

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held in the Grand Meeting Room at County Hall, Northallerton on Thursday, 16 January 2025, commencing at 10.30 am.

Councillors Danny Myers (City of York Council) in the Chair; Felicity Cunliffe-Lister (North Yorkshire Council), Tim Grogan (North Yorkshire Council), Emilie Knight (City of York Council), Heather Moorhouse (North Yorkshire Council), Steve Shaw-Wright (North Yorkshire Council) and Malcolm Taylor (North Yorkshire Council).

Community Co-opted Members: Fraser Forsyth, Mags Godderidge and Martin Walker

Jo Coles (Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime).

In attendance: Councillors Kevin Foster and Carl Les OBE (North Yorkshire Council).

Officers from the York and North Yorkshire Office for Police, Fire and Crime Commissioning: Mark Ayres (Temporary Director of Public Confidence), Jenni Newberry (Director of Commissioning, Criminal Justice and Partnerships), Michael Porter (Assistant Director of Resources (Deputy s73 Officer for Police, Fire and Crime Functions)), Tamara Stevens (Director of Delivery and Assurance).

Officers from the Mayoral Combined Authority: Rachel Antonelli (Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer), Mike Russell (Director of Resources).

Officers present: Will Baines and Diane Parsons (North Yorkshire Council).

Apologies: Councillors Peter Wilkinson ((Chair) North Yorkshire Council), Chris Aldred (North Yorkshire Council), Lindsay Burr MBE (North Yorkshire Council) and Michael Pavlovic (City of York Council).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

42 Apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. It was noted that Councillor Cunliffe-Lister attended as substitute Member for Councillor Aldred.

The Chair requested that a minute's silence be held in honour of PC Rosie Prior of North Yorkshire Police, who tragically lost her life while stopping to help at a traffic incident on the A19 on 11th January. Proceedings were as such suspended for one minute.

43 Declarations of Interest

Martin Walker notified that he is a Trustee of IDAS; a charity which receives funding from the Deputy Mayor's office.

Mags Godderidge notified that she is CEO of Survive, which receives funding for its

work from the Deputy Mayor. She also sits on the strategic board for tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), which is led through the York and North Yorkshire Office of Police, Fire, Crime and Commissioning (the OPFCC). Additionally, Mags notified that she is a member of the national Act on IICSA campaign, in the context of discussions at Item 10 (Draft Police and Crime Plan).

44 Minutes of the Panel Meeting held on 10th October 2024

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2024, having been printed and circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

45 Chair's Announcements

The Chair highlighted the following issues for Panel members:

1. A reminder to the Panel of the invitation to attend a visit of the new Victims' Centre site in York on 27th January. An alternative session has also been offered to Members who cannot make this date and Members should contact Diane Parsons on this.
2. A response was provided on behalf of the Panel to government regarding the national consultation on remote attendance at meetings and proxy voting. A response was given which aligned with the views put forward by North Yorkshire Council as the Panel's host authority and which also aligned with the views of Panel members.
3. Simon Dennis, formerly Corporate Director (OPFCC) and Deputy Monitoring Officer for Policing, Fire and Crime, has moved on to a new role at the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. The Chair wished Simon well in his new role and requested clarity from Combined Authority colleagues in attendance on how Simon's responsibilities will be discharged. Rachel Antonelli explained how the Order which created the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) made provision for a single Monitoring Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Executive Officer. Simon approached the MCA in respect of scope for voluntary redundancy and as such a confidential process to progress this was initiated last year.

In terms of assuming Simon's functions and certain statutory delegations, the MCA Constitution will be amended so that elements of that Corporate Director role can be done by the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive Officer. Rachel highlighted that the MCA does require a Deputy Monitoring Officer to include the OPFCC side so steps are underway to progress this. It was noted that the Panel were disappointed not to have received earlier indication of Simon's move from the MCA, particularly in relation to assurance around continuity of role.

46 Progress on Issues Raised by the Panel

Considered

The report of the Panel Secretariat updating on progress made against issues raised at previous Panel meetings.

Members noted that in relation to the action on time spent by police officers attending hospitals with individuals placed under arrest, where the response

received refers to “relatively low numbers” of detainees it would be helpful to be able to put a figure to this. It was agreed that this detail would be provided prior to the next meeting.

Resolved

That the Panel

- (a) notes the update report provided on progress against issues raised; and
- (b) receives confirmation of the number of detainees escorted to hospital each month since May 2024.

47 Public Questions or Statements to the Panel

The Panel were advised that no public questions or statements had been received.

48 Members' Questions

A question had been submitted prior to the meeting by Mags Godderidge, as follows:

“[Following the recent summit hosted by the Deputy Mayor regarding VAWG], I would be keen to know where the Deputy Mayor has got to with getting NHS and local authorities to the table in terms of their involvement / commitment / and funding of VAWG, given what was presented at the recent VAWG summit”.

The Deputy Mayor’s written response was provided prior to the meeting as follows:

- Under the Addressing VAWG Strategy myself and my team meet and continue to engage regularly with both City of York Council (“CYC”) and North Yorkshire Council (“NYC”), this includes Public Health, Community Safety, Housing and Safeguarding teams.
- We already jointly commission/fund a number of VAWG related support services with Local Authority and NHS England including:
 - Community-based Support for Victims & Survivors of Domestic Abuse jointly commissioned with CYC and NYC
 - Support for Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse to change their behaviour jointly commissioned with CYC and NYC
 - CYC and NYC contribute funding towards the Counselling Talking Therapy Services for Children and Young People affected by domestic abuse
 - Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (“ISVA”) Services jointly commissioned with CYC and NYC
 - Sexual Assault Referral Centre (“SARC”) jointly commissioned with NHS England (Lead Commissioner) South and West Combined Authorities and Humberside PCC
 - Child Sexual Assault Assessment Service (“CSAAS”) jointly commissioned with NHS England (Lead Commissioner) and West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- We have also held recent meetings with representatives of the Integrated

Care Board (ICB) and NHS England; these relationships extend beyond VAWG and encompass other aspects of policing, fire and crime which will be reflected in my Police and Crime Plan, to be published in April this year.

- My team are also preparing for the new Duty to Collaborate, under the Victims and Prisoners Act (2024) which will require local policing bodies, local authorities and ICBs to collaborate to commission community support services for victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and serious violence (excluding accommodation-based support). The new Duty is expected to go live in 2026, following which a joint needs assessment will be developed to inform a strategy which will set out how we will collaborate to improve relevant victim support services.

In the meeting, the Deputy Mayor added that there will be a refresh of the VAWG Strategy in the coming weeks and that when looking at budgets and commissioning, resources need to be shifted to where they will have most impact.

The Deputy Mayor was also asked about the police policy on attendance at residential burglaries and whether 100% of these are attended. It was agreed that this would be obtained before the next meeting.

A Member also asked whether any pressure can be brought to bear nationally on ensuring that the fire and rescue service's response to flooding is a statutory funding obligation. The Deputy Mayor reflected on the need to make sure the service is resourced and able to respond and that colleagues in other OPFCC areas are making similar representations to government as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the responses provided to questions by the Deputy Mayor and receives further information as agreed on these.

49

Police Settlement and Setting the Police Precept 2025/26

Considered

The 'pre-precept' report from the Deputy Mayor's office on the provisional funding settlement for the police service, additional context around the current precept consultation and future planning assumptions.

Michael Porter provided an overview for the Panel of the budget position for the service, including the following points:

- £14 precept flexibility is being provided to all PCCs or equivalent for 2025/26 for a Band D property (for North Yorkshire this would be a 4.56% increase).
- North Yorkshire has received a slightly above-average increase in government funding but slightly lower in overall terms when precept was taken into account.
- A significant increase in the Council Tax base in North Yorkshire this year has helped with the higher overall levels of funding.
- However, there has also been significant additional expenditure this year, e.g. £3m, increase in the pay budget, £3.3m pay budget as a result of NI changes and it's also expected that 2025/26 pay award will add another £2.5m to the budget.

- This equates to £9.6m balanced against an additional £10m in expected funding. As such there isn't much opportunity to tackle service pressures or address areas of risk. Priorities will need to be made in line with risk and harm.
- The budget will be balanced but the situation is challenging.

Members raised a concern that funding to tackle rural crime did not seem to feature. The Deputy Mayor outlined that tackling rural crime will be at the heart of the new Police and Crime Plan.

Members also asked about how the precept consultation has been conducted. The Panel were advised that the final numbers will be weighted to ensure the demographics of both local authorities are represented. Harder to reach communities were targeted for their views. The final precept proposal will provide further information.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the report provided on the provisional policing settlement and future planning assumptions.

50

Draft 2025/26 Fire Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Proposal

Considered

The draft 2025/26 fire budget and Medium Term Financial Plan proposal from the Mayor.

Michael Porter clarified that the fire budget now forms part of the Mayor's wider Mayoral general precept and as such the decision-making on this falls to the MCA. However, there is still a role for the Panel to make recommendations and as such a more detailed report has been brought ahead of the formal proposal in February, to enable sufficient time for the Panel to consider this before the MCA meet on 7th February.

Michael's overview of the draft budget and MTFP included the following points:

- Fire and rescue has been in a very challenging financial position over the last six years, with low levels of reserves, an over-reliance on borrowing and significant under-investment in assets.
- If the fire and rescue authority had not come under the Mayor, these challenges would have been further compounded by a maximum £5 precept increase limit (1.6%).
- Flexibility was therefore needed to the precept to try to help address some of the challenges. The Mayor is looking to take the opportunity to balance the budget, increase the service's financial stability and provide a baseline for future investment and continued improvement.
- The Rural Services Delivery Grant and Services Grant have been removed entirely.
- A £24 increase would bring in an estimated £7.2m for the service.
- There are still significant non-pay costs and the service would be expected to continue to deliver savings and efficiencies.

The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the need to balance the needs of public safety and the money in taxpayers' pockets but that in view of the issues to be addressed within

the service and the changing nature of demand (flooding and wildfires), it was felt that it wouldn't be responsible to not try and fund investment this year.

The Panel agreed to write a letter to government to support the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in making representations regarding the loss of the Rural Services Delivery Grant and Services Grant and the need for resilience funding (flooding and wildfires). It was noted that York receives a high number of visitors and students each year which presents additional challenges for the service and it needs to be alive to changing demand, so government need to appreciate the environmental challenges and high visitor economy impact.

The Panel received some assurance at the confidence levels in the assumptions made around non-pay inflation. Questions were also asked around the delivery of new fire appliances. Sixteen new appliances will have been received by the end of September and there will be significant investment in breathing apparatus, which hasn't been updated for many years.

The Chair reminded everyone that the public consultation on the precept is open until 20th January.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the report provided on the draft fire and rescue budget 2025/26 and the Medium Term Financial Plan proposal.

51 The legal framework and guidance for Panels in relation to review of the draft Plans

Resolved

That the Panel notes the guidance provided by the Panel Secretariat regarding the Panel's role in reviewing the Mayor's draft statutory Plans.

52 Overview of the draft Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plans 2025/29

Resolved

That the Panel notes the contextual reports provided to the draft Plans.

53 The Draft Police and Crime Plan 2025/29

Considered

The Mayor's draft Police and Crime Plan 2025/29.

The Panel heard from the Deputy Mayor about how both the local and national context has been considered by the Mayor in the development of the Plan, particularly with issues such as neighbourhood policing. The Deputy Mayor also outlined how the consultation incorporated work with insight groups and that it had been important to get representations from victims of crime. Colleagues at the OPFCC were thanked by the Deputy Mayor for their work on this and it was highlighted that timescales had been challenging to pull a draft together.

The Panel highlighted that it would be beneficial to more explicitly state the Mayor's

ambition around the following in the final plan:

- a. reducing re-offending, including provision for schemes on early prevention and restorative justice;
- b. tackling online harm
- c. tackling County Lines
- d. tackling hate crime

In terms of re-offending, the Deputy Mayor highlighted in particular that a lot of work is commissioned but also that as North Yorkshire is fortunate to not have large numbers of serious offenders the area does miss out on programmes to tackle certain types of re-offending which she is looking to address. Under the rubric of the MCA the Deputy Mayor is looking at services around housing and drug/alcohol abuse across both local authorities and how this can be built upon. Tackling re-offending was felt to be a core component of the draft Plan, along with a continued commitment to restorative justice.

Discussion highlighted the need to ensure victims' service commissioning for all-age services where feasible in relation to supporting survivors of sexual violence; both in relation to ensuring support for children who are victims and as such providing early preventative work but also recognising that trauma can be experienced by survivors many years after incidents have taken place.

Members were keen to highlight that consideration will need to be given to some of the kinds of metrics identified in the plans to ensure that performance is being measured in the right way. An example was provided that reference is made to increasing the satisfaction with the police of victims of domestic abuse, but not of victims of sexual violence. In addition, if child sexual exploitation cases are monitored through statutory service referrals then this may risk missing those dealt with by non-statutory services.

Members were advised of the commitment to looking at all-age services where possible and that under the Domestic Abuse Act, the Deputy Mayor will need to ensure services are provided to children identified as at risk of being exposed to domestic abuse. It was also helpful to hear about the Deputy Mayor's recent discussions with NHS and other partners around supporting victims.

It was further highlighted by the Panel that roads policing may be better placed within early intervention and prevention rather than protection in the plan.

The Panel expressed support for the aim to make the plans more accessible to a wider readership in terms of length, style and format. However, it was felt that there is a balance to be struck between providing a succinct summary and ensuring that all relevant detail is meaningfully included. In particular it was felt that the plans would benefit from more baseline metrics, where these are helpful, in order that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor can be confident in monitoring progress made by the services and so that the Panel are also able to effectively scrutinise the Mayor's performance.

It was noted in the meeting that the example of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Plan had been viewed as 'best practice' during the development exercise. It was felt by some of the Panel that the presentation of this model may enable a better balance between these principles for York and North Yorkshire in the final versions.

In addition, the Panel reflected that the Mayor may wish to consider including a Foreword in order to help set some context and sense of direction to both plans in terms of priorities, challenges and goals.

Resolved

OFFICIAL

That the Panel supports the 'direction of travel' of the Mayor's draft Police and Crime Plan 2025/29 but that the Panel's report will highlight the specific points and concerns raised in the meeting for further consideration by the Mayor.

54 The Draft Fire and Rescue Plan 2025/29

Considered

The Mayor's draft Fire and Rescue Plan 2025/29.

The broader principles and comments provided by the Panel in respect of the draft Police and Crime Plan also related to the draft Fire and Rescue Plan. It was acknowledged that the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's challenge would be to deliver a robust and visionary fire and rescue service, reflective of the plan, under the linked precept proposal.

Resolved

That the Panel supports the 'direction of travel' of the draft Fire and Rescue Plan 2025/29 but would welcome the Mayor's consideration of the points raised in relation to the broader approach and principles of both plans.

55 Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity in Policing and Fire and Rescue Services

Considered

The report from the Deputy Mayor updating Panel on the status of equality, diversity and inclusivity within the police and fire and rescue services; looking at the initiatives, audits and strategic for both services.

The Panel asked about applications to the police service and monitoring around this in terms of demographics and linking this to ongoing retention. The Deputy Mayor referred to the demographic data provided in the paper and that equality data is also reviewed at the regular Online Public Meetings. The Deputy Mayor is keen that the service strikes a balance also between seeking officers via accelerated programmes and getting entrants in with other levels of experience on other pathways. It was underlined to the Panel that it's important to assess why certain groups or demographics are seeking to move on from an organisation before they do.

The Deputy Mayor was asked about her views on the national antipathy and sexism reported within the fire service towards women firefighters, including around how they are tested for entrance to the service. In response, the Deputy Mayor acknowledged the concerns raised and that the issues identified are experienced in public services more widely. Reference was made to the Framework for Change project undertaken by the fire service with Huddersfield University and the work already done extensively within the police service around unconscious bias. It was highlighted to the Panel that with greater precept flexibility for the fire service, there would be more scope to embed more development around such issues.

The Deputy Mayor was recommended to speak to representative bodies and be agile in approach in relation to ensuring the experiences of women and BAME staff within the fire and rescue service continue to be improved upon. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the importance of this but highlighted the significant number of On-Call firefighters, proportionally, in North Yorkshire and with difficulties in recruiting these officers the need to make working spaces as accessible as possible.

Resolved

That the Panel notes the update report provided and receives a further update from the Deputy Mayor in twelve months' time.

56 Work Programme

Considered

The outline work programme for the Panel.

Members were asked to note the new meetings dates for 2025/26 and that electronic appointments for these have already gone out. Further liaison will take place once the Mayor's Plans are finalised to look at how the Panel can use the work programme to monitor the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's performance in relation to the Plans.

It was suggested that a future item could be added around children and young people in terms of domestic sexual violence.

Resolved

That the Panel agrees the work programme, incorporating additional suggestions.

57 Any other items

The Panel were advised that no urgent items had been raised with the Chair.

58 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 6th February 2025 at 10:30am at County Hall, Northallerton.

The meeting concluded at 12.19 pm.
DP.