



Councillor Wendy Nichols – Chair of Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee has met once since the previous update given to Council in April 2018.

27 June 2018

The main items of business on the agenda for this meeting were the Annual Report of the Committee 2017-18, the Committee's Work Programme for 2018-19, Corporate Performance, Treasury Management and Financial Results reports, the current review of scrutiny, and updates on the Programme for Growth and Housing Tenant Services.

The Committee discussed a number of issues across the agenda items:

- The work of the Committee in the previous 2017-18 year was discussed, as well as the work planned for the 2018-19 year. Members noted the planned attendance of Nigel Adams MP at a future meeting of the Committee (January 2019), and the special transport themed meeting taking place in October 2018. Members queried the progress of the co-location with the Police at the Council Offices and the sale of Newby Wiske Hall in Northallerton, and asked that the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire and a senior Police Officer be invited to the November meeting of the Committee, to which the Chair of the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel had been invited.
- The Committee were supportive of the review of scrutiny and the suggested actions for strengthening scrutiny at Selby; Members also discussed the importance of the Committee getting 'out and about' in the community and promoting their work.
- In relation to the Quarter 4 corporate performance report, there were some concerns around the targets for time taken to re-let empty properties, and staff sickness levels. Officers explained that some of the void properties required more work than anticipated to ensure they were in a good condition before re-letting, and that work to reduce levels of sickness was progressing. The Committee suggested that the delays in re-letting of empty properties may be an issue the Executive would want to look into in more detail.
- The Committee received a report on the work of Housing Tenant Services. Officers explained that each application for housing was dealt with on its own merits, but that the local knowledge of Members could be useful with regard to other matters that required attention, for example, streetlight repairs or highways issues. Members were pleased to hear that area 'walkabouts' were being reintroduced and that different ways to get tenants involved were also being explored, for example, the current garden competition. Officers explained that Housing had a budget for estate improvement and were currently looking for ideas for longer term improvements that

could be made; Members were asked to submit any ideas to the department for consideration. Members were also pleased to note that the Committee would be consulted on the review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

- Members enjoyed an interesting discussion on the Programme for Growth and heard about upcoming projects and plans to strengthen and grow the economy of the District. The Committee emphasised the importance of improving local infrastructure and encouraging town regeneration. Officers reassured Members that they understood that the majority of businesses in the District were small and medium sized enterprises, and explained that the Council was keen to support them through encouraging long term investment and job creation.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 27 September 2018.

Councillor W Nichols
Chair, Scrutiny Committee