

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 28th May 2024 commencing at 11.00 am.

Councillor Carl Les in the Chair. Councillors Mark Crane, Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors Alyson Baker, Caroline Dickinson, Karin Sedgwick, Paul Haslam, Malcolm Taylor, George Jabbour, Peter Lacey and Cliff Lunn.

Officers present: Karl Battersby, Stuart Carlton, Gary Fielding, Richard Flinton, Barry Khan, Richard Webb, Ian Thompson, Will Boardman, Elizabeth Jackson, Daniel Harry and Chris Bourne (remote attendee).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

457 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

458 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Michael Harrison declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Minute 460 on the basis that his employer was listed in Treasury Management Appendix B. He confirmed that he had a dispensation from the Standards and Governance Committee enabling him to remain in the meeting and vote on the item.

459 Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements.

460 Q4 Performance Monitoring and Budget Report

Considered – A joint report of the Chief Executive and Corporate Director – Resources, bringing together key aspects of the Council's performance on a quarterly basis.

Councillor Heather Phillips, Executive Member for Corporate Services, introduced the report which covered the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024 and concluded the first year of performance reporting for North Yorkshire Council. The first year of operation had been characterised by the convergence of systems from the former borough and district councils and work was continuing to bring systems together. This was the last time the report would be in its current format as future reports would be amended to meet the requirements of OFLOG and the emerging needs of the new authority

The Executive Member drew Members' attention to a number of highlights from the Executive Performance Report including:

- HAS was able to meet the demands of an increase in hospital discharges to 16.1 per day compared with 15.8 per day in Q3, whilst localised surges in demand quickly used up local capacity
- CYPS had experienced the highest number of contacts recorded by the Multi Agency Screening Team which had recorded an increase of 12% since 31 March 2023
- The Environment directorate reported that for Q3 no waste went into landfill, and this was assisted by the fact that Allerton Park operated at 100% capacity
- For Community Services rent recovery continued to do well and the Council was in the top quarter for this
- For Corporate Services there were 329 active apprenticeships active for this quarter, a 54% increase from the same period last year

In response to questions from Scrutiny Chairs and Member Champions to Executive Members the following was confirmed:

- There were now fewer than 10 unresolved homecare packages on a regular basis, and the council was working jointly with the NHS to prevent care home closures and the prevention of exploitation due to international recruitment
- There had been changes in public attitudes to smoking and vaping was now as much of an issue, although smoking was still the number one public health cause of death and cancer. The focus of smoking cessation services was now on more difficult to reach groups and those with other issues or addictive behaviours
- Different ways of providing health checks were being explored such as at libraries or in workplaces, travel time had not been found to have an impact on take up and further work was required to understand the reasons for the low take up
- The number of children being home educated had increased to over 1000 pupils; where the Council was notified that a child was to be educated at home a meeting was offered to look at how any issues that had led to home education might be addressed. Annual checks were undertaken to ensure that provision was right for each child in line with national legislation
- Demand for children's social care was rising with an increase of 46% in initial contacts. Re-referrals were audited regularly to understand if cases were closed too early, generally it had been found that re-referrals were for a different reason than the original referral
- Rates of persistent absence from school were falling and were less than the national average. Exclusions were a matter for school headteachers, however the council did work with schools in supporting children who had been excluded
- When Allerton Park was shut down for maintenance the council worked to ensure waste was diverted to other waste treatment plants rather than going to landfill
- Local government reorganisation had had a negligible impact on the amounts of garden waste collected
- The apparent increase in fly-tipping was considered to be a statistical anomaly due to some under-reporting in Q3
- The number of vacant dwellings was due to lack of proactive maintenance in the past and provision had been made in the HRA budget to commission a programme of proactive maintenance
- Whilst there were more virtual visits to libraries there had been an increase in the number of books physically loaned by children and young people and there was a strong future for physical libraries

Revenue Budget, Treasury Management and Capital Plan

Councillor Gareth Dadd, Executive Member for Finance and Resources, introduced each section of the report, which was the first outturn report for the new authority. Initially a £30m deficit had been predicted, however by year end the deficit was £19m, which had been taken from reserves. Children's and adult services to vulnerable people were experiencing many pressures, which had been offset by £11m of windfalls and one off savings. Since local government reorganisation £5m had been saved through moving to one energy supplier from eight separate procurements. There had been a £2m saving in insurance through moving to a single policy and having a larger excess.

Attention was drawn to proposals to create a £10m reserve to mitigate risks in relation to capital projects.

The Corporate Director of Resources reminded Members of the following

- the budget strategy for the first year of the new council acknowledged the high level of change and the need to develop a new plan for savings going forwards
- the budget for the current financial year was broadly break even
- all councils were required to produce a productivity plan by July; in the context of LGR productivity had been at the heart of what the council had been doing in recent years and the information set out in the budget plan satisfied the requirements as set out by the government.

Having considered the report and the information provided at the meeting, Executive members were referred to the recommendations in the report and it was

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) the outturn position against the 2023/24 Revenue Budget, as summarised in **paragraph 2.2.2** be noted
- ii) the outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account as set out in **paragraph 2.3.1** be noted
- iii) the creation of a £10m reserve to provide for capital cost over-runs as described in **paragraph 2.1.6** be approved
- iv) the draft Productivity Plan set out in **Appendix I** be approved and authority be delegated to the Corporate Director Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, to make any relevant changes prior to final submission to DLUHC
- v) the performance of the Treasury Management operation during 2023/24 and the outturn position on Prudential Indicators be noted
- vi) the position on capital outturn as detailed in **Appendices A to D** be noted
- vii) the allocation of £2m from the Strategic Capacity Reserve to complete the Ripon Leisure Centre project (**paragraph 4.3.5**) be approved
- viii) to recommend to the Council, the proposed carry forward to 2023/24 of the net capital underspend totalling £12.4m as set out in **paragraph 4.4.2**
- ix) the financing of capital expenditure as detailed in **paragraph 4.5.1** be approved

461 Environment Agency Grants for North Bay Urgent Wall Improvements – Phase 2

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director – Environment proving an update on a former Scarborough Borough Council legacy coastal protection scheme and requesting approval to accept a grant from the Environment agency of £1,510,855. The grant would allow the council to progress the project to completion including the procurement of a specialist consultant to design and project manage the works, and a contractor to undertake the works.

Councillor Keane Duncan, Executive Member for Highways and Transportation, introduced the report and advised that the works would be 100% funded by the Environment Agency and the grant included £400k of contingency. Further funding could be drawn down if required to complete the works.

In response to a question on the timeframe for the works Councillor Duncan advised that the design and project management phase would need to be completed by November 2024 and the works completed by October 2026.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) the capital grant contribution of £1,510,855 from the Environment Agency be accepted;
- ii) subject to following the relevant procurement procedures, delegate to the Corporate Director of Environment, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources, the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Executive Member for Highways and Transportation, Road Safety and Cycling, the authority to enter into contract with a specialist consultant to design and project manage the works, and a contractor to construct works, subject to the cost of the works being contained within the current grant awarded; and
- iii) a further report be provided to Executive once the full costs are known if further grant funding is required prior to the approval of a construction contract and the works starting.

462 Acceptance of the Music Hub Grant to run the North Yorkshire/York Music Hub to deliver the National Plan for Music Education

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service recommending the acceptance of the Music Hub grant totalling £1,258,152 made up of £947,053 revenue grant plus a related capital grant of £311,099 for musical instrument purchase.

Councillor Annabel Wilkinson, Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills, presented the report and advised that the Department for Education and the Arts Council had redrawn the map of Music Hubs and following a successful bid the Music Service was now the lead organisation for the North Yorkshire and York Music Hub. Councillor Wilkinson detailed some of the opportunities and activities which would be provided through the Hub.

Executive agreed to the inclusion of an additional recommendation that should any subsequent grants come forward in future years the Corporate Director in consultation with the Executive Member be given delegated authority to accept Music Hub grants without the need for a further report to Executive.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) the revenue grant for £947,053 and the capital grant of £311,099 (totalling £1,258,152) for the delivery of the new Music Hub for North Yorkshire and York be accepted; and
- ii) the Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Service, in consultation with the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills, be authorised to accept any subsequent grants for the Music Hub.

463 Forward Plan

Considered –

The Forward Plan for the period 20 May 2024 to 31 May 2025 was presented.

Resolved - That the Forward Plan be noted.

464 Date of Next Meeting - 11 June 2024

The meeting concluded at 12.11 pm.