

North Yorkshire County Council

Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2019, commencing at 10.00 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present:-

Members:-

County Councillors Angus Thompson (Chairman), David Blades, David Hugill, Carl Les, Heather Moorhouse (Vice-Chair), Karin Sedgwick, John Weighell OBE, Annabel Wilkinson and Bryn Griffiths, together with Co-opted Member, Malcolm Warne.

Apologies were received from: John Blackie, Caroline Dickinson, Helen Grant and Stuart Parsons

In Attendance:- Paul Mudd & Andy Pippin – Yorkshire Ambulance Service

Officers:- Andrew Leeming – Head of Services, Economic Partnership Unit; Robert Ling – AD Technology & Change

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

50. Appointment of Chairman

On being nominated and seconded, it was

Resolved -

That County Councillor Angus Thompson be elected Chairman of the Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee to serve until the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2020.

County Councillor Thompson in the Chair

51. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2019 and the Special Meeting held on 9 April 2019

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 27 March and 9 April 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

52. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Resolved -

That County Councillor Heather Moorhouse be elected Vice Chairman of the Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee to serve until the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2020.

53. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

54. Public Questions & Statements

There was one public question from Mr Ken Blackwood as follows:

When I called NYCC to query the accuracy of information on the ELGIN road works system I could not get an explanation as to why the road closure signs that have been erected locally were in a different location to the on-line information. Why can I only be told the same information that is shown on-line without being able to get an explanation for the discrepancy? Why am I given the name of the contactor if I want to check the accuracy and advised to contact them to find out why there is a problem when it's NYCC which controls the road closure permissions?

In a written response the Customer Service Centre confirmed they had listened to Mr Blackwood's call made back in April 2019 and acknowledged his experience had unfortunately not been a good one. Mr Blackwood could not find what the staff member was looking at on Elgin and there was some 'tooting and froing' between both parties i.e. 'I'm looking at it / well I can't see it'.

They also confirmed that whilst the wiki information had been updated to say that streetworks would take calls for road closures in areas 1 and 2, this was not offered to Mr Blackwood. Instead, as it was BT utilities that were carrying out the works, he was advised he would need to call BT to talk to them about the road closure and he was given the standard customer service number of 0800800150.

The Customer Service Centre acknowledged they should have:

- Talked Mr Blackwood through the screen he was looking at
- Ensured both parties were looking at the same location
- Checked NYCC wiki pages for updated information around road closures in that area
- Made any calls necessary to help give clarity on the call
- Arranged a call back if needed to discuss further.

On the back of that and to ensure that type of conversation did not happen again, the Customer Service Centre confirmed they had arranged for the highways HCCO's to attend the Centre to provide some further staff training, to ensure the knowledge the Customer Service Centre officers needed was up to date and accurate.

In a written response from NYCC's Streetworks Team, they confirmed Openreach (BT) were the works promoter carrying out works on Front Street, Appleton Wiske on the 27th of May 2019.

The road closure application and permit request to allow the works to go ahead were checked and approved. The closure (1 day only) was from Appleton Wiske Primary School to the North side of Wiske Bridge.

On the issue of the signs, at this later stage the Streetworks Team were unable to confirm if the signs layout for the diversion had been put out correctly. They were able to confirm

that there were other Highways works involving closures within close proximity to that location at the same time. Whilst those proposed works were visible on Elgin, it was again not possible at this later stage to confirm if there were signs out for those, but as such there was the potential for a clash of works.

On the issue of the signs, the Streetworks Team confirmed there were other Highways works involving closures visible on Elgin, that were within close proximity to the works on Front Street Appleton Wiske at the same time, creating the potential for a clash of works. However, at this later stage it was now impossible for the Streetworks Team to confirm if the signs layout for the diversion in question had been put out correctly, or if the signs for the other highways works in the vicinity had been correctly placed.

As the issue wasn't brought to their attention at the time, they could not state for certain what really happened. However, moving forward they confirmed they would ensure that their inspectors endeavoured to inspect that all signage was laid out correctly.

Members gave various examples of similar instances they were aware of where there had been problems with temporary road signage, and noted there had been previous similar issues with the Customer Service Centre.

Cllr Bryn Griffiths suggested that residents needed to be made aware of road closures well in advance in order to have the opportunity to plan their movements on the affected dates, and Members agreed there was a need for improved dialogue and greater road courtesy. County Councillor Carl Les confirmed traffic management would be part of the role of a new NYCC company in a year's time

55. Yorkshire Ambulance Service Update

Members received a presentation from Andrew Pippin (Sector Commander) and Paul Mudd (Divisional Commander), of the Yorkshire Ambulance Service which gave an overview of the service across the constituency area. The presentation also provided a response to a number of issues raised by the Committee at its special meeting held on 9 April 2019.

Members noted the issues associated with the delivery of an Ambulance service in a rural setting, and the knock on effects of any increase in demand. However they were pleased to note that preparations were ongoing to address any further increases in demand in the coming years.

It was confirmed that:

- The introduction of the clinical hubs had resulted in a more efficient use of resources;
- Conveyance rates had reduced as a result of the regional service being aligned to Treatment centres, ensuring patients were delivered to the right destination to address their needs;
- Mental Health clinicians had been placed in call centres to triage calls and sign post patients to appropriate healthcare, reducing unnecessary trips to the Emergency Department;
- First responders were an important part of the Service. They were managed in the same way as paramedics and Ambulance staff – if they could get there quicker, they were sent but the use of triage had limited their use;
- As a result of improved governance arrangements, first responders were required to spend more time completing paperwork than ever before ;

Members considered the performance data provided and expressed concern about the downgrading of the Friarage and questioned the impact on the Ambulance Service.

It was confirmed there had been no clinical impact associated with the introduction of a clinical decision unit (CDU), but it had resulted in an increase in job cycle time, hence the need for the two temporary additional double crewed ambulances. It was noted the CCG were currently covering the significant associated costs and it was not clear where the funding would come from if the two additional ambulance were required on a permanent basis.

It was also confirmed that:

- The Ambulance Service was working well with GP services - a national directive for paramedics to work in GP practices had created a common understanding between both parties
- North Yorkshire Ambulance Service compared favourably against other areas across Yorkshire and was often held up as an exemplar service by others working in rural areas across the country.

Resolved –

That: (i) The Yorkshire Ambulance Service representatives be thanked for their attendance
(ii) The presentation be noted.
(iii) A further update be provided in 12 months

56. Economic Development Strategy

Members received an update on the Local Enterprise Partnership activity in the Richmondshire district, together with an update on the proposed merge with Leeds City Region and the development of a Local Industrial Strategy.

Andrew Leeming, Head of Service for the Economic Partnership Unit introduced the report which detailed the five priorities that were supporting the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan, with a focus on infrastructure, business and skills.

Members were made aware of recent activity which included funding for Mobile phone network, growth of Catterick Garrison and road improvements. It was noted that work was ongoing to develop a number of policies and strategies with action plans that would support future investment opportunities and to develop delivery mechanisms for policies already established. Following a question from Members, it was confirmed that the number of apprenticeships had reduced and that work was ongoing to address it.

Members discussed the proposed amalgamation of the two LEPs in the region and acknowledged the associated barriers to its success e.g. both currently had a different system; one politically led and one business led. They also noted the parameters that might prevent North Yorkshire going ahead without York, and expressed concern about North Yorkshire receiving its fair share of Growth Funding once amalgamated; ensuring future local influence over spend and the time available for drafting new strategies.

County Councillor Carl Les confirmed the Board & Transition Group was working to ensure a smooth transition with no impact on delivery during the transition period. He also confirmed the current Capital Infrastructure Programme would not be affected and would continue to run to the end of its agreed timeframe.

Members noted that East Riding was to merge with the Humber LEP and agreed that as the relationship with East Riding had been very successful, it should not be lost.

Resolved –

That: The update be noted

57. NYCC Digital Strategy

Members received a presentation on NYCC's Digital Strategy from the Assistant Director of Technology & Change, Robert Ling.

The update provided an overview of the development of a range of technologies designed to improve connectivity and access to services, and increase opportunities for business.

Members noted that all public sector and voluntary partners had signed up to the five core objectives of the draft Digital Strategy. They also noted the benefits considered achievable for the County Council, and its partners and customers.

Members received an overview of the types of services now available via a smart app and those that could be developed in the future. They also considered how digital skills and talent could be increased through collaborative working with partners, and the plans in place to ensure the county became better connected.

It was noted that the issues around varying levels of coverage across the county were being tackled as part of the County Council's ambitions for economic growth. Members noted that whilst it was good that the introduction of 5G would benefit many, there were still some areas of the county with no coverage, and agreed there should be some focus on addressing that imbalance.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

58. Work Programme

Having considered the current suggested Work Programme for the Committee alongside information on current/planned scrutiny activity, Members suggested the addition of the following items for the meeting in November 2019:

Closing the Gap
Highways Agency attendance
Cycle Pathways

Resolved –

That the Work Programme be updated to reflect the additional items suggested.

59. Next Meeting

Resolved -

That the next meeting of the Area Constituency Committee take place on Wednesday 28 August 2019 at 10am in County Hall, Northallerton.

The meeting concluded at 11:55am
MLC