



Agenda

- Meeting:** Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee
- To:** Councillors Caroline Goodrick (Vice-Chair), Keane Duncan, Lindsay Burr MBE, Gareth Dadd, Janet Sanderson, Greg White, Joy Andrews, Alyson Baker, Sam Cross, Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, George Jabbour, Nigel Knapton (Chair), Steve Mason, Malcolm Taylor, Dave Whitfield and Annabel Wilkinson.
- Date:** Friday, 31st March, 2023
- Time:** 10.00 am
- Venue:** The Evron Centre, 1a John Street, Filey, YO14 9DW

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Business

1. **Welcome by the Chair - Apologies, Introductions and Updates**
2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd February 2023** (Pages 3 - 18)
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Public Questions or Statements**

Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they have given notice and provided the text to Stephen Loach of Democratic Services (*contact details below*) no later than midday on Tuesday 28th March 2023 Each speaker should limit themselves to 3 minutes on any item. Members of the public who have given notice will be invited to speak:

 - at this point in the meeting if their questions/statements relate to matters which are not otherwise on the Agenda (subject to an overall time limit of 30 minutes);
 - when the relevant Agenda item is being considered if they wish to speak on a matter which is on the Agenda for this meeting (unless, for the orderly operation of the meeting the Chair deems it appropriate that all questions are provided at this time).

If you are exercising your right to speak at this meeting, but do not wish to be recorded,

please inform the Chairman who will instruct those taking a recording to cease whilst you speak.

5. **Stronger Communities Update - Report of the Stronger Communities Delivery Managers** (Pages 19 - 28)
6. **Services in local towns and villages - Discussion** (Pages 29 - 62)
7. **Rural policing update - Report of North Yorkshire Police** (Pages 63 - 84)
8. **Work Programme** (Pages 85 - 90)
9. **Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.**

Contact Details

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Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall
Northallerton

23 March 2023

North Yorkshire County Council

Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2023, commencing at 10am – held Ryedale House, Malton

Present:-

Members: County Councillors Nigel Knapton (Chair) Joy Andrews, Alyson Baker, Lindsay Burr MBE, Sam Cross, Gareth Dadd, Michelle Donohue-Moncrief, Keane Duncan, George Jabbour, Steve Mason, Janet Sanderson, Malcolm Taylor, Gregg White and Dave Whitfield.

NYCC Officers: Steve Loach (Democratic Services), Mark Kibblewhite (Senior Policy Officer – Economic Growth), Andrew Dixon (Strategic Planning Manager – Education and Skills), Howard Emmett (Assistant Director, Strategic Resources), Amanda Newbold (Assistant Director, Education and Skills) Jane Le Sage – (Assistant Director, Inclusion), Mark Ashton (Strategic Planning Officer, Education and Skills), Matt George (Strategic Planning Officer, Education and Skills), Tim Coyne (Improvement Manager, Highways and Transportation) and Stuart Grimston (Improvement Manager, Highways and Transportation).

Apologies - County Councillors Caroline Goodrick and Annabel Wilkinson.

There were 15 members of the public present.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

22. Minutes

Resolved

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2022, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

23. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24. Public Questions and Statements

Questions from Andy Wilson, Thirsk

With reference to the drainage work on York Road, Thirsk, and Sowerby flats, please will NYCC explain why:

1. it failed to answer parts of the question to the Cabinet, especially the part which asked why it proceeded to act without awareness of the relevant Protected Species information;
2. how the reply given at the Cabinet Executive and the information provided by FoI shows compliance with
 - a) its statutory duty towards Biodiversity;

b) Protected Species legislation and guidance (which require a survey if work will have impacts on the habitats of these species and ban actions which disturb or destroy their habitat) - given that: no data, survey, or other sign of awareness or interest was present with regard to the habitats and Protected Species on the site and in the vicinity of the work carried out and reliance was placed purely on the supposed absence of protected sites;

3. why it is apparently unaware of Protected Species and obvious examples of their protected habitats in the area (can it now name those present?);

4. why it is apparently unaware that its operations took place partly in a SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation);

5. why it funded additional work damaging to wildlife adjacent to the Beck at the behest of a land manager which Hambleton District Council has classified as 'agricultural'; and why this element of the question to Cabinet was not responded to;

6. why the aftercare work outside the compound was done in a way which degraded the ecological value of the area;

7. whether there is any physical, financial, managerial, legal or other connection between any of the work on York Road and the development of the Oakfield Lorry Park;

8. Why were the five or more conversations with private landowners/agents held in connection with the York Road drainage scheme not recorded in any way;

9. What was the status of the land to the west of York Road as a designated green corridor ignored... and will it agree to protect Cod Beck better in future?

County Councillor Keane Duncan, the Executive member whose Portfolio covers Highways issues, responded to the questions, outlining the following:-

In order to reply to this question fully, I have consulted with Stuart Grimston, the Improvement Manager at the Area 2 Highways office in Thirsk, who shared the following information:

The scheme referred to by Mr Wilson is one of the schemes in the 22/23 capital programme.

The York Road Drainage scheme is a maintenance scheme currently being carried out to replace/renew the existing highway drainage between the A19/A168 interchange and White Mare roundabout, along the A170 in Thirsk, much of which was/is currently "beyond repair".

The requirement for a drainage scheme was first identified in financial year 16/17, due to ongoing issues with blocked gullies and standing water on York Road – which is a category 2 road, causing disruption – and road safety issues. Investigations since then, including CCTV surveys, have proved that much of the existing system had failed (collapsed etc), or was in a very poor state of repair. The standing water eventually dissipates, but it is feared that some of this water is likely to be undermining the foundation of the carriageway pavement, with the associated risks of voids (sinkholes) – and contributing to the poor surface condition. York Road is in need of a resurfacing scheme; however, we cannot implement such a scheme without first renewing the drainage assets.

In response to Mr Wilson's latest question, the key point to make is that local NYCC Highways Officers – as well as staff from WSP (our partner consulting engineers responsible for designing – and project managing - this scheme) - were unaware of the ecological status of the land located immediately to either side of the Cod Beck, which is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). For the benefit of others, SINC is a non-statutory designation which does not engage the Habitats Regulations, and the need for appropriate assessment. Likewise, Mr Wilson has also referred to the status of Sowerby Flatts as a 'designated green corridor', which is not a formal nature conservation designation. Given the aforementioned, NYCC are not guilty of any wrongdoing, although would like to take this opportunity to formally

apologise for this oversight on behalf of the officers/staff who have been involved with this scheme to date. In hindsight, had the status of the SINC been identified prior to - or during – phase 1 of the works, NYCC Highways would have sought specialist advice from an Ecologist.

Since identifying this issue NYCC's Highways officers have engaged with Julia Casterton, NYCC's Principal Ecologist, in order to establish what the best way forwards is. In the future NYCC Highways will be working closely with the ecologists to minimise any potential disturbance or damage to flora and fauna by implementing any measures that can realistically be implemented, e.g. using the most suitable seed mix to re-instate vegetation growth in areas where excavations have scarred the earth. Also, in terms of the delivery of phase 2 of the scheme (between Thirsk Industrial Park and the Ingramgate/Long Street/Sutton Road roundabout), an Ecologist has already been to the site to make an assessment of any measures required during the works to reduce or minimise the impact on any flora and fauna. Furthermore, NYCC Highways are also putting measures in place locally (i.e. staff training) in order to ensure that another incident of this nature does not happen again.

As well as the questions on the environmental/ecological aspects of the scheme, Mr Wilson has also asked why conversations with private land owners and/or agents held in connection with the scheme have not been recorded in any way. The simple answer is that some meetings were held on site, and other conversations were also had via telephone. Agreements were made as to how to progress with various matters, but not all meetings are recorded. This is only generally carried out in formal meetings in an office environment, as and when there is a need. In this situation the actions were clear to all parties, and any e-mails exchanged between NYCC or WSP and private land owners and/or agents have already been provided to Mr Wilson in NYCC's previous responses to his Freedom of Information (Fol) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests.

With regard to the aftercare works to the area currently being used as the site compound, these have not yet commenced – or been completed, as the works are still ongoing. However, works to 'make good' this part of the field will be undertaken upon completion of the scheme.

Finally, NYCC can confirm that there is absolutely no connection between the ongoing NYCC Highways drainage work and the Oakfield Lorry Park development. As stated above, and also in previous conversations and correspondence with Mr Wilson, NYCC's drainage maintenance works have been proposed since the 2016/17 financial year but have taken some time to come to fruition due to the requirement for further investigatory works, as well as securing the funding necessary to deliver the project.

Officers now consider that Mr Wilson's questions have been fully answered and addressed in a number of communications including several phone calls, attendance at an Executive Member meeting, an Fol request, and most recently an EIR request. If Mr Wilson remains unsatisfied with the responses that he has received then we would encourage him to progress this matter through the County Council's corporate complaints procedure, details of which can be found on the NYCC website.

The following issue was raised:-

A Member noted that the Community Framework recognised a legal responsibility for the protection of species and asked what action was being taken to collect appropriate data to ensure that disturbed habitat areas were returned to their original status. Councillor Duncan stated that he would obtain those details and circulate to Members.

Questions from Councillor Steve Shaw – Norton Town Council

1. When the new Beverley link Road is built will the present traffic lights on Scarborough Road/ Beverley Road junction be replaced with a more sensible roundabout configuration?

County Councillor Keane Duncan responded, outlining the following:-

The new link road between Beverley Road and Scarborough Road represents key infrastructure that will provide significant benefits to residents of Norton, Malton and the surrounding area.

It is proposed that the traffic lights at the Westfield Way/Scarborough Road junction will remain in place. Traffic modelling has indicated that even during peak times the junction and signals would continue to operate within capacity with the additional development traffic. However, this situation will continue to be reviewed, with potential for the signals to be upgraded and optimised as required.

2. Will the new Beverly Road link be constructed prior to housing development commencing so traffic congestion can be avoided at as earlier date as possible?

The developer has proposed that no more than 100 dwellings would be occupied before the link road opens. The additional traffic from up to 100 dwellings has been modelled at a number of junctions within Norton and Malton, with most experiencing an increase of less than 3% at the peak hours. The exception is the Beverly Road/Mill Street roundabout which would experience a 6% increase, although the roundabout would still remain with capacity.

I ask these questions because infrastructure development is a critical matter for Malton and Norton and should not be treated as an ad-hoc matter.

Has any progress been made in convincing the Highways Agency to change the A64 junction at Musley Bank to allow Southbound traffic to exit there?

As it stands all southbound traffic whose destination is the southern edge of Malton has to go through Malton to get to its destination. Musley Bank does not allow access for vehicles wishing to head north from this point.

County Councillor Keane Duncan responded, outlining the following:-

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) is committed to working with Department for Transport, National Highways and local partners and stakeholders to ensure the A64 between York and Scarborough is improved and this includes the need for junction upgrades at Malton.

The A64 junction at Musley Bank has limited movements, meaning use of the bypass is restricted and vehicles are unable to travel east on the A64 when exiting Malton from Musley Bank. They are also unable to exit at Musley Bank for Malton when travelling west along the A64.

We have consulted National Highways who unfortunately confirmed funding for improving this junction is not available and it does not represent a priority for them because there is insufficient benefit to the strategic road network to justify the significant investment (estimated to be at least £10m) that would be required.

Given this improvement would be of significant benefit to addressing congestion issues in Malton and Norton, and unlocking future growth, Ryedale District Council and NYCC officers are working together to agree next steps to deliver this and will continue to liaise with National Highways to secure the funding needed.

The following additional issues were raised:-

It was suggested that a roundabout would be the most appropriate solution as this would lessen traffic build-up in an area suffering from high pollution levels. This was disputed and it was emphasised that pollution levels were within EU legal limits. It was further suggested

that any proposals should be resubmitted to determine how they address the Climate Emergency Plan.

New development expected to take place in the area would place an additional strain on the existing road network and it was suggested that further highways development was required to take traffic away from the centre of Malton. It was clarified that the alteration of the road network related to the A64, which would require the involvement of National Highways, and recent discussions with them had concluded that there was no available funding for this currently. The Council would continue to work closely with the Highways Agency and would explore alternative sources of funding and look to utilise CIL, to obtain the improvements to infrastructure required.

Questions from Councillor Di Keal – Ryedale District Council

What progress has been made in the negotiations with the developer of the Norton Lodge housing site in Norton regarding a timeline for a potential new school? Are plans for the new school drawn up and what is the projected cost of the build?

County Councillor Janet Sanderson, the Executive Member whose portfolio covers schools and education, responded as follows:-

In recent years a further form of entry (210 places) was added to Norton Community Primary School partly through the development of a new satellite site at Brooklyn House. This was projected to meet the need for new places arising from existing sites with planning permission within Norton.

The Norton Lodge site, the largest housing site allocated within the Local Plan, includes land for a further school site. NYCC Officers are working with Ryedale District Council colleagues and the developer to secure this land as part of a S106 agreement. This application was submitted in 2021, is still going through the planning process and we are told is not expected to be determined in the near future.

Securing the site means we retain the option to deliver a new school at an appropriate point in the future as and when the need arises. The timescale for the whole development remains uncertain and therefore so does the potential delivery date for a new school. As such, the County Council has not commenced design work at this stage, other than in the broadest terms to agree the site area.

Projecting the future cost of a new school is therefore difficult. The latest official DfE figures from 2021 indicate a cost per place for new build provision in the region to be c.£21k which equates to c.£4.5m for a 210 place school, but of course there has been significant inflationary pressure since then. The construction cost is expected to be funded by a combination of council grants and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, so it is vital that this funding is retained so it is available when needed.

Councillor Di Keal – Ryedale District Council

Discussions have been held in Malton and Norton on possible solutions to traffic congestion and high levels of air pollution in our twin towns since 2016. The Malton and Norton Infrastructure and Connectivity Improvements Study was discussed by Ryedale DC in 2018.

Quote: “Short-term goals include promoting walking and cycling for short journeys and improvements to bus service connectivity. The medium-term goals include a bridge for pedestrians and cyclists to access Malton station from the south, a new car parking strategy for the district and strategy to improve junctions.” –

So from the proposals outlined in the report, to my knowledge the only things we have seen delivered are the Car Park Strategy - by Ryedale DC - and a joint project between RDC and NYCC to reconfigure the traffic lights at Butcher Corner.

A one way trial on Norton Road was scheduled for June 2022 and still hasn't come to fruition and proposed traffic lights on the junctions in Norton are nowhere to be seen.

Meanwhile residents in Malton and Norton continue to face daily traffic queues and in Norton they - motorists, cyclists and pedestrians - continue to negotiate dangerous junctions. -

Q. Please can you confirm that this work is still going to be delivered by NYC and provide a timeline?

County Councillor Keane Duncan responded, outlining the following:-

Combating traffic congestion and promoting sustainable travel in Malton and Norton, and elsewhere, must be a key priority for the new council.

We have already delivered the improved traffic signals at Butcher Corner, funded by NYCC and RDC. Parts of the Car Park Strategy have been delivered, but not all. This was funded by NYCC and RDC. The new council will provide oversight and control of both on and off street parking, which will give much improved coordination to our approach.

We are keen to move forward with the next stages of our traffic plan – a one-way on Norton Road and new signals at the level crossing.

The proposed one-way trial on Norton Road was postponed last year due to the Environment Agency advising us at relatively short notice that they needed to close the road in order to work on maintaining/replacing their underground pumps at this location. The work on the pumps was prioritised given the time of year then and given the risk of flooding to nearby properties should the pumps fail this winter.

The good news is that six months of baseline traffic data is being collected as we speak. The experimental one-way will hopefully be introduced on Norton Road from September 2023 and will run for 6 months, providing a further six months of data while the one-way is in place.

All collected data will be analysed and the traffic modelling assumptions on vehicle movements and air quality can be fine-tuned to allow an informed decision on the way forward proposed.

Can I take this opportunity to thank you for your support for the work we are doing to progress this scheme in your role as a district and town councillor? I think we agree that this scheme is not perfect – no solution can be – but we both wish to see this scheme progressed as action on traffic is much needed. Doing nothing is not an option.

Unfortunately, Malton Town Council has lodged opposition to the scheme progressing. Meanwhile, Malton's County Councillor has not publicly expressed her support or opposition for the scheme. Perhaps, she might like to take the opportunity to do so in this public forum. Unity from Malton and Norton's representatives would help make the very strongest case for further progress.

The following additional issues were raised:-

The current one-way system, alongside the traffic lights, was part of a package of measures being considered to address the situation, and further resources were likely to be introduced as a response to collected data.

A written response would be provided to the questioner in respect the response to the original plan for this location. Details relating to the potential withdrawal of Yorkshire Water funding due to the delays in providing the junction alterations would also be sought and addressed in a written response.

Ian Conlan, Malton – Statement

Mr Conlan and other representatives of the 20s Plenty group, unfurled a banner to demonstrate the stopping distances for a vehicle travelling at 20mph as opposed to a vehicle travelling at 30mph, whilst the following statement was read out:-

"I am a child. I made a mistake

Distance from a driver noticing someone potentially in the path of their vehicle	Driver speed At 30mph	Driver speed At 20mph
0-6 metres	Likely to kill	Likely to injure
6-12 metres	Likely to kill	Likely to hurt
12-23 metres	Likely to seriously injure, less likely to kill	Driver stops without hitting child.

This is Driver 20. This is Driver 30.

Driver 20: "I see a child. I am driving at 20 miles per hour". If I hit in the 1st 6 metres, I am likely to injure the child.

Driver 30: "I see a child. I am driving at 30 miles per hour". If I hit in the 1st 6metres I am likely to kill the child.

At 6 metres, Driver 20: "I have started braking. But I am still doing 20 miles per hour." At 6-12 metres I am likely to hurt the child.

At 6 metres, Driver 30: "I am still thinking about braking. I am doing 30miles per hour."

At 9 metres, Driver 30: "I have started braking. But I am still doing 30 miles per hour.". At 6-12metres I am still likely to kill the child.

At 12 metres: Driver 20: "I was originally doing 20 miles per hour. But have now stopped."

At 12 metres, driver 30: "I was originally doing 30 miles per hour. My current speed is 27 miles per hour. I have hit the child."

At 23 metres, driver 30: "I was originally doing 30 miles per hour. But have now stopped." At 12-23metres I am likely to seriously injure a child. I wish I had been driving at 20mph. I wish the speed limit I was observing was 20. I have hit the child, they are now a number that might lead to a lower speed limit on this street, but a new speed limit here is too late for this child and their family.

You are a councillor. You have a duty of care to the child, and to that poor driver 30 who was lawfully observing the 30 speed limit. Do you agree with me that 10 more people per area, 65 in County, not being hit by a vehicle every year is good for me, you, our families, our community? Do you agree to vote for the 20mph motion, to make all the roads where I live be safer, feel safer?

Say yes to finishing your 20mph review Cllr Duncan, and report on time to get £1M in the 2023/24 budget, £5 each. £5 is the cost of 2 school lunches. Not much to keep me safe.

Say yes to 20mph being normal in my town, and in all towns and villages in the area, to make better places to be. Thank you.

It was noted that a recent meeting of the Harrogate and Knaresborough ACC had agreed to be part of any pilot scheme that would benefit from a 20mph scheme in that area, and the questioner was hoping that the Thirsk and Malton ACC would support a motion later in the meeting for a similar proposal in this area.

It was stated that the issues raised would be taken account of when the agenda item relating to 20s Plenty was discussed later in the meeting.

Statement from Bill Breakell

The 128 serves a significant area of Ryedale, providing the only bus service for over 20 communities, connecting Helmsley, Kirkbymoorside, Pickering, Thornton le Dale and Scarborough. The frequency has reduced significantly over the past decade or so. In winter 2011 the first bus from Helmsley to Scarborough left at 0815, and the last left at 1045. There were 13 buses a day at approximately hourly intervals. Today there are a maximum of 8, but only 5 serving Helmsley. The first bus from Helmsley to Scarborough leaves at 1025, and the last at 1825.

North Yorkshire County Council has reduced support for public transport by a massive amount in that time, (Overall bus service support: NYCC bus subsidy reduction between 2010 and 2017 was the highest in England and Wales – a 78% reduction) and also reduced most joined-up thinking whereby public transport was considered the preferred choice and supported by bus infrastructure such as shelters, and by information provision such as the compilation, publication and distribution of area-wide timetables. Yet it has failed to fund marketing of the 128 despite having over £100,000 in s106 developer contributions to do just that. It also has only recently commenced work on providing the infrastructure of bus boarders and shelters which was agreed many years ago in Kirkbymoorside. This is certainly closing

the door after the horse has bolted as most of the new residents of the Manor Woods development have been settled here for 4 or 5 years and planned their individual transport needs as there was no bus stop, nor promotion of the local bus service. I recently met a new resident (from London) who was shocked that the transport authority had apparently reneged on its proposals. It is therefore vital that the new council reverses these policies and addresses the known benefits of bus access – social, health, educational and employment. It could do this by a creative use of the £100,000 budget to market the 128. This would benefit the whole corridor. It should also put funding into timetabled bus services which offer reliability and capacity to enable people to get to doctors' appointments, to post offices, to shops, to school, to leisure facilities and just to avoid social isolation and improve mental health. It is also important to provide the low cost infrastructure of bus boarders and bus shelters to give some safety and comfort to those awaiting a bus. And the new council should learn from other authorities who provide accessible information for would-be passengers. Finally, every road scheme should start with an audit of how it can improve things for pedestrians, for cyclists and for public transport users.

It was stated that the issues raised would be taken account of when the agenda item relating to local bus services was discussed later in the meeting.

The following additional issues were raised:-

The new Council should utilise the powers provided by the Bus Services Act to ensure that public transport is more usable and operates for the benefit of local communities.

The issue raised in relation to the location of venues for ACC meetings was acknowledged and it was stated that although efforts had been made to ensure that these took place in the major towns in the Constituency area, additional care would be taken to ensure the venues could be accessed at appropriate times, where possible, by public transport.

25. Schools, educational attainment and finance

Considered –

The report of the Corporate Director, Children and Young Peoples Services, outlining the following:-

- Local educational landscape
- Summary of schools' status – December 2022
- School standards
- School Ofsted judgements
- Uneven impact of the pandemic on 2021/22 performance data
- Attainment overall
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)
- Key Stages 2 and 4
- Not in education, employment or training
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions
- Suspension incidents
- Permanent exclusions
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities
- Targeted Mainstream Provision- Reshaping of SEN Provision in Thirsk & Malton over the 2020/21 Academic Year
- SEN Statistics for Constituency Area
- Elective Home Education
- School Finance
- 2021/2022 School Revenue Balances
- School Budget Projections - Based on 2022/23 Start budgets
- School Finance and Funding Issues
- Local Authority Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty

- Schools Financial Position – Thirsk & Malton
- Planning school places
- School sustainability
- Collaborative working
- Pupil rolls – current and future
- Planning Areas and forecast surplus/shortfall school places

Resolved –

That Officers be thanked for the report the contents of which be noted.

26. North Yorkshire Cultural Framework

Considered –

A report and presentation from Mark Kibblewhite - Senior Policy Officer (Economic Growth) on the development of a cultural Framework for North Yorkshire.

The report outlined the following:-

- Background and Development of the Framework
- Key issues and opportunities for culture
- A Strategic Framework
- Key cultural development projects in North Yorkshire

Mr Kibblewhite stated that the development of the Framework was ongoing , whilst supporting existing cultural strategies.

Funding from the Arts Council, Government and supplementary funding from various initiatives specific to North Yorkshire was assisting existing projects and enabling developments to be undertaken. The Framework was seen as a stepping stone to an enhanced cultural platform.

Following on from the decision to reorganise Local Government in North Yorkshire it was considered appropriate that the Cultural Strategy should also be redeveloped to reflect strategies across North Yorkshire, with the existing strategy utilised as a basis to move forward from. Devolution agreements had the potential to provide additional funding which would assist in developing a co-ordinated approach, across North Yorkshire, to raise the status of the portfolio and improve the cultural offer across the board.

Members outlined the following:-

- It was asked whether the framework would require fundamental changes as a result of changing habits following the pandemic. In response it was stated that the Government had provided a great deal of financial support to the cultural sector to try and assist the effects of the pandemic, however, at this stage, it was not known how people's habits would have changed. COVID restrictions were gradually being removed and it would be determined whether people would return to traditional cultural events as things progressed. It was possible that local events would become more popular than those further afield.
- A Member asked how the cultural framework was being developed to address climate change issues. In response it was noted that the development of the strategy aimed to provide facilities at a local level to negate the need for travel, where possible. In terms of addressing climate change it was difficult to determine how the framework would support action against this, but action would be undertaken to ensure developments took account of this matter.
- A Member highlighted the 2019 Yorkshire Coast bid which was discontinued by Scarborough Borough Council. He stated that the delivery of a cultural offer on the coast was essential to the viability of that area and asked how the strategy was addressing that. In response it was noted that community networks would be fed into the structures of the new Authority to ensure

that the key local organisations were utilised to develop the offer on the coast. Scarborough currently had the Spa and the Stephen Joseph Theatre, and the aim was to engage better with local communities, to enhance the offer from those facilities and build on that.

- Members welcomed the report which was considered to contain a tremendous amount of useful information and thanked those involved for the work carried out.

Resolved –

That the report be noted.

27. NHS Services - Details and Statistics on provision in Constituency Area

The details and statistics requested at the previous meeting to determine how to respond to the issues raised in relation to provision of GP, dental and ambulance services.

Local dentist – Mark Green – had been invited to take part in the meeting but, unfortunately, was unable to attend due to other commitments, however, he was still keen to discuss issues that arise in relation to Dentistry, with Members at a subsequent meeting.

A Member noted that the Scrutiny of Health Committee were preparing a report for Parliament in relation to the provision of health and social care services in North Yorkshire, and the ACC had been invited to participate in a consultation that would provide the details for the report. He encouraged Members of the Committee to take part in the consultation process. It was suggested that the final report could then be submitted to the ACC for further analysis.

Resolved that the details and statistics provided be noted at this stage.

28. National Highways – update on maintenance and improvement activity

Considered -

A report by National Highways which included updates on maintenance and improvement activity in the Constituency area. No officer from National Highways was available to attend the meeting.

Members welcomed the update.

A Member referred to the helpful information now being circulated to Members in respect of roadworks taking place in the Area 4 highways area, and neighbouring areas, which he had found extremely helpful.

Resolved –

That the report be noted.

29. Local Bus Services - Service 128, Helmsley to Scarborough

County Councillor Joy Andrews requested that the 128 bus service that operates between Helmsley and Scarborough along the A170 be considered at this meeting.

She highlighted how the service had been operating for decades but over the years the frequency had decreased, with it now operating a limited service every two hours, however, this is still a vital service to residents. There has been talk about it ceasing altogether which would be a travesty.

She also raised concerns regarding the continued service of the 840 Malton to Whitby service

An earlier public question had also referred to this matter and would be taken account during consideration of this item.

County Councillor Duncan, the Executive Member whose portfolio includes passenger transport outlined the following:-

Bus Service operators were currently under significant pressure with staff shortages, rising costs and decreasing passengers, which was reflected in bus service alterations throughout the County. The subsidy available from the County Council for bus services had been further reduced and was fully committed. The 128 service was operated on a commercial basis and was subject to the same pressures as outlined above. Passenger transport officers had worked closely with the provider to establish the new timetables and no further alterations to the service were expected in the short term.

In relation to Service 840 it was noted that there had been no decision on the provision of the service currently. A subsidy was being sought to provide a solution to enable the service to continue.

A bid had been made to the Government for additional funding to support bus services, however, this had been unsuccessful. Work continued with the bus operators, therefore, to preserve service, where possible, and to find alternative options for the public where services are removed. The Local Transport Plan was also being developed to take account of public priorities. It was likely that the devolution agreement between York and North Yorkshire would generate additional funding that could be utilised to assist passenger transport provision in May 2024, but, in the interim, services would require as much support as was available to the Councils.

Passenger Transport Services had also responded to County Councillor Andrew's question, stating the following:-

Bus services in North Yorkshire are facing significant pressure due to reduced passenger numbers following the pandemic, increasing costs and staff shortages. This is an unprecedented situation affecting the whole country with many bus routes seeing a reduction in service or at risk of withdrawal. The Department for Transport has been providing funding to help bus companies and local authorities ensure essential services continue to operate but this is due to end in March 2023. The council also uses £1.6m each year to support bus services that are not commercially viable but this budget is fully committed.

Service 128 is a commercially operated route which runs from Scarborough to Helmsley and is one of over 70 routes in the county that have seen passenger numbers fall and costs rise to the point where it wasn't viable to continue at the previous frequency of timetable. Officers have worked with East Yorkshire Motors Services to put in place a new timetable that retains regular journeys six days a week but also reduces costs by operating at a 2 hourly frequency. While the situation is still very challenging, the bus company haven't indicated that further changes will be needed to the timetable and provided passengers keep supporting it we expect the service to continue running for the foreseeable future.

County Councillor Andrews welcomed the responses provided. She emphasised that North Yorkshire had a substantial amount of very rural areas and the loss of bus services left people feeling isolated. She considered it unthinkable that the 128 service could be lost, and emphasised that connectivity and environmental impact issues would need to be addressed should the service cease. There was also a risk to jobs as a number of people would be unable to access their place of work should the service be discontinued. She noted that a 3000 name signature had been created to prevent the service being cut, but acknowledged that people needed to use the service to ensure it was viable, and an advertising campaign was taking place in relation to that.

Members raised the following:-

- Bus Service cuts were not limited to rural areas with many urban areas also affected.

- The public have highlighted that they see public transport, therefore, external funding and locality budget can be directed towards this provision. This approach had enabled the Helmsley Hopper Community Transport Service to be developed, enabling people to access local services and other transport services via this on demand service.
- The 128 service was underused currently and every effort had to be made to get more people using the service to ensure it was viable and could continue to operate.
- The timetable changes for the 128 service had benefitted some local communities as this had provided a more frequent bus service to some of the smaller locations.
- A Member emphasised that local Community Transport, whilst welcome to the area it served, was not operated at the same level of service as the commercially operated services. He also noted that changes to the timetable had resulted in people not being able to access work, which in turn had led to less people using the service. He suggested that the timetable should better reflect the needs of local communities to improve usage. Members agreed that this would assist bus usage in the local area.
- Bus service provision was currently a national problem and cuts to services, coupled with re-timetabling had led to some local communities no longer receiving any bus service. There appeared to be a national desire to assist train services to operate effectively but not for bus services. It was suggested that additional support and funding from central Government was required as bus services are strategically important to the viability of local communities.
- County Councillor Duncan acknowledged that the issues of connectivity and timetabling are important to the delivery of effective bus services. There was a need to invest to maintain services, however, it had to be recognised that long term sustainability was a key to this as it was unfair to place that burden on tax payers who were not using those services. He emphasised, therefore, that a greater use of bus services was the major factor in keeping bus services running.

Members discussed the recent failure of Levelling Up bids for improvements at Thirsk and Malton Rail Stations. A Member stated that there was a great amount of disappointment that the Thirsk improvements had been turned down, particularly as these, in the main, related to accessibility for disabled people. It was noted that the MP had been very disappointed with the outcome of the bids and efforts were now underway to deliver the projects through alternative funding sources. It was noted that there had been a significant number of bids for limited funding, and despite the disappointment of the failed bids, these were likely to be re-evaluated and resubmitted into the process for Round 3 of the Levelling Up Fund process. A Member emphasised the need to ensure that there was a thorough understanding of how these bids could be successful before they were resubmitted, otherwise the time and resources required for such bids would be wasted. Members agreed that clarity on how bids could be successful was important for any future bids. A Member emphasised that the Thirsk bid had related to disabled access and hoped that Round 3 of the bidding took a sensible perspective of the issues involved. Members agreed that further efforts should be made to ensure that both the Thirsk and Malton rail station plans were followed through to development.

Resolved –

That the issues raised in relation to both bus and rail services be noted.

30. Motion to Area Constituency Committee – 20 MPH Speed Limits

The following Motion was Proposed by County Councillor Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff and seconded by County Councillor Steve Mason:-

The Thirsk and Malton ACC wishes the executive to be advised that we would like to be included in the proposed pilot scheme as detailed in the proposal below approved by Harrogate and Knaresborough ACC

“The Executive be advised that the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee wishes a 20mph speed limit to be piloted throughout the area towns and villages in the constituency where a benefit has been identified and that the Transport, Environment, Overview scrutiny Committee when it considers the County Council’s 20mph speed limit and zone policy on 19th January 2023 to consider appropriate amendments to the existing policy to enable the pilot to be introduced.”

County Councillor Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff moved the motion outlining the following:-

- She set out the context of the motion, outlining that this was first put forward to be considered at the meetings that had been cancelled prior to the announcement by the Executive Member that a review of the implications of the “20s Plenty” initiative was to take place, following consideration of the matter at Scrutiny. Since then, the issue had been debated at a number of other ACCs, with various recommendations coming forward.
- She emphasised that the motion was not dependent on the other discussions that had been held but resulted from genuine concerns raised in local communities throughout the Constituency area on how to manage speeding traffic. She noted that the request for the motion came from local residents and not from the “20s Plenty” campaign group.
- The issue had been discussed with Area Highways on previous occasions but there had been no move to lower the speed below 30mph, despite requests, through local towns and villages, as monitoring had not resulted in speed limits being breached. Despite this many people still felt local roads were unsafe, hence the call for a 20mph restriction.
- She considered that this provided an opportunity for Scrutiny and the ACCs to show how they were complementary to the democratic process in North Yorkshire rather than being contradictory.
- She emphasised the need to consider the holistic aspect of this issue, and how best to manage the concerns of local residents effectively. Those concerns were genuine and related to speeding traffic passing through local communities with 90% of roads unaffected by the proposal. This was not an anti-car issue but a response to those genuine concerns.

County Councillor Steve Mason seconded the motion and outlined the following:-

- He considered that rejecting the motion would be contradictory to the TE&E Scrutiny Committee and for the ACCs that had voted to undertake a pilot scheme within their Constituency areas.
- A lot had been stated during the LGR process about the local delivery of services and he noted that there was a strong feeling in local communities within the Constituency area that 20mph zones would be beneficial.
- He considered the speed monitoring recording to be measured inappropriately with the mean speed registered and suggested that a modal measurement would be more appropriate.
- He noted that there were other benefits related to the reduction of speed through local communities which were set out in a 10 point welfare plan.
- He was aware of two villages that were willing to take part in a trial of the 20 mph limit through their communities.
- He asked that the Executive report on the review of the possible 20 mph limit for appropriate locations be provided to Members as soon as possible.
- He urged Members to support the motion.

Members outlined the following in respect of the motion:-

- The current policy is not fit for purpose as local residents do not feel safe with the current speed limits. The current enforcement of speed limits was not effective as it was delivered on an ad-hoc basis and was not consistent. Campaigns for the 20mph

limit had been taking place for a number of years, with a view that reducing the speed of traffic would be advantageous to all road users and pedestrians. Agreeing to the motion would send out the message that the Council was willing to work with people to address issues, despite differences of opinion.

- It was suggested that Members' locality budgets could be utilised to assist the lowering of traffic speeds, with an example given of a VAR sign provided near to a school in Filey. The Member stated that he would prefer to see the report of the Executive and undertake further engagement with the public before making a decision on this issue. He considered that the subject of speeding related to perceptions and was aware of a number of people in local communities who were against the imposition of a 20mph limit.
- The Executive Member for Highways, County Councillor Keane Duncan acknowledged the valid issues raised by Members and clarified that the aim of "20s Plenty" was not for a default 20mph limit throughout North Yorkshire, but for a limit to be implemented in Towns and Villages where this would be beneficial, and that this was the position of the resolutions passed at other ACCs, with targeted pilot projects requested. An important caveat to the whole discussion is that any 20mph limits would be placed where they were needed and would be of benefit to the local community, and therefore based on consultation and agreement with those communities. Going forward Councillors need to see the work taking place in relation to this issue and recognise its complexity, leading for the need to take time to ensure that this can be implemented with the greatest effectiveness, where appropriate.
- A Member suggested that the requested pilot initiatives could be utilised as case studies to feed into the final report, otherwise it would be difficult to obtain the necessary data. In relation to this a Member pointed out that there were already 20mph zones in place in the Constituency area from which data could be obtained, therefore there was no need for others to be introduced. He emphasised that policy should be evidence based rather than developed through ad-hoc decisions.
- A Member stated that, should the motion be defeated, he would expect advice on how the number of killed and/or seriously injured (KSI) can be reduced on local roads. He considered that implementing 20mph limits through local towns and villages would significantly reduce the number of (KSI) and wondered whether reducing this risk was a priority for Members. He considered that the reduction KSI on local roads should be a significant factor in determining this issue.
- The mover of the motion emphasised that she had engaged with the "20s Plenty" group and had found them to be engaged and wishing to make improvements to their local communities. She acknowledged that some people were against a 20mph limit, but a way to address this issue was required. She emphasised that Members were elected to engage with their local communities and take account of the issues they raised and ensure that their opinions were represented. The current 20mph Zones were isolated and did not provide any co-ordinated connectivity to be able to determine whether their placement had an effect on the subsequent town or village. She considered that a pattern of recurring 20mph Zones would provide a much more effective demonstration of their benefit to feed into the Executive report. She acknowledged the issues raised in relation to having sight of the Executive report and reiterated the fact that the delay in the meeting had given the motion an appearance of being slightly outdated, but felt it appropriate to have a constructive, public debate on the matter.
- A member stated that he was not against a change to the speed limit in specific areas, for legitimate reasons, but could not support the motion without sufficient evidence having been provided.
- It was asked, should the motion be defeated, whether that would negate the proposals that had been approved at other Committees. In response a Member stated that the other Committees referred to could still submit their resolutions to the Executive, but only the Executive were in a position to change policy. He also stated that he would like to see the issue expanded to include all road safety.

The motion was put to the vote and defeated.

Resolved –

That no further action be taken on this matter at this time.

31. Work Programme

Considered -

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) providing a Work Programme for Members to consider, develop and adapt.

The following issues were suggested as additions to the Work Programme, to be considered at subsequent meetings:-

- Access to local key facilities in local towns – eg. Post Office Services in Helmsley and Banking in Easingwold – following recent closures
- Update on the proposals for Thirsk and Malton Rail Stations following the failure of the Levelling Up bids

Resolved -

That the Work Programme be noted and the issues highlighted be included in the Programme and considered at subsequent meetings of the ACC

32. Next Meeting

Resolved -

That the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Area Constituency Committee would take place on Friday 31st March 2023 at a venue to be confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm.
SML

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**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
THIRSK AND MALTON AREA CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE –
31ST March 2023
Stronger Communities Update**

1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on the Stronger Communities Programme and an overview of progress made in the Thirsk and Malton Constituency area.

2.0 Background

2.1 Despite the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic over the past 12 months, the community support infrastructure through the Community Support Organisation (CSO) network has remained largely in place since March 2020. As we moved into recovery, a minority of CSOs wound down or scaled back their pandemic response activities. A significant number have however continued to work with the programme on supporting communities with the challenges they face in relation to cost of living and winter pressures. This has been alongside exploring how the successful CSO model could be built upon and developed further to support the health, wellbeing and prevention agenda, and wider community resilience in localities, through the Community Anchor Organisation (CAO) model concept.

2.2 In addition to this work, the programme has also been able to resume pre-pandemic projects and has taken the lead role on a number of new countywide programmes.

2.3 A number of new national initiatives have been launched over the past 12 months particularly around alleviating the cost of living pressures being felt by families and residents on low incomes. Stronger Communities are leading on a number of these programmes and work in partnership with others within the Council and externally.

3.0 Community Support Organisations (CSOs) & Community Response

3.1 The work of the CSOs has shifted focus in 2022/23, moving from pandemic response to recovery. Instead of supporting people who were self-isolating or shielding, their efforts have been on building confidence and independence and helping to remove some of the dependencies that emerged during the pandemic. This has included activities such as supported shopping trips, accompanied walks, social events and support groups and activities.

3.2 In acknowledgement of broader community resilience challenges including cost of living and winter pressures, 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.

- 3.3 A total of £924,700 has been invested in the CSO infrastructure across the county in 2022/23; this includes a £22,000 contribution from the Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to support the development and rollout of the Rockwood Frailty Toolkit. A breakdown of CSO investment by geography is outlined below.

District	No. of CSOs	Total Value
Craven	3	£92,000
Hambleton	4	£138,000
Harrogate	6	£203,500
Richmondshire	5	£126,000
Ryedale	2	£68,000
Scarborough	3	£173,200
Selby	3	£124,000
Total	26	£924,700

3.4 Future Opportunities for CSOs

Stronger Communities has also been working alongside the CSOs to identify elements of the model that could be retained and developed further to support the wider health, well-being and prevention, and community resilience agenda. Following a well-attended 'Response to Recovery' event that took place in May 2022 for those organisations that had undertaken the CSO role, followed by the 'Learning Together and Co-Creation' day in early November, 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.

- 3.5 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. This investment supports the core aims of the wider Stronger Communities Programme which include:

- Prevention and reducing health inequalities
- Community resilience
- Social regeneration

- 3.6 After gathering insight from other local authorities and community development programmes and gaining insight from voluntary and community sector organisations (including CSOs), a number of characteristics and activities which we would hope to see in a Community Anchor Organisation have been developed. This encompasses:

Characteristics

- Crucial to the place and the community in which it is based.
- A voice for local people.

- Collaborative, open and encouraging of other contributions.
- Proactive with a can-do mindset.
- Already delivering services.
- Independent and community led.
- Financially resilient.

Activities

- Building local partnerships and alliances to deliver services.
- Improving physical and mental wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.
- Regeneration of their communities.
- Building community resilience.
- Improving people's financial resilience.

3.7 The funding currently being used to support this work is non-recurring and as such, the challenge will be to develop financially sustainable options for CAOs in order for them to become less dependent on public sector grants and establish diverse income streams – which could include earned income through contracts and charging.

3.8 Community Grants

In addition to the work with CSOs, Stronger Communities has awarded £114,696 in Community Grants supporting 109 groups and / or projects to date in 2022/23. This investment has allowed communities and small grass roots groups and organisations to recover from the pandemic and to re-establish local events and activities in their communities. A geographical breakdown of the grants awarded is outlined below.

District	No. of Grants	Total Value
Craven	8	£10,000
Hambleton	8	£7,300
Harrogate	14	£13,990
Richmondshire	10	£10,000
Ryedale	15	£14,500
Scarborough	37	£35,214
Selby	16	£15,692
Countywide	1	£8,000
Total	109	£114,696

3.9 A breakdown of grants awarded in the Thirsk and Malton Constituency area is attached at **Appendix A**.

4.0 Wider Stronger Communities Programme Work

4.1 The Stronger Communities programme has been able to resume some of its pre-pandemic work over the past twelve months; it is also leading on a number of large new national programmes.

4.2 The range of activities the team are leading on, or are contributing to, is broad and varied:

- Holiday Activities and Food Programme for free school meal eligible children (Department of Education funded)
- Household Support Fund - awards to low-income households (Department of Work and Pensions funded)
- Homes for Ukraine Programme (Home Office)
- Wellbeing and Prevention investment – Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected
- Digital Inclusion
- Cost of living
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- Mental health programmes (NHS)
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

4.3 Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Stronger Communities continue to lead on the delivery of this programme, which was launched with the branding of FEAST (Food, Entertainment, Arts & Sport Together) in partnership with Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) and the voluntary and community sector. Coordination of the programme has been undertaken by North Yorkshire Together who in conjunction with a network of locally placed clubs and community organisations, deliver a range of enriching activities over holiday periods.

The new Holiday Activities and Food Coordinator is now in post and is working with North Yorkshire Together partners, as well as colleagues in CYPS, Stronger Communities and Public Health to develop the programme further with a particular emphasis on providing a wraparound service for families, its nutrition and healthy food offer, building stronger relationships with schools, and increasing the number of teenagers engaging with the programme.

4.4 Household Support Fund

In the last 6 months, Stronger Communities have continued to administer the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funded Household Support Fund.

The third phase of the scheme aimed to support those most in need with significantly rising living costs between October 2022 and March 2023, particularly focussing on those who missed out on national government cost of living support. In line with the expenditure guidelines and the agreed eligibility framework developed in partnership with the seven District and Borough Councils, 23,395 eligible households across North Yorkshire have received a direct award in the form of a shopping voucher in January 2023. This encompassed eligible families, pensioners and working age adult

households, as well as those who missed out on other forms of national Cost of Living support. In addition to this, supplementary funding was awarded to North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF), Warm and Well, and 16 food providers across the County.

Household Support Fund will continue from 1 April 2023 for a further 12 months; guidance for the scheme has been received and work will commence on how this will be deployed shortly.

4.5 Homes for Ukraine Programme

Following the launch of the national Homes for Ukraine programme, officers from the Stronger Communities team have continued to lead on North Yorkshire's multi-agency approach to ensuring arrangements are in place for host families (sponsors) are approved (home and welfare checks) and procedures are in place to distribute the government funding for sponsors and guests. The approach also supports the many local groups who have set up across the county to help welcome and support the Ukrainian refugees with things such as language lessons, social events and peer support.

The number of Ukrainian guests residing in North Yorkshire, through the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship programme was approximately 838 at the end of Q3. In addition, 346 guests, who initially arrived in North Yorkshire, have either moved into private rental accommodation, to another Local Authority area, or returned to Ukraine, making a total of 1184 arrivals since March 2022. Of the guests who have moved on from their sponsor, 78 groups, or 191 individuals are now living in rental properties within North Yorkshire.

The government has recently announced a number of updates to the scheme; this includes an extension to the maximum sponsorship term from 12 to 24 months, an increase to the thank you payment once guests have been in the UK for 12 months, and additional funding to acquire housing and support for guests to move into their own homes and reduce the risk of homelessness.

4.6 Wellbeing and Prevention – Stay Healthy, Independent & Connected

The Stronger Communities team have continued to support colleagues in Targeted Prevention (Health and Adult Services) to develop options for future investment in wellbeing and prevention, learning from the place-based pilots operating in Craven and Selby. The Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected Grants scheme was launched in late 2022, with new providers starting work in their localities on 1 April 2023.

4.7 Digital Inclusion

The digital buddies and champions programme delivered in partnership with Citizens Online, libraries, Living Well and community volunteers has proved a vital resource during the pandemic helping people to access online services and stay connected to friends and families. This has been delivered in tandem with the recycling of ICT equipment and devices project Reboot North Yorkshire. Awareness of Reboot North Yorkshire continues to grow, with an increased number of organisations and services

referring their beneficiaries into the scheme, particularly those who are socially isolated, or those in need of a device to access training or education.

4.8 Cost of living - Food Insecurity

Following the Council's investment of a Defra grant in 2020/21 for a range of community projects that help combat food and fuel insecurity arising out of the pandemic; additional funding was made available to deliver the Food for the Future programme, aiming to embed local sustainable food support options, which also support beneficiaries to build their levels of confidence and independence. An additional 44 have also been made available to food banks and / or providers of free or low-cost food through the three rounds of HSF.

The food insecurity research and insight work continues to progress well in conjunction with City of York Council (CYC), with the report expected in Spring 2023. This broadly encompasses the following areas:

- Developing and utilising an evidence base of interventions including associated outcomes.
- Building our understanding of the realities faced by food providers, the unmet needs, the real-life outcomes, and thoughts about sustainability /viability.
- Developing a clearer map of provision across York & North Yorkshire and gaining a feel for possible gaps in areas / or models.
- Innovating / experimenting with an approach that involved people with lived experience.

The team continues to work closely with the Public Health Healthier Lives, Community and Economy team who are looking to bring together a range of organisations in the food sector to establish a food system framework and ultimately a food partnership to address the immediate to long term challenges presented. Joint work on exploring the impact of Cost of Living on Health Outcomes will also commence in Spring 2023.

4.9 Broader Cost of Living work

In conjunction with internal and external partners and coordinated by Stronger Communities, the cost-of-living support page on the NYCC website has been updated and reconfigured to provide as comprehensive a picture as possible. This encompasses links to more local level sources of information, including the District and Borough Councils and Community Support Organisations (CSOs), as well as detailing information on Warm Spaces, and support available for community and voluntary groups wishing to tackle cost of living challenges in their communities.

The programme has also supported the development of the NYCC Cost of Living Communications Campaign utilising a variety of tools. This includes the development of a range of social media assets and an A5 leaflet that has been made available in hard copy and digitally, which will drive people to the updated cost of living page on the website, their local CSO, and potentially to NYCC's Customer Service Centre by telephone as an alternative.

4.10 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

As part of the government's Levelling Up agenda the Council submitted its proposals for its allocated UKSPF funding, which have now been approved. There is a strong emphasis within the criteria for UKSPF on place shaping, community empowerment, engagement and strengthening the voluntary and community sector, and Stronger Communities are taking the lead role in the delivery of the Communities and Place strand. An advisory group is in place made up of public and voluntary sector partners and the year one allocations have been signed off with contracts being prepared.

4.11 Mental health programmes (NHS)

The Stronger Communities Programme has worked in partnership with colleagues in Public Health and the NHS to deliver a range of community led mental health projects since 2019. These include grass roots suicide prevention programmes and other specialist mental health services. As part of the national Community Mental Health Transformation programme, Stronger Communities continue to work in partnership with the NHS to transform mental health services for people with a serious mental illness through building capacity within communities and the voluntary sector. The approach includes NHS financial investment, managed by Stronger Communities, working with four place based multi-agency partnerships to develop and/or pilot new community -based services and projects through grant funding to voluntary organisations and community groups with the over-arching aim of enabling people with a serious mental illness to live well in their communities.

4.12 Children and Young People

In conjunction with Children and Young People Service (CYPS), the Stronger Communities team continues to work with Early Help to deliver their Get Going grants scheme that seeks to grow community capacity by working alongside and with our communities to stimulate, support and develop activities that enable children, young people and their families to be happy, healthy and achieving.

4.13 Capacity Building

The Stronger Communities Programme has continued to strengthen local community assets and infrastructure; this has included encouraging relationships and collaborations between voluntary and community sector organisations as well as stabilising, and / or building capacity within them if required. The impact of the pandemic on income and capacity within the sector, together with concerns in relation to rising fuel costs is resulting in concerns about their long-term viability and sustainability. Stronger Communities continues to work with colleagues such as Community First Yorkshire, The Two Ridings Foundation, the Lottery and other partners to identify issues and concerns and develop joint responses.

5.0 Planning for the future

5.1 Independent Evaluation

The Stronger Communities Programme is subject to a 5-year independent evaluation, conducted by Skyblue Research; evaluation of the CSOs has been encompassed within this, alongside continuing to develop our ten-year strategy, People, Place and Power.

5.2 The Learning Review Evaluation (2018 – 2022) highlighted a number of key achievements of the programme. Some of the headlines include:

- 1,100 community projects supported in over 200 communities in North Yorkshire since 2018. This rises to 1,415 projects since the programme's inception in 2015.
- Over 600 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations have received financial and / or relational support from the programme.
- An estimated 100,000 benefitted from the programme between 2015 and 2020, with 60,000 benefitting in 2020/21.
- £3.45million of external funds have been secured as a result of Stronger Communities organisational development investment in to VCSEs or place based collaborations.

5.3 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

The Stronger Communities team is involved in a number of work-streams to support the formation of the new unitary council. Stronger Communities also delivered elements of the Let's Talk campaign in partnership with Borough and District Councils between September and December 2022.

6.0 Local Area Information

6.1 Community Support Organisations (CSOs)

The remit for CSO's this year has developed to support cost of living initiatives alongside the traditional post-pandemic roles around recovery including encouraging people to become as independent as they can be and to strengthen the local provision of VCS activities in their area. With each organisation's focus being on supporting the wellbeing and independence of their beneficiaries there has been a reduction in the pandemic-related support provided previously, such as shopping and prescription delivery but an increase in the offer of a range of activities and community capacity building. The Thirsk and Malton Constituency CSO provision is currently served by:

- Community Works (Thirsk)
- Easingwold & District Community Care Association
- Ryedale Carers Support (transferred CSO responsibilities to Carers Plus at the start of this year)
- Carers Plus Yorkshire (Ryedale)
- Age UK Scarborough (Filey)

These organisations have over the winter period focused their offer on broader community resilience issues such as cost of living and winter pressures and have acted as a place based single point of contact for locally based support. This has included the publication of individual CSO's contact information on the NYCC website so that residents can access information about local support which may include access to warm spaces or food provision.

6.2 Wellbeing and Prevention – Stay Healthy, Independent & Connected

As referenced in Section 4.6, the new SHIC grants will be delivered in the Thirsk and Malton constituency area through four new partnership models involving a combination of place-based organisations (some of which are currently acting as CSOs), as well as

specialist support organisations. Through this model all communities will have access to specialist advice and guidance as well as an opportunity to make local social connections.

6.3 Mental Health Support

The Community Mental Health Transformation (CMHT) programme, led by Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust, is being managed in this area by the Scarborough, Whitby, Ryedale (SWR), Vale of York, and Hambleton and Richmondshire area Task and Finish Groups. The programme aims to improve the quality of life and services for people with a serious mental illness, or people at risk of developing a serious mental illness. Grant funding has been invested in communities under the CMHT umbrella throughout the last year across the constituency including both grass roots small grants and larger voluntary sector initiatives.

6.4 Local Community Initiatives

In Ryedale the collaboration with Ryedale District Council and community partners has continued to develop through the year around network and support through Ryedale Community Connect meetings, news and website information, and the related Ryedale Food Groups network. This provides a good platform for the year ahead with a key to take forward the learning and best practice to fit within the new authority's local community working arrangements.

The Community One Stop model originally piloted through Stronger investment which facilitates monthly local sessions with strong representation from public and voluntary sector colleagues has continued to grow and is now available in all Ryedale towns. This provides a focal point for a community providing information and activities at a local level. The sessions, led by the Ryedale Charities Together partnership, have now secured external sustainable funding from health and National Lottery funders.

Stronger Communities continue to provide advice and development support to a wealth of community initiatives at a very local as well as a wider strategic level, inspired and driven by the aspirations and resilience found within our constituency.

7.0 **Recommendations**

7.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

Report Authors

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16th March 2023

**Appendix A – Breakdown of Community Grants Awarded
Thirsk and Malton**

District	Organisation Name	Project	Value
Ryedale	Norton Hive Community Library	Children's Singalong	£1000
Ryedale	The Salvation Army Malton	CAMEO – Tackling isolation	£1000
Ryedale	Yorkshire energy Doctor	Cost of Living Cooking Project	£1000
Ryedale	Ryedale YMCA	My Mind Toolkit – 16-25	£1000
Ryedale	Flaxton Parish Council	Community Engagement	£1000
Ryedale	Hovingham Action Group	Early Years Nature Project	£1000
Ryedale	Leavening Parish Council	Community Allotment Group Development	£1000
Ryedale	Next Steps Mental Health Resource Centre	Warm Welcome	£1000
Ryedale	Thornton Le Dale Village Hub	Community Activity and Equipment Costs	£1000
Ryedale	Racing Welfare	Loneliness and Isolation Support	£1000
Ryedale	Rillington PCC	Warm Spaces Group	£500
Ryedale	Westow Petanque	Facilities	£1000
Ryedale	The Bothies	Loneliness and Isolation Support	£1000
Ryedale	Coastline Sight and Hearing	Cooking Activities	£1000
Ryedale	MEMBERS	English Language Group	£1000
Filey	Active Filey	Running/Cycling Group Costs	£900
Filey	Filey Childcare	Kitchen Equipment	£1000
Filey	Active Filey	Activity Equipment	£750
Hambleton	Romanby Scout Group	Squirrels Section Set-Up	£1000
Hambleton	Easingwold Community Library Association	Wonderous Stories Project	£1000

North Yorkshire County Council

Thirsk & Malton Area Constituency Committee

31 March 2023

Provision of Services in local towns and villages

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an opportunity to discuss the provision of services in local towns and villages following a number of closures and consider solutions as to how the provision of these services can be addressed.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A Member requested that an item be placed on the agenda for this meeting to allow Members to consider how to address the issue of services such as banks and Post Offices, closing down in local towns and villages, and to discuss possible solutions to the loss of these services.
- 1.2 The Corporate and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee produced a report on these issues in 2018 and that is provided as an appendix to the report (item 7) to assist the discussion. Members may conclude that further Scrutiny analysis of this matter is required.

Recommendation

That Members undertake a discussion on the provision of local services and suggest a way forward on this issue.

Steve Loach
Principal Democratic Services Officer

March 2023

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North Yorkshire County Council

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review of cash-based, over the counter banking and Post Office services in rural areas of the county

Purpose of the Report

1. Members are asked to consider the findings from the scrutiny review of cash-based, over the counter banking and Post Office services in rural areas of the county, and agree the recommendations arising from the review.

Background

2. The Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee recognised that SMEs are key to the long term sustainability of rural areas, and that the closure of branch banks in rural areas posed a significant risk to their long term future. They also recognised that many older people would be affected by the closures (see paragraph 13).
3. In December 2017 Members agreed to carry out a review of the effect of branch bank closures and the loss of access to face to face banking and ATMs, particularly in rural areas across the county, and to consider the cumulative effect alongside the closure of Post Offices across the county. A list of the current availability of branch banks, ATMs and Post Offices is shown at Appendix 1.

Introduction

4. Access to banking is a basic requirement of any functioning economy. Research¹ into the impact of bank branch closures on local businesses reveals that it often creates additional costs for the wider local economy and for business owners, making it more difficult to manage cash flow and hit productivity.
5. For small rural businesses, many of which are cash-based and operating in largely cash dependent local economies, this typically means being able to easily manage cash flow. To do this, they need access to banking services. Put simply, cash remains the most frequently used payment method in the UK² and those businesses need to deposit their cash safely and securely. It is therefore unsurprising that over three quarters of small businesses continue to use branches for a wide range of services.
6. Rural businesses and cash-dependent businesses are therefore particularly affected by branch closures. The impact on their productivity can be notable e.g. a business owner will have to travel further for the nearest bank branch.

¹ Locked Out: The Impact of Bank Branch Closures on Small Businesses”, Federation of Small Businesses Scotland, April 2018.

² UK Cash and Cash Machines: 2017 Summary”, UK Finance, August 2017.

7. In March 2015 the major high street banks, consumer groups and the government signed up to an industry-wide agreement to work with customers and communities to minimise the impact of branch closures and put in place alternative banking services.
8. As a result, the British Bankers Association (BBA) - the trade association for the UK banking sector - agreed a protocol which committed banks to:
 - Working with local communities to establish the impact of the branch closure, prior to its closure
 - Finding suitable alternative provision to suit individual communities
 - Putting satisfactory alternative banking services in place before a branch is closed. Options for this to include free to use cash machines, the proximity of alternative branches, and Post Office branches and mobile banking arrangements.
9. However, evidence suggests that the replacements put in place following branch closures (mobile banking units and Post Office access) are often inadequate and do not meet the needs of business customers. Added to that, if LINK's plan to reduce the fee paid by card providers to cash machine operators goes ahead³, there is a risk of closure of Free-to-use ATMs, which are an essential part of a thriving local economy.

Information Gathered

10. Closure of Branch Banks
In January 2018, Members met with a Natwest Bank representative responsible for Yorkshire and the Humber, and for managing the engagement process for closure of NatWest branch banks. Whilst not speaking for the industry as a whole, he was able to provide an insight into the processes that are undertaken when a bank is considering closing a branch, and the thresholds applied.
11. As part of his presentation he confirmed:
 - There had been a 40% reduction in the number of customers coming in to bank branches over the past 5 years.
 - More people were going on-line and using telephony to access banking services and 2017 was the first time that there were more online than branch based transactions.
 - 90% of branch bank processes can be undertaken at a Post Office
 - Reducing banking hours and changing opening times were considered and trialled.
 - Factors that are taken into account include: proximity to other bank branches, ATMs and Post Offices; level of use; and transport links
 - The decision to close a branch bank is a commercial one and it has to comply with government guidelines, but there is no industry body or regulator that sets or enforces standards.
 - NatWest typically gives 6 months' notice of a closure, compared to the Government Minimum standard of 3 months

³ See: <https://www.link.co.uk/about/news/link-moves-to-secure-future-of-free-atms/>

- Ahead of a closure NatWest contacts all its frequent customers, often owners of SMEs - NatWest have continued to employ 'SME relationship managers', other banks have not. These provide a direct link with SMEs and usually go to see them at their company site.
 - MPs are informed of any closures
12. Members also received information from the Rural Services Network (RSN) who confirmed that their next Sounding Board Survey which goes out to all Local Authority Councillors and Parish Councillors will focus on the withdrawal of cash machines and banks from rural areas. The RSN confirmed they plan to use the information they gather from across the country to campaign against further losses/closures.
13. Finally, Members received information provided by Age UK who had previously called for all banks and building societies to work harder to respond to the needs of their older customers. Members noted that while a minority of older people are able to use internet banking, around a quarter (26%) of people aged 65 to 74 and around three-fifths (61%) of people aged 75+ do not regularly use the internet. Many older people also have a strong preference for in-branch banking, with face-to-face services allowing the chance to talk to people – an important component of tackling loneliness, particularly in rural communities. In-branch banking also offers peace of mind and the security of seeing bank transactions take place and receiving a paper record to prove it.
14. Post Office Closures & their link in to Bank Branch Closures
The Post Office has a requirement to provide branches in all parts of the UK in line with national access criteria set by government, and to date the government has protected rural post offices. Research carried out in 2017 confirms the particular importance of post offices to rural consumers and businesses - see Appendix 2.
15. In April 2018, Members met with the Post Office External Affairs Lead for Scotland and Northern Ireland (previously the External Affairs Manager for the National Post Office Company) who confirmed there were no planned closures of post offices. He also provided an overview of the current situation as follows:
- There are 11,500 post office branches in the UK - the National Post Office wants to increase this by 2,000
 - Almost 93% of people live within a mile of their local post office, and 99.7% live within three miles.
 - The National Post Office do not run their own post offices other than 200 Crown post offices. All other post offices are commercial ventures run as individual businesses.
 - Closures occur for a number of reasons but they are usually due to contractual issues or commercial issues.
 - An existing agent has to give six months' notice of ending a contract.
 - It is difficult to get someone to take on a post office. The post office field team will try to get a new post office agent up and running as quickly as possible.
 - There are outreach post offices that get additional payments that help in more rural areas.
 - There are also 3,000 community branches that get an additional payment - a community branch is one where there is no shop within half a mile.

- Community run post offices are an option but they would still need a designated postmaster who would be prepared to be liable for any losses incurred.
 - A 6-year agreement between the Post Office and banks has been in place since 1 January 2017, to provide basic bank branch services particularly over the counter bank transactions for bank customers - both for personal accounts and small business accounts. Banks are obliged to pay for this service and given the number of previous and upcoming branch closures, it is likely this will be extended.
 - There are approximately 2,700 ATMs in the post office network but every post office is in effect an ATM.
 - Standalone post offices were very rarely commercially viable any more. Even a post office with a large catchment area could at best hope to earn income of £14,000 per annum based purely on post office counter services
 - Four years ago the post office network was transformed and modernised and since then efforts had been made to encourage retail.
 - There are over 170 products and services in post offices (postal orders are the only one owned by the post office) - Greater advertising is needed nationally to highlight the services that post offices operate but this is incredibly expensive to do.
 - 2017/18 was the first year that post offices had made money nationally.
16. With respect to changes in the post office network, Members also considered the Post Office's code of practice for public consultation and communication, published in May 2014.
17. Finally, in May 2018 Members received information on an action plan developed by the Finance Industry and the Post Office working with the Treasury and government officials⁴. The aim of the plan is to raise awareness among local communities grappling with bank branch closures, of the day-to-day banking services that bank and building society customers can access at 11,500 Post Office branches across the UK.
18. Members learnt that customers in rural or urban areas with less bank branch coverage are the primary focus of the plan, which seeks to:
- i. Raise awareness of banking services available at the Post Office via regional and targeted localised pilot media campaigns. These will be timed to coincide with Post Office in-branch campaigns across the Post Office network.
 - ii. Support specific communities, including those impacted by bank branch closures, through information leaflets, joint Post Office and bank outreach to communities and improved collaboration between Post Office and banks during any bank branch closures.
 - iii. Promote the Post Office as an integral channel for day-to-day banking, with clear and prominent information for customers in banks' literature, on websites and telephony channels.
 - iv. Provide enhanced support for vulnerable consumers to be developed based on Citizens' Advice best practice guidelines.

⁴ <http://www.rsonline.org.uk/post-office-eases-bank-closure-pain>

- v. Carry out ongoing monitoring of awareness and confidence in the Post Office counter service.

Analysis

19. In regard to branch bank closures, Members identified a number of concerns, including the lack of any cumulative impact assessment of branch bank closures, and an over reliance on Post Offices to fill the gaps made by those closures. They noted the importance of ATMs in some of the more rural areas of the county, and questioned what type of contracts were in place with Post Offices to ensure the sustainability of banking services, once a nearby bank branch had closed.
20. They also questioned whether the existing community banker role could be extended to provide accessible banking services in places such as community libraries, or whether multi-bank hubs could be established in buildings of community use. They agreed it may be possible to explore with the Stronger Communities Team what community bases could support banking services.
21. In regard to post office services, Members recognised that commercial decisions were determining what Post Office services were available. They acknowledged with surprise the low amount of income generated through post office counter services solely, and questioned how best to highlight the services on offer in Post Offices and encourage use of their retail facilities, on the basis that if you don't use it you lose it.
22. They also questioned whether it would be possible to levy greater charges upon the banks for the services provided by post offices, as this may influence the decision making around branch bank closures.
23. Finally, they were pleased to note the national action plan developed by the Finance Industry and the Post Office. However, they questioned whether at a local level the true impact of a branch bank closure was being recognised, particularly as in their view; there was a need to balance commercial concerns with community concerns.

Review Conclusions

24. The Committee were unable to say with confidence that banks were fully considering their 'corporate social responsibility' as part of their decision making around the closure of a branch bank. They highlighted their concern for the number of people that may get left behind without access to banking services, as the move towards a cash-less society and dependence upon on-line technologies continues.
25. They therefore agreed that:
 - Decisions were not taking account of the full impact upon rural communities and the SMEs within those communities, and;
 - At a local level, assumptions were being made about the ability of nearby Post Offices to fill the resulting gap in banking services provision.
26. However, the Committee accepted there was little they could do to influence banks from making a unilateral decision to close a branch, made in response to commercial pressures.

27. The Chair therefore proposed writing to both the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and to North Yorkshire MPs to raise the Committee's concerns about the impact on rural communities and small businesses.

Recommendations

28. Having considered the findings from this review, it is proposed that:
- i. The Chair write to both the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and to North Yorkshire MPs to raise the Committee's concerns about the impact on rural communities and small businesses.
 - ii. The Committee recommend to the Executive that they:
 - a) Note the findings from the review.
 - b) Endorse this Committee's views in regard to the impact of bank branch closures on local businesses and rural communities.
 - c) Highlight the concerns identified by the review to members of the Local Government York & North Yorkshire Partnership Group.

Report Author:

Melanie Carr
Principal Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: List of Branch Banks, Post Offices & ATMs across the county
Appendix 2: Briefing note on rural Post Office use dated November 2017

**Banks & Building Society Branches, LINK ATMs and Post Offices in North
Yorkshire Market Towns and Large Settlements**

<p>Bedale Barclays (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society LINK ATMs at Co-op, Tesco and Spar. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Bentham Barclays (incl. ATM) LINK ATM at Spar. Free to use. Post office.</p>
<p>Boroughbridge Barclays (incl. ATM) LINK ATMS at Spar and Morrisons. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Catterick Garrison Lloyds (incl. ATM) Santander LINK ATMs at Poundland, Aldi, Co-op, Tesco and various barracks. Free to use. LINK ATMs at Brewers Fayre, a pizza shop and McDonalds. Charge to use (£1.75 - £1.95) Two post offices.</p>
<p>Easingwold Barclays (incl. ATM) HSBC – closing Nationwide (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society (agency) LINK ATMS at Co-ops and Costcutter. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Filey Barclays (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank – closing 3 May 2017. LINK ATMs at Spar, Tesco, Londis, Heron Foods, Millers, and post office. Free to use. LINK ATMs at Brigs Amusements, Holdsworths Amusements and Filey stores. Charge to use (99p - £1.85) Post office.</p>
<p>Glusburn & Cross Hills Barclays (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society LINK ATMs at Spar, Co-op and Snax 24. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Grassington Barclays (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society (agency) Post office.</p>
<p>Great Ayton LINK ATM at Co-op. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Hawes Barclays (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society (agency) Post office in Community Office.</p>
<p>Helmsley Barclays (incl. ATM) Nationwide (incl. ATM) Nat West - ATM only LINK ATM at Costcutter. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Ingleton LINK ATMs in Co-ops and at Marton Arms, Thornton in Lonsdale. Post office in community centre (open Tuesday and Wednesday).</p>

<p>Kirkbymoorside HSBC – closing LINK ATM at Co-op. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Knaresborough Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) Nat West – closing Santander (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Co-op and Sainsburys. Free to use. LINK ATMs at Premiere and Chain Lane stores. Charge to use (£1.50 - £1.65)</p>
<p>Leyburn Barclays (incl. ATM) HSBC – closing Skipton Building Society (agency) Yorkshire Building Society (agency) LINK ATMs at Co-op and One Stop. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Malton Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Nat West (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society TSB (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Asda, Morrisons, Heron Foods, and One Stop. Free to use. LINK ATM at McColls. Charge to use (£1.99) Post office.</p>
<p>Masham Barclays (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank LINK ATM at Co-op. Free to use. Post office in Masham News.</p>	<p>Middleham LINK ATM at Central Stores. Free to use. Mobile post office at Key Centre (not open all week)</p>
<p>Northallerton Barclays (incl. ATM) Darlington Building Society Halifax (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Nat West (incl. ATM) Santander (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society TSB (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATM in a number of Co-ops and at Sainsburys. Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Pateley Bridge Barclays (no ATM) LINK ATMs at Spar, Costcutter and the Oldest Sweet Shop. Free to use. Post office.</p>
<p>Pickering Barclays (incl. ATM)</p>	<p>Richmond Barclays (incl. ATM)</p>

<p>Nat West (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank – closing 4 May 2017. Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Co-op, Costcutter and Malton Road garage. Free to use. Post office in Morlands newsagents.</p>	<p>HSBC (incl. ATM) Nat West (incl. ATM) TSB (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank – closing 20 April 2017 Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Nisa, post office, N Shaw Ltd, Heron Foods and The Station. Free to use. LINK ATM at McColls. Charge to use (£1.65) Two post offices.</p>
<p>Ripon Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Leeds Building Society Lloyds Nat West (incl. ATM) Santander (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society Yorkshire Bank – closing 6 June 2017. Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at McColls, Sainsburys, Nisa, Booths, Morrisons and Co-ops. Free to use. Three post offices.</p>	<p>Selby Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Lloyds (incl. ATM) Nat West – closing Santander (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society Yorkshire Bank (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Griffin Hotel, post office, Wilkinsons, Sainsburys, Morrisons, Tesco, Flaxley Road newsagents, Selby college, Co-op and McColls. Free to use. LINK ATMs at Millgate service station, Two Stop Shop, Wishing Well, Three Lakes Retail Park, and Abbeyside filling station. Charge to use. (£1.85 - £1.99) Two post offices.</p>
<p>Settle Barclays (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Lloyds Nat West – closing Skipton Building Society LINK ATMs at Co-op and Booths, Free to use. Post office.</p>	<p>Sherburn in Elmet Nat West – ATM only. LINK ATMs at Spar, Tesco and Co-op. Free to use. Post office.</p>
<p>Skipton Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Nat West (incl. ATM) Santander (incl. ATM) Skipton Building Society (incl. ATM) TSB (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank (incl. ATM)</p>	<p>Stokesley Barclays (incl. ATM) HSBC – closing Nat West (incl. ATM) Newcastle Building Society Santander (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society (agency) LINK ATM in Co-op. Free to use. Post office in Quality Fare.</p>

<p>Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Tesco, Morrisons, Spar and Rendezvous Hotel. Free to use. LINK ATMs at Rowland Street Stores and Londis. Charge to use. (£1.25 - £1.99) Two post offices.</p>	
<p>Tadcaster Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) Nat West – closing LINK ATMs at Sainsburys and Esso garage. Free to use. Two post offices.</p>	<p>Thirsk Barclays (incl. ATM) HSBC (incl. ATM) Lloyds (incl. ATM) Nationwide Nat West – closing Santander – closing 15 June 2017 LINK ATMs at Heron Foods, Co-op, Tesco, Thirsk Garden Centre. Free to use. LINK ATMs at Bytheway Stores, Thirsk Service Station and Thirsk Racecourse. Charge to use. (£1.65 - £1.99) Post office in Co-op.</p>
<p>Whitby Barclays (incl. ATM) Halifax (incl. ATM) HSBC Nat West (incl. ATM) TSB (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Bank (incl. ATM) Yorkshire Building Society LINK ATMs at Pleasureland Amusements, Millers Amusements, Poundland, Heron Foods, Co-op, Spar, Sainsburys, Eves & Co. Free to use. LINK ATMs at the Board Inn, George Hotel and Heldradale Stores. Charge to use (£1 - £1.85) Three post offices (One in Co-op).</p>	

Rural Post Office Use

How rural
consumers and
small businesses
use post offices



Annabel Barnett

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Summary

Post offices have always been particularly important for rural communities. But in the context of declining mail use and dramatic growth in digital communications, what role do they play today? And do people in rural areas use post offices differently to people based in urban areas?

This briefing note draws on a survey of over 800 rural residents and over 250 small businesses. Although almost all rural residents and businesses use post offices, people in rural areas are visiting post offices less frequently than they did a decade ago (31% visit at least once a week, compared to 56% in 2005). Our research shows:

- **Rural consumers still use post offices significantly more often than urban consumers and they are more likely to use many of the services offered.** Rural residents make greater use of mail services including buying stamps and sending parcels, for example. Post offices in rural areas are also used much more for cash withdrawals (24% of rural consumers, 19% in urban areas).
- **Post offices remain embedded in rural life, providing a range of community and retail services.** These include offering local information, informal support and a place for meeting fellow residents. 7 in 10 rural consumers buy essential items like groceries and food at post offices.
- **Rural small businesses rely on post offices more than their urban counterparts.** Rural businesses make more use of postal and banking services in particular. And the current breadth of the post office network helps their bottom line: 71% of rural small businesses say that without their local post office, their costs for accessing services would rise.
- **The more rural a community, the more important its post office.** 6 in 10 remote rural residents describe the Post Office as 'very' or 'extremely' important to them. They withdraw cash most frequently, are more likely to buy retail goods and make most use of community services.

The Post Office has a requirement to provide branches in all parts of the UK in line with national access criteria set by government, and to date the government has protected rural post offices. Our research confirms the particular importance of post offices to rural consumers and businesses. It is vital that the government and Post Office Ltd continue to maintain the number of rural post offices and ensure they retain their wide range of services.

Introduction

The post office network is a crucial access point to the public postal service.¹ Post offices also deliver other essential services to citizens, including banking services, access to benefits, bill payment and a range of central and local government services. Post offices have long played particularly critical roles in rural areas, frequently described as 'lifeline' and 'essential to the vitality of the local community'.²

But post offices - and the ways in which individuals and small businesses use them - have undergone very considerable change in recent years. These changes reflect the enormous social, economic and technological developments within wider society. A range of factors including the increasing digitisation of communications and transactions, pressure on local retail and ongoing bank branch closures are likely to continue to have a significant impact on service provision.

With an older population and often less choice in service providers, rural residents and businesses may be disproportionately affected by these changes. The post office network with its extensive geographic coverage, is key in providing services in rural and remote areas.

However, the network has been loss-making since 2000, and in order to maintain its size and financial viability, the Post Office is undergoing a major transformation programme, which involves converting traditional branches into new operating models. Many smaller post offices are being integrated into retail premises where they operate for longer opening hours but with a slightly reduced range of services. In addition, the government has committed to 'safeguard the post office network, to protect existing rural services'³ and provides a Community Branch Fund to strengthen branches that may be the last shop in the village serving small, often remote, communities⁴.

As the statutory watchdog for postal consumers, it is our role to monitor matters relating to post office numbers and location. We have particular responsibilities regarding the interests of more vulnerable consumers, including those in rural areas. With the post office transformation programme approaching its conclusion, in this briefing note we look at how consumers and small businesses in rural areas are currently using post offices, and the value they place on them.⁵

¹ Royal Mail, [Universal Service Obligation](#)

² Business and Enterprise Committee, [Post Offices - securing their future](#), 2009

³<https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/manifesto2017/Manifesto2017.pdf>

⁴ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2013-11-27/debates/13112751000003/PostOffice>

⁵ Unless otherwise referenced, the figures quoted in this report are from Accent/Citizens Advice, [Use of Essential Services Traditionally Provided at Post Offices](#), June 2017. See Appendix. In the report, we use the term 'consumer' to refer to citizens (not businesses).

1. Post offices have a unique reach in rural areas

There are significant differences in the ways rural and urban post offices are used.⁶ This is partly for geographical reasons - rural areas are more sparsely populated and less well provided with services than urban areas. But it is also because rural and urban demographics are distinct.

Rural post offices have unparalleled coverage

There are around 11,600 post offices in the UK, with a unique reach across all parts of the country. Rural areas are particularly well-served by post offices, and over half (55%) of the UK's branches are rural.⁷

98.7% of the rural population is within 3 miles of a post office. This exceeds government access criteria that require Post Office Ltd (POL) to ensure 95% of the rural population is within 3 miles of a post office. There is a further requirement that 95% of the population of every postcode district is within 6 miles of their nearest post office, to ensure a minimum level of access for those based in remote rural areas.⁸

The Post Office also has to report on accessibility for particular groups of consumers, including small businesses, lower income consumers, older people and those with disabilities. In 2016, well over 99% of all of these groups were within 3 miles of a Post Office branch. However, ease of use of a post office in practice, particularly in remote areas, often depends on access to transport as well as direct distance.⁹

There are fewer alternative services in rural areas

In many rural and remote areas, post offices are especially important because of the decline in availability of local alternatives providing these services. The number of bank branches has fallen sharply¹⁰, and some have particular concerns about the impact on small businesses in rural areas¹¹. More widely, closures of other services such as pubs¹² and shops¹³ have also affected rural

⁶ Throughout this report we use the Office for National Statistics (ONS) definitions for urban, rural and remote rural areas. See Citizens Advice, [Use of Essential Services Traditionally Provided at Post Offices](#), 2017 (Appendix A).

⁷ Post Office Ltd, [Network Report 2016](#)

⁸ BIS, [Securing the Post Office Network in the Digital Age](#), 2010. Our independent analysis confirms the access criteria were being met in 2017, [Citizens Advice. Access All Areas?](#), 2017.

⁹ This issue is explored further Citizens Advice, [Access All Areas?](#), 2017

¹⁰ From 20,583 in 1998 to 8,837 in 2012, with a further 1,000 branches closing 2012-2016. (House of Commons Library, [Bank Branch Closures](#), 2016)

¹¹ Federation of Small Businesses, [Locked Out](#), 2016

¹² The Campaign for Real Ale [reports](#) 21 pub closures a week in 2016, of which just under half were in rural areas.

areas, especially where alternatives are distant.

Bank and other service closures are driven partly by the changing use of technology. While many consumers in rural areas do use the internet to access services, there are also both physical and behavioural barriers to replacing face to face counter services completely:

- Broadband speeds are generally inferior in rural areas¹⁴
- Older people are less like to use the internet: 78% of those aged 65-74 are online, but only 41% of over 75s.¹⁵

Rural population is different to urban population

Whilst 17% of the UK's population live in rural areas,¹⁶ the rural population is not evenly distributed throughout the country. For example, only 1% of the population of England live in remote rural areas compared to 6% in Scotland.¹⁷

The population of rural areas is significantly older than that in urban areas. For instance in rural areas in England, 24% of the population is aged 65 or over, but in urban areas only 16% are aged 65 or over.¹⁸ This rises to 28% in remote areas of England. However, in the majority of cases where there is a difference in the way post offices are used in rural and urban areas, this is due to rurality rather than age.

¹³ The Rural Shops Alliance [estimates](#) 2,500 village shop closures in the decade to 2014.

¹⁴ House of Commons Library, [Superfast Broadband Coverage in the UK](#), 2017

¹⁵ 99% of adults under the age of 34 use the internet.

www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2017

¹⁶ data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS

¹⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-population-and-migration/rural-population-201415

¹⁸ www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/09/29133747/2

¹⁸

www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-population-and-migration/rural-population-201415

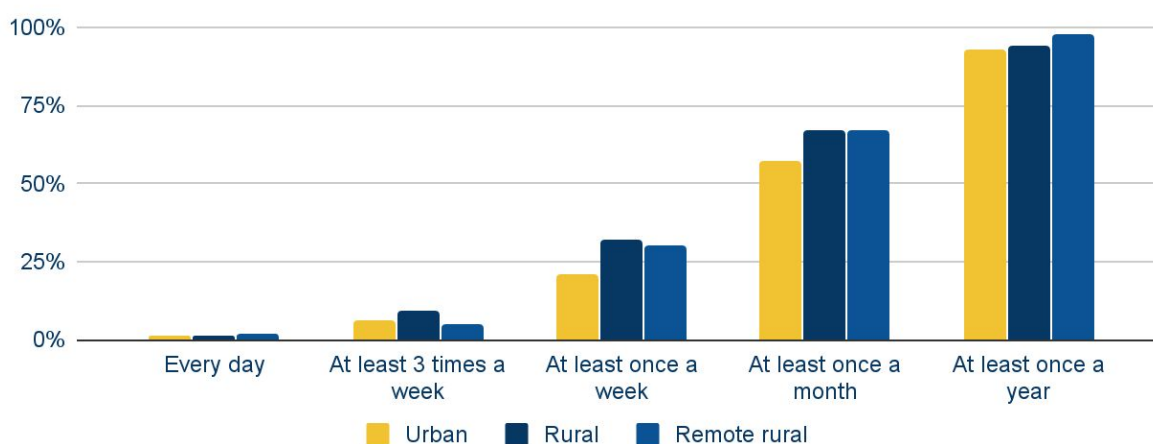
2. Rural consumers visit post offices more frequently

Almost everybody uses a post office at some time, but rural consumers are slightly more likely to use post offices than urban residents. 98% of rural consumers ever use post offices (compared with 97% of urban consumers). People based in rural areas also use post offices more frequently. In both rural and urban areas consumers say that localness or proximity is the most important reason why they choose to use key services at post offices.¹⁹

Rural residents use post offices more often

Rural residents use post offices more often than those in urban areas. Whilst nearly 1 in 3 (31%) rural residents uses a post office at least weekly, in urban areas only 1 in 5 (21%) uses a post office at least weekly. 2 in 3 (67%) consumers in rural areas use a post office once a month or more (compared to 57% in urban areas). Consumers living in non-remote rural areas use post offices slightly more frequently than remote rural residents.

Figure 1. Rural consumers use post offices more frequently



Rural consumers visit most during core hours

Despite a considerable increase in the hours many post offices are open, people overwhelmingly use post offices during traditional opening hours, both in terms of day (Monday to Saturday) and time (9am-5.30pm). As in urban areas, the vast majority of rural (89%) and remote rural (93%) consumers who use post offices visit during traditional opening times. Most people who visit outside traditional hours, visit just outside these times.²⁰

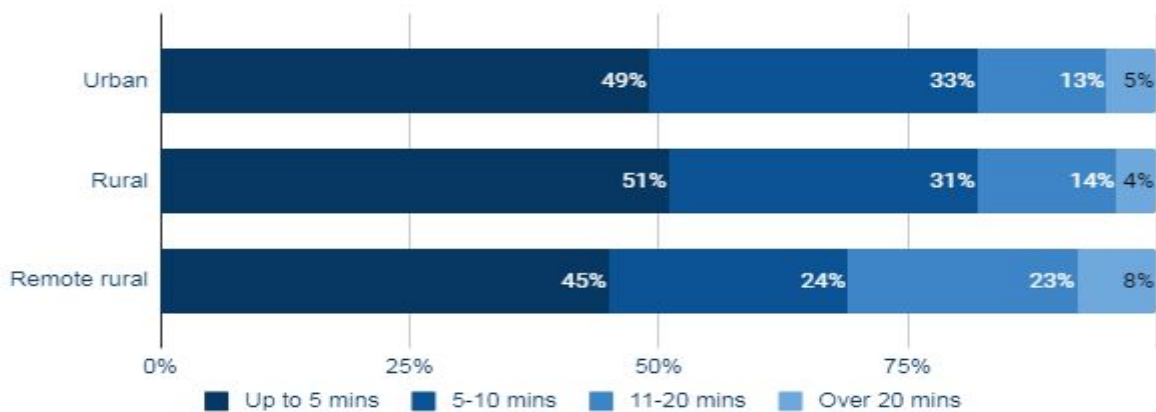
¹⁹ Citizens Advice, [Consumer Use of Post Offices](#), 2017

²⁰ 8am-9am or 5.30pm-7pm.

Remote residents have longest journey times

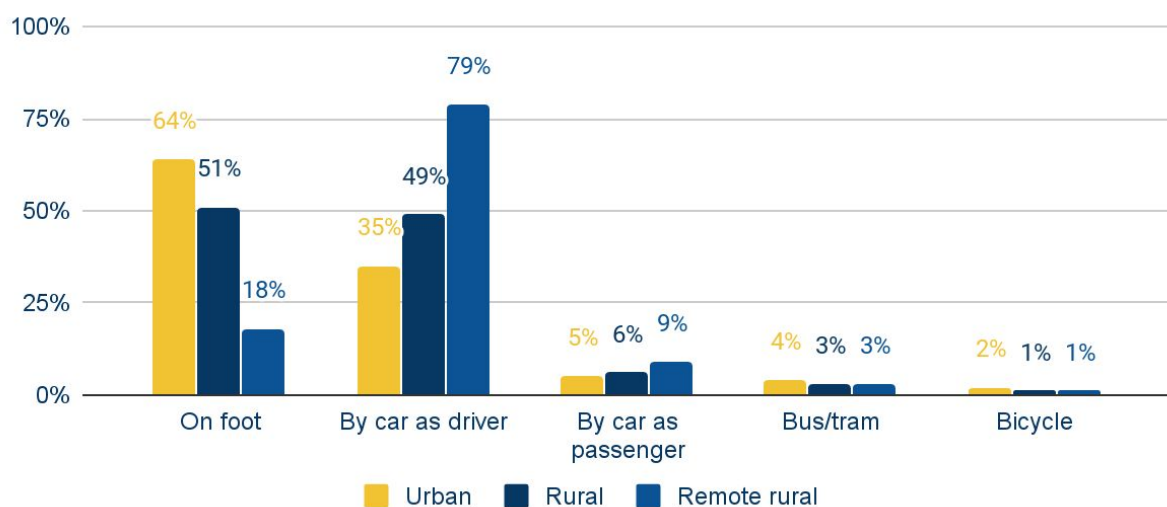
Consumers in non-remote rural areas have very similar journey times to consumers in urban areas. But those in remote areas have longer journey times. Just over half (51%) of customers in rural areas and 45% of those in remote areas are within 5 minutes journey time of the post office they use most. Those in remote rural areas are significantly more likely (31%) to have a journey time of over 10 minutes (18% in rural or urban areas).

Figure 2. Remote consumers have longest journey times



Non-remote and urban consumer journey times are similar despite the greater distance travelled in rural areas, because consumers use different methods of transport. Driving is more than twice as common in remote (79%) compared with urban (35%) areas. Walking decreases with rurality - 64% of urban, 51% of rural and 18% of remote rural post office users travel to the post office on foot.

Figure 3. Remote and rural consumers are more likely to drive



3. Rural consumers use key services more

Post offices provide consumers with a wide range of services including mail, banking and cash services, access to central government and council services and bill payments. Many of these services are available through a range of other channels as well as post offices.

Postal services are used most

Postal services are the most commonly used Post Office service in rural areas, as in urban areas. Almost all (99%) rural residents who visit post offices use them to access at least one postal service.²¹

However, for key postal services a slightly higher proportion of rural consumers than urban consumers are using post offices. Urban residents are more likely to use non-post office outlets for mail services. Alternative outlets, such as supermarkets selling stamps and parcelshops like CollectPlus, tend to be more accessible in urban areas.

80% of all remote rural consumers, 72% of rural consumers and 70% of urban consumers buy stamps or pay for letter postage at a post office. This difference is partly because the rural population is older, and older people send more letter post than younger people, regardless of where they live.

Rural residents are also more likely than urban residents to send parcels and use premium mail services (Signed For and Special Delivery) at post offices.

Figure 4. Remote and rural consumers use key mail services most



Similar proportions of rural (40%), remote rural (38%) and urban (38%) consumers use post offices to return mail order or internet shopping items. But fewer rural residents than urban residents need to collect mail orders that have not been delivered to them at home/work in general. And a correspondingly

²¹ Postal services: sending 1st or 2nd class letters, stamps, Special Delivery, Signed For, international letters, parcels, mail order returns and collections.

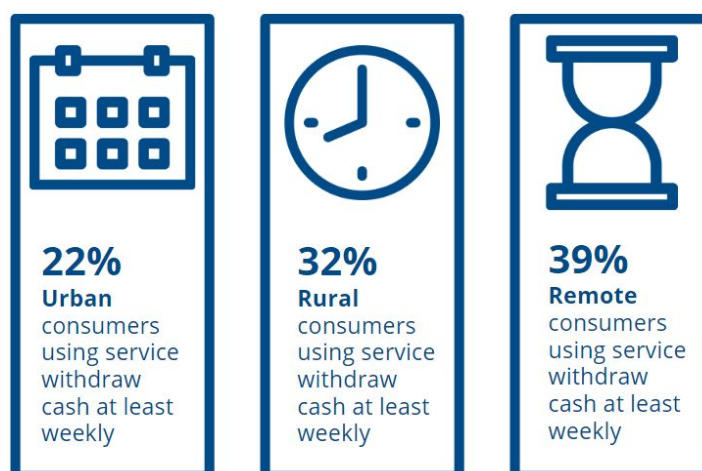
lower proportion of all rural (19%) and remote residents (15%) collect mail order items at post offices.²²

Banking services are used more in rural areas

Post offices are used significantly more for cash and banking in rural areas, than in urban areas. In rural areas nearly 1 in 4 (24%) consumers withdraw cash from their bank account at a post office. In urban areas 1 in 5 (19%) do so. The more remote consumers are, the more likely they are to withdraw cash from post offices weekly, as shown in figure 5 below.

An increasing number of high street banks now offer a broader range of banking services through post offices, and this provision is likely to become more important as rural bank branches continue to close.

Figure 5. Frequency of cash withdrawals increases with rurality



Other banking services at post offices are also used more by rural than by urban residents. 6% of all rural and remote rural residents deposit cheques at post offices (compared with 2% of urban residents). 4% of rural residents and 5% of those in remote areas use a post office to deposit cash (3% in urban areas).

Figure 6. Rural consumers make more use of banking services

Post Office service	Urban	Rural*
Cash withdrawal from bank acct	19%	24%
Cheque deposit	2%	6%
Cash deposit	3%	5%

* Rural = rural and remote rural

²² 21% of urban residents collect undelivered mail order items at post offices.

A considerable proportion of consumers who say they collect their state benefits and pension payments in cash, use a post office.²³ This Post Office service is used far more extensively by rural residents than urban residents. Over 1 in 3 people (36%) in rural areas who collect their payments in cash use a post office counter, but in urban areas only 1 in 5 (21%) do so.

Foreign currency exchange services at post offices are used by nearly 1 in 4 (24%) rural consumers, slightly more than the 22% in urban areas.

Rural and urban consumers use application and payment services in similar ways

Post offices offer access to a range of application services, including government forms, applications for passports and licences and identity checking services. Consumers can also pay utility bills and access some local council services, mainly payment services, at post offices. For the majority of application and payment services, rural residents use post offices in similar ways to urban residents.

Around half of all consumers make use of the Post Office's passport application form checking service, Passport Check and Send - 46% in rural areas and 42% in remote areas. In urban areas slightly more consumers (49%) use Passport Check and Send. The service is only available in larger post offices, which tend to be based in urban areas.

Only 6% of rural residents use a post office for identity checking services, for example when applying for a mortgage, new job or Home Office Biometric Residence permit. In urban areas this rises to 9%, which may reflect the higher usage of these services among under 45s and Black, Asian and minority ethnic consumers who are more likely to be urban residents.

More rural residents than urban residents pay their vehicle tax at a post office. Almost 1 in 4 rural (23%) and remote rural residents (24%) who pay vehicle tax, pay at a post office.²⁴ In contrast only 1 in 5 (19%) urban residents do so. There is little or no difference in the proportions of rural and urban consumers using post offices to pick up government forms²⁵ (48% of rural consumers), access council services²⁶ (5% rural) or pay utility bills (3% rural consumers).

²³ Only 4% of rural consumers say they withdraw their state benefits or pensions in cash at a post office counter. The majority of people who report withdrawing benefits or state pensions in cash use a bank account or bank ATM. The low figure may also be due to people viewing these payments as general money in a bank account, rather than specifically as a pension or benefit payment.

²⁴ 17% of all rural consumers pay for vehicle tax at a post office.

²⁵ For example, application forms for passports, driving licences or fishing rod licences.

²⁶ For example, paying for rent, council tax or parking fines; payments to consumers; obtaining transport passes.

4. Rural consumers use retail and community services

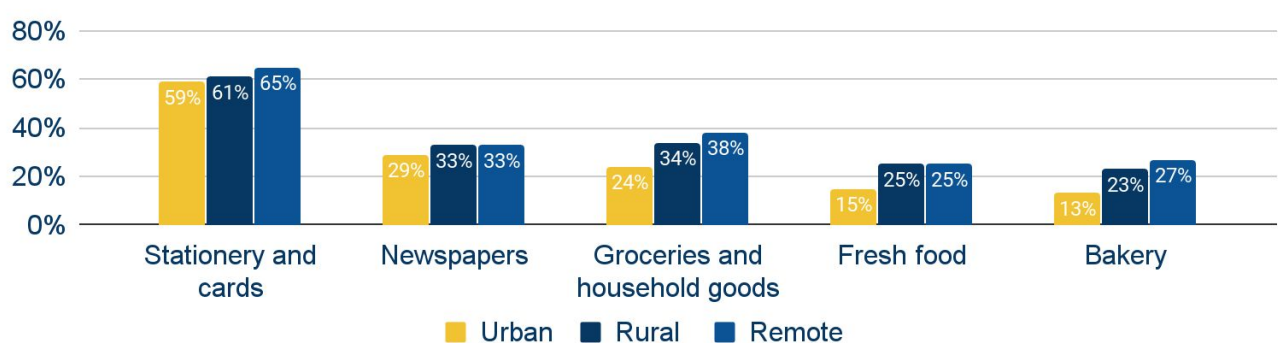
Consumers say they find it useful to be able to access postal and other Post Office services in the same place. People living in rural or remote rural areas are significantly more likely to say that this is very useful - 59% in remote rural and 55% in rural areas, compared with 46% in urban areas.

Rural consumers buy retail goods at post offices

The majority of rural consumers use a post office located within other premises. 6 in 10 rural (64%) and remote rural (60%) residents use post offices co-located or based in the premises of another retailer or enterprise, most commonly a convenience store.²⁷ 54% of urban residents say they use a co-located post office.

The co-location of post offices within retail outlets enables many consumers to buy retail goods in the same premises. This service is particularly well-used in rural areas, reflecting both the greater number of rural post offices based in retail outlets and the lower provision of alternative retailers. Almost 7 in 10 rural consumers purchase non-Post Office retail goods at post offices such as stationery and cards, groceries, household goods, newspapers and fresh food.

Figure 7. Retail goods purchasing increases with rurality



Many rural residents use the community services

As well as offering Post Office and retail services, post offices often play a role in providing more informal and social services ('community services'). These services are more heavily used in rural areas, and most of all in remote communities.

²⁷ Consumers also use post offices based in supermarkets. And less commonly in community centres, chemists, petrol stations, private houses and stationery/book shops.

Overall, 44% of rural post office customers use a post office for at least 1 community service, compared with 33% of urban customers. Post office community services include community information; help and advice; and the provision of a focal point for meeting other local residents.

Community services used by post office customers:

- Information about events and local services: 30% remote, 27% rural, 17% urban
- Place to meet friends and local residents: 31% remote, 26% rural, 16% urban
- Help and advice, such as informal assistance with services, help with state benefits, reading official letters, form filling: 15% remote, 19% rural, 18% urban

1 in 5 post office customers in rural (21%) and remote (22%) areas say they would lose contact with neighbours or friends without their post office.

Figure 8. Rural customers make significant use of community services²⁸



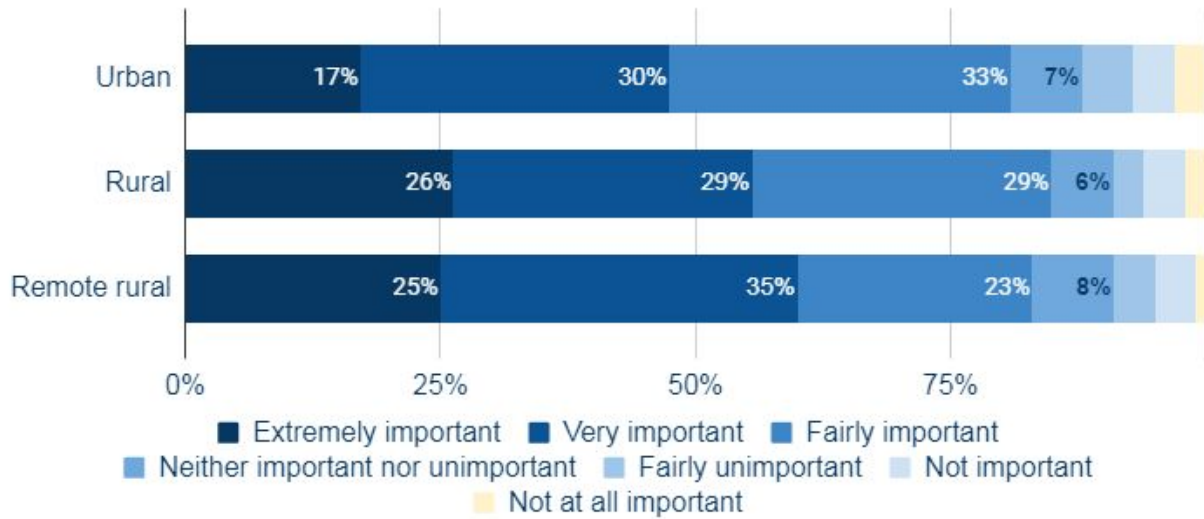
Rural residents are more likely to rate the Post Office as very important

Consumer views of the Post Office are overwhelmingly positive in both urban and rural areas. Almost all (97%) rural and urban of consumers in rural areas say the Post Office is 'trustworthy'. Over 9 in 10 see the Post Office as an 'official service in the community' (93% in rural and 94% in remote areas).

People in rural and remote areas are also much more likely than those in urban areas to describe the Post Office as 'very' or 'extremely important' to them. 60% of remote rural residents, 55% of rural residents and 47% of urban residents say this.

²⁸ Aggregate figures for rural and remote rural customers

Figure 9. Post offices are more important to rural and remote consumers



Perceived importance also increases with age, amongst those whose mobility is limited and amongst people who are digitally excluded.

5. Rural small businesses use post offices more

Rural small businesses are an important part of the UK's economy. For example, in England there are 2.4 million small businesses in rural areas, and 20% of all enterprises with fewer than 50 employees are rural.²⁹

The profile of rural small businesses is very different to those based in urban areas. On average, businesses in rural areas are smaller. There are also more small businesses per head of population in rural areas. In this report small businesses include businesses with up to 50 employees.

Rural businesses use post offices more than urban businesses

Rural small businesses are slightly more likely to use post offices than urban businesses, and they use them more frequently. 95% of rural small businesses ever use post offices, compared with 93% of those based in urban areas.

39% of all rural small businesses use a post office at least weekly (compared with 33% in urban areas). 74% of rural small businesses use a post office at least monthly (65% in urban areas).

Rural businesses use mail and cash services most



Rural small businesses make more use of the key Post Office services. Over 1 in 3 (36%) rural businesses use postal services at post offices at least weekly, compared with 1 in 4 (24%) urban businesses.

Rural small businesses are more likely than urban businesses to use a post office to pay for stamps or letter post.³⁰ They are also more likely to post letters/documents and parcels at a post office, and to use mail order return services.³¹

²⁹

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641459/Businesses_August_2017_Digest.pdf

³⁰ Pay for letter post: 76% remote small businesses, 73% rural, 71% urban.

³¹ Post letters and documents: 32% remote, 35% rural, 22% urban. Post parcels: 49% remote, 46% rural, 42% urban. Mail order returns: 22% all rural, 16% urban.

Small businesses in rural areas are almost twice as likely those in urban areas to use day-to-day banking services at post offices. 11% of rural businesses withdraw cash for their business from a post office, compared with 6% of urban businesses.

A small proportion of small businesses use post offices for less formal services. Again, this is more common in rural and remote areas, where 6% of rural and 10% of remote rural small businesses use a post office for advertising their business or services (3% in urban areas). Similarly, 4% of rural and 6% of remote businesses use the post office for informal networking.

3 in 4 (75%) of all small businesses find it useful to be able to access mail and other Post Office services in the same place. Businesses in rural areas are most likely to say this is very useful - 54% in rural areas and 48% in remote areas.

Businesses with shorter travel times use post offices more frequently

Small businesses are less likely than consumers to visit outside the 9am-5.30pm core opening times. However, 15% of small businesses in remote areas say that they use a post office between 5.30pm-7pm, a much higher proportion than the 5% that do this in urban and rural areas.

As for consumers, there is a sharp contrast in post office travel times for those in remote areas compared with those in urban or non-remote rural locations. 32% of small businesses in remote areas have a travel time greater than 10 minutes (13% in rural and urban areas). Small businesses with shorter travel times use post offices more frequently than those with longer travel times.

Business costs would rise without local post offices

If their local post office was not available, most small businesses say they would use another post office rather than another outlet or methods to access similar services. 71% of rural and 82% of remote small businesses would use another post office (65% in urban areas).

The negative impacts predicted by small businesses if their post office was not available, increases with rurality. This is particularly striking for costs. 76% of rural and 80% of remote rural small businesses anticipate higher costs to access services, compared with 55% of small businesses in urban areas. Over 8 in 10 rural small businesses (85% rural, 86% remote) say it would take them more time to access services, compared with 77% in urban areas.

87% of all rural small businesses expect they will be using use post offices as much as they do now, or more often, in 2 years' time.

6. People visit less now and use services differently

There have been significant changes to how post offices are used. We have compared results from our 2017 survey with equivalent results from a 2005 survey to show changes over time, both for frequency of visits and the range of services consumers use.

People use post offices less than a decade ago

Previous research indicates that a decade ago, people used rural post offices far more often than they do now.³² We found that in 2017, 31% of rural consumers used a post office at least weekly and this compares with 56% in 2005.

However, asking people about use now compared with 2 years ago suggests that use of post offices is rising among consumers, especially in rural and remote areas. A clear majority of consumers in rural (68%) and remote (69%) areas report using post offices about the same amount as 2 years ago. But there is a stronger net increase in the number of consumers using post offices more often in rural and remote areas than in urban areas. A greater number of rural consumers say they are using post offices more frequently than say they are using them less.

Most rural (68%) and remote (81%) small businesses say they are using post offices about the same amount as they did 2 years ago. Although there is a net increase in the number of rural small businesses using post offices more often and no change in remote areas.

Figure 10. Mixed net change in frequency of post office use compared with 2 years ago

	Urban	Rural	Remote rural
Consumers	+3%	+6%	+6%
Small businesses	-5%	+6%	0%

The types of services people use have changed

Over the last decade there have been considerable changes in the ways rural consumers use Post Office services. They use some more, such as sending parcels, cash withdrawals from bank accounts, currency exchange and passport application and checking. But others are used less, such as letter post, pension

³² ERM/MORI, The Future of the UK's Rural and Deprived Urban Post Office Network, 2006

and benefit withdrawal and paying for vehicle tax.

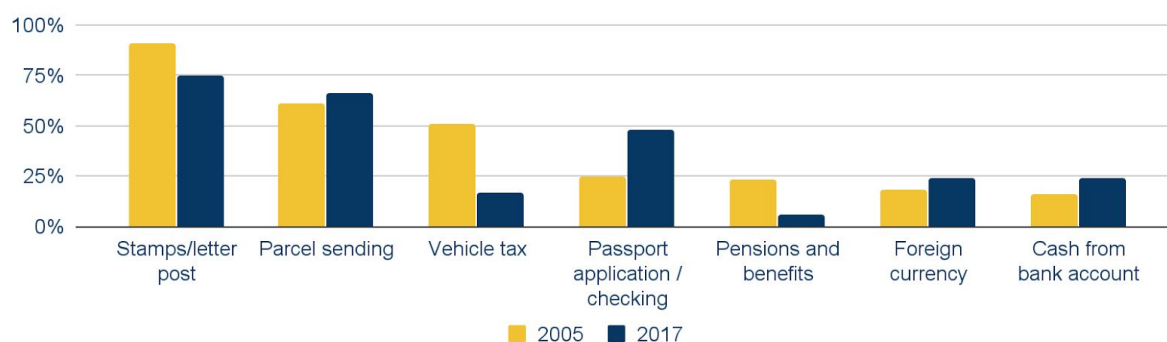
In 2005, 91% of rural consumers bought stamps or paid for letter post (letters, cards, documents etc) at a post office. But in 2017 this had fallen to 75% of rural consumers. Parcel sending by rural consumers has increased from 61% to 66% over the same period.

The number of rural residents paying for vehicle tax at post offices has fallen dramatically from half (51%) to fewer than 2 in 10 (17%) over the same period. The majority now pay online as they find it quicker and more convenient.

The proportion of rural residents who say they withdraw their state pensions and benefits in cash at a post office has also decreased significantly. In 2005 almost a quarter (23%) of the rural population used a post office to withdraw pensions and benefits, but by 2017 this has dropped to 6%. The majority of people who withdraw their state pensions and benefits in cash now use a bank counter or bank ATM.

However, the proportion of rural residents using post offices for other banking transactions has increased. Foreign currency transactions were used by 18% of rural consumers in 2005 to 24% in 2017. Withdrawing cash from a bank account has risen from 16% to 24%.

Figure 11. Services used by rural consumers changed between 2005-2017³³



Travel times have not changed

Over the last decade, travel times to post offices have hardly changed for rural consumers. In 2017, post offices were within a 5 minute journey for 47% of rural and remote residents (49% in 2005). However, there has been a slight fall in the proportions of rural residents getting to their post office on foot (40% of all rural post office users in 2017, 44% in 2005). There has been an increase in the proportions of rural residents driving (57% in 2017, 48% in 2005).³⁴

³³ ERM/MORI, The Future of the UK's Rural and Deprived Urban Post Office Network, 2006

³⁴ ERM/MORI, The Future of the UK's Rural and Deprived Urban Post Office Network, 2006

People expect frequency of use to stay the same

Most rural consumers and small businesses believe there will be little change to how often they use post offices in the near future.

4 in 5 consumers in rural (80%) and remote rural (81%) believe in 2 years' time they will use post offices the same amount as they do now. There is a mixed picture about future predicted use among the remaining 1 in 5 consumers, with some saying they will use post offices more and some less. Overall, 9 in 10 (89%) rural consumers anticipate they will be visiting post offices as much or more frequently in 2 years' time.

Consumers say costs, travel time and dependency would rise without local post office

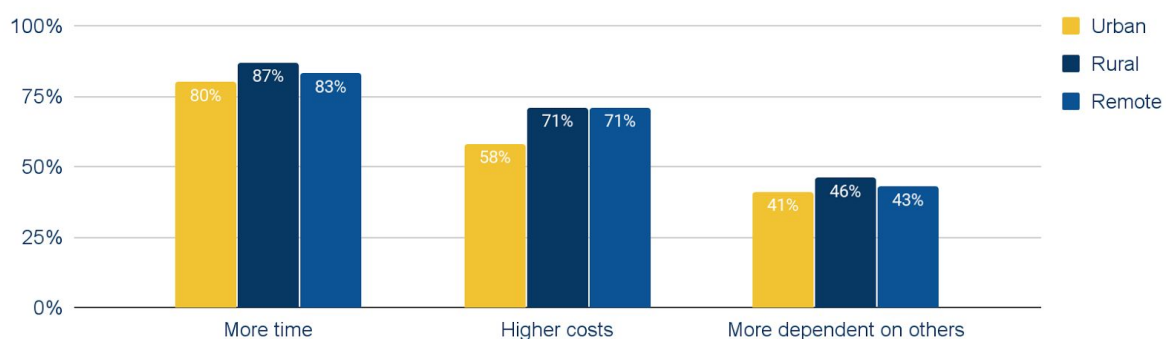
If their local post office was not available, a majority of consumers say that they would use an alternative branch for the services they currently use at their local post office. People living in rural (64%) and remote (58%) areas are more likely to say they would do this than those living in urban (54%) areas.

Around 1 in 5 rural consumers (21% in rural and 19% in remote areas) say they would use an online alternative (compared with 24% of urban consumers). A smaller proportion of rural consumers say they would use another local retailer (15% in rural and 19% in remote areas).

Rural residents are more likely to anticipate a negative impact than urban residents. The difference is particularly striking for the 7 in 10 (71%) of those in rural or remote areas who say it would cost them more to access services, compared with 6 in 10 (58%) in urban areas.

Over 8 in 10 consumers say it would take more time for them to access services (87% in rural and 83% in remote areas). In addition, more than 4 in 10 rural consumers (46% rural and 43% remote residents) say if their local post office was not available, they would be more dependent on others to access services.

Figure 12. Rural and remote consumers expect most negative impact if their post office were unavailable



Conclusion

Almost all rural consumers and small businesses use post offices, and they visit them more than people in urban areas. Rural residents particularly value the wide range of services provided under one roof.

Some of the differences in use between rural and urban areas may be because there are fewer alternative providers in the countryside, and a few differences are because the rural population is older.

Many Post Office services are used significantly more by the rural population. Mail remains the most accessed service. Its use increases with rurality and remote residents are using mail services most of all. Post Office banking services are also accessed more by rural consumers and small businesses than by those in urban areas.

Rural residents make a proportionately greater use of other key Post Office services including pension or benefit withdrawals, vehicle tax payments and the more informal community services. In addition, rural residents tend to buy more retail goods, such as groceries, at post offices.

Compared with 10 years ago, fewer rural residents now pay for letter post, withdraw benefits in cash or buy vehicle tax at a post office. But more use post offices to send parcels, withdraw cash from bank accounts and get passport applications checked.

The vast majority of rural consumers and businesses say they expect to be using a post office just as much or more in 2 years' time. If their local post office was not available, rural residents and businesses anticipate a more negative impact than those in urban areas. Most say they would visit another branch, which would cost them more in time and money. A considerable minority say they would become more dependent on others or lose contact with neighbours and friends.

This research highlights the importance of rural post offices to both consumers and small businesses, and the wide range of locally based services the network provides. It is vital that the government and Post Office Ltd continue to maintain the number of rural post offices and ensure its broad offer is retained.

Appendix - research method

Unless otherwise referenced, the figures quoted in this report are from a research study undertaken by Accent for Citizens Advice, Use of Essential Services Traditionally Provided at Post Offices (June 2017).

A total of 2,000 telephone interviews were undertaken with a representative sample of consumers and 1,000 interviews with small businesses (fewer than 50 employees). Over 800 consumers and 250 businesses were based in rural areas.

The sample was representative of the consumer population, including in terms of rural versus urban dwelling. Remote rural areas were oversampled to provide a more robust sample size of people in those areas. Data was weighted to correct for any imbalances in the sample and to ensure the final total was representative.

Consumers and small businesses were based in Great Britain and interviews took place between 14 January and 12 March 2017. The original findings and a summary report are available on our website.³⁵

The original research was undertaken by Accent in accordance with the market, opinion and social research international quality standard ISO 20252:2012. Additional analysis was conducted by Citizens Advice.

³⁵ <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/policy/post-policy-research/>

We help people find a way forward

Citizens Advice provides free,
confidential and independent advice
to help people overcome their problems.

We advocate for our clients and consumers
on the issues that matter to them.

We value diversity, champion equality
and challenge discrimination.

We're here for everyone.



citizensadvice.org.uk

Published October 2017

Citizens Advice is an operating name of The National Association of Citizens
Advice Bureaux.

Registered charity number 279057.

Rural Policing Update – Thirsk & Malton

Pcso 3535 Andy Birkinshaw (Ryedale)

Pcso 6786 Kimberley Laws (Hambleton)

Page 63



Age 17

Current issues within Thirsk & Malton

- Page 01
- Burglary & Theft
 - Poaching
 - Raptor Persecution
 - Sheep worrying



RURAL CRIME MAPPING OCTOBER 2022-MARCH 2023



Map Options

Legend **Tools**

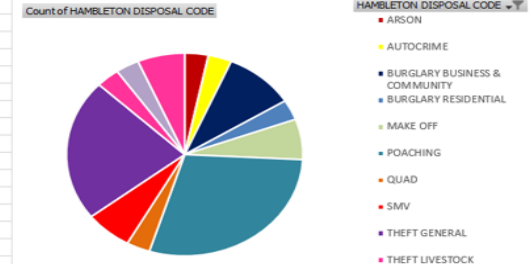
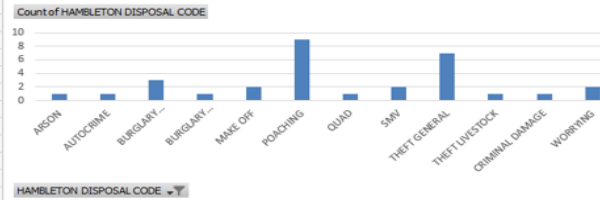
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- Quad Bike [13 of 19 in view]
- Livestock [14 of 17 in view]
- Heritage [2 of 2 in view]
- Auto Crime [18 of 28 in view]
- Burglary [52 of 92 in view]
- Theft [53 of 79 in view]
- Day time Poaching [34 of 46 in v...
- Night time poaching [60 of 73 in ...]
- Theft GPS [3 of 4 in view]
- Theft Cooking Oil [3 of 5 in view]
- Burglary Attempt [24 of 35 in vie...
- Stolen Vehicle [33 of 43 in view]
- Op Byways [8 of 11 in view]
- Rapture [5 of 5 in view]

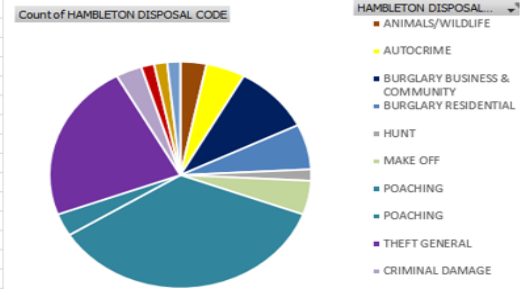
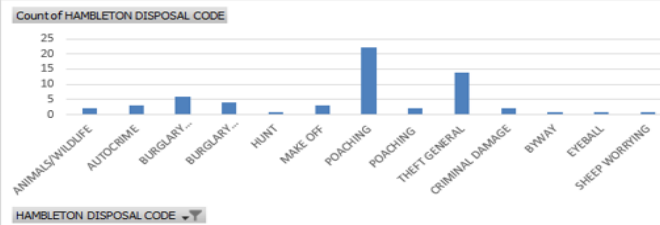
The Stats – Hambleton

August – November 2022

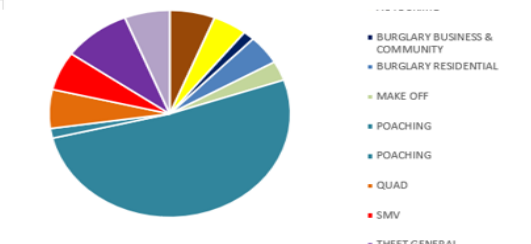
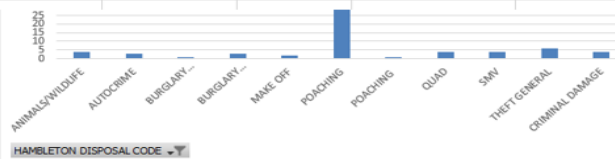
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ARSON	1	1
AUTOCRIME	1	1
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY	3	3
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL	1	1
MAKE OFF	2	2
POACHING	9	9
QUAD	1	1
SMV	2	2
THEFT GENERAL	7	7
THEFT LIVESTOCK	1	1
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	1	1
WORRYING	2	2
Grand Total	31	



Row Labels	Count of HAMBLETON DISPOSAL CODE	SEPTEMBER
ANIMALS/WILDLIFE	2	2
AUTOCRIME	3	3
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY	6	6
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL	4	4
HUNT	1	1
MAKE OFF	3	3
POACHING	22	22
POACHING	2	2
THEFT GENERAL	14	14
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	2	2
BYWAY	1	1
EYEBALL	1	1
SHEEP WORRYING	1	1
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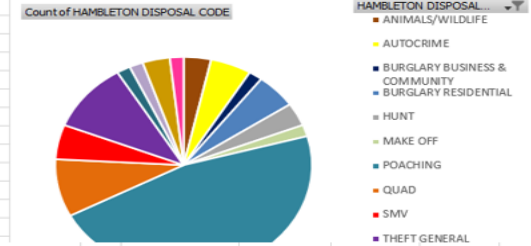
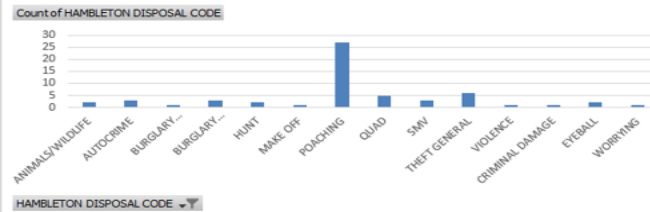


BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY	1
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL	3
MAKE OFF	2
POACHING	34
POACHING	1
QUAD	4
SMV	4
THEFT GENERAL	6
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	4
Grand Total	66

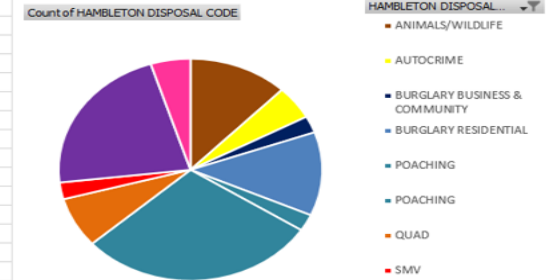
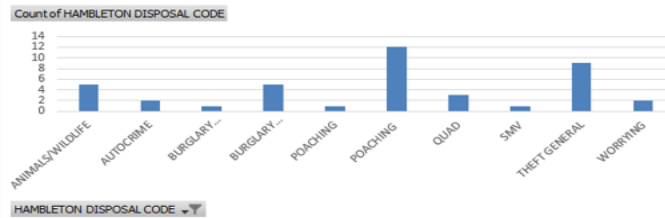


The stats Hambleton November 2022-January 2023

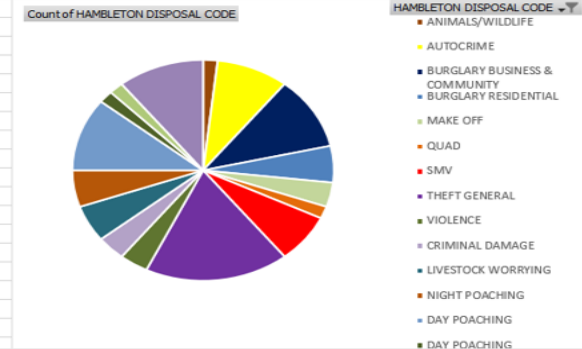
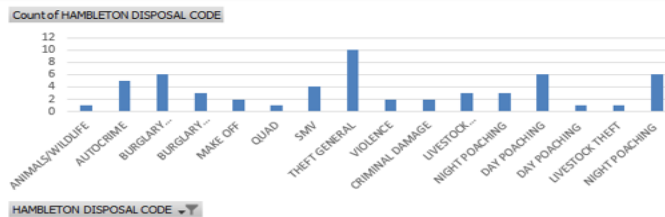
Row Labels	Count of HAMBLETON DISPOSAL CODE	NOVEMBER
ANIMALS/WILDLIFE		2
AUTOCRIME		3
BURGLARY BUSINESS & C		1
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL		3
HUNT		2
MAKE OFF		1
POACHING		27
QUAD		5
SMV		3
THEFT GENERAL		6
VIOLENCE		1
CRIMINAL DAMAGE		1



Row Labels	Count of HAMBLETON DISPOSAL CODE	DECEMBER
ANIMALS/WILDLIFE		5
AUTOCRIME		2
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY		1
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL		5
POACHING		1
POACHING		12
QUAD		3
SMV		1
THEFT GENERAL		9
WORRYING		2
Grand Total		41



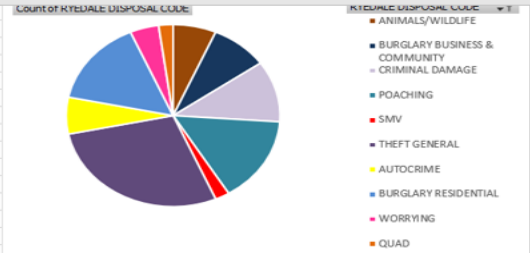
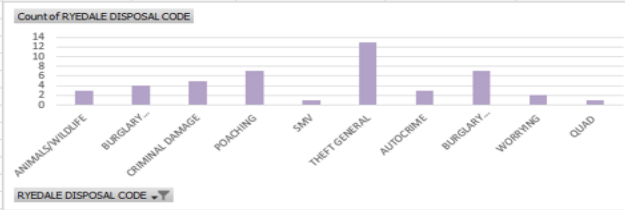
Row Labels	Count of HAMBLETON DISPOSAL CODE	JANUARY
ANIMALS/WILDLIFE		1
AUTOCRIME		5
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY		6
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL		3
MAKE OFF		2
QUAD		1
SMV		4
THEFT GENERAL		10
VIOLENCE		2
CRIMINAL DAMAGE		2
LIVESTOCK WORRYING		3
NIGHT POACHING		3
DAY POACHING		6
DAY POACHING		1
LIVESTOCK THEFT		1
NIGHT POACHING		6
Grand Total		56



The Stats – Ryedale August –November 2022

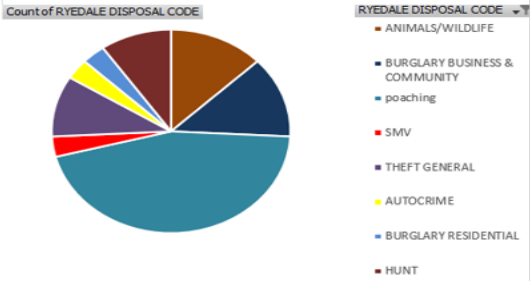
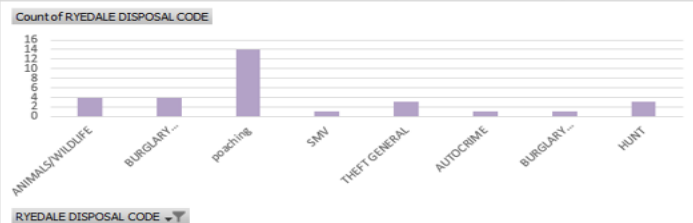
RYEDALE
 Row Labels Count of RYEDALE DISPOSAL CODE AUGUST

ANIMALS/WILDLIFE	3
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY	4
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	5
POACHING	7
SMV	1
THEFT GENERAL	13
AUTOCRIME	3
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL	7
WORRYING	2
QUAD	1
Grand Total	46



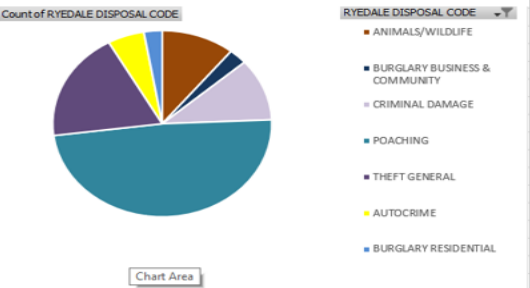
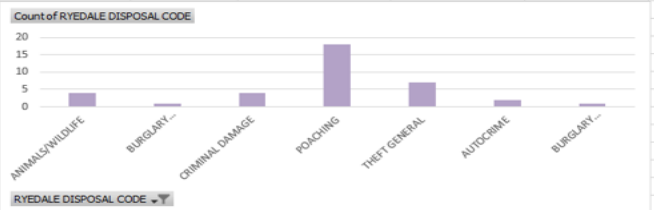
RYEDALE
 Row Labels Count of RYEDALE DISPOSAL CODE SEPTEMBER

ANIMALS/WILDLIFE	4
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY	4
poaching	14
SMV	1
THEFT GENERAL	3
AUTOCRIME	1
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL	1
HUNT	3
Grand Total	31



RYEDALE
 Row Labels Count of RYEDALE DISPOSAL CODE OCTOBER

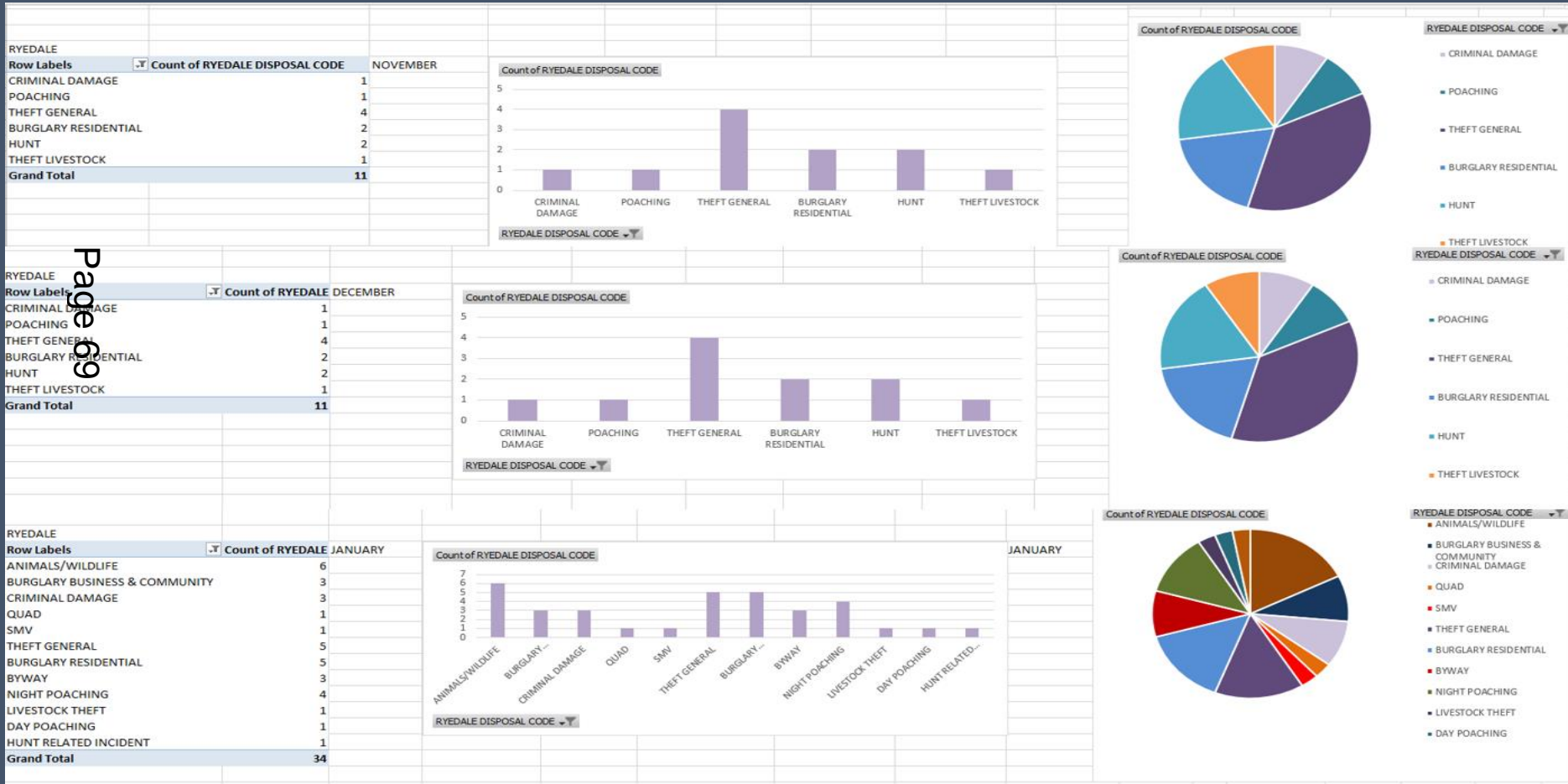
ANIMALS/WILDLIFE	4
BURGLARY BUSINESS & COMMUNITY	1
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	4
POACHING	18
THEFT GENERAL	7
AUTOCRIME	2
BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL	1
Grand Total	37



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The stats Ryedale November 2022- January 2023

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Op Checkpoint

- Ran by forces across North of England
- Tackling cross-border criminality
- RTF/NPT/RPG/MRW
- ANPR
- Intelligence led
- Proactive patrols



OPERATION GALILEO

- Targeting poaching/coursing
- Runs alongside Op Galileo
- Stepped 'fairways' approach to a Criminal Behaviour Order
- First poaching season in action

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OPERATION GALILEO

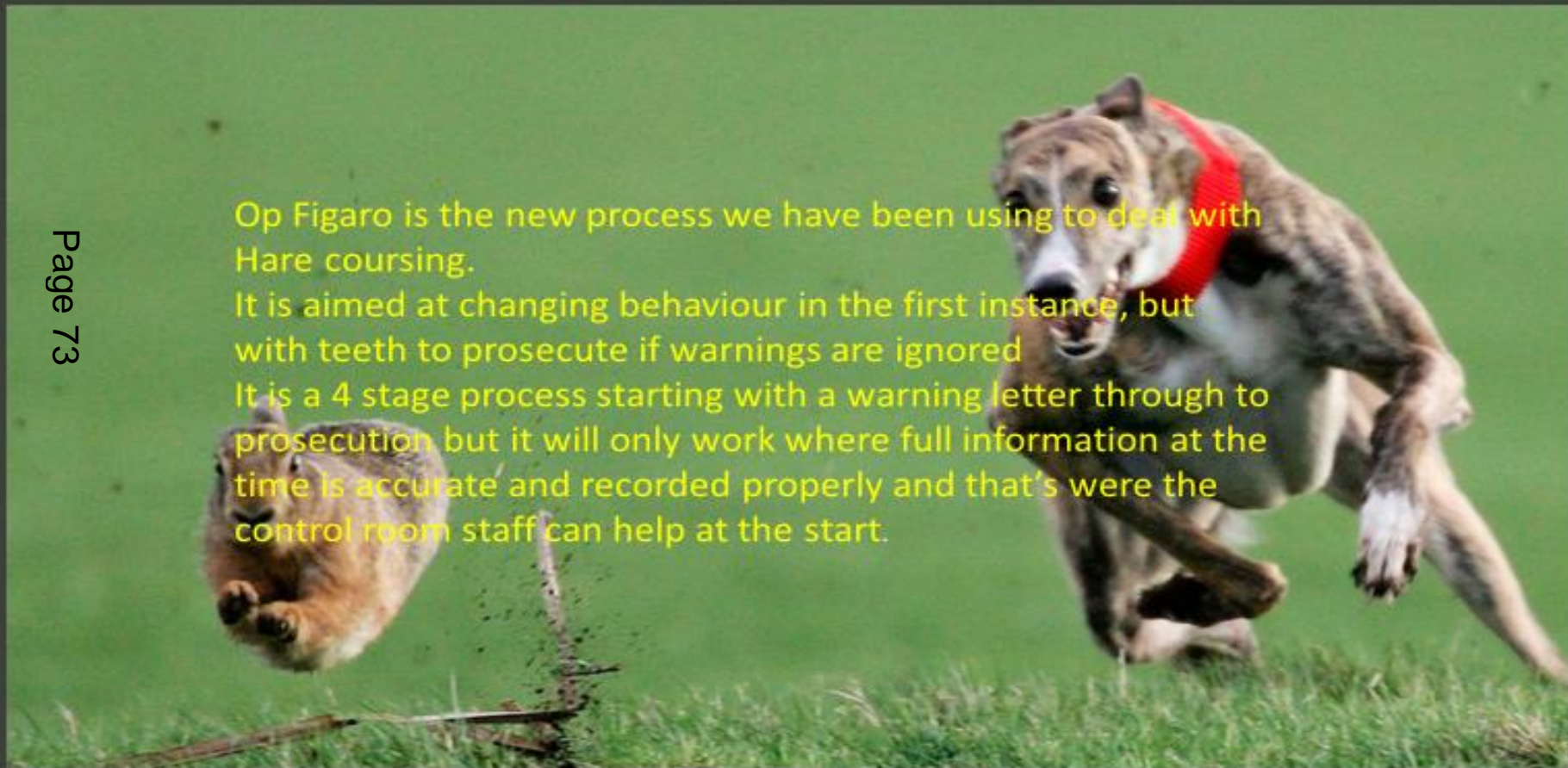
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- North Yorkshire gets about **1500** reports of poaching and hare coursing per year
- It is second only to theft in rural areas in terms of numbers of incidents.
- The **impact on farmers** is much greater than everyone realises – stress, Domestic Violence, frustration, abuse, intimidation, threats, criminal damage, reprisals, and fear.
- The **impact on our wildlife** is pointless and selfish cruelty
-often for betting between themselves or live streamed online - based on how good the dogs are at chasing down hares.

OPERATION GALILEO

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Op Figaro is the new process we have been using to deal with Hare coursing. It is aimed at changing behaviour in the first instance, but with teeth to prosecute if warnings are ignored. It is a 4 stage process starting with a warning letter through to prosecution but it will only work where full information at the time is accurate and recorded properly and that's where the control room staff can help at the start.



OPERATION GALILEO

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OP FIGARO IS
NOW A
9
FORCE
OPERATION



A large stag with impressive antlers stands in a field of tall grass. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a hazy sky. The text is overlaid on the image in a bright yellow color.

It may seem like a lot of work to get from ongoing nuisance to a CPN.

BUT

A CPN never dies, we don't have to achieve this again just so long as we can complete the process from first letter to CPN in 12 months.

For that reason every incident counts. We don't have to prove the complex offence of poaching.

REMEMBER 1 CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR ORDER(CBO) IS FOR ALL 9 FORCES

Of all the offences that are committed in rural communities, our inability to date to effectively address poaching is the one that creates lack of confidence in North Yorkshire Police. This process is turning that around.

The most important message, if you forget everything else, is ensuring that an address given at the time of the incident is correctly recorded.

Rural Watch- WhatsApp

- Transitioning to a modern way of delivering local policing
- Ryedale groups: Helmsley, Pickering and Wolds.
All 3 are working together and installing their own ANPR cameras to help protect Ryedale
- Hambleton groups: Stokesley, Bedale, Girsby , East and West Harsley, Thirsk and TEB
- Bedale are also looking to install their own ANPR cameras.

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Raptor Persecution – Op Owl

- Raising awareness – “be our eyes & ears”
- Unfortunately still worst area in England
- Multi-Agency
- Proactivity to disrupt offenders
- Wildlife crime trained officers



Raptor Persecution – Op Owl



← FEN TRAP LEGAL



**BUT PLACE THEM
ON A POLE IN THE
AIR
ILLEGAL**

**POLE TRAP
RECOGNISE IT
REPORT IT**

AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE

AVIAN INFLUENZA

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REMEMBER TO REPORT THE DEAD BIRD TO DEFRA ON 03459335577 AS THEY WILL DISPATCH A TRAINED OFFICER WITH FULL PPE TO RECOVER THE BIRD AND TESTED I

AVIAN INFLUENZA HAS ALSO BEEN DETECTED IN MINK , FOXES AND CATS. TAKE THE PRECAUTIONS AND LETS NOT MAKE THIS THE NEW COVID

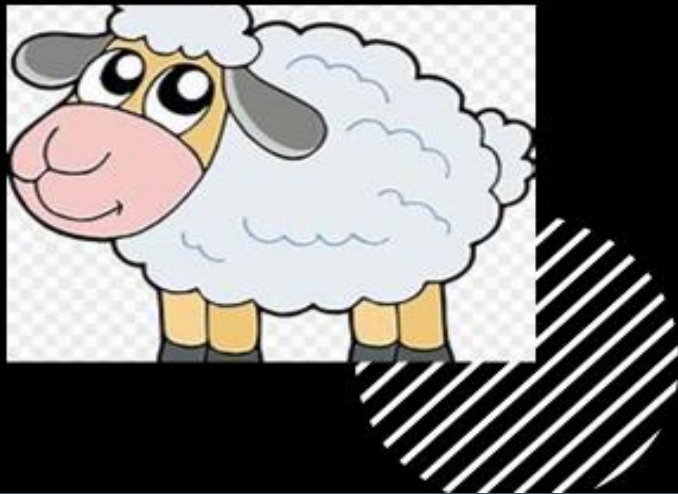


SHEEP WORRYING STILL A PROBLEM IN NORTH YORKSHIRE

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SHEEP WORRYING

SHEEP WORRYING STILL A PROBLEM IN NORTH YORKSHIRE



...and we have our share of the shocking National Sheep Worrying problem

- Dogs loose in fields is a major problem across the whole UK – either being off the lead when being walked or escaping from gardens.
- Up to 15,000 sheep were killed last year nationally
- Cost of livestock worrying across the UK may be as high as £1.4 million
- If you see anyone with a dog near a field of sheep, please ask them to keep the dog on the lead

WARNING!



KEEP YOUR DOG ON ITS LEAD

Farmers are within their
rights to shoot dogs
worrying their livestock.

**Farm
Watcher UK**
STOP BEZAL CRIMES!


facebook.com/farmwatcher



**WARNING YOU
ARE AT RISK
OF LOSING YOUR
DOG IF THE
POLICE FIND IT IN
A FIELD WITH
SHEEP**

POLICE

- Pcs0 3535 Andy Birkinshaw Ryedale
- Andrew.Birkinshaw@northyorkshire.police.uk
- Pcs0 6786 Kimberley Laws
- Kimberley.Laws@northyorkshire.police.uk
- Rural Task Force
- North Yorkshire Police



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North Yorkshire County Council

Thirsk & Malton Area Constituency Committee

31 March 2023

Work Programme

Purpose of Report

That Members review the Committee's work programme, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the area.

Work Programme

The draft Work Programme for 2022/23 is attached at Appendix 1, and takes account of the areas of work identified by the previous Committee. These items could be considered during 2022/23 by the new Committee and Members can prioritise these for consideration at future meetings. Members can also suggest new issues for consideration that can be placed into the Work Programme.

It is recommended that the new Committee regularly revisits the Work Programme to review areas that could be covered in forthcoming meetings with additional, relevant items identified by Members added to the Work Programme.

Remit of the committee

The Area Constituency Committees:

- Act as a forum for Members to bring forward issues affecting their local Electoral Divisions
- Hear and respond to questions and statements from members of the public relating to anything affecting the community within the constituency area
- Agree a Work Programme which lists items of business which the Committee wishes to consider at future meetings
- Undertake meaningful scrutiny of local health issues within their constituency area, complementing the strategic work undertaken by the Scrutiny of Health Committee
- Undertake meaningful scrutiny of local transport issues within their constituency area, complementing the strategic work undertaken by Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Act as consultees in major decisions that affect their constituency area (including responding to consultations)
- Make recommendations on the application of Innovation funding (supported by the Stronger Communities Team)
- Develop a working relationship with the local MP, sharing updates and information on relevant local issues being addressed by the committee.

Scheduled meeting dates

The Meeting dates for 2023/24 are set out below:-

Friday 16th June 2023 at 2pm

Friday 29th September 2023 at 10am

Friday 1st December 2023 at 2pm

Wednesday 17th January 2024 at 10am – Budget briefing

Friday 22nd March 2024 at 2pm

The majority of the meetings have been arranged for a Friday to enable the attendance of the local MP, subject to the committee issuing him an invitation to attend.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- (i) Consider, review and develop the Committee's Work Programme;
- (iii) Note the date and time of scheduled meetings for 2023/24.

Steve Loach
Principal Democratic Services Officer

January 2023

**Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee
Work Programme 2022/23**

10am on Friday 30 September 2022

Subject	Description
Appointments to Outside Bodies	To further consider appointments to Outside bodies that were not completed at the previous meeting and to ratify those made between meetings.
Scoping the details required from reports on the provision of dentistry in the area, the availability of GPs and the response of the Ambulance Service.	To discuss the issues that need to be addressed from a Constituency Area basis from reports on the matters highlighted – Daniel Harry/Chris Phillipson – Scrutiny of Health
North Yorkshire Cultural Framework	Overview of new Cultural Framework - Mark Kibblewhite
Levelling Up bids	To consider the bids for levelling up funding submitted to the Government and their potential impact on the Constituency area.
Work Programme	Review of work undertaken to date and future topic proposals

9am on Friday 20 January 2023

Budget Briefing	To consider a briefing on the Council's budget for 2023/24 and onwards
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4pm on Friday 27 January 2023

Attendance of local MP	MP Kevin Hollinrake to share his views on issues in the area constituency
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10am on Friday 3 February 2023

Local Bus Services	Issue to be raised by County Councillor Joy Andrews and an opportunity for other Members to raise any related issues.
Motion on 20s Plenty	To consider a motion on participating in a 20s Plenty initiative in the Constituency Area.
Schools, Educational Achievement & Finance	An annual update on the issues outlined will be provided by various representatives of Children and Young Peoples Services
Cultural Framework for North Yorkshire	Overview of new Cultural Framework - Mark Kibblewhite (deferred from 30 September 2022)
National Highways Update on maintenance and improvement activity	To provide an update from National Highways on issues affecting the Constituency Area and on a public consultation on the A64 Hopgrove Junction
The provision of dentistry in the area, the availability of GPs and the response of the Ambulance Service – area details	To discuss the details provided in respect of the Constituency Area on the matters highlighted and consider the next steps

Work Programme	Review of future topics relevant to the Constituency
10am on Friday 31 March 2023	
Subject	Description
Attendance of local MP	Opportunity for MP Kevin Hollinrake to share his views on issues affecting the constituency area
Stronger Communities	Annual update on the work within local communities by Stronger Communities Teams
Rural Policing	Update from the NYP Rural Taskforce Unit – Clive Turner (Head of Taskforce)
Environment Agency Update	Attendance of Environment Agency representative to provide an overview of the issues affecting the quality of the water and pollution levels in the water courses/streams running through various villages in the constituency area.
Work Programme	Review of future topics relevant to the Constituency area
2pm on Friday 16 June 2023	
Subject	Description
Attendance of local MP	Opportunity for MP Kevin Hollinrake to share his views on issues affecting the constituency area
LGR, Devolution and future role of ACCS	To discuss the development of ACCs, their purpose and additional roles following the introduction of the new Unitary Authority.
Environment Agency Update	Attendance of Environment Agency representative to provide an overview of the issues affecting the quality of the water and pollution levels in the water courses/streams running through various villages in the constituency area.
Work Programme	Review of future topics relevant to the Constituency area

Areas of work identified but not scheduled:

1. North Yorkshire Police Update - Presentation on crime data for the constituency area
2. Supported Living - review of supported living provision and links to future development of the NYCC services
3. Heritage and Natural Environment - Tourism and the promotion of local heritage and natural environment
4. Mobile phone coverage – black spots – proposals for improvements
5. Unpaid Carers (young and old)
6. Fracking
7. Review of primary care services in and around Easingwold – referral from Scrutiny of Health (after December 2022)
8. Follow up on Rural Commission recommendations

Dates and times of Meeting 2023/24:-

Friday 16th June 2023 at 2pm

Friday 29th September 2023 at 10am

Friday 1st December 2023 at 2pm

Wednesday 17th January 2024 at 10am – Budget briefing

Friday 22nd March 2024 at 2pm

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