

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on Monday 22nd July 2024 commencing at 3.00 pm.

Present: Mayor David Skaith in the Chair. North Yorkshire Councillor Gareth Dadd, City of York Councillor Claire Douglas and City of York Councillor Peter Kilbane.

In attendance: Jo Coles – Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime and North Yorkshire Councillor Kevin Foster

Officers present:

YNYCA - James Farrar, Rachel Antonelli, Debbie Mitchell, Mike Russell, Andrew Leeming, Liz Philpott, Sara Jeffs and Paul Clark

NYC – Richard Flinton, Barry Khan and Elizabeth Jackson

CA24-22 Apologies for Absence

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular he welcomed Jo Coles, the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime and Mike Russell, the newly appointed Director of Resources, to their first meeting of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Carl Les. Notification had been received that Councillor Simon Myers was to act as substitute for Councillor Les, however Councillor Myers was not present at the meeting.

CA24-23 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2024

The minutes of the meeting of the York and North Yorkshire Combined authority held on 28 June 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

CA24-24 Declarations of Interest

The Deputy Interim Monitoring Officer, Rachel Antonelli, reported that she had an interest in Minute CA24-33 and would leave the meeting room for consideration of the item.

CA24-25 Public Participation

There were no public questions.

CA24-26 An Economic Framework for York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

Considered – A report of the Head of Strategy which set out a revised Economic Framework for the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, building on the previous framework approved by the Combined Authority in March 2024 and incorporating the priorities of the newly elected Mayor. The Framework also set out current activity, proposed delivery and investment to achieve the Framework's priorities.

In introducing the report the Mayor stated the previously agreed Framework had been simplified and now focused on the scale of powers and investment in transport and affordable housing. The proposed revisions offered a greater emphasis on delivering for our communities and drawing the work of our police, fire and crime colleagues closer to work on economic activity.

Andrew Leeming, Head of Strategy, gave an overview of key points as follows:

- The first part of the report was as previously agreed, the second part set out revisions primarily around key connections with Police, Fire and Crime colleagues in relation to housing investment, transport, the place agenda and the green economy, and connecting the business and skills sections as detailed in section 4.2 of the report.
- A revised Framework diagram was included at section 4.3 which set out the three ambitions of the Framework with healthy and thriving communities at the centre and four further thematic priorities

Members thanked officers for their work in producing the document, which provided the foundation for delivery of the Combined Authority's aspirations.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

The revised Economic Framework be approved as a key strategic document.

CA24-27 York and North Yorkshire Skills Framework and Strategy

Considered – A report of the Head of Strategy which set out a revised Skills Strategy for the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) building on the previous York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Skills Strategy and incorporating changes in the funding landscape and the priorities of the newly elected Mayor. The Strategy also aligned to the Economic Framework which was considered at the meeting.

In introducing the report the Mayor advised that the Strategy would ensure a locally focussed approach to skills and that it met the needs of business and the YNYCA's ambitions for growth.

Andrew Leeming, Head of Strategy, gave an overview of key points:

- The strategy was based on skills strategy of the LEP and the skills plans of the two constituent authorities, revised and updated as a key basis for the devolution of the Adult Skills Fund which would come later in the year.
- The Skills and Employability Working Group, which included a range of organisations and agencies, had acted as an interim advisory group.
- The key elements were set out in the diagram at section 4.2 and consisted of four overarching ambitions covering a responsive skills system, high quality careers, supporting businesses and meeting the needs of communities.

Members thanked all those involved in developing the Strategy which would support the provision of opportunities for people wanting to take the next steps in their career and improve the economy.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

The Skills Strategy be approved as a key strategic document.

CA24-28 Call for Projects

Considered – A report of the Head of Strategy which set out proposed investment programmes, linked to the economic framework, which could be funded via the Mayoral Investment Fund.

In introducing the item the Mayor reported that four funds would be created which were intended to support businesses to innovate, tackle challenges and collaborate, and obtain the benefits from devolution. The call sought to put high street businesses at the heart of change and growth on the high street after a challenging few years. Achieving Net Zero was a national challenge and much work had taken place already in York and North Yorkshire towards a carbon negative economy, the fund sought to provide opportunities for further innovation. The proposed skills innovation fund invited challenge to how the skills system can be more integrated and flexible to meet the needs of businesses. The Business Innovation Fund sought to further unlock potential and feed innovation to drive up productivity.

Andrew Leeming, Head of Strategy, gave an overview of key points:

- The Call for Projects was based on the five themes of the revised Economic Framework and how the Mayoral Investment Fund was utilised to support these priorities
- The Annex to the report provided an outline of the four funds, the next steps would be to develop a detailed prospectus for each fund over the summer, with the funds being launched in October
- Section 5.1 detailed an indicative allocation for each fund
- It was also recommended that up to 5% of the total Mayoral Investment Fund be used to cover management and administration costs

Members welcomed the report and thanked officers for their work on this. It was noted that the Combined Authority would use this fund to deliver its priorities.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) An indicative budget allocation of £27.5m over four years from the Mayoral Investment Fund be approved, subject to further consultation with Members and full prospectus documents to be developed across the following programmes:
 - Indicative £10m across 2024 to 2028 for the Carbon Negative Challenge Fund
 - Indicative £10m across 2024 to 2028 for the Vibrant & Sustainable High Streets Fund
 - Indicative £5m across 2024 to 2026 for the Business Innovation Fund
 - Indicative £2.5m across 2024 to 2026 for the Skills Innovation Fund
- ii) Approval be given to a maximum of 5% of the allocated £27.5m to be utilised towards management and administration fees, to ensure the programmes are fully resourced for successful delivery. Any required costs beyond this will need to seek further approval from the Combined Authority.
- iii) Delegated authority be approved for the Chief Executive, in consultation with the CA Members, to sign-off the full prospectuses and application packs of each fund. This will then enable the funds to formally launch.

CA24-29 Approval of Brownfield Housing Fund Round 2 Projects (Phase 1)

Considered – A report of the Head of Delivery which provided information on the second call for project applications to the York and North Yorkshire Brownfield Housing Fund Programme. The second call for projects had been approved by the Combined Authority in February 2024 to utilise the remaining balance of approximately £3m from the Brownfield Housing Fund Programme following the first round of approvals in December 2023. Recommendations were made for the approval of grant contributions towards new projects. An allocation from the Mayoral Investment Fund was also requested towards the YNYBHF to maximise delivery of brownfield housing sites, and new homes, including affordable homes. It would also enable programme over-commitment to ensure full utilisation of the existing funding from what was the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), now called the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The Mayor introduced the item and reported that through the Fund the CA had already approved the delivery of 700 homes in York and North Yorkshire, and with the additional approvals requested at the meeting the total would be 977 homes, half of which were affordable. The ambition was to find ways to develop more homes for rural communities and the CA was working with Yorkshire and Humber Housing Partnership to progress this.

Liz Philpott, Head of Delivery, gave an overview of key points:

- The first round of approvals had allocated to 16 sites, a total of £9.6m had been committed, with a balance of £3m remaining unallocated.
- In February it was agreed to proceed with a Round 2 call for projects which was issued to local authorities and registered housing providers and six applications were received. Those six were divided into two tranches of three each, with phase 1 being those sites which were ready to progress now. The remaining three would be brought back to the CA on 6 September as they were on a slower timescale.
- Three allocations were recommended for approval at the meeting, totalling £4.298m and which would result in 311 homes being built, 181 of which were affordable homes
- It was highlighted that for the Blind Lane site the appraisal had been reworked which had resulted in the full amount being awarded and an amendment to the figure given in Appendix B
- To fund the recommendations an additional £1.298m was to be made available from the Mayoral Investment Fund

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) the response to the second call for projects to the York and North Yorkshire Brownfield Housing Fund be considered
- ii) a maximum additional allocation of £1.3million be approved from the Mayoral Investment Fund towards the York and North Yorkshire Brownfield Housing Fund to enable the first three of the six applications to be supported, with the contribution towards the project at Blind Lane, Aiskew to be the subject of further review
- iii) three projects to be supported through the York and North Yorkshire Brownfield Housing Fund Programme be approved:
 - Blind Lane, Aiskew

- Linton-on-Ouse
 - Cocoa Gardens (Phases 3 – 5) York
- iv) the Director of Resources be delegated to approve the final contribution amount to the project at Blind Lane, Aiskew, subject to the outcome of the further review and recommended grant award
- v) It be noted that a further report will be presented to the Combined Authority in September seeking approval to allocate a further £3.36m from the Mayoral Investment Fund, to enable the remaining three project applications to be supported.

CA24-30 Finance Update

Considered – A report of the Interim Director of Resources requesting approval for the allocation of the Road Renewal Fund to be passported through the constituent councils and providing an update on the Quarter 1 budget monitoring position for the Combined authority.

Debbie Mitchell, Interim Director of Resources, gave an overview of key points:

- Road Renewal Funding had been announced late in 2023 with specific allocations for each council. Now that the CA was the regions transport authority this funding has been paid through the CA, rather than the constituent councils. As this wasn't part of the original budget Members were asked to approve this today.
- The budget monitoring provided a high level overview and further work would be done in the coming months to develop forecasts to enable more accurate monitoring
- Future reports would include details of allocations made from the Mayoral Investment Fund

The Mayor thanked Debbie for her work on the Combined Authority.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) The additional Road Renewal Fund allocation totalling £5.064m is passported through to the constituent councils as outlined in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4 of the report
- ii) The first quarter financial information as outlined in paragraphs 4.5 to 4.8 be noted

CA24-31 Constitution Amendment - Adult Skills Fund Delegations

Considered – A report of the Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer in which approval was sought to amend the Constitution to include additional delegations in relation to the Adult Skills Fund and governance arrangements.

Rachel Antonelli, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer, introduced the report and advised that it was necessary to amend the Constitution to add delegations to the Chief Executive to allow for operational day to day functions to be carried out, a full list was provided at Appendix A. There was one proposed amendment which related to making interim changes to the Adult Skills Fund strategic skills plan in response to

new emerging economic needs and it was proposed this be amended to include consultation with the Mayor.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) The functions set out in Appendix A of the report be delegated to the Chief Executive with the amendment as described above
- ii) Authority be delegated to the Interim Monitoring Officer to make amendments to the draft Constitution to reflect these additional delegations.

CA24-32 Pay Policy Statement

Considered – A report of the Head of Human Resources which set out the Combined Authority’s proposed Pay Policy Statement as required by the Localism Act 2011. This was an updated version of the annual Pay Policy, first published in April 2024. The update was required following the TUPE transfer of employees from the OPFCC and Fire Service.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

The proposed Pay Policy Statement, as set out in Appendix A, be approved for publication on the Combined Authority’s website.

CA24-33 Appointment of Head of Legal - Monitoring Officer

Considered – A report of the Head of Human Resources requesting approval for the recruitment process for the role of Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer). Approval was also sought to establish an Appointments Sub-Committee with delegated powers to conduct the recruitment process and select and appoint a candidate subject to the requirements of the Constitution and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Sara Jeffs, Head of Human Resources, introduced the report and gave an overview of key points:

- It had been agreed that the CA would wait 4 months from the TUPE transfer of other staff before commencing recruitment for this role, which had been undertaken on an interim basis until now
- Section 3.5 set out three options for a timeline for recruitment, the Mayor proposed Option B as his preferred timescale, with a 4 week recruitment commencing the week of the meeting and assessment events the first week in September
- It was proposed that the Appointments Sub-Committee be made up of the Mayor, Leader/Deputy Leader – City of York Council, Leader/Deputy Leader – North Yorkshire Council and the YNYCA Chief Executive. It was confirmed that the Chief Executive would not be a voting member.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) the recruitment process for the position of Head of Legal be approved, including the proposal to set up an Appointments Sub Committee enabling them to conduct the recruitment process and select and appoint a candidate to the role, subject to the Standing Orders

- ii) Option B be the preferred recruitment timeline: Launch 22 July with a 4-week campaign and attraction period; Close 18 August; Shortlist w/c 19 August; Assessment Events w/c 2 September
- iii) Nominations be made to the appointment panel under separate cover after the Combined Authority Meeting
- iv) It be noted that should the recruitment campaign and/or appointment process fail to appoint a suitable candidate a further report will be presented to the Combined Authority with options for a way forward to resolve the particular circumstance.

(Rachel Antonelli left the room for consideration of this item)

CA24-34 Forward Plan

Considered – The Combined Authority’s draft Forward Plan was submitted for approval for publication on the Combined Authority’s website. The Governance and Assurance Manager reported on new entries to the plan since the agenda was published.

Resolved – that:

The draft Combined Authority Forward Plan be approved.

CA24-35 Urgent Business – Local Transport Functions and Funding Allocations – York and North Yorkshire

There was one item of urgent business which, in the absence of a Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Mayor considered should be dealt with at the meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

The urgency related to the requirement to utilise funding allocations for Bus Service Improvement Plans during this financial year. If the usual 28 days’ notice were to be given and the provisions of call-in not disapplied there would be insufficient time for the Plans to be approved and funds utilised. This could lead to each Constituent Authority missing the opportunity to fully utilise the available funding for this financial year.

Considered – A report of the Head of Strategy providing an update on funding allocations made to the City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council for 2024/25 by the Department for Transport and highlighting recent changes to Local Transport Functions in the region in light of creation of the Combined Authority. The report also sought the approval of the Combined Authority to delegate Local Transport Functions for 2024/25 to each of the Constituent Councils with immediate effect, in order that they can update their Bus Service Improvement Plans and distribute the funds received by the end of this financial year. The report also outlined to the Combined Authority the transport functions by virtue of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Order 2023, which can only be exercised by the Mayor.

Resolved (unanimously) – that:

- i) It be noted that the Department for Transport has already provided North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council with the Bus Service Improvement

Plans funding, in the sum of £3.5million to North Yorkshire Council and £1.53million to City of York Council, which will remain with each Authority for 2024/25 in order for them to deliver their Bus Service Improvement Plans.

- ii) The delegation be approved of specific Local Transport Functions which are now Functions of the Combined Authority to North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council respectively in order that they can finalise their Bus Service Improvement Plans utilising the funding received from the Department for Transport. Such delegations to remain in place until 31 March 2025.
- iii) Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to sign the agreements delegating specific Local Transport Functions to each Constituent Authority for the year 2024/25.
- iv) It be noted that each Constituent Authority will approve their Bus Service Improvement Plans in principle before submission to the Mayor for final ratification by the Mayor, with assistance being provided to the Mayor by way of consultation with the Combined Authority.

The meeting concluded at 4.00 pm.