

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

12 NOVEMBER 2025

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY BOARD

Scrutiny Board brings together the Chairs of the six thematic overview and scrutiny committees at the Council and the Older People's, Young People's and Climate Change Champions. It provides an opportunity for a whole council view of scrutiny activity, which avoids gaps and overlaps and helps establish a lead committee for areas of joint interest. It also provides a forum in which the key performance issues for the Council can be reviewed and items for further scrutiny identified.

The scrutiny function was created to act as a check on and balance to the executive and it is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements. There has been one meeting of Scrutiny Board since my last statement to Council.

The meeting of Scrutiny Board on 15 August 2025 focussed upon the scrutiny of the Executive Q1 Performance and Finance Management Report, ahead of the members of the Board attending the meeting of the Executive on Tuesday 19 August 2025. Some of the issues highlighted by members of the Scrutiny Board at their meeting are as summarised below:

- The progress that is being made with the backlog in minerals and waste planning applications. It was recognised that they are complex applications but there is a need to progress these strategic planning matters as quickly as possible
- What is driving the recent increase in the use of landfill
- Reablement and what happens at the end of the 90 days allocated for reablement support, where someone still requires support
- What is behind the recent increase in the number of child protection plans and what action is being taken, as increases will have a significant knock-on effect to other services
- Recognition that good progress has been made with the timeliness of EHC Plans issued and the achievement of the statutory 20-week target
- When an up-to-date, integrated and robust dataset for monitoring the management of Council housing stock will be in place.

Updates were also provided by the Older People's Champion, Young People's Champion and Climate Change Champion on key elements of their work over the past 3 months, as summarised below:

- Recently completed the LGA carbon literacy exam, which may be of interest to other members
- The farming community is being encouraged to become more involved in nature recovery
- Discussions are underway with Yorkshire Water regarding preparation for possible surface water flooding with heavy rains following a prolonged period of drought
- The International Day of the Older Person event is going from strength to strength and planning has already started for this year
- The Memory bags scheme was recently launched at Skipton library. The Memory bags are a portable collection of items, books and activities for individuals or groups to share at home, in the library or out in the community. They aim to promote conversations between people with memory loss and their family and friends. There are five bags based around the themes of countryside, garden, home, seaside and sport.
- Ongoing engagement with colleagues from across the Council regarding the work to support unaccompanied asylum seekers

- Attended the national SACRE conference at which there was a strong focus upon the role that religious education in schools had to lay in developing and maintaining social cohesion.

Members of Scrutiny Board reviewed the work programmes of the Area Committees, to help to ensure that opportunities for joint working and co-ordination of activity were identified.

Members of Scrutiny Board are next due to meet at 10am on Friday 14 November 2025. At that meeting, the Executive Q2 Performance and Finance Management report will be scrutinised.

COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK

4 November 2025