

North Yorkshire County Council

13 November 2019

**Transport, Economy and Environment
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Chairman's Statement

Committee – 24 October 2019

Highways England update

- 1 The key topic for discussion at the meeting was the Highways England update on the strategic roads in our county, with the principal focus being on the A64.
- 2 We expressed dismay about the decision to downgrade A64 road improvements from medium to low. When making its assessment, Highways England took out of the equation tourist traffic, rating it as less important than commuter traffic. There is no logic to this in light of the vitally important role that tourism plays to the east coast economy in the county and in East Riding. Consequently, the Committee was frustrated that statistically the vast increase in tourism and visitor vehicle numbers during the season was not taken into account when the traffic modelling was done by Highways England.
- 3 We also noted that the recently announced upgrade of the York outer ring road would create further pressure on an already congested situation at Hopgrove roundabout on the A64.
- 4 We also queried why, just after a few years after the A1M Barton to Leeming upgrade was completed, road re-surfacing works is occurring on some of the sections that were amongst the last to be completed in the county. We were informed by the Highways England representative at the meeting that there was a trade-off between noise suppressing road materials and durability. Highways England is starting to re-introduce more durable road materials on some of their other A-roads
- 5 The feeling overall at the meeting was that Highways England must be made more accountable to the public.
- 6 In fairness, the Highways England representative who attended our meeting said that he appreciated the frustration surrounding the A64. He informed us that a further study is underway that will take traffic on York's Outer Ring road into account. The results are due before the end of this year.
- 7 We welcome the fact that a letter signed by North Yorkshire County Council and the A64 Growth Partnership is due to be sent to the Prime Minister setting out our collective concerns of Highway England's assessment to downgrade A64 road improvements. 8

County Council Motion

- 8 Further to the Motion submitted to the County Council meeting on 24 July 2019 calling for utility companies to be required to make a mandatory level contribution towards flood and coastal protection schemes, the Committee agreed to recommend to the County Council that the Chairman of the Transport Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Rt. Hon Theresa Villiers MP, to call for the financial contribution from utility companies to be mandatory. The Committee also agreed to recommend to the County Council that County Councillor Derek Bastiman be authorised in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Local Government Association Special Interest Group (LGA SIG) Coastal Issues to contact (in consultation with the Leader of North Yorkshire County Council), other relevant agencies to call for utility companies to make a proportionate and appropriate mandatory level of financial contribution where flood defence schemes will protect their infrastructure.

Single-use Plastics Review

- 9 The Committee approved the terms of reference of its next task group review – the Single-use Plastics Review. The task group, which will meet from February 2020, will establish how North Yorkshire County Council along with partners and members of the public could reduce the use of single-use plastics.

20 mph speed limit policy task group

- 10 The task group has now taken evidence from 95 Alive, North Yorkshire Police and the 20s Plenty Campaign group. It will be meeting in December to sum up its findings and produce recommendations. The task group's report will then be submitted to the Committee in January.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley

Chairman

Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall

Northallerton

30 October 2019