



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 11 February 2021 at 6.30 pm

Virtual Meeting

IMPORTANT: The Council fully recognises and respects the role and importance of democratic meetings and is committed to protecting the health and safety of Elected Members and Officers who participate.

This meeting will be held virtually. The meeting will take place via Microsoft Teams and details of how to join the meeting have been provided to Members of the Committee. A telephone dial-in facility will also be available.

For the purpose of public transparency and accountability, the meeting will be live streamed online. The live stream can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZCvPUsJOLwMJ9ukDsGf0Hw>

The media will be able to report on proceedings from the live stream.

Agenda

1 **Apologies for absence**

2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021**

(Pages 3 - 6)

3 **Urgent Business**

To receive notice of any urgent business which the Chairman considers should be dealt with at the meeting as a matter of urgency by virtue of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 **Declarations of Interest**

Members to indicate whether they will be declaring any interests under the Code of Conduct.

Members making a declaration of interest at a meeting of a Committee or Council are required to disclose the existence and nature of that interest. This requirement is not discharged by merely declaring a personal interest without further explanation.

- 5 **Customer Complaints and Compliments Q3 2020/21** (Pages 7 - 14)
- 6 **Decisions from other Committees**
Policy and Resources Committee held on 4 February 2021, minutes to follow.
- 7 **O&S Forward Plan** (Pages 15 - 16)
- 8 **Any other business that the Chairman decides is urgent.**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 21 January 2021.

Present

Councillors Brackstone, Cussons MBE, Garbutt Moore, King, Middleton (Vice-Chairman), Oxley, Raine, Raper (Chairman) and Wass.

In Attendance

Alan Bardet, Simon Copley, Jonathan Dodsworth, Anton Hodge, Connor Munroe, Christine Phillipson and Thilina De Zoysa.

Minutes

27 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies from Committee Members.
Apologies were received from Gareth Mills from Grant Thornton.
[Apologies from Cllr Keal were received retrospectively on 27th January 2021.]

28 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020

Decision
That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on 19 November 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Voting Record

8 For

0 Against

0 Abstentions

29 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

30 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PART 'A' ITEMS - MATTERS TO BE DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS OR MATTERS DETERMINED BY COMMITTEE

31 External Audit Annual Fee Letter 2020/21

Considered – The External Audit Annual Fee Letter 2020/21

Decision

That the External Audit Annual Fee Letter 2020/21 be received and noted.

Voting Record

8 For

0 Against

0 Abstentions

32 **Second Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Reports 2020/21**

Considered – Report of the Chief Finance Officer.

Decision

That the Committee note the work undertaken by internal audit and the counter fraud team in the year to date.

Voting Record

8 For

0 Against

1 Abstention

33 **Counter Fraud Framework Update**

Considered – Report of the Chief Finance Officer.

Decision

That Members

a) approve the new counter fraud and corruption strategy;

b) comment on the updated counter fraud and corruption policy; and

c) comment on and note the analysis of current fraud risks faced by the council.

Voting Record

9 For

0 Against

0 Abstentions

34 **Internal Audit Plan 2021/22 - Consultation**

Considered – Report of the Chief Finance Officer.

Decision

That Members identify any specific risk areas which they believe should be considered a priority for audit in 2021/22.
Areas relating to staff wellbeing as a result of Covid-19 were identified as a key priority to review in the next 12 months.

Voting Record

9 For
0 Against
0 Abstentions

35 **Update on the use of RIPA**

Considered – Report of the Head of Corporate Governance.

Decision

That Members note that no application for covert surveillance has been made to the Council's approved "Authorising Officers" in the last twelve months and as a consequence no application to the Magistrates Court requesting approval of any such grant has been made

Voting Record

9 For
0 Against
0 Abstentions

36 **O&S Forward Plan**

Considered – The O & S Forward Plan.

Decision

That Members note the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Plan.

Voting Record

9 For
0 Against
0 Abstentions

PART 'B' ITEMS - MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL

37 **Treasury Management Statement and Investment Strategy 2021-22**

Considered – Report of the Chief Finance Officer.

Decision

That Council is recommended to note and approve:

- (i) Members receive this report.
- (ii) The Operational Borrowing Limit for 2021/22 is set at £7m.
- (iii) The Authorised Borrowing Limit for 2021/22 is set at £12.5m.
- (iv) Councillors delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer to effect movement within the agreed authorised boundary limits for long-term borrowing for 2021/22 onwards.
- (v) Councillors delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer to effect movement within the agreed operational boundary limits for long-term borrowing for 2021/22 onwards.
- (vi) The treasury management strategy statement 2021/22 be approved.
- (vii) The minimum revenue provision policy statement for 2021/22 be approved.
- (viii) The treasury management investment strategy for 2021/22 be approved. The prudential indicators for 2021/22 which reflect the capital expenditure plans which are affordable, prudent and sustainable be approved.
- (x) The Capital Strategy for 2021/22 be approved.

Voting Record

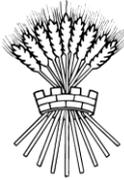
9 For

0 Against

0 Abstentions

38 **Any other business that the Chairman decides is urgent.**

There being no other items of urgent business the meeting closed at 7.45pm.



PART A:	MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS
REPORT TO:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	11 FEBRUARY 2021
REPORT OF THE:	HEAD OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE SIMON COPLEY
TITLE OF REPORT:	CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS Q3 2020/21
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the customer complaints and compliments received in 2020/21 to the end of the quarter 3 reporting period on 31 December 2020.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended to:

- (i) Note the report on the complaints and compliments received up to the end of quarter 3 of the reporting cycle

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To monitor the numbers of complaints and compliments received, the departments affected and identify any trends in the data.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS

- 4.1 Potential reputational damage from upheld decision notices following investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman into customer complaints.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION

- 5.1 None

6.0 REPORT DETAILS

- 6.1 The customer complaints and compliments received form an important part of the feedback process for the Council to learn from any issues raised and improve how we deliver our services. When analysing the customer complaints and compliments, they should be read in conjunction with each other to gain a full picture of the feedback received.

COMPLAINTS

- 6.2 The Council operates a two stage internal complaints process to respond to the issues raised by complainants. The first stage is an initial response by the applicable line manager or service unit manager. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they receive, then they can move to stage 2, which is investigated and answered by the relevant Head of Service.
- 6.3 Following this stage 2 response, there is the option to then go to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied. The Ombudsman is a free and impartial service, but will generally only consider complaints that have been through the internal two stage process at the Council first.
- 6.4 Since the quarter 2 update report to the committee meeting in November, the council has handled a further 7 corporate complaints in the period from 1 October to 31 December 2020.

Department	Number of Complaints received	Complaints resolved at Stage 1	Complaints resolved at Stage 2
Environmental Health	1	1	N/A
Housing	1	1	N/A
Planning & Regulatory Services	2	1	1
Revenues & Benefits	2	2	N/A
Streetscene	1	1	N/A
Total	7	6	1

- 6.5 From the seven corporate complaints received during quarter 3, six were dealt with under stage 1 of the complaints process, with one complainant remaining dissatisfied at stage 1 and advancing on to stage 2. The overall average response time during the quarter was 10.13 days, broken down to 9.57 days to respond at stage 1 and 14 days for the stage 2 response. All complaints received in quarter 3 were completed within the timescales set out to the complainants in the initial acknowledgement letter.
- 6.6 For the 2020/21 year-to-date performance, there have been 31 complaints received from 1 April to 31 December 2020. The 31 complaints received from April to December 2020 is significantly lower than the 48 received in the same time period last year and in comparison to previous years. It is felt that the periods in national lockdown has led to a reduction in citizens contacting the authority generally for non-emergency enquiries.
- 6.7 Of the 31 complaints received, 29 have been resolved at stage 1, with 2 complaints escalated to be dealt with under stage 2 of the complaints procedure. This is an improvement on the same time period last year, when 14 out of the 48 complaints received were dissatisfied with the stage 1 response and requested to progress to stage 2 complaints. This is part of a concerted effort to improve complaint responses to thoroughly address all of the points raised in complaints received.
- 6.8 The most complaints this year have been received in the customer facing areas of Revenues & Benefits, Streetscene, Planning & Regulatory Services and Housing Services. The average response times for the year to date are 7.39 days for the resolution of stage 1 complaints and 12.5 days for the resolution of stage 2 complaints. Analysis of the service response times has found that where specialist legal advice is sought or when interviews are required between the investigating officer and other

members of staff to better understand the reasons behind a complaint, this generally leads to a longer time to respond.

- 6.9 Examples of the lessons learned from the complaints received up to the end of quarter 3 this year are included as an appendix to show the actions taken to remedy complaints received.

COMPLIMENTS

- 6.10 The number of service compliments recorded in the 2020/21 year up to 31 December 2020 is 81. The main topics of the compliments received by citizens relate to appreciation of the response of the council to Covid-19, in particular the grant help for local businesses provided by the Economic Development, Finance and Revenues & Benefits teams. Furthermore, the work of Streetscene in continuing to provide refuse and recycling collections is recognised, and the Ryecare service to support vulnerable residents during the pandemic.

- 6.11 Examples of some of the compliments from October to December include:

“Many thanks for the incredible service provided today. Could not believe it when I returned from work to see my new bin. Please can you pass on my thanks to the amazing street scene team. They always were a credit to Ryedale District Council and it is lovely to know that they still deliver a service second to none.”

“A big thankyou to the Ryecare staff who were working on Tuesday morning. You were so quick. Cannot thank you enough.”

“Thank you so much! You have been amazingly quick with dealing with my request. In the first lockdown I was unfortunately not eligible for any grants or funding so I am most grateful and very impressed with your professional and prompt service.”

“I just wanted to thank you for all your help with the planning application. We welcome the effort that you and your team has done on this complex and challenging case and the time taken on sites visits and collation of a report that summaries hundreds of pages of paperwork.”

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The following implications have been identified:

- a) Financial
None
- b) Legal
No direct implications
- c) Other (Equalities, Staffing, Planning, Health & Safety, Environmental, Crime & Disorder)
None

Simon Copley
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Background Papers: None

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Appendix 1

Lessons learned from complaints received in Quarter 3 2020/21

Complaint	Description	Department	Lessons Learned
Behaviour and attitude of refuse lorry crew	Refuse lorry not reversing down a narrow lane to allow oncoming traffic past and the driver refusing to reverse when asked to by a member of the public.	Streetscene	CCTV footage reviewed and collection crew involved spoken to and reminded of the importance of ensuring they are considerate in their actions to other road users. Apology offered.
Behaviour of enforcement agents	Allegations of aggressive behaviour from the enforcement agent working on behalf of the council to seek debt repayment.	Revenues and Benefits	Offer to create a repayment plan to pay off the outstanding debt. Directed to information on the Council Tax Support Scheme and the Exceptional Hardship schemes run by the council, and signposted to the Citizen's Advice Bureau.
Lack of planning enforcement activity	Following reporting to the council a breach of a planning condition, following alleged activity and associated noise on site in breach of specified working times, no acknowledgement was received.	Planning and Regulatory Services	Apologies offered for not initially acknowledging receipt of the enforcement complaint when it was received and leading to the corporate complaint. However, investigations into the alleged breaches have been undertaken, and a site visit made to reinforce this to the developers and reiterate the agreed conditions.
Business non-compliance with the Covid-19 regulations	Businesses not abiding by Guidance issued by central government in relation to the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and perceived lack of action from the council to rectify this.	Environmental Health	No formal enforcement action could be taken at the time of the complaint as the guidance issued by Government had not been passed into law. Following receipt of the complaint, further site visits were conducted to reassure the complainant.

Appendix 1

Lessons learned from historic complaints in 2020/21

Complaint	Description	Department	Lessons Learned
Closure of public toilets	Frustration with the closure of the public toilets during the lockdown period	Community Team	Explanation that we are trying to strike a delicate balance for our citizens, as some people are asking us to keep amenities closed and others are asking us to open our amenities. As a result of the feedback received, we have begun to open toilets on market days, as this has been a way to ensure the health and safety of our citizens and visitors. Assurance given that the feedback has been taken onboard as part of ongoing risk assessments of the public conveniences
Licence dispute	Questioned why a licence had been given with the restrictions on meeting in groups and social distancing in place.	Environmental Health	Complainant informed that the applicant did not require a licence to operate and did not receive any type of licence or endorsement from Ryedale District Council. Events of this nature are not strictly prohibited at this moment in time by any Coronavirus Restriction Regulations and can go ahead provided they are conducted in a Covid-19 secure way.
Lack of contact from Ryedale District Council before the closure of the last round of the Collective Switching auction	Resident did not receive notification to register for the latest collective switching auction despite being involved in previous auctions	Housing	Apology given for any distress caused. Choices 4 Energy to notify resident of future auctions

Appendix 1

Lessons learned from historic complaints in 2020/21

Complaint	Description	Department	Lessons Learned
Ongoing issues with waste and recycling collection	Resident had reported non-collection of bins on three separate occasions. Also, when the bins have been emptied, they have been left next to or in the highway and there is a risk of an accident occurring.	Streetscene	Site visit to the property undertaken and agreed future collection point for waste and recycling. The InCab technology system in vehicles has been updated to this effect. Given the extra waste and circumstances referenced in the complaint, the RDC Commercial Waste service was also suggested as a potential solution.

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O & S Forward Plan

Date of Meeting	Committee	A/B	Service Area	Report Title	Draft Deadline	Final Deadline	Draft Press Release	Implement Date	Full Council	Reporting Officer	Annual Y/N
21-Jan-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	External Audit Annual Fee Letter 2020/21	30-Dec-20	12-Jan-21				AH	Y
21-Jan-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	Second Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Reports 2020/21	30-Dec-20	12-Jan-21				AH	Y
21-Jan-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	Internal Audit Plan 2021/22 - Consultation	30-Dec-20	12-Jan-21				AH	Y
21-Jan-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	External Audit Plan	30-Dec-20	12-Jan-21				AH	Y
21-Jan-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	Update on the use of RIPA	30-Dec-20	12-Jan-21				SC	Y
21-Jan-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	B	Financial Services	Treasury Management Statement and Investment Strategy 2021-22	30-Dec-20	12-Jan-21	12-Jan-21		18-Feb-21	AH	Y
11-Feb-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	OS	Corporate Governance	Standards Complaints Overview and Annual Report	20-Jan-21	02-Feb-21				AH	Y
11-Feb-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	OS	Customer Services	Customer Complaints and Compliments Q3 2020/21	20-Jan-21	02-Feb-21				MW	Y
11-Feb-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	OS	Communications, Technologies and Business Transformation	Performance Report Q3	20-Jan-21	02-Feb-21				LW	Y
March											
25-Mar-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	OS	Customer Services	Safer Ryedale and Community Safety Plan	03-Mar-21	16-Mar-21				MW	Y
April											

Date of Meeting	Committee	A/B	Service Area	Report Title	Draft Deadline	Final Deadline	Draft Press Release	Implement Date	Full Council	Reporting Officer	Annual Y/N
22-Apr-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	External Audit Progress Report	31-Mar-21	13-Apr-21				AH	Y
22-Apr-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	Third Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress report	31-Mar-21	13-Apr-21				AH	Y
22-Apr-21	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Au	Corporate Governance	Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Governance Plans 2021/22	31-Mar-21	13-Apr-21				AH	Y