

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee

12 June 2023

Area Constituency Committees in the new North Yorkshire Council

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide a guide about Area Constituency Committees' ways of working for this next iteration of the committees.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The County Council has six Area Constituency Committees (ACC) which are coterminous with the six Parliamentary constituencies within North Yorkshire. Each committee meets formally in public four times a year. The Terms of Reference for the ACCs were agreed at the meeting of the County Council on 22 February 2023, as stated in the Constitution for the new North Yorkshire Council. The Terms of Reference are at Appendix A.

3.0 ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 This guide to ways of working has been developed in conjunction with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the ACCs, the Executive member for Corporate Services and senior officers. The intention is to work through the practicalities of delivering upon the Terms of Reference.
- 3.2 An initial discussion was held at the meeting of the ACC Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting on 24 April 2023 to identify key issues and themes to feed into discussions with officers leading on key areas of work that are of interest to the committees. The discussion with officers took place on 9 May 2023. A further meeting was held with the ACC Chairs and Vice Chairs on 18 May 2023.

4.0 FIRST ROUND OF MEETINGS

4.1 The dates and times of the first round of meetings of the ACCs are as follows:

Committee	Date and time
Harrogate and Knaresborough ACC	10am on 8 June 2023
Richmond (Yorks) ACC	10am on 12 June 2023
Scarborough and Whitby ACC	10.30am on 9 June 2023
Selby and Ainsty ACC	10am on 15 June 2023
Skipton and Ripon ACC	10am on 1 June 2023
Thirsk and Malton ACC	2pm on 16 June 2023

4.2 Papers for the meetings will be published 5 clear working days ahead of the meeting itself.

5.0 MEETINGS

- 5.1 The ACCs are scheduled to meet four times a year. Additional meetings or working groups may be held and established as necessary, at the discretion of the committee chair.
- 5.2 The Constitution states: “The Chair of a Committee, or the Chair of the Council, may summon a special meeting of a committee at any time, and either of them shall summon a special meeting on the requisition in writing of not less than one quarter of the members of the committee. The summons shall specify the business to be considered at the special meeting, and no business other than that specified shall be considered at the meeting.”
- 5.3 The ACCs will determine where they are to hold their meetings. There is a strong case to hold meetings at the former district, borough and county council offices as there are facilities, staff and parking there. It may also be possible to record/broadcast and hold hybrid meetings at those sites using existing facilities. It is important, however, to have the flexibility to hold meetings in the area where a matter being considered is most relevant or of most concern.
- 5.4 A review is underway of options with regard to recording/broadcasting of meetings and holding hybrid meetings across the North Yorkshire Council estate.
- 5.5 Where a meeting is held as a hybrid enabling access for officers and members remotely via MS Teams, members who attend remotely will not be able to propose a motion, second a motion or vote. There is also an expectation that members make every effort to physically attend a committee meeting of the council so that they are able to fully participate in that meeting.

6.0 MID CYCLE BRIEFINGS

- 6.1 A Mid-Cycle Briefing (MCB), following a similar format to that of overview and scrutiny, will be held that enables chairs, vice chairs and group spokes to develop the committee work programme, review issues to see whether they are appropriate for a discussion at the committee and agree the agenda for the next meeting. The meetings to be held remotely using MS Teams and be scheduled in-between formal committee meetings.

7.0 CORPORATE DIRECTORS

- 7.1 A corporate director will support the work of each of the six ACCs. Their role will be to provide high level officer support to help facilitate the work of the committee and ensure that reports and papers are as requested by the committee and provided in a timely way.

Corporate Director	Area Constituency Committee
Karl Battersby	Selby and Ainsty
Rachel Joyce	Harrogate and Knaresborough
Stuart Carlton	Richmond (Yorks)
Richard Webb	Thirsk and Malton
Gary Fielding	Skipton and Ripon
Nic Harne	Scarborough and Whitby

8.0 PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

- 8.1 Representatives of the local Parish and Town Councils will be able to attend the meetings of the committee and will also be able to submit questions or statements through the council's public participation scheme (see page 214-216 of the Constitution).
- 8.2 There is also an opportunity for Parish and Town Councils to raise issues of local concern between meetings of the ACCs directly with the committee chair, vice chair and democratic services officer. These can then be considered for inclusion on the committee work programme and/or escalation or referral elsewhere.
- 8.3 There may be opportunities for issue-led engagement with a cluster of Parish and Town Councils, in response to a local issue of concern. Such a discussion could also include representation from a wider number of local groups who have expertise and insight to bring to bear.

9.0 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- 9.1 ACC chairs and vice chairs will liaise as appropriate with overview and scrutiny chairs as issues arise to work out how scrutiny can best be managed in a complementary manner.
- 9.2 An example of where local scrutiny by the ACCs has worked well is the re-development of the Castleberg Hospital in Giggleswick, which was closed at short notice due to concerns over its structural safety. Local members were able to scrutinise the plans for and progress with the re-development of the site whilst the Scrutiny of Health committee was able to review the long term plans for smaller, cottage hospitals in the county.

10.0 ESCALATION ROUTES

- 10.1 Where an issue has been considered that the committee resolves must be addressed then there are a number of routes by which this can be done. This includes recommendations and/or referral to: the relevant Assistant Director or Corporate Director or Executive Member; Overview and Scrutiny; or Executive.

11.0 FUNDING

- 11.1 The process for making recommendation to the Corporate Director of Community Development regarding allocation of the £50,000 'seed funding' aligned to each of the ACCs needs to be developed. There is no wish to develop an overly complex or bureaucratic system for making recommendations to the corporate director but there will need to be a structure and process in place that enables funding requests to be robust, aligned with local needs and the strategic priorities for the Council and justifiable.
- 11.2 A framework will be developed in conjunction with the relevant Executive members, the ACC Chairs and Vice Chairs and the Corporate Director of Community Development.
- 11.3 The funding could be used to support economic and destination development, particularly in ways that ensures that there is a pipeline of projects ready for grant and funding applications as and when they arise.

12.0 WORK PROGRAMME

- 12.1 The following have been suggested in addition to topics that have already been scheduled for individual committee work programmes.

12.2 Themes and topics that could be brought to the committees for ‘strong recommendations’:

- Local Plan development (including the links with the National Parks and AONBs)
- Planning policy engagement (including the links with the National Parks and AONBs)
- Community safety strategic plan engagement
- Local Transport Plan development
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy development
- Parking policy and strategy
- Traffic Regulation Orders
- How the services in the new council work – AD led
- Economic growth strategies – development and implementation
- Economic development projects that are in the pipeline
- Destination development strategies.

12.3 Annual reports:

- Work programme setting session
- Review of the Council Plan and how this informs the work of the committees
- Schools performance and budget report
- Adult social care performance and budget report
- Housing development
- Council budget report
- Stronger communities report
- Report from the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner.

12.4 Reports for circulation (only discussed where members have raised a specific issue):

- Community safety (Police and Fire)
- 1/4ly performance and finance report that goes to the Executive
- Grant funding and seed funding available to local communities.

13.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

13.1 The Terms of Reference of the ACCs were agreed at the meeting of the County Council on 22 February 2023. This report proposes a way in which those Terms of Reference can practically be applied. The report represents the outcome of a series of meetings with members and officers and includes a number of options for members of the committee to consider as they plan for the first 12 months of the new committee.

14.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 As referred to in paragraph 11.0, the process for making recommendation to the Corporate Director of Community Development regarding allocation of the £50,000 ‘seed funding’ aligned to each of the ACCs needs to be developed.

15.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

16.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

16.1 There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.

17.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

18.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 The suggested ways of working are outlined as above to assist the committee in its first year of operation.

19.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

19.1 That the committee reviews the Terms of Reference and suggested ways of working.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Constitution of North Yorkshire County Council - [New Council Constitutions \(northyorks.gov.uk\)](http://northyorks.gov.uk)

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)
County Hall, NORTHALLERTON

23 May 2023

Report Author: Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager.

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.