

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**18 May 2022**

**THIS STATEMENT COVERS THE PERIOD FROM THE MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL ON 16 FEBRUARY 2022 TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS ON 5 MAY 2022**

### **STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY BOARD**

Scrutiny Board brings together the Chairs of the five thematic overview and scrutiny committees at the Council and the Older Peoples' and Young People's Champions. It provides an opportunity for a whole council view of scrutiny activity, which avoids gaps and overlaps and helps establish a lead committee for areas of joint interest. It also provides a forum in which the key performance issues for the Council can be reviewed and items for further scrutiny identified.

The scrutiny function was created to act as a check on and balance to the executive and it is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements.

There has been one meeting of Scrutiny Board since the last statement to Council.

The meeting of Scrutiny Board on 18 February 2022 focussed upon the scrutiny of the Q3 Performance and Finance Management Report, ahead of the members of the Board attending the meeting of the Executive on 22 February 2022. The main theme of the report was 'every child and young person has the best start to life'. Some of the issues raised at the Executive meeting by members of the Scrutiny Board are highlighted below:

- The increase in the number of and complexity of referrals to children's social care provision
- The increase in number of assessments of children and families where mental health is identified as a factor
- The high turnover of Educational Psychologists in the Special Educational Needs Service and the associated workforce pressures
- Whether an average of 6 days support for each maintained school by the School Improvement service was sufficient to address the issues that have arisen over the past two years of providing education during the pandemic
- The performance of the Customer Contact Centre and call handling time and call abandonment
- The anticipated new national waste strategy and the impact that this will have upon waste collection and disposal
- The national hospital discharge framework and the impact that this is having upon social care
- The 'Make Care Matter' recruitment campaign and whether it has had a positive impact upon staffing shortages across the care sector
- The response of the Council to the cost of living crisis and what actions can be taken.

At the meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 18 February 2022, members also reflected on the activity of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees over the past 5 years and some of the key pieces of work that had been undertaken. Examples include:

- Transport Economy and Environment OSC - vehicle activated speed signs, 20mph speed limits, single use plastics and waste and recycling in general and broadband and mobile phone coverage
- Corporate and Partnerships OSC - offending rates and rehabilitation services, reconfiguration of the library service, over the counter banking services and access to cash machines in rural areas and the Brierley Group of companies
- Young People OSC - mental health provision and early intervention and prevention, elective home education, SEND provision and school attainment
- Scrutiny of Health - health and social care workforce planning, integration of health and social care services, mental health service provision in the county and centralisation of specialist health services and the role of smaller hospitals in the health economy
- Care and Independence OSC - the care market and provision of adult social care services, user participation and the Council's Living Well Service and the renewed focus upon prevention and early intervention.
- All committees and Scrutiny Board – the report and recommendations of the Rural Commission, the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan and the achievement of net zero carbon dioxide emissions, the impact of the UK exit from the EU upon the local economy and the recovery from the pandemic and understanding its impact upon service provision in the county.

There are many more examples of the role that the overview and scrutiny committees have played in the development of policies, strategies and services and the key role that they have had as a check-and-balance and as a critical friend.

The annual report of overview and scrutiny for 2021-22, will be included in the papers for the July meeting of the County Council.

Members of Scrutiny Board are next due meet at 2pm on 17 June 2022. At that meeting, the Executive Q4 Performance and Finance Management Report will be scrutinised.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR STANLEY LUMLEY  
29 April 2022