
Meeting	Decision Session - Combined Executive Member Decision Session
Date	1 July 2025
Present	Councillors Pavlovic (Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities) [to 10.44 am], Douglas (Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships) [10.13-10.44 am] and Kent (Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency)
Apologies	Councillor Steels-Walshaw (Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care)
In Attendance	Sara Storey – Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Integration Pauline Stuchfield – Director of Housing and Communities Michael Melvin – Director of Adults Safeguarding Jane Mowat – Head of Community Safety (remote) Tanya Lyon – Community Safety Manager Kate Helme – Community Mental Health Programme Manager Paul McCabe – Strategy and Policy Manager, Carbon Reduction Team

9. Appointing a Chair (10.05 am)

The Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities opened the Decision Session, and explained that each Executive Member would Chair the Decision Session for their respective items. This would be himself for Agenda items 6 (Merger of Safer York Business Partnership with York BID including transfer of Reserves) and 7 (Re-procurement of the Stray Dog Contract). The Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships would take over as Chair for Agenda item 8 (Use of Acomb Garth for the 24/7 Neighbourhood Mental Health Centre Pilot). The Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency would then take over as Chair for Agenda item 9 (Strategic Partner Endorsement of the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan 2025-50).

10. Apologies for Absence (10.06 am)

Apologies were received from Cllr Steels-Walshaw, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care. In Cllr Steels-Walshaw's absence, it was noted that Cllr Douglas, Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships, would make the decision in respect of Agenda item 8 (Use of Acomb Garth for the 24/7 Neighbourhood Mental Health Centre Pilot).

11. Declarations of Interest (10.06 am)

The Executive Members were invited to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests, or any disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

12. Minutes (10.06 am)

Resolved: That the minutes of the Combined Executive Member Decision Session held on 3 June 2025 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

13. Public Participation (10.07 am)

It was noted that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Speaking in relation to Agenda item 8 (Use of Acomb Garth for the 24/7 Neighbourhood Mental Health Centre Pilot), Cllr Carol Runciman welcomed the report, but raised concerns over continuity of services given that the NHS grant covered only two years, the impact on existing services based in Acomb Garth, provision for a place of safety under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act, the potential for outstanding legal issues to prove an impediment, and the need for consultation with local Councillors.

14. Merger of Safer York Business Partnership with York BID including transfer of Reserves (10.12 am)

The Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities considered a report proposing approving the transfer of reserve funding held by Safer York Business Crime Partnership to York BID. The Head of

Community Safety provided an overview, noting that following the transfer of the partnership's functions to the BID in March 2025, a decision was now required to approval of the transfer of the partnership's reserves, which were held on behalf of the partnership in a separate account within the Council's Community Safety budget.

It was confirmed that the partnership had accrued reserves through commission paid by its radio contractor which were held by the Council at the request of the partnership to facilitate transactions. This was not the Council's money but sat as a separate budget with its own annual report; there were no outstanding transactions since 31 March 2025 as the BID was now responsible for all contracts held by the partnership.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities approves the transfer of reserve funding held by Safer York Business Crime Partnership to York BID.

Reason: To preserve the valuable services provided by the scheme in assisting the police with tackling crime and anti-social behaviour impacting on the business community.

15. Re-procurement of the Stray Dog Contract (10.20 am)

The Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities considered a report seeking approval for officers to tender and award the 3-year Stray Dog Service contract. The Community Safety Manager provided an overview, noting that this was a statutory service. The Council was one of many local authorities that contracted out the service, and delegated authority was being sought to tender and award the contract to ensure compliance with procurement rules, as pre-market assessment had identified that the contract could be over £250k in value. The intention was to stay below this threshold, but increases in National Insurance, energy and feeding costs had the potential to push the value higher.

In response to the Executive Member's questions it was confirmed that the Stray Dog Service, which worked closely with the Neighbourhood Enforcement team, was well-run with the vast majority of dogs either reunited with their owners or re-homed. Income from reclaim fees and daily and part-daily kennelling costs was transferred back to the Council. It was noted that a separate Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) covered dog fouling and dog control. The Executive Member noted that as a statutory service, there must be no break in provision when the current contract expired, and that as a well-run service over the last three years, it was appropriate to continue using an external contractor.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities gives approval for officers to tender and award the 3-year Stray Dog Service contract which pre-tender market testing has assessed could increase to be over £250k in value.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the council's statutory responsibilities and Contract Procurement Rules.

[The Leader of the Council then took the chair for the next item].

16. Use of Acomb Garth for the 24/7 Neighbourhood Mental Health Centre Pilot (10.26 am)

The Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships considered a report setting out the technical and legal steps required to secure the delivery of the 24/7 Neighbourhood Mental Health Centre Pilot at Acomb Garth Community Centre. The Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Integration and the Community Mental Health Programme Manager introduced the report, thanking colleagues and partners for their support, and noting that £2.4m in NHS England funding had been made available over two years to support the project as part of a national pilot. This was an innovative and complex partnership piece of work, and following work with Legal colleagues to mitigate risks, approval was sought for the signing of an Agreement for Licence to Occupy (AFL) and a Licence to Occupy (LTO), with Nimbuscare Ltd, who leased part of Acomb Garth, together with obtaining a Side Letter from NHS Property Services Limited, who owned the freehold.

In response to the issues raised during the Public Participation item, cross-party support was welcomed and it was confirmed that:

- Longer-term work on community mental health support was ongoing to avoid any lapse in services;
- Services would co-exist with many of those already provided at Acomb Garth;
- The partnership could consider the suggestion of a place of safety although this would need to align with the agreed ethos and values of the partnership; that
- While there was no way to mitigate all possible risk, work was not being held up by the outstanding legal issues;
- Engagement with local councillors and citizens would continue to be important.

The Leader of the Council noted this was an important part of reforming the delivery of mental health services in the city and highlighted the success of the existing Clarence Street Hub. She noted that York had been selected to take the pilot forward, and that the Chief Medical Officer for England was visiting the Council today to see the city's innovative co-produced services. She emphasised the York Place Board's longer-term commitment to services beyond the two years, and thanked officers and partners for their work on the project. She noted that of the other options outlined, doing nothing would be detrimental while delaying in order to resolve outstanding issues would not help get services in place within the timeline. As such, it was

Resolved: That the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships approves the option for City of York Council to enter into the AFL, Licence to Occupy and a Side Letter relating to the property at Acomb Garth, once they are agreed, as the holder of the funds for the pilot, and to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Services and Integration ("DASS") in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Chief Finance Officer to take such steps as are necessary to draft, negotiate, and conclude the proposed Agreement for Licence to Occupy, Licence to Occupy and side letter.

Reason: To allow the City of York Council and the partner organisations within the hub to occupy and make necessary alterations to Acomb Garth as part of a pilot project. By securing occupancy and making modifications, the Council can ensure that the site becomes operational without undue delay, in line with NHSE expectations. The Agreement for Licence to Occupy, Licence to Occupy and side letter confirms the Council's right to use the site and mitigates some key risks from a property law perspective (to extent possible in the circumstances and given the position taken by NHSPS and Nimbuscare) and ensures alignment with Council policies. As host to the Project Team and budget holder, CYC is best placed to manage these arrangements and ensure best outcomes for the residents of York.

[The Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities both left the Decision Session at 10.44 am, and the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency then took the chair for the remainder of the meeting].

17. Strategic Partner Endorsement of the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan 2025-50 (10.44 am)

The Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency considered a report noting the new Strategic Plan developed and approved by the White Rose Forest (WRF) partnership, and seeking City of York Council's endorsement as a strategic partner. The Strategy and Policy Manager (Carbon Reduction Team) provided an overview, noting that the WRF, which was the Community Forest for North and West Yorkshire, was not a single forest but the network of all trees, woods and forests across the region. Endorsement for the Strategic Plan 2025-50, which expressed the partnership's long-term direction, ambition and strategic objectives, was sought from WRF partners, including all local authorities within the region.

It was noted that the Strategic Plan aligned closely with York's Local Plan, Climate Change Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Economic Strategy and emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It was a Council ambition to increase York's tree canopy cover from 10.8% to 13% by 2050, and tree planting had broad public support. Successes to date included the 79-hectare York Community Woodland and the 5,300 trees planted in urban areas through the York Green Streets initiative. The Council was also seeking to protect and restore existing trees and woodland as well as working with upstream partners to enhance flood resilience.

The Executive Member expressed her support for the work of the WRF, noting news that the broader Northern Forest, of which the WRF formed part, had now planted 10m trees to date against a target of 50m by 2050. She thanked the officer for his work on Green Streets, and noted that the 13% target could not be achieved on Council land alone, highlighting work with partners to encourage tree planting on their land. She noted that every tree in every garden was part of the WRF, calling on all to work together to meet the target.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency:

- a) Notes that a new WRF Strategic Plan 2025-50 has been developed and approved by the WRF partnership and formally endorses it, demonstrating City of York Council's support.
- b) Notes how the Council can play its part in successful delivery of the Strategic Plan with reference to the priorities and targets for York.
- c) Notes the progress made to date towards York's priorities and targets.

Reason: To demonstrate City of York Council's support for the WRF partnership and the long-term direction and level of ambition of its Strategic Plan.

Cllr M Pavlovic, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.05 am and finished at 10.55 am].