

# North Yorkshire Council

## North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held at West Offices, York on Wednesday, 8 October 2025, commencing at 10.30 am.

Councillors Peter Wilkinson in the Chair (North Yorkshire Council); Danny Myers ((Vice Chair) City of York Council), Chris Aldred (North Yorkshire Council), Tim Grogan (North Yorkshire Council), Heather Moorhouse (North Yorkshire Council), Michael Pavlovic (City of York Council), Greg White (North Yorkshire Council) and Steve Shaw-Wright (North Yorkshire Council).

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

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

Officers from the Policing, Fire and Crime Team (YNYCA): Rachel Antonelli (Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Mark Ayres (Interim Director, Public Confidence), Amanda Wilkinson (Head of Partnerships and Commissioning).

Officers present: Will Baines (Senior Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Lindsay Burr MBE, David Chance and Emilie Knight.

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### Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

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#### **104 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lindsay Burr MBE, David Chance and Emilie Knight. It was noted that Councillor Greg White was attending as a substitute for Councillor David Chance.

#### **105 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. Furthermore, in relation to item 8, she is part of the Act on IICSA group, campaigning for the implementation of the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Childhood Sexual Abuse.

#### **106 Minutes of the Panel Meeting held on 7 July 2025**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2025, having been printed and circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **107 Progress on Issues Raised by the Panel**

**Considered**

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

In relation to point 1 of the issues log, a Panel member sought reassurance that all aspects of the law following the Supreme Court ruling are being adhered to, not just the National Police Chiefs Council guidance. The Deputy Mayor highlighted that the Estates team for police, fire and crime have recently audited the estate to ensure that any changes needed to comply with the law have been implemented, for example on toilet access and signage. It was also confirmed that any future refurbishment work or upgrades will ensure accessibility for everybody.

### **Resolved**

That the report is noted.

## **108 Public Questions or Statements to the Panel**

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

## **109 Members' Questions**

In response to a question received about anti-social behaviour reports, how successful the police detects those involved and how the crimes reported are followed up, the Deputy Mayor set out the work to carefully monitor data on offences committed and how this is publicised through the online public meetings. It was cautioned that anti-social behaviour data can be difficult to draw accurate trends on, as it is not always labelled as such in the reporting system and there are concerns of underreporting in communities. In terms of resolving anti-social behaviour complaints, Community Resolution Orders are increasingly used to enable victims of low level crime and anti-social behaviour to have a greater say in any outcomes. It was further noted that North Yorkshire Police have been undertaking 'Safer Streets' work and hotspot policing over the summer, as a result of additional funding from central government. 45 areas were identified as hotspots, receiving extra resources through 6,622 additional hours and 14,337 extra high profile policing patrols over the summer. This has led to a 13% overall reduction in reports from those targeted hotspot areas. Some examples include:

- Thirsk Market Place - 50% reduction
- Skipton Road, Harrogate - 50% reduction
- Sycamore Avenue, Old Malton - nearly 60% reduction
- Trafalgar Square, Scarborough - over 60% reduction
- Haxby, York - 76% reduction

The Deputy Mayor also highlighted the impact of a public space protection order in Scarborough town centre over the summer, that has assisted officers in prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in that high footfall area. Proactive work is also underway to make it easier for members of the public to report anti-social behaviour concerns more easily. The recent increase in neighbourhood policing officers will also help tackle anti-social behaviour across the region. Work is also underway to link the data together with the early intervention and prevention information through the commissioning partnerships.

Following concerns raised by town and parish councils, the Deputy Mayor flagged that she had attended Sherburn-in-Elmet Town Council in the summer, with the

Neighbourhood Policing team also going out to meet with them. In response to a supplementary question setting out details of a particular incident, it was agreed for the committee member to share details with the Deputy Mayor in writing to follow this up.

Linked to this issue, a member raised an incident of alleged threatening behaviour related to PROW access in a rural area of the region, and the need for the Rural Taskforce to be alive to the increasing frequency of these incidents occurring. The Deputy Mayor suggested the new measures from the Crime and Policing Bill, currently going through the House of Lords, in particular the proposed ways of dealing with anti-social behaviour, may be an area of interest for the Panel in the future.

A further question was raised on the growth of youth gangs, particularly in York, concerning violence and two wheeled crime. It was asked how the police are taking a strategic approach to this increase in gang activity, as well as how the Panel can be reassured that a process is in place to address this. In response, the Deputy Mayor explained that the joint work of the neighbourhood policing teams, together with the schools teams and the local authorities through the youth justice teams is all tied in together, along with the commissioned services to ensure there is a partnership approach. The work of the police, fire and rescue service to respond to particular arson incidents was highlighted, and the spread of these across multiple areas of the city. Work is going on to reach out through schools to highlight to young people the risks involved and the possible criminal implications of arson.

On illegal bikes, police are progressing a number of specific operations on this, with a number of e-bikes already seized. New measures in the Crime and Policing Bill should enable officers to seize bikes that are used illegally. In crimes such as these, the reporting is crucial to help identify and respond to any data trends early as they emerge.

In response to a question on how the flying of flags on lampposts and painted on roundabouts impacts on the strategic aim of the Deputy Mayor to make people feel safe and be safe in York and North Yorkshire, it was noted in response that it is a complicated situation, as it sits between the responsibilities of the local authority and the police. Flags are seen as symbols of national pride by some, whereas others see them differently as signs of intimidation. The Deputy Mayor felt that people are entitled to fly flags on personal property or on vehicles, but they can't be used as a green light to behave differently towards people in their communities.

The Deputy Mayor emphasised that she has been closely monitoring reports of intimidation and hate crime that have been received, but the anecdotal information isn't currently reflected in the data presented to the Hate Crime Partnership meetings. Quarterly data from July to September 2025 showed 387 hate crime reports were recorded across the force area, of which 149 were in York, which was actually a slight drop on the data from the previous quarter. Over a longer period of time, the data shows a big increase in hate crime incidents across the whole patch since 2020, of which approximately 60% is believed to be racially motivated. The Deputy Mayor expressed concern about the effect this may have on communities and wider public sector workers, particularly the Police and Fire and Rescue workers who are subject to hate crime and intimidation. If people don't feel safe, then they should have the confidence to report what happened through the various means, such as by calling 101 and they now have the option of reporting street-based harassment anonymously through the new 'Start Safe, Stay Safe' app. The Deputy Mayor reiterated that reporting any incidents is important to help build a picture of what is happening out there in communities.

The Deputy Mayor noted there is a wider challenge for the Hate Crime Partnership to

ensure that incidents in communities are picked up in real time, to make sure people feel safe. After attending an event at the synagogue in Harrogate on Saturday, whilst sad that a police presence is required at times outside mosques and synagogues, it is key that the police are engaging with our places of worship across the region. Any schools that have concerns are welcome to make contact with the Neighbourhood Policing teams to discuss how they can help. Recent examples include visits to the primary school in Stokesley to talk about restorative justice. The Chair also suggested that Town and Parish Councils be used as a conduit to relay and share information to raise awareness in local communities.

Finally, the therapeutic work taking place at the Acer House Victims' Centre was queried, such as the number of cases where therapeutic treatments has been offered and whether it was subsequently accepted and rejected. It was also asked about if other policing areas use the facility. In response, it was shared that since the opening in March up to the end of September 2025:

- 65 victims over the age of 16 and 4 young victims aged 13 to 15 had undergone a forensic medical examination at Acer House
- 19 victims over the age of 16 and 3 young victims had undergone forensic medical examination at another SARC site in Yorkshire and the Humber.
- 8 victims under the age of 12 had a non-recent examination at Acer House.
- 7 victims under the age of 12 had undergone a forensic medical examination in West Yorkshire.
- 213 Video-Recorded Interviews had been offered at Acer House. The video recording suites have been operational since February 2025.
- It was important to note that partnerships exist at other sites to the North and the West of the region to allow victims a choice of facility.

The information was welcomed, but the lack of data regarding therapeutic treatments to better support victims as part of their recovery and healing was of concern. Further detailed information on this was to be provided by the Deputy Mayor.

It was further emphasised that contact with the police is not required in order to attend Acer House following any incident, this can be done easily by directly contacting the centre, to enable forensic evidence to be gathered without delay.

Following this, the item was brought to a close.

**110**

### **Verbal Update from the Deputy Mayor on the recent Langdale Moor Fire**

In introducing this item, the Chair recognised the unprecedented nature of the wildfire at Langdale Moor over the summer. The work of the multi agency response, from the fire and rescue services, the partner agencies, contractors, game keepers and the local farming community was commended for their huge efforts to tackle this unprecedented event to bring the fire under control and prevent it from spreading.

The Deputy Mayor provided a verbal update, noting the recent Online Public Meeting held on this topic back in September. A timeline of events was set out, with the fire service first notified of the fire at Langdale Moor on the 11<sup>th</sup> August. The response to the fire was complicated because of the very dry summer and the high winds, coupled with the location of the fire on an old army range, with unexploded ordinance on the site. This unique location meant that the usual tactics to respond to a wildfire couldn't be used.

A major incident was declared on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August and it remained significant, but the fire was contained up to the 25<sup>th</sup> August, with the Deputy Mayor

making a visit to the affected site during this period. It was noted that a request to access the Bellwin scheme of emergency financial support from government to local authorities had been made early on in the incident.

Unfortunately the situation escalated as the fire jumped one of the fire breaks, becoming a much larger incident and spreading extremely quickly across the moorland. Evacuations had taken place of nearby holiday parks. National resilience assets were called in on 27<sup>th</sup> August, to ensure the North Yorkshire crews and service personnel were able to have some respite from tackling the wildfire.

The situation was contained again by the 29<sup>th</sup> August, but the affected area was now a much larger land area. The Deputy Mayor visited the site again on the 30<sup>th</sup> August, speaking to firefighters about the unique circumstances of this wildfire, for example the threats to infrastructure, the wildlife and the different geography of the North Yorkshire Moors compared to more urban incidents.

The Fire and Rescue service was praised for their incredible response, along with the farming community and other partners. It was noted the wildfire still remains an active incident and is still being monitored. An investigation is underway and ongoing, and will be reported on in due course.

Following this verbal update, Panel members asked if given the unprecedented resource had focused on the wildfire situation as a major incident, whether this had affected the response times and appliance availability for incidents elsewhere in the county. The Deputy Mayor explained that this was a concern of the service, leading to the request for operational support from other fire and rescue services to provide ongoing cover in other parts of York and North Yorkshire.

It was highlighted that volunteer firefighters in North Yorkshire and elsewhere had stepped up to provide strong support. Response time data which will cover the duration of the incident will be available in November to be scrutinised to see what effect it has had. It was agreed to send the performance data pack to Panel members when it becomes available.

In relation to a question on the impact of the incident on the finances of the Fire and Rescue service, it was noted that the unprecedented precept increase earlier this year had helped to shore up reserves and provide a much needed buffer to provide long term resilience for the service. Bellwin support was applied for early and the wider costs of the incident will be made public when they are finalised. Panel members would be kept informed of the finance reports as they become available.

Ensuring that the fire equipment and appliances meets the current and future needs of the service would form part of the review of the response to the wildfire. It was noted that the Mayor and the Combined Authority are looking at the land management and recovery work and how to look after the environment for the long-term and help minimise the future fire risks.

Further questions were raised regarding the approach of the service to munitions fires and how the wildfire incident has informed thinking for the future would be responded to in writing. Reassurance also was sought on the timeline for the post implementation review and how the recommendations that come out of it would be monitored. The national resilience of the fire and rescue service was also touched on, given the changes in the climate experienced in recent years. If the situation arose where four or five wildfires were to start at the same time, is there the capacity to provide adequate cover across the country.

**Resolved**

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The Panel notes the verbal update received.

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## **Protecting Vulnerable People**

Considered

In introducing the report, the Deputy Mayor emphasised the commitment of both herself and the Mayor to protect vulnerable people across York and North Yorkshire to have access to the support and services they need. The work of the Commissioning team was highlighted, particularly during a period of transition for the Combined Authority. Commissioned services received 52,500 referrals during 2024/25 for 23,000 individuals, with a service satisfaction rating of over 90% achieved consistently across 26 key services. As examples, the eight perpetrator programmes have been enhanced as part of early intervention and prevention work to address root causes, as well as vulnerable people's services and the community engagement / safety services that are now up and running.

Attention was drawn by the Deputy Mayor to the new services commissioned, such as preventative perpetrator programmes, for those without a previous history of offending seeking to avoid problems escalating. There is also an accommodation focus around domestic abuse, with an audit of accommodation provision for domestic abuse survivors undertaken and gaps in provision identified. A similar programme is underway in York through the operators Changing Lives to support vulnerable women facing homelessness.

It was noted the Mayor is launching a 'Moving Forward' campaign, including a Movement, Activity and Sport fund to support projects designed specifically for Women and Girls, as well as early intervention in anti-social behaviour and crime.

Following this introduction, questions from Panel members included the performance and monitoring arrangements in place for the Acer House Victims' Centre, which would be shared in writing with Panel members. The provision of services for adult survivors of child sexual abuse in Scarborough was queried, as well as what the wider strategy is to protect children in the county from sexual harm and how to support them. In response, the Deputy Mayor explained the work to reach out to health partners to ensure the two victims centres are trauma-informed. Ensuring these pathways are open to enable support for child victims of sexual abuse in all commissioned services was also seen as an important part of this area of work. The Deputy Mayor noted a recent open day in Scarborough had seen good attendance from health partners to help provide reassurance of the working relationships built up with the operators Changing Lives and facilitate any referrals.

Further questions were asked about the Operation Encompass safeguarding initiative and the allocations awarded for 2025/26 from the Community Safety Serious Violence Fund would be responded to in writing. It was also asked what support is given to adults and child victims in respect of therapeutic intervention whilst a criminal investigation is ongoing, and if there is data on the current time lag between an investigation ending and when any court proceedings are completed. The Deputy Mayor responded that this should be considered by the Local Criminal Justice Partnership Board and she would report back to Panel. There was a further question raised about whether data is held for the region on the number of children under the age of 12 that are waiting for court and how long the delays are in these cases. This issue is to be progressed through Local Criminal Justice Partnership.

Finally, the proactive work of fire prevention officers to fit safety alarms where vulnerable people live to ensure accommodation is safe was praised.

## **Resolved**

That Panel notes the report.

## **112 Tackling Online Fraud and Cyber Crime**

### **Considered**

In introducing the report, the Deputy Mayor emphasised that the statistics show that cyber crime and online fraud is an issue for all age groups. The Economic Crime Unit within North Yorkshire Police is a dedicated team working in a fast moving area of work where partnership working is essential. A recent meeting with the North Yorkshire Youth Commission highlighted this issue and officers have committed to working more closely with the Commission on this.

Following this introduction, a query was raised on the cyber crime and online fraud dashboard data referenced in the report at section 3.4 and what the heading 'Other Fraud' related to and whether it can be broken down further.

It was also asked if more can be done to promote the contact details required if someone is scammed, for example the organisation Action Fraud. In response, the fast pace of change with cyber and online crime meant it was difficult to make marketing campaigns timely to the current threats, but this would be looked into. The issue of whether the scale of younger people falling victim to sex-tortion online blackmail is known about. The Deputy Mayor would take this request away to investigate further.

Following this, the report was warmly welcomed by the Chair. He highlighted the education of local communities as a key part of raising awareness of fraud and cyber crime scams, that can have life changing consequences for those affected by them. He advocated using the existing networks available, for example through the existing crime reports presented to Town and Parish Councils, as a way to help spread the word on ways to avoid online fraud and cyber crime.

### **Resolved**

That the Panel note the report.

## **113 Development Update of the NYFRS Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2029**

### **Considered**

The Deputy Mayor spoke to provide an update to Panel on the Community Risk Management Plan 2025/29 for the Fire and Rescue Service. The public consultation on this had closed on the 7<sup>th</sup> September. The Deputy Mayor paid tribute to Fiona Kinnear, Fire & Rescue Authority Manager for her work over the summer to oversee the consultation, alongside all of the work required to support the Langdale Moor wildfire response for the Fire and Rescue service.

The consultation data had been segmented out to show the feedback received before the wildfire incident started and then after it began. 802 consultation responses were received, which was seen as a good response rate. Panel members were advised a change proposal was included as part of the consultation, to extend the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) attendance policy from 12 hours to 24 hours a day i.e. no attendance to AFAs at commercial premises where no one sleeps, unless a

fire is confirmed. Following the end of the consultation, the Deputy Mayor had raised concerns with this proposal because of its potential impact on rural response times and was seeking further reassurances from the service.

On a second proposal to replace one of the two water bowsers, this proposal was also being looked at again to ensure the service would have the ability to commission adequate additional water bowsers in the case of another major incident in any part of the region. For example, during the Langdale wildfire incident 12 bowsers were in use. The service was looking again to be able to provide assurances to the public around what commissioning will be for water bowsers going forwards if it is needed. Further clarification will be put in the public domain on this in due course.

The availability of on-call firefighters in rural areas was queried, noting that is a national challenge rather than a specific one for York and North Yorkshire. In response, the Deputy Mayor noted that overall on call fire engine availability for Q1 was 62%. Newly appointed staff have helped to alleviate the situation, with more recruits joining in the near future to support the service. The Combined Authority are working to improve the facilities for on call firefighters to allow them to work from the fire station, such as improvements to wifi, and working with employers to incentivise them to be flexible in releasing on-call firefighters when they are required.

A further concern was raised regarding commercial premises close to residential properties and whether the proposal to extend the AFA attendance policy could be an issue in urban areas. The Deputy Mayor was confident in reply that the Fire Service have taken full account of this potential scenario when bringing forward its proposals.

### **Resolved**

That Panel note the development update report.

## **114 Work Programme**

Considered

The work programme was introduced by the Senior Scrutiny Officer.

A query was raised about a forthcoming work programme item on neighbourhood policing and whether the process of communicating with complainants to update them on their case could be improved, such as in circumstances where the case officer changes or an investigation is discontinued. It was agreed to take the point raised into account when considering the issue at a future meeting.

### **Resolved**

That Panel note the work programme.

## **115 Any other items**

There were no items of other business.

In closing, the Chair put on record his thanks on behalf of the Panel to the three Co-opted independent members: Fraser Forsyth, Mags Godderidge and Martin Walker as this would be the last meeting of their term of membership.

The meeting concluded at 1.00 pm.  
WB