

Minutes

Scrutiny Committee

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| Venue: | Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9FT |
| Date: | Thursday, 23 March 2023 |
| Time: | 5.00 pm |
| Present: | Councillors S Shaw-Wright (Chair), A Lee, R Sweeting, J Chilvers, K Ellis, J McCartney and R Packham |
| Officers present: | Suzanne Sweeting, Partnerships Manager, Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development and Improvement, Peter Williams, Head of Finance; and Dawn Drury, Democratic Services Officer |
| Others present: | Superintendent Fran Naughton, North Yorkshire Police Service, Martin Dodd, Area Operations Manager, Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS); and Councillor C Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resource |
| Public: | 0 |
| Press: | 0 |

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor W Nichols. Councillor R Packham was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Nichols.

54 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

55 MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes of the meetings held on 27 October 2022 and the 16 February 2023.

RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 27 October 2022 and 16 February 2023.

56 CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There was no Chairman's address.

57 BLUE LIGHT SERVICES: POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES, AND YORKSHIRE AMBULANCE SERVICE (YAS)

Members noted that present at the meeting were:

- Martin Dodd, Area Operations Manager, Yorkshire Ambulance Service, and
- Superintendent Fran Naughton, York and Selby Commander, North Yorkshire Police

Each representative gave an update on the service that they covered.

Martin Dodd, Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS)

Mr Dodd gave a presentation which covered the following points:

- All urgent and emergency systems had faced significant pressure over the winter months; YAS had been at level 4 (the highest level of escalation), de-escalating for the first time last month and had experienced high demand, including NHS 111, Accident and Emergency and PTS services. System pressures had led to disruption in patient flow which in turn had resulted in ambulance handover delays at Emergency departments, with the average handover taking over 53 minutes to date in North Yorkshire. Working under pressure, delays at ED's and the inability to respond to outstanding calls had resulted in a negative impact upon staff's health and wellbeing and retention.
- Actions taken to tackle the pressures included the opening of a new, larger call centre for handling 999 calls in York, a recruitment campaign, especially focused on 999/111 contact centres which included radio and bus advertisements. The maximised use of alternative care pathways to reduce conveyance to A&E departments, deployment of welfare vehicles to support staff wellbeing and enhance staff morale. Working closely with colleagues in ED's to identify opportunities for improvements in ambulance handover, especially as the new build ED's in York and Scarborough opened.
- Future priorities included the increase of available staffing numbers within the area with increased recruitment which focused on local

Universities. An increase in development and career opportunities to promote staff retention and the continued promotion of staff wellbeing incentives to reduce absence. YAS would continue to work with local ED's to minimise handover delays, and also with the ICB and other system partners to improve patient care and patient through the development of alternative care pathways.

Members questioned how the performance figures for the YAS compared with the national picture, if the service currently suffered from a shortage of staff; and the average waiting time, upon arrival, it took for the ambulance crew to hand over a patient to the hospital. The Area Operations Manager confirmed that the average time for a patient to be transferred to hospital care was 53 minutes and that at the present time the YAS was well staffed. In terms of performance figures Members heard that the YAS faced challenges in this area due in part to the patient flow through hospitals and the geography of the County.

The Committee queried whether the service had a requirement for additional emergency vehicles and equipment to meet the demand, the Area Operations Manager advised that the service had sufficient vehicles and equipment, and that there was budget available to fund an increase in the number of ambulances should the need arise.

Fran Naughton, North Yorkshire Police

The Superintendent for the Selby and York area provided Members with an update on the work of the North Yorkshire Police.

The Committee were informed that following an inspection of the North Yorkshire Police force by the Police Inspectorate, a detailed report had highlighted a number of areas which required improvement within the force. An improvement plan had been put in place, and some actions from the plan had already been implemented as follows:-

- The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner had approved £1.85m of investment for the NYP force control rooms, this had resulted in 72% of public 999 telephone calls being answered within 10 seconds in February 2023, compared with 46% of telephone calls answered within 10 seconds in July 2022.
- An additional 21 staff posts had been made available to be recruited to on the Safeguarding Team.
- The NYP vehicle fleet had received investment with 63 new police vans being rolled out across the area, this enabled NYP to respond to the public effectively.
- A commitment had been made to reduce the current backlog in digital forensic work by 50% by June 2023, this would ensure that mobile phone devices, once seized, would be inspected in a more

timely fashion to aid with any possible investigation.

- Staff training on diversity and inclusion had been introduced, along with the development of a first line leadership and middle manager programme.

Members noted that within the Police Inspectorate report it had been acknowledged that NYP Officers understood the importance of treating the public with fairness and respect. The report further stated that investigations were effective and well supervised, and that Officers were effective in apprehending and managing suspects and offenders, to protect the public from harm.

The Committee were informed that the current areas of priority for the NYP were abuse and neglect, serious and organised crime, sexual crime and exploitation and community harm.

Superintendent Naughton highlighted the partnership between NYP and the Selby Community Safety Hub, who collaborated on a daily basis, sharing local knowledge and information, with the aim to provide early intervention, to reduce offending as a whole, and help victims of crime.

Two Councillors praised the work of the Community Neighbourhood Police in each of their respective wards. One Member stated that the officers had been pro-active in combating anti-social behaviour and drug crime and were frequently visible on the streets of the village, with regular foot patrols and community drop-in meetings, which residents appreciated.

The Committee asked a number of questions in relation to staff retention, 101 telephone calls, and the potential use of text messages for the public to report incidents. Superintendent Naughton explained that there were no plans to relocate the current Inspector at Selby to another area, and that two new experienced neighbourhood policing Sergeant's had been stationed with the Selby team.

In terms of 101 telephone calls, the Superintendent stated that she was committed to reducing the wait time for answering 101 calls and attempting to reduce the numbers and manage the demand, however answering the 999 emergency telephone calls took priority.

Other queries raised by Members during the discussion included community involvement with the Police force, the use of fixed traffic camera's and the "20 is Plenty" speed limit campaign. Superintendent Naughton advised that she would look into the details and report back to the Committee with more information.

The Committee thanked the attendees from North Yorkshire Police and the Yorkshire Ambulance Service for all they did and for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the updates from the attendees.

58 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - Q3 2022-23 (S/22/21)

The Committee received the report of the Head of Business Development and Improvement which asked Members to consider and comment on the performance information presented to them for Quarter 3, 2022-23.

Members noted that the report provided a progress update on delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2030, as measured by a combination of: progress against priority projects/high level actions; and performance against KPIs.

Officers summarised progress in Quarter 3, with 63% of KPIs reported showing improvement over the longer term or having maintained 100% performance, and 67% of KPIs reported were on target, with 17% of KPIs within acceptable tolerances.

Queries were raised in relation to the performance of Stage 2 corporate complaints and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests as there had been a reduction in response times. The officer explained that capacity had been a challenge which had impacted on the ability to respond within the given timeframe. In terms of FOI's, it was confirmed that the Council had seen an increase in the number of FOI requests that had been received, which was attributed to the Council ceasing to exist from 31 March 2023.

RESOLVED:

The Committee considered and noted the content of the report.

59 FINANCIAL RESULTS AND BUDGET EXCEPTIONS - Q3 2022-23 (S/22/22)

The Committee received the report from the Head of Finance which asked Members to consider and comment on the Council's financial and budget exceptions for Quarter 3 of the 2022-23 year.

Members noted that at the end of Q3, current estimated full year revenue outturn estimates indicated surpluses of (£305k) for the General Fund (GF) and (£241k) for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The key variances were highlighted in the report with further detail in Appendix A.

Officers explained that improved investment interest returns driven by base rate rises had resulted in an additional (£1,227k) of forecasted income in year. There was a net saving of (£97k) at present on salaries however it was anticipated that the vacancy levels were likely to increase over the next three months; and there was a (£63k) saving expected on drainage board levies due to the difference in actual inflation on the fees compared to what was assumed in the budget, which had been based on early estimates.

The Committee heard that the capital programme showed an underspend at the end of quarter 3 of (£1,012k) across both GF and HRA budgets.

RESOLVED:

The Committee considered and noted the report.

60 TREASURY MANAGEMENT - MONITORING REPORT - Q3 2022-23 (S/22/23)

The Committee received the report from the Head of Finance which asked Members to consider the Council's borrowing and investment activity (Treasury Management) for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022 and presented performance against the Prudential Indicators.

Officers explained that on average the Council's investments held in the North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Investment pool totalled £87.8m over the quarter at an average rate of 2.79% and earned interest of £617.0k. The total interest earned to the end of December 2022 stood at £1075.2k (£775.5k allocated to the General Fund; £299.7k allocated to the HRA) which was £960.8k above the year-to-date budget.

Members were informed that current trends indicated that forecast returns for the year could be in the region of £1,853.7k (£1,337.1k GF, £516.6k HRA) a total budget surplus of £1,701.2k. For the General Fund, any interest earned above a £350k threshold would be transferred to the Contingency Reserve. This figure was currently forecast to be £987.1k.

Members noted that in addition to investments held in the pool, the council had £4.55m invested in property funds as at 31 December 2022. The funds had achieved a 3.22% revenue return and 16.75% capital loss over the course of the year. This resulted in revenue income of £127.4k to the end of Q3 and an 'unrealised' capital loss of £914.6k. These funds remained long term investments and changes in capital values were realised when the units in the funds were sold.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the content of the report.

61 FINAL ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SELBY DISTRICT COUNCIL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2022-23 (S/22/24)

The Committee received the report from the Democratic Services Officer, which asked Members to approve the annual report for 2022-23; and to delegate authority to the Democratic Services Officer, in consultation with the Chair, to update the final version of the annual report 2022-23 following the inclusion of details from the current meeting.

Members noted that the Annual report provided an update on the topics considered and the subsequent findings of the Scrutiny Committee over the last municipal year.

RESOLVED:

- i. **To approve the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee for 2022-23, submitted by the Chair of the Committee.**

- ii. **To delegate authority to the Democratic Services Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to update the final version of the Annual Report 2022-23, following the inclusion of details from the meeting on 23 March 2023.**

62 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the 2022-23 work programme as presented in the agenda.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the work programme.

The meeting closed at 5.46 pm.