

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
22 February 2023
STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY BOARD

Scrutiny Board brings together the Chairs of the six 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 my last statement to Council.

The meeting of Scrutiny Board on 25 November 2022 focussed upon the scrutiny of the Executive Q2 Performance Monitoring Report, ahead of the members of the Board attending the meeting of the Executive at 11am on Tuesday 29 November 2022. Some of the issues raised at the Executive meeting by members of the Scrutiny Board are highlighted below:

- The impact that the rate of inflation will have upon the average weekly cost of a care home placement and the work of the Council to mitigate this and support care providers in an otherwise fragile market
- The cost of living crisis and whether there is more that the Council and partners can do, in addition to schemes such as NYLAF and the Household Support Fund, to support people on lower incomes and prevent them from getting to the point where they need emergency support
- The role that libraries may have to play in providing a community base for banking services, following on from the example of a building society opening a branch in Knaresborough Library
- The support that is put in place for unaccompanied asylum seekers who claim to be under 18 years of age and are undocumented and the need to ensure that vulnerable children are not placed in the same settings as adults
- The impact of the increasing cost of fuel and associated budgetary pressures upon schools and whether this will have an effect upon the number of teaching and ancillary staff employed and so standards and school performance
- The degree to which the Council can and does monitor and follow up on children who are not attending school
- The continued use of remote access meetings and new ways of working post-covid to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions and increase efficiency by saving staff time
- Waste management and what more can be done to encourage recycling and to divert household waste from landfill.

The Older People's and Young People's Champions provided an update on key aspects of their work over the past three months. Common themes were the cost of living crisis and access to public transport.

Members of Scrutiny Board are next due meet at 17 February 2023. At that meeting, the Executive Q3 Performance and Finance Management Report will be scrutinised.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK
8 February 2023