

North Yorkshire County Council

Corporate and Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 12 March 2018 at 10.30 am.

Present:-

County Councillor Derek Bastiman in the Chair.

County Councillors, Val Arnold, Bryn Griffiths, Caroline Goodrick, Richard Musgrave, Andy Paraskos, Caroline Patmore (substitute for Margaret Atkinson), Stuart Parsons, Tony Randerson, Annabel Wilkinson, Nicola Wilson and Robert Windass (substitute for Cliff Trotter).

Also in Attendance

County Councillors Carl Les and Greg White (Executive Members).

Officers: Louise Johnson, National Probation Service, North Yorkshire and Martin Weblin, Community Rehabilitation Company; Julie Blaisdale, Assistant Director, Library and Community Services, NYCC and Sarah Foley, Customer Programme Manager, NYCC; Neil Irving, Assistant Director, Policy and Partnerships, NYCC; Jason Geldard-Phillips, Technology and Change, NYCC and Louise Jackson of Veritau; and Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, NYCC.

A member of the press.

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Margaret Atkinson, Paul Haslam and Cliff Trotter.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

37. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2017, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

38. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

39. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

40. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman provided the Committee with an update relating to the following matters:-

At the Mid Cycle Briefing on 22 January 2018 there was a review of bank branch closures and the impact upon access to counter-based cash transactions in the county, particularly rural areas.

The following key issues were identified by those members present:

- Concerns about the future of Post Offices and the over reliance on them to fill the gaps made by branch closures
- The lack of any aerial view of the cumulative impact of branch bank closures (as each bank makes unilateral decisions based upon its commercial pressures)
- Concerns about the number of people that will be left behind without access to banking services as we move increasingly to a cash-less society and dependence upon on-line technologies
- A query about the role that bank's 'corporate social responsibility' had to play in decision making
- SMEs are key to the long term sustainability of rural areas. The closure of branch banks in rural areas poses a significant risk to their long term future.

At the Mid Cycle Briefing on 23 April 2018 there will be a review of Post Office closures (linked to Bank branch closures) as a follow-up to the review of access to counter-based banking services.

In response to this announcement by the Chairman, committee members made the following comments:

Cllr Bryn Griffiths stated that s.106 and SIL funding linked to housing developments could be used in some way to support access to counter-based banking services.

Cllr Stuart Parsons suggested that the Council could look into the feasibility of a scheme to support rural Post Offices.

Cllr Caroline Patmore noted that the matter was pressing and that Post Offices and bank branches were being closed on an ongoing basis.

Cllr Andy Paraskos suggested that there needed to be a focus upon ATMs.

Resolved –

- a. Daniel Harry to investigate whether s.106 and SIL funding linked to housing developments could be used to support counter-based banking in rural areas and market towns.

41. Reducing adult offending

Considered -

The report of Louise Johnson, National Probation Service, North Yorkshire and Martin Weblin, Community Rehabilitation Company providing an update on data relating to adult reoffending rates in the county.

Introducing the item, Cllr Derek Bastiman noted that Louise Johnson and Martin Weblin previously attended the committee at the meeting on 3 April 2017. At that time concerns were raised about the lack of data that would enable committee members to better understand the reoffending rates of adult offenders in the county and how they compared to similar areas.

In response, Louise Johnson and Martin Weblin stated that there remained real problems with accessing comprehensive data on adult reoffending in the county and comparative data for surrounding areas. This was because the data is not locally controlled and the issue was how the Ministry of Justice collated and disseminated the data. Both Louise and Martin stated that they had endeavoured to bring what information they could to assist the committee.

Louise Johnson then gave a presentation on the work of the Probation Service locally, the key points of which are summarised below:

- The quality of the work that the Probation Services does with offenders in the county is regularly monitored via the: NPS Effective Probation Practice Team; Divisional Performance team and new Quality and Development Officer roles; Quality Frameworks; and NPS NE Performance Dashboards
- There are 26 National Performance Measures with Probation that are routinely measured on along with 11 additional NPS NE Priority measures
- There is a system of accredited programmes for the rehabilitation of offenders, all of which have previously been piloted and independently assessed before being adopted
- More work being done with mental health services to enhance the treatment available to offenders with mental health problems

In concluding, Louise Johnson offered to show committee members some of the work that is done in the community with adult offenders.

Martin Weblin referred members to the 'Understanding Proven Reoffending: Quick Guide' on page 29 of the agenda pack. He stated that he understood the frustration of committee members, a frustration that he and others shared. Martin Weblin gave assurances about the quality of the work undertaken with adult offenders and reiterated that their work was regularly assessed and inspected.

Cllr Tony Randerson said that he could not understand why local and comparative data was not accessible.

Cllr Bryn Griffiths noted that the data was not a local issue but something that the committee should take up directly with the Ministry of Justice.

Cllr Caroline Goodrick queried how, in light of the paucity of local data to track reoffending rates, the effectiveness of work with offenders could be evaluated.

In response, Martin Weblin stated that there were a wide range of qualitative measures in place that helped ensure that the programmes and interventions adopted by the CRC and the Probation Services locally were effective.

Resolved –

- a. Thank Louise Johnson and Martin Weblin for attending
- b. Request that an update on the rehabilitation programmes and interventions delivered by the Probation Service and the CRC is provided to the committee meeting on 4 March 2019
- c. That the committee write to the Ministry of Justice to highlight the concerns about the data that is available and the resulting difficulties in scrutinising reoffending rates.

42. Progress against the 2020 target of 70% of contact being managed by customers using digital self-service channels

The presentation of Sarah Foley, Customer Service Central Manager/Customer Programme Manager and Julie Blaisdale, Assistant Director, Library and Community Services, NYCC providing an update on the use of digital self-service channels.

Daniel Harry noted that this presentation had not been published with the main committee papers and that it would be circulated to members and published on the Council website after the meeting.

Sara Foley gave a presentation providing an update on the work being done to move more of the Council's contacts from face to face and telephone to digital self-service. The key issues are as summarised below:

- By 2020 70% of transactions with the NYCC will be done on-line
- 12 services are now in the customer portal
- Customers can now upload documents to provide evidence for eligibility for services
- Customers can now book an appointment to register a birth or death online
- The Customer Service Centre is picking up more complex work with social care assessments by telephone. The volumes of contacts annually is approximately 455,000
- Telephony and face to face providing a safety net for on-line
- There have been significant improvements in speed and efficiency, particularly regarding blue badges and senior person bus passes
- During the recent poor weather we saw a 20% reduction in calls to the Council compared to similar events in previous years but a 300,000% increase in web hits on the school's closure page
- Future areas of work include: book and plan a wedding on-line; apply for or renew a blue badge on-line; report a fault on a public right of way; and report a lost or stolen bus pass and apply for a new one.

Julie Blaisdale noted that moving more social care queries and assessments on-line and through the Customer Service Centre has meant that greater capacity has been created within adult social care services.

Sarah Foley said that customers were involved from the outset in the development of any transfer of services from face-to-face to telephone or on-line.

Sarah Foley updated the committee on the visit that had been made to see the work being done by Cumbria County Council on customer contacts. This was undertaken at the request of the committee. In summary, it was shown that North Yorkshire was significantly ahead in its work.

Daniel Harry said that he would work with Julie Blaisdale and Sarah Foley to identify a series of updates for the committee on key aspects of this work, based upon the customer work programme and key milestones to be achieved.

Cllr Derek Bastiman thanked Julie Blaisdale and Sarah Foley for all that they had done to make this area of work so successful.

Resolved -

- a. Thank Julie Blaisdale and Sarah Foley for attending
- b. Request regular updates on the work being done and progress against the 2020 target.

43. Response to the consultation on the proposed closure of Northallerton Magistrates Court

Considered -

The report of Neil Irving outlining the Council's draft response to the Ministry of Justice consultation on the proposed closure of the Magistrates Court in Northallerton.

Neil Irving introduced the draft consultation response and identified the following issues:

- Many of the assumptions made in the consultation are flawed

- The consultation fails to meet the three standards or principles that it set out for itself
- There is sufficient demand for Northallerton to continue as a Magistrates Court
- Closing the court would result in excessive travel times and journeys for people who are often on low incomes and solely reliant on public transport
- Closing the court would impact upon access to justice for those people who are reliant on public transport
- There has been insufficient consideration of the impact of the proposed closure on BME (black and minority ethnic) groups.

Neil Irving noted that members had a role to play in highlighting the consultation to Parish Councils, all of whom could be encouraged to respond in their own right.

Cllr Derek Bastiman said that promises had previously been made that Northallerton Magistrates Court would be protected when Stokesley Magistrates Court was closed.

Cllr Val Arnold stated that, when compared to York, Northallerton Magistrates Court was well equipped and so should be protected. Any savings from the closure of the Northallerton Magistrates Court would soon be lost in funding the works needed to bring York Magistrates Court up to standard.

Cllr Stuart Parsons said that people are typically required to report to the Magistrates Court at 10am. If they do not do so, then they run the risk of being fined or having their case heard in their absence. He said that people would struggle to get to York or Harrogate or Skipton by public transport from the more rural areas of the county by 10am. This went against the administration of justice.

Cllr Caroline Patmore said that it made little sense to close Northallerton Magistrates Court when the Police HQ was in the town.

Cllr Derek Bastiman queried whether the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire had a view and how she would be responding to the consultation.

Cllr Bryn Griffiths highlighted the importance of having magistrates who had local knowledge and who knew the area.

Neil Irving stated that the closing date for the consultation is 29 March 2018. The views of the committee will be included in the final draft of the response, which will then go to the Leader, Cllr Carl Les, for final sign-off ahead of submission.

In closing, Cllr Derek Bastiman noted the support of the committee for the draft consultation response.

Resolved -

- a. That the draft consultation response be supported.

44. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Considered -

The report of Jason Geldard-Phillips, Technology and Change, NYCC and Louise Jackson of Veritau, providing an overview of the GDPR, what work is being done to implement the regulation across the Council, what the risks are and what mitigating actions are being taken to reduce those risks.

Jason Geldard-Phillips introduced the item and stated that the GDPR was not a major change but a formalisation of good practice. It will be enacted in UK law in May 2018. A lot of work had already been done to introduce the requirements locally, with delivery

being led by the Data Governance Team in Technology and Change.

Jason Geldard-Phillips summarised the key elements as follows:

- More information and explanation must be included in the Privacy Notices which must be given to customers, clients and other individuals
- Privacy Notices must include the “legal basis” for processing
- The annual fees paid by organisations to the Information Commissioner for processing of personal information will increase from the current £500 to £2,900
- The annual fee for individual councillors will increase from £35 to £40
- There will be a greater focus on Data Protection Impact Assessments
- The Council will be obliged to notify the ICO of serious data security incidents within 72 hours
- The maximum possible fine for a data breach will increase from £500,000 to £17m
- The Corporate Information Governance Group is working to a plan based on the Information Commissioner Office’s 12 Step Plan
- There has to be full and complete compliance with the regulations by May 2019.

Jason Geldard-Phillips said that the large and complex nature of the Council meant that the scale of the task face was significant. He gave the example of needing to review how data is processed and held at over 100 council owned or operated buildings.

Cllr Stuart Parsons raised concerns that the significant increase in the fees payable to the Information Commissioner for processing personal information would have a disproportionate impact upon Parish Councils.

Jason Geldard-Phillips said that advice and guidance on the implementation of the GDPR was available and could be shared with Parish Councils. This included on-line presentations, training tools, template documents and FAQs.

Cllr Derek Bastiman asked that this information be circulated to all County Councillors so that they could share it with their respective Parish Councils.

Cllr Caroline Patmore noted that the Yorkshire Local Councils Association was also providing advice and guidance and that there was a need to make sure that there was one clear message being given.

Resolved -

- a. Thank Jason Geldard-Phillips and Louise Jackson for attending
- b. Keep the committee informed of progress with the implementation of the regulations, through Daniel Harry
- c. Circulate the resources mentioned to all County Councillors.

45. Work Programme

The report of Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, NYCC, providing Members with a copy of the committee work programme for review and comment.

Cllr Tony Randerson emphasised the need to have an update from the Police and Crime Commissioner on the plans for closer working between emergency services at the 18 June 2018 meeting of the committee. Irrespective of the outcome of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s application to the Home Office to take on the governance of the Fire and Rescue Service, there needed to be more information on what was planned.

Cllr Stuart Parsons asked whether the update on Traded Services that was planned for

the Mid Cycle Briefing on 23 April 2018 was the same item that previously gone to the Members Seminar on 7 March 2018. If so, then this could be removed from the agenda.

Cllr Bryn Griffiths asked that an item on Post Offices and Branch Banking be included in the agenda for the committee meeting on 18 June 2018, so that there could be a fuller debate on what action the committee could take.

Cllr Derek Bastiman said that the item on Traded Services would be moved to another date and that the item on Post Offices and Branch Banking would be included in the agenda for the committee meeting on 18 June 2018.

Cllr Derek Bastiman reminded the committee that the Mid Cycle Briefings were private sessions that were for the Chair, Vice Chair and the political spokespersons. Committee members were welcome to attend but as observers.

Resolved -

a. To update the work programme accordingly.

46. Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

No other business was raised.

The meeting concluded at 12:20.

DH