

## County Councillors report March 2022

### Covid 19 update

As you will be aware that the Government made further announcements around Covid restrictions on Monday 21 February. It's important to say that, while the legal requirement to self-isolate if you test positive for Covid ended yesterday, the guidance remains that you should stay at home for five days.

Please remember there are simple measures we can all take to reduce the risks around covid and many other infections.

- Get vaccinated
- Keep rooms ventilated - Let fresh air in if meeting indoors, or meet outside
- Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces
- Get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms, and stay at home if positive

### Boundary Commission

Tuesday 22 February saw the launch of a public consultation run by the Boundary Commission for England on the proposed new map of MP constituencies. This consultation is open until 4th April 2022 and gives you the opportunity to have your say on where the constituency boundaries in your area should be. You can view and comment on proposals on the consultation website, [bcereviews.org.uk](https://bcereviews.org.uk), or send a letter or email.

### Local Government reorganisation

At the most recent Implementation Board meeting (23 February), discussion focused on the news that the Draft Structural Changes Order has been before the House of Commons for debate and is now to go before the House of Lords. This will be the final part of the legal process to facilitate our new unitary council. We do not have an exact date for this, but it is very likely to be in time for a notice of elections around 17 March, triggering a pre-election period, ahead of the county council elections on 5 May. You can read the whole order here <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2022/9780348231380>

Updates on all of the 15 work streams have been received, with the final five detailed below.

**Culture, Leisure and Sport** – Sponsor – Richard Webb (NYCC) This area's priority is to ensure that on day one people can go for their swim or to the gym, book a show, visit a museum or take out a library book, as usual. It will ensure that colleagues working in these areas understand what is going on, have a chance to feed into the change programme and are equipped with the knowledge, access and training they need to continue their role effectively. The wider aim is to lay

the foundations to realise North Yorkshire's potential as one of the best places for culture, leisure and sport. Work is under way to explore opportunities to maximise external funding into the county (some of which will be available in 2022) and the aim is to achieve this alongside strong collaborative partnerships.

For leisure and sport, it is making sure customers will continue to experience a good, local offer from the start and that communities and partners are well informed. Looking ahead, the aim is to think about how the service might operate in the future to best support wider wellbeing and health outcomes, increase participation and activity levels and make sure the offer is inclusive for everyone.

**Economic Development** – Sponsor – Mike Greene (Scarborough BC) Creating economic growth for North Yorkshire is one of the biggest opportunities afforded by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the creation of the new North Yorkshire Council. It comes at a crucial time to aid our recovery from the pandemic. There are ambitious plans for supporting business growth, generating inward investment, firing up the jobs and skills agenda and prioritising regeneration. Underpinning those ambitions, North Yorkshire needs a sustainable, high-quality visitor offer to make the most of the economic potential. There is a big focus on ensuring there is an economic strategy for North Yorkshire on day one of the new council to support these goals. This includes a pipeline of regeneration programmes and projects to support high streets and wider communities as well as ensuring there is a single business support function that is visible and accessible locally and further afield.

**Property and Housing** – Sponsor – Justin Ives (Hambleton DC) It's a big job to map the property and housing portfolios of all eight councils and to understand things like their energy efficiency, maintenance needs, health and safety status, value and so on. This is a key focus for this area. Alongside this, work is under way on repair and maintenance needs. There is also exciting potential, once the new council is established, to link housing and economic development strategies to better housing options, including more affordable homes. As well as this, the work stream aims to make best use of all buildings to support flexible office space and regeneration opportunities.

**Organisational Development (OD)** – Sponsor – Stacey Burlet (Ryedale DC) This work stream is about how we create a strong, successful new council, which takes and builds on the best elements of all the existing councils, so it delivers for North Yorkshire.

It is about identifying and embedding the culture, behaviours and values of the new North Yorkshire Council. It is also about getting people ready to deliver on, the new council's priorities while maintaining consistently high-quality services. The work stream is also focussed on some key areas which are important for future success like leadership, health, well-being, resilience and equality, diversity and inclusion. Alongside this, it will be looking at the new organisation's approach to working styles/ways of working.

It is also focusing on developing tools to support knowledge, skills and confidence throughout the change process such as a manager toolkit, an effective intranet and regular 'Pulse' surveys. In addition, we will establish smaller focus groups to involve and engage a broad range of colleagues in detailed discussions and feedback opportunities.

**Regulatory services and emergency planning** – Sponsor – Tony Clark (Richmondshire DC) This work stream has a broad remit and includes registrars and bereavement services, harbour and coastal services, community safety, building control, pest control, trading standards and environmental services. It is also looking at licensing and emergency planning. In support of this, a great deal of collaborative work is going on across all eight councils to ensure the new council has

everything it needs in place to be safe and legal on day one. Looking to the future, there is a commitment to build upon the positive work already started across the county, for example, improving community resilience and developing the multiagency nature of community safety hubs.