



## **Scrutiny Committee**

## **Annual Report 2020-21**

## Introduction by Councillor Steve Shaw-Wright, Chair of Scrutiny Committee 2020-21



I am pleased to present the Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report 2020-21, which sets out the work undertaken by the Committee over the course of the 2020-21 municipal year.

The Committee only met 6 times in 2020-21 due to the coronavirus pandemic, an event which has changed the way the Council works in many ways. Despite having held fewer meetings, the Committee still considered a range of different issues, including (amongst others) corporate performance, treasury management, financial and budget monitoring, the final report of the Housing Centres Working Group, Leisure Services contract, North Yorkshire Adults and Children Safeguarding Boards Annual Reports, local government reorganisation, the Council Delivery Plan and Monitoring Framework, Barlow Common and Hambleton Hough Annual Reports 2019-20, Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan Annual Review, Education in Selby District and Housing Repairs.

I would like to express my thanks to my fellow members of the Committee for their support and continued hard work. Many people have contributed to Scrutiny in 2020-21, including officers, external partner organisations and my thanks goes out to all of them.

### The Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee membership comprised the following members in 2020-21:

<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Selby Independents and Yorkshire Party Group</b>
A Lee	S Shaw-Wright (Chair)	J McCartney
N Reader	W Nichols (Vice Chair)	
M Topping		
R Sweeting		
K Ellis		
<b>Substitutes</b>	<b>Substitutes</b>	<b>Substitutes</b>
J Mackman	P Welch	M McCartney
T Grogan	R Packham	
J Cattanach		

## **The Role of the Scrutiny Committee**

Scrutiny was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000.

Selby District Council operates a Leader and Executive model, where the Executive is responsible for most day-to-day decisions. The role of the Scrutiny Committee is to scrutinise decisions and performance and to hold the Leader and Executive to account.

Scrutiny's main roles are:

- To scrutinise the performance of the Council and that of its partner organisations and other agencies delivering services within the Selby District.
- To exercise the Council's statutory obligations and powers in relation to Scrutiny.
- Exercise the right of call-in of decisions and recommendations made, but not yet implemented.
- To issue reports and make recommendations, where appropriate, and in relation to any matters listed above, for consideration by the Council, Executive or the relevant Committee of the Council.

## **2020-21 Work Programme**

A summary of the Committee's work over the last year is set out below.

## **Conclusion and Looking Forward to 2021-22**

Despite the delayed start to the Committee's meetings due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Scrutiny Committee fulfilled its role through its work programme in 2020-21.

Further scrutiny training was provided in October 2020, following which a number of recommendations were made and have been taken forward.

A liaison group between the three scrutiny Chairs and the Executive has started to meet again on a quarterly basis after a hiatus due to coronavirus. It is hoped that this group will continue to improve communication between the Scrutiny Committees and the Executive and will keep on meeting in 2021-22.

2021 has been an unusual year for both the Committee and the Council as a whole due to the pandemic, with the start of the 2021-22 municipal year looking to continue in much the same way for a while longer. However, the Scrutiny Committee will carry on undertaking its important work, with the work programme for 2021-22 looking busy already.

Councillor Steve Shaw-Wright  
**Chair of the Scrutiny Committee 2020-21**

Date of Meeting	Topic	Discussion / Resolution
13 August 2020	Financial Results and Budget Exceptions Reports Quarter 3 (to 31 December 2019) and Quarter 4 (to 31 March 2020)	<p>The Committee received the reports which asked Members to consider and comment on the financial information that covered both Quarters 3 and 4 of 2019-20.</p> <p>In response to a query about the shortfall in property income, Officers explained that some Council-owned industrial units were empty and required upgrading, and that there had been a drop in income from room bookings at the Civic Centre.</p> <p>Members emphasised the importance of improving the industrial units so that they could be rented out and start to generate income. It was agreed that this had been an ongoing issue for some time, and as such Officers were asked to report back to the Committee on the matter in the future and ensure that action was taken on the matter soon.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Council's financial results and budget exceptions from Quarters 3 and 4 in 2019-20, and asked Officers to report back to the Committee on the upgrading and letting out of Council-owned industrial units, as this had been an ongoing concern for some time.</b></p>
	Treasury Management Quarterly Update Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 - 2019-20	<p>The Committee received the reports for Quarters 3 and 4 of 2019-20, which asked Members to consider and comment on the information contained therein, to comply with the Treasury Management Code of Practice.</p> <p>Members asked for more information from Officers regarding the</p>

		<p>0.9% return on a balance of £66m; Officers confirmed that this would be supplied to the Committee after the meeting.</p> <p><b>The Committee endorsed the actions of officers on the Council's treasury activities for Q3 2019/20 and Q4 2019/20 and approved the reports, noted that general fund investment income received over the £350k threshold was to be transferred to contingency reserve, equating to £65k for the year, and asked Officers to provide further information on the 0.9% interest return on the balance of £66m, as detailed in the report.</b></p>
	<p>Corporate Performance Report - Quarter 4 - 2019/20 (January to March)/Year End 2019/20</p>	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider and comment on the performance information contained in the report.</p> <p>Members asked Officers to provide some further information on the costs of not re-letting void properties and on the provision of affordable homes, particularly what was causing the difference between the targets and the number of actual homes delivered.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Corporate Performance Report for Quarter 4 2019-20 (January to March)/Year End 2019-20, and asked Officers to provide further information on the costs of not re-letting void properties and on the provision of affordable homes, particularly what was causing the difference between the targets and the number of actual homes delivered.</b></p>

	Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019-20	<p>The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which asked the Committee to approve the Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019-20 and make any comments or suggestions as to how the format of the Committee's Annual Report could be improved for future years.</p> <p><b>The Committee approved the Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019-20.</b></p>
	Work Programme 2020-21	The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2020-21 as circulated.
<b>17 September 2020 (Extraordinary Meeting)</b>	Call In of Executive Decision Relating to the Review of Car Parking Tariffs	<p>The Committee received the report which asked the Committee to consider the Call In of the decision made in respect of report E/20/9 – Review of Car Parking Tariffs 2020 by the Executive at their meeting on 3 September 2020.</p> <p>Also present at the meeting were three Executive Members; the Deputy Leader, Councillor R Musgrave, Councillor C Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources and Councillor D Buckle, Lead Executive Member for Communities and Development.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee were asked to recommend one of the following options - refer the decision back to the Executive for reconsideration, agree with the decision made by the Executive and take no further action or refer the decision to Council.</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee Members expressed the importance of retaining the ability to pay with cash in car parks and warned against increasing parking charges which could potentially stop</p>

		<p>people coming into town to shop and use services. They also reflected on the ongoing problem with the central car park in Tadcaster which was usually full of the cars of commuters to Leeds and workers in the town, subsequently not leaving many spaces for shoppers or visitors during the day. They also mentioned the issues in Selby with parking on residential roads, which put pressure on local people and was often inconvenient. The Executive Members agreed that all day parking on the street, particularly near people's homes, was not acceptable.</p> <p>The Committee felt that further consideration was required on the matter before them, and as such it was then proposed and seconded that the matter be referred to Council for a decision. A vote was taken on the proposal and was carried.</p> <p><b>The Committee agreed that the decision be referred to Council, for the following reasons:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. the Scrutiny Committee were not convinced of the fullness of the report or the meaning behind the description of the 'fragile economy' of Tadcaster;</b></li> <li><b>ii. concerns around the split between Selby and Tadcaster;</b></li> <li><b>iii. the lack of consultation with local communities in Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn; and</b></li> <li><b>iv. that the report does not mention clearly that cash payments will still be available.</b></li> </ul>
<b>24 September 2020</b>	Corporate Performance Report - Quarter 1 2020/21 (April to June)	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider and comment on the performance information.</p> <p>Members considered the report and asked Officers to relay the</p>

		<p>Committee's thanks to all staff that had been working particularly hard during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Corporate Performance Report for Quarter 1 2020-21 (April to June).</b></p>
	<p>Financial Results and Budget Exceptions Report to 30th June</p>	<p>The Committee considered and commented on the financial information that covered Quarter 1 of 2020-21.</p> <p>Members asked a number of queries about the report in relation to the HRA deficit, the adaptations budget, budgetary underspends and reasons for these, and the retail and hospitality grants issued by the Council during lockdown.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Council's financial results and budget exceptions in Quarter 1 in 2020-21.</b></p>
	<p>Treasury Management - Quarterly Update Q1 2020/21</p>	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider and comment on the information contained therein. The report reviewed the Council's borrowing and investment activity (Treasury Management) for the period 1 April to 30 June 2020 (Q1) and presented performance against the Prudential Indicators.</p> <p><b>The Committee endorsed the actions of Officers on the Council's treasury activities for Quarter 1 2020/21 and approved the report.</b></p>
	<p>Outcome of Housing Centre Review by Task and Finish Group with Recommendations</p>	<p>The Committee considered the which asked Members to agree the recommendations for subsequent referral to the Executive for consideration and approval.</p>



		<p>The Committee considered the report and agreed that it had been useful to visit all of the Housing Centres in the district in order to inform the recommendations set out in the report. It was proposed and seconded that the report be referred to the Executive.</p> <p><b>The Committee agreed that the recommendations set out in the report should be referred the Executive for consideration and approval.</b></p>
	<p>Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles - Selby Annual Review 2019-20 and Verbal Update on Urgent Decision taken during Covid-19 relating to Leisure Services made in May 2020</p>	<p>The Committee received the report asked Members to consider and comment on the content of the Annual Review 2019-20, and note the information provided by Officers on the urgent decision taken during Covid-19 in May 2020 relating to the waiving of a portion of the management fees for the Leisure Services Contract.</p> <p>Members asked if Officers were aware of any financial difficulties being experienced by IHL in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic. Officers advised that there was weekly dialogue between the Council and IHL on this matter, and that in response to the reduced income the management fee had been waived by the Council between April and June 2020. Officers explained that they were working with IHL to establish how the service would operate in the coming weeks and months.</p> <p><b>The Committee considered and commented on the content of the Annual Review 2019-20, and noted the information provided by Officers on the urgent decision taken during Covid-19 in May 2020 relating to the waiving of a portion of the management fees for the Leisure Services Contract.</b></p>

	<p>North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Reports 2018-2019</p>	<p>The Committee considered the report which asked Members to note the content of the annual reports for the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adult's Boards.</p> <p>Members were informed that the reports highlighted the governance changes agreed in 2018, and the timeframe for which they would be enacted. The changes included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults: New Multi-Agency Protocols (i.e., A reduction of the number of stages in the process, and shifting the focus to be person-centred, to 'Make Safeguarding Personal').</li> <li>• Children: Following the changes in legislation, the Board would be revised and replaced by an Executive function by September 2019, with the co-ordination of children's safeguarding undertaken by all organisations that featured in the report.</li> </ul> <p>Members discussed the reports and agreed that further scrutiny on the topic in the future could be worthwhile, perhaps as a half or full 'scrutiny in a day' session.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the content of the annual reports for the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adult's Boards.</b></p>
	<p>Information on Local Government Reorganisation - Discussion Item</p>	<p>The Committee were informed by the Director of Corporate Services and Commissioning that since the discussions at full Council on 22 September 2020, there had been no further developments on the government's proposed local government</p>

		<p>reorganisation. The Committee agreed that an update should be given at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting when appropriate.</p> <p><b>The update was noted.</b></p>
	Work Programme 2020-21	<p><b>The Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2020-21 was noted.</b></p>
<p><b>26 November 2020</b></p>	<p>Yorkshire Wildlife Trust - Barlow Common Activity Review April 2019 to September 2020 and the Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust – Hambleton Hough Annual Report 2019-20</p>	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider and comment on the annual reports of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) and Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust (WHPT) about the activity taking place at Barlow Common (managed by YWT) and Hambleton Hough (managed by WHPT). In attendance at the meeting were David Craven from the YWT and Martin Blakey from WHPT, who gave an overview of their annual reports.</p> <p>Members noted that whilst 2020 had been a very different year due to the pandemic, Barlow Common had not experienced any of the issues that other sites had, such as illegal raves. It was hoped that there would be further positive developments for the site and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in the next twelve months. The Committee were informed that the replanting work had been fulfilled at Hambleton Hough, and whilst there had been some issues with fencing and damage to a sign, around £12k worth of trees had been planted. A minimal number of the planted trees had been stolen, but not in numbers that caused concern.</p> <p><b>Members noted the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust - Barlow Common Activity Review April 2019 to September 2020 and the Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust - Hambleton Hough Annual Report 2019-20.</b></p>

	<p>Financial Results and Budget Exceptions Report to 30th September 2020</p>	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider the content of the report and make any comments on the Council’s financial results and budget exceptions.</p> <p>Members asked for more information on the contributions to the Bawtry Road roundabout and when this had been agreed; Officers confirmed that they would look into this and send a response after the meeting.</p> <p>Some Members were concerned that savings targets had been missed and queried whether they were ambitious enough. Officers explained that as part of the revised budget, savings targets were also reviewed, but that some of the targets had not been achieved due to the resource requirements of the Covid-19 pandemic. Savings targets often meant additional work for Officers, which during the pandemic had proved to be difficult.</p> <p>Members suggested that some of the text in the report appendices should be made bigger so that figures were easier to read; Officers confirmed that they would look into improving this for future reports.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Council’s financial results and budget exceptions in Quarter 2 in 2020-21, asked Officers to provide a response to the Committee’s query relating to the Council’s financial contributions to the Bawtry Road roundabout and asked Officers to enlarge some of the figures in the report appendices to make them easier to read.</b></p>
	<p>Treasury Management - Quarterly Update Q2 2020/21</p>	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider the content of the report and make any comments on the Council’s treasury management in Quarter 2 of 2020-21.</p>

		<p><b>The Committee endorsed the actions of Officers on the Council's treasury activities for Quarter 2 2020/21 and approved the report.</b></p>
	<p>Council Delivery Plan 2020-23</p>	<p>The Committee considered the report which asked Members to consider the content of the report and make any comments on the Council's Delivery Plan 2020-23.</p> <p><b>The Committee considered and noted the content of the report and the Council's Delivery Plan 2020-23.</b></p>
	<p>Update on delivery of the 2018 - 2021 Visitor Economy Strategy</p>	<p>The Committee considered the report of the Culture, Visitor and Creative Economy Project Manager.</p> <p>Members asked a number of questions of Officers relating to the future of Welcome to Yorkshire and the local impact of events it had arranged such as the Tour de Yorkshire. The importance of involving local Members from the start of discussions around such events was emphasised by the Committee.</p> <p>Members suggested that the presentation given by Officers be disseminated to local parishes as well, as they were key components in the local visitor economy.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the Selby 950 celebrations had been good for the district, and that the coronavirus pandemic had encouraged local people to explore their local neighbourhoods more. Members emphasised the importance of Officers checking that they had the correct permissions for the placement of banners and posters, as there had been some confusion over this in the past. Officers accepted that there had been some</p>

		<p>misunderstandings around this, but reassured Members that lessons had been learnt and advice would be sought in the future from the Planning department.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the content of the report.</b></p>
	<p>Recommendations from Scrutiny Training on 9 October 2020</p>	<p>The Committee considered the report which asked Members to consider the recommendations set out at Appendix A to the report and decide which ones they wish to take forward.</p> <p>Members emphasised the importance of being able to ask unscripted questions at meetings, and keeping Councillors effectively informed; for example, on issues such as the erection of scaffolding on Council homes in Member wards, which resulted in numerous queries from residents.</p> <p><b>Members agreed that the recommendations as set out in Appendix A of the report be adopted.</b></p>
	<p>Work Programme 2020-21</p>	<p>The Committee considered the work programme and asked Officers if the item on the Council's Covid-19 response could include information on partnership working; Members were keen to include as many representations as possible.</p> <p>The Chair of the Committee asked that a letter be drafted on behalf of the Committee to the Director of Public Health, Dr Lincoln Sargent, to thank him for all his work in North Yorkshire, as he was leaving his post in December to join another authority.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2020-21 and agreed that a letter of thanks to Dr.</b></p>

		<b>Lincoln Sargeant should be sent on behalf of the Chair and the Committee to thank him for his work in North Yorkshire.</b>
<b>25 February 2021</b>	Work Programme 2020-21	Members briefly considered the work programme and noted that the item on housing repairs would now be considered at the meeting of the committee in March 2021.  <b>The Committee noted the 2020-21 work programme.</b>
	Corporate Performance Report - Quarter 2 2020/21	This item was deferred and considered at the next meeting of the Committee in March 2021.
	Education in Selby District - Revisited	The Chair and Committee welcomed to the meeting the following attendees:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phil Sayles – Principal at Selby College</li> <li>- Dave Barber – Executive Headteacher at Ebor Academy Trust</li> <li>- Tim Moat - Director of Communications and Development at Ebor Academy Trust</li> <li>- Andrew Dixon – Strategic Planning Manager at North Yorkshire County Council Children’s and Young People’s Service</li> <li>- Jane Le Sage – Assistant Director for Inclusion at North Yorkshire County Council Children’s and Young People’s Service</li> <li>- Amanda Newbold – Assistant Director for Education and Skills at North Yorkshire County Council Children’s and Young People’s Service</li> </ul> Presentations and updates were given by North Yorkshire County Council, Ebor Academy Trust and Selby College which Members found informative and useful.

		<p>A question was raised regarding the potential for significant development in and around Tadcaster, and the need for more school places. Officers confirmed that this had been considered and that detailed discussions about this were ongoing. Members were interested to note that there was currently a surplus of places in Tadcaster primary schools, but that the availability of secondary school places was more complex.</p> <p>Members thanked all the guests for attending the meeting of the Committee, and expressed their pride in education in the district, including Selby College and its work, for all it did for young people across the district.</p>
<b>25 March 2021</b>	Corporate Performance Reports Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 2020-21	<p>The Committee received the two reports which asked Members to consider and comment on the performance information contained in the reports.</p> <p><b>Members noted the Corporate Performance Reports for Quarter 2 (July to September), and Quarter 3 (October to December).</b></p>
	Financial Results and Budget Exceptions Report to 31 December 2020	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider the content and make any comments on the Council's financial results and budget exceptions.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Council's financial results and budget exceptions in Quarter 3 in 2020-21.</b></p>
	Treasury Management - Quarterly Update Q3 2020/21	<p>The Committee received the report which asked Members to consider the content and make any comments on the Council's treasury management in Quarter 3 of 2020-21.</p>



		<b>Members noted the Treasury Management Quarterly update for Quarter 3 2020-21.</b>
	Work Programme 2020-21 and Planning for 2021-22	<p>Members agreed the work programme as presented and requested that the item on housing repairs be brought back before the Committee at a date to be agreed in the future. The Chair stressed that Members wished to see the delay in housing repairs improve in a timely fashion and recognised that Councillors and officers must work together to highlight any issues, and to support tenants within the District.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the 2020-21 work programme.</b></p>