

North Yorkshire County Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7 November 2019 at 9.30 am at the Dower House Hotel, 48 Bond End, Knaresborough

Present:-

Members:-

County Councillor John Mann (in the Chair); County Councillors Philip Broadbank, Jim Clark, Richard Cooper, John Ennis, David Goode, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, Don Mackenzie Cliff Trotter and Robert Windass

In Attendance:-

County Councillor Carl Les (Leader of the County Council)

County Council Officers:- Jane le Sage (Assistant Director Inclusion, Children and Young People's Directorate), Andrew Bainbridge (Team Leader Transport Planning, Business and Environmental Services Directorate), Melisa Burnham (Area Highways Manager, Business and Environmental Services Directorate), Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and Luke MacKintosh (Business Support)

Seven members of the public

Apologies for Absence:-

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Zoe Metcalfe and Geoff Webber (Committee Members) and County Councillor David Change (Executive Member).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

47. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

48. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

49. Public Questions or Statements – Traffic Congestion on the Western Side of Harrogate

Two statements and questions were presented by members of the public. Both related to traffic congestion on the western side of Harrogate. The statements and questions are set out below:-

1. Mr Rene Dziabas, Chairman of Harlow & Pannal Ash Residents' Association:-

Whilst we welcome the monies released under the NPIF scheme, the scale of the additional problems facing the western arc of Harrogate, due to what we consider to be excessive development are considerable. As I am sure you all know, the western arc, of which HAPARA is a part, will be expected to absorb nearly 4000 houses without any significant improvement to its infrastructure. The Otley Road corridor alone, between Harlow Carr and Beckwithshaw, will be expected to accommodate nearly 10% of the total numbers contained within the Local Plan. So as we have said on many occasions the equivalent of a settlement, and then some, is being planned for the western arc, and we will take much of the brunt of these numbers. All of this in addition to the acknowledged problems already faced.

The number of trips generated will be very large. Cycle or pedestrian paths alone are clearly not sufficient, and whilst we welcome many of the proposed sustainability initiatives arising from the results of the Congestion Study, we believe that some infrastructure upgrade needs to be considered. In addition we believe that there has to be a substantial improvement in public transport, given that many of the large developments being proposed in the Local Plan will be very car dependent. In addition we see no real evidence of a Master Plan, only development specific applications, with little to link them, and certainly no overall context.

We would therefore wish to seek the assurance of this committee that our problems be afforded a fair chance when it comes to developing the Congestion Study proposals. Not only sustainability measures, but hard infrastructure also. We have met with certain members of NYCC and expressed our view that sustainability measures alone will not resolve the anticipated problems. We doubt that they will even significantly reduce current levels of traffic. We are not looking for a Western Bypass, since as soon as anything to do with roads is mentioned, the bypass word seems to be introduced as a means of killing the debate. What we are looking for is a comprehensive assessment of the problems of the western arc, since in reality the Congestion Study seemed to focus more on other parts of the town, and a great deal of the debate was drowned out by the relief road proposal. No significant infrastructure upgrade has been implemented in more than 30 years, and during this time the problems have just grown.

In conclusion I would like to ask the question that if no viable solution to the additional traffic generated by this large scale development is found, then will the 4000 houses still be built? In other words will it be housing numbers to the exclusion of anything else? Hopefully not!

2. Councillor David Oswin (Vice-Chairman of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council) on behalf of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council:-

The Parish Council noted from the minutes of the last constituency meeting the views from some councillors that implied a narrow and limiting view on proposals to investigate ways of improving congestion on the western side of Harrogate.

The Executive has now signed off on NYCC Highways' task to investigate our ever-increasing problems between Otley Road and the A61 in our parish. This should mean that no possibilities or options were excluded from the task. Parish Councillors consider that polarised views - at the outset - do not bode well for a fair and open investigation.

Please could you assure us that all proposals and suggestions will be afforded a fair chance?

It is the aim, indeed the responsibility, of the Parish Council to give as much help and call upon its extensive local awareness and knowledge to support officers in their proposals in securing the optimum solutions to a problem that has been studiously ignored by both NYCC and HBC for many years.

Parish Councillors feel that this lack of effort for the western part of Harrogate was probably as a result of directives to concentrate on other areas.

With some 4000 houses due to be built in a relatively small area, some form of infrastructure is a must – as would be the case for a settlement of that size elsewhere. To learn that only “widening of existing roads” would be the preferable alternative just beggars belief. Just widening existing roads would be futile, given established pinch points constrained by narrow river and rail bridges plus at least one significant junction already proven to be beyond mitigation and others over capacity.

Parish Councillors noted that a councillor didn’t want a western bypass by the back door. This was patently a pre-emptive strike against something that hasn’t been proposed. If it was “touch and go” two decades ago about improved infrastructure being needed, then it’s certainly essential now.

The Parish council isn’t asking for - and never has asked for - a western by-pass. Our concern is that accommodation built on the western arc has been given consent and allocations in the Local Plan on the assumption that S106 / CIL will be the answer to everything. The considerable flaw, to date, is that there has been no overarching plan to deal with the inevitable increase in congestion.

Improvements in public transport and cycling facilities - necessary adjuncts to any transport infrastructure and provision - would only touch a fraction of the *current* traffic generated, so to propose that only sustainable measures should be considered to accommodate what will prove to be a *huge* increase in traffic volume given the additional 4000 proposed houses, is a bigger folly than was planning to destroy the Nidd Gorge.

The question must be asked – given that a majority of life-changing solutions boil down to economies of scale – “what maximum expenditure is NYCC / HBC prepared to outlay to make the necessary, but principally effective changes, to Harrogate’s transport system that will significantly alleviate the problems in the western area?” Should there be no viable solution then the only alternative would be to dramatically reduce the 4000 proposed house-build.

The Chairman advised that the officer who was responding to the above questions/statements had been delayed and had not yet arrived at this meeting. The Chairman asked for the officer’s responses to be circulated by email following this meeting and to be included within the Minutes of this meeting. (Accordingly, the officer’s responses have been included at the Appendix to these Minutes.) The Chairman apologised to the members of the public.

County Councillor Don Mackenzie (the County Council’s Executive Member for Highways and Public Passenger Transport) made the following comments about the questions and statements presented to this meeting by the two members of the public:-

- County Councillor Don Mackenzie had sympathy for the comments made by the two members of the public and advised that he was familiar with such opinions. He highlighted that the County Council had very recently held a public engagement

on the congestion study in Harrogate and Knaresborough. Over 15,500 replies had been received. The overwhelming opinion expressed in the responses was that the County Council should not be putting down more tarmac, and instead should be boosting sustainable and public transport. The results of the public engagement had been considered by the County Council's Executive whose Members had agreed unanimously with the recommendations in the report presented to it, namely, for a mix of measures, but not a relief road for Harrogate.

- County Councillor Don Mackenzie regretted the fact that the public engagement exercise had almost become a question of 'do we want a relief road, or do we not want a relief road?'. 78% of the respondents to the engagement had said that they did not want a relief road. Many had said they did not wish even to consider a bypass for Killinghall or a link road between the B6161 and the A61 (ie, the issue to which the questions from members of the public to today's meeting had referred). However, the County Council's Executive had decided to keep those options in because it was recognised that Killinghall was one of the fastest growing villages in North Yorkshire and was almost of small town proportions. As such, it was appropriate that the County Council looked at an improvement in the highways infrastructure in that location. County Councillor Don Mackenzie advised that he had considerable sympathy with the views expressed in the two questions and, in particular, that, if traffic was congested now, and thousands of more homes were going to be built, an enormous number of people would need to be transferred onto bikes, buses and rail in order to overcome the effects of congestion. He highlighted that, nevertheless, the public had delivered the clear message that the County Council should look, first and foremost, to boosting public transport and boosting sustainable transport.
- County Councillor Don Mackenzie advised that, whilst it might be considered that boosting public transport and sustainable transport were easy to do, as had been demonstrated in the report about the West Harrogate Transport Improvement Package submitted to today's meeting, the County Council had been trying now, for a year, to develop an off-road cycle path between Beech Grove and Cardale Park and had met with considerable public opposition. He added that a lot of work was still required to persuade members of the public that boosting sustainable travel was an essential part of an overall solution to reduce congestion.
- Regarding the basic question which had been asked, namely, why didn't the County Council look at providing a western relief road or some sort of infrastructure improvement in the west, County Councillor Don Mackenzie advised that the County Council's consultants had clearly stated that the worst congestion was taking place on the A59 and the A661 (ie Skipton Road and Wetherby Road). On the west side of Harrogate, congestion was not being experienced to the same extent, although rat-running was a problem. The County Council's Executive had agreed to make an assessment of a link road between the B6161 and the A61 Leeds Road, which County Councillor Don Mackenzie thought was eminently sensible. Regarding the boosting of public transport, the County Council was doing all it could. However, the County Council did not currently subsidise any buses in the Harrogate area because all were run on a commercial basis. County Councillor Don Mackenzie advised that the buses were not full, which showed that plenty of bus provision already existed, but that it was not being used. This showed that the issue was to alter people's behaviour in order to persuade them not to travel by car but to prefer to catch a bus or catch a train. The County Council's Executive was also looking at the rail services and had set aside income from parking surpluses to fund improvements to the Harrogate rail line to enable two trains an hour in both directions. County Councillor Don Mackenzie believed that no one thing could be done to get rid of traffic congestion and that it would be the cumulative effects of lots of measures that would assist. He advised that some measures would come forward more quickly than others.

- Finally, with regard to 4,000 new homes which the two members of the public had said were going to be built, County Councillor Don Mackenzie highlighted that many had not yet been given planning permission. He advised that it was when the planning application was submitted to Harrogate Borough Council that specific measures relating to boosting public transport and/or sustainable transport needed to be addressed.

50. National Productivity Investment Fund - West Harrogate Improvement Package - Progress Update

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services which advised of the progress of the various highways schemes, costing a total of £4.6 million, within the West Harrogate Improvement Package.

The key points within the report were as follows:-

- The West Harrogate Improvement Package comprised sustainable measures to improve safety and alleviate traffic congestion along the Otley Road corridor. It included improvements to junctions on Otley Road including smart traffic lights, extra traffic lanes, a new off-road cycle lane to link into the developing cycle network, new or improved pedestrian crossings, and investment into publicity and education regarding sustainable travel. The Package was partly funded by the National Productivity Investment Fund which had to be spent by March 2020.
- Delivery of all those schemes which had not already been completed was due to commence in February 2020. However:-
 - Difficulties were being encountered with the Otley Road Cycle Route scheme for reasons described in the report. Consequently scheme delivery was being split into two phases, with the first phase (Cardale Park to Harrogate Grammar School) commencing in February 2020 and the second phase (Harrogate Grammar School to the town centre) now being due for delivery at a later date once the use of the Stray and associated requirements had been concluded.
 - The scheme for a roundabout at Burnbridge was no longer required at this time following the introduction, in 2018, of a left turn lane from the A61 Leeds Road onto Burnbridge Lane which had resulted in a marked improvement in safety and flow of traffic on Leeds Road.

Clarification was provided that the West Harrogate Improvement Package was a totally separate piece of work to the investigation of traffic problems between Otley Road and the A61, to which reference had been made whilst commenting on the questions and statements from members of the public at the beginning of today's meeting.

Members asked questions, to which answers were provided. Members also expressed the following comments:-

- County Councillor Jim Clark (local Member) advised that he had been involved in this matter for many years. He expressed concerns, together with the opinion that traffic congestion would not be solved by building more roads.
- County Councillor Cliff Trotter (Pannal and Lower Wharfedale Division) expressed great disappointment that it had been decided that a roundabout at

Burnbridge was no longer required at this time and that the funding had been reallocated for other works. He asked for traffic to be monitored, especially during peak times, because he felt that the problem of large queues would continue. Officers commented that, in addition to funding, land was required for a roundabout and that, following negotiations with the various landowners, it had been concluded that a roundabout was not feasible. County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member) commented that he had received many objections from residents who were opposed to a roundabout at Burnbridge on the grounds that it would create a rat-run.

- The County Council needed to carry out high quality evaluations of the highway implications of planning applications and to be able, when appropriate, to provide robust advice to the Borough Council's Planning Committee.
- A Member suggested that the County Council needed to stop pretending that it could do what people wanted, namely, to solve the problem of congestion without doing anything which would cause inconvenience to anybody. He added that it would be the cumulative effects of a package of sustainable transport measures that would reduce congestion. The Officers commented that the County Council was now building-up a package of actual measures which would include where the County Council wanted to put cycle routes and bus lanes and park and ride facilities. Some of the measures would disadvantage the motorist. Subsequently the County Council would carry out consultation on those actual measures.
- Very effective communication would be key to persuading people to use sustainable transport. A Member suggested that there should be one County Council officer who had a view on all schemes, and one Borough Council contact with whom he/she could work to ensure co-ordinated action. The Member also suggested that, when letters were sent to residents, copies should be sent to County Councillors. Similarly, when substantial changes were made to the County Council's website, such changes should be communicated to all County Councillors representing the constituency so that they knew what was going on and were able to advise their constituents. The same arrangements should be made for Travel Plans.
- The ability to tell the complete package when communicating would be important. For example, if people saw individual projects, rather than the whole picture, communications could go wrong with the consequence of damaging the overall programme of works.

Resolved -

- (a) That the comments which County Councillors have made under this agenda item be forwarded to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member).
- (b) That further progress on delivery of the schemes within the Harrogate West Improvement Package be submitted to Members in March 2020.

51. School Exclusions and The Grove Pupil Referral Service Update

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service which provided an update on school exclusions in the locality and the current position with regards to The Grove Academy.

The key points within the report were as follows:-

- 436 children had been excluded for a fixed term from mainstream schools (primary or secondary) in the Harrogate district in the 2018/19 academic year. This represented 1.92% of the district's mainstream school population for the year, and was approximately 2% fewer than during the 2017/18 academic year. In addition, there were 18 permanent exclusions from mainstream schools (primary or secondary) in the Harrogate district in the 2018/19 academic year, which was approximately 22% fewer than during the 2017/18 academic year.
- With regard to The Grove, the County Council was in a very positive position at present. In particular, there were on-going discussions between Delta Multi Academy Trust (ie the existing sponsor of The Grove Academy), the Regional Schools Commissioner, and another Multi Academy Trust that was interested in taking over the sponsorship of The Grove. Negotiations were well advanced. From discussions with the potential incoming sponsor during the previous few months, the Local Authority (LA) was confident that the working relationship with the new sponsor would be positive and that it would also be positive with secondary schools in the area. The LA had been talking to the new sponsor and schools about:- 30 places in The Grove at KS4 or KS3; flexible places and longer term places; and on the same funding arrangement as applied for the rest of North Yorkshire. The funding model included an additional £5k contribution from each school to jointly commission preventative places with the LA and the local Pupil Referral Service (PRS). It had also been agreed that the LA's place funding would be made available in its totality at the outset of each financial year, thereby aiding budget stability of each PRS and Alternative Provision. Transport had been highlighted as a significant barrier to schools being able to access provision and therefore the LA was undertaking detailed modelling of options with the aim of reducing the burden of travel costs for young people to access places preventatively.

Members asked questions, and received answers, to clarify their understanding of the following issues:- whether schools in the Harrogate district area had agreed to contribute the additional £5k to jointly commission preventative places with the LA and the local PRS; the arrangements for primary school children at risk of exclusion; the front-loading of funding to each PRS and Alternative Provision; the consequences for efficiency of having flexible places; the implementation date; the effect on jobs at The Grove; and the publicity campaign which The Grove had carried out, although no approach had been made, at any time, to the Regional Schools Commissioner to close The Grove.

Members expressed the following comments:-

- Members were pleased that the County Council was attempting to address the issue of children excluded from school because permanent exclusions had been increasing and the resulting cost, to both the pupil and society, could not be under-estimated.
- A Member suggested that a strong communication plan was required as part of the implementation of the arrangements, in particular, to ensure information was passed to parents and carers.
- A Member commented that he continued to have concerns. This was because there were issues which needed to be discussed, once The Grove had been transferred to the new sponsor, between the new sponsor, secondary school head teachers and the LA, for example, the additional £5k contribution from each school to jointly commission preventative places with the LA and local PRS.

Resolved -

That the comments which County Councillors have made under this agenda item be forwarded to County Councillor Patrick Mulligan (Executive Member for Education and Skills).

52. TalkTalk FibreNation Rollout in Harrogate

The Chairman advised that a presentation about TalkTalk FibreNation could not be given at today's meeting due to a bereavement.

Resolved -

That TalkTalk FibreNation be invited to make a presentation at the Committee's meeting to be held on 9 January 2020 and that the Committee's Work Programme be amended accordingly.

53. Bond End Junction Improvement - Update

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services which reported on the success of, and lessons learned from, the junction improvement scheme carried out at Bond End in Knaresborough and completed in November 2018.

The key points within the report were as follows:-

- The primary objective of the scheme had been to contribute to improving air quality by reducing nitrogen dioxide levels at the junction, by improving traffic flow and reducing the propensity for vehicles to come to a standstill. Whilst the nitrogen dioxide level data for the period following implementation would not be available until March 2020, the impact of the work on traffic queues and delays had been significant and feedback from the community had confirmed that. Two cameras had been installed to monitor the junction and the data could be used to inform future air quality reduction actions.
- The scheme had also been cognisant of the function of Bond End as a town centre and residential street with neighbouring church, hotel and an arts and crafts centre. This had been achieved through enhanced pedestrian crossing provision and a widened footway, thereby making the junction safer and easier to negotiate on foot. Sustainable practices, such as the re-use of traditional stone footway and kerbing materials, had been adopted where the scheme allowed.
- A Communication Plan had ensured regular contact, with letter drops to the residential area and regular updates and progress being posted on the County Council's website. "Meet the Contractor" and "Meet the Designer" events had been held to engage the community.
- The works were delivered within the agreed programme and within the agreed budget of £480,000.
- Safety Audits had demonstrated that the scheme was safe and had highlighted a number of amendments in connection with signing and lining for the highways team to address.

County Councillor David Goode (Knaresborough Division) advised that the scheme had exceeded everyone's expectations and that the Communication Plan was an

excellent example for such plans in the future. He thanked the officers for all their support. He advised that, nevertheless, he had the following concerns:- (i) he was awaiting the final safety report so that he could undertake a final communication with residents; and (ii) he asked whether the County Council was prepared to carry out works if the two cameras monitoring the junction identified issues, for example, vehicles encroaching onto pavements. In response, the Officers undertook to forward a copy of the Safety Audit to County Councillor David Goode. They also confirmed that the County Council would address any safety measures needed at the junction.

Members asked questions, to which answers were provided. Members expressed the following comments:-

- The new scheme appeared to be working very well, with less stop-start traffic being observed.
- Members referred to safety and advised that they were pleased that the new signalling was working alongside the new roundabouts.
- Members expressed an interest in seeing the results of the data nitrogen dioxide level which would be available in March 2020. They hoped that the results would show that the previous poor air quality had now reduced.
- The improvements at Bond End had created a problem further up Forest Lane, where traffic now built-up.

Resolved -

- (a) That the comments which County Councillors have made under this agenda item be forwarded to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member).
- (b) That the results of the data nitrogen dioxide level, which will be available in March 2020, be provided to Members.
- (c) That a copy of the Safety Audit be forwarded to County Councillor David Goode.

54. A1(M) Junction 47 Improvement - Progress Update

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services which provided an update on the progress of the A1(M) junction 47 improvement scheme.

The key points within the report were as follows:-

- The A1(M) junction 47 was currently a grade separated, four arm roundabout on the A59 and was located between York and Harrogate. The junction had high traffic flows on all four arms which made gap-seeking difficult and lead to queuing and delays to journeys. The queuing could extend onto the A1(M) main carriageway during peak hours. The junction had been identified as a location for safety improvements due to the number of recorded collisions.
- Funding to improve safety and capacity had been confirmed. Construction had been due to commence in spring 2017. However, in early 2017, planning approval had been given for a development at Flaxby Park, to the west of junction 47. As part of the consent, the developer was required to deliver a further package of improvements at junction 47. To avoid a situation whereby improvement works carried out at the junction were followed closely by further

developer works, resulting in additional traffic disruption, it was decided to delay the County Council's scheme to explore combining the two sets of work.

- The Scheme estimate was £5.19m, of which:- £2.47m was being funded by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP; £1.16m by the County Council; £0.56m by Highways England Growth & Housing Funding; and £1.0m (approved in February 2019) by the developer of the employment area at Flaxby Park.
- Detailed design work had now commenced, including topographical and ground investigation works. The detailed design was expected to be completed in November 2019 and tenders sought in December 2019. Work on site was due to start in March 2020 and construction was anticipated to take 10 months. The majority of work would be undertaken overnight to minimise the impact on traffic.

Members asked questions, to which answers were provided. A Member suggested that, whilst the works were being undertaken on site, the operation of traffic controls needed to recognise when traffic was backing-up onto the A1(M) main carriageway. The Officers confirmed that the contractors would need to be aware of this because safety was paramount. However, most work would be undertaken overnight when there was likely to be less traffic.

Resolved -

That the comments which County Councillors have made under this agenda item be forwarded to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member).

55. Harrogate Railway Line - Update

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services which provided an update on the Harrogate York railway improvement project.

The key points within the report were as follows:-

- The Harrogate Lind project was a long standing piece of work undertaken by the County Council with the aim to increasing the frequency of rail services from one train per hour to a reliable two trains per hour, in each direction, between Harrogate and York.
- The project had already been through the standard Network Rail scheme development procedure (known as GRIP 1 and GRIP 2). Details of the scheme were now being refined through the rail industry GRIP 3 and GRIP 4 stages and would see increased operational capacity of the railway infrastructure by replacing Victorian era token exchange signalling with track circuit axle counters, increasing train speed on the points between single and double track sections and an increase in the overlap distance at the points at Cattal.
- The project was anticipated to cost £12.6m, of which £9.6m would be funded by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP, and £3.0m by the County Council. However, the funding from the LEP had been approved subject to a series of conditions which had not yet been met. In particular, currently Network Rail was unable to provide absolute certainty that the investment would be able to guarantee that two trains per hour could operate successfully between Harrogate and York. This was due to the uncertainty of the capacity of the East Coast Main Line north of York. Network Rail and industry partners

needed to complete an extensive piece of timetable modelling work which would generate a proposed future timetable for the East Coast Main Line. Such work was due to be completed by a Network Rail Event Steering Group by the end of November/early December 2019. Should the outcome of the timetabling work:-

- Either - Confirm that two trains per hour was achievable, the Harrogate Line project would remain on schedule, with the County Council commissioning the next phases of scheme development (GRIP 5 to GRIP 8) from Network Rail in January 2020. The desired two trains per hour service between Harrogate and York were then likely to commence as part of the December 2020 rail timetable changes.
- Or - Indicate that the required two trains per hour was not achievable, the LEP was likely to withdraw its funding offer and the project would cease.
- With regard to the Starbeck level crossing, the desired two trains per hour service between Harrogate and York would have no impact on the number of closures of the Starbeck level crossing. This was because currently services from Leeds to Harrogate terminated and turned around at Knaresborough and, as such, already ran through Starbeck level crossing. The increase in services from Harrogate to York would therefore be achieved by continuing the trains that currently terminated at Knaresborough, through to terminate at York station.

The Chairman asked for the advice of the Network Rail Event Steering Group, currently being prepared for the end of November/early December 2019, to be emailed to Committee Members. The Officers confirmed that, due to timescales, this would be achieved by emailing the report which was going to the LEP Infrastructure Board's meeting, to be held in December 2019, to Committee Members.

Members asked questions, to which answers were provided. Members expressed the following comments:-

- Members described the current situation was massively frustrating. They suggested alternative options to the desire of having a two trains per hour service between Harrogate and York. In response, the Officers advised that such alternatives were not possible for reasons associated with rail timetables.
- Members commented that it was unacceptable if two trains per hour was not achievable now, with the consequence that the project had to cease, whilst, at the same time, the County Council was going to ask people to use sustainable transport rather than drive.
- A Member commented that, in his view, it was unrealistic to expect to fund, from parking fees which the County Council received, works to reduce the amount of time when the Starbeck level crossing was in the closed position.

Resolved -

- (a) That the comments which County Councillors have made under this agenda item be forwarded to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member).
- (b) That the report which will be going to the LEP Infrastructure Board's meeting in December 2019 be emailed to all Members of this Committee.

56. Committee Work Programme

Considered -

The Committee's Work Programme, for the Committee to consider, develop and adopt.

Members raised three new suggestions which the Committee discussed and decided to deal with as set out in the following Resolution.

Resolved -

- (a) That the Work Programme be approved, subject to the amendments agreed during the earlier debates at this meeting and subject also to the inclusion of the submission of a briefing note, which outlines the progress of the Parking Study, to the Committee's meeting on 9 January 2020.
- (b) That the Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services be asked to consider a request for Members to be provided with a quarterly update which describes the progress of the various work arising from the Harrogate and Knaresborough Congestion Study, and that the Principal Democratic Services Officer advise Members, by email, of the Corporate Director's response.
- (c) That County Councillor Robert Windass be requested to email the Committee's Chairman to outline the concerns regarding the performance of Yorkshire Water within the Boroughbridge Electoral Division and that the Chairman refer the concerns to the relevant Executive Member or Officer.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm.

RAG/JR

APPENDIX

County Council Officers' Response to the two Public Questions and Answers presented at this meeting regarding traffic congestion on the western side of Harrogate (Minute 49 refers)

Firstly, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) officers would like to clarify that the issues relating to development of housing in this area are a Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) matter as the local plan and planning development control matters lie within their remit. We will continue to work with HBC on these, but feel it must be recognised that NYCC, whilst a consultee on the local plan and planning matters, do not have the ability to direct, or determine, any of the decisions on housing.

We are committed to working with HBC and developers to ensure a robust and rigorous transport assessment is undertaken for each of the Local Plan allocations, using the same approach and data to ensure outputs are comparable and importantly that cumulative impacts of the developments are considered. This should ensure a high confidence in the assessment the impact of the development on the surrounding highway network.

This will permit a robust evaluation of the traffic impacts and suitability of any mitigation measures in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Moving onto the specifics of the recommendations resulting from the Harrogate Congestion Study work on the next phase, the Harrogate Transport Investment Programme (HTIP) is in the process of being formally commissioned. The HTIP covers a wide range of topics, as set out in the recommendations to Executive, and covers the same Harrogate and Knaresborough geographical area as the congestion study, namely the whole of the Harrogate and Knaresborough urban area including the 'western arc'. As is the case with all our work streams, the priority areas for the studies will be evidence based, and focussed on trying to deliver the greatest improvements in terms of congestion relief where it is most needed and officers can assure you that full consideration will be given to the needs of the 'western arc'.

Specifically, the HTIP will include an initial feasibility study into options for either a link road, or creation of additional capacity on the existing network in the western area. We do fully recognise the issues faced in the western area, and have already committed to working with the parish councils at the appropriate stage in the development of the studies.