

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Local Government Reorganisation Implementation Executive

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Wednesday, 16th March, 2022 commencing at 9.00 am.

A recording of the meeting can be viewed on the Council's YouTube site via the following link - <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/live-meetings>

Members:-

County Councillors Carl Les (Chair), Derek Bastiman, David Chance, Gareth Dadd, Michael Harrison, Andrew Lee, Don Mackenzie, Janet Sanderson, and Greg White.

District and Borough Councillors: Liz Colling (substitute for Steve Siddons), Mark Crane, Richard Foster, Dinah Keal, Mark Robson, Graham Swift.

Officers present: Justine Brooksbank NYCC, Stuart Carlton NYCC, Tony Clark Richmondshire District Council, Vanessa Glover NYCC, Mike Greene Scarborough Borough Council, Dr Justin Ives Hambleton District Council, Barry Khan NYCC, Robert Ling NYCC, Wallace Sampson Harrogate Borough Council, Paul Shevlin Craven District Council, Janet Waggott Selby District Council.

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

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#### **1 Notes of the LGR Implementation Board meeting held on Wednesday 23 February 2022**

The committee Chairman, County Councillor Carl Les, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

County Councillor Carl Les reminded the committee that the meeting was being held informally and that any formal decisions would need to be taken in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer using his emergency powers.

County Councillor Carl Les noted that this was the first meeting of this committee.

The notes of the meeting of the LGR Implementation Board that was held on Wednesday 23 February 2022 were considered and having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

#### **2 Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Patrick Mulligan, Richmondshire District Councillor Angie Dale and Scarborough Borough Councillor Steve Siddons.

Scarborough Borough Councillor Liz Colling attended as a substitute for Councillor Steve Siddons.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

#### **3 Public Questions or Statements**

There were none.

## 4 Governance and Approval of the Implementation Plan

Considered -

A report on the Governance and Approval of the Implementation Plan.

Richard Flinton, Chief Executive of North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), introduced the report. He said that the creation of a new unitary council for North Yorkshire was a real opportunity to re-cast services, to innovate, improve and place people and their communities at the heart of what we do. He noted that this would be a huge task as there continued to be pressures linked to the recovery from the pandemic, an increased demand for services and rising inflation and economic uncertainty.

Barry Khan, Monitoring Officer and Assistant Chief Executive for Legal and Democratic Services NYCC, said that at the time of writing this report, it had been anticipated that the Structural Changes Order would be in force by the time of the meeting. This has not yet happened and so this was an informal meeting of the LGR Implementation Executive.

Barry Khan gave an overview of the governance arrangements for implementation of the new unitary council for North Yorkshire. Key points are as summarised below:

- The Structural Changes Order (SCO) defines the basic governance and operating principles leading up to the new North Yorkshire unitary authority
- The SCO has been through Parliament, the House of Commons on 21 February 2022 and the House of Lords on 9 March 2022, and is due to be signed by the Secretary of State and take force by the end of the week
- To date, all eight councils have worked together informally through the Implementation Board and Implementation Team. With the passing of the SCO, the Implementation Board will become the formal Implementation Executive
- After the elections on 5 May 2022, the Implementation Executive will be replaced by the Executive, which will consist of the newly appointed councillors
- Under the SCO, all eight local authorities have a duty to co-operate
- The Implementation Plan identifies the officers that constitute the Implementation Team. *[For the benefit of the minutes please refer to for clarification of the constitution of the Implementation Team at paragraph 86 of the Plan at Appendix D.]*

Robert Ling, Assistant Director Technology and Change Management NYCC, gave a presentation on Implementation Plan, which expanded on the themes and issues outlined in the report. The key points from the presentation are as summarised below:

- The Implementation Plan must include detailed plans and timetables as the Implementation Executive consider necessary to enable effective implementation of the new unitary council
- The Implementation Plan is a living document and will be subject to change over time. After the elections on 5 May 2022, the new administration for the County Council may wish to revisit the plan
- The Implementation Plan is rooted in the submission document to the Secretary of State that detailed the proposal for a single tier local government in North Yorkshire and reference will be made back to that submission as the plan is implemented over time
- The Implementation Plan details the large amount of work that is required to enable a new unitary authority to be in place on 1 April 2023. It also highlights the significant progress that has been made to date with all eight councils working closely together
- There is a set of core design principles that help articulate what the new unitary authority is seeking to achieve: customer focused; digital by preference; countrywide and local; locally accountable and empowering; data-led and financially sustainable; collaborative; empowered, agile and innovative workforce; promoting equality, diversity and inclusion; and tackling climate change.

- There are 15 work streams in place across the Change Programme, covering aspects such as: Corporate Governance; Property; and Waste, Highways, Parking and Street Scene.
- The priority at day one of the new unitary authority is that it is safe and legal and that there is no change to services. Whilst services will develop and change in the longer term, the transition to the new unitary authority should see no disruption to local services
- The delivery of the Implementation Plan is supported by a transition budget of between £32m and £38m
- As previously noted, this is a huge task and there are challenges and risks, including: capacity within councils to continue with the 'business as usual work' whilst working on the development of a new unitary; and the loss of experienced staff during a period of uncertainty
- It is anticipated that the Chief Executive Officer will be appointed by autumn 2022, statutory posts by late 2022 and then the Corporate Management Team by January 2023
- Staff will transfer by TUPE across to the new organisation on 1 April 2023
- The expectation is that the majority of staff will continue to work in their current role and location on 1 April 2023
- Regular communication with staff is key and the first all council staff communication is this Thursday
- A programme of support and training is being developed for councillors
- A key piece of work for the new authority will be setting and agreeing a budget for 2023/24, which includes harmonised Council Tax and Business Rates
- There will be a strong focus upon partnership working, double devolution and the creation of a local council with staff living and working in the communities that they serve.

County Councillor Carl Les thanked Barry Khan and Robert Ling for the report and presentation.

County Councillor Derek Bastiman said that the coming into force of the SCO would signal the start of a new era for the county, with new opportunities for business, local people and service delivery.

County Councillor Gareth Dadd said that huge progress had been made to date and that this was a testament to the positive working relations across all 8 councils and the commitment of officers. He said that it was important to keep referring back to the business case, as the Implementation Plan was delivered and that once a safe and legal unitary authority was established on 1 April 2023, the focus could be upon driving out the £67m savings that had been identified.

Scarborough Borough Councillor Liz Colling said that officers had worked hard to ensure that work on local government reorganisation could continue whilst still undertaking the day job.

Harrogate Borough Councillor Graham Swift said that there was a need to remain firmly customer focussed and not get complacent about the delivery of the Implementation Plan. He welcomed the fact that the Implementation Plan was in the public domain and that councillors and officers could be held to account.

Ryedale District Councillor Dinah Keal echoed previous comments about the close working between all councils and the hard work being done by officers. She said that district and borough councillors needed to be kept involved through to 1 April 2023 and not just until the May elections.

County Councillor Carl Les summed up and moved to the recommendations.

Barry Khan said that as the SCO was not yet in force, the recommendation needed to be amended and that it was now that the Implementation Plan be approved by the Implementation Board and that the Chief Executive notes their approval. The Implementation Plan would then be formally brought back to the newly elected Executive after the May 2022 elections.

A vote was held using the electronic voting facility on MS Teams and 13 votes were cast, all of which were in favour.

**Resolved –**

- a) That the Implementation Plan be approved by the Implementation Board.
- b) That the Implementation Plan be taken to a meeting of the Executive after the May 2022 elections to be formally approved.

**5 Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.**

This item was not discussed as the meeting closed after item 4.

The meeting concluded at 9.55 am.