

North Yorkshire County Council

Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee held at Brayton Community Centre, Brayton, Selby on 14 June 2019 at 10.00 am.

Present:-

Members:-

County Councillors Richard Musgrave (Chairman), Karl Arthur, Mike Jordan, Andrew Lee, Cliff Lunn, Don Mackay, Andy Paraskos and Chris Pearson; together with Co-opted Member Howard Ferguson.

Officers:-

Hannah Bowles (Business Support), James Farrar (Economic Partnership Unit), Robert Ling (Assistant Director, Technology and Change) Steve Loach (Democratic Services) and Luke MacKintosh (Business Support).

In attendance:

County Councillors David Chance and Carl Les.

There were four members of the public in attendance.

Apologies:-

Apologies were received from County Councillor Stephanie Duckett.

37. Appointment of Chairman

Resolved -

That County Councillor Richard Musgrave be appointed Chairman of the Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee until the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of the County Council in May 2020.

County Councillor Richard Musgrave in the Chair

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

38. Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman thanked everyone for his appointment as Chairman of the Committee for a further year and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He referred to the Better Together Programme being undertaken in conjunction with Selby District Council and highlighted how well this was developing and the substantial savings being made through this. He urged that both Authorities continued to support and promote this excellent project.

He noted that a response had not yet been received from Selby District Council in relation to planning conditions/directives in respect of broadband being provided in new housing developments and he asked that this be followed up.

Following the previous meeting a letter had been sent to the local MP, Nigel Adams relating to the disparity of funding for different areas of the country, through the national funding formula, in respect of schools. In relation to this Co-opted Member, Howard Ferguson, stated that the allocation of funding to services would be the subject of a review by the Government in the near future. He noted that a recent visit by a Government Minister to the area, for discussions with local employers, had seen education funding raised as one of the most important issues. He noted that Nigel Adams MP was fully aware of the issues raised by the Committee and was committed to ensuring that school funding in the area was provided at an appropriate level.

39. Minutes

Resolved -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

40. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Resolved -

That County Councillor Andy Paraskos be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee until the first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the County Council in May 2020.

41. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this stage of the meeting.

42. Public Questions or Statements

There were no questions or statements submitted by members of the public.

43. NYCC Digital Strategy

The Assistant Director, Technology and Change, Robert Ling, provided a presentation updating the development of a range of technologies to improve connectivity, access to services and opportunities for business.

He stated that the presentation would be made available electronically to Members of the Committee and provided the following highlights from the detailed presentation:-

Setting out the Approach to become a Smart County

The key to the development of the strategy was working in partnership, throughout the county and this being a North Yorkshire Digital Strategy, rather than North Yorkshire County Council's.

Core Objectives

- ◆ Thinking and working smarter - accelerating digital transformation in the public sector.
- ◆ Digital and smart communities - invest in communities to develop sustainable neighbourhoods.
- ◆ Skills for a digital age - collaborate with partners to grow digital skills and talent to harness the opportunities offered by the digital world.
- ◆ Connected North Yorkshire - enabling the county to be better connected.
- ◆ Smart businesses and growth - North Yorkshire digitally enabled to be the catalyst for economic growth.
- ◆ Communities need to have the appropriate infrastructure in place to enable them to access the full range of digital technologies. Rural areas require investment to ensure that they mirror urban areas in terms of connectivity.
- ◆ Local communities can become sustainable through best practice. Details of the Sleights project, near Whitby were outlined. The project enabled connection with local services through smart speakers located within homes, providing full contact with local shops and services, for these to be delivered directly.
- ◆ Gaps in individual digital skills require filling to enable all technologies to be utilised. This also includes employees within local public services and businesses, enabling them to respond to developments in digital technology. The development of good skills allows the full range of technical solutions to be utilised.
- ◆ There was still an issue with regards to connectivity within North Yorkshire. The Superfast Broadband projects had delivered a huge amount of good level broadband connection, however, there were still areas that were not connected, and every effort had to be made to ensure that full connectivity was in place.
- ◆ There was also a challenge regarding connection to mobile technology with the advent of 5G. It was emphasised that 5G would require more masts and more infrastructure which could create significant issues for rural areas. Businesses need to have connectivity and also have the appropriate technology to meet the demands of digital advancements. Not only do they need to invest in the technology but also in the skills required to utilise that technology effectively to progress effectively. Connectivity is key to all that.
- ◆ An increasing number of people are using digital technology to access public services and there was a need to ensure that investment in digital connection to services was matched by ensuring the public had the necessary skills to use online facilities. It was expected that, as the strategy evolved, those issues would be addressed, with connectivity and skills being in place to fully utilise digital technologies in the provision of public services.
- ◆ Consideration had also to be given to the use of artificial intelligence which could open real opportunities in all areas. Examples of how this was being used by Health providers were detailed and it was expected that its use would

expand extensively over coming years. Work was also being undertaken alongside the Police in relation to the extended use of artificial intelligence.

- ◆ One of the guiding principles of extending digital technology was ensuring that it was safe and secure. Security was a major issue and had to be designed into future advancements.
- ◆ In terms of the development of digital services an example was provided of the re-launch of the Blue Badge service by the County Council. It was stated that Blue Badge users were canvassed to assist in developing a system that was appropriate for them, resulting in a significant increase in the number of people who were now using the service online. This showed that the development of digital services required the input of users to ensure that the systems developed were effective and were being used appropriately.
- ◆ The next major development for digital technology, which was already underway, was voice activated technology. This was expected to expand significantly in coming years leading to technology being much easier to use for everyone and enable self-service through technology to be much more accessible.

Following the initial presentation Members undertook a discussion of the issue and the following points were raised:-

- ◆ A Member referred to the “not-spots” within his area, particularly in relation to mobile coverage and asked how these were to be addressed. In response it was noted that funding had been obtained from the Local Enterprise Partnership with a view to addressing infrastructure issues, where connectivity was absent, and work identifying those was underway. Mr Ling noted that addressing this issue was dependent on mobile providers in the main, which created some difficulty. Discussions were taking place in relation to the possibility of the introduction of “rural roaming”, similar to utilising mobile services, through roaming, when visiting other countries. It was noted that currently, people visiting from overseas could access better mobile coverage in rural areas than local residents, which was unacceptable. It was also noted that addressing this matter was proving more of a challenge as providers were not concentrating on the introduction of 5G. The Chairman noted that mobile operators had indicated a willingness to work together to address problems in rural areas and had approached Central Government in relation to that. Mr Ling noted that this had occurred previously with little success in addressing the situation, however, hopefully this time there would be some success, particularly if this could be tied to the awarding of contracts for 5G.
- ◆ Referring to the project mentioned earlier in the presentation regarding links to local shops and businesses through smart speakers, it was asked whether the project was experimental at this stage and whether it would be rolled out in due course. In response Mr Ling stated that this would be going live in Sleights on 25 June 2019. He noted that the technology had been designed in such a way that, should the project prove to be successful, then this could be rolled out to other areas and local communities would be sought for this to be implemented. Members stated that many of their local communities would welcome such an initiative.
- ◆ The Co-opted Member referred to the Superfast Broadband initiative, which had seen 94% of the county receiving a good level of broadband connection. He raised concerns, however, that some of the funding was not being used for the purposes it should have, for example providing broadband connection to

major housing developments, as the developers themselves should be providing this. He suggested that remaining funding should be concentrated on addressing the “not-spots” within the constituency area, rather than on matters such as the example provided. He emphasised that funding should not be utilised to promote the benefits of broadband connectivity as the provision would automatically lead to take-up, as had been proved in a number of areas. Emphasis had to be on those areas that did not have the appropriate broadband connections. In response Mr Ling stated that he did not disagree with the issues raised. He noted that the same discussions had been held over a number of years in relation to the challenge of addressing the difficult to reach areas. The challenge remained providing coverage for those areas that had no connectivity and the best solutions to addressing that. He also noted that some urban areas were now getting full fibre before a number of small rural communities had any connection at all. The pressure had to be maintained on addressing this matter and ensuring that the funding provided was diverted into addressing those areas with no connectivity rather than issues such as those outlined by the Co-opted Member. He suggested that the matter was not just one for Superfast North Yorkshire and talks were being undertaken with the Government around possible grants to address those matters.

- ◆ The Chairman noted that there was a commitment to obtaining 100% connectivity through the Superfast Broadband scheme, which, currently, had provided 94% connection across the county, but this still left little or no coverage for 6% of the population. He noted that some of the smaller developments, including single build projects, in small, rural communities, had less chance of infrastructure being built into their developments and also required the assistance of the Superfast Broadband scheme to help them to connect accordingly. In response Mr Ling emphasised that this was a planning matter and that the Superfast Broadband project had been given grant funding to deliver to those areas where gaps in connectivity occurred. He suggested that many of the issues raised could be addressed through planning consideration, with the appropriate infrastructure put in place as part of the planning terms and conditions, rather than the Superfast Broadband funding being used for that purpose. The Chairman noted that some care had to be exercised in terms of making this issue part of planning conditions, but planning informatives could be utilised to address this.
- ◆ The Co-opted Member emphasised the need to have broadband infrastructure in place when housing developments were being constructed and that builders needed to be made aware of the necessity for this. He too believed that this could be addressed through the planning process. He considered that in many cases this matter was being addressed retrospectively and that available funding was being taken away from where it was most needed. He stated that he would continue discussions on this matter with Mr Ling outside of the meeting.
- ◆ The Chairman suggested that the Committee request an update from NYnet, for the next meeting of the Committee, with particular reference to the areas that were not yet in receipt of appropriate connectivity to Superfast Broadband. It was considered that this was a particular concern for specific rural communities. Mr Ling noted the move towards message connection through various social media applications, such as WhatsApp, which connected via wifi, and emphasised the importance of good broadband connectivity in relation to that. Addressing the broadband connections could help to alleviate the lack of mobile connectivity in some areas.

Resolved -

That Robert Ling be thanked for his presentation, the contents of which be noted, together with issues raised, and any action identified be undertaken accordingly.

44. York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership - Constituency Update

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services, delivered by James Farrar of the Economic Partnership Unit, providing an update on the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) activity in the constituency area whilst also providing an update on the proposed merger with Leeds City Region and the development of the local industrial strategy.

Mr Farrar provided highlights of the report, detailing the following:-

Strategic Focus

- ◆ Grow the economy by £2bn.
- ◆ Double house building rates and triple affordable house building rates.
- ◆ Improve east-west connections.
- ◆ Connect every student to business.
- ◆ Priorities are monitored and delivered by sub-boards, with each sub-board providing a report back to each main LEP Board.
- ◆ Through the sub-boards a series of strategic plans had been developed to support implementation and ensuring the LEP strategic objectives were being delivered.
- ◆ Good progress was being made on all of the priorities.

Infrastructure

The following projects had been recipients of local growth funding:-

- ◆ Improving mobile phone coverage - LGF awarded £1m - 100% committed.
- ◆ North Yorkshire Rural Connectivity Grant - LGF awarded £24m - 94% committed.
- ◆ Selby College - equipment - LGF awarded £110k - 100% committed.
- ◆ Selby College - trailblazers - LGF awarded £48k - 100% committed.
- ◆ Newlands Bridge, Drax M62 - £15m LGF awarded - 100% committed.
- ◆ Tadcaster Bridge - LGF awarded £1.4m - 100% committed.

Pipeline projects:-

- ◆ Selby Olympia Park - full business case to be considered at June Board - LGF estimated profile £1.2m.
- ◆ Tadcaster Flood Scheme - development stage - full business case to be considered at June Board - LGF estimated profile £1.13m.

It was noted that the Capital Programme extended to 2021 and schemes had to be delivered by that date, therefore, there was some risk to projects that were unable to make that commitment.

Joint work was taking place with the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Board and a housing proposition had been developed and submitted to Homes England with priorities being:-

- ◆ MOD and large sites.
- ◆ Rural affordable housing.
- ◆ Off-site manufacturing.

A meeting would be held later in the summer in relation to these.

The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding and Hull non-statutory spatial framework had been developed, underpinned by a non-statutory spatial framework which identified the growth corridors within the geography, which included the M62 corridor and the A1/19 corridor.

The value of natural capital across the region was recognised with work underway alongside the local nature partnership to develop a natural capital asset register and support the attraction of investment.

The LEP was working with North Yorkshire County Council and NYnet to utilise additional investment into mobile and broadband coverage, particularly in hard to reach rural areas. Details of the investments were set out in the report together with details of mapping work in relation to mobile coverage in an attempt to reduce “not-spots” within rural mobile coverage.

Business

Details of revenue support offered to businesses throughout the region, with particular emphasis on the constituency area, were provided.

Skills

Strategies were in place for:-

- ◆ Workforce skills.
- ◆ Careers and employability.
- ◆ Social inclusion.
- ◆ Apprenticeships.

A large number of partners were involved in the development of the skills projects and good progress was being made on the majority of these.

Efforts were being made to ensure that work experience was meaningful and that schools were engaged in challenging this.

The development of 'T' levels had created a challenge in terms of apprenticeships as businesses were not clear as to how these should be developed. In view of this work was being undertaken with businesses to deliver quality apprenticeships and develop degree level apprenticeships. Workforce skills were targeting a number of issues including gender and diversity. The aim of the project was to increase productivity.

Local Industrial Strategy

Local areas, led by LEPs, had been tasked with creating local industrial strategies to bring out the distinctive characteristics of local places. The strategies would be used to secure investment from Central Government into local areas. The strategies were driven by the five drivers of productivity and four grand challenges, as set out in the report, and the LEP had secured robust evidence to develop the strategy into the next phase, aligning it to existing strategies, engaging local partners and understanding the opportunities for the different economic geographies across the new diverse LEP area.

Stage 1 of the process would see workshops being undertaken in the afternoon of the LEP's Annual Conference relating to, good growth in distinctive places, and focusing on:-

- ◆ Yorkshire Coast.
- ◆ Rural Powerhouse.
- ◆ Future market towns.
- ◆ City of York.

The workshops would agree the underlying principles for developing the strategy and then focus on the future. Local knowledge and expertise would be utilised to shape additional evidence required to commission.

Stage 2 would see a number of local events delivered in partnership with the local authorities. These would be focused on the areas/corridors identified within the spatial framework which had been agreed by all local authorities, ensuring that existing work was being built on. The local events would focus on:-

- ◆ A1/A19 corridor.
- ◆ M62 energy corridor.
- ◆ Yorkshire Dales.
- ◆ North York Moors.
- ◆ Yorkshire Coast.
- ◆ York City Region.
- ◆ A59 York-Harrogate.
- ◆ A59 Skipton-Bradford-Colne.

This would ensure that the regional evidence base was utilised as a shared understanding of the functional geographies within the area alongside the opportunities and challenges. It was expected that this would evolve into emerging priorities on which engagement would again be undertaken locally to analyse options and identify the best policy levers from which to deliver priorities.

Future of LEPs

Further to a Government review recommendations came out which dictated that LEPs could not have overlapping boundaries.

In order to comply with the recommendations negotiations were taking place to merge York and North Yorkshire with Leeds City Region. These were ongoing with a view to being implemented in April 2020.

The negotiations included a priority to protect the importance of the rural agenda and the influence of local areas. Every effort was being made to ensure that there was no disadvantage to the rural areas by an urban focus. Close collaboration was being undertaken with regard to the local industrial strategy to ensure alignment for the future model.

Further information would be shared when negotiations were completed.

Following the initial presentation of the report Members discussed the issues raised and the following issues and points were highlighted:-

- ◆ A Member noted that there had been a great deal of development within the Selby District, however, it appeared that infrastructure to support the development was often provided retrospectively, rather than proactively. He provided an example of the developments at Kellingley and Eggborough which would have to use the A19 roundabout to access the motorway system, and noted that it was far too small. In response Mr Farrar stated that the M62 corridor had been highlighted as an area of investigation and the issue raised would be investigated. He noted that whilst it could not take direct action, the LEP could use the opportunity to influence for appropriate action to be taken. The Member asked that he be kept updated on action that was being taken to address this matter. Mr Farrar highlighted the local events taking place throughout the area, detailed in the report, and noted that when these had taken place he would return to the Committee to provide an update on issues raised. Other Members echoed the issues raised with regards to infrastructure.
- ◆ The Chairman referred to the need to create quality jobs, not just the quantity of jobs, in the area.
- ◆ A Member referred to the apprenticeship levy and the problem that this was causing for colleges in the area in relation to cash flow and it was asked whether the LEP could assist in resolving this matter. In response Mr Farrar stated that the LEP was aware of the issue highlighted and considered that a better understanding of how this operated was required for both businesses and local colleges. The LEP was assisting in developing that awareness and it was hoped that this would assist in preventing those problems.
- ◆ The Co-opted Member referred to the proposed flood prevention scheme for Tadcaster and noted that the development of the project had reached a vital phase, in terms of the design of the scheme by the Environment Agency. He noted that this was an important step in the scheme. Mr Farrar stated that the LEP was working closely with the Environment Agency in relation to the development of the scheme, which was expected to go forward for funding approval shortly. The Member for Tadcaster emphasised the importance of the scheme for the town.
- ◆ A Member asked what happened to the LEPs when devolution took place in those areas. Mr Farrar stated that he believed that the boundaries for the LEPs would be changed to match those of the devolved area to ensure that there was no overlap.
- ◆ A Member highlighted how cities were booming up and down the country at the moment but emphasised the need to ensure that funding was diverted to North Yorkshire's market towns and rural areas which, in contrast, were struggling in many cases.

- ◆ It was asked whether any of the £1m investment in mobile phone coverage was to be allocated to the Selby and Ainsty Constituency. In response it was stated that the funding had not yet been committed and the report back on that would be made available when this was announced. The Leader of the Council, present at the meeting, noted that five sites had been offered extended mobile coverage at no cost to them, none of which were in the Selby and Ainsty Constituency area, but had not taken up the offer in relation to this. The Chairman asked whether there was a potential for other sites to be considered for this, on the no cost to the area basis. The Leader confirmed that this would be the case. Mr Farrer noted that the “rural roaming” issue raised earlier in the meeting was a major talking point for the LEP to consider and they would be taking that up on behalf of rural areas in the county. The Co-opted Member noted that a major new mobile phone mast was proposed at Eggborough, with significant investment from the mobile phone companies, however the proposal had yet to go through.

- ◆ A Member suggested that the pedestrianisation of local town centres may assist in developing their prosperity. In response Mr Farrar stated that, initially, a firm understanding of the role of the particular town centre had to be determined to ensure that the most appropriate solution for that specific place was provided. Many aspects of how life is conducted in those areas and the idiosyncrasies of the local community had to be taken account of to determine the most appropriate development of those town centres. The LEP was undertaking consultations with local communities to ensure that appropriate solutions were delivered.

- ◆ Clarification was provided in relation to the York/North Yorkshire/East Riding Housing Board, with this not being part of the LEP, but being a local authority board.

Resolved -

That James Farrar be thanked for his report to the Committee the contents of which be noted, together with issues raised, and any action identified be undertaken accordingly.

(County Councillor Mike Jordan declared an interest in the following item in relation to him being a Member of the Selby District Council Planning Committee and the likelihood of a standing planning application being discussed. He left the meeting and took no part in the consideration or discussion of that item.)

45. HGV Overnight Parking on NYCC Highway Network - Update

Considered -

A briefing note from Traffic Engineering Team Leader, David Kirkpatrick, updating Members on the progress being made in relation to this matter.

He noted that, recently, all County Councillors had been contacted to determine the scale and extent of problems in their respective divisions across the county. The County Council was in the process of analysing the responses to identify all affected locations, along with other information previously gathered, to create a geographical plan of the areas most impacted and listing the main issues with a view to them developing a strategic approach. Members were thanked for their engagement in this exercise and invited to submit any further information that they thought may be of relevance.

Members noted that a current planning application with Selby District Council was seeking to create an appropriate lorry parking facility in the area to try and alleviate some of the problems that had been highlighted.

Members recognised that this was a difficult issue for local communities and would continue to strive to seek appropriate solutions to this, however, it was emphasised that independent solutions would not solve the problem, simply move it elsewhere, and a strategic approach was required to fully address this matter.

Resolved -

That the update and action being undertaken be noted.

46. Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee Work Programme

Considered -

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) providing details of the Work Programme for the Committee to consider, develop and adopt.

Resolved -

That the Work Programme be noted and any further issues considered appropriate by Members, for inclusion in the Work Programme, be submitted to the Clerk.

47. Future Meetings

The Chairman noted that there would need to be some flexibility on the date of the next meeting as it was expected that local MP, Nigel Adams would be in attendance and the date would need to coincide with his availability.

Resolved -

That the next meeting of the Committee be held on Friday 27 September 2019 at Brayton Community Centre, Selby, at 10 am, subject to the availability of Nigel Adams MP.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 am.

SL/JR