

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Friday, 1st October 2021 commencing at 10.00 am.

County Councillor Caroline Goodrick in the Chair. Plus, County Councillors Keane Duncan, Val Arnold, Robert Baker, Gareth Dadd, Caroline Patmore, Peter Sowray, Roberta Swiers and Greg White.

Officers present: Richard Marr, Andrew Dixon, Chris Reynolds, Sally Dunn and Louise Wilson.

Other Attendees: Mr Philip Allott (PFCC) and PC Andrew Birkinshaw.

Apologies: County Councillors Lindsay Burr, Janet Sanderson and Helen Swiers.

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

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### **103 Welcome by the Chair - Introductions & Updates**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed there were no updates to provide.

### **104 Election of Vice-Chair**

County Councillor Gareth Dadd nominated County Councillor Robert Baker as the Vice-Chair of the Committee, which was seconded by County Councillor Greg White.

Members of the Committee voted on the nomination, as it was

**Resolved** – That County Councillor Robert Baker be elected as the new Vice-Chair of the Committee.

### **105 Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 June 2021**

**Resolved** –

That the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee held on 25 June 2021, having been printed and circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **106 Apologies & Declarations of Interest**

There were no apologies given.

County Councillor Bob Baker declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 8, as a member of his family worked at Outwood Academy in Easingwold.

## 107 Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

## 108 Attendance of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner - Mr Philip Allott

Considered:

A presentation by Philip Allott, North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), in which he confirmed his initial focus during his first four months in post, which had included getting out and about to meet with staff across the Police and Fire and Rescue Service, and provided an overview of his priorities and plans, as summarised below:

- Priorities included tackling neighbourhood crime, greater use of youth diversion, tackling drug supply and drug use, hate crime, dealing with cross border crime, reducing re-offending and enhancing rural services, safety of women and;
- Improvements to infrastructure and equipment – the new combined Police and Fire Service station at Ripon;
- A new approach to anti-social behaviour, with more use of ‘nudge theory’ to promote behaviour change;
- A renewed focus upon tackling rural crime, with greater use of modern technology, such as drones, to extend the reach of Police Officers and PCSOs;
- Greater support and incentives for retained/volunteer fire fighters and small rural fire and rescue stations;
- Development of the relationship between the Police and local communities so they were better able to work together to promote community safety;
- A review of the 101 service – introduction of digital reporting and waiting times and additional funding for extra staff;
- An updated CCTV system across North Yorkshire with a centralised base for monitoring;
- Development of a Public Safety Service;
- Improved support for victims of crime and promotion of the Victims’ Code;

Specifically in regard to speeding, the PFCC noted the limited resources available and 6,000+ miles of road to be covered. As such, he wanted to encourage residents to raise complaints about speeding, as this would help the Police build up an understanding of where the problems were and how best to target resources. He also confirmed:

- Research would be commissioned, to better understand how best to regulate speed on the highways across the county. This would include enhanced measurement of road use and speeds;
- The number of Road Traffic Police Officers to be increased;
- The support of the Council and councillors would be welcomed in working through where fixed speed cameras and camera vans could be placed;
- In some cases, speed limits could be reduced from 40mph to 30mph on roads where there were particular concerns;
- Use of citizen dashcam footage to support prosecutions;

Members raised their concerns about speeding through villages, particularly those lying alongside main roads.

In light of recent national events, Members also queried the robustness of the selection and vetting process for prospective officers and were reassured that the Government was leading on a review.

Finally, they queried the training provided to Police Officers in regard to recognizing dementia and other such issues, noting that 80% of their work was safeguarding and prevention related and only 20% about responding to crime. In response, the PFCC confirmed that there were Dementia champions and other such roles within the Service.

The PFCC went on to outline his plans for the future, which included improving resilience, service delivery, governance arrangements, partnership working, and seeking fairer funding to meet the challenges of serving the largest county in the country. He also confirmed forthcoming consultations on the Police and Crime, and Fire and Rescue Plans, and his commissioning priorities.

The Chair thanked the PFCC for attending the meeting and it was

**Resolved** – That the presentation be noted.

## **109 Rural Policing Annual Update**

Members considered a presentation delivered by PC Andrew Birkinshaw of North Yorkshire Police (NYP) on the work of the Rural Taskforce, which highlighted the current issues within the Thirsk & Malton constituency area and provided a breakdown of the statistics for the different types of crime recorded.

It was noted that the key focus of the Taskforce was:

- Raptor Persecution - North Yorkshire being the worst hit county for that type of crime
- Poaching season (the biggest problem) leading to an increase in the number of reports of damage to crops and gates, and harassment of land owners;
- Thefts and rural burglaries at farms and campsites - It was confirmed a WhatsApp group had been set up for campsite owners to keep them all updated on suspicious behaviour etc and to allow the sharing of information with and from the Police;
- Heritage Crime – night hawking becoming a larger problem;
- Sheep worrying;

PC Andrew Birkinshaw went on to provide an overview of NYP's ongoing Operations – Checkpoint, Figaro and Owl. It was confirmed that Operation Checkpoint was intelligence led, focussed on tackling cross-border inquisitive crime - jointly run by forces across the north of England with support from Neighbourhood policing and community watch groups.

He also noted the benefits of the Rural Watch Scheme (facilitated through social media), which alongside reporting crime through 101 and 999, allowed rural communities to contact and receive feedback from NYP and reporting suspicious behaviour in their communities, such as recording suspicious vehicle registrations,.

It was recognised that rural communities were often hard to reach communities and therefore Members were pleased to note the ongoing and successful use of WhatsApp as a way of keeping communities in touch with the Police, enabling them to work together to prevent crime in their localities.

Members thanked Inspector PC Andrew Birkinshaw for his attendance and it was:

**Resolved** – That the presentation be noted.

## 110 Annual Update on Schools, Educational Achievement and Finance

Members considered a detailed report introduced by Andrew Dixon, CYPS Strategic Planning Manager. The wide-ranging report provided information on:

- The no of schools across the area and their status;
- School standards and attainment;
- Exclusions;
- Special Education Needs;
- Elective Home Education;
- Schools Finance;
- Local school place planning issues;

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed:

- There was land designated in the Easingwold area for school parking, secured by the County Council in case it was needed, which would be dependent on house building in the area. These types of decisions were now supported by access to NHS data on pre-school aged children registered at local GP practices;
- Capacity at Kirbymoorside school and the level of expansion needed, was currently being assessed;
- There had been a steady decline in the number of fixed term exclusions which was considered positive but the Service was not complacent. It was confirmed that following the significant review of secondary school exclusions in 2018, which led to changes to the pupil referral unit and the introduction of a more positive and proactive approach, a similar review of the support and interventions for primary aged pupils was to be undertaken;
- In regard to Easingwold Outwood Academy, there had been a reduction in its intake. In previous year's it had seen a significant intake of pupils from outside its catchment area, but following its special measure judgement, those numbers fell away. Coupled with that there had been no increase in the primary population from its feeder schools, which was having an inherent impact. It was noted the school had not had an Ofsted inspection since becoming a sponsored academy in 2018, so it continued to carry its predecessor's judgement.
- There would be a return to external exams this year, with some adjustment to GCSE and A Level examinations e.g. some reduced content;
- In the last 5 years, the gap between the national and local recognised percentage of children with an EHCP had reduced significantly, bringing the county much closer in line with the national picture. Work continues to ensure the county has enough provision in the right places;
- A high percentage of those pupils with fixed term or permanent exclusions often had complex needs or unidentified SEND;
- There had been an increase in the number of pupils being electively home educated which had been exacerbated because of the lockdowns. Many had chosen to continue post pandemic. A team of advisors had been established under the Medical Education Service to work with families to ensure an appropriate curriculum and safeguards were in place. The co-operation of the parents was key, as it was not something the local authority could insist on;
- Overall a falling birth rate and some social and economic factors were responsible for a reduction in pupil roll numbers, resulting in a reduction in funding;
- Further developments for 2022/23 around sparsity funding following the significant increase in the maximum value for smaller and more remote primary schools in 2021 with a further 80 schools expected to benefit across North Yorkshire;

The Chair thanked officers for their comprehensive report and it was

**Resolved** – That the annual report be noted.

#### **111 Work Programme**

Members considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) which contained the Committee's current work programme for the remainder of the municipal year (2020/21).

The Chair thanked County Councillor Keane Duncan for his work as the previous Vice-Chair of the Committee, and it was

**Resolved** – That the work programme for the remainder of 2020/21 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm.