



Councillor Jim Deans – Chair of Policy Review Committee

The Policy Review Committee has met once on 16 January 2018 since the previous update given to Council in December 2017. The Committee is scheduled to meet again on 13 March 2018.

16 January 2018

The main items of business on the agenda for this meeting were Tackling Deprivation in Selby District, the Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan, an update from the Executive Hire Working Group, the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles Policy Review, the Private Sector Assistance Policy and the Committee's Work Plan. The Committee discussed a wide range of issues across the agenda items, including:

- The identification of the most deprived areas in the Selby District, and what work was being undertaken by the Council and partners to improve the quality of life for people in these specific areas and across the District as a whole. It was noted that some residents were harder to contact than others and that special consideration would need to be given in order to reach these people. Members acknowledged the importance of working with local schools in order to raise the aspirations of children from areas identified as deprived, to try and break the cycle of deprivation.
- The Committee raised concerns around levels of housebuilding in some areas, such as Sherburn, and that such housing was not necessarily accessible by low skilled workers in the area. Transport for employment in areas such as Sherburn, in particular bus provision, was also raised as an issue by the Committee. Discussions had taken place with local employers on the Sherburn Industrial Estate and local bus service provider Arriva, and felt that some headway was being made in addressing the issue.
- As part of the Executive's consultation on the draft budget proposals, the Committee noted the need for further savings, and discussed various aspects of the proposals such as funding for housing purchases, the move of the Contact Centre and its staff to the Civic Centre, council housing rents, renewable energy business rates and the Council's use of reserves. In response to the Executive's request for savings ideas, the Committee felt that the Better Together Programme with North Yorkshire County Council could be developed and explored further in order to share other services and potentially save additional money.
- The Committee considered two reports relating to the Council's licencing function; one on the Executive Hire Working Group and the other one a review of the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles Policy. Three Members of the Policy Review Committee (Cllr J Deans, Cllr Hobson and Cllr Shaw-Wright)

were appointed to serve on two joint working groups, also made up of Licensing Committee Members to look at both issues.

- The Committee commented on the Council's Private Sector Assistance Policy, specifically about the expected budget for discretionary disabled facilities grants and emergency repairs. Members were pleased to note that assistance had already been offered over the Christmas period to a vulnerable resident who required emergency repairs to a household boiler. Officers identified the connection between the Private Sector Assistance Policy and efforts in tackling deprivation, which had been considered by the Committee earlier in the meeting.

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 include the Policy Review Committee's Annual Report on both the 2017/18 and 2018/19 Work Programmes for consideration in April 2018 and April 2019 respectively.
- To consider the Tree Management Policy at the provisional meeting of the Committee on 13 March 2018.
- To ask Committee Members to suggest topics they would wish to see on the 2018/19 Work Programme, and to send these to the Chair and Democratic Services Officer.

Councillor J Deans
Chair, Policy Review Committee