

Minutes

Scrutiny Committee

Venue:	Committee Room - Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9FT
Date:	Thursday, 21 November 2019
Time:	5.00 pm
Present:	Councillors W Nichols (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), N Reader, M Topping and R Packham
Officers present:	Angela Crossland, Head of Community, Partnerships and Customers, Drew Fussey, Customer, Business and Revenues Service Manager, Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development and Improvement, Peter Williams, Head of Finance; and Dawn Drury, Democratic Services Officer
Others present:	Dr Lincoln Sargeant, Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire, Kathryn Ingold, North Yorkshire County Council, Councillor I Chilvers, Chair of Central Community Engagement Forum (CEF), Councillor M Jordan, Chair of Southern Community Engagement Forum, Bob Procter, Chair of Eastern Community Engagement Forum, Sharon Fox, Highways Customer Communications Officer Craven & Selby, North Yorkshire County Council Highways, Amanda Scrimgeour, CEF Development Officer, Groundworks; Chris Hailey-Norris, CEF Development Officer, Selby District AVS; and Julie Dallison, North Yorkshire Police

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Shaw-Wright, R Sweeting, A Lee and P Welburn.

27 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

28 MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019.

RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 September 2019 for signing by the Chair.

29 CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There was no Chair's address.

30 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2019-20

The Chair asked the Committee to consider and comment on their Work Programme for 2019-20.

RESOLVED:

To note the Work Programme for 2019-20 as circulated.

31 LIFE IN TIMES OF CHANGE: HEALTH AND HARDSHIP IN NORTH YORKSHIRE: THE 2019 DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE (S/19/15)

The Chair welcomed Dr Lincoln Sargeant, Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire to the meeting to present the annual report of the Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire.

Dr Sargeant gave a presentation to the Committee on the report and the following points were highlighted:

- Areas of deprivation and multiple deprivation in the Selby District, with Selby West ward having the most identified challenges.
- The Director of Public Health highlighted statistics on the life expectancy of males, including the length of healthy life expectancy, between the most and least deprived areas in North Yorkshire.
- The Committee was informed that the report looked at the elements which lie at the heart of poverty and deprivation, with areas of concern including employment, skills, income, education, crime and living environment, in which the factors all interplayed.
- In terms of the different levels of poverty in the United Kingdom (UK), the Director of Public Health explained that more than one-

in-five of the UK population lived in poverty, with around 5 million people living on the poverty line, and 8.4 million people living in deep poverty. It was further explained that lack of money in itself did not cause ill health, but the indirect influence of poverty did have a marked effect on health.

- The Director of Public Health explained that the report provided a review of the health of the population and focused on some of the areas where collective action was required to protect people from the worst effects of poverty. Based on this work the Director for Public Health had made seven recommendations for the Council to consider with regards to: supporting deprived areas, tackling rural poverty, reducing childhood inequalities, working with military families and veterans, creating safe environments for high-risk groups, developing priorities to mitigate the impact of changes to the benefit system; and improving community engagement.
- The Director of Public Health outlined to the Committee how he would action the recommendations and this included:
 - In respect of supporting deprived areas, work in partnership with North Yorkshire County Council to lead co-ordinated plans focused on areas of deprivation through collaboration with local communities to reflect their priorities for reducing poverty and shaping healthy places.
 - In terms of tackling rural poverty, consideration should be given to developing a co-ordinated Rural Strategy that highlighted rural-specific needs, including employment, connectivity and affordable housing.
 - In respect of reducing childhood inequalities, be alert to the risk and impact of childhood poverty to ensure account is taken of hidden and indirect costs that may hinder a child's full participation in the services offered by the Council.
 - In terms of military veterans, ensuring that veterans are not disadvantaged when accessing local services such as health and housing.
 - In respect of safe environments for high-risk groups, consider a 'housing first' approach to provide a safe and stable environment for people with multiple health and social problems.
 - In terms of changes to the benefit system, to understand the impact of changes to the benefit system on mental and physical health, and the use of services to set new strategic priorities in local plans to mitigate these impacts.
 - In respect of improving community engagement, ensuring

greater joint working between sectors to strengthen and promote a culture of local community involvement in shaping plans for reducing the impact of poverty in areas of deprivation.

Members heard that much of this work had already been identified in the Selby district through the Selby Health Matters group. A newsletter of the work completed across a number of partners had been circulated to scrutiny members with the agenda.

The Director of Public Health stated that it was important to understand that people were proud of where they came from, and therefore investment and regeneration was needed to enable them to stay in the area.

The Committee felt that better co-ordination between agencies was needed, and concern was raised in respect of the lack of bus services in rural locations making it difficult for people without vehicles to access employment in neighbouring towns and villages.

The Chair thanked Dr Sargeant for his attendance.

RESOLVED:

To note the report and consider the recommendations made by the Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire.

32 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUMS (S/19/16)

The Committee received the report of the Head of Community, Partnerships and Customers which asked Members to consider the role and function of the Community Engagement Forums (CEF's) in conjunction with key CEF representatives.

Members were informed that there were five CEF's in the Selby District: Central, Eastern, Southern, Tadcaster and Villages and Western. Each CEF comprised of local Councillor representatives from parish, town, district and county authorities from the wards which the CEF served, along with 'co-opted' community members; and their role was to engage with local resident populations, to assess local strengths and needs and to develop a community led plan to meet those needs.

Members noted that the Annual Reports for each CEF would be submitted to Full Council in December 2019 and would identify further impacts and use of local funding.

The Committee heard examples of how each CEF had made an impact in their area both through organisations having received funding and also groups being established following information presented at Forums.

Members were informed that the CEF model had been in place since

2009/10. In order to maintain a view on the effectiveness of the CEF's, CEF Chairs and Vice Chairs had completed an evaluation workshop in September 2018 facilitated by an external company, which had been funded and supported by North Yorkshire County Council Stronger Communities; the workshop had highlighted areas to be considered for further development.

The Chairs of Central, Eastern and the Southern CEF were present at the meeting along with the two Community Development Officers and the North Yorkshire County Council Highways Customer Communications Officer, who frequently attended CEF meetings, and entered into the dialogue.

Discussion took place around the Forum meetings, and in particular how to encourage local residents to attend, it was agreed that the movement of Forums around the respective CEF areas had addressed issues such as rurality, and had improved attendance. The CEF Chairs stated that the subject matter and how it linked to localised issues was key to both numbers of attendees and the quality of discussion.

Members raised concerns about the way the allocated funding of £20k per CEF was apportioned across each CEF area; it was felt that some areas within the district had disproportionate factors which affected them such as deprivation or population per head, and therefore should receive a larger proportion of funding. Discussions centred on Central CEF in this respect, but also noted other funding and network opportunities that the area could work on, such as Selby Big Local, with potential to work more collaboratively with groups and funders.

In terms of CEF areas, members felt that geographically some of the CEF boundaries should be reviewed, and also queried the composition of each Partnership Board which in some cases was felt to be unproportioned representation of the areas, particularly from community members.

The Committee were informed that since inception 123 community organisations had received grant funding, with numerous community buildings within the area being saved from closure.

The Director of Public Health stated that the core idea of the CEF's was excellent and that in terms of engaging with the communities, he would be happy to assist.

RESOLVED:

To note the Community Engagement Forums (CEF's) report.

Dr Lincoln Sargeant, Kathryn Ingold, Bob Procter, Amanda Scrimgeour, Chris Hailey-Norris, Sharon Fox, Angela Crossland and Councillor Chilvers left the meeting at this stage and did not return.

33 POLICE CO-LOCATION AND CONTACT CENTRE (S/19/17)

The Committee received the report of the Customer; Business and Revenue Service Manager which asked Members to consider the contents of the report and comment on the impact of the police co-location.

Officers explained that following informal discussions with North Yorkshire Police in 2015 the Executive supported proposals to the co-location. Following approval the project faced significant legal obstacles due to the number of stakeholders involved, this led to a number of delays but the work finally commenced on site in October 2018, and was completed in April 2019; with the Police relocated to the Civic Centre in May 2019.

Members noted that the first six months have seen a relatively smooth transition with no formal complaints from the public, and the Police and the Council had strengthened their working relationship.

The Committee raised their concerns regarding confidentiality, as it was felt that people could overhear conversations which took place in the reception area. The Police representative assured Members that the Police Officers used their common sense when dealing with the public, and confirmed that two offices had been made available to the Police for the use of confidential interviewing.

Members stated that it was the location of the reception staff, with the Police and Council receptionists sat side by side at the reception desk where they felt the problem arose, and queried whether a different seating arrangement could be explored for the future.

RESOLVED:

To note the Police Co-Location report.

Drew Fussey and Julie Dallison left the meeting at this stage and did not return.

34 DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2030 (S/19/18)

The Committee received the report of the Head of Business Development and Improvement which asked Members to consider and comment on the Draft Council Plan 2030.

It was explained that the draft Council Plan showed the Council's strategic priority framework for the next ten years, it was further explained that at a meeting of the Executive on the 3 October 2019, it had been agreed that the draft Plan could go out to consultation.

Whilst the draft Plan presented an evolution from the previous Plan, including retaining the vision of the Selby district as 'a great place', there had been a new area of priority focus around a cleaner, greener, safer environment, which was in line with the national agenda.

An update was provided on the consultation responses received to date, the Committee heard that over 160 responses have been received which showed that more than three quarters of respondents were supportive of the draft strategic priorities as presented, with the greatest level of support for the priority 'a great place to Enjoy'.

Members noted that of the respondents who had suggested alternatives actually suggested that the plan go further, for example being more ambitious in the targets around environmental improvements. Others have suggested the need for more facilities for families and children, whilst other respondents felt there was a need to improve the retail offer in Selby town.

It was confirmed that the final details of how the Council would deliver on the priorities would be set out in three year delivery plans, with the first to be published in March 2020.

Members supported the draft Plan as a basis for future delivery, and welcomed the new focus on the environment and hoped the recommendations from the Low Carbon Working Group would provide more specific, strong actions for delivery of the green agenda. Members were also keen that the work around economic growth should prioritise sustainability, which the new Local Plan would help with, and that a focus on wellbeing was addressed.

The Committee agreed with the comments from consultees around shops on Gowthorpe and queried what could be done to encourage and support shops to continue trading.

Discussion took place regarding town pedestrianisation which seemed to have worked in neighbouring towns, along with other possible steps to support town centres such as access and easy parking. Members welcomed more high quality public realm interventions similar to the proposals around the Selby station masterplan.

Finally, discussion took place around the argument for and against the possibility of introducing a one way traffic system around Selby town centre to alleviate traffic pressures.

RESOLVED:

To note the report and the comments made by the Committee.

Stuart Robinson left the meeting at this stage and did not return.

35 FINANCIAL RESULTS AND BUDGET EXCEPTIONS REPORT TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2019 (S/19/19)

The Committee received the report of the Chief Finance Officer which asked Members to consider and comment on the financial information

contained in the report.

Members noted that at the end of quarter 2, the General Fund indicated an outturn deficit of £298k, driven by a shortfall on planned savings. The cost of services was showing a breakeven outturn position, although this was made up of a number of variances detailed in the report. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was indicating an outturn surplus marginally higher than at quarter 1, of (£118k) due to lower external borrowing requirements, partially offset by lower savings expected in the current financial year from the implementation of the new housing system.

Officers explained that General Fund savings were showing a forecast shortfall of £363k, whilst the HRA was forecasting savings to be £195k lower. It was further explained that in relation to the shortfall in the general fund, £51k related to industrial unit rental income due to a number of vacant units; and £63k related to the waste service due to a reduction in the price received per tonne for recyclable materials.

The Committee noted that the capital programme was forecasting an underspend of £13.870k, of which £11.975k was General Fund and £1.895k Housing Revenue Account. In the general fund, the majority related to the removal of any future New Build Projects (Loans to Selby District Housing Trust) in the current year; along with Disabled Facilities Grants and a delay in the procurement of new Microsoft licences, plus additional savings had been made on IT programmes. The HRA was principally roof replacements, the Kitchen, Bathroom and Rewire programme and the phasing of the Empty Homes Programme which was expected to deliver over three years, with £750k of spend anticipated in this financial year.

Members also noted that the Programme for Growth was progressing well with projects delivering over multiple years.

In response to a query regarding plans for the former NatWest bank building in Tadcaster, the Officer informed Members that there were no income streams forecasted at present for the acquisition, and stated that he would contact the responsible officer and circulate an update to the Committee.

Discussion took place regarding the vacant industrial units in Sherburn, and the lack of transport for people from Selby to travel out to the industrial estate for work. It was also noted that some of the units were in need of investment for a number of improvements.

RESOLVED:

- i. **To note the Council's financial results and budget exceptions to 30 September 2019 (Quarter 2).**
- ii. **To ask Officers to supply further information to the Committee about the Council's plans for the**

former NatWest bank building in Tadcaster.

**36 TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE Q2 - 2019-20
(S/19/20)**

The Committee received the report of the Chief Finance Officer which asked Members to consider and comment on the content of the report; the information contained in the report was required in order to comply with the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Members noted that the report reviewed the Council's borrowing and investment activity (Treasury Management) for the period 1st April to 30th September 2019 (Q1) and presented performance against the Prudential Indicators.

Officers explained that on average the Council's investments totalled £61.3m over the first 2 quarters at an average rate of 0.93% and earned interest of £285k (£197k allocated to the General Fund; £88k allocated to the HRA), which was £67k above the year to date budget. Whilst cash balances were expected to reduce over the year, should interest rates remain static, forecast returns could be in the region of £540k, a budget surplus of £105k. However, a no deal Brexit could lead to a cut in the Bank Rate and therefore the position would be kept under review.

Members were informed that in addition to investments held in the North Yorkshire County Council investment pool, the Council had £4.85m invested in property funds as at 30/09/19 with a net rate of return of 2.71% and achieved net income of £39.7k to the end of Q2.

The Committee acknowledged that the Council had no short term borrowing in place as at 30 September 2019, and the Council's affordable limits for borrowing were not breached during this period.

RESOLVED:

To note the Council's borrowing and investment activity (Treasury Management) for the period 1 April to 30 September (Quarter 2), and performance against prudential indicators.

The meeting closed at 7.09 pm.