



Councillor Wendy Nichols – Chair of Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee has met once, on Friday 25 January 2019, since the last update to Council in December.

25 January 2019

The main items of business on the agenda for this meeting were attendance by Nigel Adams MP, the Housing Development Programme, Economic Development Framework – One Year On, Corporate Performance Report for Q2, North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults and Children Board Annual Reports 2017-18 and the Committee's work plan for 2018-19 and draft for 2019-20.

Work Plan 2018-19 and draft for 2019-20

Members considered the work programme for 2018-19 and the draft programme for 2019-20 and queried when the review of Council-funded community centres would be considered, and asked the Democratic Services Officer to enquire about the matter further.

Nigel Adams MP

The Committee welcomed Nigel Adams MP to the meeting.

Mr Adams updated the Committee on his recent ministerial roles in government in housing (focusing on homelessness and rough sleeping) and health (mainly looking at mental health); he was currently a minister in the Wales Office.

Members noted that Brexit and the complicated arrangements for leaving the EU were taking up a lot of time and resources in government, but that the preparations were progressing steadily.

Mr Adams explained that his constituency casework continued as usual, and that he enjoyed working closely with Selby District Council to resolve issues for constituents.

Members asked Mr Adams a number of questions on a variety of topics, including availability of land for social housing and the need for new homes, the Council's future retention of the Drax Green Energy payments, the WASPI (Women Against State Pension Inequality) campaign at both a local and national level, Brexit and the economic future of Selby District, pupil referral units, homelessness, the impacts of Universal Credit on the use of food banks and parking provision for new housing developments.

Corporate Performance Report Q2

The Committee considered the Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Report and noted that performance had improved or exceeded targets in relation to emergency and urgent

repairs to Council-owned properties, empty homes, dealing with complaints, processing of major planning applications and sundry debt collection.

However, performance in relation to the re-letting of vacant Council homes, missed bins, staff sick days and health and safety incidents was not as positive.

The Committee were pleased that the number of empty homes brought back into use through direct action had increased, and felt that the target could be revised upwards; the Senior Policy and Performance Officer confirmed that KPIs were due for review and this revision would be considered.

Members again expressed their concern at the time taken to re-let Council properties, but acknowledged that some properties were in a dire state and required a lot of remedial work to bring them up to standard. The difficulty in recruiting to trade jobs for the Council was also causing delays.

Officers were asked to look into missed recycling collections in Selby which were exacerbated by the continuing problem of parked cars down some roads, making it difficult for the recycling vehicles to get down the road to collect the refuse.

Selby District Economic Development Framework 2017-2022 – One Year Review and Delivery Plan 2019 and 2020

The Committee considered the report and were asked to consider the contents and make any comments on the Council's Economic Development Framework (EDF) 2017-2022. The report provided further information requested by the Executive on 8 November 2018 in relation to the proposed EDF Delivery Plan 2019 and 2020, and the associated progress review and budgetary transfers.

The information was comprised of feedback from Members, external partners and stakeholders regarding the proposed delivery plan, details of the business case for recruitment and staffing measures and proposed key performance indicators to monitor progress of the delivery plan and framework.

The report also provided an update regarding opportunities and challenges that had become clearer since the priorities for 2019 and 2020 were last considered in early November 2018.

Members asked questions on a number of issues, including public realm works on New Lane in Selby, the future plans for the banks in Tadcaster and Selby that had been purchased by the Council, train and bus transport in Selby and Sherburn and subsequent connectivity for employment purposes, and traffic management issues in Selby.

Officers were keen to involve Members and draw upon their previous experience and local knowledge in order to further improve the EDF and its projects, and would continue to keep the Scrutiny Committee up to date with its progress.

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Reports 2017-18

Members considered the report and were asked to note the annual reports for the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adult's Boards.

The Committee noted that the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Boards had a statutory duty to publish annual reports, accounting for the activities of the Boards for the previous year. The reports covered 2017/18 activity and also provided evidence of the key areas of focus for the current year.

Both reports set out the governance arrangements across North Yorkshire and outlined the activity and partnership working in the Selby District. The priority areas for the boards remained the same as those shared in the 2017 report to Scrutiny Committee. The Adults Board continued to prioritise awareness and empowerment, prevention of harm, protection and proportionality and partnership effectiveness. The Children's Board prioritised the coordination of the activities of the board and ensuring its effectiveness.

The Committee asked questions of Officers around current teenage pregnancy rates, the number of residential care homes in North Yorkshire and if the demographics of the county as described in the report were accurate, i.e. rural upbringing.

Housing Development Programme: PH2 Sites Detailed Business Cases

The Committee received the report and were asked to consider the contents and make any comments on the Housing Development Programme.

Members noted that the Housing Development Programme sought to provide 207 affordable homes for Selby District Council (SDC) and Selby District Housing Trust (SDHT) by 31 March 2020. The programme was based on three 'delivery pillars' that included direct development on SDC owned sites, the acquisition and development of new sites, and the acquisition of affordable homes constructed by other developers. The programme would generate revenue streams for the Council as a result of loans provided to the SDHT.

Members queried whether the delivery timescales described in the report were realistic; the Interim Development Surveyor advised Members that whilst they were optimistic, they were not unreasonable. The Committee also asked Officers to check the details relating to a location listed under Phase 3, specifically Benedicts Close in Selby.

Members were pleased that a number of sites that had been suggested over the years were appearing in the HDP, and were keen to see them delivered.

It was suggested by the Committee that the wording of the corporate priorities to 'Make Selby a Great Place to do Business' and 'Make Selby a Great Place to Enjoy Life' be amended to include the word 'District', to emphasise that Selby District was not only focused on Selby Town.

Future Meetings: The next meeting of the Committee will be on **12 March 2019**.

Councillor W Nichols
Chair, Scrutiny Committee