

North Yorkshire Council

Thirsk and Malton Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 27 September, 2024 commencing at 10.00 am.

Councillor Caroline Goodrick in the Chair and Councillors Caroline Goodrick, Alyson Baker, Lindsay Burr MBE, Sam Cross, Dan Sladden, Gareth Dadd, Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, George Jabbour, Steve Mason, Janet Sanderson, Malcolm Taylor and Greg White.

In attendance: Councillor Carl Les

Officers present: Hannah Baker, Jayne Charlton, Meirion Jones, Nicki Lishman and Howard Wallis

Other Attendees: Yorkshire Water – Emma Brown and Tim Myatt
Environment Agency – Ian Cooke and Joe Allan

Apologies: Councillors Nigel Knapton, Joy Andrews and Annabel Wilkinson

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

1 Welcome by the Chair - introductions and updates

In the absence of Councillor Nigel Knapton Councillor, Caroline Goodrick (Vice Chair) took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed there were no updates to provide.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2024

Resolved

That the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee held on 14 June 2024, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Voting record

11 For
2 Abstentions

3 Apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joy Andrews, Nigel Knapton and Annabel Wilkinson.

Councillor Alyson Baker declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 as a volunteer at the Tourist Information Centre and in Item 8 as a family member worked for Yorkshire Water.

Councillor Lindsay Burr declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 as she has business interests in Thirsk.

Councillor Sam Cross declared a personal non-pecuniary interest as the owner of Filey's

“Little Bus”.

Councillor Gareth Dadd declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 as he provided consultancy services to business in Thirsk.

4 Public questions or statements

Question from Ms Jo Shaw

Context

The following bullet points are to illustrate the current risk that users of Station Road users face:

- The 40 mph relates to around 350 m of highway only on Station Road.
- The whole of Station Road is in an extremely poor state of repair.
- Increased housing (112 new homes at Furlong Park) and the new Europark has increased usage of the road. We are aware that planning permission is being sought for a further 30 houses on Station Road. This will increase the number of vehicles turning into drives and onto the new roads leading off Station Road.
- We have ongoing issues with vehicles using excessive speed on the road – this includes HGVs and other vehicles. There are also slow-moving agricultural vehicles and carts and horses using this road.
- There is a new children’s playpark in Furlong Park around 10m from Station Road 40mph section.
- Increased pedestrian footfall from the Station and on Race Days. Increased cycle users having to make use of a cycle path in extremely poor condition.

The Ask

This question comes in two parts and is supported by those residents* who live on Station Road, Thirsk.

The residents of Station Road request:

- A commitment and plan to remove the 40 MPH section of Station Road, thereby making the entirety of this road subject to a 30 MPH limit.
- A commitment and plan from the Council to re-surface both the road and cycle path

Through actively committing to these requests today the Council Members will meet the resident’s concerns around the safety of this road, support their wellbeing by reducing the noise, reduce air pollution and enable a better user experience for all those motorists, cyclists and pedestrians that use this route in and out of Thirsk.

Note - *I have a signed petition to support this request from those impacted on the 40MPH part of Station Road. Currently this stands at 44 residents and is increasing daily. The residents are now displaying posters asking for a 30mph limit.

Response from the Area Manager, Highways and Transportation

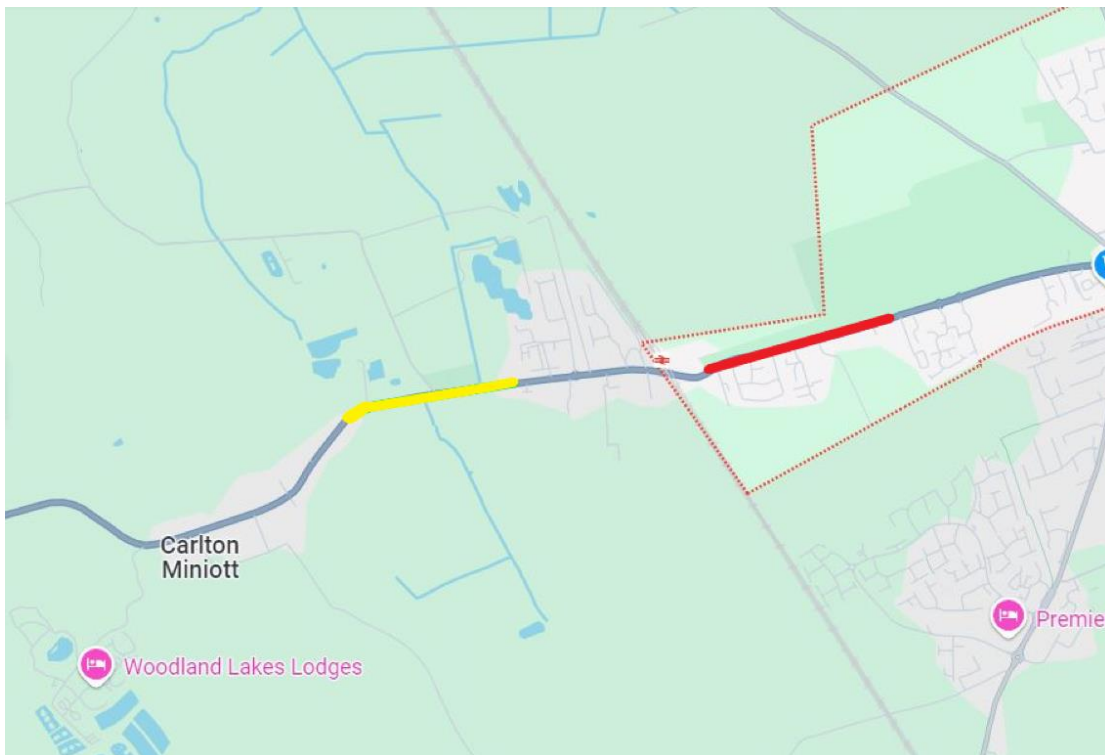
The residents of Station Road request:

- A commitment and plan to remove the 40mph section of Station Road, thereby

making the entirety of this road subject to a 30mph speed limit.

NYC response: This matter has been raised previously, but North Yorkshire Police were not supportive of the proposed change in speed limit at that time. However, given that there has been further development along this route – as has been pointed out, NYC highways officers now intend to re-visit this matter.

Whilst there is no objection in principle to this proposal from NYC, a formal consultation is required prior to making the necessary amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order, as well as alterations to the infrastructure on the ground (i.e. signage and road markings). The plan is to combine this consultation with an additional proposal seeking to change the existing 40mph speed limit on another section of the A61 to the west of the railway line, thereby making a continuous 30mph speed limit, starting at the western end of Carlton Miniott and extending into Thirsk. The two sections of existing 40mph speed limit which are proposed to be reduced to 30mph are shown in yellow and red lines in the diagram below, the red section being Station Road and the yellow section being Carlton Road. A specific date for the consultation has not been set at the time of writing, it is likely that this will commence within the next few months.



- A commitment and plan from the Council to re-surface both the road and cycle path.

A carriageway resurfacing scheme for the A61 – Station Road, Thirsk, is currently within the draft capital program for financial year 2025/26. The proposal involves the resurfacing the full width of the A61 carriageway between the approach to town end roundabout to the eastern side of the railway overbridge at Thirsk Station. However, at the current time our funding settlements from central government/the Department for Transport (DfT) for 2025/26 have not been confirmed, therefore we cannot commit to the delivery of this scheme at the time of writing. Confirmation of the highway maintenance funding settlement for financial year 2025/26 and onwards is unlikely to be received from DfT until early 2025 following the Government's autumn statement.

Ms Shaw then asked the following supplementary question.

On average, how long does the consultation take for the reduction in the speed limits?

The Area Manager replied:

We need to get the statutory consultees on board, so the police need to be on board and the initial indications are that they are.

It comes down to other staff, consultants and if we've got objections there is a process to go through. So, I wouldn't like you to put a time scale on it to be quite honest with I would like to see if it would be done within 12 months. We can keep you updated.

Question from Ms Kate Nash

Filey Community Transport (Filey little bus)

I note with concern that the former Filey little bus ceased to operate some time ago, and that very little progress appears to have been made towards putting in place a replacement service, and in addition there has been little or no communication with the people of Filey regarding the position.

This is despite bus services apparently being a priority issue for both North Yorkshire Council and national Government.

The lack of the little bus service has had a huge impact on the lives of the people of Filey with clear detrimental impact on the health, both mental and physical, of vulnerable residents. This in an environment where local health services are under immense pressure.

There have been surveys done and reports written, some of which date back some time, but they have not been acted on and no actual progress has been made. The people of Filey are not being fairly treated. In response to one of the surveys a number of people expressed their willingness to volunteer but their offer has neither been recognised nor acknowledged. Given the length of time since these responses were received it is likely that people's goodwill and willingness to volunteer is unlikely to continue.

Given this background please provide a full and detailed update in relation to the position regarding the Filey Little Bus to include details of grants applied for and to be applied for, the date the bus service is planned to be reinstated, the person or persons, or organisations, who will be taking this forward and the reasons for the delays and lack of communication to date.

Response from Councillor Keane Duncan, Executive Member for Highways and Transportation via Teams

There is a written response which has been circulated to Councillors from the Passenger Transport team (below), but I did want to speak directly on this topic. Firstly, just to thank Miss Nash, Miss Cowan and local people for raising the issue of the bus provision in and around Filey. I recognise your commitment and passion to improve services. I thank you for that.

I also wanted to thank our Member of Parliament, Kevin Hollinrake, for also bringing forward this issue. I've had several conversations with him and with our Passenger Transport team in a bid to try and find a way forward.

I also wanted to recognise the work of the Council and the Passenger Transport team. We have really sought every potential avenue that we can in an attempt to provide a revived town bus service. We know previously it was popular and it's unfortunate that the service did cease. We have been trying to find a way forward.

In terms of the situation right now and as things stand today, there's summary really, is quite simple.

The bus that previously operated - the condition of that has been assessed by the Council. We've inspected that and it's really in a dire state. It's unroadworthy. We think - our teams feel - that it's likely it will never be roadworthy again. So, as things stand today, there is no bus. There is also no operator for the bus. We have sought interest. None has come forward. There is no business plan that we have received at the Council either. We have suggested that the community get together to try and devise a viable proposal. We haven't had a business plan.

As a result of that there is no funding available either for the service. We need the business plan for that funding to be identified and released. We are prepared to support the development of a business plan. We're prepared to release some grant funding as well but no grant funding's been applied, for no grant funding has been released. So as things stand right now, I think it's just important to make clear that there isn't a plan. We're not aware of any plan that would see the revival of the town bus in the way that it operated before.

However, there is a positive which is the car scheme, the voluntary car scheme, which some Members will be aware of and members of the public will be too, is moving forward. North Yorkshire Council has issued a grant of £2,500 to help Age UK set up the car scheme. We hope and we think this can be a success. We want to support that. We want to get that up and running. We want local people to be using it, making sure that they can access the services that they need. That is a positive to take away from this.

But we just want to address really any potential misunderstanding or miscommunication that there might be in and around Filey, that the bus is going to be revived and working in the way that it was before. That is not the model that we have at the moment and that's as a result of the number of issues which have identified there been no real viable way forward for this service. So, I imagine that's some disappointment. Again, we would be willing to receive any business plan, any proposals, but as things stand today, there is no way forward which we're aware of.

Ms Nash asked the following supplementary question.

It is no surprise to me that the actual physical bus that was stashed in the in the open for heaven knows how long is not going to run. Anybody with half an eye could have guessed that but I don't think it's acceptable for people to wash their hands of this. This is an important issue and money needs to be put in and I think they should be new minibuses. A car scheme, whilst I'm sure it's very useful, it's just not acceptable as a replacement for the former bus service. A bus service is sorely needed in the Filey.

The Chair replied:

Thank you. We've got the message and we'll work on it with you.

Written response from Integrated Passenger Transport

Olympic Coaches stopped operating their Filey Town Bus in May 2023 when the company owner decided to retire. Although the route had originally been operated on a commercial basis, NYCC (now NYC), contacted other bus operators but none were interested in running a replacement service. On retirement, the owner of Olympic Coaches donated the bus to the local community.

Since then, there have been a number of meetings led by different groups discussing this issue, including Filey Town Council and the local MP.

With no bus company willing to take on the operation of a local bus service, the Integrated Passenger Transport and Stronger Communities teams at NYC spoke to Community Transport operators in the area asking them to look at options for a voluntary car or minibus

scheme in Filey. Earlier this year Age UK agreed to undertake a car scheme in Filey and they applied to NYC for a grant of £2,500 to help set this up. The grant was approved and paid last month and we are waiting to hear from Age UK as to when the project will start.

As we understand it, the new scheme will be a pilot at this point and its success will depend on finding sufficient volunteers and also that passengers make use of the service.

Question from Dinah Keal

Norton on Derwent has a long history of flooding and has suffered from repeated incidents of sewer flooding for over 20 years since the Malton, Norton & Old Malton Flood Alleviation Scheme was completed. Due to climate change and a rise in the water table, flood incidents have increased in frequency and are particularly difficult in Norton as flood water contains raw sewage as the sewers do not have sufficient capacity to cope with surface water flooding when river levels are high in the River Derwent.

These repeated incidents not only put homes and businesses at risk, but also cause increased road traffic congestion due to road closures.

Members of the committee may be aware that there are plans to build 645 new homes in Norton, which will undoubtedly have an impact on the towns over stretched sewer system.

Should planning permission be approved for this site, the developer will be installing drainage measures as recommended and agreed with Yorkshire Water as part of the planning process, which will manage flow into the main system, but ultimately waste water from the development will flow into the main sewers in Norton.

So, my question is: "Will North Yorkshire Council as lead planning authority ensure that Yorkshire Water fulfils its statutory duty, as prescribed by the Water Industry Act 1991, to improve its existing sewer systems in the town itself on the back of this development?"

Response from Development Management read by the Chair

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the overall approach to protecting people and property from flooding, which all local planning authorities are expected to follow, with a number of tests required at both the plan making and application decision making stages. Engagement with key stakeholders - including the environment agency, water utility providers such as Yorkshire Water, the Lead local flood authority - forms an important part of the local plan making process to ensure that appropriate site selection takes place and local policies reflect national guidance, and that where development is proposed to take place there is appropriate infrastructure in place, or that there is a realistic prospect of additional capacity being provided alongside new development.

Such bodies are also key consultees on planning applications in ensuring that the proposed on and off-site infrastructure is suitably robust and future proof in light of the implications of climate change. If there are specific questions and concerns with regard to particular sites/applications, we can raise those with the relevant body.

Ms Keal then asked the following supplementary question.

Just yesterday when everyone saw the torrential rain houses in Norton were yet again surrounded by water and the sewers discharged into and around people's properties. So just yesterday the River Derwent was not high, it was the level of torrential rain.

So that to me proves that the capacity in the sewer system in Norton is not sufficient to deal with the level of rain and the level of extra discharge which will come from this development.

So, I hope the Members of this committee would agree that having more sewage in our

streets in 2024 is actually totally unacceptable. Will Members therefore agree to continue to lobby Yorkshire Water to commit to putting all measures possible in place to alleviate sewer flooding in Norton, including increasing the capacity of the sewers and agree to contribute a percentage of the CIL receipts from the Beverley Road development, should it be approved, towards a Yorkshire Water project to provide a permanent, and I stress the word permanent, pumping station for Norton.

The Chair responded that the debate later in the meeting may address this questions.

5 MP - question time

The Rt Hon Kevin Hollinrake MP attended the meeting and highlighted the following issues that were of concern in the area.

- The potential local impacts of the changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance.
- The increased numbers of bank closures in the area and the impact on residents' access to cash and issues for businesses who needed to bank significant amounts of cash, the limits of the service provided at Post Offices and the provision of banking hubs.
- A64 – the continued campaign to dual the A64 to Barton Hill.
- The provision of a town bus service in Filey and the work with partners to identify a solution.
- Issues with the planning process, particularly with reference to retrospective applications.
- Concerns regarding some locally provided medical procedures and dentistry.
- Housing targets for the area.
- Solar farms on agricultural land and the balance between energy and food security.
- Proposed changes in workplace regulations and their impacts on business.

Councillors discussed the subjects raised, the main points of which were:

- The planning process, with particular reference to sites used by the gypsy and traveller community where planning permission may be sought retrospectively.
- Work with partners including the mayor's office, Filey Town Council, Age UK and others to identify funding and a practical solution to the provision of a replacement service for Filey town bus. This may include support from the Council's Stronger Communities team to develop a business plan and identify sources of funding.
- A local application for the development of a solar farm.

Members requested that the MP for Wetherby and Easingwold be invited to future meetings of the Committee.

The Chair thanked the Rt Hon Kevin Hollinrake for attending the meeting.

The meeting paused from 11.13am to 11.19am.

6 Proposals for the allocation of the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport

Project Development Fund

Considered – report of the Corporate Director (Community Development).

Members were requested to consider project proposals under the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund; to approve the process for endorsement of proposals and endorse proposals that could meet the objectives of the fund and be completed within the required timescales.

Presenting the report, the Principal Regeneration Officer explained the proposed process for endorsing the suggested projects, given the tight timescales to deliver outcomes within the current financial year.

Rather than seeking Committee approval for a list of projects for which Scoping Reports are subsequently completed and reported to the next Committee in three months' time, Officers were seeking endorsement of project proposals by the Committee based on the outline scoping reports (see appendices 1 – 7 of the report).

Each of the projects endorsed by the Committee would then be subject to the following process:

- Finalise scoping report
- Complete Climate Change and Equalities Impact Assessments
- Evaluation of proposal
- Discuss with Executive Member for Open to Business
- Final approval and sign-off by the Director of Community Development

Following initial discussion of the proposals, Councillor Dadd proposed and Councillor Baker seconded that the proposal to conduct traffic and parking surveys in Easingwold (see appendix 5 of the report) be removed due to the risks associated with the project.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Members considered the best method of prioritising the remaining proposals and it was proposed by Councillor Sladden and seconded by Councillor Cross that officers take forward the remaining projects and progress those that are deliverable up to the remaining value of the Fund.

Councillor Jabbour suggested that Division Members may wish to consider contributing additional funds from their Locality Budgets if appropriate.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Resolved

That officers take forward the remaining projects and, following the revised process above, progress those that are deliverable up to the remaining value of the Fund.

Voting record

12 For

1 Abstention

7 Maintenance and repair of Thirsk Market Place

Considered – report of the Corporate Director – Environment

The Area Manager Area 1 and Area 2, Highways and Transportation, presented a report to appraise Members of the current position regarding the condition of the pavements around Thirsk Market Place, what was being done to mitigate the state and advise Members of future plans.

Councillors were appraised of the available budget for the works and the plan for phased completion of works around the market place. The plan had been devised looking at evidence of footfall, ongoing maintenance costs and insurance claims.

Councillors discussed the report and asked for:

- Clarification of the proposed materials to be used to complement the heritage of the market place. Councillors were reassured that suitable materials would be used.
- The timing of the works to minimise the impact on businesses on the market place. The officer advised that works were planned to take place in the evening.

Councillors requested that an update report be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

That the report be noted and that an update report be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Dan Sladden left the meeting at 12:15pm.

8 Malton, Norton and Old Malton flooding update

The Senior Engineer, Flood Risk Management introduced an update on flooding in Malton, Norton and Old Malton.

Officers from the Council, Yorkshire Water and the Environment Agency guided the Committee through the roles and responsibilities of their respective agencies.

The presentation guided Members through the various schemes that had been implemented, the detail of the most recent year's weather conditions, the geology and hydrology of the area and the latest data for 2023/24 on river and groundwater levels and the revenue and capital investments that had taken place.

During the discussion Councillors considered and questioned the officers on:

- The local sewerage system and its capacity
- Storage and management of groundwater drainage
- The local pumping plan
- Flood diversion and water storage methods including the use of agricultural land for storage
- Engagement with the local community
- The applicable legislation

The Chair thanked the officers and representatives from partner organisations for the presentation.

9 Work programme

Members considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) which contained the Committee's current work programme for the remainder of the municipal year (2024/25).

A representative from NYNET was due to attend the next meeting to update on broadband and mobile phone coverage. Councillor Sanderson suggested that, as NYNET were undertaking a project on vaping in schools, it would be helpful if this was included in the update and the Committee agreed.

The Democratic Services Officer advised the Committee:

- That it was hoped that the Mayor of York and North Yorkshire and/or his representatives would be attending the meeting of the Committee in March 2025 and
- That the second and third point in the recommendation had been included in error.

Resolved

That the work programme for the remainder of 2024/25 be noted.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting concluded at 1.15 pm.