



REPORT TO:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	7 JULY 2011
REPORT OF THE:	HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION CLARE SLATER
TITLE OF REPORT:	PROGRESS ON SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the progress made with implementing the recommendations of Scrutiny Reviews which have been agreed by this committee, during the previous term of the Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the progress made in relation to the recommendations made by this committee be noted.

REPORT

3.0 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Overview & Scrutiny committee has undertaken a number of reviews over the last 4 years. Details of the recommendations arising from these reviews can be found in Annex A, with detailed comments. The progress that has been achieved to date and the impact of each review is summarised in the main body of the report.
- 3.2 Members should monitor the progress made and if the committee is of the opinion that sufficient progress on the recommendations has not been achieved, the Committee should consider requesting the Chairman of the relevant policy committee(s) and/or senior officers to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 The topics chosen for scrutiny reviews should be priority issues for the Council in delivering the Council Plan and ultimately better outcomes for communities in Ryedale.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Every scrutiny review should include the engagement of stakeholders. An outcome of the review of the Complaints procedure has been that the council has more robust information in relation to services to be used in future reviews, both to challenge through complaints but also through comments and compliments.

6.0 REPORT DETAILS

6.1 Review of Sickness Absence 2009-10

On 9 April 2009, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to review sickness absence within Ryedale District Council as a result of the sickness absence levels remaining substantially higher than the national average and in comparison to local authority neighbours.

6.2 Progress to date includes:

- A managers toolkit has been developed to support the procedures within the current policy.
- Management Team have continued to encourage the management of attendance on a consistent basis across the authority. The Human Resources service unit advise managers and make them aware if their approach is not consistent with the rest of the authority.
- Positive reporting on good levels of attendance are included in reports to Management Team and Unison, this is also highlighted in staff appraisals.
- A Health and Wellbeing Group has been formed and have met to agree terms of reference for the group. They are currently working towards producing a Wellbeing Strategy along with a Health and Wellbeing programme. A number of initiatives have been run already e.g. Health and Wellbeing Event for all staff to attend.
- Training on the revised Managing Attendance Policy was given to all supervisors and managers.
- The induction programme now includes advice on absence reporting procedures, along with familiarisation of all relevant policies, including the Managing Attendance Policy.
- Revised Flexible Working Guidelines were introduced in April 2011. Annual leave is being reviewed.

6.3 The Impact of the Review:

In 2008-09, the average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent (FTE) employee was 10.68 days. This reduced to 8.9 days in 2009-10 and further reduced to 8.7 days in 2010-11.

6.4 Scrutiny Review of Car Parks 2008

At a meeting on 7 August 2008, the Committee resolved to undertake a scrutiny review of Car Parks with a particular focus on the Wentworth Street Car Park charging trial.

The majority of Members felt that they had successfully reviewed the trial as outlined in the scope with no significant issues arising. It was not felt possible for the committee to make recommendations on future charging proposals without considerable further work on demand and sales after the trial. The Committee decided it was not able to accommodate this work into the Committee's work programme at that time.

6.5 Scrutiny Review of Waste Management 2008

On the 9 August 2007 Members agreed to undertake a review of waste management as a result of concern over the decline in resident's satisfaction with the service between 2003 (90%) and 2006 (75%). The service is also significant for residents, as it serves every household in the district, and it faces significant challenges.

6.6 The Committee focussed on the following areas: Reducing waste, Re-using waste, Recycling waste, Disposal, Trade waste and made various recommendations which were presented to the Community Services Committee in March 2009 (Annex A).

6.7 Progress to date includes:

- Economies have been achieved following the development of a new transfer station which will reduce mileage and Co2 emissions and increase income through sale of material.
- Reduction of food waste has been addressed through the Love Food Hate Waste Campaign, coupled with a variety of waste minimisation campaigns. This is a York & North Yorkshire Waste Partnership initiative supported by Council officers. Separate food waste collections are costly and require an anaerobic digestion facility not currently available within Ryedale. This will be kept under review.
- Introduction of highly popular 'Give and Take days'. Popular with teachers
- York and North Yorkshire Waste Partnership Pack for Schools has been developed with data and information on recycling and waste reduction specific to Ryedale. The pack places waste and recycling issues within the national curriculum and has proved very
- Co-mingled collection has been investigated but this is not as cost effective as source separated collection
- Initially, trade waste was due to be sold due to increased landfill costs and the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme costs negatively affecting trade. Following negotiation by the Head of Environment with North Yorkshire County Council, these costs have been reduced, and coupled with a VAT windfall the Council's trade waste service is again able to compete within the market. During 2011/12 the potential of increasing trade collection capture within this the potential for increased trade recycling will be considered where cost effective.
- The new collection system due to start in Autumn will include 3 stream collections, Glass, Paper and Card and Cans and Plastic bottles.

6.8 **The Impact of the Review:**

Although, the latest survey (2010) showed satisfaction levels at 72%, it is anticipated that the addition of plastic bottles and cardboard to the kerbside recycling scheme, will result in an increase in levels of satisfaction with the waste collection service. The Council has exceeded the Governments 2020 recycling target for the 4th year running achieving a rate of 52% and is close to achieving the Government's 2020 target of 225kg of residual waste per capita. This makes the Council the top performer in the region for the 5th year running.

6.9 **Scrutiny Review of the Complaints System**

At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 9 August 2007 Members agreed to undertake a review of the complaints system in order to address low levels of public satisfaction with the handling of complaints, as evidenced by the 2006 satisfaction survey of residents.

As a result of the review a new procedure and leaflet have been introduced, including the ability for the public to record comments and compliments.

Progress has been made and is ongoing to develop the intranet as a source for staff guidance and training. Complaints and compliments are now recorded on the

Council's performance management system Covalent.

The manner in which Councils work with complaints, compliments and comments is a key strand of the 'self regulation' framework being promoted by the government in partnership with the Local Government Group

6.10 **The Impact of the Review:**

The number of complaints received by the Council has doubled from 35 in 07/08 to 57 in 10/11. Only a small number have been escalated beyond stage 1. Any complaints received in relation to a particular officer is discussed directly and all complaints are monitored centrally through covalent to identify any patterns. No patterns have been identified to date.

7.0 **NEXT STEPS**

7.1 The recommendations from these and all future scrutiny reviews have been uploaded to Covalent, the Councils Performance Management System, and progress will be managed through reports to the Councils Management Team.

Clare Slater
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Background Papers:

Scrutiny Review of Sickness Absence 2009-2010 –Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 19th April 2010

Scrutiny Review of Car Parks 2008 – Community Services Committee – 27th November 2008

Scrutiny Review of Waste Management 2008 – Community Services Committee - 26th March 2009

Scrutiny Review of the Council's Complaints Procedure 2008 – Policy & Resources Committee - 17th April 2008

Background Papers are available for inspection at:

Sickness Absence - page 59

<http://democracy.ryedale.gov.uk/mqConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=634&T=10>

Waste Management – Community Services Committee Agenda 26th March 2009

Complaints – Policy & Resources Committee – 17th April 2008

Or contact Jane Robinson or Clare Slater for a copy of the review documents