



## Agenda

- Meeting:** Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- To:** Councillors David Ireton (Chairman), Nick Brown, Chris Aldred, Karl Arthur, Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, Kevin Foster, Richard Foster, Bryn Griffiths (Vice-Chair), Tim Grogan, Robert Heseltine, Tom Jones, Yvonne Peacock, Tony Randerson, Subash Sharma, Malcolm Taylor and Phil Trumper.
- Date:** Monday, 6th March 2023
- Time:** 10.30 am
- Venue:** Brierley Room, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD

This meeting is being held as an in-person meeting and in public. The government position is that of learning to live with COVID-19, removing domestic restrictions while encouraging safer behaviours through public health advice. In view of this, hand cleanser and masks will be available for attendees upon request. The committee room will be well ventilated and attendees encouraged to avoid bottlenecks and maintain an element of social distancing. Please contact the named supporting officer for the committee, if you have any queries or concerns about the management of the meeting and the approach to COVID-19 safety.

Please do not attend if on the day you have COVID-19 symptoms or have had a recent positive Lateral Flow Test.

Further details of the government strategy (Living with COVID-19 Plan) is available here – <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-sets-out-how-to-live-safely-with-covid-19>

### Business

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022** (Pages 3 - 8)
2. **Apologies & Declaration of Interest**
3. **Public Questions & Statements**  
Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they have given notice and provided the text to Melanie Carr of Democratic Services (*contact details below*) no later than midday on Wednesday 1 March 2023. Each speaker should limit themselves to 3 minutes on any item. Members of the public who have given notice will be invited to speak:

- at this point in the meeting if their questions/statements relate to matters which are

not otherwise on the Agenda (subject to an overall time limit of 30 minutes);

- when the relevant Agenda item is being considered if they wish to speak on a matter which is on the Agenda for this meeting.

If you are exercising your right to speak at this meeting, but do not wish to be recorded, please inform the Chairman who will instruct those taking a recording to cease whilst you speak.

4. **Bi-annual Update on Community Safety Plan Delivery & Partnership Working** (Pages 9 - 14)
5. **Bi-annual Stronger Communities Programme & Corporate Volunteering Update** (Pages 15 - 22)
6. **Annual Workforce Update** (Pages 23 - 34)
7. **Foodbanks Scrutiny Review - Verbal Update**
8. **Draft Work Programme 2023/24** (Pages 35 - 38)  
Purpose of the Report – To consider, amend and adopt the committee’s work programme for the coming municipal year.
9. **Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.**

#### **Contact Details**

Enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Melanie Carr Tel: 01609 533849 or e-mail:

[Melanie.carr1@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Melanie.carr1@northyorks.gov.uk)

Website: [www.northyorks.gov.uk](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk)

Barry Khan  
Assistant Chief Executive  
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall  
Northallerton

Friday, 24 February 2023

## North Yorkshire County Council

### Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Monday, 5th December 2022 commencing at 10.30 am.

County Councillor David Ireton in the Chair. plus County Councillors Nick Brown, Chris Aldred, Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, Kevin Foster, Richard Foster, Bryn Griffiths, Tim Grogan, Robert Heseltine, Tom Jones, Yvonne Peacock, Tony Randerson, Malcolm Taylor, Phil Trumper, Eric Broadbent and George Jabbour.

Officers present: Jon Holden, Deborah Hugill, Alaina Kitching, Robert Ling and Simon Moss and Melanie Carr.

Apologies: County Councillors Karl Arthur and Subash Sharma.

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**Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book**

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#### **20 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2022**

##### **Resolved –**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2022 having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **21 Apologies & Declaration of Interest**

There were no apologies or declarations of interest to note.

#### **22 Public Questions & Statements**

There were no public questions or statements received.

#### **23 Property Services Bi-annual Performance Update**

Jon Holden, Head of Property Services, gave an overview of the key points from the presentation, as summarised below:

- Savings of £954,000 have been achieved since 2014, with £213,500 identified in 22/23
- Rationalisation opportunities associated with LGR. For example in Northallerton
- New Ways of Working (Post Covid-19) with most back office staff working from home for some of the week
- Continued reviews of running costs, including energy, in light of inflationary pressures
- Ongoing work on carbon reduction and the achievement of the 2030 target
- Carbon reduction achieved through property rationalisation, investment in building fabric, LED lighting upgrades, feasibility studies on low carbon technologies, decarbonisation of heat and behaviour change
- £1.9m on Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Scheme window replacement work at 22 schools and 4 corporate sites
- 174 properties are managed that are used for the direct or indirect delivery of services

that are not provided by Schools and Pupil Referral Units

- There are 231 community schools and community Pupil Referral Units
- There are 192 properties that are not used for direct or indirect service delivery in the short, medium or long terms
- During 2021-2022, 34 capital projects completed with total value of £22.8m
- £4.364m traded turnover in 2021-22, with a total of 280 clients.

There followed a discussion, with key points as summarised below:

- There are between 3,000 and 4,000 assets across all 8 local authorities. A programme of review and rationalisation will be undertaken after vesting day but the focus at present is upon making the 'safe and legal' transition to the new unitary authority
- A number of councillors raised queries about the future of district and borough council properties and also the use of the existing County Hall site
- Interest in understanding the liabilities and risks associated with the properties that would be inherited by the new unitary council
- The air source heat pumps are located at an office, a library and a children's resource centre. For the pumps to work effectively high levels of insulation are needed in the buildings
- The lifetime of a commercial boiler is 15 years. Towards the end of that period, a review is undertaken to see what form of heating could be adopted that is effective, efficient and helps with decarbonisation
- The refurbishment of the Grand committee room at County Hall, Northallerton will not be complete until next year. The work to remove asbestos has been complex
- There was interest in understanding how the various office setups impacted upon productivity.

County Councillor George Jabbour sought clarification on assets listed as 'other' in the presentation.

In response, Jon Holden explained that these were often bus stops or laybys used by highways to store grit or surface dressing material. He said that he would provide a written response.

County Councillor Tony Randerson asked what was happening to the old Overdale primary school site.

Jon Holden said that the site had been made secure following the suspected arson attack and that the Council was looking to dispose of the site.

The Chair summed up and thanked Jon Holden for attending the meeting and presenting his annual update to the committee.

**Resolved** – That an update on the management of the property portfolio and any planned rationalisation following the creation of the new North Yorkshire Council be brought back to the December 2023 meeting of the committee.

## 24 Annual Equality and Diversity Update

Deb Hugill, Senior Strategy and Performance Officer, gave an overview of the report with key points as summarised below:

- The report provides Members with an overview of progress with achieving the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) objectives and other EDI related work
- The public sector equality duty requires the Council to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years

- A vaccine assurance group was set up to identify and address inequalities in the COVID-19 vaccine take up
- The vaccine assurance group identified that schools could be doing more to promote uptake of school-age immunisations
- Refugee resettlement by the Council working in partnership with the district councils, has permanently resettled 127 persons (27 families) under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and to date 134 persons (34 families) under the United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)
- Work has continued on exploring the Council's employment of disabled people, particularly people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people
- Four staff networks have been established and are chaired by senior members of staff: Pride; Value in Racial Diversity; Disabled Employee; Gender Equality
- Mandatory EDI training for all managers has been developed and is in the pilot stage
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month in June was promoted within the Council
- Pride month was promoted and celebrated within the Council in June
- Digital inclusion has been enabled with the roll out of free public WiFi in 20 towns across the county
- Work is progressing to develop a proposed framework to ensure the new council meets its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty.

There followed a discussion, with the key points as summarised below:

- Access to transport is a key issue in North Yorkshire, particularly bus services and rail
- Equality of access to services in a county as sparsely populated as North Yorkshire will always be a challenge
- It is important that we, as a commissioner and provider of services, understand what people's needs are and work to prevent discrimination
- Keen to ensure that key pieces of work on equality and diversity that have been undertaken in the districts and boroughs are not lost as the new unitary council is formed.

County Councillor George Jabbour asked whether comparator data could be shared regarding the diversity of staff working for the County Council and other similar councils.

The Chair summed up and thanked Deb Hugill for attending the meeting and updating members on the Council's work on equality and diversity.

**Resolved** – That a further update be provided to the committee in December 2023.

## **25 Update on the Development of a new Council Plan 2023-27**

Simon Moss, Strategy and Performance Team Leader, introduced the report and made key points as summarised below:

- The Council Plan 2023-27 will go to County Council in February 2023 for approval
- It is the new council plan for the new council and a bringing together of elements of the existing plans from 8 local authorities. It has not been, however, an exercise in simply stapling together those plans
- Representatives from all 8 local authorities have worked together on the development of the plan
- There has been a move to adopting more thematic objectives
- There is a need to have 'deliverable ambition' on the objectives and targets
- There are five themes: Place and Environment; Economy; Health and wellbeing; People; and Organisation
- The full draft plan will be circulated by email to all members of the Council after 19

December 2022 for comment.

There followed a discussion, the key points of which are as summarised below:

- There are no references to councillors in the plan and the key role that they have to play in their Electoral Divisions
- It would be helpful to have a more detailed explanation of how the new unitary council will be locally responsive and accountable
- The community networks and the role that they will play needs to be explained in the Council Plan
- Concerns raised that the community networks were not needed as Parish and Town Councils already fulfilled that role
- There is a risk that the community networks undermine the Parish and Town Councils
- Concerns that the 'Let's Talk' campaign was not as open and transparent as it could have been and that key aspects of how the new council will work were not covered
- Members need to take a key role in the establishment and development of the community networks
- The section on the economy does not mention the inter-dependencies with neighbouring authorities
- Queries about the accountability of the community networks
- Little or no mention of sustainable housing in the plan.

The Chair summed up and thanked Simon Moss and Alaina Kitching for attending and updating the committee.

#### **Resolved –**

1. That a report on the next iteration of the Council Plan be brought to the meeting of the committee in December 2023
2. That the points raised by members in the discussions on this item be taken into account in the development of the Council Plan.

## **26 Update on the Operation of the Customer Portal**

Robert Ling, AD Technology and Change Management, and Sarah Foley, Head of Customer Services, introduced the presentation and made key points as summarised below:

- The number of website views had been slightly down on the previous year. This was to be expected as 2021 was the height of the pandemic when large amount of covid-19 related information was posted on the website for the public to access
- Social media activity continued to grow, and work was being done to expand the range of activity. The number of hits on Facebook were 48,977; Instagram 8,534; Twitter 5,505; and LinkedIn 4,067
- The feedback on the map of roadworks had been poor. The mapping system was sourced from a third party to large numbers of local authorities and work was underway to improve this system
- Services continue to be moved on-line and this is helping to reduce the number of face to face meetings
- About 57% of all services were now requested on-line
- There are challenges around telephony as it tended to be the more complex requests that go via that route
- There were delays in responding to telephone calls and work was being done to reduce those delays, but compared to many private sector organisations performance was relatively good

- More resource had been put into the night shift team in the call centre
- The focus was upon digital by choice and not digital by default.

Robert Ling apologised to members for the wrong version of the presentation being included in the papers for the meeting.

There followed a discussion, the key points of which are as summarised below:

- Need to ensure that personalised contact details were removed from the website and that generic, team emails and phone numbers were used. This helps ensure that queries were answered effectively and not missed when someone was in a meeting or on leave
- Concerns about the length of time that people had to wait until phone calls were answered and also the number of abandoned calls
- Need to ensure that telephone access was still available to people as not everyone could use or had access to IT
- Plea to ensure that all reports to councillors and information to the public was in plain English
- Queries about the capacity to ensure that all services continued to be supported once the new unitary council was established.

The Chair summed up and thanked Robert Ling and Sarah Foley for attending and updating the committee.

**Resolved** – That a further update on operation of the customer portal be brought to the December 2023 meeting of the committee.

## **27 Work Programme 2022/23**

The report of the Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer inviting Members to consider the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of 2022/23 taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the county.

**Resolved** – That the work programme be amended to include the additional items identified at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm.

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## North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership March 2023

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### 1.0 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To update on the partnership working around the priority areas agreed by North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on local authorities to create multi-agency partnerships to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment and to reduce re-offending. The world of community safety continually changes and despite significant organisational change, the need for partners to work together is essential.
- 1.2 The Strategic Plan 2022-24 aims to identify the national and local influences that affect the agreed multi-agency priority areas for delivery. The local partnership arrangements for delivery will be reviewed during this period, with a new strategy to be planned in 2024.
- 1.3 North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership has agreed the following priority areas for delivery.
  - Partnership development (links across safeguarding)
  - Community safety hubs
  - Domestic abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
  - Early intervention and prevention (Serious and Organised Crime)
  - Hate crime and community cohesion.
- 1.4 Local CONTEST arrangements (UK's counter terrorism strategy) sit within separate governance structure to the Community Safety Partnership.
- 1.5 Membership, terms of reference and chairing arrangements of North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership have recently been reviewed. Since the last update the new chair is Scott Bisset, newly appointed Assistant Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police and the vice chair is Mathew Walker, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue.

### 2.0 National and Local Influences

- 2.1 Serious violence has a devastating impact on victims and their families, it instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society. On the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 the Government introduced the **Serious Violence Duty** as part of its programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence, taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focused on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence. The duty requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence that occurs in the area and implement a strategy to address it. The authorities are:
  - Police
  - Justice (Probation and Youth Justice Services)
  - Fire and Rescue
  - Health (Integrated Care Boards)
  - Local authorities.
- 2.2 The Home Office definition of Serious Violence for the purpose of this duty, refers to:

- Violence
  - Violence against the property
  - Threats of violence.
- 2.3 The definition does not include terrorism but should consider public space youth violence. It should also consider factors surrounding violence such as:
- The maximum penalty which could be imposed for offences
  - The prevalence of violence in the area
  - The impact of violence on the community and victims.
- 2.4 Locally a working group has been established for North Yorkshire and York, Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) have been identified from each required sector. The group are working together to understand local issues and develop a strategic needs assessment. Which will be used to prepare and implement a local strategy, with a set of proposed multi-agency actions to address local serious violence. The strategy must be published by January 2024. It has been agreed that the partnership governance will sit with North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership and Safer York Partnership.
- 2.5 **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)** refers to any act of violence or abuse that disproportionately affects women and girls and is usually perpetrated by men, however it is recognised that men and boys can also be victims of these crimes and women can be perpetrators. Collaboratively, support services are available for all victims of these crimes regardless of gender, age, sexuality or background.
- 2.6 The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) with a wide range of partners has developed a multi-agency strategy with six strategic objectives.
- Ensure all women and girls are listened to, including those from under-represented communities
  - Tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls with early intervention and prevention
  - Increase public confidence and trust in North Yorkshire Police
  - Strengthen partnerships, so we work together, across agencies, to address the challenges
  - Enhance the support available for victims and survivors
  - Invest in early intervention to identify and stop potential offenders and change behaviour of those who have already offended to prevent re-offending.
- 2.7 See Appendix 1 for further detail on the multi-agency delivery of objectives. A progress report on delivery so far was published December 2022 [Joint Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy - Progress Update - December 2022 - Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner North Yorkshire \(northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](#)
- 2.8 On the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 the Government announced tougher management of the most dangerous abusers and new protection for victims. This includes adding violence against women and girls to the strategic policing requirement, published by the Home Secretary. For the first time it categorises violence against women and girls as a national threat and sets out clear expectations for police forces on how this threat should be tackled.

### 3.0 Local Arrangements

- 3.1 **Local Government Reorganisation and Community Safety-** a number of work streams have been established to bring the new council together, in preparation for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. Under the work stream of 'Regulatory Services and Emergency Planning' a community safety subgroup has been established. This group is focusing on the arrangements that

need to be in place to be safe and legal and identifying opportunities for development and transformation. There are obvious interlinks with other work streams e.g., locality working, communications and branding.

- 3.2 The group bring together the community safety leads across the eight councils. There is a good engagement from all and opportunities to develop further the relationships that already exists under the Community Safety Partnership. Each of the seven Community Safety Hubs will remain for local delivery and will continue to be a key priority of the Community Safety Partnership.
- 3.3 **Effective partnership links-** North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board have developed a joint Engagement and Communications Strategy to ensure the work of the Board and Partnerships is effectively communicated to children, young people, adults, families, professionals and the wider community in North Yorkshire. Effectively highlighted in the annual delivery of Hate Crime Awareness Week and Safeguarding Week.
- 3.4 In addition, there are four Local Safeguarding Partnerships across North Yorkshire, aiming to ensure there is local awareness raising and delivery across 'safeguarding', ensuring effective links to the work and strategies of North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 3.5 **CONTEST-** is the UK'S counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to reduce the risk of terrorism so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence. CONTEST has four strands.
- Pursue** investigate and disrupt terrorist attacks
  - Prevent** stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
  - Protect** improve our protective security to stop a terrorist attack
  - Prepare** work to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover as quickly as possible.
- 3.6 The local CONTEST arrangements sit within a separate governance structure to the Community Safety Partnership, with strong effective links. The CONTEST strategic partnership sits across North Yorkshire and City of York and is chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable. Again, the Prevent Partnership Board represents North Yorkshire and City of York and is currently chaired by the Chief Executive, Craven District Council. The Channel Panel for North Yorkshire, a statutory multi-agency panel that identifies and supports those individuals vulnerable and susceptible to terrorism, is currently chaired by the Head of Safer Communities, North Yorkshire County Council. These local partnership arrangements continue to be under review to ensure joined up effective multi-agency engagement. With a particular focus on Protect partnership arrangements to ensure that anticipated duties under a new Protect duty- Martyr's Law are fully implemented.
- 3.7 **Domestic Homicide Reviews** are a statutory function of Community Safety Partnerships. As and when the criteria are met, the Partnership will commission domestic homicide reviews. On completion the reviews are published via [Domestic Homicide Reviews | North Yorkshire Partnerships \(nypartnerships.org.uk\)](https://www.nypartnerships.org.uk). Specific learning events take place, and the Community Safety Partnership's performance group maintains oversight and scrutiny of recommendations and actions. Since the creation of North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership four domestic homicide reviews have been commissioned, one is currently sitting with the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel, and once approval has been received this review will be published.
- 3.8 A Domestic Homicide Review is a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 years or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a) A person to whom he/ she was related or with whom he/ she was or had been

in an intimate personal relationship or b) A member of the same household as him/ herself. Where a victim took his or her life and the circumstances give rise to concern, a review should be undertaken.

3.9 **Domestic Abuse Partnership Arrangements** Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on local authorities to undertake the following duties:

- Form a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board which represents key partners and the voice of victims, survivors and their children
- Undertake a needs assessment of domestic abuse safe accommodation and publish a strategy in respect of that provision.

3.10 The Safe Accommodation Strategy for North Yorkshire and City of York can be accessed via [NYCC & CYC Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy \(nypartnerships.org.uk\)](https://nypartnerships.org.uk). A large scale independent multi-agency strategic needs assessment by Safe Lives has been commissioned to review all domestic abuse systems and partnerships across North Yorkshire and City of York. The findings will shape and influence future delivery including the spend of the significant grant from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

#### 4.0 Recommendations

4.1 For Members to take note of the overarching activity being driven and developed, with strategic oversight from North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership. Future updates will be provided, and specific themed reports from this general overview, can be presented at future committees.

**Report provided by:** Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities

**Date:** 22 February 2023

## Multi-Agency Objectives

**Objective 1:** Listening to all women and girls, including those from rural and under-represented communities, and proactively seeking feedback and inform continuous service improvements.

Partners, commissioned services are/ will be proactively engaging with individuals and communities, particularly

- Ethnic minority communities
- Girls in care and care leavers
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- LGBTQ+ community
- Armed services communities
- Rural communities
- Sex workers
- Students
- Those with disabilities, including hidden disabilities and neurodiversity.

The strategy will ensure parity of services across both urban and rural areas, to reflect unmet needs in communities, with consideration of the unique vulnerabilities of those living in rural areas and other isolated communities.

**Objective 2:** Tackling the root causes of VAWG through Prevention and Early Intervention

Challenging everyday sexism and misogyny is key to tackling the root causes of VAWG, therefore a series of campaigns will be developed and delivered across a number of settings.

- Challenging misogyny from a young age, highlighting healthy vs unhealthy relationships and behaviours
- Inappropriate language and behaviour, particularly street harassment
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, also known as 'Clare's Law'
- Spiking incidents, particularly with pubs and clubs
- Sexual exploitation of adults, particularly increasing understanding of 'survival sex'
- Illegal cultural harms, clarifying that much of the conduct which sustains them is unlawful and/ or criminal
- Stalking in all its forms, including online harassment and 'revenge porn'.

### Early Help and Community-led Interventions

A network of VAWG Champions in local communities and workplaces to help raise awareness of VAWG and ensure victims can easily access help and advice at the earliest opportunity.

Development of 'Safe Spaces' and support for other initiatives to keep women and girls safe e.g., 'Ask for Angela' and 'Ask for ANI' and vulnerability awareness training for workers in the night-time economy settings. Work to be done with education partners to co-develop and co-produce age-appropriate materials to challenge misogyny.

**Objective 3:** Increasing public confidence and trust in the Police

Training and support to enable police officers to adopt a trauma aware response to ensure the right support is offered when victims do report.

Continue to strengthen Rape and Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panels to review cases which have not attained the required evidential level for prosecution or otherwise resulted in a failed prosecution, in order to identify learning opportunities and ensure continuous service improvements.

**Objective 4:** Strengthening the multi-agency approach to address VAWG

Safeguarding and Risk Management- Support the expansion of multi-agency work focused on identifying and supporting victims of all forms of VAWG.

Continue to support and develop the Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) process to more effectively identify and target the most harmful and serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**Objective 5:** Enhancing support services for victims

Continue to explore options to jointly commission where possible a range of services to offer trauma aware support for victims of all forms of VAWG.

**Objective 6:** Facilitating behaviour change by perpetrators

Continue to develop a range of services and interventions that focus on both enforcement and rehabilitation of perpetrators of all forms of VAWG, including illegal cultural harms, stalking and harmful sexual behaviour.

## North Yorkshire County Council

### Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee

6 March 2023

#### Stronger Communities Programme & Corporate Volunteering Update

Report of Assistant Director Policy, Partnerships and Communities

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#### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the work of Stronger Communities and the Corporate Volunteering Programme.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Despite the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic over the past 12 months, the community support infrastructure through the Community Support Organisation (CSO) network has remained largely in place since March 2020. As we moved into recovery, a minority of CSOs wound down or scaled back their pandemic response activities. A significant number have however continued to work with the programme on supporting communities with the challenges they face in relation to cost of living and winter pressures. This has been alongside exploring how the successful CSO model could be built upon and developed further to support the health, wellbeing and prevention agenda, and wider community resilience in localities, through the Community Anchor Organisation (CAO) model concept.
- 2.2 In addition to this work, the programme has also been able to resume pre-pandemic projects and has taken the lead role on a number of new countywide programmes.
- 2.3 A number of new national initiatives have been launched over the past 12 months particularly around alleviating the cost of living pressures being felt by families and residents on low incomes. Stronger Communities are leading on a number of these programmes and work in partnership with others within the Council and externally.

#### 3.0 Covid-19 Pandemic related activities

##### 3.1 Community Support Organisations (CSOs)

As previously reported to the Committee, the work of the CSOs has shifted focus in 2022/23, moving from pandemic response to recovery. Instead of supporting people who were self-isolating or shielding, their efforts have been on building confidence and independence and helping to remove some of the dependencies that emerged during the pandemic. This has included activities such as supported shopping trips, accompanied walks, social events and support groups and activities.

- 3.2 In acknowledgement of broader community resilience challenges including cost of living and winter pressures, the CSOs have been retained until the end of March 2023; continuing to work in partnership with NYCC to act as a place based single point of contact for locally based support, in collaboration with their volunteers, partners and networks.

- 3.3 A total of £924,700 has been invested in the CSO infrastructure in 2022/23; this includes a £22,000 contribution from the Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to



support the development and rollout of the Rockwood Frailty Toolkit. A breakdown of CSO investment by geography is outlined below.

District	No. of CSOs	Total Value
Craven	3	£92,000
Hambleton	4	£138,000
Harrogate	6	£203,500
Richmondshire	5	£126,000
Ryedale	2	£68,000
Scarborough	3	£173,200
Selby	3	£124,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>£924,700</b>

### 3.4 Future Opportunities for CSOs

Stronger Communities has also been working alongside the CSOs to identify elements of the model that could be retained and developed further to support the wider health, well-being and prevention, and community resilience agenda. Following a well-attended 'Response to Recovery' event that took place in May 2022 for those organisations that had undertaken the CSO role, followed by the 'Learning Together and Co-Creation' day in early November, the development of a Community Anchor Organisation network across North Yorkshire has been progressed. This is building on the successful CSO model, and further exploring the role that locally rooted, place based organisations can play in building resilience in communities.

3.5 In February 2023, as part of its established 'Achieve Together' Investment Programme, Stronger Communities opened a new opportunity to establish a Community Anchor model for North Yorkshire. Grants of £15,000 a year (for up to 3 years) will be made available from April 2023 for place rooted organisations, based in principal service towns or centres, who are able to serve a wider hinterland. This investment supports the core aims of the wider Stronger Communities Programme which include:

- Prevention and reducing health inequalities
- Community resilience
- Social regeneration

3.6 After gathering insight from other local authorities and community development programmes and gaining insight from voluntary and community sector organisations (including CSOs), a number of characteristics and activities which we would hope to see in a Community Anchor Organisation have been developed. This encompasses:

#### *Characteristics*

- Crucial to the place and the community in which it is based.
- A voice for local people.
- Collaborative, open and encouraging of other contributions.
- Proactive with a can-do mindset.
- Already delivering services.
- Independent and community led.
- Financially resilient.

#### *Activities*

- Building local partnerships and alliances to deliver services.
- Improving physical and mental wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.
- Regeneration of their communities.



- Building community resilience.
- Improving people's financial resilience.

3.7 The funding currently being used to support this work is non-recurring and as such, the challenge will be to develop financially sustainable options for CAOs in order for them to become less dependent on public sector grants and establish diverse income streams – which could include earned income through contracts and charging.

### 3.8 Community Grants

In addition to the work with CSOs, Stronger Communities has awarded £114,696 in Community Grants supporting 109 groups and / or projects to date in 2022/23. This investment has allowed communities and small grass roots groups and organisations to recover from the pandemic and to re-establish local events and activities in their communities. A geographical breakdown of the grants awarded is outlined below.

District	No. of Grants	Total Value	% of total number	% of total spend
Craven	8	£10,000	7	9
Hambleton	8	£7,300	7	6
Harrogate	14	£13,990	13	12
Richmondshire	10	£10,000	9	9
Ryedale	15	£14,500	14	13
Scarborough	37	£35,214	34	31
Selby	16	£15,692	15	14
Countywide	1	£8,000	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>£114,696</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

## 4.0 **Wider Stronger Communities Programme Work**

4.1 The Stronger Communities programme has been able to resume some of its pre-pandemic work over the past twelve months; it is also leading on a number of large new national programmes.

4.2 The range of activities the team are leading on, or are contributing to, is broad and varied:

- Holiday Activities and Food Programme for free school meal eligible children (Department of Education funded)
- Household Support Fund - awards to low-income households (Department of Work and Pensions funded)
- Homes for Ukraine Programme (Home Office)
- Wellbeing and Prevention investment – Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected
- Digital Inclusion
- Cost of living
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- Mental health programmes (NHS)
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

### 4.3 Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Stronger Communities continue to lead on the delivery of this programme, which was launched with the branding of FEAST (Food, Entertainment, Arts & Sport Together) in partnership with Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) and the voluntary and community sector. Coordination of the programme has been undertaken by North

Yorkshire Together who in conjunction with a network of locally placed clubs and community organisations, deliver a range of enriching activities over holiday periods.

- 4.4 The new Holiday Activities and Food Coordinator is now in post and is working with North Yorkshire Together partners, as well as colleagues in CYPS, Stronger Communities and Public Health to develop the programme further with a particular emphasis on providing a wraparound service for families, its nutrition and healthy food offer, building stronger relationships with schools, and increasing the number of teenagers engaging with the programme.
- 4.5 Household Support Fund  
In the last 6 months, Stronger Communities have continued to administer the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funded Household Support Fund.
- 4.6 The third phase of the scheme aimed to support those most in need with significantly rising living costs between October 2022 and March 2023, particularly focussing on those who missed out on national government cost of living support. In line with the expenditure guidelines and the agreed eligibility framework developed in partnership with the seven District and Borough Councils, 23,395 eligible households across North Yorkshire have received a direct award in the form of a shopping voucher in January 2023. This encompassed eligible families, pensioners and working age adult households, as well as those who missed out on other forms of national Cost of Living support. In addition to this, supplementary funding was awarded to North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF), Warm and Well, and 16 food providers across the County.
- 4.7 Household Support Fund will continue from 1 April 2023 for a further 12 months; guidance for the scheme has been received and work will commence on how this will be deployed shortly.
- 4.8 Homes for Ukraine Programme  
Following the launch of the national Homes for Ukraine programme, officers from the Stronger Communities team have continued to lead on North Yorkshire's multi-agency approach to ensuring arrangements are in place for host families (sponsors) are approved (home and welfare checks) and procedures are in place to distribute the government funding for sponsors and guests. The approach also supports the many local groups who have set up across the county to help welcome and support the Ukrainian refugees with things such as language lessons, social events and peer support.
- 4.9 The current number of Ukrainian guests residing in North Yorkshire, through the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship programme is approximately 838. In addition, 346 guests, who initially arrived in North Yorkshire, have either moved into private rental accommodation, to another Local Authority area, or returned to Ukraine, making a total of 1184 arrivals since March 2022. Of the guests who have moved on from their sponsor, 78 groups, or 191 individuals are now living in rental properties within North Yorkshire.
- 4.10 The government has recently announced a number of updates to the scheme; this includes an extension to the maximum sponsorship term from 12 to 24 months, an increase to the thank you payment once guests have been in the UK for 12 months, and additional funding to acquire housing and support for guests to move into their own homes and reduce the risk of homelessness.
- 4.11 Wellbeing and Prevention – Stay Healthy, Independent & Connected  
The Stronger Communities team have continued to support colleagues in Targeted Prevention (Health and Adult Services) to develop options for future investment in well-being and prevention, learning from the place-based pilots operating in Craven and Selby.

The Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected Grants scheme was launched in late 2022, with new providers starting work in their localities on 1 April 2023.

#### 4.12 Digital Inclusion

The digital buddies and champions programme delivered in partnership with Citizens Online, libraries, Living Well and community volunteers has proved a vital resource during the pandemic helping people to access online services and stay connected to friends and families. This has been delivered in tandem with the recycling of ICT equipment and devices project Reboot North Yorkshire. Awareness of Reboot North Yorkshire continues to grow, with an increased number of organisations and services referring their beneficiaries into the scheme, particularly those who are socially isolated, or those in need of a device to access training or education.

#### 4.13 Cost of living - Food Insecurity

Following the Council's investment of a Defra grant in 2020/21 for a range of community projects that help combat food and fuel insecurity arising out of the pandemic; additional funding was made available to deliver the Food for the Future programme, aiming to embed local sustainable food support options, which also support beneficiaries to build their levels of confidence and independence. An additional 44 have also been made available to food banks and / or providers of free or low-cost food through the three rounds of HSF.

4.14 The food insecurity research and insight work continues to progress well in conjunction with City of York Council (CYC), with the report expected in Spring 2023. This broadly encompasses the following areas:

- Developing and utilising an evidence base of interventions including associated outcomes.
- Building our understanding of the realities faced by food providers, the unmet needs, the real-life outcomes, and thoughts about sustainability /viability.
- Developing a clearer map of provision across York & North Yorkshire and gaining a feel for possible gaps in areas / or models.
- Innovating / experimenting with an approach that involved people with lived experience.

4.15 The team continues to work closely with the Public Health Healthier Lives, Community and Economy team who are looking to bring together a range of organisations in the food sector to establish a food system framework and ultimately a food partnership to address the immediate to long term challenges presented. Joint work on exploring the impact of Cost of Living on Health Outcomes will also commence in Spring 2023.

#### 4.16 Broader Cost of Living work

In conjunction with internal and external partners and coordinated by Stronger Communities, the cost-of-living support page on the NYCC website has been updated and reconfigured to provide as comprehensive a picture as possible. This encompasses links to more local level sources of information, including the District and Borough Councils and Community Support Organisations (CSOs), as well as detailing information on Warm Spaces, and support available for community and voluntary groups wishing to tackle cost of living challenges in their communities.

4.17 The programme has also supported the development of the NYCC Cost of Living Communications Campaign utilising a variety of tools. This includes the development of a range of social media assets and an A5 leaflet that has been made available in hard copy and digitally, which will drive people to the updated cost of living page on the website, their local CSO, and potentially to NYCC's Customer Service Centre by telephone as an alternative.

#### 4.18 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

As part of the government's Levelling Up agenda the Council submitted its proposals for its allocated UKSPF funding, which have now been approved. There is a strong emphasis within the criteria for UKSPF on place shaping, community empowerment, engagement and strengthening the voluntary and community sector, and Stronger Communities are taking the lead role in the delivery of the Communities and Place strand. An advisory group is in place made up of public and voluntary sector partners and the year one allocations have been signed off with contracts being prepared.

#### 4.19 Mental health programmes (NHS)

The Stronger Communities Programme has worked in partnership with colleagues in Public Health and the NHS to deliver a range of community led mental health projects since 2019. These include grass roots suicide prevention programmes and other specialist mental health services. As part of the national Community Mental Health Transformation programme, Stronger Communities continue to work in partnership with the NHS to transform mental health services for people with a serious mental illness through building capacity within communities and the voluntary sector. The approach includes NHS financial investment, managed by Stronger Communities, working with four place based multi-agency partnerships to develop and/or pilot new community -based services and projects through grant funding to voluntary organisations and community groups with the overarching aim of enabling people with a serious mental illness to live well in their communities.

#### 4.20 Children and Young People

In conjunction with Children and Young People Service (CYPS), the Stronger team continues to work with the Early Help team from CYPS to deliver their Get Going grants scheme that seeks to grow community capacity by working alongside and with our communities to stimulate, support and develop activities that enable children, young people and their families to be happy, healthy and achieving.

#### 4.21 Capacity Building

Stronger Communities Programme has continued to strengthen local community assets and infrastructure; this has included encouraging relationships and collaborations between voluntary and community sector organisations as well as stabilising, and / or building capacity within them if required. The impact of the pandemic on income and capacity within the sector, together with concerns in relation to rising fuel costs is resulting in concerns about their long-term viability and sustainability. Stronger Communities continues to work with colleagues such as Community First Yorkshire, The Two Ridings Foundation, the Lottery and other partners to identify issues and concerns and develop joint responses.

#### 4.22 Local Government Reorganisation

The Stronger Communities team is involved in a number of work-streams to support the formation of the new unitary council. Stronger Communities also delivered elements of the Let's Talk campaign in partnership with District Councils between September and December 2022.

### **5.0 Corporate Volunteering Programme Update**

5.1 The Corporate Volunteer Project relates to all volunteering activity that takes place by members of the community to support County Council services. This includes volunteers who help across many different services from the Youth Justice Service, Libraries, Major Incident Response, Countryside Service and Waste reduction education.

5.2 Sponsored by Stronger Communities, the corporate Volunteer Project is being delivered by the Resourcing Solutions Team – HR, recognising the synergies between the volunteer journey and employee journey, whilst acknowledging that there are key differences

between the two. The focus for this project is to maximise and optimise the use of volunteers across all council services, creating consistencies in marketing, recruitment, induction, expenses, training, ongoing support and efficient volunteer processes.

5.3 A Volunteer Sub-Group meets regularly to provide a steer for the project, discussing challenges and priorities and inputting into areas of work as they progress. This group comprises of representatives from Stronger Communities and the Resourcing Solutions Team and lead officers from the services that manage volunteers.

#### 5.4 Volunteer Numbers

The number of registered volunteers in September 2022 stood at approximately 4000. This includes people who volunteer their time to support wider council services such as community Libraries and as School Governors. At the previous O&S committee a request was made for detail of all the services volunteers support, this is provided at **Appendix 1**.

#### 5.5 Current Focus

The key focus for the Corporate Volunteering Project at the present time is Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and ensuring that volunteer services currently engaged by one of the District, Borough or the County Councils are identified and brought into a consistent Volunteer approach in the new North Yorkshire Council.

5.6 To date services that utilise volunteers have been identified in Craven District Council and the project is currently working with them to transition the approach for recruiting, training, coordinating and supporting volunteers

5.7 All policies and procedures relating to volunteers have been reviewed and it will be proposed that all volunteers in the new Council are brought in line with the same Volunteer Policy to ensure the same consistent approach.

### 6.0 **Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members note the updates on:
- i. The work of the Stronger Communities programme.
  - ii. The Corporate Volunteering Programme.

#### Report Authors

Adele Wilson-Hope, Stronger Communities Delivery Manager (Hambleton)  
Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Stronger Communities  
Keeley Metcalfe, Talent Acquisition Manager  
23 February 2023

#### Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Update on Volunteer Numbers

## Number of NYCC Volunteers

Directorate	Service	Approx. number of registered volunteers	Role(s)
BES	Countryside Volunteers	126	Checking paths, low-level maintenance and conservation tasks
BES	Rotters	44	Events/shows, schools workshops and talks to groups all promoting reduction of food waste, home composting, recycling and reuse.
CSD	Libraries	1433	Help customers in library, help with shelving and stock, deliver books for home library service, help with children's activities & IT.
CSD	Records and archives	25	Digitising records, cataloguing, organising materials.
CSD	Democratic Services	50	Volunteers serve as appeals panel members for exclusion or admissions appeals.
CSD	MIRT	16	Supporting people affected by an incident.
CSD	Ready for Anything	325	Database of community volunteers to be called on in an emergency.
CYPS	Adult learning	32	Volunteer teaching assistants (Syrian Refugee project and English classes).
CYPS	Youth Justice Service	37	Panel members, appropriate adult, mentor, reparation supervisor.
CYPS	Young People's Council	5	A youth voice project for young people who have experienced Care Services.
CYPS	Youth Voice Executive	12	A youth voice committee representing young people's view across North Yorkshire.
CYPS	SENDIASS	5	Independent support for parents of children or young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or for young people (16 -25 years) with SEND to ensure their education, learning or training needs are supported.
CYPS	School governors	1775	Serve as governors and trustees on school boards.
CYPS	Peer Mentors	2	Peer mentors- current or former care leavers who have volunteered to mentor other care leavers.
CYPS	Chaperones	10	Chaperones who accompany children who have a licence to act or perform, to auditions/performances.
HAS	Gardeners	1	Supporting service users with gardening and conservation activities.
CS	Team North Yorkshire (Covid Vols)	111	Responding to COVID support requests (weekends) e.g. collecting prescriptions, shopping etc.
<b>Total</b>		<b>4009</b>	

New Volunteers will join North Yorkshire Council from Craven District Council, where they volunteer in Museum Services and the Tourist Information Centre. No other current volunteers have been identified in District/Borough Councils.



## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### CORPORATE AND PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

#### WORKFORCE UPDATE

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report represents the final County Council's workforce update, with key workforce data, areas of progress in year, and a closing down of the County Council's workforce agenda and data.

#### **2.0 A Smaller More Diverse Workforce**

- 2.1 The County Council's workforce (non-schools) has fallen slightly at a headcount of 7,255 and FTE of 5,627, with unfilled vacancies now seen across a range of services. The non-schools FTE has reduced since 2011 by over 10% with numbers directly employed in schools reducing by 47% FTE. However, this relates to schools converting to academies when numbers are removed from NYCC records and so does not represent an actual reduction in the overall education workforce.

#### **3.0 Key Workforce Data**

- 3.1 **Composition:** the non-schools' workforce continues to see a slight increase in the proportion of men, with a split of 23.5% male and 76.5% female. The proportion from an ethnic minority background increased slightly at 2.9% (against a local population figure of 3.3%). The proportion of staff declaring a disability decreased slightly to 3.8% from 4%. However, 24.2% of staff chose not to declare their ethnicity, and 50.8% have not identified if they have a disability, which is partly due to an issue with reporting data, so these figures are known to be underreported. The average age of the workforce increased slightly to 47.5 years and the proportion of under 25-year-olds has reduced to 4.58%, from 4.85% last year. 43% of staff are full time, so 57% work part time, with around 6% of these having multiple part time roles.
- 3.2 **Sickness Absence:** sickness absence (measured in number of FTE days lost) was 8.72 days in 2021/22, an increase on the previous year, but still lower than 11.5 mean FTE for all English single tier and county councils and 10.0 mean FTE for all English authorities (2021-2022). In the first 3 quarters of 2022/23 this has continued to increase with a projected outturn figure of around 9.1 days. This still remains low in comparison with other similar benchmark councils which are looking to outturn at 10.4 -12.2 days.
- 3.3 In 2022/23 working days lost to long term sickness absence accounted for 53% of all absence, with the most common causes of sickness absence remaining as stress, depression and anxiety related (28%), musculo-skeletal problems (11.8%) and infections (12.6%). The impact of Covid is still ongoing, making up 6.5% of absences in 2022/23, and Covid infection can also be recorded under other absence reasons including chest and respiratory due to the effects of long Covid.

- 3.4 Sickness absence was particularly low at the start of the pandemic, when large parts of the workforce moved to homeworking, and normal sickness absence was reduced due to self isolation requirements or employees being furloughed. NYCC has, along with other employers, seen a rise in sickness absence subsequently. The reasons for this are varied. Postponed operations result in sickness absence prior to surgery and during post-operative recovery. The extended demands of the pandemic, and staff shortages in the last 18 months, will have had an impact on pressures for the remaining employees and consequent illness and absence levels. Covid infections have continued to have an impact, and there has also been a rise in infections other than Covid which have spiked due to less communal transmission of viruses during the pandemic.
- 3.3 **Employee Health and Wellbeing:** NYCC aims to provide a health-promoting and inclusive workplace so staff can feel and perform at their best. Staff are encouraged to use the wellbeing resources and support those around them in doing so.
- 3.4 The initiatives this year include those below, which have also been made available to district council staff wherever possible:
- AskSAL, our Staff Advice line, offering an additional line of support by providing practical advice and support which is run by professional HR staff.
  - The Employee Assistance Programme provided by Health Assured includes access to 24/7 counselling services for staff (and any member of their household). Call volumes from April to September 2023 totalled 1,872, higher than the previous 6 month period and representing 7.5% of total headcount. There is also a range of online diagnostic tools, self-help guides and plans on lifestyle issues such as mental health, healthy eating and exercise. Health Assured is available via an app as well as a website.
  - Employee support groups have been established for staff, focussing on a range of health and wellbeing topics including menopause, working parents and autism. These groups are available to all staff, and during the past 12 months staff in Districts and Boroughs have been able to access these.
  - There are Yammer communities and/or MS Teams groups established for all support groups, and an email contact list is maintained of anyone who wants to be kept informed on the topic. There are currently 443 employees on the contact list, with 326 people in Yammer communities and 80 people in MS Teams groups.
  - The [‘Taking Care of YOU Toolkit’](#) is a useful tool to help prevent and/or manage stress. It raises awareness and understanding of mental health and includes straightforward strategies and coping mechanisms to help manage the challenges of work and the workplace, and the impact of these on mental health.
  - The Looking After You intranet site provides a wealth of resources on a range of health and wellbeing topics.
  - Bereavement resources include practical advice and guidance for those dealing with bereavement personally or supporting others through loss.
  - Learning Zone packages are available on personal resilience and mental health.
  - Regular communications on healthy workplace issues and national health and awareness raising campaigns, using the intranet, key messages, blogs, team brief, Yammer, newsletters and the Healthy Workplace Group. Highlighting less well talked about topics and provision of related resources (e.g. domestic abuse charter, menopause guidance and training).
  - Regular reminders about resources available to staff
  - Promotion of access to free external provision – Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership wellbeing sessions, psychological first aid training, resilience hub, Humber Recovery College and Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance.



- Voice Your Views staff survey incorporating results on wellbeing.
- Health Needs Assessment planned as a pulse survey in 2023.
- Information and support on Zoom fatigue including a webinar and top tips.
- Guidance for supporting staff who have had Covid and long covid, to be reviewed this year to reflect any updated national guidance.
- Guidance for managers on supporting staff affected by domestic abuse with a Learning Zone package to be developed and available this year.
- Guidance for managers and a separate one for employees on the menopause, which have also been converted into online training packages.

### 3.4 **Turnover:**

Turnover was 15.9% in 2021/22, matching the mean level for all English authorities, 15.8% in 2021-2022. Turnover has decreased slightly in 2022/23 with a predicted outturn of 14.9%. The job market locally and nationally has experienced significant pressures due to a range of factors, including the impact of BREXIT and market shortages for some roles caused by the pandemic and the aftermath. These and other factors, including changes in employees' working expectations and priorities have created a more difficult job market. The cost-of-living crisis added to an already difficult recruitment and retention picture with significant pay inflation for entry level roles across retail, hospitality and facilities (cleaning and catering). NYCC is particularly vulnerable to this pay inflation with higher levels of directly employed cleaners, care staff and teaching assistants than other authorities where these services have been outsourced or where there are less LA schools. However, NYCC's length of service remains a healthy average 13 years against a local authority average of 7 years, and the Council continues to be relatively successful in recruiting and retaining staff in a very difficult recruitment environment.

### 3.5 **Spend on agency pay:** The workforce approach is to employ staff on permanent contracts and supplement this with internal relief staff (usually staff with an existing part time contract at/in a different location/role) or use existing staff in the same team to work extra hours.

Agency staff are used only in circumstances when all other options have been exhausted, however increasingly scarce labours markets has resulted in the increased use of agency solutions. Spend on agency staff was £716,389 in 2020/21, £2,315,069 in 21/22 and so far is £4,282,458 in the first 3 quarters of 2022/23 with the outturn expected to be some £5m.

### 3.6 Whilst this is a significant increase, agency spend remains low compared to other local authorities; For instance: other regional council spend: Rotherham £7.47m, York £9.5m, Leeds £10m, Bradford £17m. The largest increases in agency use are due to increasing demand for care workers, social workers and occupational therapists in Health and Adult Services, and for educational psychologists, social workers and children's residential care workers in Children's Services due to both recruitment challenges and increased activity.

### 3.7 IR35 off-payroll charges for individual services, introduced for the public sector by HMRC in 2017, account for a portion of total agency spend. For 21/22, the total IR35 was £557,377 and is currently at £1,285,282 in the first 3 quarters of 22/23. NYCC minimise the use of interim and consultants covered by IR35, and the vast majority of off-payroll (IR35) engagements are for specialist and independent mental health and best interest assessors (94%) and Educational Psychologists required due to statute/regulation.

## 4.0 **Recruitment Developments**

### 4.1 Young People's Employment Initiatives

In North Yorkshire the percentage of young people aged 16–24 claiming out of work benefits as of November 2021 was 3.5% (4.9% nationally), compared to 3.7% in the same

period 12 months prior, and 3% in November 2019 (pre-pandemic). This is attributed to the return to a buoyant employment market combined with the Kickstart Scheme. NYCC wants to equip young people for life and work in a strong North Yorkshire economy and provides employability opportunities for young people which is also an opportunity to develop a pipeline of future talent for the workforce, addressing workplace and labour market demographics and recruitment difficulties.

- 4.2 A range of employment initiatives have been developed in NYCC over many years including: Supported Internships, Work Experience, Apprenticeships, Graduate Scheme, Graduate Internships, Traineeships, and most recently the Kickstart Scheme, as detailed below.
- 4.3 Kickstart Scheme (Jan 2021 – March 2022 start dates, up to Sept 2022 completion)  
This Government funded programme was launched as part of the Chancellor's 'Plan for Jobs' in 2020 provided jobs of 25 hour per week of 6 months duration to 16 - 24-year-olds at risk of long-term unemployment. Jobs were provided in NYCC and placements were also brokered for Small to Medium Sized Enterprise's (SME's) across the county. NYCC partnered with over 100 NY employers to provide 540 Kickstart jobs including 61 in NYCC. At the end of September '22, 163 young people had been appointed to these roles and the scheme has now ceased. There were a number of roles unfilled due to either them being based in a remote geographic location, lack of engagement from employers or roles nationally known to be hard to fill' e.g. Care work or food production.
- 4.4 All 163 Kickstart employees have now completed/left their Kickstart jobs. Of this total number, at least 55% have either secured employment or progressed into further education.
- 4.5 Despite efforts to maintain contact with participants it has not been possible to track destinations after Kickstart for a large number and so many outcomes have been classed as 'unknown', although they may have gone on to secure further employment or education. All 163 Kickstart participants have been provided with employability support and offered additional support to help find employment.
- 4.6 Work Experience  
22 requests for work experience have been met. During summer 2022, 11 'in-person' work experience placements have been hosted by a variety of services including Technology and Change, Finance and Major Projects. Feedback from young people and services has been positive.
- 4.7 Working closely with the Leaving Care service  
Care Leavers are supported to secure work placements and paid employment in NYCC. There are currently 11 Care Leavers in paid employment in NYCC, 5 are completing apprenticeships with 6 in substantive roles.
- 4.8 Princes Trust  
The Council has partnered with the Princes Trust to recruit 78 young people into Health and Social care. Depending on the young person's circumstances this includes work experience, placements and employment opportunities. The programme commenced in September 2022 with 20 active young people engaged, and 3 have secured employment.
- 4.9 Other initiatives  
Include Traineeships, online Employability Sessions and initiatives with universities such as mentoring programmes and under-graduate/graduate internships.
- 4.10 Resourcing for Health and Adult Services and external care providers

Recruiting care workers is a national challenge with approximately 165,000 unfilled vacancies nationally and some 1,700 in North Yorkshire. In response NYCC developed the MakeCareMatter campaign ([www.makecarematter.co.uk](http://www.makecarematter.co.uk)) to promote careers in care and increase recruitment marketing for the sector. Alongside this, the Recruitment Hub, launched in October 2018, provides recruitment support to the care sector and has been a strong base from which to increase recruitment support to the sector.

- 4.11 Demand for care workers has continued to increase, with demand far outstripping supply. Recruiting post pandemic, care work remains unattractive to many job seekers, this, together with the cost of living pressures, exacerbated the situation. Care sector recruitment has become increasingly competitive with the sector struggling to compete with supermarket and other employment sector pay rates and a range of incentives to attract talent.
- 4.12 To meet the internal and external care sector staff requirement, a sector wide multi-channel recruitment campaign is constantly delivered reaching approx. 18,000 weekly. The Recruitment Hub is currently, actively working with approximately 70 providers to recruit to over 120 vacancies. Since starting this campaign, 1112 care workers, have been recruited and more recently over the past 3 quarters 80 workers have been recruited for external providers with an average of 62 placements per quarter across 2021/22 & 2022/23.
- 4.13 Recruitment to other professional roles continued for the first three quarters of 2022/23 including Social workers. Recruiting so far in 22/23 an average of 22.5 vacancies per quarter with an average 17 new starters per quarter. Plus 29 international social workers have been recruited (9 arrived, 20 arriving Feb/March) and 9 Occupational Therapists.
- 4.14 Recruitment from abroad  
The Council uses all available routes into social work (i.e. Step up to Social Care, Return to Social Care and more typically newly qualified routes) but despite this and following targeted recruitment campaigns multiple vacancies remain in adult social workers across the county and children’s social workers in the coastal area. As a result of the national shortage and growing demand the Council has undertaken international recruitment of 29 adult and 10 children social workers from South Africa and Zimbabwe. The scarcity is a national issue with many local authorities recruiting internationally something the NHS has relied on for many years. 10 new recruits have arrived and the remaining 29 arrive from next month into May which will reduce agency spend on social workers. Many regional local authorities have or are planning to recruit internationally.
- 4.15 The Council is also considering recruiting internationally for Education Psychologists similarly due to scarcity. Whilst international recruitment is costly the savings on agency spend will cover the international costs within 6 months.
- 4.16 Apprenticeships  
The table below shows the total number of starts and completions across all areas of the levy spend.

	Corporate	Schools	Transfer
<b>Total number of starts (Apr 17 – Dec 22)</b>	542	179	191
<b>Total number of completions (Apr 17 – Dec 22)</b>	220	48	4
<b>Q4 21/22 and Q1 - Q3 22/23 number of starts</b>	77	24	51

4.17 Since January 2022 there has been a good mix of starts across most areas of the Council with higher numbers in Accounts (8), Care (12), CYPS worker (16), Digital (7), Improvement Practitioner (5) and Social Workers (9). In schools there continues to be a good level of starts for Teaching Assistants (5), Early Years (8) and Leadership and Management (9).

4.18 The table below shows the total number of starts across all directorates.

	CS	HAS	BES	CYPS	Ryedale *
<b>Total number of starts (Apr 17 – Dec 22)</b>	218	223	76	22	3
<i>* Graduate Apprentices employed by NYCC and seconded to Ryedale</i>					

#### 4.19 Unspent Funds

Unspent funds from the levy pot continue to be returned to the Treasury. Since the introduction of the levy just over £2m has been returned to the Treasury, with approx. 90% of the money returned belonging to schools. NYCC has faced a number of challenges and structural limitations to maximising levy spend as previously reported including:

- Large number of part time workers making apprenticeships ineligible or impractical.
- Most schools are small, in rural locations with small workforces and a high percentage being part time, making an apprenticeship almost impossible due to low contracted hours or ability to cover the 20% off the job training.
- Rurality with limited public transport reducing labour market mobility for apprentices who are lower paid until qualified.
- The requirement to undertake Level 2 Maths and English functional skills for Level 2 & 3 apprenticeships has a negative impact on recruitment, retention and up skilling staff.

#### 4.20 Levy Transfer

In order to make the best use of our levy spend, NYCC continues to transfer 25% of the total annual levy fund to other employers locally who either do not have their own levy fund or have fully spent their allocation. Since December 2019 transfers have been made to 62 different employers covering a total of 191 apprenticeships, with a spread across various sectors; 124 in the care sector, 45 in the construction industry, 1 in the digital sector, 1 in Leisure and Tourism and 1 in the voluntary sector. The remaining 31 are with Brierley Group companies, 13 with Align Property Partners, 17 with NY Highways and 1 with Veritau.

#### 4.21 Hire a new Apprentice Incentive Scheme

This government scheme ran from July 2020 until January 2022, enabling employers to claim a financial incentive for hiring new apprentices. In total nearly £100K was claimed across NYCC and schools.

#### 4.22 Graduates

The graduate programme continues to be successful with 29 currently in post; 19 recruited in 2022, including 5 for Ryedale District Council, and 3 to work on LGR projects. Feedback from services continues to be very positive indicating the calibre and contribution of graduates is high, and the graduates continue to express positive feedback about their experiences on the council's scheme.

## 5.0 Diversity and inclusion (D&I)

5.1 NYCC aims to be an inclusive and diverse employer, where employees feel valued and supported to be themselves at work. As well as being an important part of the wider commitment and approach as a council to diversity and inclusion, this provides real benefits

including a better understanding of our communities and service users, greater retention, and greater appeal as an employer, which improves recruitment.

- 5.2 Employee networks have been set up to engage with colleagues from underrepresented backgrounds: the Value in Racial Diversity Employee Network, the Disabled Employee Network (DEN), Gender Equality Staff Forum and the Pride Network. Staff networks have proven to be valuable, not only in the support and sense of community they provide but also in shedding light on staff experiences, and areas for improvements. As a result of feedback from employee networks in 22/23 a number of changes have been made including; flexible bank holidays to reflect religious diversity and reviewing and changing the attendance and increment policy to be more inclusive of disabled employees.
- 5.3 Celebrating awareness days has promoted and normalised discussions on issues relating to diversity and inclusion. Coverage has included amongst others Black History Month, Disability History Month, International Women's Day with a number of different articles published internally and in social media posts, Yammer posts, intranet articles, and senior manager blog features. Staff have engaged by providing case studies, podcasts and videos.
- 5.4 Also informed by staff engagement, is a revised approach to the training and learning approach; recognising that specialised training may be needed, and that one size does not fit all. There is a mandatory E-learning module for new staff and further specialised training available dependent on role and/or service area. Also training for managers, following feedback that managers were less confident when dealing with EDI complexities and were concerned about making mistakes regarding discrimination.
- 5.5 There is also a range of high-quality specific EDI related training available:
- Multiple online interactive learning modules eg. Autism and Mental Health
  - Range of Skills Booster Videos eg. Allyship
  - Council Members Seminars inviting guests' speakers with protected characteristics to share lived experience
  - Lunchtime Learning webinars eg. Allyship, Inclusive Language etc.
- 5.6 Feedback to date has been positive. For example feedback from the 'Allyship' webinar, 100% of attendees who submitted feedback left both learning new information and feeling confident in applying the new information in practical situations in the workplace. However, the impact of such training will take longer to become visible as this approach is based on a longer-term strategy of creating a more inclusive culture.

## **6.0 Engaging the Workforce**

- 6.1 Focus for the past 12 months on engagement of the workforce has been on the LGR programme and delivered in two parts: with the county council's workforce, as part of business as usual, and under the LGR programme with staff across all eight councils as part of the transformation delivery.
- 6.2 Celebration Event  
In December 2022, the NYCC staff Celebration Awards took place. As part of the drawing to the end of a chapter for the county council, staff took part in the celebration of recent projects which had a positive impact on NYCC and the services offered, as well as sharing a look back on previous projects and innovations that have brought change to NYCC over the years. There were 75 entries in this year's awards and approximately 300 participants in the online celebration award with Richard Flinton, CEX. The event was also recorded and shared with all staff on the council intranet.



### 6.3 Hybrid working

Continuing with new ways of working, hybrid working trials were undertaken during the year. A programme of engagement touch points included seeking employee feedback, manager feedback and a series of focus groups with staff using local offices. Feedback helped inform requirements across the council and getting the balance right for service delivery, optimising the range of workspaces and digital resources to achieve high performance, ensuring customer needs are met. This feedback has informed the development of a hybrid working policy with supporting resources for managers and staff.

### 6.3 Appraisals

Webinars have taken place to support managers and staff with their appraisal requirements when using the My View system to record Individual Performance Management (IPM) review outcomes for 2022/23.

## 7.0 **Learning and Development**

7.1 Strengthening the workforce by developing the requisite knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet the workforce priorities is important, and headline data for Q4 2021/22 and Q1-Q3 2022/23 is below:

- 1,047 classroom training events for 9,678 delegates (including 702 from Private, Voluntary and Independent PVI Sectors)
- 30,659 mandatory online learning completions (including 5,108 from PVI Sectors)
- 18,913 non-mandatory online learning completions (including 1,673 from the PVI)
- 3,173 CPD training/learning activities undertaken
- 39 middle managers completed cohort 12 of the Middle Management Programme in May 2022, with a further 51 starting on cohort 13 in September 2022. 11 of the 51 managers who started on the programme in September 2022 are Borough or District Council colleagues.
- 110 Borough or District Council staff attended courses between January and December 2022 which ranged from Anaphylaxis awareness through to manager development such as Having Difficult Conversations.

7.2 Online learning resources delivered via the Learning Zone, accessed by staff from any device 24/7

- Ashridge (Learning materials for managers) 4,677 views
- Learning Nexus 7,204
- Learning Zone views 1,298,870

7.3 The key training and learning priorities for 2022/23 included:

- Continued support for HAS including a new delivery model increasing accessibility to training, enhanced quality assurance and a focus on co-production.
- A joint approach to positive behaviour management training across CYPS and HAS, delivering greater consistency and a cost saving due to the development of an in-house delivery model.
- Develop better knowledge and skills around the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda by introducing mandatory classroom training for frontline staff and all managers, and mandatory online learning for the rest of the workforce, with a plan to ensure the workforce is fully trained by April 2024.

- Continue to deliver adult social care training to the wider sector via the Learning 4 Care project (funded by government IBCF funding) whilst developing a longer term working relationship with external providers post funding.
- Continue to support a high number of Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programmes for Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS)
- Provide mentoring, observation, support groups, guidance and advice for over 100 Practice Educators in social care.
- Coaching continued to be a priority, with a higher level of staff referred for coaching to support various work-related activity than seen in previous years.
- Training and learning continued to build support NYC companies and local schools including work with Veritau and NYHighways.
- New online learning packages created for LGR, and existing packages reviewed/rebranded ready for 1st April 2023.
- A statutory/mandatory training programme has been mapped for the new council and will be available from 1st April 2023
- A Leadership Academy has been developed and will provide a programme of support to all levels of leaders and managers, as well as those who are aspiring to become managers. To be launched in September 2023.
- Continued work on developing a managers induction programme to ensure managers in NYC have a strong knowledge and understanding of their role, accountability, and values and behaviours required.
- A mentoring programme for managers in NYC is being designed with a planned roll out prior to vesting day. This will offer support, guidance and operational assistance to initially senior managers recently appointed and will further look to strength knowledge, skill and networking across NYC.
- Knowledge transfer of leavers - a toolkit has been developed to capture corporate memory and tacit knowledge of experienced and long serving officers across the 8 councils planning on leaving over the next few months. The objective is to retain that knowledge as an asset to pass on to successors.
- Work has been underway with staff across District councils to prepare for the movement of all staff onto a single learning management system, The Learning Zone after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. This project will also ensure the transfer of all staff training records into one secure system for reporting and tracking purposes.

## **8.0 Pay and Reward**

- 8.1 The Pay and Reward priority has been to respond to a difficult labour market environment, with recruitment and retention challenges, against a backdrop of late national pay negotiations.
- 8.2 Over the summer a comprehensive pay benchmarking review was undertaken in response to unusual difficulty with recruitment and retention. The pay benchmarking identified that pay rates, after the 2022-23 pay award, were largely competitive with market rates, with problems arising from a labour supply shortage (reflecting for example the 500,000 reduction in over 50s in the labour market nationally), and competition with private sector market rates (technology sectors and crafts). It was identified that turnover was highest in the shorter pay grades.
- 8.3 In response to these findings there have been some changes to the council's pay structure including merging some grades to create longer pay grades, an additional senior manager grade and some small changes to pay point values within the locally negotiated part of the

pay spine to create equal incremental steps. Entry level Grade A is being merged with Grade B because of the national NJC pay award which sees pay point 1 deleted from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

- 8.4 Implementation of the national NJC pay award of £1,925 on all pay points is already having some impact, with an increase in applicants for hard to fill care roles. The employee benefit scheme remains an important part of attraction and is both popular internally and generates savings for employees and the council as an employer.

## **9.0 HR Shared Service Team (HRSST)**

- 9.1 HRSST continued to provide HR support and advice to managers primarily across NYCC, Ryedale DC and Selby DC, with over 2300 enquiries responded to and support provided to over 280 cases to date. The team have also provided support via Ask SAL; the majority of enquiries have been with regards to TUPE and terms and conditions, in response to LGR.

- 9.2 The 3 key development priorities for the year have been:

- attendance management: with monthly calls made to managers who have members of their team absent to check on progress and offer support. Data is analysed to identify hotspots which are appropriately escalated.
- manager skills/induction: all manager skills sessions have been reviewed and are now offered in a bite-sized, interactive format. The manager induction session has been reviewed and is now co-hosted with ESS colleagues to better meet the needs of new managers.
- casework review: panel dates are booked, and panel members are identified six months in advance to make the process more efficient and to assist with reducing case timescales.

## **10.0 Commercial**

- 10.1 Commercial activity has remained strong in the education market despite conditions being challenging in terms of growth and retention. In terms of the last financial year, financial targets set by the NYES board were met, and this year looks confident, with a combined profit exceeding £500k. Occupational Health have seen significant growth, which included taking on the contract for East Riding Council. The focus remains on high retention, with average retention rate around 97%. In terms of growth the focus is on organic growth in areas surrounding North Yorkshire. In the last 6 months new contracts worth over £500k for HR and ESS have been secured, which demonstrates a competitive and attractive offer in the market.

## **11.0 Local Government Reorganisation**

- 11.1 An update was provided to the Transition Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 providing an overview of the HR Workstream, detailing the work of each of the ten subgroups and outlining in particular how staff are being informed and supported through the transition. Therefore, this information has not been included in this report as it has already been covered by Scrutiny.
- 11.2 Obviously significant work has been carried out this year to support the LGR process and has been a focus of the HR teams.
- 11.3 From a workforce perspective the full senior management structure is now in place having recruited to all Management Board and Assistant Director posts across NYC. A total of 37



positions, all bar one was filled from within existing staff across all 8 councils, which demonstrates the skills, knowledge and talent available within the 8 authorities.

- 11.4 Work undertaken on LGR has been mentioned throughout the report in terms of preparation for vesting day ranging from induction and training available, health and wellbeing support to staff, to the terms and conditions and pay structures, all which are key in making the new council attractive to new applicants but also to retain staff and reward and recognise them for their excellent work.

## **12.0 Conclusion**

- 12.1 It has been another demanding and unusual year dominated by a range of service pressures, particularly in the health and social care sector, labour market pressures causing recruitment and retention pressures and higher agency spend, Covid and other causes of sickness absence. A hybrid working model which can be adapted to individual and service needs has been implemented, and the council has continued to innovate and adapt to attract and retain in a difficult recruitment market. The focus has continued on strong communication and engagement to support the workforce to remain resilient through a continuing period of change, and to maximise retention.
- 12.2 Alongside these ongoing challenges have been high levels of activity in preparation for local government changes. Effective collaborative working across councils and with trade union colleagues has resulted in the building blocks being in place for the start of the new council. The next Overview and Scrutiny workforce update report in June will set out these preparations in more detail.

## **13.0 Recommendation**

- 13.1 Members are asked to note and comment on the report.

**Report Author:** Justine Brooksbank, Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

**Date:** 22 February 2023

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## Corporate & Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee Remit

### Scope

- The Council’s corporate organisation and structure, resource allocation, asset management, procurement policy, people strategy, equality and diversity, performance management, communication and access to services.
- Partnership working, community development, community engagement, community strategies and community safety.
- This Committee is the Crime & Disorder Committee for the purposes of Part 3 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

**Agenda Briefings** (Attended by Group Spokespersons only) - will be held at 9.30am on the day of the committee meeting

## Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft 2023-2024 Work Programme

### Committee Meeting – 5 June 2023 @ 10:30am

Workforce Update	To provide an outline the new council workforce and associated issues – Trudy Forster, Head of HR / Justine Brooksbank Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)
NYCC Property Services	Bi-annual Performance Update – Jon Holden, Head of Property Services
Investment Strategy	Update on NYCC’s Investment Strategy & its investments – Karen Iveson, AD Strategic Resources
Work Programme 2023/24	Consideration of work programme

### Mid Cycle Briefing – 24 July 2023 @ 10:30am

Work Programme 2023/24	Consideration of work programme
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### Committee Meeting – 11 September 2023 @ 10:30am

Community Safety	Bi-annual Update on Community Safety Plan Delivery & Partnership Working – Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities & Chair of CSP
Stronger Communities	Bi-annual update on work of the Stronger Communities team and progress update on the corporate volunteering project – Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Stronger Communities & Keeley Metcalfe, NYCC Resourcing Solutions Business Partner

Brierley Group Update	Vicki Dixon, AD Strategic Resources (BES & CS)
Customer Access	Update on the Operation of the Parish Portal and Parish Council engagement – Nigel Smith, Head of Highway Operations
Youth Justice	Performance Update – YJS Planning & Development Officer
Resilience and Emergencies	Annual overview of the National Resilience Standards and NYCC’s current performance, together with an overview of ongoing Resilience and Emergencies work – Matt Robinson, Head of Resilience and Emergencies
Work Programme 2023/24	Consideration of the work programme
<b>Mid Cycle Briefing – 23 October 2023 @ 10:30am</b>	
Work Programme 2023/24	Consideration of work programme
<b>Committee Meeting – 4 December 2023 @ 10:30am</b>	
NYCC Property Services	Bi-annual Performance Update – Jon Holden, Head of Property Services
Council Plan Development	Progress update on implementation of Council Plan Priorities – Simon Moss, Strategy & Performance Team Leader
Equality and Diversity	Overview of progress with achieving the Council’s new Equality and Diversity objectives – Deb Hugill, Senior Strategy & Performance Officer
Customer Access	Update on the Operation of the Customer Portal - Robert Ling, AD Technology & Change
Work Programme 2023/24	Consideration of the work programme
<b>Mid Cycle Briefing – 15 January 2024 @ 2pm</b>	
Work Programme 2023/24	Consideration of the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year
<b>Committee Meeting – 15 March 2024 @ 10:30am</b>	
Community Safety	Bi-annual Update on Community Safety Plan Delivery & Partnership Working – Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities & Chair of CSP

Stronger Communities	Bi-annual update on work of the Stronger Communities team and progress update on the corporate volunteering project – Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Stronger Communities & Keeley Metcalfe, NYCC Resourcing Solutions Business Partner
Draft Work Programme 2024/25	Consideration of the draft work programme for the coming municipal year
<b>Mid Cycle Briefing – 15 April 2024 @ 10:30am</b>	

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