

North Yorkshire County Council

Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2 March at 10am.

Present:

County Councillor Karin Sedgwick in the Chair.

County Councillors: Joy Andrews, Karl Arthur, Phillip Barrett, Eric Broadbent, Andy Brown, Caroline Dickinson, Bridget Fortune, Robert Heseltine, George Jabbour, Pat Marsh, Heather Moorhouse, Andy Paraskos, Jack Proud, Roberta Swiers and Nigel Knapton

Cllr Joy Andrews joined remotely

In attendance:

Officers: Ray Busby (Principal Scrutiny Support Officer), Christine Phillipson (Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer), Mike Rudd (Head of Housing, Technology & Sustainability, Prevention and Service Development), Victoria Turner (Public Health Consultant), Abigail Barron (Head of Service Development, Commissioning and Quality) and Louise Wallace (Director of Public Health).

Co-opted Members: Jill Quinn (Voluntary and Community Services)

Apologies: Mike Padgham (Independent Care Sector)

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

1. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 December 2023 having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

3. Public Questions or Statements

The committee was advised that no notice had been received of any public questions or statements to be made at the meeting.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

5. Social Care, Public Health and Climate Change & North Yorkshire Council Health and Adult Services Climate Action Plan

Considered-

Line of enquiry compiled by Cllr Andy Brown with the support of the group spokespersons in relation to Health and Adult Services directorate activity on Social Care, Public Health and Climate Change. The paper invited a response at this committee meeting

Presentation and briefing by Mike Rudd and Victoria Turner on the Climate Action Plan for the directorate of Health and Adult Services and a service specific action plan for Public Health, produced in February 2023.

Mike Rudd emphasised that the draft plan has not yet had wider engagement and is therefore subject to change, but gives an indicative overview of the proposed actions, existing activity, and priorities.

When eventually finalised, the plan will form the basis of the directorate's contribution to the overarching NYC strategy. He and Victoria Turner highlighted the following aspects:

- Climate change & sustainability is a recognised part of HAS work plan.
- Identified leads for climate change for adult social care and public health since 2019.
- Climate change key issue highlighted in 2019 HAS Summer Conversations.
- Lots of work ongoing – in light of (draft) NYC climate strategy the directorate is pulling all current and planned work together into HAS climate action plan.
- Lots of crossover between climate and public health agendas – specific public health action plan to supplement HAS plan.

The Climate Action Plan follows nationally accepted guidance from the Local Government Association. This includes a series of commitments about what we will do and how we will do it. Also, HAS intends to include commitments around additional pieces to support implementation of the action plan:

- HAS Climate Board
- Climate literacy training
- Development of service level plans
- Climate in all policy approach

In relation to public health, there are significant commitments to:

- Develop the evidence base and data for the climate impact within North Yorkshire.
- Address the wide range of health impacts of climate change.
- Strengthen the climate resilience and environmental sustainability of the local health system, commissioned services, strategies, and interventions.
- Promote the health co-benefits of climate change mitigation in other areas.

In response to a member's question Mike confirmed that wherever possible the directorate was working hard to bolster and encourage local supply chains and locally sourced materials.

The scope of the in-house climate change training for HAS personnel was explained. Jill Quinn suggested this be opened out to voluntary and community sector participation.

Members remarked favourably on the comprehensive nature of the draft plan. It was acknowledged that whilst the content of the documents does not directly address the specific questions raised in the line of enquiry, the matters Cllr Andy Brown pinpointed were incorporated in the scope and narrative of the draft plan.

Resolved –

- a) that the report be noted.
- b) That the committee need not, in the short term at least, to look again at the draft plan, once the overall strategy is adopted the commitments within it ought to be a key element of how the committee chooses to scrutinise service performance and developments.

6. Health and Adult Services Local Account 2021-2022

Considered-

- a) Covering report by the Scrutiny Team Leader introducing the Health and Adult Services Local Account.
- b) The draft Local Account, covering the time period 1st April 2021-31st March 2022. Louise Wallace briefed the committee on this document.

Louise explained that for this Local Account:

- the format has been adapted to introduce the HAS Plan 2025 and better support the Directorate's work to prepare for the new CQC assessment framework for council's adult social care.
- Align future Local Accounts to the CQC self-assessment and showcase performance improvement in an engaging and accessible way
- the intention to make the report more user-friendly and accessible.

Members supported this approach.

Given that the Local Account ought to be an honest assessment of social care performance, members agreed it was helpful that, before it is published, members can review, pass comment and make suggestions for any amendments. On this occasion, however, no changes were suggested.

Resolved –

- a) that the report be noted
- b) the committee found the Local Account to be a high-quality document, well written and accessible. It assed what for members has been the pivotal test: it is self-reflective rather than self-congratulatory.

7. North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board -

Considered – One page summary of the Board's Annual Report

Ray Busby explained that to reflect the committee's responsibilities to review safeguarding matters, the annual report is ordinarily taken after it is published. On this occasion, however, only the one-page summary had been put before members for information.

On past occasions the Chair of the Safeguarding Board attends to help members understand the report which chronicles Board activity and priorities, but also to hold a discussion on broader Safeguarding issues, concerns and developments, the level of partnership commitment and co-ordination etc. This was not possible this year.

Louise Wallace took members briefly through the report. The key point to note was the commitment of partners to the safeguarding agenda remained strong.

Resolved –

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) That the customary broader discussion on Safeguarding with the Board Chair be arranged as soon as practicable.

8. Care Market Update

Considered –

Presentation by Abigail Barron on Care Market issues in North Yorkshire.

Abigail explained the key headline pressures:

- Workforce issues across the health and care sector
- Increased number of hospital discharges
- Unsourced packages of home care, particularly in Whitby, Craven and Ryedale
- Cost of care continues to rise, particular issues resulting from economic pressures
- Limited care home capacity, with deregistration of nursing homes
- Sustainability of the care market remains a priority, issues relating to financial stability and recruitment and retention

Resolved –

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) The following topics feature strongly in the committee's programme of work over the coming year for regular monitoring and review.
 - the significance and impact of unsourced packages of care and if some areas of the county were more affected than others, what does this mean for equity.

- The complications and financial implications to providers and the authority resulting from the sector running high occupancy rates.
- The details, findings and conclusions of a pilot scheme in Harrogate on changed terms and conditions for the social care workforce.
- How we work to prevent but, when required, respond to market provider failure.
- A briefing on the success of the pilot (in Ryedale) to encourage more micro providers into the market and the prospects for that being rolled out more widely wider.

9. Work Programme

Considered –

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader on the Work Programme.

Performance Measures

Cllr Andy Brown expressed the view that the committee ought to look seriously and as a matter of urgency at compiling a series of key indicators against which performance could be judged. This was especially important in then light of the impending CQC assessment framework. The committee need to be prepared.

It was examined that the Executive routinely assessed and reviewed a set of performance measures; it was, of course, open for the committee to review any of these, or a section of them, at any time. In terms of CQC inspection preparation, an undertaken had been given by the directorate to come back to committee members as the CQC self-assessment work was refined.

Committee Remit - Housing

Members were aware that under new governance arrangements for the new authority - North Yorkshire Council, there was a suggestion that the committee take on board as part of its remit responsibilities to scrutinise housing issues. Recognising that there was likely to be a range of views as to the scope of this work, it would be wise for members to receive an informal briefing before committing to any work.

Resolved -

- a) That the work programme be agreed.
- b) It was agreed that group spokespersons consider how the committee might better and more constructively use such performance measures.
- c) An informal briefing on housing matters be arranged

The meeting finished at 12 noon