

North Yorkshire County Council**19 February 2014****Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee****Chairman's Statement**

My Chairman's statement for this full council includes details of the Committee meeting on the 3rd February 2014. The meeting focussed on looking at the County Council's budget proposals for the Central Services Directorate, the 2013 annual procurement report, the interim report of the scrutiny review of video conferencing solutions and our annual look at crime and disorder matters.

1. Savings proposals for Central Services Directorate

Members by now are used to hearing about savings proposals but it does not make them any easier to accept. We are encouraged to see that the County Council is doing all it can to mitigate any effects on front line services but 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 of course 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.

2. 2013 Annual report for the procurement service

The Committee welcomed this honest and open report on our procurement services although it is difficult to focus the discussion on the procurement function rather than the actual procurement that had taken place. We could see the benefit that working in partnership with the North Yorkshire Procurement Service brings with more robust challenge of traditional procurement practise. We look forward to future reports and continued progress in this area.

3. Interim report on the scrutiny review focussed on video conferencing solutions.

As the lead Member for the scrutiny review around communication solutions I have been working closely with officers focussing particularly on video conferencing. I see 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.

4 Committee consideration of crime and disorder matters.

We were pleased to welcome the Chief Constable Dave Jones along with the Police and Crime Commissioner Julia Mulligan to our meeting. It is vital that the links between the County Council, the police and the commissioner's office continue to be developed to ensure we are all 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 sat around the table 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. We look forward to developing those links.

5 Work programme

The Committee agreed to include a report on the County Council's property portfolio on the work programme. To be scheduled in to an appropriate meeting. It is important as Members that we keep informed about the rationalisation of properties as part of the 2020 North Yorkshire programme and that we continue challenge the use of our resources so that we achieve the most use from them.

County Councillor Tim Swales

Chairman Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
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