



Councillor Mark Crane

Leader of the Council – December 2020

This report covers the period from the Council meeting on 22 September 2020. During this period I have attended virtual Executive meetings and represented the Council at local, regional and national virtual meetings. I have also attended meetings of the COVID outbreak planning board and a number of District Council Network events. There was an extraordinary meeting of Council on 5 November where it was resolved to submit a response to the invitation from Government to put forward a proposal for local government reform for York and North Yorkshire. Council resolved to submit the East West proposal to Government before 9 December 2020.

The work relating to the COVID pandemic has taken a lot of time and effort for many of us to keep our residents and businesses safe. We have been working really hard to manage and reduce the number of cases in the Selby District. The number of cases remained stubbornly high however I am pleased to report that there has been a significant reduction since the second lockdown. Our staff have worked extremely hard and continue to work very closely with Public Health, health and social care colleagues, partners in the health sector and the voluntary and community sectors.

I am really grateful for the continued effort and commitment displayed by our staff and all partners throughout the period, I know people are tired and it was very heartening to know that vaccines have been approved and will be rolled out. We know that the Selby District is tier 2, that is consistent with the other Districts and Boroughs in North Yorkshire and the city of York. The latest guidance is available on our website for your information. There will be a review of the Tiers on the 16 December and we know we all need to continue to be vigilant.

Covid 19 Test centre - I am pleased to report that the Covid 19 Test centre is open at Portholme Crescent Selby, thank those involved who have worked hard to deliver this facility within our District. Having the facility to get a test locally is helping to reduce the transmission rates. Mass vaccination – I will update separately when more detail is confirmed.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to the Director of Public Health Dr Lincoln Sergeant who has worked with us for over 8 years. Lincoln and his team have worked really hard in Selby and have been key players, with our own staff, in Selby Health matters, Lincoln leaves North Yorkshire to take up a position in Torbay and is replaced in the interim by Louise Wallace, I wish Lincoln the best of luck in his new role and welcome Louise.

Local Government Reorganisation – since the extraordinary meeting of Council on 5 November the Leaders of 6 District Councils have worked on the detailed submission for the case for change which will be submitted by the 9 December 2020. If the government decide to consult on our proposal it will be for a period of 8 weeks and we have been informed that will probably start in February. It is possible that the Government decide to consult on both proposals if they meet the criteria. I understand that the City of York Council have submitted representations to support why they wish to stay the same. I, together with the other Leaders of the District and Borough Councils, have agreed to change the implementation date from May 2022 to May 2023 as the vesting date

for the two new authorities , having taken advice this is a more realistic and deliverable timetable . It has become clear that the white paper for Devolution continues to slip and is not expected to be published until after May 2021.

The Chief Executive received a letter from Paul Rowsell stating that we should make clear in our proposal whether or not we wish to defer the County and any District election in 2021 , the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) election will go ahead in 2021. Having taking advice on this matter, my view, and that of the other District Leaders , is that the elections should go ahead as planned in 2021.

External meetings

I have attended LEP Infrastructure and joint assets board 22 October where £6M was allocated to the A19 . I also attended the first virtual LEP conference which was well attended and full of interesting topics including a specific session on the circular economy. The Yorkshire Leaders Board has also met , the main focus of the meeting was Health and the Economy. I have also attended the LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Boards and the DCN Executive

Council Delivery Plan 2020-23

Our three-year Delivery Plan has now been approved by Executive. It sets out the specific actions that will be delivered in order to achieve the strategic priorities set out in our Council Plan (a great place to live, a great place to enjoy, a great place to grow and a great place with a Council delivering great value). It also reflects the challenges and risks we face around local government reorganisation, staff capacity, finance and incorporates our plans for recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

A number of the actions focus on our ambitions to improve our housing, increase the number of houses, support our town centres, reduce our impact on the environment, deliver the Local Plan, support the district to recover from Covid-19 and improve the way the Council operates such as increasing our use of technology and developing our staff.

It provides the detail to support Council services and stakeholders to understand and share priorities for the next three years – and a framework against which to check and communicate progress.

Thank you

I am acutely aware of how difficult this year has been for our residents and businesses and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank for working together for the benefit of Selby and the wider community. I was really pleased that we went ahead with the business awards, well done to all those nominated and to the winners . I have had feedback and I know that it was really well received and offered hope and good news at a time it is needed, Councillor Buckle will have more to say on this later in the agenda.

Finally I wish you, your families and friends a very Merry Christmas, it will be unusual Christmas this year and I hope that you enjoy a safe, relaxing and restful festive period and that 2021 brings health , happiness and restores prosperity to you all.

Mark Crane
Leader of the Council