

North Yorkshire County Council

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held at No. 3 Racecourse Lane, Northallerton on Tuesday, 18 February 2020 commencing at 11.00 am.

County Councillor Carl Les in the Chair. County Councillors, David Chance, Gareth Dadd, Caroline Dickinson, Michael Harrison, Andrew Lee, Don Mackenzie, Patrick Mulligan, Janet Sanderson and Greg White.

Other Councillors Present: County Councillor Paul Haslam

Officers present: David Bowe, Justine Brooksbank, Stuart Carlton, Gary Fielding, Richard Flinton, Barry Khan, Richard Webb, Sue Wharam, and Melanie Carr.

There was one representative of the press in attendance.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

420. Minutes

Resolved –

That the public Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

421. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Michael Harrison declared a personal interest in Agenda item 5, Treasury Management Appendix E, as an employee of a bank named in the document.

422. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved –

That on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph(s) specified in column 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to information)(Variation) Order 2006, members agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 9.

423. Questions and Statements from members of the public

There were no public questions or statements.

424. Quarterly Performance and Budget Monitoring Report

Considered – A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Strategic Resources, bringing together key aspects of the County Council’s performance on a quarterly basis.

County Councillor David Chance introduced the Quarter 3 performance report, confirming the Council continued to demonstrate good performance across all four of its ambitions. He provided a brief summary of the strengths and challenges in performance across the four ambitions and drew attention to the in-depth focus of the performance report on ‘Every child & young person has the best possible start in life’. In particular County Councillor David Chance highlighted:

- The improved timeliness for referrals to the Early Help Service The 12% reduction in demand for support from the Children & Families Service
- The increase in children with SEN being educated in main stream schools
- The falling timeliness of health assessments for Looked After Children services

He also drew Members attention to key progress and challenges across the other ambitions, which included:

- The increase in website views as a result of increased access to online services and promotion of the digital first strategy
- The ongoing work to support the aspiration of carbon neutrality
- The sustained growth in the in the prevent, reduce and delay elements of the social care pathway
- The increase in referrals into both the Care & Support Team and the Living Well service
- The unsuccessful bid for ERDF funding for electric vehicle charging points
- The high number of placements for older people that were above the approved rates

County Councillor Janet Sanderson acknowledged the strong data and the fall in referrals to Children’s Social Care specifically, but drew attention to the underlying pressures, including the increase in the number of Early Help open cases over the last three months. It was noted that the Service was closely monitoring the situation. Members also noted the rise in second and subsequent Child Protection Plans.

County Councillor Patrick Mulligan highlighted the increase in EHC plans and confirmed that the County Council continued to lobby government in regard to the new SEND code of practice.

In response to a written question from County Councillor Janet Jefferson, Chair of the Children & Young People’s Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Stuart Carlton provided an overview of the ongoing work to address North Yorkshire’s attainment level at Key Stage 2.

County Councillor Annabel Wilkinson queried the reasons behind the downward trend for support from the Children & Families Services, and it was confirmed it was as a result of improved working with partners and improved access to advice and guidance at a local level. In regard to the fall in protection plans it was confirmed that numbers naturally rose and fell without any change in decision making. Finally, in regard to Ofsted’s new inspection framework, it was confirmed it was likely to impact more on North Yorkshire’s small rural schools that struggled to deliver the full breadth of curriculum.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley questioned the take up of the mileage allowance to parents and carers, and it was confirmed that take up had not been as high as hoped but that it was likely to increase over time as awareness of the option was raised with each new intake.

Members noted the performance update summary in regards to the other council ambitions i.e. Modern Council, Growth and Healthy & Independent Living.

County Councillor John Ennis queried what impact the financial pressures faced by Public Health would have upon their ability to continue to deliver key services and interventions, and it was noted that confirmation of government funding for the next 3-5 years was required to enable the Council to plan ahead with a focus on prevention and earlier intervention. County Councillor Gareth Dadd also suggested the focus should be entirely on outcomes not on inputs.

Finally, Richard Flinton, Chief Executive, confirmed that the recommendations arising from the ongoing Rural Commission would be reported to the Executive and then to Council. It was suggested that Overview and Scrutiny would have the opportunity to assess the findings as part of that process.

County Councillor Carl Les thanked officers for the exemplar report on performance and noted the County Council's strong performance across the board.

Revenue

County Councillor Gareth Dadd introduced the section of the report on the revenue budget, highlighting the minimal difference between Quarters 2 & 3. Attention was drawn to the projected net underspend of £6.4m mainly from the BES Directorate, an increase of £2,424k since the Q2 forecast. It was noted the underspend, in the main due to non-recurring savings, would offset the overspend pressures in other Directorates. It was also noted that the incurred costs as a result of the recent flooding were as yet unknown, but were expected to be in the region of £1m.

Members agreed the recommendations relating to the Revenue budget, as shown on page 81 of the report.

Treasury Management

County Councillor Gareth Dadd introduced the section of the report on Treasury Management, and as there were no questions arising, Members agreed the associated recommendations on page 98 of the report.

Capital Plan

Members noted the Capital Plan section of the report and as there were no questions, agreed to note the updated Q3 2019/20 Capital Plan.

County Councillor Carl Les noted that the recommendations at the end of the report on page 109 had all been picked up as the Members had worked through the report section by section and as such no further action was required.

Resolved – That:

- a) The contents of the Performance Report be noted
- b) The latest position for the County Council's 2019/20 Revenue Budget, as summarised in paragraph 2.1.2. be noted.
- c) The position on the GWB (paragraphs 2.4.1 to 2.4.3) be noted.

- d) T position on the 'Strategic Capacity – Unallocated' reserve (paragraphs 2.4.4 to 2.4.8) be noted.
- e) T position on the County Council's Treasury Management activities during the third quarter of 2019/20 be noted.
- f) The report be referred to the Audit Committee for their consideration as part of the overall monitoring arrangements for Treasury Management.
- g) The updated Q3 2019/20 Capital Plan be noted.

425. International Holocaust Remember Alliance (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism

Considered –

A report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) seeking Executive support for the IHRA working definition and working examples.

Members of the Executive expressed their individual and collective support for the working definition, noting that it had been supported by all group leaders. It was also noted that the definition was North Yorkshire County Council's declaration against all hate crime and in support of all religions.

Resolved – That:

- The IHRA definition and working examples be formally supported, and reported to Full Council at its next meeting.
- All members of the Council be made aware of what this means in their work as Councillors and Officers.

427. Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies

Considered –

A report of the Corporate Director for Children & Young People's Services seeking the Executive's approval for a number of appointments as detailed in the report.

In addition to those listed in the report, County Councillor Gareth Dadd requested that the Executive appoint Councillor Greg White as his replacement on the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Management Board. It was noted that as this was an Executive decision it did not need to be referred on to County Council.

Resolved – That

- i) The following appointments be recommended to County Council:
 - Emma Barbery – Askham Bryan College, as Employer Representative to the Pension Board
 - David Hawkins – York College, as Associate non-voting Member (reserve Employer Representative to the Pension Board)
 - County Councillor Patrick Mulligan, as Shareholders representative for Border to Coast Pensions Partnership

- ii) The following appointment be approved by the Executive:
- County Councillor Greg White to replace Councillor Gareth Dadd on the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Management Board

428. Forward Work Plan

Considered -

The Forward Plan for the period 27 January 2020 to 31 January 2021.

Resolved –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

429. Private Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020

That the private Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

David Bowe – Corporate Director for Business & Environmental Services provided a detailed overview of the work undertaken over the weekend in relation to Storm Dennis.

He also summarised the work undertaken the previous weekend in response to Storm Ciara and the resulting problems arising from the full rivers and saturated ground, which had been further exacerbated by Storm Dennis.

Members noted the number of calls of concern received as a result of both storms – 82 for Storm Ciara and 811 for Storm Dennis. David Bowe also confirmed the expected cost of the damage to the road network as a result of Storm Ciara – in the region of £400K, and confirmed the additional costs associated with Storm Dennis were as yet not fully known.

It was noted that a pro-active response was need, including a strategic review of the river systems and catchment areas. It was confirmed that work was ongoing with the Environment Agency and the Met Office, which the intention of developing proposals that would result in an improved approach.

Members expressed their thanks to County Council staff, partners' staff and volunteers. They also acknowledged the work of other staff who continued to provide services to residents in spite of the conditions, and the work of IT and the Communications team.

The meeting concluded at 12:06pm
MLC

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