

- Meeting:** Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Members:** Councillors Philip Barrett, Derek Bastiman, John Cattanach, Melanie Davis (Vice-Chair), Hannah Gostlow, David Ireton, David Jeffels, Tom Jones, Steve Mason, Subash Sharma, David Staveley (Chair), Phil Trumper, Arnold Warneken, Steve Watson, Andrew Williams and Robert Windass.
- Date:** Monday, 8th July, 2024
- Time:** 10.00 am
- Venue:** The Grand Meeting Room, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD

Members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting as observers for all those items taken in open session. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer, whose details are below, if you would like to find out more.

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AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 April 2024** (Pages 3 - 10)
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
All Members are invited to declare at this point any interests they have in items appearing on this agenda, including the nature of those interests.
- 4. Public Participation**
Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they

have given notice (to include the text of the question/statement) to Will Baines, Senior Scrutiny Officer (*contact details below*) no later than midday on Wednesday 3 July 2024. 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.

If you are exercising your right to speak at this meeting, but do not wish to be recorded, please inform the Chair who will instruct those taking a recording to cease while you speak.

- 5. Review of Motion on Water Quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity and economy** (Pages 11 - 16)
- 6. Network Strategy Update** (Pages 17 - 22)
- 7. Work Programme** (Pages 23 - 26)
To ask Members to consider, amend and add to the Committee's work programme.
- 8. Any other items**
Any other items which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**
Thursday, 17 October 2024 at 10am.

Members are reminded that in order to expedite business at the meeting and enable Officers to adapt their presentations to address areas causing difficulty, they are encouraged to contact Officers prior to the meeting with questions on technical issues in reports.

Contact Details:

For enquiries relating to this agenda, please contact Will Baines, Senior Scrutiny Officer - Tel: 01609 533885 or email: william.baines@northyorks.gov.uk

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall
Northallerton

Friday, 28 June 2024

North Yorkshire Council

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 10th April, 2024 commencing at 10.00 am.

Councillor David Staveley in the Chair plus Councillors Philip Barrett, John Cattanach, Mark Crane, Melanie Davis, Caroline Goodrick, Hannah Gostlow, David Jeffels, George Jabbour (substitute), Steve Mason, Subash Sharma, Phil Trumper, Arnold Warneken, Steve Watson and Robert Windass.

In attendance (in person): Tom Gifford (National Highways - A66 Project Sponsor) and Stewart Jones (National Highways - A66 Project Director)

In attendance (virtual): Ada Gonzalez Albert (National Highways - RIS 3 Pipeline Regional Delivery Director), Mairead Lane (National Highways – RIS 3 Pipeline Programme Director), Councillor Paul Haslam (for item 9)

Officers present: Karl Battersby, Nigel Smith, Brian Stanforth (NY Highways) and Will Baines

Apologies: Councillors Paul Haslam and David Ireton.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Ireton, with Councillor George Jabbour attending as substitute.

Councillor Paul Haslam also gave his apologies but was able to attend virtually to present item 9 (Annual Report of the Climate Change Member Champion).

2 Minutes of the Meetings held on 18 January and 1 February 2024

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 19 January 2024 and 1 February 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Public Participation

No public questions or statements were received.

5 Verbal Update from the Corporate Director of Environment

Karl Battersby, Corporate Director of Environment, attended the meeting to provide a verbal update on the directorate.

Some of the key points highlighted in his update are as summarised below:

- The restructure of the Environment directorate and plans for service transformation
- Progress with the three 'Transforming Cities Fund' projects
- Upcoming consultations on Traffic Regulation Orders in Skipton and Harrogate
- Kex Gill – piling works due to start shortly
 - Designs for replacement road scheme to be finalised shortly
 - Expected to be on site in April and May, with extended working hours over evenings and weekends.
 - Set to be the largest capital project for North Yorkshire Council
- Directorate climate change action plans are under development and lead officers now in post to drive forward plans.

Following the update, questions raised by the committee included:

- The impact of the recent unprecedented wet weather and its impact on the progress with major road schemes?
- The disruption to local businesses and the traffic congestion caused by the Kex Gill diversion route and the expected completion date for the reopening.
- Whether the work of the climate change team will look at future proofing against potential costs coming in the years ahead, as well as policies and procedures around rationalising the estate and decarbonisation?
- How potential transformation savings are monitored and checked within the directorate?
- If there was any impact of climate change events on the insurance cover for the authority.
- A member emphasised that new trees are required when others are chopped down.
- The continued use of spray injection patching for road repairs and whether it works better in some areas than others?
- The link up between the Environment directorate with the planning service.
- Plans for improving coastal infrastructure.
- Work on developing a long-term solution to the Oliver's Mount approach road at Jackson's Lane, particularly given the economic impact for the local area with the nationally recognised motorbike races.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

6 National Highways Update

Considered – Report of National Highways.

Stewart Jones (A66 Project Director) and Tom Gifford (A66 Project Sponsor) from National Highways introduced the update, setting out the structure of the organisation, comprising teams in strategy, operations and major projects.

Within major projects, there are projects that can be delivered under National Highways governance (typically under £500m) regional teams, and those costing more that fall

under Department for Transport (DfT) governance.

On the A66 Transpennine Route Scheme, the Development Consent Order was granted by the Secretary of State for Transport on 7 March 2024, and is now going through Department for Transport (DfT) governance to secure further funding to continue developing this scheme. The appeals period is ongoing, where objections can be raised. In recent months, the development has progressed, with designs initially worked up on the western side of the scheme in the first instance.

The full business case is required to be finalised and signed off by the Department for Transport to access the construction phase funding. Pending the conclusion of the appeals period and the extent of any challenges made, construction is expected to start in Spring/Summer 2025 with enabling works. An Environmental Management Plan is also being prepared.

Councillor Angus Thompson, the division member for North Richmondshire, asked about the implications of the A66 scheme on the Scotch Corner roundabout. In response, it was explained that the plans at Scotch Corner were to widen the carriageway rather than a significant intervention. The end of the involvement of Costain as one of the developers for the eastern side of the project had caused a delay in progress, but with different suppliers now in place things can move forwards, but this is at very early stages currently.

As a follow up, the congestion at the roundabout was highlighted, for example residents leaving Middleton Tyas via Scotch Corner can find it extremely difficult and that is without any additional traffic. In response it was noted that as part of the Development Consent Order there has been a lot of engagement on the scope of the scheme which sits within its remit. The scheme now has approval and detailed designs are being worked up for all aspects of the scheme, from the A1 to the M6, with a total of ten different schemes undertaken by three different contractors. Construction for the project will take a number of years, given the size and scale across the Pennines as an important strategic route, with Scotch Corner an important part of this A66 upgrade. However, it is a smaller component project in relation to some of the large bypasses required to enable the A66 dualling.

Councillor Steve Watson asked for the Scotch Corner junction improvements to be brought forward in the overall programme, believing it is pointless rushing traffic to a known congestion spot. On the scheduling of the works, it was explained that considerations on priority include safety as well as the earthwork seasons, traffic management requirements and the views of the expert contractors to allow them to work as efficiently as possible.

In response to specific points raised:

- Traffic modelling has been undertaken on the scheme in partnership with North Yorkshire Council and the predecessor authorities to support the scheme. National Highways are very much aware of the plans to construct a new Scotch Corner Designer Village close to the roundabout and the relationship between the projects, in particular the cumulative impact, has been factored into the traffic modelling undertaken so far.
- The close dialogue between National Highways and North Yorkshire Council was seen as crucial for the progress of the two schemes, to ensure that the detailed designs work from both a local transport perspective and the strategic highways viewpoint.
- Engagement with elected members was seen as an area that could be improved to be more proactive.

On the A64 dualling, National Highways officers updated the committee that it is one of over

30 RIS3 pipeline schemes across England. Stage 1 and 2 has been completed, with a deliverable solution identified and recommended to the Department for Transport. Follow up work has been undertaken to reduce the cost through a value engineering study, which looked at whether to reduce the number and simplify the layout of proposed junctions, with changes including removing grade separated junctions, adding in footbridges and on-/off-slips. Walking and cycling measures and provision for utilities were also reviewed to ensure the most efficient provision. Natural England had confirmed that areas of woodland impacted by some of the proposals meet the criteria to be classed as ancient woodland, and therefore any further work on this project would need to consider best way to avoid those. This value engineering study reduced the costs of the project assets, but the overall value for money for the scheme has remained low. National Highways are now awaiting direction from the Department of Transport on the next steps for the project. It was also noted that Government announced in March 2023 that work on the future pipeline of schemes, like A64 Hopgrove, that were earmarked for RIS3 (covering 2025 to 2030) will now be considered for construction as part of RIS4 (beyond 2030).

Councillor Caroline Goodrick felt that if there are changes made to the scheme, then the local elected members should be kept updated, to understand what the changes are and can input the local knowledge they have into the plans. Regarding the low value for money ratio, given the expected dualling of the A1237 York Outer Ring Road, it was believed this would deliver traffic in a much faster way to the Hopgrove A64 roundabout, which is already at capacity and cannot cope with the traffic as it currently is. It was felt that all of this would have a knock on impact on the social and economic viability of the local area, in particular employment opportunities given the strategic importance of the A64 route to the eastern side of the region.

In response, it was noted that stakeholder reference groups have been set up and tend to meet every six months. It was understood that local councillors were already invited to these but these will be checked to ensure updates are shared.

On the low value for money, an economic analysis was undertaken as part of the business case, as well as a strategic analysis. All monetised impacts are added up and then divided by the schemes costs to estimate the benefit / cost ratio (BCR). Furthermore, the scheme is up against 30 others for investment as part of RIS3.

Councillor Steve Mason asked about how the accident blackspot at Welburn is factored into consideration and whether dualling of the route all the way through to Malton has been considered. In response, it was noted that the pipeline study areas had come out of regional modelling and assessments, with the section to Barton-le-Willows seen as the most appropriate for the initial dualling.

Councillor David Jeffels commented that the A64 is now a bottleneck all year round. Given the time any dualling scheme would take to come to fruition, he suggested a rethink and to look at widening the carriageway wherever possible to improve the traffic flow.

Rounding up the discussion, Councillor David Staveley spoke about the frustration with the process that had to be followed and the need for much improved engagement from National Highways to work closely with council members and officers to ensure they tap into the local knowledge of the community representatives directly affected by major roads when developing schemes.

Resolved -

That the update from National Highways be noted and reports to future committee meetings be scheduled for 2024/25.

7 Preventing Flooding on Highways - Gully Clearance and Maintenance

Considered – Report of the Head of Highways Operations to update on the progress and performance to date of NY Highways (NYH) on gully cleaning and maintenance over the last 12 months.

Nigel Smith introduced the report, with the key points covered as highlighted below:

- Managing the removal of water from the highway network and its impact on highway deterioration is as important as ever.
- During the course of the last year, discussion has taken place regarding how to further evolve the use of the Kaarbontech system. A review of data led to an interim programme being introduced in September 2023, which took into account concerns over gullies on main roads, gullies that had not been cleaned for more than 2 years as well as local knowledge relating to known flooding issues.
- Surveys show that there are 164,171 gullies on the highway network. The risk-based programme approach adopted identifies that some 98,503 gullies need to be attended across North Yorkshire in any given year, with certain higher-risk locations requiring more than one clean in a twelve month period, taking the total number of attendances to circa 106,000 per annum. These targeted locations are constantly reviewed and updated by data that directs where those cleanses are required.
- Usually there are an average of three named storms per year, but over the last 12 months we have had ten, all of which necessitated NYH resource to be deployed, particularly in December 2023, January and February 2024 to deal with flooding issues as a direct consequence of those storms. As a result, NYH has had to respond to non-programmed gully orders in addition to the cyclic programme. It is currently estimated that in excess of 10,000 additional gullies have been attended to.
- The programme has been refined, as to what to do and where as part of the risk based, data led approach. This helps to constantly evolve the gully cleansing and maintenance programme.

Following this, key points raised by members included:

- Does the increase in the number of reactive incidents requiring gully cleansing indicate that the service isn't working well? Given the ten named storms, the highways drainage systems becomes over capacity following significant flooding events as there is simply too much water coming off not just the highway network, but adjacent land onto the highway network.
- Part of the data collection is around how much silt is in the pot, so if there is 50/75% then the gully would be put on a more frequent cleaning schedule.
- It was asked if the number of reactive call outs could be broken down into urban and rural settings, as there was feedback that local knowledge had sometimes not been fed in and taken into account. Gullies are looked at on an individual basis, with no distinction between whether it is in a rural or urban location. For example, work has been done in the Selby area to put in place solutions to work with landowners to improve the drainage and discharge of water from agricultural land.
- The robustness of the service area in dealing with land flooding adjacent to the highway was asked about. There is a wider project underway as part of our responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority, together with Highways and

Planning colleagues to look into large flooding events.

- A Member spoke about a flooding event in their ward and had concerns whether we were doing enough as a Council to clean gullies regularly enough as a preventative measure and following flooding events and asked whether officers go out and look at affected gullies following events.
- It was asked whether there are trigger points where the planned gully cleaning schedule is superseded by more reactive schedules to treat gullies affected by heavy rainfall or other unforeseen weather events?
- A piece of work is ongoing regarding how much further we can pull the data and intelligence from the cyclical programme together with the local knowledge and the officer intelligence gathered from recent flood events.
- A lot of the intelligence led, local knowledge is absolutely critical. Seven local area teams know the area, but extra information from elected members and town and parish councils is greatly appreciated. Information received will assist in amending the programme to help target where further gulley cleans may be required.
- This year has been extreme, by January/February time the cyclical programme had to be put to one side to focus on the immediate response required to weather events. We cannot have teams waiting around on standby.
- A Member commended the response of an officer for a recent site visit following a flooding event in their division and for sending through drainage plans of the village, which has helped to alleviate the current problems.
- Parish and Town Councils would like to be the conduits for drainage issues to relay information on what is happening in their communities.
- On known flood risk areas, co-ordination is needed where trees and highways are in situ to deal with the situation in the round.
- It was asked whether a link exists with the water companies to exchange intelligence and plan potential joint activities on gully cleaning and continued maintenance?
- Concerns around the combined drainage systems and potential pollution issues, plus the highway flooding impact on adjacent properties and climate change.

It was agreed to share the quarterly cyclical high level programme of gulley cleaning works with members of the committee to provide information on when officers are scheduled to attend in their division, but with the caveat that this can be subject to change.

Resolved –

To note the update received and that the comments and suggestions from elected members be considered to improve the service.

8 Scientific Team Update - AQAP

Considered – Presentation of the Divisional Officer – Scientific and the Head of Environmental Protection to set out the plans for a more co-ordinated approach to the monitoring of air quality as part of the new unitary council.

The key points highlighted in the report are as follows:

- An air quality steering group has been set up with representation across relevant services such as planning, highways, transport planning, public health and climate change to ensure there is a much more joined up approach to the subject across the authority.
- An annual air quality status report will be published in June, followed by the submission of the final Air Quality Action Plan for North Yorkshire to DEFRA in September, which will confirm the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) across the county.

Questions and comments raised by the committee included:

- The proposed approach was welcomed, in particular the development of baseline monitoring data to track changes in air quality levels.
- The future process for revoking the AQMA currently in place and how quickly they could be reimposed if air quality levels deteriorate again. Furthermore, confirmation that monitoring arrangements will be retained despite the revoking of the AQMA.
- The recent UK Clean Air Night campaign to shine a light on stricter conditions imposed on wood burning stoves to reduce the amount of smoke that can be emitted.
- The legally binding target under the Environment Act 2021 to reduce concentrations of PM_{2.5}

Resolved –

That the update to the committee be noted.

9 Annual Report of the Member Champion for Climate Change

Considered – Annual Report of the Member Champion for Climate Change.

Councillor Paul Haslam joined the meeting virtually to present his report.

Comments and questions raised by committee members included:

- It is difficult to track the environmental impact of Brierley Homes. It was asked whether an Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework or full impact assessment could be done.
- To share the information from the residential weekends attended.
- It was noted that there was no reference to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work undertaken as part of the Member Champion role. This was to be added.

Resolved – That the Annual Report of the Member Champion for Climate Change be noted.

10 Report of the Highway Reinstatements and Road Closure Working Group

Resolved –

- i) That the action points 2-6 from the Highways Reinstatements and Road Closures Working Group be endorsed.
- Confirm and communicate the agreed definition of works to communities and

partners, ensuring first time completion and the use of temporary reinstatements only when necessary (especially in conservation areas). Look to limit any attempts to exploit the 48 hour grace period with repeat works.

- Recommend that the business case for change in resources or working patterns to allow increased inspector efficiency, up to and including additional recruitment, to improve the inspection rate in the face of anticipated continual increases from fibre.
- Contact bus service operators in North Yorkshire, confirming their preferred procedure for informing them of short notice road closures and asking for information on their onward communication and contingency processes, ensuring that this is being done to mitigate and communicate the effect of closures.
- Confirm a timescale for the improvement of One Network information.
- Contact Parish Councils to inform them of the One Network tool for monitoring and communicating road closure information.

ii) That a further update on this topic is considered in the 2024-25 civic year.

11 Work Programme

Considered -

The following topics were suggested to be included on the work programme:

- Department for Transport invite
- Coastal erosion

Resolved -

That the work programme be noted and the suggestions be explored.

12 Any other items

There were no further items.

The meeting concluded at 3.00 pm.

North Yorkshire Council

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

08 July 2024

Review of Motion on Water Quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity, and economy

Report of the Corporate Director Environment

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update committee members on the progress made by officers following the approval of the Motion on water quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity, and economy at the meeting of Full Council on 15 November 2023

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of Full Council on 19 July 2023, the Chairman decided that a Notice of Motion submitted on water quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity and economy should be referred to the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- 2.2 The motion was then presented on 19 October 2023 to the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a series of recommendations were referred back to Full Council for approval.
- 2.3 At the meeting of Full Council on 15 November 2023, it was unanimously agreed to support the motion on water quality, accepting in full the recommendations put forward by the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.4 It was also put forward as an additional recommendation at the Council meeting and subsequently agreed that the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the motion in six months, hence the report before the committee today.
- 2.5 The full motion text agreed by Full Council on 15 November 2023, resolved to:
- Recognise it has a role and agrees to define its role to protect the rivers, watercourse and seas in North Yorkshire and precious habitats supported in these ecosystems; as far as possible from the cumulative impacts of pollution, including in line with its local planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - Be aware that there is evidence of deterioration of water quality due to the cumulative impact of nitrates phosphates, micro-plastics, pharmaceuticals, historical metal mining, waste and minerals activities, rural diffuse pollution and multiple sewage discharge events from diffuse and point source pollution including private and statutory waste treatment systems to monitor, measure and seek to better understand the impact on our local rivers, wildlife and the health of our residents.
 - Draw on relevant evidence that assesses the cumulative impact of pollution so that this is appropriately factored into the emerging North Yorkshire plan, including the site-specific level of future development.

- Ask the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee to invite senior representatives from Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Dales River Trust, Nidd Action Group, Natural England, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, the National Farmers' Union and other interested groups to attend a meeting to allow for a better understanding of the current levels of pollution and remedial action being taken in this regard.
- Ask all relevant water companies, from this date onwards, in its planning consultation responses for major developments, to clarify which treatment works will be managing the sewage; confirm that these treatment works have the additional capacity to take waste from agreed developments and whether it has the information available to assess the impact on the number or duration of sewage discharges into local rivers or seas, and if it does have this information to share it (noting that this can only be requested not required).
- Ask the Leader and appropriate Executive Members to collaborate with other Local Authorities facing similar water quality problems in order to best understand how we can use our influence to reduce and mitigate the damage done to our watercourses.
- This Council plays its part in supporting communities who wish to attain bathing water status.
- Planning policy should give specific weight and consideration to the potential impacts on watercourses and river waterbodies both in terms of potential contamination and health.
- To ask the Leader of the Council, if the motion is carried, to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request that the policy issues raised in the Notice of Motion be included as part of the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - This motion has been endorsed by the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust; Lower Ure Conservation Trust; Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.
 - The motion to be reviewed by the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months.

3.0 SIX MONTH PROGRESS UPDATE

3.1 Under each numbered section of the agreed motion, an update has been provided as follows:

3.1.1 **Recognise it has a role and agrees to define its role to protect the rivers, watercourse and seas in North Yorkshire and precious habitats these support as far as possible from the cumulative impacts of pollution, including in line with its local planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework.**

- i. This issue now has a high profile across a range of Council services and in NYC's wider partnership activity involving water companies, the Environment Agency, catchment partnerships and rivers trusts, and with other stakeholders.
- ii. River/ catchment/ water quality matters have featured strongly in recent workshops on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- iii. These matters are being considered within the Local Plan process, in particular in relation to the Blue Green Infrastructure strand
- iv. This is an important element of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) provisions that now apply to most types of development that require planning permission. There has been some concern nationally that water related BNG is not always getting the attention it should. This has been reflected in discussion at the national River Restoration Centre conference in April and at the ADEPT Natural Capital and Heritage Group.
- v. Almost half of North Yorkshire is designated as either National Park or National Landscape (the latter formerly referred to as 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' - AONBs). NYC is the host authority for the Nidderdale and Howardian Hills National Landscapes. The two National Park Authorities and the three National Landscapes all undertake extensive work with land managers in their areas that benefit water

quality and wider catchment objectives - with financial support from the Defra funded Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme and other sources. NYC will continue to work with all the five bodies managing these areas to further these objectives.

3.1.2 Be aware that there is evidence of deterioration of water quality due to the cumulative impact of nitrates phosphates, micro-plastics, pharmaceuticals, historical metal mining, waste and minerals activities, rural diffuse pollution and multiple sewage discharge events from diffuse and point source pollution including private and statutory waste treatment systems to monitor, measure and seek to better understand the impact on our local rivers, wildlife and the health of our residents.

- i. As well as main media focus on water company discharges, a wide range of other pollution sources impact on rivers across North Yorkshire. There is increasing attention on the impacts of mixtures of chemicals rather than just testing for individual thresholds – for example, the ECOMIX project led by a team at the University of York has now set up series of testing sites across Yorkshire that are sampling water for a wide range of chemicals including from farming, industry, human and pet pharmaceuticals. The impacts of different combinations of these on aquatic biodiversity will then be assessed.
- ii. A recent report from the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) on pollution from road run off has shone light on a major issue that is often overlooked as not regularly monitored – this is potentially a very significant challenge for Highways Authorities like NYC.
- iii. It is clear that private sewage systems present a significant challenge in rural areas like North Yorkshire as these are often not properly installed / maintained. This has been highlighted in catchment projects that NYC is currently involved with – for example on the Foss north of Yorks and on the Leven around Stokesley.
- iv. Some recent press coverage has focused on ground water pollution at Bentham relating to historic contamination from polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs) – so called ‘forever chemicals. However, NYC inspection of private water supplies has not identified problems arising from this.
- v. Draw on relevant evidence that assesses the cumulative impact of pollution so that this is appropriately factored into the emerging North Yorkshire plan, including the site specific level of future development.
We have yet to commission specific studies to look at water and air quality issues but will do so once we have a clear direction in terms of where growth is to be focused- and these will inform the Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment work (as required).

3.1.3 Ask the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee to invite senior representatives from Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Dales River Trust, Nidd Action Group, Natural England, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, the National Farmers’ Union and other interested groups to attend a meeting to allow for a better understanding of the current levels of pollution and remedial action being taken in this regard.

- i. After further discussion initiated by Richard Flinton, the inaugural meeting of a new North Yorkshire River Catchments Forum (NYRCP) has been arranged for 24 June.
- ii. Invitations to for this meeting have sent at director level in Yorkshire Water Group, the Environment Agency, Natural England, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Internal Drainage Board, Catchment Partnerships and the Rivers Trusts.
- iii. The NYRCP will be a strategic group – adding to existing partnership activity. A key aim of the Forum is to clarify NYC’s role as very large unitary with key role in flooding/planning/highways/nature recovery (including the Council’s recently enhanced duties in relation to promoting biodiversity and in the delivery protected landscape management plans)

- iv. The first meeting will review current activity and identify any gaps – and focus for future activity of the Forum – including the potential for a wider ‘North Yorkshire Rivers Summit’ later in the year.
- v. A verbal update on the outcome of the first meeting of the NYRCP will be provided at the TEEE OSC meeting on 08 July.

3.1.4 Ask all relevant water companies, from this date onwards, in its planning consultation responses for major developments, to clarify which treatment works will be managing the sewage; confirm that these treatment works have the additional capacity to take waste from agreed developments and whether it has the information available to assess the impact on the number or duration of sewage discharges into local rivers or seas, and if it does have this information to share it (noting that this can only be requested not required).

- i. This has to be done within the context of the primacy of the development plan - and the accorded weight to that. Clearly water quality is a material planning consideration, and NYC can ask for additional information as part of the planning application.
- ii. Information on capacity in terms of dealing with planning applications is something that a strategic level Yorkshire Water do not do - but they do comment on connections into mains sewers with individual planning applications.
- iii. This is a matter that would benefit from input from the Development Management Managers to see how they feel this can be explored – this will be progressed within the Planning Service

3.1.5 Ask the Leader and appropriate Executive Members to collaborate with other Local Authorities facing similar water quality problems in order to best understand how we can use our influence to reduce and mitigate the damage done to our watercourses.

- i. NYC works with a number of other LA’s through the already established Catchment Partnerships (CPs). There are nine CPs in North Yorkshire of which six cover significant areas of the county.
- ii. NYC is an active participant in other relevant activity – for example through the Integrated Catchment Solutions Programme (iCASP) led by the University of Leeds, that also involves other local authorities across Yorkshire.

3.1.6 This Council plays its part in supporting communities who wish to attain bathing water status.

- i. Knaresborough Lido was formally designated as a Bathing Water in May and regular EA water testing is now being undertaken. A minimum of twenty samples will be taken between May and the end of September, after which first formal classification will be made in the autumn. That will then apply for the 2025 bathing season.
- ii. As a result of the formal designation of the Lido site as a Bathing Water, NYC has responsibility to work with site operator regarding signage – the required signs for 2024 are now in place.
- iii. NYC expressed support for successful application for Bathing Water status on the river Wharfe and Wetherby. That site is in the Leeds City Council area but much of Wharfe catchment upstream and downstream is in North Yorkshire so many of measures to improve water quality will be in North Yorkshire – and that will benefit the whole river.
- iv. A site at Edisford Bridge on the Ribble at Clitheroe (Lancs) was also designated as a Bathing Water in May. Measures to reduce pollution of the Ribble upstream in North Yorks are likely to be required – and again this will benefit the whole river system.
- v. We have yet seen any detailed proposals for other Bathing Water designations on North Yorkshire rivers, but it is understood that there is public support for future designation on the Swale at Richmond.

3.1.7 Planning policy should give specific weight and consideration to the potential impacts on watercourses and river waterbodies both in terms of potential contamination and health.

- i. The new Local Plan is still in its early stages of production. As part of that process, officers will be having in depth discussions with Yorkshire Water, Northumbrian Water and United Utilities as site assessment work develops.
- ii. A number of different considerations have to be factored in, including levels of development, investment cycles and so this is on-going engagement as part of the local plan work.
- iii. Regarding planning policy giving specific weight to water quality matters, no one policy has primacy over the other - they are all to be read in the round, but planning policy development, and site-specific considerations, will be considering water quality as an aspect. The Local Plan 'issues and options' consultation (due out at the end of the year) will include water quality as an issue to address.
- iv. Further DLUHC consultation on reforms to the plan making process, and the implementation of national development management policies may well include matters around water quality.

3.2 To ask the Leader of the Council, if the motion is carried, to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request that the policy issues raised in the Notice of Motion be included as part of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- i. Cllr Carl Les wrote to the DEFRA Secretary of State (Steve Barclay) and copied in the DLUHC Secretary of State (Michael Gove) on 27 November 2024. The Leaders' letter includes the full text of the motion adopted by the Council and made the following request:

'In line with Item 09 above, I am writing to you to highlight the issues raised in the Council's adopted Motion — and to ask that, working with your ministerial colleagues in DLUHC, the Government take appropriate action to ensure that the planning policy matters (addressed in particular in Items 3, 5 and 8 of the Motion) are addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework.

My officers would be happy to discuss these matters in more detail with Defra if that would be useful.'

4.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 4.1 Improving water quality is a key part of the 'Place and Environment' ambition set out in the Council Plan 2024 to 2028 and is particularly linked to the pillar to create a clean, environmentally sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit. It also crosses the 'Health and Wellbeing' ambition to help people to 'enjoy active and healthy lifestyles.'

5.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 Officers have been working on a cross departmental basis to progress the numbered points of the motion text, including members of the environment/sustainability, planning and environmental health teams.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As this is an update, there are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific equality implications associated with this report.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The climate change implications arising from the original Notice of Motion submitted were addressed in the report considered by the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny committee on 19 October 2023. ([Link](#))

10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To bring elected members up to speed on developments in this important area.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To note the update on the progress made following the agreement of the Notice of Motion.

11.2 To consider any further recommendations to the Executive Member for Managing Our Environment or Corporate Director of Environment to ensure progress with carrying out the motion text continues.

Karl Battersby
Corporate Director Environment
County Hall
Northallerton
20 June 2024

Report Author – Hugh Clear Hill, Principal Environmental Policy and Project Officer

Presenter of Report – Hugh Clear Hill, Principal Environmental Policy and Project Officer, supported by Rachel Balmer, Planning Policy and Place Manager

North Yorkshire Council

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee

08 July 2024

20mph Schemes and Active Travel Update Report

Report of the Corporate Director – Environment

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on actions from its previous meeting on 18 January 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During the committee meeting held on 18 January 2024 when considering items 4 'Public Participation' and 5 'Questions referred from Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee', a series of questions were raised by members of the public and Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (TEE&E O&S) Members on the subjects of 20mph schemes and active travel. These were agreed as a set of action points for officers to respond to and feed back to the Committee.

3.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 3.1 Six action points were agreed, and their responses are set out below:

3.2 **Mr Conlan:** Langton and Welburn 20mph requests turned down – why?

- 3.2.1 **Response for Langton:** North Yorkshire Council (NYC) received a request to introduce a 20mph speed limit outside the school, which is located at the western end of the village. Ideally, an eastbound 20 mph speed limit would commence from the same location as the existing 30mph speed limit. It would, therefore, be necessary to relocate the 30mph speed limit further into the countryside, which would not be appropriate, as it is further away from the commencement of the built-up area. This view is also shared by North Yorkshire Police. In addition, properties are well set back from the edge of the road and mean speeds are such that physical traffic calming would be necessary, to engineer speeds down to a compliant level.

- 3.2.2 **Response for Welburn:** Mean speeds are such that physical features would be required to engineer speeds down, but given the proximity of properties to the roadside, vertical traffic calming features would be prohibitive due to potential noise intrusion and horizontal features would not fit, given the lack of space. Signed only 20mph limits would not be supported, given the risks around non-compliance.

- 3.2.3 Nevertheless, following a report to the Council's Executive in July 2023, NYC will be undertaking a more proactive approach towards the assessment of all speed limits as part of a new Speed Management Strategy across the County. There will, therefore, be a further opportunity to consider the existing speed limits as part of that more planned programme of speed limit reviews.

- 3.3 **Cllr Haslam:** set out pros and cons of part-time 20mph speed limits.
- 3.3.1 **Pros:** The benefits of part-time 20mph speed limits are broadly consistent with their permanent equivalents, e.g. lower speeds, fewer and less severe personal injury collisions, improved local environment and potential for active modes.
- 3.3.2 **Cons:** Part-time 20mph speed limits are advisory only; they cannot be enforced.
- 3.3.3 Sign types are either the standard/fixed arrangement or electronically activated, see Appendix A for further details. Outside of school term time, there may be some confusion with the standard fixed display as to the prevailing speed limit, given the existence of the sign, unless the sign was electronically variable.
- 3.3.4 Signs with electronic activation are large and expensive, plus substantial posts are required to accommodate and install. In addition, mains power connection is required and there are concerns about reliability and complaints when not working. Similarly, maintenance costs outside of warranty period are high and equipment, such as digital timers need to be calibrated.
- 3.3.5 Assembly and 'flashing lights' may not be appropriate in some environments or welcomed by residents.
- 3.3.6 Though the principle appears sound and other authorities have introduced part-time 20mph speed limits, there is little in the way of formal evidence to support their benefit.
- 3.3.7 Typically, at school times, which is when the 20mph speed limit is in operation, speeds tend to be low anyway, through congestion, so their implementation tends to do little to achieve a shift in driver behaviour.
- 3.3.8 The then Transport, Economy, Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its in depth review of 20mph speed limits, concluded that "...*The possibility of including these (part time 20mph speed limit) signs in this policy was considered as part of the review however, it was deemed unsuitable as they can be confusing to drivers and therefore the County Council does not support their use on the network, which continues the previous policy position*" (Paragraph 4.5 of the revised 20mph Speed Limit and Policy, January 2022).
- 3.4 **Cllr Warnekin:** latest on Cllr Duncan's earlier comments that it would be easy to introduce a 20mph speed limit on Station Parade.
- 3.4.1 Currently, the road would not support a 20mph speed limit. Following introduction of the Transforming Cities Fund project though and improved public realm, a lower speed limit on this road would be worthy of further consideration.
- 3.5 **Cllr Crane:** cycling plans, where are they and what priority is attached to them?
- 3.5.1 NYC is in the process of developing and adopting Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). This is a strategic approach to identify cycling and walking improvements required at a local level, enabling a long-term planning approach to developing cycling and walking networks. Having adopted LCWIPs enables NYC to have a series of bid ready projects ready to submit should government funding become available. Additionally, LCWIPs also allow the Council to be in a much better position to request Section 106 funding from developers towards new infrastructure.

- 3.5.2 NYC has LCWIPs for all population centres above 20,000 (Harrogate and Knaresborough and Scarborough) and all phase one documents are published. NYC has also published phase one LCWIPs for Selby/Tadcaster/Sherburn in Elmet (population 19.5k), Skipton (population 15k) and Northallerton (population 13.5k). An LCWIP for Malton/Norton (population 14k) is also complete but not yet published.
- 3.5.3 From the aforementioned LCWIPs, 35 priority corridors have been identified at an estimated delivery cost of £95M. Phase two reports for the above LCWIPs including design and economic evaluations of corridors have also been completed. LCWIP development is at an advanced stage for Ripon (population 16.5k) and Catterick (population 14k). LCWIPs in Whitby (population 12.5k) and Thirsk (population 7k) are underway.
- 3.5.4 The published LCWIPs can be found here: [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans \(LCWIPs\) | North Yorkshire Council](#)
- 3.6 **Cllr Mason:** Malton to Pickering cycle route, last mile under mud – can it be completed, so is fit for purpose?
- 3.6.1 This was a Ryedale District Council project and officers were aware of issues with the stone surface and poor drainage following the original contract works on off-road sections of the route. Remedial works were undertaken in 2023 to address the issues, including regrading of the surface to improve the camber. The section of the route in question is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) and a working farm track, so it will likely always be a challenge to keep it and other sections completely free of mud. Nevertheless, officers will continue to investigate the issues and consider what further action might be appropriate.
- 3.7 **Cllr Staveley (Chair):** establish working group later in the year, following MCA, to consider more proactive approach to active travel, linked to Local Plan and Local Transport Plan, including green travel plans and wider development process. Await February LTP update.
- 3.7.1 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) has essentially been on hold for a few months now, whilst we are still awaiting the updated DfT LTP guidance. The statutory responsibility for publishing the LTP now sits with the Combined Authority. Officers at NYC will still be involved in the development of the document, but the way forward has not yet been agreed and as such the timescales for the final document are not yet determined. In the meantime, constructive dialogue with City of York Council and the new MCA continues with respect to collaborative working on transport matters, e.g. the development of a Key Route Network (KRN) and a Strategic Transport Plan.
- 3.7.2 More generally, NYC is in the process of establishing an active travel delivery team. There is currently no guaranteed and sustained funding stream from government for active travel and, as a result, the development if the team will be proportionate to the limited available funding for improvement projects. Whilst the Department for Transport has given an indication of a potential future Local Transport Fund, any certainty on quantum or timescales will not be known until after the General Election.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications as the report is an update.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications resulting from the action points put forward.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications resulting from the action points put forward.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct climate change implications resulting from the action points put forward.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- i) For the TEE&E O&S Committee to note the responses to the action points set out in Section 4 of this report.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Examples of part-time 20mph signs

Karl Battersby
Corporate Director – Environment
County Hall
Northallerton
19 June 2024

Report Author – Allan McVeigh
Presenter of Report – Allan McVeigh

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

PART-TIME 20 MPH SIGNS

Examples of standard/fixed display signs



Examples of electronically activated signs



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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8 July 2024

Work Programme

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report gives Members the opportunity to be updated on work programme items and review the shape of the work ahead.

2.0 Remaining TEEE O&S Committee dates and Mid-Cycle Briefing dates for 2024/2025

2.1 Committee Meetings

- Thursday 17 October 2024 at 10am
- Thursday 30 January 2025 at 10am
- Thursday 24 April 2025 at 10am

2.2 Mid Cycle Briefing Dates

- Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 10am
- Thursday 5 December 2024 at 10am
- Thursday 27 February 2025 at 10am

- 2.3 Please note that the Mid Cycle Briefings are not public meetings and are attended by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Spokespersons for the political groups. These meetings are used to develop the committee work programme and determine the scheduling of key items.

3.0 Committee Remit

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committees represent the interests of local people about important issues that affect them. They look at how the decisions, policies and services of the Council and other key public agencies impact on the area and on residents. Scrutiny Committees do not take decisions but can make recommendations to decision-makers about how they are delivering on objectives.
- 3.2 The Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the transport and communications infrastructure of all kinds, however owned or provided, and how the transport needs of the community are met.
- 3.3 Supporting business, economic development, regeneration and helping people develop their skills, including lifelong learning. The committee will also study sustainable development, climate change strategy, countryside management, waste management, environmental conservation and enhancement flooding.
- 3.4 Further to this, at a recent Scrutiny Board meeting held on 24 May 2024, the committee was also given the scrutiny responsibility for bereavement services, public conveniences and tourism under its remit. This is following the cessation of the Transition (LGR) Overview and

Scrutiny Committee at Full Council on 15 May 2024 and the subsequent reallocation of work out to the other scrutiny committees.

4.0 Work Programme

- 4.1 The current committee work programme is attached at Appendix 1. It is tabled at every formal committee meeting and reviewed at every mid-cycle briefing for comments and suggested items.

5.0 Task and Finish Group

- 5.1 With the 2024/25 municipal year beginning, committee members may wish to consider further potential topics for task and finish groups for the forthcoming 12 months, so that any ideas can be scoped out.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the attached work programme and determine whether any further amendments should be made at this stage.

Author of Report: Will Baines, Senior Scrutiny Officer

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28 June 2024

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Transport, Economy, Environment & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Work programme

Committee remit

Scrutinises the transport and communications infrastructure of all kinds, however owned or provided, and how the transport needs of the community are met.

Supporting business, economic development, regeneration and helping people develop their skills, including lifelong learning. The committee will also study sustainable development, climate change strategy, countryside management, waste management, environmental conservation and enhancement flooding.

Meeting	Subject	Aims/Terms of Reference
Monday 8 July 2024	Six-Month Review of Water Quality Motion	To review progress against the Water Quality Motion that was approved at the Full Council meeting in November 2023 – Hugh Clear Hill and Shaun Berry
	Follow up of 20mph speed limit queries raised at 18 January 2024 meeting	
Thursday 17 October 2024	Scrutiny of Climate Change Strategy (1/2)	Bi-annual TEEE O&S scrutiny of the Climate Change Strategy – Jos Holmes, Climate Change Strategy Manager
	‘Let’s Talk Rubbish’ Consultation and harmonisation proposals	Analysis of the ‘Let’s Talk Rubbish’ public consultation findings (possibly to include Allerton Waste Recovery Park update) – Aimi Brookes, Service Development Manager (Waste), Peter Jeffreys, Head of Service Waste
	North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Recovery Strategy	NY&Y Local Nature Recovery Strategy will consider land at a county scale and will identify locations to improve nature and provide other benefits, such as capturing carbon from the atmosphere, flood regulation and access to nature-rich spaces where this is most needed for health and wellbeing. – Tris Terry and Tim Johns, Environment
	Tree and Woodland Policy	For consideration of a proposed countywide policy for trees and woodland – Helen Arnold, Tree & Woodlands Manager

Thursday 30 January 2025	North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan	Consideration of the Local Transport Plan for North Yorkshire, the Council's key transport policy document – Allan McVeigh, Head of Network Strategy and Louise Anne Neale, Team Leader Transport Planning
Thursday 24 April 2025	Scrutiny of Climate Change Strategy (2/2)	Bi-annual TEEE O&S scrutiny of the Climate Change Strategy – Jos Holmes, Climate Change Strategy Manager
	National Highways (TBC)	Report on major project delivery and route and maintenance activity from National Highways
	Annual Report of the Member Champion for Climate Change	A report to detail the projects and initiatives undertaken by the Member Champion for Climate Change.
Items to be allocated for future meetings	Future Energy	
	Development of Parking Strategy	
	Assets / Property Maintenance (falls under Corp & Part O&S Committee)	
	Public Rights of Way	
	Attendance of water companies at a future meeting	
	HGV Weight Orders	
	Enviro Crime Update	
	Development of a Shoreline Management Plan / Coastal Management	
	Allerton Waste Recovery Park Annual Update	
	Department for Transport invite	
	Economic priorities for North Yorkshire Council – linked to MCA work and Economic Growth Strategy	
	Major Regeneration Projects Update	
	Tourism Destination Management Plan	