

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Friday, 23rd September 2022 commencing at 11.30 am.

County Councillor Clive Pearson in the Chair. plus County Councillors Eric Broadbent, David Chance, Liz Colling, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Rich Maw, Heather Phillips, John Ritchie, Subash Sharma and Roberta Swiers.

Officers present: Louise Wallace, Natalie Smith, Dan Atkinson and Melanie Carr.

Other Attendees: Mr Adrian Perry and Mr Matthew Pells .

Apologies: County Councillors Derek Bastiman, Tony Randerson, Phil Trumper and Neil Swannick.

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

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### **12 Introductions & Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Derek Bastiman, Tony Richardson, Phil Trumper and Neil Swannick

### **13 Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2022**

#### **Resolved –**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2022, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to an amendment to the table in Minute No.9 - Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies.

County Councillor Liz Colling confirmed the 'TBC' for North Yorkshire and Cleveland Coastal Forum Executive Committee should instead have read 'Cllr Neil Swannick'.

In regard to matters arising from Minute No.10 - North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Risk and Resource Consultation document provided by the Office of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Committee agreed to write to The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner to query the relationship with Cornwall Control Room and the impact of the changes to their Service Model.

### **14 Declarations of Interest**

County Councillor Liz Colling declared an interest in Agenda item 5 – Verbal update on Performance at Scarborough Hospital, as a member of the Hospital Trust Council of Governors.

County Councillors Janet Jefferson and John Ritchie both declared an interest in Agenda item 4 – Public Questions & Statements, as members of Scarborough Civic Society.

There were no other declarations of interest.

## 15 Public Questions & Statements

Mr Adrian Perry attended the meeting to read out a statement on behalf of Scarborough Civic Society, as follows:

'We have great concerns about the future structure of local government in North Yorkshire especially in the unparished part of Scarborough. Some sources of information state that there will be a gradual change and officers are involved in work-streams to discuss how things might operate. However, residents are asking for answers and reassurances now. For example, will all current services be maintained at the same level? NYCC seem to have little experience of managing parks and gardens and may try to get a new Scarborough Council Town Council to maintain them. The recent document issued by NYC explains that a Scarborough Town Council may wish to undertake the maintenance of parks and open spaces which could be financed by a precept. This would result in the local tax payer suddenly having to pay a very high precept for a service which was included in their previous council tax bill which was without a precept.

Can we assume that we will continue to have a planning department based in Scarborough as well as locally based Ecology Officers and Conservation Officers. Planning, we understand, will be done on a constituency basis. For Scarborough and Whitby, it means that the planning committee will consist of members drawn from the 15 unitary councillors elected last May. This could create complications in its own right. For example some of the councillors might have executive roles and so could not serve on the regulatory committees.

Will officers be remaining in the St Nicholas Street offices? Or will they eventually move out to Pavilion House. Or will most officers be based in Northallerton?

What will happen to the Town Hall? Has any thought has been given to the creation of a town museum by obtaining grant-funding to expand Scarborough Museums and Galleries. For what seems like many years there has been talk of a Museum on the High Street, so it is dispiriting to see large sums of grant money directed towards new projects in the Town Bid, when we risk losing the Town Hall which is an important cultural asset packed with historical artefacts. Currently there is no capacity to display these works of art elsewhere. Is it planned to continue to allocate grants to support cultural enterprises such as SJT?

The reasons given for the changes are that this is central government driven, with the aim of reducing costs and enabling more direct funding to the area via a mayor. However, there is a fear that this will result in asset stripping by NYC with the sale of Scarborough SBC properties and the transfer of revenues such as parking charges from Scarborough to NYC.

We don't want to sleepwalk into this new council. These issues need to be clarified before April next year otherwise we will be confronted by a fait accompli which could be very damaging to our trust in local government.'

In response, the Democratic Services Officer read out a prepared NYCC Officer Response, which confirmed all the assets and services that were currently provided by Scarborough Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council would become the responsibility of North Yorkshire Council on 1 April 202, and all staff would be transferred across with be no gap in service provision.

She also confirmed the Council was committed to retaining offices in all areas of the County in order to administer services locally, and it was absolutely not the case that all officers would be based in Northallerton. It would also be undertaking reviews of all office accommodation in Scarborough, including Scarborough Borough Council's existing proposals for the development of new offices at Pavilion House and the former Comet

building, to ensure that offices met the requirements of customer, provided efficient working environments for staff, and value for money.

Finally she noted that:

- At this stage, no decisions had been made, including in respect of Scarborough's Town Hall.
- A Community Governance Review, including a public consultation, was currently being undertaken to identify whether there was interest in and support for the establishment of parish councils for the unparished areas in Scarborough and Harrogate. The closing date for the responses is 30 September 2022 and full information is available at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/community-governance-reviews>.
- The Civic Society and all interested individuals and organisations were being encouraged to participate in the public consultation.
- If a parish council were to be created for the currently unparished areas in Scarborough, it was likely that the first election would take place in May 2024. After the first election, the parish council would be able to call itself a town council if it so wished, and it would also be able to express an interest to North Yorkshire Council for taking responsibility for services or assets in the parish that were managed by North Yorkshire Council. This process was called double devolution. Proposals would have to have a solid business case and delivery plan. If a transfer were agreed, the budget incurred by North Yorkshire Council for the agreed level of service would be transferred to the parish council. The parish council could also choose to raise a precept to provide a higher level of service.
- The intention was there would be no change in the delivery method or standards of Street scene services on day one. The existing teams would continue to deliver the services as they do now. Post day one; there would inevitably be a review of the services, as teams were brought together under one structure.
- Discussions were ongoing with regard to the structure of the committee system, and a member working group was considering the matter, with the intention that the Executive would agree the new committee structure in November, in order to have it in place for day one and training and support provided for members and officers.
- In terms of the planning service, very little would change on day one, with teams still based locally dealing with the caseload of applications as they do now.

Members went on to discuss the issues raised in the public statement and expressed their own concerns and the need for keeping services in the borough.

County Councillor David Jeffels drew members' attention to the coming 'Lets Talk' events, recognising that good communications would be key to addressing residents' concerns.

County Councillor Janet Jefferson confirmed that Chartered Trustees were now in place in unparished area responsible for preserving the civic side of the Borough and could choose to appoint a Major and ask for a precept. She also suggested it might be worthwhile extending the consultation period to take account of the recent mourning period, and Mr Perry asked that more be done to advertise the consultation, as he was confident that some residents were unaware.

County Councillor David Chance confirmed the key intention was to be 'safe and legal' on vesting day.

## **16 Verbal Update on Performance at Scarborough Hospital**

Simon Morritt attended the meeting to provide a verbal update on performance at Scarborough Hospital. He noted it was his first update since July 2021, and provided an

overview of the key issues, which included:

- The full business case for the redevelopment works had been approved to the value of £47m, and work had started and was ahead of schedule;
- The intention was that the work would be completed by early 2023, and would include a new trauma unit on the ground floor, with a critical care facility and Chiropody care on the first floor;
- The existing CT scanner was to be replaced by the beginning of 2024. A second CT scanner was to be introduced with funding for it to be available by the end of this financial year;
- The hospital had invested in additional nursing staff but it was still a struggle to attract staff to the east coast;
- The Coventry training course had delivered an additional 25 staff this year'
- The pressures and challenges remained the same, as with all other hospitals nationally e.g. the volume of demand at the front door, and back door discharges – there were currently 90 patients awaiting some form of package of care and ways to expedite discharges were being explored
- There was a report of additional funding to come from Government for Social Care;
- There had been an upturn in Covid-19 numbers, with a return to the use of masks in clinical areas;
- Agency staff were still being used together with an internal bank system – the hospital was desperate to recruit more substantive staff;
- Yearly staff turnover was currently around 12% - those who would have previously continued for a few more years are now making other life choices;
- Opportunities existed for promotion for nurses and health care assistants – career progression was not seen as a barrier to joining the NHS;
- In 10-20 years' time, it was expected the hospital would be thriving, with improvements in technology likely leading to other related improvements – the NHS was determined to sustain the hospital;

In regard to previous standards of care issues considered by the committee, Simon Morritt confirmed that in the main they had been addressed and that a paediatrically training doctor in emergency was expected to be in place within the next couple of months. He noted most recently, there had been some standards of care issues at York District Hospital. He also noted the CVC were expected to revisit before Christmas 2022.

In response to a request from Members, Simon Morritt agreed to provide data on:

- The number of consultations taking place online - he confirmed that face to face outpatients would not disappear;
- Response times for blood results from labs;

The Chairman thanked Simon Morritt for his attendance at the meeting and Committee member agreed to note the verbal update.

## **17 Progress Update on Chief Medical Officer's Report on Coastal Health**

Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health presented a progress update on Coastal Health. She started by giving a brief overview of the key themes within last year's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) report which had provided a focus to work through.

Natalie Smith - Head of Service HAS Planning, noted that some of the findings within the previous year's CMO report had been well known and others unknown. She also drew attention to the nine themes arising from the report and the three recommendations.

Dan Atkinson – Health Improvement Officer provided a progress update on the ongoing work to address the nine themes, which included:

- The projects ongoing to improve health and wellbeing opportunities;
- The introduction of a physical activities hub;
- The plans to address alcohol and substance misuse and the high rates of smoking;
- A new housing solution for those with no fixed abode or those with high levels of need

County Councillor Heather Philips suggested the need for a Rough Sleepers review, recognising that too much was being spent on too few people – she asked whether REACH could actually reach enough people. In response, Dan Atkinson noted there was evidence of multi agency work, with pathways in place to support and help rough sleepers. He agreed to provide a summary of the numbers.

County Councillor Rich Maw suggested life expectancy in his division was 10years less than in neighbouring divisions.

In regard to the national pause in NHS health checks due to Covid, Members noted the Government's recent announcement that Doctors were now expected to return to providing them.

County Councillor Liz Colling drew attention to the many socio-economic factors affecting public health in the Scarborough area e.g. housing, fuel and food poverty etc. She also suggested the need for more meaningful employment prospects.

Louise Wallace provided an overview of the public health advice available to address the many challenges. She also noted the need for equity in access to care services and suggested there were multiple ways to address the wider determinants of health. Finally, she confirmed that the annual report priorities for the coming year or two was just about to be published.

County Councillor David Jeffels drew attention to the Borough Council's cost of living Working Party, which he noted was cross party and had a wide geographical membership.

Finally, County Councillor David Chance acknowledged the work of the HAS team who were assisting residents to access as many benefits as possible. He also noted that 80% of poverty in North Yorkshire was in the Scarborough borough area.

The Chairman thanked officers for their update and it was agreed that the report be noted.

## **18 Verbal Update on Ambulance Service Developments in the Scarborough Area**

As there was no one available to attend the meeting from the Ambulance Service, Members agreed to defer the item to their next meeting in November 2022.

## **19 Scarborough & Whitby Area Constituency Committee Work Programme 2020/21**

Considered - The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) asking Members to review the Work Programme, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the area.

Members expressed an interest in receiving information on the cost of living crisis i.e. fuel and food poverty affecting their area, at a future meeting.

**Resolved** - That the Democracy Officer update the work programme to reflect the decisions made during the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 1.20 pm.