

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 19 November 2024 commencing at 11.00 am.

Councillor Carl Les in the Chair plus 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, Barbara Brodigan (remote), Caroline Dickinson, Kevin Foster, Sam Gibbs, Paul Haslam (remote), David Hugill, Cliff Lunn, Andrew Murday, Steve Shaw-Wright (remote), David Staveley (remote), Malcolm Taylor, Karin Sedgwick, John Weighell and Andrew Williams

Officers present: Richard Flinton, Gary Fielding, Karl Battersby, Stuart Carlton, Nic Harne, Richard Webb, Barry Khan, St John Harris, Will Boardman, Jennifer Norton, Tony Law and Rachel Joyce (remote)

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

565 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

566 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 November 2024

Resolved

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

567 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gareth Dadd declared an interest in Minute 569 on the basis that he was a Director of a company with holiday cottages. He remained in the meeting for the item as he had previously been granted a dispensation.

Councillor Michael Harrison declared an interest in Minute 569 since his employer was listed within the Treasury Management Quarter 2 report. He remained in the meeting for the item as he had previously been granted a dispensation.

568 Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements.

569 Quarterly Performance and Budget Monitoring 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.

The Executive Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Heather Phillips, introduced the report which covered the period 1 July to 30 September 2024. In her introduction, the Executive Member highlighted areas of improving performance such as numbers of library visits and reablement packages delivered, and time to process new benefit claims, in contrast to areas of concern such as timeliness of initial Early Help assessments and the number of children entering care.

The Leader welcomed members of the Scrutiny Board to the meeting. In response to questions to Executive Members from Scrutiny Chairs and Member Champions the following was confirmed:

- The Customer Service key performance indicator of the percentage of telephone calls answered in 4 minutes was based on data from the legacy councils. There was no industry standard which could be used and the annual customer satisfaction survey helped establish a baseline. Currently, the average customer waiting time was less than a minute.
- The rise in fly tipping was disappointing, although the council was helping to address the problem through the establishment of local enforcement teams.
- The trend in increasing use of temporary accommodation was a national issue, in part caused by the rising cost and limited availability of private rented housing. The council was addressing this challenge through multi-million pound investment in new temporary accommodation which was of better quality and less costly to the taxpayer.
- In terms of planning key performance indicators and the time taken to determine planning applications, time extensions were currently included in the data. There was no single data set on the time taken to validate planning applications. This information was still disaggregated across the seven legacy councils, but typically it would only take a few days.
- The growth in the number of reablement packages delivered in Quarter 2 reflected the higher number of hospital discharges but was also testament to the success of the service and the resources deployed in supporting people to remain in their own homes.
- As had been discussed at full Council, the impact of the new National Living Wage rate and employer National Insurance contributions on the cost of care home placements was still to be determined.
- The reduction of Living Well referrals was attributable to a number of factors including the changing nature of the service and data recorded elsewhere such as the NHS so the forthcoming review of the service was timely.
- An important outcome of the Addressing Poverty in a School Setting project would be the launch of a new Poverty Proofing Toolkit in the new year.
- The national target for the number of adults accessing a structured drug treatment offer was very challenging and the fact that the council was 10% away from the target and improving was encouraging when compared with similar local authorities.
- The increase in referrals to Children's Social Care and Child Protection Plans remained a cause for concern. This was in line with national trends and was being closely monitored. However, the council's overall rate remained low compared to similar local authorities and a very active Early Help service was deployed to prevent issues escalating.
- The comparatively high youth reoffending rates in the county remained something of a conundrum given the excellent preventative work undertaken by the Youth Offending Team. One factor was that numbers were small and consisted in large part of young people presenting with complex problems at greater risk of reoffending. The way data was recorded was also being examined.
- The vast majority of looked after children were placed with carers within North Yorkshire although the geography of the county and other considerations meant

that it was often not possible nor desirable to place children within 20 miles of their home. In Quarter 2 the percentage figure of looked after children placed within 20 miles of home had dropped from 64.7% to 62.2% compared to the previous year. Placement outside a 20 mile radius did have an impact on transport and associated costs, but not the Home to School Transport budget.

- In respect of the reduction in the timeliness of Early Help assessments, this showed a reduction of 0.9% from an exceedingly high figure of 96.5% over the last year which was within the tolerance range

Revenue Budget, Treasury Management and Capital Plan

Councillor Gareth Dadd, Executive Member for Finance and Resources, introduced each section of the report. In respect of the Revenue Budget he noted with concern the £1.7m net overspend at Quarter 2, a deterioration since Quarter 1. This was attributable in the main to the rising demand for, and increasing cost of the people services of Health and Adult Services and Children and Young People Services (the costs of the market were increasing at rates that were unaffordable) but partially offset by underspends within other directorates, including a significant underspend against energy budgets in both property and street lighting. These were in addition to the £5m saving taken from these areas as part of the 2024/25 budget. These savings would be offered up for inclusion within the 2025/26 budget; however it was highly likely that there would need to be further growth provision in the 2025/2026 budget for Health and Adult Services and Children and Young People Services, thereby increasing the savings gap.

The relevant Executive Members and Corporate Directors then provided further commentary and detail on the Health and Adult Services and Children and Young People Services expenditure and the challenges they faced to deliver services within budget. Councillor Dadd confirmed that the council continued to lobby government through professional bodies and local MPs for a fairer and more sustainable funding model for these services.

In respect of the Capital Budget, Councillor Dadd noted the breadth of activity across the council including the major highways scheme of the Kex Gill realignment, multiple regeneration schemes, and a range of internally inspired schemes to bring services up to standard. Importantly, the Capital Plan paved the way for a series of possible schemes including the Extra Care programme and development of Care and Support Hubs to help address some of the demand issues highlighted in the Revenue Budget report. It was noted that the £126k recommended to support the Whitby Town Hall project was as a contingency to enable the project to be completed. With reference to the Catterick Levelling Up Fund project, timescales set by government around the delivery of the scheme had not changed, although the deadline of March 2026 now pertained to committed expenditure rather than actual expenditure.

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 the Executive:

- a. notes the forecast outturn position against the 2024/25 Revenue Budget, as summarised in **paragraph 2.2.1**
- b. approve £1m funding from the LGR reserve to fund replacement devices to support the transition to Windows 11 in **paragraph 2.5.2 and Appendix I**
- c. notes the position on the Council's Treasury Management activities during the second quarter of 2024/25

- d. refers this report to the Audit Committee for their consideration as part of the overall monitoring arrangements for Treasury Management.
- e. approve the refreshed Capital Plan summarised at **paragraph 4.2.3**
- f. approve the allocation of £182.3k from the Capital Receipts Unapplied Reserve to fund the Claro Road Depot Welfare Facilities scheme (**paragraph 4.7.3**)
- g. approve the allocation of £23k from the Harrogate Council investment Reserve to address overspends on the Harrogate Convention Centre redevelopment scheme (**paragraph 4.7.4**)
- h. approve the allocation of £126k from the Strategic Capacity Reserve to fund the works to the Whitby Old Town Hall and Marketplace (**paragraph 4.7.5**)

570 North Yorkshire Council response to the Boundary Commission's consultation of future division boundaries

Considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive for Community Engagement presenting the proposed Council response to the Boundary Commission's consultation on future division boundaries.

The Executive Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Heather Phillips, introduced the report paying tribute to the work of Councillor John Weighell and the cross-party Member Working Group he chaired which had developed a draft council response to the Boundary Commission's consultation on the future division boundaries of a council of 89 single-member divisions to come into effect from the May 2027 elections. It was noted that members of the Executive had all received representations from both Dacre Parish Council and the Chair of Darley and Menwith Parish Council in respect of the proposed changes to the current Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale division. With the Chair's permission, Councillor Weighell addressed the meeting noting the magnitude and complexity of the task because of the council's geographical size and population and the three criteria set by the Boundary Commission of delivering electoral equality, reflecting the interests and identities of local communities, and providing for effective and convenient local government. For the Member Working Group, these criteria translated into the following principles:

- That, as far as possible, the forecast electorate numbers for each division should start within 10% variance of the average, and that most should be well within this. This meant that each division should ideally represent around 5819 electors, no less than 5237 and no more than 6401.
- That division boundaries should not divide communities which identify as a single area where it is possible to avoid this.
- That it should be possible to access each residence within a division by road without having to leave that division.
- That, as far as possible, urban areas should be in different divisions to rural areas to reflect the different nature of issues and work for the Councillors.

Whilst the proposals identified a model which aligned with the main principles of the review, Councillor Weighell acknowledged that there were inevitably compromises in many areas. The Chair and other members echoed Councillor Phillips' gratitude to Councillor Weighell in devising proposals which had achieved cross party agreement. With the Chair's permission, Councillor Andrew Murday addressed the meeting proposing alternative arrangements for the current Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale division which

were illustrated on a map circulated at the meeting. In response, the Chair and other members commented that it was late in the day for alternative proposals when ideas should have been channelled through group representatives on the Member Working Group. Besides, the complexity of the calculations meant that changes in one area may well have knock on implications for other areas. Further, the Boundary Commission's consultation was open to anyone to make proposals. With the Chair's permission, Councillor Andrew Williams addressed the meeting to suggest alternative names for the proposed new divisions to the east and west of Ripon. It was noted that the report's recommendations included to delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to make any further required minor amendments to ensure the accuracy of the split of forecast electorate figures in consultation with the Chair of the Member Working Group prior to submission, and the matter of these names would also be considered as part of this delegation. Finally, Councillor Keane Duncan advised that whilst respecting the council's submission, he would be working with Malton and Norton Town Councils to develop alternative proposals for those areas to try and avoid dividing both towns as proposed.

Resolved (unanimously) that the Executive:

- i) Approve the proposed division patterns at Appendices A-F
- ii) Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to submit this proposal, and accompanying background information, to the Boundary Commission's consultation by 9 December.
- iii) Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to make any required minor amendments to ensure the accuracy of the split of forecast electorate figures, in consultation with the Chairman of the Member Working Group, prior to submission.

Reason for recommendations

The approval and submission of the proposed division patterns will provide the Boundary Commission with a clear model on behalf of North Yorkshire Council. The model represents the work of the cross-party Member Working Group and seeks to achieve a workable balance across the principles described above. If this were not to be submitted, the Boundary Commission would determine a model to be consulted upon based on their knowledge of the area and other information received during the consultation.

By delegating authority to make minor amendments to the electorate figures associated with each proposed division, it will be possible to ensure that the figures accurately reflect the boundaries proposed as the submission is prepared.

571 Proposal to add provision for Special Educational Needs in the form of Targeted Mainstream Provision at Norton Community Primary School and Dishforth Airfield Community Primary School

Considered a report by the Corporate Director Children and Young People's Service in respect of proposals to add provision for Special Educational Needs in the form of Targeted Mainstream Provision at Norton Community Primary School and Dishforth Airfield Community Primary School.

Resolved (unanimously), having undertaken the required preliminary checks, that:

- i. the four key issues in paragraph 7.3 of the report have been satisfied and there can be a determination of the proposals.
- ii. The following proposal be determined:
 - To add provision for Special Educational Needs in the form of Targeted Mainstream Provision at Norton Community Primary School.

- To add provision for Special Educational Needs in the form of Targeted Mainstream Provision at Dishforth Airfield Community Primary School.

Reason for recommendations

In 2020 the Local Authority launched the first phase of Targeted Mainstream Provisions. The focus for each being either Communication and Interaction (C&I) or Social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH). The provision at Norton Community Primary School will support up to 8 full time pupils with communication and interaction (C&I) needs. The provision at Dishforth Airfield Community Primary School will support up to 8 full time pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

The Council's SEND Strategic Plan, adopted in September 2018, set out the model of targeted SEN provision to be commissioned by the council in mainstream schools. This model remains part of more recent plans including the SEND Capital Investment Programme agreed in 2023. The implementation will have an impact upon the identified gap between mainstream and special school provision and provide families with an additional option.

572 Forward Plan

Considered

The Forward Plan for the period 11 November 2024 to 30 November 2025 was presented.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

573 Date of Next Meeting - 17 December 2024

The meeting concluded at 12.48 pm.