

North Yorkshire Council

Selby and Ainsty Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 18 September 2025 commencing at 2.00pm in Selby Civic Centre.

Councillor Kirsty Poskitt in the Chair and Councillors Karl Arthur, John Cattanach, Stephanie Duckett, Mike Jordan, Andrew Lee, Cliff Lunn, John McCartney, Andy Paraskos, Bob Packham, Steve Shaw-Wright and Arnold Warneken.

In attendance: Keir Mather MP (virtual), Owen Harding-Best, Office Manager to Keir Mather MP (virtual); and Councillor Carl Les OBE.

Officers present: Kate Exley, Planning Policy & Place Officer; Natasha Durham, Delivery and Infrastructure Manager; and David Smith, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies: Councillors Mark Crane, Melanie Davis, Tim Grogan and Jack Proud.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

153 Introduction by the Chair

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.

Tribute was paid to former Councillor John Duggan, who had recently passed away. In his memory, the meeting observed a one-minute silence.

154 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Crane, Melanie Davis, Tim Grogan and Jack Proud.

155 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2025

Resolved

- a) That the minutes of the meetings held on 26 June 2025 are confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

156 Declarations of interest

Councillor Stephanie Duckett declared an interest as Vice-Chair of the Appeals (Home to School Transport) Committee and noted that she had participated in the hearing of the public speaker. She stated that she would leave the room should any discussion on the Home to School Transport Policy arise during the meeting.

Councillor Andy Paraskos declared an interest as a substitute member of the Appeals (Home to School Transport) Committee.

157 Public questions/statements

One public statement was received before the deadline of midday on Monday, 15 September 2025.

Dr Ruth Jones made the following statement.

Good afternoon, Chair and Committee members.

My name is Ruth Jones (Dr Ruth Walker). I am a GP in Selby, a mother, and the GP lead for health inequalities in this area. I work with council colleagues and schools on projects to improve children's health, wellbeing, and attendance, and I sit in Local Care Partnerships where poor rural transport — and its impact on health — comes up constantly.

So, there is more than a little irony that I am here today, fighting the consequences of this Council's own transport policy. We talk about prevention, tackling disadvantage, and the importance of school attendance — yet this policy is undermining those goals. Getting children safely and happily to school is prevention. Blocking it widens inequalities for already underserved rural communities — just as the Council's own equality impact statement warned it would.

Let me share with you an example of how absurd things have become:

At Tadcaster Grammar there is a pedestrian gate, in daily use for 5 years. Yet the Council's mapping system missed it off. For many that incorrectly makes Milthorpe School in York marginally closer - as few as 6 meters but enough for the computer to say no. Officers admit the error and promised it would be corrected when the system was next updated. Meanwhile children this year still been incorrectly denied transport.

To make matters worse, we discovered yesterday that the system was updated just last week and yet the missing gate is still missing. That means another year of children living in villages in and around Appleton Roebuck for example, are about to be wrongfully denied transport.

And this is not an isolated case of injustice. Mistakes in communication, double counting of available school places in neighbouring councils, and inaccurate route calculations are common.

Families are dragged through appeals that are slow, stacked against them, and now even restrict councillors like Cllr Warneken and Cllr Lee — who have stepped up in support— from fully representing parents in their hearings. This action undermines the principles of natural justice under which all appeals should run, and quite honestly it reeks of a council that are desperate to win at all costs.

So, I came here today to say two things. First, thank you to those councillors who have stood shoulder to shoulder with parents — we are grateful.

Second, to those who have stayed silent: please speak up. Don't sit on your hands hoping this will blow over. It won't. We need you to do your bit. Stand up for North Yorkshire's children. Do your job, so parents like me can get back to doing ours.

The Tadcaster Grammar Gate injustice seems like a perfect place to start. And so, the question that I would like an answer to today — is this:

Will this committee urgently write to the Executive Member and the Chief Executive this week to request that, in cases like this where an error has been acknowledged, any child who was wrongly denied school transport should have that decision reversed without delay?

The relevant Officers were unable to attend the meeting so David Smith, Senior Democratic Services Officer, read the following response on their behalf.

Thank you for your statement.

The council adopted its home to school travel policy in July 2024 and have ensured that the policy is legally compliant and follows the DfE statutory guidance.

This summer the council has made arrangements for eligible children to access free transport, many of these attend their nearest school and travel over the statutory walking distance. Parents of children who do not attend the nearest suitable school with places remain responsible for their travel arrangements.

The council has a mapping system used for admissions and transport purposes, this system has been used for many years and contains maps which are updated each year. The distance to the school is measured to nearest entrance point (not always the main entrance) as defined by the Council's system.

As part of the home to school travel appeals process this year, some parents in a small number of cases, have identified issues where schools were using entrances/gates onto their sites which were not designated as such on the routing and mapping system used by the council for admissions and transport purposes. It is acknowledged that, for various reasons, a small number of schools may have started using entrance points which have not been designated and that some schools may have stopped using identified entrance points that are recorded within the system.

Changing any identified entrance points within the mapping software is a significant step. For every parent who may benefit from a change of this kind, there could be parents who would be disadvantaged from either an admissions or home to school travel policy perspective. To ensure fairness, the Council believe it would not be appropriate to include or exclude individual entrances /gates at particular schools without fully considering changes across all school sites as part of the annual update to the mapping system.

The Council is therefore reviewing the identified entrance points with schools across this academic year to ensure the information included on the system is up to date. Any agreed changes to entrance points would be updated prior to the admissions round which opens in September 2026, affecting school places in the academic year 2027/28, and also in-year applications from September 2026. The Council have taken this approach in order to ensure equity amongst pupils.

However, after any eligibility check has been undertaken, parents are able to use the council's appeal processes to seek a review of the decision, including if they have exceptional individual circumstances that are significant enough

to depart from the policy.

Dr Ruth Jones was provided the opportunity to make a supplementary statement and the following points were raised.

- What is the purpose of an appeals process if new information is not taken into account and errors are not addressed?
- The speaker questioned who is scrutinising decisions, and whether that level of scrutiny is sufficient.

Members noted the issue that was raised by the public speaker.

At this point in the meeting, Members held a vote on whether to bring Item 9 – Committee work programme forward. The vote was carried unanimously.

158 Committee work programme

Councillors Stephanie Duckett and Andy Paraskos left the room for the below discussion regarding the Home to School Transport Policy.

Councillor Kirsty Poskitt declared that, while Tadcaster Grammar School is located within her division, this did not prejudice her.

The Chair introduced the item and Members made the following comments regarding the work programme.

It was queried whether Area Committee meetings could be held virtually in instances where no formal decisions are being made. Other Members highlighted the importance of holding meetings in public.

Members repeated their interest in receiving an update on housing and requested that officers attend a meeting in person.

A discussion on the Home to School Transport Policy took place and the following points were raised.

- The financial savings of the policy were highlighted.
- It was suggested that the gate at Tadcaster Grammar School, which had not been included in the Council's system, is used often.
- It was noted that while one may support the Home to School Transport Policy at a strategic level, it is also important to acknowledge that the policy may raise issues in certain situations and therefore could require amendments. Members suggested that such amendments should be made promptly and proactively when issues are identified.
- That where issues arise, appeals should be looked at on an individual basis.
- It was suggested that the appeals process may require a review, particularly in relation to how exceptional circumstances are defined and applied. This concern was raised in the context of the gate at Tadcaster Grammar School, with some members expressing surprise that the situation had not been considered an exceptional circumstance.
- It was acknowledged that the Area Committee does not have the authority to review or amend the Home to School Transport Policy directly. However, when issues are

identified, they can be raised either by individual Members or collectively by the Committee and fed back to the relevant officers or decision-making bodies.

It was proposed and seconded that officers be invited to attend the November meeting to discuss specific issues related to the Home to School Transport Policy. This would help the Committee to gain a clearer understanding of how the policy is implemented in practice and its impact on individuals. The issues raised by Members are laid out below.

- Clarification on whether North Yorkshire Council has acknowledged an error regarding the gate at Tadcaster Grammar School not being included in the Council's system. If an error has been acknowledged, whether any cases potentially affected will be reviewed.
- An outline of the remit of the appeals committee, particularly the circumstances under which an appeal may be upheld.
- An explanation of how the process for appeals is reviewed and updated. In addition, consideration of whether the local Member can have greater involvement in appeals cases.
- Information on the post-implementation review.
- Information on the feedback received from parents regarding the Home to School Transport Policy.

The proposal was put to a vote and carried unanimously. Councillors Stephanie Duckett and Andy Paraskos had declared an interest and therefore were not present for the vote.

It was also proposed and seconded that the Committee should support Councillor Andrew Lee in relation to the concerns that he has raised outside of the meeting regarding the gate at Tadcaster Grammar School. The motion was put to a vote and carried, with nine voting in favour, none against, and one abstention. Councillors Stephanie Duckett and Andy Paraskos, having declared an interest, were not present for the vote.

Resolved

- a) That the above suggestions be added to the work programme.
- b) That the Committee supports Councillor Andrew Lee in relation to the concerns he has raised regarding the gate at Tadcaster Grammar School.

At this point in the meeting, Members agreed to bring Item 7 – Update from the Area Committee's MPs forward.

159 Update from the Area Committee's M.P.s

The Chair introduced the item and confirmed that a written update had been received from Sir Alec Shelbrooke MP. Keir Mather MP joined the meeting remotely to provide a verbal update which covered the below topics.

- Keir informed Members that an update on road safety would be provided at the extraordinary meeting scheduled for 24 October 2025.
- Regarding SEND provision, it was reported that the contract for the SEND school in Osgodby has been awarded and that work will begin on site soon. The school is expected to open in Easter 2027. Keir also highlighted that he was aware of the purchase of the Holy Family school and is looking to meet the purchasers to discuss their plans.
- Regarding public transport, Keir highlighted that, following discussions with Arriva, the

Leeds Road bus service is being reinstated, with 4 buses per day. Continued work will be undertaken for areas identified by councillors as lacking adequate transport provision.

- Regarding mobile phone signal, Keir reported that Vodafone have made improvements and that Virgin media and O2 have put a plan in place for improvements. It was reported that a new mast is proposed to be put in place near the canal in Selby. Residents have been encouraged by Keir's office to report any noticeable improvements.

Members raised the following queries regarding the verbal updates.

- A question was raised about how motorcycles are considered within the new transport policy, particularly in relation to the Motorcycle Action Group. Keir clarified that this does not fall within his current role, but he would be willing to take forward any specific concerns in his capacity as MP.
- A question was asked about whether the Leeds Road bus route includes Thorpe Willoughby, and if route details could be shared by email. Keir confirmed that the service would run to Fox Lane in Thorpe Willoughby and agreed to circulate the full route information to councillors.

No queries arose out of the written update.

Resolved

- a) That the updates be noted.

160 Maltkiln New Settlement Development Plan Document

Kate Exley, Planning Policy & Place Officer, provided a presentation which summarised the report. The following additional points were made.

- Consideration has been given to how the Maltkiln development would integrate with the surrounding villages.
- One of the Inspector's Main Modifications was to revise the policy boundary. The new boundary would facilitate an alternative vehicular access, which would ensure that delivery of the earlier phases of development would not be dependent on further negotiations and/or CPO. The revised boundary would also facilitate the relocation of an existing plant nursery business (Johnsons of Whixley).
- It was confirmed that the second recommendation in the report serves as a contingency, allowing for minor amendments if required.

Following the presentation, Natasha Durham, Delivery and Infrastructure Manager, briefly discussed a letter which had been circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

The letter from Veritas Planning Ltd, on behalf of a landowner within the proposed settlement boundary, stated that a portion of the land remains unavailable, as was the case during the Examination in Public. It noted that the Inspector's report does not assess the sustainability of the settlement if compulsory purchase fails. The letter argued that the Council has not shown it can deliver a CPO that meets the necessary legal and policy tests, and suggested that failure would render a significant part of the settlement undeliverable, undermining its overall sustainability. It also recommended that the sustainability appraisal should consider the implications if the land were to remain unavailable.

It was reported that officers have reviewed the letter and do not consider any of the arguments to have merit. On the deliverability of Maltkiln and the potential use of a CPO, officers reported that the Council has received legal advice indicating a compelling case

could be made if required. It was highlighted that the Inspector has concluded that the land in question is a valid part of the allocation, and its inclusion remains justified. Officers highlighted that concerns about the sustainability appraisal (including whether it should have considered an option excluding the land) were addressed during the examination and in the Inspector's report. It was confirmed that the Council is confident the appraisal process was sound, and the independent Inspector has agreed. Officers concluded by saying that there is no evidence of unfairness, and that nothing in the letter alters the report's recommendations.

A discussion followed and the below points were raised.

- It was confirmed that the proposed settlement spans land owned by multiple parties, and that Veritas Planning Ltd's client appears to be acting as a representative for the wider group of landowners.
- Concerns were raised that the Council had not sufficiently assessed the impact of a failed CPO. Officers responded that the land was deemed necessary, and therefore on 12 December 2023, the Executive agreed in principle to pursue a CPO, based on legal advice indicating a compelling case. It was confirmed that the DPD considers the settlement as a whole and does not explore scenarios where a CPO might fail.
- Councillor Arnold Warneken asked that it be noted he had concerns about the Council progressing with the proposal without fully understanding the potential impact if the CPO is unsuccessful.

The recommendations outlined in the report were proposed and seconded and a vote was taken. The motion was declared carried with 10 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention.

Resolved

- a) That the Committee proposes to Executive that they recommend to Full Council that the New Settlement (Malkiln) DPD and accompanying Policy Map, incorporating the Inspector's recommended Main Modifications, are adopted.
- b) That the Committee proposes to Executive that they recommend to Full Council that the Corporate Director of Community Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Open to Business, be authorised to make further additional modifications to the documents. Those modifications may relate exclusively to factual updates, grammatical and formatting corrections.

161 Briefing Paper - Selby Community Centres

No officer could attend and so David Smith, Senior Democratic Services Officer, read a statement out on their behalf. The statement read as follows.

Members should note that an informal, fact-finding exercise was carried out in January this year by a member of the Tenant Involvement Team. This involved direct engagement with the various management committees and has helped to inform our approach to date.

Looking ahead, we intend to undertake a more detailed review of current usage as part of the individual options appraisal for each building. The findings from this review will be shared with members in due course.

Members will also be aware from the contents of the report that these buildings are funded entirely by the Housing Revenue Account. Therefore, any savings that may arise from this exercise will be recycled within that budget and directed towards the priorities identified in the Housing Improvement Plan, ensuring our homes continue

to be maintained to a high standard.

Members raised the following points in the discussion.

- Members expressed frustration that the relevant officer was unable to attend and requested that they be invited to a future meeting.
- Concerns were raised that the Area Committee had not been consulted prior to the decision to delegate authority to assess alternative options for each centre, aimed at reducing the financial burden on the Housing Revenue Account.
- Members felt that local councillors, parish councils, and residents had not been adequately informed or involved in efforts to improve centre usage.
- It was noted that the centres are underused, and informal usage may not be fully captured, meaning officers may be unaware of the true level of community activity.
- Members highlighted the value of the centres as spaces for councillors and officers working locally – for example, as places to meet residents.
- Questions were raised about the report's reference to discussions with management committees, including how many meetings took place, when they occurred, and whether local members were informed.
- Concerns were expressed about the effectiveness of management committees, the condition of the buildings, and the lack of promotion. A suggestion was made to explore the creation of a community interest company, endorsed by NYC, to assess and improve the viability of the centres.
- Members asked who would ultimately decide the future of the centres. It was noted that no formal decision has yet been made, and local members still have an opportunity to influence the outcome.
- Questions were raised about the future use of the buildings if the centres were to close, and members hoped that communities would be actively involved in shaping any decisions.

It was proposed and seconded to recommend that no decision regarding the future of the centres be made until an officer has attended a meeting of the Area Committee and there has been meaningful consultation with the local Members, Parish Councils and communities. A vote took place and this was carried unanimously.

Resolved

- a) That the Area Committee recommend that no decision regarding the future of the centres be made until an officer has attended a meeting of the Area Committee to respond to the questions raised, and until meaningful consultation has taken place with the local Members, Parish Councils, and wider communities.

162 Any other items

There were none.

163 Date of next meeting

Friday, 24 October 2025 at 2.00pm in Selby Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 3.29 pm.