

North Yorkshire County Council

Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 24th March, 2023 commencing at 10.30 am.

County Councillor Clive Pearson in the Chair plus County Councillors David Chance, Liz Colling, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Rich Maw, Heather Phillips, Tony Randerson, John Ritchie, Subash Sharma, Roberta Swiers, Phil Trumper and Neil Swannick.

In attendance: County Councillor George Jabbour.

Officers present: Will Baines, Andrew Clarke, Marie-Ann Jackson, John Lee, Richard Marr, Amanda Newbold, Graham North, Alex Richards (Scarborough BC)

Other Attendees: Sir Robert Goodwill MP

Terri-Anne Jones and Dr Janet MacDonald

Apologies: County Councillors Derek Bastiman and Eric Broadbent.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

1 Introductions & Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Eric Broadbent and Derek Bastiman.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2022

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2022, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3 Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Liz Colling declared an interest in agenda items 5 and 6 (Update on North Yorkshire Town Deal Fund & Levelling Up Fund and the Update on North Yorkshire Cyber Security Network) as the Scarborough Borough Council Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth.

County Councillor Tony Randerson declared an interest in agenda item 5 (Update on North Yorkshire Town Deal Fund & Levelling Up Fund) as the Scarborough Borough Council Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.

County Councillor Phil Trumper declared an interest in agenda item 8 (Receipt of Petition 'Save Eskdale School') as he had been lobbied on the matter.

County Councillor David Chance declared an interest in agenda item 8 (Receipt of Petition 'Save Eskdale School') as he is an Executive member and will be a future decision maker on the amalgamation proposals. He recused himself from the debate on this item.

4 Public Questions & Statements

Question from Mr Andy Jefferson, representing Whitby Community Network

We have a current proposal to close one of the two secondary schools in the Whitby area. Should this proposal be passed that would mean circa 500 children from Whitby east-side having to walk anything up to 30 mins along a very busy road, part of which is 40mph with narrow pavements, and one part (Mayfield Road) with totally inadequate crossings. Even with the current walk to Eskdale school there are significant road safety issues for these same children. With this in mind Whitby Town Council passed a motion back in December 2022 requesting a default 20mph in the Whitby parish. A recent NYCC Scrutiny committee passed a motion requiring 20mph outside all schools and areas of high footfall. The current NYCC 20mph policy is widely seen as a mechanism for not introducing that limit, and no action has thus far been forthcoming from NYCC Transportation and Highways, just more "reviews" and "pilot".

Does your committee consider it acceptable that children's lives be put at risk on a daily basis just to get to an educational establishment, when there is a measure (20mph) that would make it inherently safer, but which is the subject of continual dither from Northallerton? Further to this, can you assure us that action will be forthcoming in the near future, because you do indeed actually value children's safety?

Richard Marr, Highway Area Manager - Areas 3 and 4, responded as follows:

May I first thank Mr Jefferson for his question and seek to assure him that NYCC takes its road safety responsibilities very seriously.

As you will see from the Council's response to the petition at Agenda item 8, the Council is only at the initial stage of consulting on a possible closure, no firm decision has yet been made either way. Nevertheless, following the consultation exercise, I expect there to be further dialogue between Council departments, e.g. in relation to discussing whether any highway improvements are necessary, in order to ensure student safety remains a top priority.

More widely, Members may recall that a revised 20mph Speed Limit Policy was introduced in January 2022, following its approval by the Executive. The positive changes, which highlight the importance of place and community and the role that a reduced speed limit has in improving road safety as well as achieving these broader ambitions, represent a demonstrable step forward in how requests for 20mph speed limits are now considered.

Moreover, the Council is currently undertaking a review of the 20mph Speed Limit Policy, in part to see how well it has been embedded over the last twelve months or so, but in addition, to look at what further improvements can potentially be made. As part of that review, the Council is also considering how it should deal with area wide or default 20mph speed limit requests, which are beyond the scope of the existing Policy.

5 Update on North Yorkshire Town Deal Fund and Levelling Up Bid

Considered – A presentation from Alex Richards, Head of Economic Development, Scarborough Borough Council, updating the committee on the progress made on the Scarborough and Whitby Towns Deal projects.

Mr Richards went through each of the projects listed below, giving an overview of progress and next steps.

Scarborough

- Green Construction Skills Village
- Fablab+
- Improving Scarborough Cricket Club
- Scarborough Fair
- Scarborough Harbour West Pier
- Scarborough Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure (Cinder Track Improvements)
- Scarborough Nature Tourism (Wild Eye)
- Scarborough Station Gateway

Whitby

- Broomfields Carbon Neutral Village
- Eastside Community Hub
- Old Town Hall and Market Place
- Harbourside public realm improvements and pedestrianisation of Whitby swing bridge
- Wayfinding and Gamification
- Whitby Maritime Training Hub

Following the presentation, questions from members concerned whether a deadline existed to spend the money awarded to all of the different projects and then moved on to the recent unsuccessful bid to the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 from the Borough Council. In response, whilst disappointing, it was noted that the LUF Round 2 decision has no impact on the delivery of the Towns Fund programme, in particular the Station Gateway public realm project, which continues to make good progress, and the Fab Lab project, that can be delivered within existing budgets.

However, the funding rejection does impact on the ability to deliver Pavilion House refurbishment, redevelopment of the Comet building and delivery of the Transport Hub and railway station refurbishment. Ahead of a potential Round 3 window, the recommendation of the Scarborough Town Deal Board was to explore alternative funding options whilst concurrently developing Plan B proposals for FabLab to be located in the existing Comet building, with a target for resolution of January 2024 and requiring North Yorkshire Council agreement.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

6 Update on North Yorkshire Cyber Security Network

Considered – A presentation by Alex Richards, Head of Economic Development, Scarborough Borough Council, to update the committee on the work of the North Yorkshire Cyber Security Network within the constituency.

As part of the presentation, the threats and challenges associated with cyber security were outlined, with cyber crime costing the UK economy approximately £27billion per annum. The UK government National Cyber Strategy 2022 outlined plans to develop a more digitally secure and resilient nation, with opportunity more evenly spread across the country.

In setting up a cyber security network for North Yorkshire, it is hoped to make Scarborough a cyber safe and secure place to live and work, by raising awareness of online harms and cyber best practice, addressing the skills gap in digital tech and cyber security through specialist SMEs and making the local area a centre of excellence for Operating Technology security.

The cyber security network has been set up initially in Scarborough with cross sector representation, including representation from Anglo American, CU Scarborough, Plexal Limited and consulting with GCHQ Scarborough. A pilot programme has been running, including 'Stay Safe Online' workshops, work placements and SME business support through the 'Cyber Essentials' accreditation. Next steps are to develop a roadmap and business case for phase 2 and taking into account feedback received from the pilot scheme.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

7 Attendance of MP Robert Goodwill

The Chair welcomed Sir Robert Goodwill MP to the meeting.

In providing an overview to the committee of some of his areas of work, concerns and priorities, the MP welcomed the smooth changeover to date across to the new unitary authority and the creation of North Yorkshire Council from 1 April 2023. He noted the current second round of public consultation ongoing on the draft recommendations of the community governance arrangements for Scarborough Town, and expressed his view that including parishes on the conurbation in addition to those already included in the consultation proposals would make any new body created a stronger one.

Mr Goodwill referenced the recent visit of Dehenna Davison MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Levelling Up to see the progress of Towns Fund projects within the borough, and subsequent discussions he had held on the Comet Corner building project as part of the Levelling Up Fund submission.

Following this introduction, issues raised by elected members included:

- The reduction in catches of lobster and crab reported by local fishermen in the area following the recent shellfish mortality incident off the north east coast.
- Concern regarding the response of DEFRA to calls for investigating the shellfish mortality incident further and the effect of this on the future fishing fleet in the local area
- Whether financial compensation from the government should be given to local fishermen in the same way as farmers were compensated following the foot and mouth cull for disease control purposes back in 2001.
- A call for government funding to support local leisure centres and swimming pools as they continue to recover from the pandemic.
- Support for the adoption of the Middle Deepdale development in Eastfield, to rectify the extra financial burden that residents face to the private housing developers.
- Feedback received about the cancellation of appointments at Scarborough Hospital due to the lack of consultants.
- The low response rate to the first round of public consultation on whether to create a town council in Scarborough and whether this is enough of a mandate to go ahead with the proposals.

The Chair thanked Sir Robert Goodwill MP for his attendance and his responses to members questions.

8 Petition re Eskdale School

The petition entitled "Save Eskdale School" was brought before the Area Constituency

Committee in accordance with the County Council's Petitions Scheme.

The petition, containing 2,468 signatures, was presented at the meeting by Terri-Anne Jones, who spoke for 5 minutes.

Officers from the Children and Young People's Directorate, John Lee and Amanda Newbold then answered members questions raised by the petition and provided some background information around the amalgamation proposal.

Members debated the petition. Points raised during the debate were as follows:

- A member felt that the ACC should be supportive of the concerns expressed as part of the petition.
- The increasing number of small schools closing, particularly in rural areas, was highlighted.
- The reasons behind the amalgamation proposals were discussed and extent of the additional support that could be offered by the County Council.
- It was noted that the Governing Board of the Whitby Secondary Partnership had asked the County Council to commence the consultation process to amend the structure of the Whitby Secondary Partnership.
- An education provision review for Whitby was a suggestion put forward by a member.

After 15 minutes of debate, County Councillor Neil Swannick put forward the following response to the petition:

'If the statutory organisation proposals for amalgamation of Caedmon College & Eskdale School & technical closure of Eskdale school consultation results in amalgamation, the Scarborough & Whitby Area Constituency Committee recommends to the Executive that the Local Authority will allocate funding to put in place support measures, including financial support for such extra costs as uniforms, to assist parents and students during the transition.'

This petition response was approved.

Resolved –

If the statutory organisation proposals for amalgamation of Caedmon College & Eskdale School & technical closure of Eskdale school consultation results in amalgamation, the Scarborough & Whitby Area Constituency Committee recommends to the Executive that the Local Authority will allocate funding to put in place support measures, including financial support for such extra costs as uniforms, to assist parents and students during the transition.

9 Petition re 840 Bus from Leeds to Whitby

The petition entitled "Save the 840 Bus to Whitby from Leeds" was brought before the Area Constituency Committee in accordance with the County Council's Petitions Scheme.

The petition, containing 621 signatures, was presented at the meeting by Dr Janet MacDonald, who spoke for 5 minutes.

Andrew Clarke, Public and Community Transport Manager, then answered members questions raised by the petition and provided some background information.

Members debated the petition. Points raised during the debate were as follows:

- The need for affordable public transport to deliver improved connectivity and infrastructure in the constituency.
- In order to continue, bus services require passenger numbers to increase, otherwise vital service routes would be lost.
- The £2 bus fare cap was welcomed as a way of making bus travel affordable for passengers.
- The 840 service was an important service that had seen passenger numbers increase recently and should be supported by North Yorkshire County Council.

After 15 minutes of debate, it was:

Resolved –

That the petition statement be supported, with a letter to be written to the Chair of the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in support of the 840 bus service to be considered as part of the consideration of a future report on Rural Bus Services.

10 Transport Connectivity Update

Considered – A report of the Strategy and Performance Officer (Rail) to update members on transport connectivity in and around Scarborough and Whitby.

- A complete redevelopment of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is set to be undertaken. The new LTP will set out the plans and strategies for maintaining and improving all aspects of the transport system over a set period of time.
- One of the priority corridors in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Scarborough has funding for delivery through the Town Deal Fund, with a plan for Whitby to be created in 2023/24.
- The government are currently running a £2 bus fare cap scheme, which is being offered on all local bus routes in the county to help encourage people to use the bus.
- Industrial action together with on-going impacts of COVID have caused delays to the training of new drivers (takes around 18 months) and learning new routes, alongside some major infrastructure failures has led to poor performance and cancellations, particularly for services run by Transpennine Express (TPE).
- The East Coast Main Line timetable is likely to be significantly changed in the next few years to take advantage of the technology advancements both to the trains and the signalling.
- There are plans to increase frequency of the Scarborough to York line to every half an hour on the route from the next winter timetable. Initially these are planned to run in the leisure peaks on Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays. It is hoped that this will be the start of the process to move towards a half hourly service frequency between Scarborough, Seamer, Malton and York.
- Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bids for Seamer and Malton train stations have been unsuccessful.
- The increased frequencies and changes to the TPE timetable has improved connections to/from the Yorkshire Coast Line to Hull at Seamer. With the increase in staycations and leisure travel, there has been increased use of the line, with both Filey and Hunmanby stations making the fastest recovery post pandemic.
- On the A64, results of the public consultation were published in December 2022.

Overall, respondents felt there is a need for improvements to the A64 Hopgrove Junction. They felt the options would, on the whole, have a positive impact on the junction, meet the scheme objectives and would help facilitate and support economic growth in the area.

There followed a discussion, the key points of which are as summarised below:

- What is the recovery plan proposed for Transpennine Express to improve performance and reliability?
- Is a Malton to Pickering railway line planned?
- Whether the speed of train driver training could be accelerated to assist with the reliability issues Transpennine Express are experiencing?
- The need for major investment in transport infrastructure to and from the Yorkshire coast.
- Ongoing noise and disruption issues from the Nova 3 train servicing depot on Seamer Road, Scarborough.
- A member commented on the frequent reliability issues faced by passengers when travelling by train from the East Coast across to Leeds and Manchester. Improvement in the service was felt to be desperately needed.

Resolved – That Members note the report.

11 Stronger Communities Annual Report

Considered – Report of the Head of Stronger Communities to provide Members with an update on the Stronger Communities Programme and an overview of progress made in the Scarborough and Whitby Constituency area.

The key points are as summarised below:

- The work of the Community Support Organisations (CSO) has shifted focus in 2022/23, moving from pandemic response to recovery. Efforts have been on building confidence and independence for those residents the CSO supports, as well as helping to remove some of the dependencies that emerged during the pandemic.
- The CSOs have been retained until the end of March 2023; continuing to work in partnership with NYCC to act as a place based single point of contact for locally based support, in collaboration with their volunteers, partners and networks.
- £173,200 has been invested in the CSO infrastructure in the borough of Scarborough in 2022/23.
- The development of a Community Anchor Organisation network across North Yorkshire has been progressed. This is building on the successful CSO model, and further exploring the role that locally rooted, place based organisations can play in building resilience in communities
- In February 2023, as part of its established 'Achieve Together' Investment Programme, Stronger Communities opened a new opportunity to establish a Community Anchor model for North Yorkshire. Grants of £15,000 a year (for up to 3 years) will be made available from April 2023 for place rooted organisations, based in principal service towns or centres, who are able to serve a wider hinterland.
- Several organisations, including Sparks Project, the Rainbow Centre and Gallows Close, are working with Stronger Communities looking at how they develop their offer, streamline their practices, become more sustainable and are able to evidence to a variety of stakeholders and funders the difference that they make to their communities.

There followed a discussion, the key points of which are as summarised below:

- The importance of the holiday activities and food programme for free school meal eligible children, in particular during the cost of living crisis.
- The key work of the CSOs in the local community during the pandemic and coming out of it during the cost of living crisis
- The work of the Early Intervention Team in supporting community access to baby weigh clinics

Resolved – That the contents of the report be noted.

12 Scarborough & Whitby Area Constituency Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-24

Considered -

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) asking Members to review the Work Programme, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the area.

Suggestions put forward included:

- The work of the Healthy Child Programme and Healthy Start vouchers
- The progress of economic regeneration schemes in the constituency
- A request to set up a SEND provision in Scarborough task and finish group be set up
- Future homelessness service provision

Resolved - That the Democracy Officer update the work programme to reflect the suggestions made during the meeting and liaise with the supporting officer for the Children and Families O&S Committee on the task and finish group suggestion.

13 Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 1.45 pm.