

**North Yorkshire Council**

**Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**9 September 2024**

**Localities Update Report**

**Report of the Assistant Chief Executive for Local Engagement**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The report will update Members on projects and programmes undertaken by the new Localities service and Corporate Volunteering.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The committee has received bi-annual updates from the Stronger Communities service and corporate volunteering programme for a number of years.
- 2.2 Following LGR the Stronger Communities Programme was incorporated into the new Localities Service and as such it was agreed that future reports include the work of the wider Localities service along with Corporate Volunteering.
- 2.3 The Council agreed as part of the arrangements for the establishment of a unitary council a locality-based delivery model with four strong and interconnected pillars:
- i. Local services and access – locally based and integrated council, partner and community services.
  - ii. Local accountability – six Area Committees, political accountability for the discharge of statutory functions and services at local level.
  - iii. Local action – local people, partners and communities coming together in new Community Networks to identify and deliver against priorities.
  - iv. Local empowerment – devolution of powers to community groups and town and parish councils who want to, to run assets and services.
- 2.4 Whilst locality working will be part of a whole council approach, as part of the structure for the new North Yorkshire Council a central corporate localities team has been established comprising a Communities team (incorporating the Public Health funded Stronger Communities Programme), a Parish Liaison & Local Devolution Team and a Migrant Programmes Team.
- 2.5 The new Localities Service went live on 1 May 2024.
- 2.6 The Communities team lead on the delivery of pillars one and three and the Parish Liaison & Local Devolution team lead on pillar 4 of the locality operating model.
- 2.7 A number of programmes and projects have been agreed as early priorities to help to establish and embed the locality operating model.

**3.0 COMMUNITIES TEAM PRIORITIES – UPDATES**

- 3.1 The Communities Team work collaboratively with other services; communities; public sector; and voluntary and community sector partners to deliver the following aims:
- i. Prevention - supporting communities to contribute to the Council and public health prevention priority to reduce, prevent or delay the point at which people need to access statutory health and social care services.
  - ii. Supporting people to live longer, healthier and independent lives within their community and contributing to broader public health priority to reduce health inequalities.
  - iii. Supporting communities to become more resilient to respond to local challenges.
  - iv. Social Regeneration - Ensuring that the places where people live, now and in the future, create new opportunities, promote well-being and reduce inequalities so that people have better lives, in stronger communities and achieve their potential.
- 3.2 The Communities Team is based on three area teams, each including two Area Committee localities: West (Skipton and Ripon; Richmond areas); Central (Harrogate and Knaresborough; Selby and Ainsty areas); and East (Scarborough and Whitby; Thirsk and Malton areas).
- 3.3 **Prevention & reducing health inequalities.**  
*Stronger Communities Programme Inspire Fund* - The Stronger Communities Programme Inspire Grant continues to run, supporting community and voluntary groups to establish new services, events or activities that promote social action and improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities. A total of £130,074 was awarded in 2023/24 supporting 137 groups. There has been an increase in demand on the Inspire Fund, with 50 projects already supported in Q1 of this financial year.
- 3.4 *Health Inequalities* - The team are involved in a number of developing work areas that aim to support the reduction of health inequalities across the county. This includes:
- On-going support for the Transforming Community Mental Health Programme in Hambleton & Richmondshire, Harrogate, Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale, and Vale of York.
  - In conjunction with colleagues from Health & Adult Services (HAS), the development of an Enhanced Prevention pilot project. Working with place based voluntary sector partners, this project aims to develop learning and practice that support collaborative working with, and relieve system pressures for, HAS and the NHS in local communities.
  - Membership of the Local Care Partnerships (LCPs) which have been established to improve health and care service delivery and activity for local people as set out in the NHS Plan.
  - Core 20 + 5 in Skipton – this is a national programme which has been set up to improve health in the 20% of areas of England with the worst health outcomes and focuses on improving health in 5 key areas which are maternity care, severe mental illness, lung disease, early cancer diagnosis and high blood pressure. In Bradford District and Craven two further areas of focus have been added: Smoking Cessation and Prevention and early help for children and young people (CYP) to reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences. Two areas in Skipton met the funding criteria to develop a project to address health inequalities: Greatwood & Horsesclose, and Broughton Road. Alongside two dedicated Community Connectors, the Communities Team continue to support the on-going development of the project, commissioning external expertise to develop a theory of change and to provide on-going learning and evaluation activity.
- 3.5 **Digital Inclusion**  
*UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)* - The UKSPF funded Digital Inclusion Fund was launched in April 2024. The ambition for the investment is to stimulate digital inclusion

activity through learning, skills, resources, and volunteering, in a range of existing and new settings targeting digital and health inequalities. The funding comprises of £200,000 capital grants, £336,000 revenue for digital learning and skills and £25,527 for research and development from the Integrated Care System. The first phase of awards is complete with 16 grants being awarded totalling £180,435. A digital inclusion support package for successful applicants is currently being finalised and procured and the capital /development application process re-opened on 5th July 2024.

3.6 *Reboot North Yorkshire* has continued to support digital inclusion with regular referrals into the scheme from a broad range of organisations, including from health partners, and NYC services. There has also been interest from several larger organisations who wish to donate their corporate devices to Reboot to redistribute to those in need.

### 3.7 **Community Resilience**

*Community Anchor Organisations (CAOs)* - The 25 place-based organisations from across the county continue to work with the Communities team and other service areas to progress a Community Anchor model for North Yorkshire; this includes a review of the organisational development action plans and progressing prevention pilots with Health & Adult Services as outlined in Section 3.3.2. The UKSPF funded collaborative support programme for CAOs, delivered by Community First Yorkshire (CFY) and Better Connect continues. It is tailored to meet the needs of each organisation and will broadly include the development and delivery of resources and training, one to one support meetings, partnership events and networking opportunities. Collaborative work with our key voluntary sector partners in our larger urban areas of Harrogate and Scarborough has concluded and the scope of how an urban Anchor model could operate has been identified, further work is taking place to develop the grant specification.

3.8 In May there was a fluvial flooding emergency event in Knaresborough. In response to the incident Chain Lane Community Hub, who are on our Community Anchor Organisation (CAO) development programme, worked successfully in partnership with our Resilience and Emergencies Team and Knaresborough Town Council to provide a Local Assistance Centre.

3.9 *Capacity Building for VCSE* – The Communities team continues to strengthen local community assets and infrastructure; this has included encouraging relationships and collaborations between voluntary and community sector organisations as well as stabilising, and / or building capacity within them if required. The residual impact of the pandemic on income and capacity within the sector, together with concerns in relation to rising essential costs is resulting in concerns about their long-term viability and sustainability. The team continues to work with colleagues such as Community First Yorkshire, Two Ridings Community Foundation, The National Lottery and other partners to identify issues and concerns and develop joint responses.

### 3.10 **Social regeneration**

*UKSPF (Communities & Place)* - Localities continue to take the lead role in the delivery of the Communities strand of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme. An advisory group is in place made up of public and voluntary sector partners, who are overseeing the delivery of the work being progressed on the year one and two allocations, as well as over-seeing year three allocations. Notable progress has been made in the following areas:

- The Community Grants fund has made 30 awards to date, representing £520,000 worth of investment. This fund is now closed to new applications.
- Village Halls and Community Buildings Grant fund closed in Q1, resulting in £815,000 worth of investment into a range of valued local community assets. This a total of 33 awards over the two years, with 15 awarded (£320,000) in Q1.

- 35 grants awarded to support organisations with feasibility work to date. This fund is also now closed to new applications.
- The Physical Activity, Sport and Active Travel Fund continues to be successfully delivered by North Yorkshire Sport on behalf of the Council after its launch in autumn 2023. This programme is now fully allocated with 57 organisations receiving a total of £725,000 of funding. In addition, 8 projects have receiving a total £450,000 for large scale works via the capital fund available.
- Digital Inclusion –see Section 3.3.3

3.11 *Community Partnerships* - The team continues to develop the ambition of supporting local partnership and multi-agency working through the establishment of local Community Partnerships, focussing on principal towns and surrounding areas, and reflecting natural communities. This is taking a phased approach, with the team working in five pilot areas: Easingwold, Leyburn and Middleham, Ripon, Sherburn in Elmet and Forest and Dale (Thornton-le-Dale and rural hinterland). A progress report is scheduled to be considered by the Executive in September 2024.

#### 3.12 Local Member Support

Each Area Committee area has a Communities Locality Lead officer who is the single point of contact for all Members in those constituencies regarding both the work of the team and can also support Members to navigate other services.

### 4.0 PARISH LIASON AND LOCAL DEVOLUTION UPDATE

- 4.1 Working closely with Legal and Democratic Services, the Parish Liaison and Local Devolution Team works alongside the county's 664 Parish Councils offering a range of support including the development and implementation of the Parish Charter; arrangements for effective consultation and parish liaison; and providing a single 'front' door interface for town and parish councils.
- 4.2 They are also responsible for managing the Council's corporate arrangements for the devolution of council assets and services to town and parish councils and community groups; our statutory responsibilities in relation to Assets of Community Value and Community Right to Challenge.
- 4.3 *Parish Charter* - The review of the Parish Charter is progressing, with a further meeting of the Working Group scheduled for November. The commitments within the Charter have been progressed and an action plan developed that sets out the detail required to complete the review and enable work across the council to embed and monitor the arrangements. The commitments set out the relationship between North Yorkshire Council and the Parish Sector, informing other Parish Liaison work.
- 4.4 *Parish Liaison* - the work to develop Parish Liaison has included the establishment of a programme of area-based Parish Liaison meetings. These will be preceded in each area by drop-in days where Parish Councils are invited to discuss any local/other issues. These drop-in days provide the opportunity for the Parish Sector to engage with North Yorkshire Council within their area. It also enables any local issues to be identified and facilitate discussion at the Parish Liaison Meeting and/or with relevant Council services.
- 4.5 The work to coordinate and improve Parish Sector consultation has commenced; this includes the ongoing development of a Forward Plan of key consultation campaigns with appropriate communication and coordination. Actions include the consideration of consistent consultation timescales (appropriate for the Parish Sector), advance communication and a

commitment to provide feedback. Opportunities are also being explored to facilitate Parish Sector requirements for each Consultation.

- 4.6 In addition to individual consultation campaigns a voluntary representative group of Parish Meetings/Parish/Town/City Councils is being established. This will be a valuable opportunity for regular informal dialogue with the Parish Sector to inform the development of Parish Sector initiatives such as options for a single 'front' door', liaison meetings, web pages etc as well as Parish Liaison generally. It will also facilitate the establishment of baseline information for performance and service monitoring.
- 4.7 *Local Devolution* has continued to progress with devolution focussing on the agreed double devolution proposals. Progress on these has been dependant on the availability of information and internal capacity due to restructures and the capacity of Parish Councils to progress to full business cases. Given the range of proposals being considered – from simple single services to more complex multi-service bids - a review of this process is currently being looked at by officers and a further update will be considered by Executive in September 2024.
- 4.8 *Community Rights* - Transitional arrangements to fulfil the council's statutory responsibilities for community rights were put in place from April 2023. This combined the previous District/Borough processes within a new overall decision-making framework. Officer capacity for this work is now in place and work to develop new structures, policies, procedures and changes to delegation will be developed in Q3 and Q4 of 2024/25. This includes the arrangements for Community Right to Bid, (Assets of Community Value) and the Community Right to Challenge.

## **5.0 MIGRANT PROGRAMMES UPDATE**

- 5.1 The Migrant Programmes Team has brought together a number of existing refugee and asylum seeker programmes alongside the Homes for Ukraine programme to form a single integrated service and is positioned in the Localities Service.
- 5.2 The work of Migrant Programmes is subject to a detailed annual update to Corporate & Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with a report considered on 10 June 2024.
- 5.3 *Economic Migrants* - Progress is ongoing to develop a countywide programme of support for economic migrants building on the successful 'Pomoc' programme that has operated in the former Scarborough and Ryedale areas and supports migrants to access services and to contribute meaningfully to social and civic life. A funding bid has been submitted to Big Lottery funding to support the development of this countywide community based initiative.

## **6.0 CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING UPDATE**

- 6.1 The Corporate Volunteer Project relates to all volunteering activity that takes place by members of the community to support North Yorkshire Council services. This includes volunteers who help across many different services from the Skipton Museum, Youth Justice Service, Libraries, Major Incident Response, Countryside Service and Waste reduction education.
- 6.2 Sponsored by the Communities Team, the corporate Volunteer Project is delivered by the Resourcing Solutions Team – HR, recognising the synergies between the volunteer journey and employee journey, whilst acknowledging that there are key differences between the two. The focus for this project is to maximise and optimise the use of volunteers across all council services, creating consistencies in: marketing, recruitment, induction, expenses, training, ongoing support and efficient volunteer processes.

- 6.3 A Volunteer Sub-Group meets regularly to provide a steer for the project, discussing challenges and priorities and inputting into areas of work as they progress. This group comprises of representatives from the Communities Team and the Resourcing Solutions Team and lead officers from the services that manage volunteers.
- 6.4 Volunteer Numbers  
The number of registered volunteers in April 2024 stood at approximately 4203. This includes people who volunteer their time to support wider council services such as community libraries and as School Governors. Detail of all the services who engage volunteers support, is provided in appendix 1.
- 6.5 Highlights  
National Volunteers Week was held during June. NYC organised some informal events for volunteers to come together, these were open to all NYC volunteers from all services countywide to attend and a total of 41 attended. The Chair of the Council attended these events to meet with volunteers and thank them for their contribution.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report and advise officers regarding any areas of the work that they may wish to see more detailed information on at future meetings or briefings.

Rachel Joyce  
Assistant Chief Executive Local Engagement  
County Hall, Northallerton

29 August 2024

Report Authors: Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Localities  
Keeley Metcalfe, Talent Acquisition Manager

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Summary of Corporate Volunteering Levels

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Update to Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee (10 June 2024) –

<https://edemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=1170&MIId=7824&Ver=4>

## Appendix 1 - Summary of Corporate Volunteering Levels

Service	Approx. number of registered volunteers (Q1)	Role(s)
Countryside Volunteers	130	Checking paths, low-level maintenance and conservation tasks
Rotters	44	Events/shows, schools workshops and talks to groups all promoting reduction of food waste, home composting, recycling and reuse
Libraries	1557	Help customers in library, help with shelving and stock, deliver books for home library service, help with children's activities and IT
Records and archives	0	Digitising records, cataloguing, organising materials
Democratic Services	50	Volunteers serve as appeals panel members for exclusion or admissions appeals
MIRT	18	Supporting people affected by an incident
Ready for Anything	325	Database of community volunteers to be called on in an emergency
Adult learning	14	Volunteer teaching assistants (Syrian Refugee project and English classes)
Children's Centres	0	Support in group activities and engage with children and families
Youth Justice Service	26	Panel members, appropriate adult, mentor, reparation supervisor
Flying High	0	A youth voice project for young people with special educational and/or additional needs
Young People's Council	5	A youth voice project for young people who have experienced Care Services
Youth Voice Executive	12	A youth voice committee representing young people's view across North Yorkshire
SENDIASS	2	Independent support for parents of children or young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or for young people (16 -25 years) with SEND to ensure their education, learning or training needs are supported
School governors	1775	Serve as governors and trustees on school boards (estimate based on 330 establishments x average 10 per board)
Peer Mentors	0	Peer mentors - current or former care leavers who have volunteered to mentor other care leavers

Chaperones	<i>10</i>	Chaperones who accompany children who have a licence to act or perform, to auditions / performances
Gardeners	<i>0</i>	Supporting service users with gardening and conservation activities
Skipton Museum	<i>26</i>	Giving visitor information and helping in the shop
Craven Tourist Information	<i>15</i>	To provide information services to the public
Harrogate Museum	<i>10</i>	Cataloguing artifacts
Local Access Forum	<i>5</i>	Office holders assisting with countryside access issues
Community Volunteers	<i>179</i>	Providing conservation services
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,203</b>	

*\* Figures in italics are estimated from previous quarterly reports as Q1 information is not currently available.*