

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Executive

13 October 2020

### Area Constituency Committee Feedback

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

To bring to the attention of the Executive key issues considered at the following recent meeting of the Selby & Ainsty Area Constituency Committee on 25 September 2020.

#### 2.0 Selby & Ainsty Area Constituency Committee on 25 September 2020

2.1 This was the first live broadcast, formal, virtual meeting of the Selby & Ainsty Area Constituency Committee since the Government introduced the emergency legislation for virtual meetings, in view of the COVID 19 pandemic.

#### 2.2 Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

The Leader of the Council, County Councillor Carl Les, provided an update on proposals for devolution and Local Government reorganisation in the region. The following issues were raised both by the Leader and during discussion of the issues:-

- The process had currently slowed after initially being highlighted as being an urgent consideration.
- The required letter from Government, in relation to providing the go ahead for LGR, had yet to be issued.
- Not all Local Councils had considered the matter at this stage, therefore the unanimity required had still to be achieved.
- Discussions were continuing at all levels of local Councils and Double Devolution was being carefully considered.
- The advantages to be gained, particularly financially, from devolution could be clearly seen in other areas where this had taken place.
- In terms of double devolution it was emphasised that Parish and Town Councils could take on as many additional duties as they felt comfortable with, and there was no need to change their current arrangements, as there was no obligation to undertake additional duties. It was noted that Bedale was a good example of where the Town Council's decision to take on additional duties had been of benefit to that location. It was emphasised that many of the smaller Parish Councils were not in a position to operate in the same way as Town Councils, but it was reiterated that there was no obligation for them to change the way they currently operate.
- Support for local Councils wishing to take on additional duties in line with double devolution would be offered via supporting bodies.
- Members were aware of the impact on the Council's finances resulting from COVID 19, the difficult budgetary situation faced in the short and medium terms. and the importance of the response to devolution and LGR to address that situation.

#### 2.3 "Better Together Initiative" – Update

## Item 9

Janet Waggott (CEO Selby DC/Assistant CEO NYCC), Dave Caulfield (Selby DC) and Joel Sanders (NYCC) provided an update on the Selby DC/NYCC “Better Together Initiative”, highlighting the following:-

- The initiative had now been in place for 7 years and had delivered a wide range of benefits in terms of joint working and communication for both organisations.
- This had been particularly beneficial during the restrictions related to COVID 19.
- Specific examples were provided in relation to benefits obtained in respect of:-
  - Planning – Local Plan
  - Infrastructure Planning
  - Transport
  - Health, Social Care and Housing
  - Economic Growth
  - Regeneration
  - Shared services – providing greater resilience
  - Community development and programming
  - Selby Health Partnership – Selby Health Matters – Public Health co-ordination
- The initiative had realised savings of around £1.7m since 2017, with a further saving of around £312k identified for the current year.

### 2.4 Return to Schools

Adrian Clarke (CYPS) provided details of the return to schools in the Constituency area, following their extended closure due to COVID 19 restrictions. The following issues were highlighted:-

- The service had worked closely with schools over recent weeks to ensure pupils could return to school as safely and effectively as possible.
- All 58 maintained schools in the Selby area had returned at the expected time in September.
- The first week of the return had seen 61% of pupils returning, which had been affected by a staggered return at Secondary schools, with the attendance figure having now risen to 87%, which was above the North Yorkshire average.
- Attendance monitoring was ongoing with specific categories of children being monitored separately – overall attendance, EHCP, known to Social Services etc.
- Take account of the views of those that cycle for pleasure and fitness.
- Attendance figures are being fed back to the DfE.
- One Primary School had needed to close following the return, due to a COVID outbreak, with staff and pupils having to isolate. It was expected to re-open shortly.
- Close liaison with Public Health representatives was ongoing to assist with issues that arose.
- The process for reacting to outbreaks of COVID within schools was outlined.
- It was noted that although Academies operated under a different remit, CYPS still had a safeguarding duty of care for pupils, and various consultation events and co-ordinated working had taken place with the CEOs of the various MATs.
- There were particular difficulties for smaller schools, should there be an outbreak of COVID, because of lower numbers of teaching resources, resulting in less chance of providing cover.
- The difficulties experienced by some children in respect of home learning were outlined, and the importance of addressing this for any potential further lockdowns were emphasised. The provision of appropriate IT and learning facilities to assist with this was essential.
- The DfE were assisting with support for children experiencing mental health issues following their return to school and due to COVID.
- Members welcomed the return of children to local schools.

### 2.5 A19 – Rebuild and Repairs – Update

The Committee received an update on the progress being made to rebuild, repair and reopen the A19 following severe flooding earlier in the year, which highlighted the following issues:

- The work required had been clarified since the previous update and the estimated cost had risen to £5.372m
- Problems with the BT cabling and gas main works in particular, had led to a delay for the contractor getting on site. The gas company had now been warned that they should be off site by the end of next week as the contractor could only carry out a limited amount of work while they remained.
- The timetable for completion was now estimated to be 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021, although a further review of the work programme was being undertaken to determine whether this could be reduced. Members expressed concerns regarding the delays caused by the gas company and the proposed completion date, which was considered too long given the impact the road closure was having on local communities.
- Clarification was provided in relation to the building up of the embankment and placement of rocks to prevent water lapping over onto the road to prevent the damage that had occurred on this occasion.
- A Member raised concerns regarding the potential for further flooding occurrences during the period that the work was being carried out, and it was noted that the work would be undertaken in stages in an attempt to prevent this from happening.
- The Committee would continue to receive updates on the progress of the work.

### 3.0 **Other Area Constituency Committee Meetings**

3.1 A report on the key issues arising at the following Area Constituency Committee meeting will be presented at the next meeting of the Executive:

- Thirsk & Malton Area Constituency Committee – 16 September 2020
- Scarborough & Whitby Area Constituency Committee – 23 September 2020
- Skipton & Ripon Area Constituency Committee – 14 October 2020
- Harrogate & Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee – 12 November 2020

### **4.0 Recommendation**

4.1 That the Executive notes the report and considers any matters arising from the work of the Selby & Ainsty Area Constituency Committees detailed above, that merits further scrutiny, review or investigation at a county-level.

Barry Khan  
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5 October 2020

Background Documents: None  
Appendices: None

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