

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 10 October 2024 at City of York Council's West Offices, commencing at 10.30 am.

Councillors Peter Wilkinson (North Yorkshire Council) in the Chair; Danny Myers ((Vice Chair) City of York Council), Chris Aldred (North Yorkshire Council), Lindsay Burr MBE (North Yorkshire Council), David Chance (North Yorkshire Council), Tim Grogan (North Yorkshire Council), Emilie Knight (City of York Council), Michael Pavlovic (City of York Council), Steve Shaw-Wright (North Yorkshire Council) and Malcolm Taylor (North Yorkshire Council).

Community Co-opted Members: Mags Godderidge and Martin Walker

Jo Coles (Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime)

Jonathan Dyson (Chief Fire Officer, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service)

Officers from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner: Mark Ayres (Temporary Director of Public Confidence), Simon Dennis (Corporate Director OPFCC & Deputy MO for Policing, Fire and Crime (MCA)), Jenni Newberry (Director of Commissioning, Criminal Justice and Partnerships), Michael Porter (Assistant Director of Resources (Deputy s73 Officer for Police, Fire and Crime Functions)), Tamara Stevens (Director of Delivery and Assurance).

Officers present: Will Baines (North Yorkshire Council), Diane Parsons (North Yorkshire Council), Paul Clark (Mayoral Combined Authority).

In attendance: Councillor George Jabbour (North Yorkshire Council).

Apologies: Councillor Heather Moorhouse and Fraser Forsyth.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

29 Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Fraser Forsyth and Councillor Heather Moorhouse. Councillor David Chance was welcomed to the meeting as substitute Member for Councillor Moorhouse.

30 Declarations of Interest

Martin Walker declared that he is a Trustee of IDAS; an organisation which receives funding from the Deputy Mayor.

Mags Godderidge declared that she is CEO of Survive, which receives funding from the Deputy Mayor. Additionally, Mags sits on the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) professional sub-group, the VAWG strategic board and the Sexual Violence steering group. Survive is also in receipt of extra funding from the Community Fund and Ministry of Justice via the Deputy Mayor's office.

Councillor Lindsay Burr notified that she is a DSL officer.

31 Minutes of the Panel Meeting held on 25th July 2024

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

32 Progress on Issues Raised by the Panel

Resolved

That the Panel notes the update report on progress made against issues raised at previous Panel meetings.

33 Public Questions or Statements to the Panel

A statement to the Panel was read on behalf of Councillor Andrew Lee, Chair of the Scrutiny of Health Committee at North Yorkshire Council (NYC), as follows:

I write following my letter to the Panel in July seeking your engagement on a matter raised with the Scrutiny of Health Committee with regard to the crisis care response for individuals with complex mental health needs. The Panel will recall that Councillor Paul Haslam (NYC) had raised concerns with the Scrutiny of Health Committee on behalf of a particular resident in crisis who was met with an armed police response. Councillor Haslam is of the view that the case presented is not an isolated one and was keen to identify how the different agencies link up around such cases and whether the support in place is working effectively. Due to the involvement of various partners and agencies in this matter, I had therefore undertaken to co-ordinate an informal meeting to better explore and consider the issues surrounding crisis care response. In particular this is around understanding the police's 'Right Care, Right Person' (RCRP) model and the strategic and operational processes in place between Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) and North Yorkshire Police.

You will recall that at the Panel meeting of 25th July, this issue was raised on my behalf and the Panel agreed to be involved in this meeting. I highlighted the need to involve North Yorkshire Police and this was raised at the meeting with DCC Bisset, who did highlight that a strategic oversight board is in place for RCRP. As such follow-up contact established that it would be helpful to include individuals involved on this. There was also a commitment made separately at the Panel meeting by the Deputy Mayor to engaging in the meeting. As such, follow-up arrangements were made for a private, informal meeting to be held on 7th October 2024, to include representatives from the above along with councillors leading on health and adult social care for both councils, the Humber and North Yorkshire ICB and TEWV.

Following my initial correspondence with North Yorkshire Police there was some constructive engagement around the co-ordination of this meeting including suggestions for other individuals with oversight of RCRP and a couple of lead officers had accepted the appointment. North Yorkshire Police had also separately invited Councillor Haslam to provide details of any specific incidents of concern that he may wish to put forward for their review. Unfortunately, just two days prior to the meeting arranged, North Yorkshire Police advised that they would not be attending

the meeting as they felt it would be inappropriate to attend a scrutiny-style meeting because a scrutiny process already exists in the guise of the strategic governance board for RCRP. The Deputy Mayor did offer to attend and speak to the policing element of this issue on 7th October. However, I took the view that it would not only be unfair to place the Deputy Mayor in this position but that it would potentially leave key operational and strategic gaps missing in this complex issue. It was therefore determined that the meeting should be postponed while further consideration is given to the next steps.

Mental health issues are of serious concern to the residents of North Yorkshire and York. While Councillor Haslam related a specific of one example of armed police response to an individual in crisis, the Scrutiny of Health Committee is concerned that this may not be an isolated example and that further exploration on this matter is important. We are therefore disappointed that North Yorkshire Police do not feel it appropriate to engage in an informal context to enable us to better understand the processes and challenges around this, and whether partners can assist. I am further concerned at the transparency and accountability of the strategic RCRP board from a scrutiny perspective. I understand that this board principally comprises the police service and TEWV and has oversight of the efficacy of the implementation of RCRP, although it would appear that there is currently no external reporting around this. Furthermore, the Panel will be aware of the poor CQC inspection outcomes for the quality of mental health care provided by TEWV which were published in 2023. It is of ongoing concern to the committee to ensure that improvements are made for our residents and that due scrutiny can be done on such matters. The Scrutiny of Health Committee will continue to scrutinise how healthcare is delivered but we cannot scrutinise the police service.

I am aware that RCRP is due to feature again within your work programme in due course and that the Panel may wish to seek reassurances from the Mayor as to the efficacy of RCRP. I would like to underline the Health committee's concern and disappointment regarding the fact that we have been unable to pursue an informal meeting with the police on this and would be grateful for any further feedback that can be shared through your own considerations with the Mayor/Deputy Mayor.

Panel response

The Chair invited the Deputy Mayor to speak to the concerns raised with the Panel. The Deputy Mayor wished to highlight that she had been happy to attend the multi-partner meeting arranged and assist with briefing on RCRP. The Deputy Mayor sought to reassure the Panel regarding oversight of RCRP and that she sits on the strategic governance board. It was also highlighted that RCRP currently only operates in relation to contact from partners, no the public.

It was agreed that the Deputy Mayor will speak to Councillor Lee to pick up further on his concerns, which the Panel welcomed. The Chair wished to note that the Panel will retain RCRP on its future work programme.

Members' Questions

The Deputy Mayor was asked how Encrochat has impacted on drug dealing in North Yorkshire in terms of arrests and drug seizures. It was agreed that a written response would be provided to the Panel.

Additionally, a Member query was put to the Deputy Mayor regarding the time spent

by North Yorkshire Police officers attending hospital with individuals under arrest, where the reasons for treatment may not seem to be fully legitimate and whether these instances had increased in order to positively impact the custody time limit. The Deputy Mayor made reference to RCRP and the importance of bringing health colleagues into this discussion. It was agreed that a response would be provided to the Panel.

As a supplementary on RCRP, the Deputy Mayor was also asked if it would be possible to have a breakdown of wasted hours spent by officers either due to a mental health crisis or a physical issue.

Members were concerned to ask about centralisation of CCTV in the force area and the fact that the police do not have live access to CCTV in some areas. This is also a concern as CCTV can support public appeals and it can cause delays in obtaining evidence. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the concerns and that the issue needs to be reviewed proportionately with council colleagues who maintain CCTV in some areas. The Deputy Mayor welcomed the update that consolidation of North Yorkshire CCTV is under review within North Yorkshire Council currently as this will facilitate easier engagement on the matter.

The Deputy Mayor was asked about the public protection order on alcohol in Scarborough and what the policy is for other towns/communities to get these put in place. The Deputy Mayor urged residents to feed such local concerns in to the Police and Crime Plan consultation.

35

'Making All Women and Girls Safer': Annual Progress Report

Considered

The report of the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime updating on progress against the Joint Strategy to address Violence Against Women and Girls.

The Deputy Mayor underlined that tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) will remain a core priority in the Mayor's new Police and Crime Plan, with planning ensuring a victim-centred focus.

The Panel commended the comprehensive report provided and put a number of questions and comments to the Deputy Mayor on the following points:-

- There appears to be only a small number of perpetrators of stalking who completed a programme to try to address their behaviours as it relied on a voluntary commitment. There was a concern at the lack of successful outcomes for such programmes and whether uptake can be increased. The Deputy Mayor highlighted that she is not seeking an alternative to a justice process but would like to do more with the under-25s as there is more scope to change behaviour for that age group. It was also highlighted to the Panel that there is an ambition to have mandated services available and seeing how funding can be provided on a longer term basis.
- The report highlights that considerable investment is being made towards a 'whole system approach' to domestic abuse. Members asked whether there will be a whole system approach to sexual violence (and child sexual abuse within that), given that it accounts for 16% of all serious violence in North Yorkshire and is under-reported. The Deputy Mayor highlighted the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) under development and how this is being developed with the intention that people will come forward through a

range of routes such as the third sector. The Deputy Mayor also acknowledged the need to tackle early on the impact of abuse-based trauma.

- The Deputy Mayor was asked what is being done to secure funding for third sector partners involved in delivery of the VAWG strategy whose funding falls away after 31st March 2025. The Deputy Mayor is acutely aware of the challenges for these partners and is voicing this along with colleagues nationally.
- The report notes that the CPS has a lack of capacity around consulting with the police prior to making a No Further Action decision. The Deputy Mayor was asked if this also means they will be unable to discharge other related matters such as pre-trial meetings. The Deputy Mayor advised that the new Head of the CPS sits on the Criminal Justice Partnership Board, which will be the appropriate place for the Deputy Mayor to pick this up and review a joined-up approach.
- In relation to the new SARC, the Deputy Mayor was asked about the strategy for ensuring that the forensic, technical and criminal investigation sides are all adequately joined up and effective. The Deputy Mayor referenced that Operation Soteria covers the policing response and that training is underway but that she is reassured by the strategic approach to date and that the new SARC represents a step-change from the previous facility. Panel members were encouraged to visit the new SARC once built.
- The Deputy Mayor was asked about the 25 police officers under investigation for VAWG and how this compared to other areas. The Deputy Mayor responded that work continues to ensure that police are held to the highest of standards. In terms of broader context there are 10,000 domestic abuse victims in the area so proportionately the police officer statistics are low and the Deputy Mayor did not believe that the force area is an outlier with other areas in this respect.
- Members discussed the evaluations of pilots for victim services and consider with the Deputy Mayor how best to share this information with council officers, including through the Mayoral Combined Authority.
- The Panel raised a highly-publicised national case of domestic abuse which could only be classified as knife crime due to the young age of the victim. It was clarified that recording of domestic abuse is at age 16 plus.

The Chair commented that due to the importance of the issues, the Panel will continue to seek an annual progress report.

Resolved

That the Panel:

- (a) notes the report provided; and
- (b) receives a further progress update on delivery against the VAWG strategy in a year's time.

The report of the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime updating on work to tackle hate crime in the force area.

The Deputy Mayor clarified that some issues are recorded as hate incidents which are not hate crimes and so are not dealt with as such but that reporting in either case is important. The disturbances seen around the country over the summer did not escalate within North Yorkshire and York but the Deputy Mayor highlighted the importance of bottoming out issues before they become a criminal matter ad so that there is an accurate picture of communities.

The Panel noted the significant increase in reporting for some crimes in comparison with the previous year's figures and queries whether more people have felt encouraged to report or whether incidents are increasing. The Deputy Mayor felt that assumptions on this would be speculative only but that neither case would be good and that the figures themselves probably don't reflect an accurate picture.

Members also highlighted the issue of hate crime through social media and whether the government could be pressed to do more on this. The Deputy Mayor urged people to report crimes through the various channels available such as Crimestoppers.

In response to a query regarding the category of religion-based hate crime and whether this could be broken down further (e.g. Islamophobia), the Deputy Mayor advised that a detailed discussion had been held at a recent Online Public Meeting which included further information on this.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the update report provided on hate crime.

37

Risk and Resource Model: Post-Implementation Review

Considered –

The report of the Deputy Mayor providing a review of the implementation of the Risk and Resource Model (RRM) within the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS).

Both the Deputy Mayor and the Chief Fire Officer reflected on the financial difficulties facing the NYFRS, particularly in view of the fire precept levy having been maintained at a low level by central government for a number of years thereby impacting on investment ability. The Panel noted that as regards flooding response, the NYFRS does receive some funding from government but this does not cover training and equipment. The Deputy Mayor highlighted that she is alive to climate change and other challenges impacting the NYFRS such as wider use of electric vehicles and related fires and that she will work with the service to get ahead of these.

Members welcomed the noted improvement in NYFRS response times and were also directed to a recent Online Public Meeting which looked at prevention and protection models. Members queried whether there is concern at the level of on-call availability at Huntington station, especially over the busy summer months. In response the Deputy Mayor looked to provide reassurance regarding levels of applications received for on-call and that she felt assured that there is adequate vehicle availability for York area. The Chief Fire Officer spoke to investment made around updating vehicles and capital investment in Scarborough, Northallerton and

Malton. The Panel also heard about the national challenges in recruiting and retaining on-call firefighters and the Chief Fire Officer outlined the various steps implemented by NYFRS to manage and preserve recruitment of on-call firefighters from interview stage to assessing impact on families. One issue faced is around proximity of housing. The Deputy Mayor noted the need for the Mayoral Combined Authority to look more broadly at housing provision to ensure that on-call firefighters are able to live locally to their station.

Members asked about fire engine availability in Harrogate. The Panel were advised that the intentions of the approved RRM remained and that discussion with staff and trade unions is ongoing. The Chief Fire Officer spoke to the differing financial and operational models that could be applied around availability of the second fire engine at Harrogate.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the update report provided on implementation of the RRM.

38 Consultation outline for the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan

Considered

The report of the Deputy Mayor outlining plans for the development of the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan.

Details of the public consultation have been received and councillors were encouraged to share within their communities. The Deputy Mayor outlined that she is keen to engage harder to reach groups on their views as part of the consultation. The draft plans will come to the Panel in January 2025 for review and recommendations.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the report provided.

39 Work Programme

Considered

The report of the Panel Secretariat outlining the Panel's programme of work for 2024/25.

The following items were identified for future scheduling:

- Neighbourhood policing;
- A deeper dive regarding children and young people and their experience of crime in their own right, following the discussions around sexual violence and impact.

Resolved

That the Panel agrees its outline programme of work for 2024/25.

40 Any other items

The Panel were advised that no urgent items had been raised with the Chair.

41 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 16th January 2025 at 10:30am at County Hall, Northallerton.

The meeting concluded at 12.35 pm.
DP.