

Minutes

Scrutiny Committee

Venue:	Committee Room
Date:	Thursday 22 March 2018
Time:	5.00 pm
Present:	Councillors Mrs W Nichols (Chair), Mrs S Duckett (Vice Chair), D Buckle, I Chilvers, D Mackay and Mrs D White
Officers present:	Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development and Improvement, Dave Caulfield, Director of Economic Regeneration and Place, Angela Crossland, Head of Community, Partnerships and Customers, Kevin Ross, Accountant and Victoria Foreman, Democratic Services Officer
Others present:	Councillor M Crane, Leader of the Council and Councillor C Lunn, Executive Lead Member for Finance and Resources
Public:	0
Press:	0

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

40. MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 January 2018.

RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 January 2018 for signing by the Chair.

41. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillor David Buckle disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 – Tour de Yorkshire, as he was a non-paid Director for the Sherburn Food and Craft Festival, which was mentioned in the report.

42. CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair advised the Committee that the order of business on the agenda would be amended; agenda item 10 – Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback and Next Steps would be considered directly after agenda item 5 – Corporate Performance Q3 – 2017/18.

The Chair also informed the Committee that the item on Council Funded Community Centres, originally scheduled for consideration at this meeting, would be delayed until later in the year due. The deferral had been agreed following a meeting with the Director for Corporate Services and Commissioning, Councillor D Buckle and the Head of Community, Partnerships and Customers.

43. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE Q3 – 2017/18 (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER) – S/17/13

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.

The Committee noted that the results were generally positive with 64% of KPIs showing improvement over the longer term and 75% of KPIs on target – both slightly better than they were in quarter 2. Notable aspects of performance included: missed bins; empty homes; and improvements in both staff sickness and complaints handling.

However, Members expressed concern around some homes in the District being left empty for too long, despite the number of people on the housing waiting list. Four properties at Barley Fields in Barlby that had been empty for six months were identified as an example; Officers confirmed that they would look into the matter.

Officers also explained that the turnaround times for some Council properties were longer than expected due to the amount of work needed to bring some homes up to standard once previous tenants left the properties; meaning, the remedial work took longer to complete.

Members were pleased to see planning application targets being met, but were troubled by the decline in numbers of people attending leisure centres. It was suggested by the Committee that there needed to be more evidence of publicity and marketing for the leisure centres.

Officers confirmed that the accidents at work that had been reported were relatively minor, and that a number of managers had been sent on intensive safety courses in order to improve safety in the workplace.

RESOLVED:

- i. **To note the report.**
- ii. **To ask Officers to look into the issue of empty properties at Barley Fields in Barlby.**

44. CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS – S/17/8

The Head of Business Development and Improvement introduced the report which asked the Committee to consider the contents and make comments on the Corporate Peer Challenge, with a particular focus on the Peer Challenge's recommendations around strengthening and improving scrutiny at Selby.

Members noted that the LGA had delivered a Corporate Peer Challenge on behalf of Selby DC in November 2017. The Council had received the final feedback report which was broadly positive but did contain a number of recommendations for how the Council could improve. The Council had committed to using the Peer Challenge as a tool for improvement and had developed an improvement plan in response to the findings and recommendations of the LGA team. On 1 February 2018 the Executive had approved the improvement plan subject to any comments made by full Council on 22 February 2018.

The Committee requested more details regarding the plans for reviewing scrutiny at Selby, and emphasised the importance of the Committee being involved in the work.

It was felt by some Members that scrutiny at Selby suffered as a result of there not being a dedicated Scrutiny Officer, and that the resources available to support scrutiny should be improved. The Committee felt that as a result of the above, issues scrutiny wanted to look at would be delayed i.e. Council Funded Community Centres.

There were concerns that a number of Committee Members were not able to attend scrutiny training arranged for 12 April 2018 by Kirklees Council, and that the Committee had not been consulted on the date. The Committee felt that the principles of scrutiny at bigger authorities like Kirklees were fundamentally different to those at Selby, and as such, training delivered by a large authority may not be relevant.

It was felt by the Committee that the Executive should ask Scrutiny to look at their work before final decisions are made, i.e. pre-scrutiny on matters such as the Car Parking Strategy, and that this would help to improve the transparency of Executive decision making. Officers advised the Committee that the upcoming mid-term refresh of the Corporate Plan could be used as a framework

by Scrutiny in order to identify upcoming Executive work that they might wish to examine further.

Some Committee Members also felt that Scrutiny Committee should be getting out into the community, scrutinising the work across numerous departments of the Council and as identifying and examining issues that local residents were concerned about.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the report.**
- ii) To ask Officers to ensure that Scrutiny Committee was involved in the review of scrutiny at Selby.**
- iii) To use the mid-term refresh of the Council's Corporate Plan as a framework to identify upcoming Executive work that the Committee may wish to examine further.**
- iv) To consider different ways in which the Committee's work could be developed, such as community visits, scrutinising across different Council departments and examining issues of local concern for residents.**

45. FINANCIAL RESULTS AND BUDGET EXCEPTIONS REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2017 – S/17/14

The Council's Accountant 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 3, the full year forecast for the General Fund showed an estimated surplus of (£304k) ((£146k) quarter 2) and the HRA an estimated surplus of (£453k) ((£378k) quarter 2) against the approved budget.

The Officer explained that planned savings for the year had already been achieved in the HRA. A number of General Fund savings had also been achieved in Q3, but there was still a further £34k of savings to be achieved in the remaining part of the year.

Members acknowledged that the capital programme was forecasting an underspend of £2.599m, £0.486m on the General Fund programme and £2.113m on the HRA programme.

The Programme for Growth 3 had been established as part of the budget setting process last year. Across all programmes, including salaries, an in-year underspend of (£1.8m) due to timing on P4G schemes was anticipated; there was a corresponding reduction in reserve contributions for this. This money was still committed to be spent in full in future years.

Members raised a number of queries with Officers at the meeting, including the need for replacement ticket machines at the back Micklegate car park in Selby, the underspend of the disabled facilities grant, remedial work on the culvert at Portholme Road, about which Members requested an update due to the risk of flooding, and the progress of the plans for co-location with the Police at the Council Offices.

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the report.**
- ii. To ask Officers to update the Committee on repair work required on the culvert at Portholme Road.**

46. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT FOR Q3 – S/17/15

The Council's Accountant introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the content 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 9 month period 1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017 and presented performance against the Prudential Indicators. During this period the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements.

Members acknowledged that with regard to investments, the Bank of England Bank Base Rate had increased on 2 November from 0.25% to 0.5% in line with market speculation earlier in the year. No further bank rate increases were expected until December 2018 at the earliest. The overall average rate achieved up to 31 December was 0.47%. Investment returns were budgeted for £125k and as at Q3, and the forecast outturn was expected to be around £253k (£190k allocated to the General Fund; £63k to the Housing Revenue Account).

The Officer explained that the Council had long term borrowing of £59.3m at 31 December 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).

Lastly, the Committee noted that the Council's affordable limits for borrowing were not breached during the period in question.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

47. PROGRAMME FOR GROWTH UPDATE – S/17/16

The Director of Economic Generation and Place introduced the report which asked the Committee to discuss the content and provide comments on the progress of the P4G projects.

The Committee noted that Selby District Council's Programme for Growth (P4G) was established in 2011 as a means of focussing and managing investment in

key Council priorities. The report before Members summarised overall progress on P4G to date, highlighted the key messages from the recent LGA Peer Review on P4G, and outlined the next steps for identifying future P4G projects.

The Committee asked questions of Officers and raised a number of issues for discussion, including P4G's links to the Visitor Economy Strategy and tourism in the District and the importance of effective street cleaning, fly tipping recovery and waste management on improving the local area.

RESOLVED:

- i. **To note the report.**
- ii. **To add to the Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2018/19 consideration of the changes made to the Programme for Growth as part of the Corporate Plan refresh, and as a response to the LGA Peer Challenge recommendations.**

48. OLYMPIA PARK – UPDATE ON PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS – S/17/17

The Director of Economic Regeneration and Place introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the work carried out to date, and proposed next steps to enable the delivery of Olympia Park.

The Committee understood that the report sought to update the Scrutiny Committee on the proactive work that Officers from Selby District Council had undertaken with landowners and other key partners to unlock delivery of Olympia Park, a key strategic site for the Council.

The Committee were pleased to note that £8.9m in funding had been awarded to the Council by Homes England, following a successful bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund by Officers. The funding would be released to the Council in summer 2018, and would have to be committed for spending by 2021. There had already been meaningful engagement with the site's landowners, but equally as important was the community's involvement in the plans for the site.

Members were pleased to see works being started on the site to remove rubble, and asked that the 'new' primary school mentioned in the report be referred to in future as the 're-sited' school.

RESOLVED:

- i. **To note the work carried out to date.**
- ii. **To ask Officers that in future reports the proposed primary school on the site be referred to as the 're-sited' school.**

49. TOUR DE YORKSHIRE 2017 – S/17/19

The Head of Community, Partnerships and Customers introduced the report which asked the Committee to note the content and consider future involvement in shaping the Council's approach to managing major cycle events in the District.

The Committee noted that The Tour de Yorkshire (TdY) 2017 Stage 2 race start for both the men's and women's races was hosted by Selby District Council at Tadcaster on 29 April 2017. This was the third TdY event and the second hosting arrangement for Selby District since the race's inception in 2015. Selby District also hosted the race starts for Stage 2 of the event in Selby town in 2015, and saw two race routes come through the area in 2016. The race would not enter the District in 2018.

Officers explained that the Council were keen to ensure that the approach to major cycle events in the District remained in line with the corporate plan priorities. The race would not pass through Selby District in 2018, but the Council should be prepared to consider further involvement in the race in future years to ensure that Selby District remained a regional presence alongside neighbouring authorities.

The Committee were supportive of events and initiatives to promote the District and tourism in the area, and felt that having the start or finish of a major cycling event in the District would always be a big draw for local people and visitors from outside the area.

Members noted that whilst it was hard to prove the direct economic benefit of the event to the Selby District, the overall benefit for Yorkshire, the way in which the profile of the area was raised and the legacy it provided were certainly evident and very important. The Tour de Yorkshire had inspired other community events such as the Sherburn Food and Craft Festival, which thousands of people attended.

Members suggested that key to making the most of future cycling events was ensuring that the local communities were engaged and involved, and that subsequent events inspired by them were sustainable. The Committee agreed that the Council's approach to forthcoming Tour de Yorkshire events be explored at a future meeting. Officers also suggested the Council's Visitor Economy Strategy as a topic for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee in 2018/19.

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the report.**
- ii. To express the Committee's support for future cycling events in the District.**
- iii. To consider the Council's approach to forthcoming Tour de Yorkshire events in the District at a future meeting of the Committee in 2018/19.**

iv. To consider the Council's Visitor Economy Strategy at a future meeting of the Committee in 2018/19.

50. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 AND 2018/19

The Committee considered the work plan for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year and the draft plan for 2018/19.

The Democratic Services Officer confirmed that Nigel Adams MP had been invited to a future meeting of the Committee, most likely in September, subject to final confirmation from his office. Members noted that in order for Mr Adams to be able to attend, the meeting of the Committee would need to move from Thursday 27 September to Friday 28 September 2018.

The Democratic Services Officer also confirmed that the review of the Car Parking Strategy and tariffs was on the Committee's work programme for later in the 2018/19 year, to tie in with the Executive's review of the arrangements following a year of operation.

Members noted that the review of Council Funded Community Centres would be kept under review on the work programme and allocated a specific date when appropriate.

The Committee indicated that they would be interested to hear from the Chair of the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, and that he should be invited to a future meeting.

Members also suggested that the Committee consider transport as a topic for a future meeting, and that a provisional meeting date be used for this purpose. The Committee asked the Democratic Services Officer to identify a date and invite representatives from Northern Rail, Arriva and Leeds City Region to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the work plan for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year and the draft plan for 2018/19.**
- ii) To note that should Nigel Adams MP be able to attend the September meeting of the Committee, the meeting would need to be moved from Thursday 27 September to Friday 28 September.**
- iii) To keep Council Funded Community Centres under review on the work programme for allocation of a specific date later in the year.**
- iv) To ask the Democratic Services Officer to invite the Chair of the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel to a future meeting of the Committee.**

- v) To add to the work programme the topic of transport in the District, and that a provisional meeting date be used for this purpose; the Democratic Services Officer was asked to invite to the meeting representatives from Leeds City Region, Arriva and Northern Rail.**

The meeting closed at 7.00pm.