



Policy Review Committee Report to Council – 17 December 2019

The Policy Review Committee has met three times, on 15 October, 12 November and 16 December, since the previous update given to Council in September 2019.

15 October 2019

The Committee considered a number of reports at the meeting.

Firstly the Committee were asked to consider and comment on the draft Council plan. Members asked a number of questions in relation to the plan on issues including broadband and mobile coverage in some parts of the district, health matters, carbon reduction and the public consultation on the plan. They also discussed the County Council's work on broadband and mobile infrastructure across the county, working in partnership with Selby District. The Committee wished to make it clear that they endorsed the draft plan as an approach to the formulation of the final plan, subject to changes made due to comments received during the public consultation.

The Committee also discussed the proposal that the Council establish a Policy Review Working Group to lead on the development of the Council's approach to the challenges of low carbon. The Committee were asked to discuss and agree terms of reference which would set out options for the scope of the group, and were provided with details of current projects and suggested potential opportunities for further action to address climate change. Members noted that the scope of the group should be focused on what the Council was realistically able to do. Members suggested that a climate change workshop for parish councils would be useful in the future, and queried whether an earlier carbon neutral target than 2050 should be set by the Council. Members agreed that all members of the Policy Review Committee should be on the Low Carbon Working Group, and asked Officers to identify potential dates for the first meeting. The first meeting would be used to further develop and scope the aims of the group.

The Committee discussed the HRA Business Plan and accompanying Action Plan 2020-2025. Members felt that more time and effort needed to be put into maintaining the environment around Council housing (i.e. grass cutting etc.), as this had a tangible effect on how people felt about their local areas or neighbourhood. Members noted that improving energy efficiency was being considered, with more effective heating systems and better insulation being explored. Members expressed their interest in the Council's affordable housing policy and asked if this could be brought to the committee for consideration, and felt that the Council should be more aggressive in its purchase of housing in order to compete with housing associations.

The Committee received the report on empty homes performance monitoring. Members noted that the new Empty Homes Officer had been very effective since being appointed and progress was being made across the district in bringing empty homes back into use. The Empty Homes Strategy had been in place since 2017 and work was being done to prevent properties becoming long term empty (i.e. over two years).

The Committee received the report that set out a six month update following the introduction of the Planning Enforcement Management Plan in February 2019. There were further improvements to be made, but that there had been substantial improvements in the service. Some Members explained that Councillors needed to be mindful of the difficult regime in which

Enforcement Officers had to work. The Committee agreed that some further Member information and training on planning enforcement would be useful, and that all Members should be encouraged to read the PEMP.

Lastly the Committee considered the 2019-20 work programme; a number of changes were agreed relating to the licensing items, the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy and the Affordable Housing Policy. Members requested that when Officers brought reports about revising or changing existing policies to the Committee that the reports highlighted clearly what changes were proposed, in order to streamline the process for Members. The Chair of the Committee would review and agree items that were added to the work programme.

12 November 2010 – Extraordinary Meeting

The Contracts Team Leader presented the report which summarised the draft policies for the collection of waste and recycling, and sought their views to inform proposals regarding the collection of waste and recycling.

Members discussed recycling and green waste contamination dry recycling bin size and excess recycling, the assisted collection service, residual waste bins, lane end collections and the missed collections policy.

Members also considered the work programme; it was suggested that the next meeting currently scheduled for 10 December 2019 be moved to the week after due to the Parliamentary election.

16 December 2019

The Policy Review Committee also met on 16 December 2019. However, this meeting was after the agenda deadline for Council reports and therefore a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

Future Meetings: The next meeting of the Policy Review Committee will be on 14 January 2020.

Councillor Andrew Lee
Chair, Policy Review Committee