

# North Yorkshire Council

## Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20th February 2024 commencing at 11.05 am.

Councillor Carl Les in the Chair. plus Councillors Gareth Dadd, Derek Bastiman, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Janet Sanderson, David Chance, Keane Duncan, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors Alyson Baker, Barbara Brodigan, Caroline Dickinson, Andrew Lee, Karin Sedgwick, David Staveley, Paul Haslam, George Jabbour, Cliff Lunn and Heather Phillips.

Officers present: Karl Battersby, Stuart Carlton, Gary Fielding, Richard Flinton, Nic Harne, Barry Khan, Richard Webb, Will Boardman, Steve Wilson, Tony Law, Melanie Carr, Daniel Harry and Laura Wilson.

Apologies: Councillor Andrew Williams

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

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#### **399 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Andrew Williams

#### **400 Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 February 2024**

##### **Resolved –**

That the public Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **401 Declarations of Interest**

In regard to Agenda item 5, Councillor Michael Harrison declared a pecuniary interest, as an employee of one of the organisations listed in Treasury Management Appendix B. He confirmed he had a dispensation from the Standards Committee enabling him to remain in the meeting and vote.

#### **402 Public Participation**

There were no public questions or statements.

#### **403 Q3 Performance Monitoring and Budget Report**

Considered: A joint report of the Chief Executive and Corporate Director - Strategic Resources, bringing together key aspects of the County Council's performance on a quarterly basis.

Councillor David Chance introduced the Quarter 3 performance monitoring and budget

report, confirming it provided an overview on all of the ambitions of the County Council but with a key focus on the council plan ambition for 'Every child and young person has the best possible start in life'.

He went on to summarise the performance update which covered the services previously provided by the former County Council and those transferred from the District and Borough Councils and drew attention to the progress made in converging those services and systems.

He noted the purpose of the new office of Local Government (OFLOG) was to monitor local authority performance and reviewing productivity and drew attention to the work underway to revise the Council's performance framework to meet the changing needs of the Council and the new requirements of OFLOG. He went on note:

- The pressure in HAS from hospital discharges and reduced assessor capacity in frontline teams;
- An increase in front door contacts and an increase in referrals for Children's Services;
- A slight drop in the public's satisfaction in the county's Highways network, compared to a larger recorded drop in satisfaction nationally, moving the Council in to the top quartile;
- A significant drop in waste to landfill compared to Quarter 1;

In regard to his own portfolio area, he confirmed

- An increase in apprenticeships with 50 new starters in Quarter 3;
- An increase in applications for Local Assistance funding, with 91% of applications being approved;
- An increase in the accessing of healthcare by the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

In response to questions to Executive Members from Scrutiny Members, the following was confirmed:

- Occupancy rates in Care Homes across the county was currently around 90-95%. The main reasons for care home closure were workforce recruitment or quality related;
- Across the county the uptake of the MMR vaccine was above the national average but still below the target set by the Authority, and interventions were in place in identified hotspots;
- C&F assessments remained high, and well within the variance expected compared to recent years;
- Schools were still re-setting behaviour post pandemic and so the increase in suspensions and permanent exclusions was not unexpected at this stage. There was no evidence to suggest that staff shortages or any other factors were affecting the figures and the County's position was not out of kilter with the rest of the country. The situation was being monitored and a gradual improvement was expected;
- The maintenance window at the Allerton Park facility had been extended from every 6 months to 9 months to help reduce the reliance on landfill. Yorwaste were also looking for alternative tipping points;
- Different ways of alerting residents of potential delays to kerbside waste and recycling collections were being examined, and a Member Working Group was looking at good local practice and the lessons learnt by the former District & Borough Councils;
- Whilst there had been a slight drop in public satisfaction, evidence showed a year on year improvement in the condition of the County's road network across all road categories.
- There had also been some recent changes made to the Highways Safety Inspection

Manual to reflect the need for treating defects at an earlier stage on popular cycling routes;

- There had been an unprecedented increase in reported street lighting faults due to recent weather conditions, and some took longer to address as they required traffic management to carry out the repairs;
- There had been an increase in the number on the housing waiting lists and in temporary accommodation in Quarter 3.
- To inform the narrative around planning decisions it was suggested the data should be split between committee decisions and officer decisions;
- Auto library enrolment for children had previously been considered but not pursued due to issues around parental consent and GDPR. Instead new parents were being asked if they wanted to enrol their child in the Library Service at the same time as registering their birth;
- In the main, leisure facility memberships were holding steady across the county - the recorded increase in memberships was thought to be due to the reopening of Harrogate & Knaresborough Leisure Centre;
- Intelligence gathering on national and global trends was a constant for the Council in order to proactively prepare for and mitigate against changing requirements;

#### Revenue Budget, Treasury Management & Capital Plan

Councillor Gareth Dadd introduced each section of the report. In regard to Revenue, he confirmed there had been little change since the last quarter's report and noted the Council's medium term financial strategy was to be considered in depth at the coming meeting of full Council. And, whilst welcoming the £4m underspend, he acknowledged that still required a call on reserves of £26m for the year. He also drew attention to the £8m overspend in Children's Services and HAS which had largely been offset by a \$10m underspend in Central Services, attributed to a drop in utility costs and interest earned on cash balances.

Attention was also drawn to the proposed carry forward of £50K economic development pot given to each Area Constituency Committee, for one year only pending a review of that Scheme, and to the detail provided on the Housing Revenue Account.

In regard to the Capital Plan, attention was drawn to the proposed allocation of capital funding of £795k from the Supply Chain Reserve to progress the replacement of Scarborough Lighthouse and Roundhead Piles (£543k) and in order to complete the design works for Whitby West Pier Lighthouse (£252k) in order to be in a position to bid for external funding for the delivery of both schemes.

Having considered the report and the information provided at the meeting, Executive Members were referred to the recommendations in the report, and it was

#### **Resolved – That:**

- a) The forecast outturn position against the 2023/24 Revenue Budget, as summarised in paragraph 2.2.2. be noted
- b) The forecast outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account as set out in paragraph 2.3.1. be noted
- c) The carry-forward of any unallocated sums for each of the Area Constituency Committees into 2024/25 for one-year only as set out in paragraph 2.6.1. be approved
- d) Funding of £795k for design work on the Harbours from the Supply Chain reserve as per paragraph 2.7.1 be approved
- e) The position on the Council's Treasury Management activities during the third quarter of 2023/24 be noted
- f) The report be referred to the Audit Committee for their consideration as part of the

overall monitoring arrangements for Treasury Management.

- g) The updated Q3 2023/24 Capital Plan be noted; and
- h) The allocation of capital funding of £795k from the Supply Chain Reserve be approved to progress Scarborough Lighthouse and Roundhead Piles replacement (£543k) and Whitby West Pier Lighthouse (£252k) in order to complete the design works to be in a position to bid for external funding for the actual delivery of both schemes.

#### **404 Adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement**

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director of Community Development seeking the adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement as the basis for consultation and community engagement in the preparation of the North Yorkshire Local Plan, other relevant planning policy documents and the consideration of planning applications.

Councillor Derek Bastiman introduced the report and provided an overview of the purpose of the Statement. He noted the consultation undertaken on the draft SCI and the consideration given to the feedback on how best to engage the public on planning matters etc.

Executive Members welcomed the report, and it was

**Resolved** – That:

- i. The modifications to the consultation draft Statement of Community Involvement document as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report be accepted;
- ii. The Statement of Community Involvement as set out at Appendix A to the report be adopted for the purposes of engagement on, amongst other matters, the preparation of the North Yorkshire Local Plan, neighbourhood plans and the determination of planning applications;
- iii. Authority be delegated to the Executive Member for Open to Business in consultation with the Corporate Director of Community Development to approve and adopt any future amendments to, or replacement of, the Statement of Community Involvement.

#### **405 Area Constituency Committee Feedback Report**

Considered – A report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Democratic Services) providing an overview of the key issues considered at a recent meetings of the Area Constituency Committees.

Councillor David Chance introduced the report and drew specific attention to paragraph 2.2 and the proposal to develop a civic honours type scheme for the Council, and through that Scheme to recognise the achievements of Rachel Daly.

In light of recent reported events Councillor Gareth Dadd suggested the Executive may wish to ask the Harrogate & Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee to consider the appropriateness of having the current Chair remain in post.

**Resolved** – That:

- i. The report be noted.
- ii. Officers consider the proposal to introduce a Civic Honours Scheme and report back to Executive within 6 months;

- iii. In light of recent reported events, the Harrogate & Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee be asked to consider re-appointing to the post of Chair;

**406 Forward Plan**

Considered –

The Forward Plan for the period 12 February 2024 to 28 February 2025 was presented.

**Resolved -** That the Forward Plan be noted.

**407 Date of Next Meeting - 12 March 2024**

The meeting concluded at 11.58 am.