

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 February 2025 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, Barbara Brodigan, Caroline Dickinson, Kevin Foster (remote), Paul Haslam (remote), George Jabbour, Peter Lacey (remote), Andrew Lee, Cliff Lunn, John Ritchie, Karin Sedgwick, David Staveley and Malcolm Taylor.

Officers present: Richard Flinton, Karl Battersby, Stuart Carlton, Gary Fielding, Richard Webb (remote), Barry Khan, Daniel Harry, Elizabeth Jackson, Will Boardman, Jon Holden (remote) and Philip Cowan (remote).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

628 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence from Members of the Executive. The Chair of the Scrutiny Board advised that apologies had been received from Councillors David Hugill and Andrew Williams.

629 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2025

Resolved

That the public Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2025, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed by the Chair as a correct record.

630 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Michael Harrison declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to Minute 632 as an employee of one of the approved lenders detailed in the Treasury Management report. As he had previously been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee he remained in the meeting room and took part in the debate and vote on the item.

Councillor Gareth Dadd declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to Minute 632 in relation to second homes. As he had previously been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee he remained in the meeting room and took part in the debate and vote on the item.

631 Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements.

632 Q3 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.

The Executive Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Heather Phillips, introduced the report which covered the period 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024 and drew Members' attention to the following:

- Telephone response times were improving
- Benefits processing times were improving
- Increased customer satisfaction with highways
- Shorter stays in short-term care homes
- Increasing numbers of children requiring support

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

- A new team was looking into the large-scale fly-tipping incidents at Osmotherley and Easingwold and the Council would seek to recover costs if possible.
- The Council had a satisfaction rate of 70% for 'Ease of access (disabilities)' for Highways, which was above the Council's own trend and the England average, however more could be done. Localised issues such as cracked pavements would be addressed through the annual accessibility budget of £75k.
- Migration of data from the legacy councils continued in sequence as support systems converged such as for planning and revenues and benefits. A priority was the avoidance of data leaks and ensuring the quality of the information transferred.
- An update on progress with the community partnership approach and community anchor organisations was requested. Councillor Phillips agreed to provide Councillor Peter Lacey with a written response.
- Consolidated economic activity data was quite new and was being shared with some business stakeholder organisations. Work was underway to look at how it could be effectively shown on the website to enable other groups to use it.
- The Allerton Park incinerator was operated by a third party under contract to the Council and a recent breakdown had resulted in an increase in waste going to landfill. Under the contract the Council received a rebate when the incinerator was unavailable, and all additional costs of disposal were met by the operator.
- Hotel occupancy figures were provided by an external organisation and could be relied upon as the same data was used by the trade and tourist information services. There was a small increase in hotel room occupancy over the year.
- Dealing with childhood obesity was a priority through the Healthy Schools Programme which included promoting the free schools meals and the type of food being served. A Family Weight Management Service was to be introduced and the Executive Member would be exploring the benefits of active travel with Public Health colleagues, such as cycling and walking to school.
- A consultant, Dr Jill Kelly, was employed in Public Health who oversaw the healthy schools programme, which included education and weight monitoring and measuring, followed by direct support for individuals where required. 124 early years settings were registered with this scheme and the Executive Member would ask Dr Kelly to look at venues for Selby.
- An update was provided on the state of the care market. Whilst there had been

difficulties last year in sourcing care packages, this had now been resolved and the home care market was currently very competitive with plenty of providers leading to rates coming down. The Council had good access to residential care, though providers were facing challenges in terms of the national wage, increases in national insurance and inflationary pressures.

- The increase in council housing void times was due to major works needed to ensure homes were made energy efficient and were of a decent standard before being re-let.
- The increase in households in private accommodation was due to a contraction of the private letting market and the gap between rents and housing benefits. To address this the Council was purchasing new homes and working with housing associations.
- The Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing referred to Indicator CD13 Percentage of domestic properties with EICR (electrical installation condition report) certificates and reported that 52.12% of properties have confirmed up to date EICRs.
- Where children were presenting as being at risk of serious harm action was taken under a legal framework involving a child protection section 47 investigation and case conferencing to ensure risk was managed around a multi-agency partnership, with the aim of children and families returning to normal life. The increased numbers reflected due process being followed through.
- The increase numbers of child protection plans were as a result of more investigations taking place. Referrals to children's social care were slowing down but were still considered high.
- Every school had access to a range of mental health resources including The Go-To mental health website, most schools had a mental health lead and there was a network of school mental health leads to share good practice. Members welcomed the proposals for a national register for elective home education.

Revenue Budget, Treasury Management and Capital Plan

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Gareth Dadd, introduced each section of the report, stating that there had been little change from the last quarter. Increased demand for services in Children and Young People's Services and Health and Adult Services had been offset by savings elsewhere. There was a recommendation for £660k of underspends to be released from the Environment directorate to be directed to capital spend on improvements to Whitby Fish Quay.

Resolved (unanimously)

That the Executive

- (i) notes the forecast outturn position against the 2024/25 Revenue Budget, as summarised in paragraph 2.2.1.
- (ii) notes the forecast outturn position against the 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account budget as detailed in section 2.3
- (iii) Agree to allocate £660k of the Environment Directorate revenue underspend in 2024/25 to fund necessary fender improvement works at the Fish Quay, Whitby (paragraph 2.5.2).
- (iv) notes the position on the Council's Treasury Management activities during the

second quarter of 2024/25

- (v) refers this report to the Audit Committee for their consideration as part of the overall monitoring arrangements for Treasury Management.
- (vi) note the updated Q3 2023/24 Capital Plan; and
- (vii) approve the allocation of £660k of Environment Directorate revenue underspend to deliver the improvements to the Fish Quay, Whitby, to return it to full operation (paragraph 4.2).

633 Proposed Redeployment of the former Lower Graham site

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director Resources requesting approval for the grant of a standard academy lease to transfer part of the Lower Graham School site to the Coast and Vale Learning Trust, as a first step to secure investment from the Department for Education for a new school to replace the current Scalby Secondary School. Agreement was also sought to accept the surrender of the current academy lease that operated at Scalby School once the proposed new school was operational.

It was noted that a written representation had been received from the Hope Sentamu Learning Trust in advance of the meeting and circulated to all Members of the Executive.

The Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills, Councillor Annabel Wilkinson, welcomed the proposals in the report. Following the identification of RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) in the construction of the school large parts of the building were now closed and temporary classrooms were being used. The Department for Education (DfE) had undertaken to rebuild the school at a cost of £30-40m as part of the National School Rebuilding Programme. Part of the former Lower Graham School site had been identified as most suitable for redevelopment, Springhead Sixth Form was currently using part of the site. If the proposal was agreed the DfE would commence feasibility work. Should the school be redeveloped at the Lower Graham site the Scalby School site would revert to the Council, and at that point a decision would be taken as to future use of that site. It was hoped the DfE would consider the issues raised by the Hope Sentamu Learning Trust as part of the feasibility work.

Councillor John Ritchie addressed the Executive, referred to the sport clubs currently using the Lower Graham School site and introduced Robbie Hawkes, who was in attendance at the meeting, who operated a football academy from the site. Cllr Ritchie expressed concern that redevelopment of the site might threaten the sports activities, affect Springhead School and increase traffic.

Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director Childrens and Young People's Service, advised that the consultation and feasibility study would be led by the DfE and confirmed that the Springhead School part of the site was ringfenced and was not affected by the proposals, though building works may cause some disruption.

Gary Fielding, Corporate Director Resources, confirmed that the Council would work with leaseholders to look at alternatives and traffic flows would be considered as part of any planning application.

Resolved (unanimously)

That the proposed grant of a standard academy lease of the site to the Coast and Vale Learning Trust, or a successor Trust, is approved and the surrender of the current lease over Scalby School site is accepted by the Executive on Terms to be agreed by the Corporate Director Resources.

634 Forward Plan

Considered – The Forward Plan for the period 7 February 2025 to 28 February 2026 was presented.

Resolved

That the Forward Plan be noted.

635 Any Other Items

The Leader reported that a formal response had been received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to the Letter Before Action challenging the Government's decision to remove the Rural Services Delivery Grant as part of the local government finance settlement. The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services advised that the Council would now be considering its position.

636 Date of Next Meeting - 18 March 2025 at Ryedale House, Malton

The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm.