

North Yorkshire Council

Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 7th March 2024, commencing at 10.01am.

Councillor Richard Foster in the Chair and Councillors Philip Barrett, Barbara Brodigan, Andy Brown, Nick Brown, Felicity Cunliffe-Lister (Remote), Robert Heseltine, Nathan Hull, Andrew Murday, Simon Myers, David Noland, Andy Solloway, David Staveley and Andrew Williams.

In attendance: Rt Hon Julian Smith MP; Councillor Carl Les; Graham North, Rail Strategy and Performance Officer, York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Officers present: Officers present: Amanda Newbold, Assistant Director, Education and Skills; Sue Turley, Strategic Planning Officer; Julian Rudd, Head of Regeneration (South & West); Sharon Sunter, Economic Development Manager; Andrew Laycock, Economic Development Officer; Sharon Hudson, Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager; Alice Fox, Senior Scrutiny Officer; Stephen Loach, Principal Democratic Services Officer; Vicky Davies, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and David Smith, Democratic Services Officer.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

99 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received for Councillor David Ireton.

100 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 December 2023

Considered –

The minutes of the meeting of the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee held on 14 December 2023.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Minutes of the meeting of the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee held on 14 December 2023, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

101 Declarations of Interest

None.

102 Update from RT Hon Julian Smith MP

Considered –

A verbal update from the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP, provided remotely using MS Teams.

The Chair invited the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP to provide an update on his areas of work, concerns and priorities before there was a discussion with Members. The key points are summarised below:

- Mr Smith informed Members that the HS2 funding reallocation was taking place and

would lead to more NYC support.

- Members queried the situation with the £86,000 adult social care cost cap. Mr Smith informed Members that he would find the latest position on this and provide information.
- Members raised a concern that the threshold for calling a Parish Poll was too low for larger town or city councils. Mr Smith agreed to raise this with ministers.
- Members raised concerns over oil prices, suggesting that more support was necessary. Mr Smith agreed to continue to investigate this.
- Members suggested that the adult social care funding that councils receive needs to be reviewed by national government.
- Members welcomed the proposals to introduce requirements for planning permissions for short term lets in tourist hot spots but queried when these would come into force. Mr Smith informed Members that this proposal was following the normal route through parliament and that he was aware of its need.
- Mr Smith informed Members of an increase in the number of measles cases and informed the public of the vaccination opportunities.

Members thanked the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP for attending the meeting.

Resolved –

- a) That the information highlighted above is circulated to Members.

103 Public Participation

There was none.

104 Receipt of Petition 'seeking an investigation into the leadership of the Upper Nidderdale Federation'.

Considered –

A report by David Smith, Democratic Services Officer, advising the Committee that a petition with the wording 'Petition seeking an investigation into the Leadership of the Upper Nidderdale Federation' had been received.

Stephen Ramsden and Fee Ewbank introduced the petition, making the following points:

- It was suggested that the leadership of the Upper Nidderdale Federation had made some decisions and actions which some deem to be questionable. Members were informed that school staff had raised concerns and that members of the governing board had resigned.
- The petition was not seeking to stop the potential closure of the school, but was asking for an investigation into the leadership of the Upper Nidderdale Federation.
- The petition organisers believed all other avenues had been exhausted and that the governing board is accountable to the local authority.

Following their statements, Members discussed the petition for a period of fifteen minutes. Members were made aware of the options available to them, as detailed in Paragraph 5.1 of the report. The key points are summarised below:

- Amanda Newbold, Assistant Director, Education and Skills, clarified to Members that the school was not an academy, but instead a school maintained by the council.
- There was uncertainty as to whether the council is responsible for carrying out an investigation. Members felt that further review would be beneficial to establish the

situation.

- It was proposed and seconded that the petition be referred to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A review by this Committee should not contest the potential closure of the school but be a general investigation into the issues raised by the petition.

It was noted that no decision has been made to close the school, and a report will be considered by the Council's Executive on 19th March 2024.

A vote was taken on the motion and there were 13 Councillors in favour and 1 abstention.

Resolved –

- a) That the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee refers the petition to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further investigation.

105 Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund for the Area Constituency Committees

Considered –

A report by Sharon Sunter, Economic Development Manager, updating Members on the current budget position of the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund in relation to this Committee and presenting a Project Scoping Form for consideration.

Officers clarified that the funding which had been included in Craven District Council's approved 2022/23 Capital Programme had been for the development of the business centre and that no funding had been allocated to the implementation of the Langcliffe Quarry Conservation Management Plan. The ACC contribution would enable delivery of the project to begin earlier, ensuring that the timelines for UKSPF funding are met and additional grant monies secured.

It was proposed and seconded that the Project Scoping Form for the project: Langcliffe Quarry – A History of the Limeworks Industry, is formally endorsed by the Skipton and Ripon ACC and is presented to the Corporate Director (Community Development) for the project to be funded from the 2023/24 Skipton and Ripon ACC budget allocation.

A vote was taken on the motion and there were 12 Councillors in favour and 2 abstentions.

Members highlighted the importance of progressing with other project ideas and Officers committed to bringing a Ripon-area based project(s) to the ACC meeting scheduled for 6th June 2024. Multiple Members agreed that the Ripon area requires additional support from Officers.

Resolved –

- a) That the Project Scoping Form for the project: Langcliffe Quarry – A History of the Limeworks Industry, is formally endorsed by the Skipton and Ripon ACC and is presented to the Corporate Director (Community Development) for the project to be funded from the 2023/24 Skipton and Ripon ACC budget allocation.
- b) That proposals for eligible projects in the Ripon-area are brought before Members at the 6th June 2024 ACC meeting.

106 Draft Bentham Masterplan - Report of the Corporate Director (Community Development)

Considered –

A report by Andrew Laycock, Economic Development Officer, updating Members on the development of a community led Masterplan for Bentham and presenting the final draft plan for information.

The plan sets out local priorities for Bentham, identifying areas of activity and providing the strategic context to support business planning and funding bids should an organisation wish to progress a specific project. Members felt that improved transport infrastructure was essential for the future prosperity of the town. Members also noted that Bentham had a couple of key, larger companies and that improvement to the transport network was important to ensure that they are helped and protected.

Members asked that Officers work with community representatives to promote and apply for funding where appropriate.

Resolved –

- a) That the Committee gives thanks to the volunteer Bentham Masterplan Group for their work in consulting, drafting and overseeing the development of the Plan.
- b) That the community-based nature of the masterplan, including the vision, themes, and areas of activity, is noted.
- c) That the masterplan is given due regard to help inform and evidence the ACC's consideration and recommendations on future activity within the Bentham area.

107 Verbal Update on the Development of Rail Services within the Skipton and Ripon Constituency Area

Considered –

A verbal update by Graham North, Rail Strategy and Performance Officer, York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, that covered the development of rail services in the Constituency area.

The following key points were made in the discussion:

- Graham gave an update on the current situation of rail services, outlining the current lines, stations, and service providers.
- Information on the Rail Reform Bill and the establishment of Great British Railways was provided.
- Updates were provided on the bids for the Department for Transport's Access for All programme:
 - As Skipton Station already has a ramp, it was unsuccessful with its bid.
 - Thirsk Station has submitted a strong bid. Members also suggested that this station improves its parking.
 - Horton in Ribblesdale was successful in receiving funding.
- There was a discussion on the reopening of some lines in the area:
 - Skipton – Colne: This is being seen as a strategic, national, scheme due to the

- high construction costs.
 - Harrogate – Ripon – Northallerton: A bid for the reopening of this line was unsuccessful because there was a lack of local support. All Members supported this link.
 - Hawes – Garsdale on the Settle – Carlisle line: This bid was unsuccessful.
 - Connecting Northallerton to the Settle – Carlisle line using the Wensleydale railway: There has been no progress on this.
 - Skipton – Embsay: There is a need to investigate which platform in Skipton Station these trains would use.
 - Ribble Head – Manchester: It was reported that from 8th June 2024, every Saturday there will be two Northern services serving Ribble Head, Settle, Hellifield, Clitheroe, East Lancashire, Bolton, Rochdale and Manchester. Those present hoped that this service would become more frequent. There were concerns that this line would predominantly be used for freight.
 - Swinden Quarry – Skipton: In 2042, use of the quarry is due to cease, leaving the railway redundant unless it can be used by passengers.
- It was reported that a new station at Cross Hills would cost over £20 million.
 - Modelling has been done to see how best to improve Kildwick crossing. A few technical improvements have been identified which should reduce barrier downtime. Other solutions don't seem to improve the situation.
 - Members suggested having a station nearer to Airedale Hospital, highlighting that this is the perfect opportunity given the rebuild.
 - Members also asked Officers to investigate Hellifield Station's 'road to nowhere'.
 - Members discussed how to reduce the number of people driving to Steeton Station in order to get to Leeds, and Ilkley Station in order to get to Harrogate.

The Committee asked that regular updates on rail services are provided at meetings.

Resolved –

- a) That the update is noted.

Councillor Andrew Williams left the meeting at 11.50am.

Councillor Nick Brown left the meeting at 12.07pm.

A break was taken between 12.27pm and 12.36pm.

108 Modality

Considered –

A report by David Smith, Democratic Services Officer, providing Members with an update regarding their concerns over Modality run GP practices.

After discussing the information in the report, Members agreed to invite somebody senior from Modality to the 6th June 2024 meeting. Members reinforced that concerns have been raised by residents within their divisions.

Resolved –

- a) That Members invited somebody senior from Modality to the 6th June 2024 meeting.

109 Annual Education Report

Considered –

A report by Amanda Newbold, Assistant Director – Education and Skills, Howard Emmett, Assistant Director – Strategic Resources, and Janet Crawford, Assistant Director – Inclusion, informing Members of the local educational landscape, educational achievement and the financial challenges which affect schools in the Skipton and Ripon Constituency area.

Members raised that North Yorkshire schools receive less funding per pupil than other areas and agreed to continue to ask for additional funding.

Resolved –

- a) That the Annual Education Report is noted.

110 72 Skipton - Grassington Bus Service

Considered –

A report by Andy Clarke, Public & Community Transport Manager, providing information regarding the No.72 Skipton – Grassington bus service.

Members were pleased that the bus service is being restored and highlighted the importance of using services in order to keep them running.

Resolved –

- a) That the report is noted.

111 Nidderdale Greenway Steering Group

Considered –

A report by David Smith, Democratic Services Officer, providing Members with information regarding the Nidderdale Greenway Steering Group Report.

Councillor Andrew Murday updated Members on the work of the Nidderdale Greenway Steering Group informing the Committee that this would be built in stages. The first stage would be between Clint and Birstwith.

There was general support of Members for the Report.

Resolved –

- a) That the Nidderdale Greenway Steering Group report is supported by Members of the Skipton and Ripon ACC.
- b) That the report is circulated to North Yorkshire Council's Transport Planning Team and Members are kept informed with its progress.

Councillor Barbara Brodigan left the meeting at 1.06pm.

112 Updates from Youth Councils

Considered –

A report by David Smith, Democratic Services Officer, presenting Members with updates from the Youth Councils in the Constituency area.

Members were informed that a Youth Council in Settle was close to being established.

Members discussed the possibility of Youth Councils using Council owned buildings and suggested that Officers investigate this.

Resolved –

a) That the update is noted.

113 Committee work programme

Considered –

A report by David Smith, Democratic Services Officer, inviting Members to consider, amend and add to the Committee's work programme.

Members made the following amendments to the work programme:

- An update on the development at Kex Gill was suggested for the September meeting. This should include information on the development of the new road and the condition of the old road. Members requested maps of landslip locations in relation to where the new road will be built.
- A discussion with Skipton Building Society to establish how Members can assist with keeping the business in Skipton. Members showed interest in their second homes and green homes policies.
- A discussion on Sutton Lane, Sutton-in-Craven, following an accident there.
- An item on a South Craven masterplan.
- An item on a Hellifield masterplan.
- Regular updates from North Yorkshire Highways on plans for the Constituency area.

Resolved –

a) That the above items be added to the work programme.

114 Any Other Items

A brief update on the Kex Gill road closure was provided.

115 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 6 June 2024 at 10.00am.

The meeting concluded at 1.22 pm.