.

**RESOLVED:**

**To note the contents of the report.**

**35 FINANCIAL RESULTS AND BUDGET EXCEPTIONS REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER – S/17/9**

The Head of Finance introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the contents and make any comments on the Council's financial results and budget exceptions.

The Committee noted that at the end of quarter 2, the full year forecast for the General Fund showed an estimated surplus of (£146k) ((£32.5k) quarter 1) and the HRA an estimated surplus of (£378k) ((£379k) quarter 1) against the approved budget.

Members noted that planned savings for the year had already been achieved in the HRA. A number of General Fund savings had also been achieved in Q2, but there was still a further £51k of savings to be achieved in the remaining part of the year.

The Head of Finance explained that the capital programme was currently forecasting an underspend of £2.05m, £0.48m on the General Fund programme and £1.57m on the HRA programme.

The Committee understood that the Programme for Growth 3 was established as part of the budget setting process last year. A report was taken to Executive on 7 September 2017 and to Overview and Scrutiny on 28 September 2017 which provided a detailed view on the progress of P4G3. The Tour De Yorkshire event had taken place in April and work had begun on the strategic sites and progress made on the Visitor Economy, Healthy Living, Retail Experience STEP and grants to the Housing Trust.

Members asked if an impact report on the effect of the Tour de Yorkshire Event on Selby District could be bought to the Committee for consideration. Officers confirmed that Welcome to Yorkshire had produced a high-level impact report for the whole county which could be considered by the Committee, as could some work that had been done with businesses and traders at a more local level in Selby District.

The Committee understood that some traders in Tadcaster were still struggling and it was reported that some business had even seen a fall in profits as a result of the Tour de Yorkshire.

Members raised the issue of access to employment in the District, particularly around matching local job-seekers to local jobs in areas such as Sherburn; it was felt that more could be done to ensure that the jobs in the District were available to local people.

Transport for employment was also an area of concern for the Committee; Officers confirmed that discussions were underway with North Yorkshire County Council on the matter, but that there were issues around the sustainability of transport in the area and the willingness of bus companies to operate routes that were not seen as viable.

Members also queried the delay to the upgrades to the Lifeline system at St Wilfrid's Court; Officers confirmed that reasons for the delay would be explored and sent to the Committee after the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To note the contents of the report.**
- ii) That a report on the impact of the Tour de Yorkshire on Selby District and its businesses be bought to the Committee at a later date.**
- iii) That reasons for the delay to upgrades of the Lifeline System at St Wilfrid's Court be explored and sent to the Committee after the meeting.**

**36 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT FOR Q2 – S/17/10**

The Head of Finance introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the contents and make any comments on the Council's treasury management activities.

The Committee noted that the report reviewed the Council's Treasury Management Activity for the 6 month period 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017 and presented performance against the Prudential Indicators. During this period the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements.

The Head of Finance explained that the latest Capita forecast was that

the first increase in Bank Rate was not anticipated until the second quarter of 2019. However, there was increasing speculation that the Bank of England Bank Base Rate could increase before the end of 2017/18. Investment returns of 0.48 had been achieved up to the end of the second quarter. High balances were supporting the interest earned budget, and income was forecast to exceed budget by £50k.

Members understood that the Council had long term borrowing of £59.3m at 30 September 2017. Interest payments of £2.5m were forecast for 2017/18 (£0.1m allocated to the General Fund; £2.4m to the Housing Revenue Account). The Council's affordable limits for borrowing were not breached during the period.

The Executive Lead Member for Finance and Resources confirmed that the pension deficit had been paid off in total last year, and that at present, the North Yorkshire Pension Fund was funded at 107%, which was a vast improvement on 30% a few years ago.

**RESOLVED:**

**To note the contents of the report.**

**37 NORTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN'S AND NORTH YORKSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORTS 2016-17 - S/17/12**

The Partnerships Manager introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the content of the annual reports from the North Yorkshire Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

Members noted that the County Safeguarding Boards had a statutory duty to publish annual reports, accounting for the activities of the Board for the previous year and providing evidence for the key areas of focus for the coming year. Both reports before Members set out the governance arrangements across North Yorkshire and outlined the activity and partnership working in the Selby District.

The Partnerships Manager explained the priority areas for the Adults Board were awareness and empowerment, prevention of harm, protection and proportionality and partnership effectiveness. The vision for the Children's Board was to 'Listen to the views of children and young people and work together to ensure they feel safe and North Yorkshire is a happy place to live.' The Board's priorities were to co-ordinate the activities of the Board and ensure its effectiveness.

The Committee noted that the Adult's report outlined per theme, partner and District, what had been delivered over the period of 2016–2017. The Council had supported safeguarding development through a new structure, re-establishing full representation on partnership groups, realigning the Safer Selby Hub to better approaches in safeguarding and piloting a community navigator scheme, offering local information, advice and volunteer initiatives.

Members considered the Children's report which outlined local involvement and highlighted the achievements of the partnership through community safety development, a focus on domestic abuse training, support and commissioning, raising awareness of the Prevent duty and contributing to campaigns such as safeguarding week.

The Committee noted that going forward the Children's Safeguarding Board would continue to develop the multi-agency safeguarding approach, ensuring appropriate and timely access to services as well as continuing to improve the quality of professionals reporting to child protection and care conferences.

The Partnerships Manager confirmed that from April 2018 there would be further responsibilities for District Councils to consider, in conjunction with County Councils.

**RESOLVED:**

**To note the content of the annual reports.**

**38 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 AND 2018/19**

Members considered the Committee's work programme for the rest of the 2017-18 municipal year and the draft plan for 2018-19.

Councillor D Buckle confirmed that he had further information about the Council Funded Community Centres item which he would share with the Democratic Services Officer, in order for a report to be produced for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee requested that Nigel Adams MP be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

Members felt that it would be appropriate for the Committee to consider the report on the findings of the LGA Peer Review, with a particular focus on the recommendations around scrutiny at the Council. The matter would also be considered by the Council at its meeting in February 2018.

The Committee also asked that the Car Parking Strategy and Tariff Review, which had been considered as a call-in item in October 2017, come back to Scrutiny Committee at a future date for the impact of the revised tariffs to be examined following monitoring for the trial period of 6 to 12 months, as agreed by the Executive in November 2017.

Members understood that the co-location of the Policy at the Council Offices could be delayed and may not be appropriate for consideration by July 2018; it was agreed that should the co-location be delayed, the matter be moved further down the Committee's work programme for 2018/19.

**RESOLVED:**

Scrutiny Committee – Minutes  
Thursday, 25 January 2018

- i) To note the Committee's work programme for the rest of the 2017/18 year and the draft work programme for 2018/19.**
- ii) To invite Nigel Adams MP to a future meeting of the Committee.**
- iii) To add to the work programme for 2018/19 the report on the findings of the LGA Peer Review, with a particular focus on the recommendations around scrutiny at the Council.**
- iv) To add to the work programme for 2018/19 the Car Parking Strategy and Tariff Review.**
- v) That should the co-location with the Police at the Council Offices be delayed, the matter be moved further down the Committee's work programme for 2018/19.**

The meeting closed at 6.06 pm.