

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 9th June, 2022 commencing at 10.10 am at Harrogate Civic Centre.

Present: County Councillors Chris Aldred, Philip Broadbank, Sam Gibbs, Hannah Gostlow, Paul Haslam, Peter Lacey, John Mann, Pat Marsh, Mike Schofield, Monika Slater, Matt Walker, Arnold Warneken and Robert Windass.

Officer present: Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer).

Other Attendees: Two members of the public and press and two members of staff from Harrogate Borough Council.

Apologies: County Councillors Margaret Atkinson, Michael Harrison and Carl Les (Leader of the County Council).

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**Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book**

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### **1 Election of Chairman**

**Resolved –**

That County Councillor Pat Marsh be elected Chairman, to serve until the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2023.

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**County Councillor Pat Marsh in the Chair**

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### **2 Minutes of the Informal Remote Meeting of the Committee held on 17 March 2022**

**Resolved –**

That the Minutes of the informal remote meeting held on 17 March 2022 be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **3 Election of Vice-Chairman**

**Resolved –**

That County Councillor Monika Slater be elected Vice-Chairman, to serve until the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2023.

### **4 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

## 5 Area Constituency Committees - Ways of Working

Considered: The report of the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager which provided a guide about Area Constituency Committees' ways of working for the period ended 31 March 2023.

Members made the following comments:-

- The facility being used, to live-broadcast this in-person meeting, was welcomed so that members of the public could watch either the live broadcast, or afterwards, on YouTube.
- Access to meetings should be as inclusive as possible for residents and guest speakers, ie by providing the options either to attend the meeting venue, or to dial into the meeting and to have the person's image displayed on a screen at the meeting venue. Meetings should also be live broadcast. Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer) undertook to report Members' comments to the Democratic and Scrutiny Manager.
- Non-decision making meetings of the Committee should be held virtually when appropriate, to reduce Members' travel time and carbon dioxide emissions associated with travel, and recognising Members' employment and other commitments.
- In-person meetings of the Committee should be held when appropriate, as they assisted in building Members' working relationships. In addition, Members were relatively local and consequently the carbon dioxide emissions associated with travel would not be so great.
- In-person meetings of the Committee might be held at locations outside Harrogate, eg Knaresborough, Boroughbridge, Pannal.
- The proposal, to convene a series of informal, development meetings, to build up Members' understanding of the constituency area and the new operating model of the area committees in the new unitary authority, was welcomed.
- Members asked for short comfort breaks to be held during meetings.
- A regular briefing on discussions to devolve power to Area Constituency Committees should be included in the Work Programme.

### Resolved –

- (a) That the report and appended guide be noted.
- (b) That the Principal Democratic Services Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, take forward the comments expressed by Members during the debate.

## 6 Public Questions or Statements

Two notices had been received from members of the public of questions or statements for this meeting. The notices had been submitted by:-

- **Mr Dunn, resident of Harrogate** who had raised the following question, which was presented, in his absence, by Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services

Officer):-

“Whilst ‘touring’, on foot, Killinghall parish, I stumbled across a remote North Yorkshire County Council depot and had various concerns about the way it was operating. I have shared my concerns with the County Council’s Democratic and Scrutiny Manager but won’t elaborate on them here because this is a public meeting. However, I would like to ask that a suitable team or councillor for this area visit the site and office to check on the suitability for staff, property and vehicles, to ensure staff well being and insurance compliance.”

A response to the question was read out by Ruth Gladstone on behalf of officers in the County Council’s Business and Environmental Services Directorate. The response was: “In light of the concerns raised by Mr Dunn, Integrated Passenger Transport will request a visit from the property team to advise us on the suitability of the office accommodation and the facilities for the staff who work on site. We will also look at the arrangements that are in place for parking the vehicles.”

A Member suggested that County Councillor Michael Harrison (local Member for the Killinghall, Hampsthwaite and Saltergate Division) who had sent apologies for absence for this meeting, might wish to visit the depot and update Members.

- **Mr Tim Larner of Zero Carbon Harrogate** who made the following statement:-

“I am delighted to have the opportunity to address this new Committee at its inaugural meeting.

My name is Tim Larner, and I am deputising for the Chair of Zero Carbon Harrogate, Jemima Parker, who is disappointed not to be able to attend this morning because of a prior work commitment. She is very keen to build a strong working partnership with you in the years ahead. We hope that this is just the start of a conversation about how best to tackle the growing climate crisis. My role, within Zero Carbon Harrogate, is to lead on planning issues and I understand that planning is likely to become a key issue for you in your work in the coming years.

This morning I’d like to set out how we would like to work with the Council in general, and this Committee in particular. As well as working with you, we will continue to be actively involved in the North Yorkshire Climate Coalition and seek to address the concerns of the whole Council. Councillors and their new set of officers need to be properly equipped to respond appropriately to the climate crisis – with the right expertise, policies, resources and local action plans. The recent report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change emphasised the need for urgent action, particularly over the period up to 2030, if we are to avoid irreversible climate change. Tipping points are not far away. Local government re-organisation cannot be allowed get in the way of continued action. We must see it as an opportunity to ramp up existing efforts, rather than a time to reflect and take stock.

We propose two priority actions. As part of our questionnaire of all candidates in the recent election, which many of you were kind enough to complete, we asked about the need for Councillors and senior officers to be offered Carbon Literacy training. We were heartened by your response and suggest that you press for that training to be put in place by the County Council as a matter of urgency. This will empower you to make climate-aware decisions across your wide range of responsibilities.

Secondly, we would urge you to bring together the Carbon Reduction work relating to your area in the Borough and County Councils. We cannot afford any pause in

projects currently underway, as we approach the birth of the new unitary authority. Work programmes need to accelerate. Staffing and financial resources must be put in place in the coming months as you prepare for April 2023. Our suggestion is that you commission a joint report from the officers for your next meeting setting out the full range of current actions and mapping out future local directions of travel. Zero Carbon Harrogate stands ready to make a strong and positive contribution to your work.

Thank you for listening so attentively to this statement.”

The Chairman thanked Mr Lerner for his statement and commented that climate change was such an important issue that action could not be delayed.

Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer) referred to Mr Lerner’s priority action point regarding carbon literacy training and advised that the County Council’s Climate Change Officer had advised that two options were due to be presented at the Members’ Seminar concerning climate change on 6 July 2022. The two options were: (i) a bespoke climate change awareness model which had been created for all York and North Yorkshire local authority employees and was of about 90 minutes’ duration, and (ii) full carbon literacy training which was a one day on-line course.

County Councillors John Mann and Paul Haslam highlighted that the County Council had made a great deal of progress since 2017 regarding climate change, referred to information on the website where some of the work was published, and explained some of the actions already taken.

Members suggested that:-

- The Committee should guard against “reinventing the wheel” but instead should look at what the County Council had already done and how that could be improved.
- The Committee should engage, not only Zero Carbon Harrogate, but all carbon aware groups eg Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition.
- The County Council’s Carbon Reduction Plan should be reviewed more frequently than once a year so that Members could help officers to treat climate change more seriously and put greater focus on climate change, and integrate it within all the Council’s responsibilities.
- Climate change training should be updated and undertaken frequently.
- The data pack (*page 47 of the papers for this meeting*) showed that the total carbon footprint in the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency area, at 9,578 kg per person, was higher than in Yorkshire and the Humber (7,301 kg per person) and for England as a whole (8,133 kg per person). This Committee should look into that data to identify the particular circumstances which were leading to that situation.
- The issue of climate change should be included in all reports asking for a decision to be made.

#### **Resolved –**

That the issue of climate change be included on the Committee’s Work Programme as an item for discussion at the meeting on 15 September 2022.

## **7 Appointments to Outside Bodies**

Considered: The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) which invited the Area Constituency Committee to appoint the County Council's representatives on six outside bodies.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That the under-mentioned County Councillors be appointed to the following Category 2 outside bodies, each to serve until the Council Elections in 2027:-
- Craven and Harrogate Districts Citizens Advice Bureau – County Councillor Peter Lacey
  - Harrogate District Community Safety Local Delivery Team – County Councillor Chris Aldred
  - Knaresborough Community Centre Committee – County Councillor Hannah Gostlow
  - Renaissance Knaresborough Executive Committee – County Councillor Hannah Gostlow
- (b) That the under-mentioned County Councillors be appointed to the following Category 3 outside bodies, each to serve until a replacement is appointed:-
- King James's Foundation at Knaresborough – County Councillor Matt Walker
  - Richard Taylor's Educational Trust – County Councillor Paul Haslam

Note: The meeting was adjourned for a short break following consideration of the above item of business.

## **8 Data Profile for Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee**

Considered: The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) which presented key data for the constituency area and invited the Committee to determine whether any issues highlighted in the data profile merited further investigation and inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme.

During discussion, the following issues were identified from the data profile for possible further investigation by the Committee:-

- As discussed earlier during this meeting, the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency area had a poor record when it came to the local carbon footprint, as demonstrated by the figure of 9,578kg of carbon per person indicator compared with 8,133kg for the whole of England. The Committee should therefore ask to see a comprehensive and ambitious programme of de-carbonisation, above and beyond that already in place through Harrogate Borough Council, and call for an urgent summit of interested parties to explore how that ambition could be realised.
- Whilst generally crime levels for the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency were below the England average, reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) were 38% higher (30.4 per 1,000 population compared to 22). Whilst not all ASB was youth-related, a large proportion would be, and this chimed with residents' concerns expressed in various surveys and 'on the doorstep'. The Committee should therefore convene a meeting at which the Youth Services and the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner should be asked to give account of the measures they were taking to address this in a collaborative way across Harrogate and Knaresborough.

- The health of people in the constituency was generally good when compared with national averages, as would be expected in an area of relative affluence. However, the prevalence of coronary heart disease (CHD) was 27% higher than the England average and rates of emergency admissions to hospital for CHD were 19% higher. The Committee should therefore hear from Public Health Officers in the Council as to what prevention measures were being pursued to address this and how local Councillors could champion this issue.
- Being admitted to hospital should be a last resort, but only if well-resourced and trusted services were available in the community. This was particularly so for the very young. However, whilst A&E attendances for the under 5's were not high relative to England, average emergency admissions to hospital were. Across England, for every 100 A&E attendances for under 5's, 26 were admitted, but this rose to 60 in the Harrogate and Knaresborough area. The Committee should therefore ask for data consistency issues to be checked and, if appropriate, seek to understand better why average emergency admissions to hospital for the under 5's in the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency were high relative to England, how parents were accessing services for the very young in the constituency, and what measures could be taken to support and reassure parents at times of concern for their children's health.
- Households in fuel poverty were slightly below the England average at 12% compared to 13.5%. However, when one considered that only 1.5% of the local population were in the lowest one-fifth (20%) deprivation group, and the Harrogate and Knaresborough rate of fuel poverty was similar to the England average, this suggested that there were particular challenges in the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency area with regard to the cost of energy, potentially linked to large properties with poor insulation. The Committee should therefore seek to understand what factors were contributing to these unexpectedly high levels of fuel poverty in a relatively affluent area.
- The Harrogate and Knaresborough area thrived on small business ingenuity and innovation, as witnessed by the level of self-employed being at 11.6% of the workforce compared with 9.8% nationally. The Committee should hear from the business community, perhaps in informal development sessions, about how this vital sector could be best supported, particularly in enabling and encouraging the entry of new talent amongst younger adults, so that the essential services currently being provided to small businesses by the Borough Council and others could be continued and built-on.
- Average house prices were higher in the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency compared to North Yorkshire and England.
  - A Member queried whether data was available to show how many people were living in affordable housing and were in fuel poverty. Councillor Peter Lacey undertook to look-up such information and suggested that intelligence could be shared in an informal development session with relevant Council professionals.
  - Members commented that 'affordable housing' was not always affordable, especially for young people in the rural areas. They suggested that the Council should look towards providing more social housing, and the possibility of preventing people from selling such housing after a few years.
- Members asked whether any data was available about the following access issues:- wait-times for ambulances; to NHS dentistry; and to GP services. Members commented that, whilst some of these were national issues, they would wish to be aware of such data to see if there was anything which this Committee could do to assist. Members commented that any such data was particularly

pertinent to the amount of development taking place in Harrogate and Knaresborough, eg to find out where the dental practices, surgeries were located to cope with that development. Members also queried whether a plan existed to show how the NHS intended to recruit staff for these services, recognising the national shortage of GPs and NHS dentists etc.

- To improve social deprivation amongst young people within the constituency, the Committee should seek information regarding social sports facilities and consider how such facilities were being used within communities. An example given was a field in Harlow Hill that was no longer used as a football pitch.
- The Committee should seek information concerning thought processes regarding what the site of the Woodfield Community Primary School might be used for if that school were to close. Councillor Paul Haslam expressed the view that Woodfield Community Primary School was very necessary within the Woodfield area and he hoped that that view would be expressed within responses to the consultation regarding possible closure of that school.
- To address the health of the environment within the Constituency, the Committee should seek a report about pollution levels, information on the AQMA areas, and number of EV chargers to understand the locations where pollution levels were high and to be reassured that action was being taken. A Member suggested that the Committee should also consider the way in which air quality was being measured and expressed the view that it should be measured in real time.
- Whenever constituency data profile packs became available in future, they should be emailed to Members without delay for possible discussion at the Committee's meetings. Members commented that data profile packs should be produced more frequently than every 4 years. They also highlighted that many of the figures in the data profile considered today, whilst helpful in identifying trends, were out of date (eg the 2011 census and fuel poverty figures from 2017/18) and therefore the data was not as accurate as it could be.
- Members asked for the data profile pack for each Electoral Division to be forwarded to the relevant Member as a matter of urgency.

#### **Resolved -**

That each of the suggestions put forward during the debate, as recorded in the preamble to this Minute, be discussed between the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Principal Democratic Services Officer to determine how best to progress each issue.

#### **9 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Risk and Resource Model 2022-25 - Consultation**

Considered: The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) which invited the Committee to review a consultation about North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Risk and Resource Model 2022/25 and to determine what action it wished to take in response.

During discussion, Members commented that they would particularly welcome detailed statistics regarding:-

- all incidents to which Harrogate Fire Station was called-out (eg including road traffic accidents) both day-time and night-time; and
- the severity of the incidents to which Harrogate Fire Station was called-out.

A Member also queried whether NYFRS was able to insist that owners of property, at which automatic fire alarms were located, had CCTV in that property.

**Resolved -**

- (a) That a special, formal, in-person meeting of the Committee be convened to develop its response to the consultation.
- (b) That the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, and the Chief Fire Officer, both be invited to attend.

**10 Committee Work Programme**

Considered: (i) The report of the Principal Democratic Services Officer which invited Members to consider, amend and add to the Committee's Work Programme; and (ii) a suggestion made orally that the Committee might wish to convene a meeting on Thursday 10 November 2022 when Andrew Jones MP might be available for a discussion with the Committee.

During discussion about possible issues for the Work Programme, the following topics were suggested:-

- Members wished to see responsibility for planning and district development control being devolved to area constituency committees.
- Regular updates/briefings on progress of local government reorganisation, including the work of the working groups.
- Update on how the various proposals within the Harrogate Highway Congestion Study were progressing, including active travel initiatives.
- A briefing on how the County-wide update on Beyond Carbon, which was due later in the year, impacted on the Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency area.
- In addition to Zero Carbon Harrogate, other stakeholders within the local communities of Harrogate and Knaresborough and Boroughbridge should be invited.
- Invite the Chief Executive of Harrogate District Hospital or the Chairman of the Board of Governors to provide a briefing on the recovery from the Covid pandemic.
- Invite a representative of the Harrogate Bid to express the organisation's views.
- A briefing on implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (which was part of the Parameters Plan and, in turn, part of the Local Plan).

The Principal Democratic Services Officer undertook to update the Chairman and Vice-Chairman on the implementation of the Committee's decisions.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the Work Programme be approved, subject to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Principal Democratic Services Officer, in liaison, considering and determining the suggestions raised at this meeting, as recorded in the preamble to this Minute.



- (b) That a virtual special meeting of the Committee be convened for Thursday 10 November 2022 at 10am, to be held using Microsoft Teams, for the purpose of having a discussion with Andrew Jones MP and that arrangements be made for the meeting to be live-streamed.
- (c) That a sub group be established to consider the views which Zero Carbon Harrogate presented to this meeting during the item “Public Questions or Questions”, comprising Councillor Arnold Warneken to chair, and Councillors Paul Haslam, Mike Schofield and Pat Marsh, together with relevant officers of the County Council. The sub group shall meet informally in private and report to future meetings of the Committee.
- (d) That the change of start time of the Committee’s meeting on Thursday 12 January 2023, to 3.00pm, be noted.

**11 Next Meeting**

**Resolved –**

That the next ordinary meeting of the Committee, scheduled for Thursday 15 September 2022 at 10am, be held in the Council Chamber at Harrogate Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm.