



Councillor Wendy Nichols – Chair of Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee has met once since the previous update given to Council in December 2017.

25 January 2018

The main items of business on the agenda for this meeting were the Housing Development Programme 2017-20, the Corporate Performance Report for Quarter 2 (July to September 2017/18), Financial Results and Budget Exceptions to 30 September 2017, Treasury Management Monitoring for Quarter 2 and North Yorkshire Children's and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Reports 2016/17. The Committee discussed a wide range of issues across the agenda items, including:

- The use of Council-owned garage sites around the District for housing and the importance of ensuring that a managed approach was taken in emptying the garages of tenants at the appropriate time. The Committee felt that garages should not be left vacant for too long in order to minimise the loss of rental income and the unnecessary movement of tenants.
- 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.
- The impact of the Tour de Yorkshire on the District and its traders and businesses; the Committee asked for more information on this and would be considering it at a future meeting.
- Transport for employment in areas such as Sherburn, issues around the sustainability of transport in some parts of the District, and the ability of bus companies to operate routes that were not seen as viable.
- The Committee were pleased to hear that the pension deficit for North Yorkshire had been paid off and was currently funded at 107%, a vast improvement on the figure of 30% only a few years ago.
- The importance of safeguarding for vulnerable adults and children across the District and the wider County, and the achievements of the North Yorkshire Children's and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Boards in 2016/17.

The Committee also considered the work plan for the rest of the 2017-18 year and the draft plan for 2018/19, and made the following suggestions:

- To invite Nigel Adams MP to a future meeting of the Committee.

- 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.
- To look again at the Car Parking Strategy and Tariff Review in 2018/19 after a few months operation.
- 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 next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 22 March 2018, at 5.00pm.

Councillor W Nichols
Chair, Scrutiny Committee