

WELCOME FROM **Richard Flinton, Chief Executive**

The last week has brought key developments for our county.

Firstly we were given the news that the Government has decided on a single unitary council for North Yorkshire meaning the county and district councils can begin to work together as one on the future delivery of public services.

Never have we needed a unified approach and strong voice more than we do now as we strive to deliver better life chances for everyone here, while working hard with partners and businesses to drive post-Covid economic recovery.

It also allows us to deliver on our promise to empower local communities including town and parish councils and local groups and to work with them to develop plans and people focussed networks around our market towns. Local decision making and action will be a key feature of the new council.

Secondly, we now see Covid rates falling across North Yorkshire, as across England, so perhaps we can be forgiven for a bout of optimism.

After the past few weeks of soaring rates, our county is now in line with the lower England average. Though rates are still as high as they were at the peak of the pandemic last January and it is too early to tell if this is a sustained downward trend, rates do appear to be heading in the right direction.

That means of course that we should carry on with the good work.

It is clear as you walk around the streets of North Yorkshire's towns and villages that people are sticking with Covid-safety precautions to protect and respect others; they are wearing face masks, they are meeting outdoors whenever possible and they are keeping homes and work places well ventilated with open doors and windows.

We can all continue to play our part by encouraging more of our younger people to do their bit too and get the vaccine – it remains the best protection against Covid-19 for all of us. There are walk-in sites around the county to make this as easy as possible

<https://www.northyorkshireccg.nhs.uk/covid-19/north-yorkshire-walk-in-vaccination-clinics/>

At our Local Resilience Forum press conference today, it was great to hear Charles Allen, a member of the team organising the Deer Shed Festival near Thirsk which starts on Friday, setting out the vast array of Covid protection measures being taken to keep the highly successful Deer Shed in this year's national festival calendar - impressive and reassuring to see.

And as we allow ourselves to relax into summer, let's keep safe in other ways. With the staycation market booming and the warm weather tempting people into the waters of our beautiful coastline, rivers and lakes, tragically there have been a spate of deaths around the country.

Tony Peel, station manager of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue reminded everybody at our press conference of the current water safety campaign. He outlined the dos and don'ts of open water swimming including key advice never to swim alone, always take somebody with you; to check the conditions of the water before you enter - how cold the temperature, how strong the currents - and if you are drinking alcohol, stay out of the water altogether. Enjoy the waters, but take good care!

Public health and social care

North Yorkshire Coronavirus Data

At 25th July 2021, there have been 41,942 positive tests since 3rd March 2020, with 2,000 new cases reported in the past week. The weekly rolling average of new cases is 286 cases per day, allowing for incomplete data in the most recent days. The 7-day rate for North Yorkshire is 376.2 cases per 100,000 people, higher than the England 7-day rate of 372.6. Work continues to ensure effective monitoring of all areas, with support for incidents being provided across a range of settings, which are reviewed daily.

Further information on North Yorkshire data provided at county, district and local area level can be found here: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-data>.

Testing Update

If anyone has symptoms, they must book a PCR test. Testing sites across North Yorkshire, as elsewhere in England, are operated and managed by the Department of Health and Social Care and private contractors employed by them. We try to help the Department by promoting the testing site locations and hosting information on how people with symptoms can book a test via the national government portal.

[Find information about where you can get a PCR test on our website.](#)

Everyone is encouraged to test themselves twice a week with home testing kits and report the results to NHS Test and Trace. You can order rapid lateral flow device (LFD) tests online or collect them from participating pharmacies.

[Find out how to order or collect free LFD tests.](#)

It remains vitally important that we continue with the key messages:

- Get your first and second dose of the jab
- Continue to think about the vulnerability of loved ones.
- Outdoors is always safer than indoors.
- Keep getting tested regularly, even without symptoms.
- Continue to follow social distancing where possible, when out with friends and family, including work places, pubs, restaurants etc.
- Hands. Face. Space. Fresh Air

Supporting our schools and childcare

The County Council's children's services have been praised by Ofsted for the way it has supported North Yorkshire's most vulnerable children during pandemic.

The inspectorate is currently looking into how England's social care system has provided services and care for children and young people since the outbreak of Covid-19. In June, inspectors looked at North Yorkshire's children's services in a focused visit on help and protection.

It found that, despite the expected increase in the number of children being referred to local authorities during the pandemic, vulnerable children were protected and supported, stating that "vulnerable children received effective services from skilled and compassionate professionals that protects, helps and supports them."

Our Children's Services are currently rated Outstanding and the inspectors concluded that children's services have "continued to develop positively since the last inspection", with improved outcomes for most children and low numbers of children needing to be brought into care due to the extensive support and resources in place for families.

The outcome is testimony to the hard work of many individuals who work hard to make sure families are fully supported and children in North Yorkshire have the best possible outcomes, regardless of their circumstances. That includes everyone often behind the scenes who support our teams and our passionate and compassionate front line workers who have sat alongside families, often at their lowest ebb, throughout this pandemic.

Growing our local economy

LEP News: Rimla Akhtar OBE - Contribution to Diversity & Inclusion

Join the next Women In Business online event on the 28 July with a special speaker Rimla Akhtar OBE talking about her contribution to diversity and inclusion. Rimla is that rare individual who has lived global business and elite sport and in 2021 was awarded an OBE in addition to the MBE received in 2015. [Find out more and register to attend](#)

Bioeconomy: how renewable resources can help the future of our planet

BioVale has been heavily involved in developing an online Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for the University of York on the Bioeconomy: how renewable resources can help the future of our planet. This three-week course (starting from 26th July) will give participants an understanding on what a bioeconomy is and which sectors it includes. [Find out more](#)

Keeping in touch

[Keep up to date with Covid-19 news for North Yorkshire.](#)

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