

North Yorkshire Council

Scarborough and Whitby Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 28 November 2025 commencing at 10.00 am.

Councillor Liz Colling in the Chair and Councillors David Chance, Eric Broadbent, Janet Jefferson, Rich Maw, Clive Pearson, Heather Phillips, John Ritchie, Tom Seston, Subash Sharma, Neil Swannick, Roberta Swiers and Phil Trumper.

Officers present: St John Harris, Matthew Joseph, Dr Gill Kelly (remote), Jenny Thompson (remote), Louise Wallace and Laura Young (remote)

Other attendees: PC Phillip Coyne (North Yorkshire Police), Alison Hume MP and PCSO Chris Unsworth (North Yorkshire Police)

Apologies: Councillors Derek Bastiman and David Jeffels. .

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

167 Apologies for absence

Councillor Derek Bastiman (who was representing the council at another meeting) and Councillor David Jeffels.

168 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2025

Resolved

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2025, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

169 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interests.

170 Feedback from previous meetings - Chair's report

The Chair provided the following updates on matters raised at previous meetings:

- The council's new draft Empty Homes Strategy would come to the committee in June
- The Annual Community Safety Report also to be considered in June would cover any issues related to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The regulation of HMOs would be considered by the committee at a later date.
- Finally the Chair referred to the Bathing Water Quality Summit convened by the council involving the various agencies involved in securing better sea bathing water quality. Over the summer there had been more detailed analysis and identification of sources of E. coli carried out by the Environment Agency, and Professor Grocke of Durham University was leading a pollution source study using nitrogen isotope analysis of seaweed samples. A consolidated report incorporating

all the findings would be published in the next month or two. Following publication of the report and with the agreement and attendance of all the parties involved, the committee would hold an additional special meeting to discuss the findings. This was anticipated to be in late January.

171 Public questions and statements

There were two public questions submitted to the committee. Cllr Linda Wild was not present at the meeting.

1. George Wakely, Scarborough Pride

Could the committee please look into why the council are trying to charge Scarborough Pride upwards of £1,000 for parking services for a community event?

Reply

Thank you for your question regarding the Scarborough Pride event and the concerns raised about NYC raising charges for this.

North Yorkshire Council recognises the Scarborough Pride as a cherished community event that brings significant cultural value to the town. We appreciate the dedication of the event organisers and the many volunteers who make this event possible.

As part of our ongoing review of fees and charges across the county, including those related to car park usage, we are mindful of the impact any changes may have on community-led events. The current schedule for Scarborough Spa car parks outlines standard charges that have been applied to cover the costs of these suspensions. However, we also understand that under previous arrangements with Scarborough Borough Council, events were not subject to these fees.

We want to reassure you that North Yorkshire Council is committed to supporting volunteer-led initiatives and maintaining the goodwill that underpins events like Scarborough Pride. While the council must ensure consistency and transparency in its charging policies, we are actively reviewing how best to accommodate exceptional community events within our framework.

Your request to maintain the existing arrangements for the Scarborough Pride will be considered as part of this review. We will engage with relevant stakeholders, including the event organisers, to explore options that balance financial sustainability with community benefit.

2. Cllr Linda Wild, Whitby Town Council

Can a reassurance be given that NY Council are giving priority to the replacement of the Whalebones in Whitby? The whalebones are at home and internationally a renowned landmark. We are aware that very capably, an officer is consulting with authorities in Alaska but we just need assurance that NY Council are supportive and totally behind the urgency of solving the problem.

Reply

Chris Bourne, Head of Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure provided the following reply:

‘In June 2025, Whitby Town Council formally asked North Yorkshire Council to undertake urgent investigations into the future of the whalebones in Whitby and provide costed options for:

- Replacement
- Refurbishment/protection
- Alternatives e.g. replica replacement

North Yorkshire Council takes any formal request seriously and Whitby Town Council can be reassured that the request is being progressed. An update was last provided to Whitby Town Council by email on 12 November 2025.'

The detailed update below, although not read out at the meeting was circulated to members of the committee.

'I had previously discussed the issue regarding the condition of the bones with yourselves and Adam (previous clerk) and agreed I would explore options for their replacement, given the current state they are in and the limited time they can remain in place.

I would firstly apologise for not coming back to you sooner, but as you can imagine these things take time and I assure you that I am committed to bringing the matter to a conclusion at the earliest opportunity, having dealt with procuring the existing bones some twenty-five years ago.

No doubt some would wish to have a real set of Bowhead Whale bones installed, and I am in communication with the mayor's office in Anchorage, Alaska about this. They are currently trying to speak to those involved previously at North Slope Borough (Barrow) but clearly many years have passed and it is regrettable that some of those people are no longer with us, but they will respond once those efforts are complete.

If a new set of bones were available that is where other issues begin. Firstly it would be likely the bones would be in a very remote location on the Arctic iceshelf and there would have to be a willingness for the residents to recover and move them to a suitable location. Secondly the bones would require thorough cleaning before any logistics company would carry them on aircraft. Thirdly, and perhaps the biggest hurdle, would be gaining the permissions required to export/import the bones to the UK given that the species (*Balaena mystecitus*) is protected under CITES regulations which was a lengthy time-consuming process last time and may not be achievable this time around.

If these hurdles can be overcome then there is the task of transport to the UK and whilst I am confident I can arrange this, there is a significant distance in the US to deal with and it would require a great deal of effort over there to get the bones from Barrow via Anchorage to Seattle.

However, some would be concerned at the connotations of displaying real whale bones. There is greater concern globally about hunting and it is somewhat less socially acceptable to display real bones. Using imitation whale bones – with an information board explaining the history – some would argue would be more fitting in addition to extending the shelf life of the bones.

Once I have some further information and realistic options for the future of the Whalebone Arch I will come back to you, and those options will be considered by the Council's Executive/Members and clearly your input is most important in the future of what is one of Whitby's most enjoyed landmarks.

As of the date of Cllr Wild's question, we have still not received any further response on the availability of whalebones from Alaska, but have sent, and will continue to send chasing emails. We have also sent email requests to other countries but again with no response.'

172 Attendance of MP Alison Hume

Ms Hume provided an overview to the committee of some of her areas of work, concerns and priorities. In respect of the Government's budget announcements on 26 November, she advised that an estimated 1850 children living in the constituency were expected to benefit from the removal of the two-child benefit cap and an estimated 4000 children from the expansion of free school meals. Ms Hume also referred to the Government's plans to support the long-term youth unemployed through guaranteeing six-month work placements for 16 to 21-year-olds and plans for four new youth hubs in the Yorkshire and Humber region. She would lobby for at least one of these to be in the constituency. Lower business rates would benefit around 16,670 retail, hospitality and leisure properties in North Yorkshire. In relation to gambling, she was pleased to report that remote gaming and general betting duties would increase, whilst bingo duty would be abolished in recognition of the social value of bingo halls. Ms Hume was in dialogue with the Bingo association and the owners of Mecca bingo to help identify alternative premises in Scarborough to replace their bingo hall which had recently closed. She supported Government plans to separate adult gaming centres from lower risk forms of gambling, and to help local authorities to address gambling clusters because AGCs were associated with greater risk of harm and were attracted to coastal areas. In regard to other work, in addition to six local surgeries since the last Area Committee meeting, Ms Hume had convened a public meeting on the subject of fracking. The following week she would be meeting with Michael Shanks, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, to press for clarity from Government on fracking, particularly that the fracking moratorium be extended to all forms of fracking including proppant squeeze associated with the Burniston drill site planning application which was of such concern to constituents. Other areas in which Ms Hume had been lobbying the Government were for Scarborough Hospital once again to provide care for stroke patients; ensuring that farmers and businesses affected by the Langdale Moor wildfire received adequate compensation in the same way as for flooding incidents and that any similar event in future would trigger a national resilience response because of the critical military infrastructure in the locality; and the inadequate NHS response to the flooding of Eastfield Medical Centre which had been out of use since the summer. Thankfully the community had rallied round and temporary clinical rooms were being made available at a fitness centre in Eastfield in addition to support from St Cecilia's Care Group and St Catherine's Hospice.

Following this introduction, the issues raised by elected members and discussed with the MP included:

- The accuracy of the NHS data of the number of stroke patients per year on the east coast which Ms Hume would raise with ministers
- The lack of a pathway of grants for businesses affected by wildfire which Ms Hume had raised with Government
- Whether the Burniston drill site planning application could be called in by the Secretary of State
- Her cautious support for the proposed tourist tax provided there was complete transparency, the hospitality industry was properly consulted, and the monies raised were spent on improving the local area
- The benefits of DCMS requiring all short term lets to be registered which would also assist in implementing the tourism tax

- As a result of the closure of Eastfield Medical Centre, the delays in arranging flu vaccinations for vulnerable people which Ms Hume would raise with the local team
- The pressure on local businesses because of increased National Insurance contributions. The MP expected reducing business rates and giving businesses funding to take on apprentices would help alleviate this pressure.
- The pressure on small guest houses because of the current VAT threshold and the 140 letting rule which governed when holiday lets qualified for a business rates assessment

The Chair thanked Alison Hume MP for her attendance and her responses to members' questions.

173 Receipt of petition urging North Yorkshire Council to reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on New Bridge, Whitby

Elizabeth Mulheran introduced the following petition seeking a reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on New Bridge, Whitby:

'New Bridge in Whitby currently has a 40mph speed limit from the traffic lights at Prospect Hill to the end of the bridge. The entrance to Whitby School (Airy Hill site) for Year 7 and 8 is situated on this section of road. We are concerned about the safety of students and families who have to walk along the bridge to access their school and the Eastside.'

Among the concerns raised by Ms Mulheran were:

- Windy exposed location of bridge
- Lack of safety measures such as raised kerbs and verges
- Heavy traffic including HGVs on the bridge
- Many pedestrians including unaccompanied children using the bridge to walk to Whitby School and Airy Hill Primary School
- Overwhelming local support for the petition
- The short length of the road covered by the speed limit in potential contravention of Department for Transport guidance

Members then discussed the petition which included the following points:

- Council policy was for 20mph speed limits outside schools
- This was a dangerous stretch of road which could be addressed in the short term through an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order reducing the speed limit to 20mph
- The Experimental TRO would then allow time for the necessary consultation to take place to make the new speed limit permanent
- The new reduced speed limit should have been considered at the same time as the upgrade to the New Bridge / Spital Road junction since the upgrade and signalisation would help slow down traffic over the New Bridge
- In February the council had announced a review of speed limits outside all 400 educational sites in the county with the presumption to reduce traffic speeds

Resolved that the Area Committee:

- i. Note the petition
- ii. Recommend to the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation that in light of the urgency of this matter an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order is introduced for New Bridge, Whitby reducing the speed limit from 40mph to 20 mph; and
- iii. That during the 18 month period of the ETRO the necessary consultations and other work is undertaken to make the change in speed limit permanent

Reasons for recommendation

Because of North Yorkshire Council's stated commitment to reviewing speed limits outside every school in the county to improve road safety, and the serious concerns raised in respect of road safety on New Bridge, Whitby.

174 Health in Coastal Communities - update by Director of Public Health

Considered a presentation by Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health and her colleagues Dr Gill Kelly, Consultant in Public Health, and Laura Young, Public Health Officer which provided an overview of health in North Yorkshire's coastal communities together with initiatives in a variety of areas to tackle health challenges and inequalities and to secure improvements.

The presentation first centred on:

- The local context of Scarborough and Whitby: the population, the older age profile and lower life expectancy than the rest of North Yorkshire and England, the greater deprivation, the higher unemployment rates, higher proportion of homes rented from housing associations and private landlords, and the lower than average house prices. Reference was also made to the wider determinants of public health: the higher proportion of physically inactive adults, claimants of disability benefits, alcohol related mortality and smoking prevalence. Despite the challenges associated with the statistics, the Director also wished to focus on the coast's considerable natural assets and the many opportunities to make interventions to improve people's lives.

In reply to members' comments and questions about this section of the presentation, they were advised that:

- The projected 20% decrease in 0-19 year olds was probably attributable both to falling birth rates and young people moving away for education and employment
- Cardiovascular and respiratory diseases were the big drivers of life expectancy and healthy life expectancy as other parts of the country, although the latter encompassed much more than physical health
- The Director and colleagues from other council services would produce an analysis for the committee as to why according to the latest Indices of Deprivation 2025, deprivation levels in Whitby had worsened (whilst exercising a degree of caution since the 2025 methodology had altered)
- The average house price in Whitby would also be provided, disaggregated from the overall figure for the area

- The Director was happy to provide a reply to a Whitby resident explaining how the data in her presentation applied specifically to Whitby, noting that often 'Scarborough' was used to describe the Scarborough and Whitby area. It was agreed that future presentations to the committee made clear the geographical area covered by the public health initiatives

The next section of the presentation focused on the extensive local work with children and young people, for example:

- Local schools' success in the Healthy Schools North Yorkshire awards scheme
- A new healthy lifestyles programme for early years, using Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (HNYICB) Health Inequalities funding, which tackled for example excess weight among four and five year olds through food education. By evidencing what worked, the plan was scale up these interventions across North Yorkshire
- HNYICB Health Inequalities funding was also being used to promote asthma friendly schools and myHappyMind, a whole school approach to mental wellbeing
- Oral health promotion through supervised toothbrushing in local schools and placing toothpaste and toothbrush start bags in local libraries
- The multi-agency Scarborough Teenage Pregnancy Taskforce established to reduce teenage pregnancy rates in the Scarborough and Whitby area. This included working with the University of York to develop a strong evidence base of the experiences of young parents and developing training for healthcare professionals.

In reply to members' comments and questions about this section of the presentation, they were advised that:

- Dr Kelly would send them the teenage pregnancy rates in the Scarborough and Whitby area
- The new healthy lifestyles programme for early years was designed to reach parents and grandparents by delivering training around healthy eating in community settings outside schools

The next section of the presentation focused on protecting health through interventions such as the winter vaccination programme, the NYC staff flu vaccination programme, the Scarborough Inequalities (Screening and Immunisation) Group which was set up to help reduce health inequalities by improving uptake of screening and immunisations in the Scarborough and Whitby area, and the work to minimise the public health impacts of the Langdale Moor wildfire.

The Director of Public Health then turned to coastal health improvement through such initiatives as the Living Well Smokefree service, the Movement Activity & Sport Fund launched in October and dedicated to reducing inequalities and improving wellbeing through increased participation in movement, activity and sport at all stages of life, and the new Healthy You Service delivered by the Active North Yorkshire team which encouraged clients to eat more healthily and take more exercise.

In reply to members' comments and questions about this section of the presentation, they were advised that:

- Public Health was involved in the development of a new North Yorkshire Play Strategy recognising fully the benefits of ensuring that young people have access to safe inclusive play spaces, particularly since some families may not be able to afford paid activities

- Play was not just important for young people, as reflected in the Healthy Ageing Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024 and its focus on developing an Active Ageing Offer and through such initiatives as Ageing Well on the Coast.

Lastly, the Director of Public Health touched on progress made more broadly with her previous year's Healthy Ageing Annual Report, Public Health's involvement in the Swift programme enabling migrant communities to thrive, a variety of interventions to support specifically men's health and specifically women and girl's health, and funding obtained by her service in partnership with Hull University and York University from the National Institute for Health Research to review over five years how research could be used more effectively to address health inequalities. The Director looked forward to bringing positive outcomes from this research collaboration back to the committee.

In reply to members' comments and questions about this section of the presentation, the Director of Public Health confirmed that she would investigate the idea of a Nordic snow clearing machine to reduce the risk of falls during wintry weather.

The Chair thanked the Director and her colleagues for their detailed presentation and for answering members' questions.

Resolved that the presentation be received.

175 North Yorkshire Police Rural Crime Report Scarborough/Whitby District

Considered a report by PC Phillip Coyne, Rural Policing Task Force, North Yorkshire Police on rural crime in the Scarborough and Whitby area, May to October 2025. Mr Coyne was pleased to report that overall rural crime was on the decline, a trend since 2020. It was important for the Police to understand whether this was attributable to crime not being reported or simply not occurring.

In reply to members' comments and questions, they were advised that:

- The Rural Policing Task Force was aware of issues such as criminal damage associated with fox hunting. Hunt organisations were not legally required to advise the Police in advance of a hunt but because the RPTF's resources were generally focused on urban areas on traditional hunting days such as Boxing Day and New Year's Day, they would welcome intelligence from councillors and others about any issues or problems arising from the hunt taking place
- In recognition of the problem of livestock theft, the RPTF was developing more accurate ways of recording and monitoring this crime
- Domestic abuse incidents were no longer investigated by the RPTF because of the time involved and specialist skillset required to investigate these crimes
- Raptor persecution did fall within the animal and wildlife crime category and was an issue in the area. The RSPB was better placed to undertake surveillance and investigation because they were not subject to the same RIPA restrictions.
- Mr Coyne did not believe that incidents of physical violence against the person were increasing in the locality; rather the term 'violence against the person' also covered use of offensive language which had increased the figures
- Most of the rural crime recorded in the report was in the north of the constituency area where there were cross border issues to contend with in conjunction with Cleveland. Collaboration had improved significantly in this respect between the two Police forces. In his next annual report, Mr Coyne undertook to provide a more

detailed breakdown of the geographical areas within the constituency.

- Illegal dumping of waste was not a major problem in the rural area
- Rural Watch patrols did seem to reduce crime but seasonality and weather (e.g. visibility) were also factors which affected rural crime

The Chair thanked Mr Coyne for attending and for his detailed answers to members' questions.

Resolved that the report be received.

176 Scarborough & Whitby Area Committee Work Programme 2025/26

Considered the latest draft of the committee's work programme for 2025-26.

Following discussion, the Chair confirmed the following topics for consideration by the committee (to be discussed at the next mid cycle briefing):

- Consultation by the Mayor of York and North Yorkshire on the proposed new tourism tax
- Review of speed limits and road safety outside schools in the Scarborough and Whitby area
- Cemetery provision in Whitby

Resolved that the work programme be noted.

177 Any other items

The committee recorded a vote of thanks to Andrew Santon, Highways Customer Communications Officer, on his retirement for his services to the council.

178 Date of next meeting

2 March 2026

The meeting concluded at 12.39 pm.