

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

23 July 2014

SCRUTINY BOARD

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

Scrutiny Board last met on the afternoon 17 June 2014 after having attended the Executive (Performance Monitoring) in the morning. The arrangement of holding Board meetings on the same day as the Executive is working well. It is reducing travelling costs and making it easier for chairmen to attend to both meetings.

My Statement is a reflection on the involvement of scrutiny chairmen at the Executive and on our discussions at Scrutiny Board.

The meeting of the Executive focussed on the "Q Report" which provided an in-depth analysis of performance covering Public Rights of Way, Libraries, the Customer Services Centre and Finance. Performance was generally strong across all of these areas. A number of issues/possible developments were discussed where there may be opportunities for overview and scrutiny to become involved, including:

- Public Rights of Way:
 - benchmarking of performance with other local authorities.

- Libraries:
 - The number of visitors does not give the full picture of services being accessed. What might be the most appropriate measure of levels of activity/business?

- Customer Service Centre:
 - Improving efficiency in terms of how customers communicate with the Centre and the time taken to deal with enquiries. For instance is there scope for increased use of on-line forms rather than receiving free text Emails?

At Scrutiny Board we were able to contribute to the on-going development of the format and content of the Executive "Q Reports". We felt that the reports need to be easy to understand, comprehensive and focused so that areas of strong service performance are recognised, and, where there is an under performance, there is a plan for improvement.

At Scrutiny Board we also considered a report which highlighted arrangements recently put in place to acknowledge that the public have the right to film/record committee meetings. We felt there should also be some wording on agendas to inform Members of the public wishing to speak that if they do not want to be recorded they should make their views known to the Chairman.

County Councillor Elizabeth Casling
Chairman: Scrutiny Board

8 July 2014