

# Public Document Pack

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

Tuesday, 7 February 2023 / 1.00 pm

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### A G E N D A

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1 **Apologies for Absence**

2 **Declarations of Interest**

3 **Items for Executive Member Decision**

4 **Proposal to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School (Pages 3 - 14)**

To agree consultation on a proposal, requested by the federated Governing Board of the Whitby Secondary Partnership, to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School

5 **Pilot Project funding bid**

Acceptance of Pilot Project Funding

6 **Grant Funding for Skills4work Programme (Pages 15 - 28)**

Retrospective approval of acceptance of grant funding.

7 **Items for Corporate Director decision**

None for this meeting

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12 **Date of future formal meetings (1.00 pm)**

07 March 2023  
04 April 2023  
09 May 2023  
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04 July 2023  
01 August 2023  
05 September 2023  
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07 November 2023  
05 December 2023

**Circulation:**

**Executive Members**

Janet Sanderson  
Annabel Wilkinson

**Officer attendees**

Stuart Carlton  
Howard Emmett

**Presenting Officers**

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## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

#### CORPORATE DIRECTOR MEETING WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

7 February 2023

#### **Proposal to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Executive Member approval to consult on a proposal, requested by the federated Governing Board of the Whitby Secondary Partnership, to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School resulting in the technical closure of Eskdale School and the Eskdale site, and increase the planned admission number for the amalgamated school, now requested with effect from 1 September 2024.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Whitby Secondary Partnership was formed in July 2019, bringing together the governing bodies of the two secondary schools in the town, Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School, to form a single Governing Board responsible for both schools. Eskdale School is an 11-16 school and Caedmon College Whitby is an 11-19 school. The Whitby Sixth Form, although technically part of Caedmon College Whitby, serves both schools. An Executive Headteacher is responsible for both schools and works with two Heads of School and two Senior Leadership Teams.
- 2.2 Eskdale School, now an 11-16 school, extended its age range from an 11-14 middle deemed secondary school from September 2016. Caedmon College Whitby is an 11-19 school formed by the amalgamation of Whitby Community College and Caedmon School in 2014.
- 2.3 Eskdale School operates from a single site on the east side of Whitby. Caedmon College Whitby's 11-16 provision mainly operates from the Normanby Site (formerly Whitby Community College) and the Whitby Sixth Form is based on the Scoresby Site (formerly Caedmon School), both on the west side of the town.
- 2.4 In February 2016, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) consulted on proposals to reorganise secondary education in Whitby by amalgamating Eskdale School and Caedmon College Whitby through the technical closure of Eskdale School and the associated enlargement and expansion of Caedmon College Whitby. Both schools still had separate governing bodies and leadership at this time, and Eskdale School was an 11-14 middle deemed secondary school. In April 2016, the County Council suspended further decision-taking on the proposal to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School. This followed the publication of the Government White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' which had set out the expectation that by the end of 2020, all schools would be academies or in the process of becoming academies and by the end of 2022, local authorities would no longer maintain schools. Subsequent experience has shown that the conversion of schools to academy status has not progressed as quickly as envisaged in the Government's 2016 ambitions. The 'Education for All Bill' was withdrawn in October 2016.
- 2.5 In March 2022 the Government published their Schools White Paper reiterating their desire for a fully academised system. Currently this Bill is not progressing through

parliamentary process. However, the Governing Board of the Whitby Secondary Partnership recognise that it would need to resolve its finances before any future application to join a multi-academy trust in accordance with Department for Education expectations.

On 13 December 2022 the Governing Board of the Whitby Secondary Partnership decided to ask North Yorkshire County Council to commence a consultation process on their proposal to amend the structure of the Whitby Secondary Partnership. Their initial proposal was that Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School amalgamate from 1 September 2023, however following further consideration, the Governing Board now request that NYCC consult on the amalgamation taking place from 1 September 2024.

### 3 CURRENT CONCERNS

- 3 The Governing Board set out three linked factors as the reasons for their proposal to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School: low pupil numbers, significant financial challenges at both schools and an imperative to give the best education and curriculum to the young people of Whitby. These are set out below.

#### Pupil numbers

- 3.1 The Whitby Secondary Partnership 11-18 Capacity has approximately 2080 school places. Numbers of secondary aged pupils have been falling steadily across the catchment area over the last 10 years (see Table 1 below). There are currently 406 pupils on roll at Eskdale, with a capacity of 550, and 783 pupils on roll at Caedmon College, with a capacity of 1530. There is therefore a surplus of over 40% of places in Whitby.

Table 1

	Eskdale	Caedmon 11-16	Whitby Sixth Form 16-18	Caedmon 11-18	Whitby Total 11-16	Whitby Total 11-18
2010/11	303	936	320	1256	1239	1559
2011/12	303	912	324	1236	1215	1539
2012/13	280	880	314	1194	1160	1474
2013/14	291	814	309	1123	1105	1414
2014/15	294	768	316	1084	1062	1378
2015/16	300	772	311	1083	1072	1383
2016/17	302	748	265	1013	1050	1315
2017/18	408	649	205	854	1057	1262
2018/19	513	582	169	751	1095	1264
2019/20	499	570	176	746	1069	1245
2020/21	481	606	163	769	1087	1250
2021/22	456	621	175	796	1077	1252
2022/23	406	647	136	783	1053	1189

#### Finance

- 3.2 The Federation currently operates two separate budgets. Operating two schools across three sites brings a significant financial cost. Both school budgets have numerous financial challenges that need to be addressed. Each school is subject to a Notice of Financial Concern. This notice is issued by the Local Authority to governing boards where, in the opinion of officers, actions need to be taken to safeguard the financial position of the local authority or the school. Under Local Management of Schools, schools are responsible for their own budgets. It is for heads and governors to

determine at school level how to optimise the use of resources and maximise value for money.

### Standards and Curriculum

- 3.3 The Governing Board view the proposal as offering the opportunity to deliver a broader curriculum offer with wider opportunities and development of skills to meet the need of students and the local community. They believe that any strategy to address the low pupil numbers and financial challenges without moving to become one school across two sites would hamper educational and curriculum improvement. Continuing to spend disproportionate amounts of their budget on premises costs across three sites would divert valuable budget away from the delivery of high-quality education.
- 3.4 Caedmon College Whitby was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2022, this was an initial (section 8) inspection. The reported outcome was that there has been no change to the school's overall judgement of good, however the evidence gathered suggested that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out at that time, and so the next inspection will therefore be a graded (section 5) inspection. The previous full Ofsted inspection took place in February 2017 which judged all outcomes to be good.
- 3.5 Eskdale School was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2022. The reported outcome was that there has been no change to the school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection, however, the evidence gathered suggested that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection The previous full Ofsted inspection took place in November 2017 which judged all outcomes to be good.

## **4.0 THE GOVERNING BOARD'S PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 At its meeting on 13 December 2022 the Governing Board decided to ask the County Council to commence a consultation process on their proposal to amend the structure of the Whitby Secondary Partnership.
- 4.2 The Governing Board's proposal to NYCC is:
1. That the Local Authority should amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School.
  2. This would result in the technical closure of Eskdale School.
  3. The Eskdale School site is declared surplus to school requirements and is returned to Local Authority management.

Their proposal initially was that Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School amalgamate from 1 September 2023, however following further consideration, the Governing Board now request that the amalgamation takes place from 1 September 2024.

Amalgamation is a proposal to technically close one school (in this Eskdale School) and enlarge an existing school (in this case Caedmon College Whitby), to accommodate all pupils. The remaining school would retain its original registration number and age range.

There is an opportunity to rename Caedmon College Whitby as part of this reorganisation process, and this is something governors propose to do ahead of the amalgamated school's proposed opening on 1 September 2024.

## **5.0 INITIAL ANALYSIS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD'S PROPOSAL**

### Educational and Curriculum Improvement

- 5.1 Amalgamation on to two sites would offer the opportunity to redirect resources from maintaining premises to delivering the curriculum. A summary of the Whitby Secondary Partnership's vision for education states: *Education is everything and delivering a Quality First Provision for the community of Whitby and surrounding areas is our number one priority. This proposal will allow recent developments and the strengths that have been seen in both schools to not only continue as the newly amalgamated school, but to be accelerated to achieve greater educational and personal outcomes. The combined strengths of the two schools will give a firm foundation to achieve greater educational and personal outcomes for our students and therefore the community. It will enhance the quality and choice of academic and vocational education for the future of our young people, providing a platform for a stronger, more sustainable education to support our students in achieving their chosen goals.*
- 5.2 Initial curriculum modelling suggests that the amalgamated school would have 7-8 classes of around 23-24 pupils in each year group within Key Stage 3, and 9 classes in each year group within Key Stage 4. The amalgamated school would operate a two-week timetable based on 50 periods, as is currently the practice at both schools. With amalgamation, the Ofsted judgement attached to the school that is technically closing is effectively lost, and in future the enlarged school would receive a single inspection and judgement.

### Staff

- 5.3 The Governing Board is clear that whilst the amalgamation would be a technical closure of Eskdale School, it will provide opportunities for staff across both schools. The amalgamation would involve the creation of a new staffing model to fit the needs of a newly enlarged and amalgamated school. A staff consultation would be undertaken, and Governors will be communicating the next steps to staff during February.

### Governance

- 5.4 The existing Federated Governing Board would be expected to remain in place through to the implementation of the decision if agreed. The Federated Governing Board would then be disestablished from 31 August 2024 and a newly constituted Governing Board would be set up for the newly named single school from 1 September 2024.

### Admissions

- 5.5 Existing pupils at both schools would automatically be placed on roll at the amalgamated school. Parents/carers of current Year 6 children who are due to start secondary education in Whitby in September 2023 would not need to take any action regarding their existing school admissions application, for which the deadline was 31 October 2022. It is anticipated that the final decision on the amalgamation proposal

will be made in June 2023 in advance of the secondary school application round for parents/carers of current Year 5 pupils due to transfer to secondary school in September 2024. Further advice will be provided to parents/carers as becomes necessary and in accordance with any decisions made.

- 5.6 The existing shared catchment area of Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale Schools would continue to be used for the amalgamated school.
- 5.7 The proposal would require an increase in the published admissions number (PAN) for the amalgamated school. The PAN is the number of school places that the admission authority must offer in the age group at which pupils will normally be admitted to the school (Year 7). The current PAN for Eskdale School is 110 and for Caedmon College Whitby is 184. It is proposed to increase the PAN for the newly amalgamated school to 240. Further details about PANs are set out in Appendix 2.

### Premises

- 5.8 It is proposed to operate the newly amalgamated school from September 2024 on two sites, the Normanby site for 11-16 pupils currently accommodated both on this site and at Eskdale, and the Scoresby site, mainly for the sixth form.
- 5.9 Given current forecasts, including the likely demand from new housing, there would appear to be sufficient secondary places available in the amalgamated 11-18 school, and sufficient places to accommodate all 11-16 pupils on the Normanby site (see Appendix 1 and 2). It should be noted that the Normanby site has operated with significantly more pupils previously. In 2002/3, for example, there were more than 960 pupils on roll at the site, which was then a 14-18 school.
- 5.10 Nonetheless, it will be important to ensure that arrangements are in place to meet the increased number of pupils and staff on the Normanby site. This will include a review of access arrangements for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and cars, but noting (as in 5.13 below) that an increase in transport services is not expected. From an accommodation perspective the initial analysis suggests there would be sufficient teaching spaces to suit the curriculum, but some ancillary modifications may be needed. Further work will be undertaken to confirm the position and any potential capital costs. The schools' meals provider has confirmed that they have no concerns regarding catering for the increased numbers on the Normanby site if the amalgamation went ahead, as they feel the existing kitchen could readily accommodate this and they would work to ensure a smooth transition.
- 5.11 As part of the proposal the Governors would declare the Eskdale site surplus to educational requirements and the site would be returned to NYCC management. Decisions about the future use of the Eskdale site would be taken after determination of the amalgamation proposal. These would need to include consideration of the Eskdale Community 3G flood-lit pitch on the school site.

### Transport

- 5.12 There are currently 11 home to school transport services that serve the two schools. Nine of these services are shared and serve both schools. Two services only serve Eskdale School, these are one taxi, and one feeder bus from the railway station.
- 5.13 As pupil eligibility currently stands, the proposed amalgamation and technical closure of the Eskdale site would require 10 home to school transport services to serve the amalgamated school. The home to school transport taxi service currently serving only

Eskdale School would instead serve the Normanby site, so there would be one additional home to school transport vehicle accessing this site.

- 5.14 Arrangements for onward travel to school from the railway station for those pupils that travel on the Esk Valley line would need to be reviewed in light of the proposed changes. This could result in a small reduction to the transport costs and vehicle requirements for secondary aged pupils in Whitby. However, this review of onward travel to school from the railway station would need to be undertaken alongside a review of eligibility, which would continue to be determined in line with the Council's home to school transport policy.

## Finance

- 5.15 Amalgamating the two schools across two sites would lead to savings on the premises costs at the Eskdale site. School budgets are funded largely by pupil numbers so the amalgamated school would have a larger combined funding allocation. However, the combined funding allocation for the amalgamated school would be smaller than the funding allocations for the two separate schools because there would be the loss of lump sum related funding, although transitional funding will be provided during the initial 19-month period of the amalgamation to assist with the reduction in this funding.
- 5.16 The estimated premises costs, excluding Rates, of £297k associated with the operation of the Eskdale site would be saved on the closure of the site. It is anticipated that the additional pupils on the Caedmon College - Normanby site would result in additional premises costs associated with utilities and cleaning of £84k for that site. On this basis, the indicative net saving on premises costs in respect of the amalgamation of the two schools is £213k on a full financial year basis.
- 5.17 The school lump sum funding of £128k, which is received by each school in their annual funding allocation, would cease for the Eskdale School budget - as with other Eskdale's school funding allocation - on the amalgamation of the two schools. However, transitional funding protection arrangements are provided which would allow for the balance of the lump sum to be retained from the point of amalgamation for the remainder of the financial year that amalgamation takes place and provide an additional £89.6k in addition to the £128k school lump sum funding received through the amalgamated school budget in the next financial year after the point of amalgamation.
- 5.18 The table below seeks to exemplify, other things being equal, the reduction in the lump sum and the estimated financial savings arising from the closure of the Eskdale site.

Financial Year	Caedmon Lump Sum (£k)	Eskdale Lump Sum (£k)	Amalgamated School Lump Sum (£k) <sup>^</sup>	Total Lump Sum (£k)	Premises Saving – Eskdale site (£k) <sup>***</sup>	Estimated Additional Premises Costs – Amalgamated School (£k) <sup>***</sup>	Net Premises Saving (£k) <sup>***</sup>
2024-25	128	128*	-	256	(173)	49	(124)
2025-26			217.6**	217.6	(297)	84	(213)
2026-27			128	128	(297)	84	(213)

\* For the financial year 2024/25, Eskdale would retain 5/12<sup>th</sup> of the lump sum, but the Amalgamated School would retain 7/12<sup>th</sup> of the lump sum in transitional arrangements.

\*\* For the financial year 2025/26, the Amalgamated School would retain 85% of the lump sums of the two individual schools.



\*\*\* Figures represent 2024-25 estimated prices

^ Figures represent 2023-24 National Funding Formula figures

- 5.19 The table shows that over the three-year period 2024 through to 2027, the reduction in lump sum funding for secondary education in Whitby would amount to £166.4k. However, this would be offset by estimated premises savings over the same period amounting to £550k. This would result in a net financial gain of £383.6k on these two factors. The impact of the lump sum reduction and the closure of the Eskdale site would result in an ongoing estimated annual net gain of £85k. The figures are based on the 2022-23 revised forecasts submitted by the school and the 2023-24 Department for Education (DfE) National Funding Formula (NFF) funding allocations and may change as a consequence of any national changes in DfE funding policy.
- 5.20 Further additional savings are likely to be able to be made through efficiencies in staffing, procurement and other costs by the amalgamated school over time. However, whilst an amalgamated school offers the potential for further savings compared to a federated structure, this paper does not include estimates of further savings pending the Governing Board decision on the final operating structure and required staffing establishment for the amalgamated school. Any savings identified from the operating model will assist an amalgamated school to address the inherited financial position.

### Transition

- 5.16 Transition planning will focus on curriculum planning, staffing structures, finances and ensuring a smooth transition for students, particularly the most vulnerable. It will build on the joint working already established between the two schools. Elements of the curriculum in Eskdale and Caedmon College are already similar, however the proposed amalgamation would provide greater opportunities for curriculum development with a broader, more relevant curriculum being available to all students. The school would be better able to ensure that all students are taught by experienced subject specialist staff who can share and grow their passion and enthusiasm for their subject. It is a key priority of the newly amalgamated school to deliver curriculum pathways that will enable students to continue study through year 7 to year 13, including by establishing clearer progression routes from options at KS4, into KS5 and by offering competitive and relevant subjects with links to not only higher education, but also to apprenticeships and local business providers.

### Summary

- 5.17 In summary, the Governing Board's proposal to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School appears to offer an opportunity to address the low pupil numbers, significant financial challenges at both schools, and the imperative to secure the best education and curriculum for the young people of Whitby. It is recommended that the views of parents, staff, local residents and other stakeholders are sought, which would enable further analysis of the proposals to be undertaken.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMESCALE**

- 6.1 Should a decision be made to initiate a consultation on the proposed amalgamation of Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School by the technical closure of Eskdale School and the enlargement and renaming of Caedmon College Whitby to form a single school, a period of six weeks of consultation is proposed. An indicative timetable is set out below. The process will follow the DfE statutory guidance for opening and closing

and making significant changes to maintained schools.<sup>1</sup> A consultation document is currently being drafted. Separate staff consultations would take place.

6.2 The final decision on closure would be taken by the Executive (or by the Executive Member for Schools if there are no objections during the representation period).

6.3 Suggested key dates are shown below:

Approval to Consult by Executive Member	7 February 2023
Consultation opens (4 weeks)	20 February 2023
Public meetings	8 March 2023
Consultation closes	31 March 2023
County Council's Executive considers consultation response	18 April 2023
Executive decision to publish statutory notices	18 April 2023
Publication of statutory notices	27 April 2023
Representation period starts (4 weeks)	27 April 2023
Representation period ends	25 May 2023
Final decision by County Council's Executive	20 June 2023
Proposed date from which Eskdale School would technically close and the newly named amalgamated school would begin to operate	31 August <u>2024</u> & 1 September <u>2024</u>

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Executive Member for Education and Skills is recommended to agree consultation on a proposal, requested by the federated Governing Board of the Whitby Secondary Partnership, to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School resulting in the technical closure of Eskdale School and the Eskdale site, and increase the planned admission number for the amalgamated school with effect from 1 September 2024.

Stuart Carlton  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE.

Action Agreed .....Executive Member  
Date:

Action Requested .....Corporate Director  
Date:

Background Reports  
None

<sup>1</sup> DfE, Opening and closing maintained schools. Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers (November 2019) and Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools. Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers (October 2018).

**List of Appendices:**

1. Pupil numbers and future forecasts
2. School capacities

## Appendix 1

### Pupil numbers and future forecasts from 23/24 onwards

	<b>Eskdale 11-16</b>	<b>Caedmon 11-16</b>	<b>Whitby Sixth Form* 16-18</b>	<b>Caedmon 11-18</b>	<b>Whitby Total 11-16</b>	<b>Whitby Total 11-18</b>
<b>2011/12</b>	303	912	324	1236	1215	1539
<b>2012/13</b>	280	880	314	1194	1160	1474
<b>2013/14</b>	291	814	309	1123	1105	1414
<b>2014/15</b>	294	768	316	1084	1062	1378
<b>2015/16</b>	300	772	311	1083	1072	1383
<b>2016/17</b>	302	748	265	1013	1050	1315
<b>2017/18</b>	408	649	205	854	1057	1262
<b>2018/19</b>	513	582	169	751	1095	1264
<b>2019/20</b>	499	570	176	746	1069	1245
<b>2020/21</b>	481	606	163	769	1087	1250
<b>2021/22</b>	456	621	175	796	1077	1252
<b>2022/23</b>	407	647	140	787	1054	1194
<b>2023/24</b>	371	666	143	809	1037	1180
<b>2024/25</b>	342	690	154	844	1032	1186
<b>2025/26</b>	316	679	161	840	995	1156
<b>2026/27</b>	307	681	156	837	988	1144
<b>2027/28</b>	326	657	143	800	983	1126
<b>2028/29</b>	322	651	145	796	973	1118
<b>2029/30</b>	315	636	146	782	951	1097
<b>2030/31</b>	308	621	145	766	929	1074
<b>2031/32</b>	304	613	142	755	917	1059
<b>2032/33</b>	299	604	138	742	904	1041
<b>2033/34</b>	293	591	139	730	884	1023
<b>2034/35</b>	282	590	134	724	882	1016

\* Sixth form numbers are projected based on the average 'stay-on rate' for the past 3 years

Note: Outstanding planning permissions and existing Local Plan allocations for new housing could generate an additional 62 secondary-aged children based on the standard pupil yield factor applied for all North Yorkshire schools.

Assessing the Capacity of Schools

The capacity of a school is the number of pupil places it can accommodate. DfE statutory guidance<sup>1</sup> describes the method of assessing the net capacity of maintained mainstream schools. For secondary schools, the net capacity is based on the number, size and type of teaching spaces, and includes a 'utilisation factor' (equivalent to the average proportion of time that any workplace is in use) linked to the age range of the school. The method also allows some flexibility to suit the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and admission arrangements.

Published Admissions Number

The published admissions number (PAN) is the number of school places that the admission authority must offer in the age group at which pupils will normally be admitted to the school (Year 7).

A PAN of 240 is proposed for the amalgamated school to provide reasonable headroom over the anticipate demand for places, and as a multiple of 30 which is commonly applied.

Current PAN and Net Capacities

School	Age Range	PAN	Net Capacity
Eskdale School	11-16	110	550
Caedmon College Whitby (Normanby and Scoresby sites)	11-18	184	1530

Maximum PANs and Net Capacities

School	Age Range	Maximum PAN	Maximum Net Capacity <sup>2</sup>
Eskdale School	11-16	118	590
Caedmon College Whitby (Normanby and Scoresby sites)	11-18	258	1698
Amalgamated School (Normanby site)	11-16	225	1125
Amalgamated School (Scoresby site)	16-18	N/A	483
Amalgamated School across Normanby and Scoresby sites	11-18	258	1698

<sup>1</sup> <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20040118061401/http://www.dfes.gov.uk/netcapacity/>

<sup>2</sup> The site capacity for the amalgamated school age range 11-18 across the two sites differs from the total of the separate site capacities for 11-16 and 16-18 due to a different utilisation factor used in the net capacity calculation following the DfE statutory guidance. There may be some slight variation of capacities when final room usages are agreed.

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# Agenda Item 6

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S MEETING WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

7 February 2023

## **Request to accept Digital and Data grant from the Department for Education**

### **Report of the Corporate Director – Stuart Carlton**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report is to request that the executive member for Children and Young People, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service, the Corporate Director Strategic Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) authorise the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to accept the grant offer from the Department for Education which will be used to explore the potential benefits of machine learning and data analytics.

1.2 Children and Young People's Service alongside Data and Intelligence and Technology and Change submitted a bid to the Data and Digital Solutions Fund to undertake the work which would initially be piloted within Children and Young People's services but would have a benefit to the council as a whole, especially to the new council.

1.3 We were notified by the Department for Education that the bid had been successful on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

1.4 The amount available to us is £642,657 to run a project until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The project uses Microsoft Azure analytics to help make sense of unstructured data. This is data that doesn't fit neatly into a table or a database.

2.2 We know that the average cost of providing a child with a social worker is £14k p/a and that the cost of care proceedings and foster placements is significantly increased over this figure.

2.3 Social Workers currently spend 80% of their time at their computers and 20% of their time with families but research suggests that with access to better technologies and case management systems time with families could be doubled and significant reductions in children coming into care could be achieved.  
<https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/report-sets-out-new-blueprint-for-councils-to-deliver-a-reshaped-childrens-services/>

2.4 We anticipate that this project will help us identify people who can help to keep children safe, quicker. We also anticipate that this work will save social workers a

significant amount of time, meaning they can spend it directly with children and their families instead.

- 2.5 The technology will be piloted in Children and Young People's services where we hold a large amount of unstructured data, which includes Social Worker case notes and analysis as well as narrative statements and assessments.
- 2.6 We will use this technology to help make accessing the right information easy for Social Workers and will use the analytics component to simplify complex information and display it in a user-friendly format.
- 2.7 This work will improve the quality of service we can provide to the children and families in North Yorkshire, will help us keep children safe and will save significant amounts of social work time.
- 2.8 It will also give us an understanding of how the technology will benefit the other areas of the council.
- 2.9 If accepted we would be working alongside Microsoft and Coram I to help develop this technology and share our learning from it.
- 2.10 The original acceptance date deadline was the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 but has been extended to the 8<sup>th</sup> February to allow time for consideration.

### 3.0 Performance Implications

- 3.1 We are not anticipating any negative performance issues. The budget included funding to increase capacity in teams to assist with the development of the work.
- 3.2 If the work is successful, which we anticipate it will be, we expect that we will see an increase in performance and outcomes for children.
- 3.3 To be successful this work will require input from Children and Young People's service, Technology and Change, Data and Intelligence, Data Governance and Finance who have all been part of preparing this bid. The bid contains funding for each of these departments in recognition of this.

### 4.0 Options

- 4.1 We could accept the bid and undertake the pilot work, evaluating its impact and future potential.
- 4.2 We could reject the bid with no detrimental impact to our services except the loss of this opportunity.

### 5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The funding available for this bid is significant at £642k. This funding has been confirmed, subject to the authority accepting it.
- 5.2 There are no matching requirements to the funding so there will be no financial exposure to the council. The entire cost of the project will be met through the grant.



5.3 We will be responsible for meeting the agreed outcomes from the bid which are achievable.

5.4 If we were to fail to meet the requirements of the bid the Department for Education would have the right to withhold future grant payments.

#### 6.0 Impact on Other Services/Organisation

6.1 This project will require cross departmental support to deliver. The bid was put together with the support of members from Children and Young People's Service and Strategic Services.

6.2 The bid contains remuneration for all areas of the service that will be affected by this work.

6.3 There is an equality impact assessment screening form attached as an appendix to this report.

6.4 There is a Climate Change impact assessment attached as an appendix to this report.

#### 7.0 Risk Management Implications

7.1 There are no anticipated risk management issues with the project. No data will be leaving our secure network and all existing security protocols will continue to apply.

#### 8.0 Human Resources Implications

8.1 There will be new posts created as a result of this project but we expect that these will be internal posts which the funding will recredit for.

#### 9.0 Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 Accepting this grant will provide us with an opportunity to pilot using new technologies in a totally different way.

9.2 By doing this we can position ourselves as sector leaders and can be at the forefront of shaping developments in this space

9.3 By accepting this grant we will be able to develop all of this at no cost to the authority.

### **10 Recommendation(s)**

10.1 The Executive Member for Children and Young People's Service in consultation with the Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Service, Corporate Director, Strategic Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) authorises the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to accept the £642,657 grant funding from the Department for Education for delivery of this digital and data grant programme.

Stuart Carlton  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE.

Action Agreed .....  
Executive Member  
Date:

Action Requested .....  
Corporate Director  
Date:

**List of Appendices**

1. Climate Change Impact
2. Initial equality impact assessment screening form

## Appendix 1 Climate change impact assessment



The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk)

### Version 2: amended 11 August 2021

**Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:**

Planning Permission  
Environmental Impact Assessment  
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk) for advice.

<b>Title of proposal</b>	<b>Using Technology to reimagine CMS</b>
<b>Brief description of proposal</b>	<b>A project to look at how data analytics can help us unlock valuable insight from unstructured data.</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>CYPS</b>

<b>Service area</b>	<b>Children's Social Care</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Jonny Hoyle</b>
<b>Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment</b>	<b>Jonny Hoyle – Development Lead</b>
<b>Date impact assessment started</b>	<b>23/1/2023</b>

**Options appraisal**

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

This project will be undertaken alongside our existing teams. It is anticipated that it will save time and efficiencies whilst not increasing our impact on the environment over and above our current impact.

**What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?**

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

The project will be fully funded by the Department for Education and therefore will be cost neutral.

<p><b>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</b></p> <p><b>N.B.</b> There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</b></p> <p><b>Where possible/relevant please include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Changes over and above business as usual</b></li> <li>• <b>Evidence or measurement of effect</b></li> <li>• <b>Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</b></li> <li>• <b>Links to relevant documents</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</b></p>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</b></p>	
<p><b>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions</b> e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel	X			We expect this project will make our teams more effective at accessing the right information, easily. This will reduce unnecessary visits to families and telephone calls.		Initially we want to pilot this work with CYPS but eventually we want to roll this technology out to other areas of the council's services.
	Emissions from construction		X				
	Emissions from running of buildings		X		This project won't involve additional time working from buildings.		

<p><b>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</b></p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</b></p> <p><b>Where possible/relevant please include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes over and above business as usual</li> <li>• Evidence or measurement of effect</li> <li>• Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Links to relevant documents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</b></p>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</b></p>	
<p>Page 22</p>	<p>Emissions from data storage</p>		<p><b>X</b></p>		<p>The data from this project will be stored in the azure cloud based system which is an existing part of our network.</p>		
	<p>Other</p>						
<p>Minimise <b>waste</b>: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		<p><b>X</b></p>					
<p>Reduce <b>water</b> consumption</p>		<p><b>X</b></p>					
<p>Minimise <b>pollution</b> (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>	<p><b>X</b></p>			<p>Having access to the right information quicker and easier should result in less car journey's to visit families (in order to gather information we already have) which will minimise pollution.</p>			

<p><b>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</b></p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</b></p> <p><b>Where possible/relevant please include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes over and above business as usual</li> <li>• Evidence or measurement of effect</li> <li>• Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Links to relevant documents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</b></p>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</b></p>
<p>Ensure <b>resilience</b> to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>		X				
<p>Enhance <b>conservation</b> and wildlife</p>		X				
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of <b>North Yorkshire's landscape</b></p>		X				

<p><b>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</b></p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p><b>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</b></p> <p><b>Where possible/relevant please include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes over and above business as usual</li> <li>• Evidence or measurement of effect</li> <li>• Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Links to relevant documents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</b></p>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</b></p>
<p>Other (please state below)</p>						

**Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal?** If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

This project will work alongside our existing Children and Young People’s environmental standards.

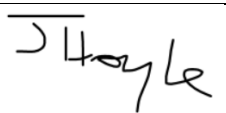


**Summary** Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

This project will work to enhance our existing services ability to access information quickly and easily. If successful it will have marginally positive impacts on the environment but most importantly won't have any detrimental impact.

**Sign off section**

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Jonny Hoyle</b>
<b>Job title</b>	<b>Development Lead</b>
<b>Service area</b>	<b>CYPS</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>CSC</b>
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Completion date</b>	<b>23/1/2023</b>

**Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):**

**Date:**

## Appendix 2

### Initial equality impact assessment screening form

This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.

<b>Directorate</b>	CYPS		
<b>Service area</b>	CSC		
<b>Proposal being screened</b>	Using technology to reimagine CMS		
<b>Officer(s) carrying out screening</b>	Jonny Hoyle		
<b>What are you proposing to do?</b>	Using new technologies to unlock unstructured data and present it to social workers in a user friendly way.		
<b>Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?</b>	We believe by doing this we will be able to save significant social worker time, make better decisions and keep children safe and within their families in a better way.		
<b>Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources?</b> Please give details.	No – the project will be funded entirely by the Department for Education.		
<b>Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC’s additional agreed characteristics</b> As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics?</li> <li>• Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important?</li> <li>• Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to?</li> </ul> <p>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked ‘Don’t know/no info available’, then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your <a href="#">Equality rep</a> for advice if you are in any doubt.</p>			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don’t know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	
<b>Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts</b> (e.g. disabled people’s access to public transport)? Please give details.	This project won’t involve new work with any groups of people. Instead, it will enhance our abilities to understand the information we hold with the groups we already work with.		
<b>Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?</b> (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with	No – the project won’t mean more work or wider groups of people being provided with services. Instead, it will mean we can build a better understanding of the unstructured data we currently hold.		

<b>protected characteristics?</b> Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.				
<b>Decision (Please tick one option)</b>	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full EIA:	
<b>Reason for decision</b>	This project will not have additional impacts upon people. Instead it will help us unlock the power of unstructured data we already hold.			
<b>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</b>				
<b>Date</b>				

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