



Councillor Jim Deans – Chair of Policy Review Committee

The Policy Review Committee has met once, on 12 March 2019, since the previous update given to Council in February 2019.

12 March 2019

The main items of business on the agenda for this meeting were the Digital Strategy, work programme for 2019-20 and the Committee's Annual Report 2018-19.

Digital Strategy

The Committee was asked to note the progress made against the objectives of the Digital Strategy, since its approval by the Council's Executive in July 2018. The report gave an up to date position on the Digital Strategy and highlighted successes, as well as areas of concern; along with detailing the projects coming up within the next twelve months.

The Committee noted that the Digital Strategy set out how technology would be used to support and enable the improvement and acceleration of the digital and transformational agenda, with the focus for the next three years on: modernising and simplifying the ICT infrastructure to improve resilience and security, to improve accessibility and increase the services delivered on line to increase customer engagement; and to create a digital culture and improve digital skills within the workforce.

The Committee queried the resource within the current software systems team and whether there would still be a need, Officers confirmed that the need would be more so now, as although IT was outsourced to North Yorkshire County Council through Better Together, the software systems team would be dealing with new updates as they came through.

Members raised a number of concerns regarding customers who may not have access to IT equipment or have problems with connectivity, the Committee were assured that the Contact Centre and telephone options would still be available and that the Strategy was about adding more options for customers who wanted to help themselves, not limiting them.

It was noted that work had already begun to procure a Microsoft Partner to design, implement, and roll out the necessary software, with the team meeting potential suppliers to ensure that a new system integrated into the back office systems already in place, whilst also delivering value for money.

In relation to queries regarding the possibility of security breaches and disaster recovery, the officers confirmed that the Digital Strategy would ensure that all the systems would be on the latest version and would therefore be secure from a cyber

attack; and should the IT system fail a new back-up solution had been configured through North Yorkshire County Council, enabling information to be pulled back at any time.

Annual Report of the Policy Review Committee 2018-19

The Committee agreed their Annual Report for 2018-19, and authorised the Chair to agree the final version of the Annual Report 2018-19 following the inclusion of details from the current meeting.

Work Programme 2019-20

Members expressed concern regarding the issue of litter, as this was a topic that the public contacted their local Councillors about regularly, and agreed that they would like to see a “deep-dive” of street cleansing and re-cycling added to the work programme, and brought to the next meeting of the Policy Review Committee.

The Committee also considered and agreed the work programme for 2019-20, with the addition of the above item. It was expected that more items would be added to the 2019-20 draft work programme in the coming months.

Councillor J Deans
Chair, Policy Review Committee