

North Yorkshire County Council

Corporate and Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 3 February 2014 at 10.30 am.

Present: County Councillor Tim Swales in the Chair

County Councillors Val Arnold, Derek Bastiman, Bernard Bateman MBE, John Blackburn, Jean Butterfield, Sam Cross, John Ennis, Stuart Parsons, Steve Shaw-Wright, Elizabeth Shields, Tony Randerson

Also in Attendance

Visitors Dave Jones Chief Constable North Yorkshire Police,
Paul Kennedy Assistant Chief Constable North Yorkshire Police,
Julia Mulligan North Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner

Officers Gary Fielding Corporate Director Strategic Resources, Debbie Hogg Assistant Director Resources, Simon Toplass Head of Procurement & Contract Management, Jon Learoyd Head of ICT Architecture, Lesley Dale Corporate Development Officer, Lorraine Laverton Corporate Development Officer

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Carl Les

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

9. Minutes

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2013, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

10. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements

11. Executive Member Update

County Councillor Les had sent his apologies so Gary Fielding explained to the Committee the savings proposals for Central Services. These include:

- Longer term savings by the redesign of library provision building on the existing models of community ownership, co-production involving key stakeholders, communities and staff.
- Rationalisation of property leading to a reduction in the number of properties and their associated costs including repairs and maintenance.

- Reduction of level of HR services.
- Reduction in the numbers of separate IT systems.
- Updating of financial services and associated ways of working.
- Updating of systems and ways of working around business support.
- Review of strategic support services within the Chief Executive's Unit.
- Improvement in systems and review of support arrangements within Legal and Democratic Services.

The Committee agreed that it was encouraging to see that the County Council is doing all it can to mitigate any effects on front line services but accepted it is inevitable that some difficult decisions will have to be made. Members were informed about the proposal to extend the provision of community led libraries but were reassured that the proposals would not be taken forward until 2015/16. However if opportunities arise before then Members understood the Council would be remiss if it did not take advantage of interest from community groups. The Committee were keen to see that local members were kept informed and involved in any decisions taken about their local area, whether this was involving local services or the reuse or the disposal of buildings.

Members requested a further report on the rationalisation of properties including an explanation on the processes for property disposal.

Resolved –

To note the information provided in the update and to receive a further report on rationalisation of property and the process for property disposal to a future meeting of the Committee.

12. 2013 Annual report for the Procurement Service

Ms Debbie Hogg, Assistant Director Resources and Simon Toplass Head of Procurement and Contract Management gave a detailed report to the Committee on procurement practice and the implementation of the new contract for procurement services that now focuses on a shared delivery model.

Members commented that they could see the benefit that working in partnership with the North Yorkshire Procurement Service brings with more robust challenge of traditional procurement practice. Members also asked whether opportunities for generating income were explored and were reassured that they were although the primary focus of work is to enable the County Council to obtain the maximum benefit from the money it spends on goods and services whilst also delivering savings through the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme.

The Committee agreed to receive the annual report on procurement as a regular report.

Resolved –

The Committee resolved to receive an annual report on procurement to its meeting early in 2015.

13. Communication Solution

Interim report of the Member Task Group presented by the Chairman, County Councillor Tim Swales.

Councillor Swales informed the Committee that as part of the scrutiny review around communication solutions he has been working closely with officers focussing particularly on video conferencing. Cllr Swales sees video conferencing as a solution that could assist the County Council in increasing productivity, saving money, reducing the need to travel for both Members and officers (whilst also reducing the associated carbon emissions) and reducing time spent travelling. The Committee agreed it was a good way forward and are keen to be involved in the pilot that is proposed.

Resolved –

The Committee noted the information in the report and agreed that they should be involved in the proposed pilot scheme.

14. Committee consideration of Crime and Disorder Matters

The Committee welcomed the Chief Constable Dave Jones and Assistant Chief Constable Paul Kennedy along with the Police and Crime Commissioner Julia Mulligan to the meeting. Members agreed it is vital that the links between the County Council, the Police and the Commissioner's office continue to be developed to ensure that all partners are working together to reduce crime and disorder in the County.

Members raised issues around the use of the 101 telephone service and questioned whether it delivered a service to the public. Members were informed that the police had taken on board the feedback they have received from the public and work is ongoing to address the problems. The use of the 101 service had seen a reduction in inappropriate use of the 999 service.

Ms Mulligan informed the Committee on the model for community safety across the County and her intention to use the reduced funding available to target issues relevant for the County by commissioning work at a local level. Ms Mulligan took on board the comments from Members and went on to advise the Committee that there would be implications for this Committee in looking at the work of the North Yorkshire Community Safety partnership in the future. The Committee look forward to developing those links.

Resolved –

The Committee noted the information in the reports and resolved to work with the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership to develop an annual reporting system.

15. Work Programme

The Committee agreed to include a report on the County Council's property portfolio and the processes used for the disposal of property on the work programme. To be scheduled in to an appropriate meeting.

Resolved –

The Committee resolved to include a report on the County Council's property portfolio and the processes used for the disposal of property on the work programme. To be scheduled in to an appropriate meeting.

The meeting concluded at 12:35

LL/JD