

North Yorkshire County Council

Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 6th March, 2023 commencing at 10.30 am.

County Councillor Bryn Griffiths in the Chair. plus County Councillors Nick Brown, Chris Aldred, Karl Arthur, Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, Kevin Foster, Richard Foster, Bryn Griffiths, Tim Grogan, Robert Heseltine, Yvonne Peacock, Tony Randerson, Subash Sharma, Malcolm Taylor, Phil Trumper, Heather Moorhouse, Neil Swannick and George Jabbour (sub).

In attendance: County Councillors Carl Les and David Chance.

Officers present: Barry Khan, Adele Wilson Hope, Odette Robson and Trudy Forster.

Apologies: Councillors David Ireton and Tom Jones.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

28 Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

29 Apologies & Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

30 Public Questions & Statements

There were no public questions or statements received.

31 Bi-annual Update on Community Safety Plan Delivery & Partnership Working

Considered – A report of the Head of Safer Communities updating the Committee on the partnership working around the priority areas agreed by North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership.

Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities introduced the report and provided a detailed overview of the ongoing partnership work in support of the five priority areas, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. She also confirmed the appointment of a new Chair – Scott Bisset, Assistant Chief Constable North Yorkshire Police.

Members noted:

- The work of the Community Safety Subgroup in support of LGR
- The ongoing effectiveness of the partnership links across the County
- The existing Community Safety Teams and seven hubs were to remain in place
- There had been no Domestic Homicide Reviews since the last Community Safety

update

Councillor Bryn Griffiths suggested that future reports should contain more detail. He reflected on the number of rape cases that did not go to court (74%) and queried the number of burglaries across North Yorkshire.

Councillor Malcolm Taylor related the issue of safeguarding arrangements across North Yorkshire and queried what action plan was in place to address recent criticisms raised by North Yorkshire Police. Councillor Yvonne Peacock suggested the Police could not do their job as well without community involvement and suggested more people should be encouraged to undertake safeguarding training.

Councillor Phil Trumper suggested the move to a unitary provided greater opportunity to look more strategically at the work around the 'Protect' element of CONTEST, as detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report.

Councillor George Jabbour sought clarity on the remit overlap with the Police Fire & Crime Panel and noted that the establishment of a Combined Authority and Mayor role would provide greater opportunities.

Councillor Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff raised the issue of radicalisation and noted an increase in the spread of propaganda by the far right. In response, Odette Robson confirmed the ongoing work to identify those vulnerable to radicalisation noting they often had a number of other issues leaving them vulnerable to other things as well, requiring close monitoring and support.

Members queried what was happening with the district Council's CCTV post LGR and requested that a future update on any planned changes would be helpful as and when appropriate.

Councillor Chris Aldred questioned whether it would be a good time to look at the major venues across the county to reconsider the potential for terrorist attack, taking account of the findings from the recent Prevent Terrorism Manchester Report, and it was confirmed that work was already in hand to enhance that which had been ongoing for years.

Councillor Bryn Griffiths suggested that the partnership's fifth priority area – 'Hate Crime & Community Cohesion' needed strengthening. He also welcomed future bi-annual reports and asked that they include more information on lessons learnt. Finally, he thanked the officer for attending and it was

Resolved – that the report be noted.

32 Bi-annual Stronger Communities Programme & Corporate Volunteering Update

Considered – A report of the Assistant Director Policy Partnerships & Communities updating the Committee on the work of the Stronger Communities team and on the Corporate Volunteers Programme.

Adele Wilson-Hope, Stronger Communities Delivery Manager provide a verbal overview of the report and drew attention to:

- The ongoing work to develop a strategy for Community Networks with a focus on the proposed locality structure.
- The shift in focus of the CSOs from pandemic response to recovery based work
- The main characteristics and proposed activities of the developing Community Anchor Organisations, as listed in paragraph 3.6 of the report

- The community grants awarded across the County
- Volunteer Numbers and the work underway to ensure all volunteers in the new Council were brought in line with the same Volunteer Policy

In response to Members questions, she confirmed:

- Maintaining community resilience remained a key focus of the Stronger Communities Programme – attention was drawn to the amazing examples in areas affected by flooding delivered by the CSOs.
- Whilst a number of volunteers had worked with and in partnership with the District and Borough Councils, only Craven District Council had volunteers linked directly with their services.
- Work would continue with all the partnership organisations that involved volunteers that the District and Borough Councils had worked closely with historically, and those relationships would be continuingly developed.
- Work continued to support those on the cusp on missing out on the national cost of living support
- 93% of the shopping vouchers issued had been redeemed.
- The Warm and Well support was working well

Finally, she agreed to circulate further data on:

- The number of registered volunteers transferring across to the new Council from Craven District Council.
- A breakdown of the number of Ukrainians who initially arrived in North Yorkshire but had since moved to private rental, or relocated to another Local Authority area, or returned to Ukraine

The Chair thanked the officer for her attendance, and it was

Resolved – That the report be noted.

33 Annual Workforce Update

Considered – A report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support) providing a workforce update, with a focus on the closing down of the County Council's workforce agenda and data.

Trudy Foster - Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support), attended the meeting to provide an overview of the report, and went on to draw specific attention to the following:

- The percentage of absence related to long term sickness (53%)
- The most common causes for absence, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report
- NYCC's extensive employee health and wellbeing programme to be open to all employees across District and Borough Councils
- The increased spend on agency staff – she confirmed they were only being used where all other avenues had been exhausted. It was suggested the comparators detailed in the report should include other similar rural areas
- The ongoing sector wide multi-channel recruitment campaign for care sector staff
- Nine international social work recruits had already started and a further 29 were scheduled to start in May 2023.
- The changes made as a result of feedback from the employee networks
- The ongoing work across the county to support young people to gain employment
- The move to a hybrid model for providing employee training

- The toolkit now in place to capture corporate memory and tacit knowledge of long serving officers across all eight Councils
- The change to the incremental pay structure arising from the difficult labour market environment and recruitment/retention challenges

As a result of members' queries, Trudy Foster confirmed:

- In regard to TUPE, the Authority's commitment to transferring staff on grades comparative to those at NYCC
- The findings from staff exit interviews was carefully considered for lessons learnt
- Productivity levels as a result of working from home were being monitored
- The key areas of concern for the workforce were for staff working in the care sector, environmental health, and planning

She also agreed to circulate further information outside of the meeting on the following:

- The type of contract being offered to international recruits - fixed term contract that complied with visa issues or a standard permanent contract.
- The restrictions on how much of the unspent Apprenticeship levy could be transferred and the issues around utilising apprenticeship money
- The outcomes of the introduction of the knowledge transfer toolkit

The Chair thanked the officer for her attendance, and it was

Resolved – that the report be noted

34 Foodbanks Scrutiny Review - Verbal Update

The Committee received a verbal update on the progress of the Foodbanks Scrutiny Review from the Task Group Chair and acknowledged the importance of local members understanding what was happening across their division.

They noted the different approaches being taken by the various types of organisations offering a food provision service across the county and agreed that a further Task Group meeting was required to progress the review.

Resolved – That a further informal Foodbanks Task Group meeting be arranged.

35 Draft Work Programme 2023/24

The report of the Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer inviting Members to consider the Committee's draft Work Programme for the 2023/24 municipal year, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the county.

Members noted they were welcome to attend future meetings of the Shareholder Committee to consider updates on the Brierley Group and therefore agreed this did not need including in their work programme for their September 2023 meeting.

Resolved – That the work programme be amended to reflect their discussions at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm.