

At a Meeting of the Council of the Richmondshire District Council held at Mercury House, Station Road, Richmond on Tuesday, 18 October 2022 at 6.30 pm.

- Present:** Councillor Lorraine Hodgson (Chairman)
Councillors Jimmy Wilson-Petch, John Amsden, Paul Cullen, Angie Dale, Campbell Dawson, Susan Fairhurst, Kevin Foster, Helen Grant, Richard Good, Lawrence Grose, Jill McMullon, Patricia Middlemiss, Richard Ormston, Stuart Parsons, Yvonne Peacock, Karin Sedgwick, Paul Spencer, Ian Threlfall, Philip Wicks and Clive World.
- Officers:** Callum McKeon (Corporate Director - Strategy and Regulatory), Sian Moore (Corporate Director - Resources) and Katie Cullum (Democratic Services Manager).
- In Attendance:** Revd. Martin Fletcher and 3 members of the public.
- Apologies:** Councillors William Heslop, Leslie Rowe and Angus Thompson.
- DC21/22 **Chairman's Announcement****
- The Council stood and observed a minute's silence in honour of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- DC22/22 **Chairman's Excellence in Performance Award****
- The Chairman, Councillor Lorraine Hodgson presented Excellence in Performance Awards to Alison Gaskell, Finance Officer, Ollie Braithwaite, Climate Change Officer, Charlotte Nettleton, Planning and Climate Change Administrative Assistant and Debbie Clapham, Resident Warden Queen's Court.
- DC23/22 **Public Speaking and Question Time****
- There were no public questions or statements submitted for consideration at the meeting.
- DC24/22 **Minutes****
- Resolved:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2022 be signed and approved as an accurate record.
- DC25/22 **Declarations of Interest****
- There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.
- DC26/22 **Chairman's Engagements****
- The Chairman presented a list of engagements undertaken for the

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period 20 July to 18 October 2022.

DC27/22 Statement from the Leader of the Council/Questions to the Leader and the Corporate Board Spokespersons

The Leader of the Council presented a written statement on the work of the Council and updated Members on issues detailed in her statement.

The Leader reported on the issues facing the operations of Colburn Leisure Centre due to a significant increase in operating energy costs which the Richmondshire Leisure Trust had reported to a recent meeting of Colburn Town Council. She reported that it would be discussed with the Senior Management Team this week.

Resolved: That the Statement be noted.

DC28/22 Statements from Chairs of Committees

The Chairmen of the Council's Committees presented written statements on the work of the Committees since the last meeting of Council.

Resolved: That the statements be noted.

DC29/22 Devolution Deal for York and North Yorkshire

Further to Minute DC21/20 (21 July 2020), the Corporate Director - Strategy and Regulatory submitted a written report on the proposed Devolution Deal and the next steps being taken towards the creation of a Combined Authority of York and North Yorkshire.

It was proposed by Councillor Parsons and seconded by Councillor Spencer that Council make representations as part of the public consultation to seek an increase to North Yorkshire Council's representation on the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, which recommended equal representation from each constituent authority of two members.

The amendment was supported by Council.

Resolved: That the Council notes and supports the steps being taken by City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council (the Constituent Councils) towards the creation of a Combined Authority for York and North Yorkshire as set out in this report and in particular to note:

- (a) The draft Devolution Deal
- (b) The Governance Review as identified in Appendix 1.
- (c) The scheme which has been prepared for consultation as set out in Appendix 2.
- (d) That Richmondshire District Council writes to North Yorkshire County Council indicating its concern that the proposed Combined Authority governance is not democratic and that it supports an increase to

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North Yorkshire Council's representation on the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority from the recommended equal representation from each constituent authority of two members.

DC30/22 Notice of Motion - Proportional Representation (PR)

Councillor Richard Good requested consideration of the following Notice of Motion, under Council Procedure Rule 11, which was seconded by Councillor Clive World.

First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.

In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.

PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and those seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation. MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.

PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.

PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. So why not Westminster?

Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general, local and mayoral elections.

Resolved: That the Motion be supported.

DC31/22 Notice of Motion - Water Quality

Councillor Philip Wicks requested consideration of the following Notice of Motion, under Council Procedure Rule 11, which was seconded by Councillor Kevin Foster.

This Council notes that:

- *Every river in England is now polluted beyond legal limits.*
- *The Environment Agency rated only 14% of rivers as 'Good' in 2019.*
- *This chemical pollution is mostly caused by sewage discharges*

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- from water companies and the run-offs of nutrients from farms.*
- *36% of English rivers have been damaged by water companies.*
 - *In England, water companies released untreated human waste directly into our waterways over 400,000 times for a total of 3 million hours in 2020 alone.*
 - *Government funding to the Environment Agency to monitor river quality, and regulate farms and water companies has dropped 75% since 2010/11.*
 - *In 2020 just 3.6% of pollution complaints made to the Agency resulted in penalties.*
 - *Farms are now almost never inspected, water quality is rarely tested, and water companies can pump raw sewage into rivers with virtual impunity.*
 - *In addition, tyre particles, metals from brake pads, and hydrocarbons from vehicle emissions wash off road surfaces and into rivers introducing potentially carcinogenic material into the water supply.*
 - *Our LOCAL RIVERS are particularly threatened by further sewage discharges.*

Council believes that, as host nation of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in 2021, the UK Government should commit to:

- (i) Restoring Environment Agency budgets to deliver the necessary oversight.*
- (ii) Increasing inspection regularity of water companies and farms, and rigorously prosecuting offenders through the Environmental Audit Committee and Ofwat.*
- (iii) Funding local and highways authorities to introduce systems to prevent road pollutants from entering our water courses.*

Council resolves to request the Chief Executive write to:

- (iv) The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs calling for the Government to make these commitments as host nation of COP-26.*
- (v) The Chairperson of the Parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee to advocate for greater enforcement of existing regulatory powers.*
- (vi) The Chief Executive of Yorkshire Water calling for urgent action to address the impact of waste-water discharges on our local rivers and, from this date onwards, in its planning consultation responses for major development, to clarify which treatment works will be managing the sewage; and whether it has the information available to assess the impact on the number or duration of sewage discharges into local rivers or seas, and if it does have this information to share it (noting that this can only be requested not required).*
- (vii) The Regional Director of the National Farmers' Union requesting clarification on the action being taken locally by farmers to prevent*

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nutrient run-off.

(viii) The charities River Action and The Rivers Trust expressing this Council's support for their campaign to restore the health of Britain's rivers.

Following debate and with the consent of the meeting Councillor Philip Wicks as proposer and Councillor Kevin Foster as seconder accepted a number of amendments to the wording in relation to farms and it was agreed to amend the motion as follows:

Third bullet point delete "*and the run-offs of nutrients from farms*".

Sixth bullet point delete "*farms and*"

eighth bullet point delete "*Farms are now almost never inspected*"

delete the word "*farms*" in point (ii)

delete paragraph *(vii)*

(Note: In accordance with Council procedure rule 13.8(a) the wording of the above motion was amended from the version published on the agenda with the consent of the meeting).

Resolved: (Unanimously) That the following amended Motion be supported:

This Council notes that:

- Every river in England is now polluted beyond legal limits.
- The Environment Agency rated only 14% of rivers as 'Good' in 2019.
- This chemical pollution is mostly caused by sewage discharges from water companies.
- 36% of English rivers have been damaged by water companies.
- In England, water companies released untreated human waste directly into our waterways over 400,000 times for a total of 3 million hours in 2020 alone.
- Government funding to the Environment Agency to monitor river quality and water companies has dropped 75% since 2010/11.
- In 2020 just 3.6% of pollution complaints made to the Agency resulted in penalties.
- Water quality is rarely tested, and water companies can pump raw sewage into rivers with virtual impunity.
- In addition, tyre particles, metals from brake pads, and hydrocarbons from vehicle emissions wash off road surfaces and into rivers introducing potentially carcinogenic material into the water supply.
- Our LOCAL RIVERS are particularly threatened by further sewage discharges.

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- (ii) Increasing inspection regularity of water companies and rigorously prosecuting offenders through the Environmental Audit Committee and Ofwat.
- (iii) Funding local and highways authorities to introduce systems to prevent road pollutants from entering our water courses.

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- (vi) The Chief Executive of Yorkshire Water calling for urgent action to address the impact of waste-water discharges on our local rivers and, from this date onwards, in its planning consultation responses for major development, to clarify which treatment works will be managing the sewage; and whether it has the information available to assess the impact on the number or duration of sewage discharges into local rivers or seas, and if it does have this information to share it (noting that this can only be requested not required).
- (vii) The charities River Action and The Rivers Trust expressing this Council's support for their campaign to restore the health of Britain's rivers.

DC32/22

Notice of Motion - Cost of Living Crisis

Councillor Ian Threlfall requested consideration of the following Notice of Motion, under Council Procedure Rule 11, which was seconded by Councillor Richard Ormston.

As a responsible employer and in the light of the current cost of living crisis, I call on Members tonight to approve a one-off support payment of £350 to all full and part time members of staff employed by the District Council as of the 1st November 2022.

In debating the motion, Members were advised that the cost would be £94,000 to be funded by Council Taxpayers Reserve.

Resolved: That the Motion be supported.

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The meeting concluded at approximately 7.55 pm.