

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on Wednesday, 21 January 2026, commencing at 2.00 pm.

Councillors Peter Wilkinson in the Chair (North Yorkshire Council); Danny Myers ((Vice Chair) City of York Council), Chris Aldred (North Yorkshire Council), David Chance (North Yorkshire Council), Kevin Foster (North Yorkshire Council), Tim Grogan (North Yorkshire Council), Andrew Waller (City of York Council), Greg White (North Yorkshire Council) and Steve Shaw-Wright (North Yorkshire Council).

Community Co-opted Members: Fraser Forsyth and Mags Godderidge and Caroline O'Neill.

David Skaith (Mayor of York and North Yorkshire).

Jo Coles (Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime).

Chief Fire Officer Jonathan Dyson (North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service).

Officers from the Mayoral Combined Authority / Policing, Fire and Crime Team: Rachel Antonelli (Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Mark Ayres (Head of Public Confidence and Assurance), James Farrar (Chief Executive Officer, MCA), Michael Porter (Assistant Director of Resources (Deputy s73 Officer for Police, Fire and Crime Functions)), Tamara Stevens (Director of Policing, Fire and Crime), Amanda Wilkinson (Head of Partnerships and Commissioning).

In attendance: Councillor Carl Les (North Yorkshire Council).

Apologies: Councillors Emilie Knight, Heather Moorhouse and Michael Pavlovic.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

116 Apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Councillors Heather Moorhouse, Emilie Knight and Michael Pavlovic. It was noted that Councillor Greg White was acting as a substitute for Councillor Moorhouse and City Councillor Andrew Waller was acting as a substitute for Councillor Knight. The Chair gave particular welcome to the Panel's new members, Councillor Kevin Foster and proposed co-opted appointee Caroline O'Neill.

117 Declarations of Interest

Mags Godderidge declared that she is Chief Executive of Survive, which receives funding from the Deputy Mayor's office for counselling for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

118 Consideration of Exclusion of the Public

The Chair moved that the Panel determine after consideration of Item 8(b) whether

to move into closed session. The Panel voted unanimously via a show of hands to retain the right to retire at that point in the agenda if necessary.

Resolved

That the Panel retains the privilege to move into closed session under Item 9 if deemed necessary following consideration of the Mayor's draft precept proposal at Item 8(b).

119 Minutes of the Panel Meeting held on 8 October 2025

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2025, having been printed and circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

120 Appointment of the Panel's co-opted independent members

Considered

The report of the Panel Secretariat outlining the recent recruitment exercise for the Panel's three co-opted independent members and seeking formal approval for the proposed appointees.

The Chair spoke to the strong field of applications received and that eight were invited to interview. Welcome was given to new appointee Caroline O'Neill and congratulations to returning members Mags Godderidge and Fraser Forsyth. It was also noted that thanks had been conveyed from the Panel to outgoing member Martin Walker. It was additionally noted that while further details are awaited around future scrutiny arrangements for policing, fire and crime, it is important to ensure robust scrutiny arrangements continue for the time being.

Members gave a unanimous vote via a show of hands by way of approval of the three appointments.

Resolved

That the Panel formally approves the appointments of Mags Godderidge, Fraser Forsyth and Caroline O'Neill for a four-year term.

121 Public Questions or Statements to the Panel

The Panel was advised that no public questions or statements had been received.

122 Provisional Police Settlement and Setting the Police Precept 2026/27

Considered

The report from the Mayor updating on the provisional settlement for the police service, the public consultation outcomes on the precept survey and the potential precept options.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor emphasised the high level of positive response

received via the public precept survey to increasing the precept, with many respondents prioritising ensuring that services are effective and well managed to keep people safe and providing value for money. Ensuring that the burden on Council Tax payers is minimised was selected as a lower priority. The formal policing precept proposal will be brought to the Panel meeting on 5 February 2026 and the Chair thanked Michael Porter for supporting an informal briefing recently.

The Panel were advised that the Mayor had received notification this week from the government of their expectations around neighbourhood policing. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor have made representations to government on the back of this around the challenges of delivering policing in a large rural area. The Mayor will share this letter with the Panel for information.

Key discussion points on this item included:

- Capital borrowing is indicative £5.2m across the current plan with current police borrowing at £6m. The intention is to borrow only for estates investment.
- Member concerns around the reserves strategy and whether levels would be proportionately high enough. Clarification was given that there must be a minimum 3% in the General Fund with other earmarked reserves for risks such as pay, insurance and major incidents.
- Confidence levels on the inflation forecasts. Inflation assumptions (baseline 2%) will be balanced by expected efficiencies.
- Member concerns regarding impact on neighbourhood policing and anti-social behaviour hotspots following freeze in government funding. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor spoke to the need for a whole system approach to neighbourhood policing along with the importance of reporting crime and sustaining public confidence. In a letter to the Home Secretary regarding the funding settlement, the Chief Constable has highlighted a 9.4% reduction in neighbourhood crime in the year to date following the renewed focus on local visible policing. The Deputy Mayor agreed to check whether this letter can be shared with the Panel-to-date was noted in the Chief Constable's correspondence to the Home Secretary.
- The Mayor was asked to include detail in the formal policing precept proposal on the factors which make up the calculation of the Core Grant, to enable consideration of opportunities to align investment with wider Combined Authority and local authority responsibilities.

Resolved

That the Panel

- (a) Notes the report provided;
- (b) receives a copy of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's letter to government regarding the challenges of policing in a rural area;
- (c) receives confirmation from the Deputy Mayor as to whether the Chief Constable's letter to government on funding can be shared; and
- (d) receives details of the factors which make up the calculation of the Core Grant in the precept proposal paper for policing notes the report provided.

123a Panel Scrutiny of the Fire Precept Proposal

Resolved

That the Panel notes the guidance note provided regarding the Panel's role in relation to consideration of the Mayor's draft fire and rescue budget and precept proposal 2026/26.

Draft 2026/27 Fire Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Proposal

Considered

The Mayor's report proposing an allocation of the general budget for fire and rescue services in 2026/27 and the Medium Term Financial Plan Proposal.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor outlined the need to stabilise and invest in the service, recognising evolving risks such as wildfires and flooding, and the importance of road safety. The Mayor is proposing a precept increase of £9.60, bringing it to £116.62 for a Band D property in 2026/27. It was noted that the Mayoral Combined Authority will make the final decision on the proposal on 6th February. Thanks were recorded to officers in the Policing, Fire and Crime Team for the extensive public consultation over the Christmas period.

Key discussion points included:

- Estate and fleet investment, including the roll-out of 16 new appliances (with legacy vehicles disposed of at auction) and a joint estates maintenance contract to improve responsiveness and planned works;
- Clarification sought on transport maintenance capacity. The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged vacancies in the in-house team and short-term use of third parties, with an intention to return to full in-house strength.
- PFI contract is due to end in May 2027, with significant cost reduction thereafter; buildings will transfer to the Mayor.
- Members asked about the status of payment of costs incurred during the Langdale Moor wildfires under the Bellwin scheme. The Panel heard that a claim has been submitted to government for around £2.6m and the outcome is pending.
- Members queried the pay award assumptions of 2.5%. It was advised that last year's award was 3.2% and inflation has fallen. The pay reserve can be used to manage the risk of higher settlements.
- The rationale around the reserves strategy in managing financial resilience. The Panel also considered rural risks and the lack of statutory basis for funding flood response; the Mayor and Deputy Mayor continue to lobby government on this and on a number of related points around realigning funding for a rural service. national funding representations.
- The positive level of response to the precept survey but that improvement is needed in response from certain areas – particularly York - and also from the under-40s.

The Chair invited Members to consider whether it was necessary to remove into closed session to consider the recommendations. The Panel agreed this was not required. Members voted unanimously via a show of hands to support the Mayor's proposed allocation of budget to the fire and rescue service for 2026/27 and updated Medium Term Financial Plan. The Panel will provide a statutory report confirming its recommendations.

The Mayor left the meeting at the close of this item.

Resolved

That the Panel supports the Mayor's proposal to increase the fire element of the Mayoral General Precept for 2026/27 to £116.62, representing an increase of £9.60 for a Band D property.

Members' Questions

A member highlighted two questions which had been submitted in advance of the meeting to the Deputy Mayor. These questions pertained to:

- (i) due diligence and safeguarding in relation to application forms used by a funded delivery partner (Youth Commisison); and
- (ii) assurance that stop and search and intimate search policies are compliant with national guidance requiring searches to be conducted by officers of the same biological sex as the detained person.

A full written response had already been provided to the first question which provided assurance in relation to procurement and contracting procedures. However, the Deputy Mayor agreed to respond in writing on the second matter and also to raise this at her forthcoming Online Public Meeting with the police.

The Deputy Mayor was asked about local plans by way of response to the national Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The Deputy Mayor highlighted the focus on prevention, perpetrator focus and victim support. The Panel were also advised that partners from a range of sectors would be brought into the discussions, such as from transport, health, education and the voluntary sector, to take a holistic approach to this issue.

Clarification was sought on the status and timetable for the Community Asset Register linked to the Local Resilience Forum (cited at Appendix A of Item 13). The Deputy Mayor agreed to respond in writing.

Resolved

That the Panel:

- (a) receives a written update to the question regarding stop and search policies; and
- (b) receives a written response regarding the status and timetable for the Community Asset Register linked to the Local Resilience Forum.

Shared services collaboration between policing and fire and rescue (formerly EnableNY)

Considered

The report from the Mayor regarding delivery of shared services between the police and fire services.

The Chair highlighted the background to the Panel's interest in this matter, which was linked to the business case for transfer of governance of the fire and rescue service under a former Police and Crime Commissioner and which had promised to deliver savings which largely hadn't been realised. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the Panel's concerns, apprising members of the Assurance Framework and renewed approach by the services which has involved some collaboration on services and some level of sovereignty on others. The Deputy Mayor holds the two services to account for shared services collaboration through the Assurance Framework and highlighted that she acts as critical friend to amplify the voices and concerns of the public and stakeholders.

It was highlighted that the inspectorate has commended the improvements made by

both services in relation to the shared service collaboration. Specific benefits cited under the renewed approach included ICT resilience and logistics support (for example during the Langdale wildfires incident), improved radio coverage at York Designer Outlet, strengthened financial management, and tangible estates improvements. Panel Members welcomed the clearer scope, governance and delivery approach.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the report provided.

127

Community Risk Management Plan for fire and rescue

Considered

The report from the Deputy Mayor updating Panel on the outcomes of the consultation on the CRMP and subsequent decision-making.

The Chief Fire Officer outlined the fire and rescue service's shift from "save to survive" to "invest to improve". The service has made the most notable improvement of any in the UK on its response times. The two particular areas of focus consulted on were highlighted:

- (i) extending the existing policy of not attending Automatic Fire Alarms at commercial premises without sleeping risk to 24 hours (with continued life-risk attendance, emphasis on engagement/enforcement with businesses, and alignment with regional/national practice), and
- (ii) replacement of one of the two water bowsers, supported by partnership arrangements and national resilience planning.

The Deputy Mayor summarised the additional assurances sought on rural impacts and on securing partner commitments (for example Yorkshire Water) for concurrent major incidents.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the report provided.

128

Progress on Issues Raised by the Panel

Considered –

The report from the Panel Secretariat outlining progress made against issues raised by the Panel.

Attention was drawn to the first two issues which date back to May 2025 and which it was felt it would be helpful to resolve. The Deputy Mayor agreed to write to the CPS in relation to progressing point 1 (securing prosecutions for wildlife crime).

It was highlighted by a member that points 5 and 6 required further clarification in relation to use of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre by victims coming in from outside of North Yorkshire. The Deputy Mayor agreed to seek some clarification on this and victims going out of area to other SARCs.

Members commended the new Report Fraud resource online and also the range of projects detailed under the Community Safety Serious Violence Fund.

A Member highlighted that point 3 (locality ASB incident) had been resolved.

The Chief Fire officer noted in relation to point 10 (Langdale Moor investigation) that the report will be shared in due course once it has been through a QA process.

It was agreed that all other points noted as 'completed' can now be removed from the log.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the updates provided and receives further information in due course on the outstanding issues.

129 Work Programme

Resolved

That the Panel work programme is noted and that any suggestions for inclusion will be submitted to the Principal Scrutiny Officer.

130 Any other items

The Deputy Mayor drew Panel members' attention to the National Rural Crime Network Annual Conference to be held in York on 24 March. Members may register to attend via the National Rural Crime Network website.

131 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 5 February 2026 at 10:30am at County Hall, Northallerton.

The meeting concluded at 3.40 pm.
DP.