

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Thursday, 20th January, 2022 commencing at 10.00 am.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley in the Chair and County Councillors Karl Arthur, David Goode, Paul Haslam, Robert Heseltine, David Jeffels, Don MacKay, Andy Paraskos, Caroline Patmore, Clive Pearson, Matt Scott, David Staveley and Roberta Swiers.

In attendance: County Councillor Derek Bastiman.

Officers present: James Farrar (Chief Operating Officer of the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership), Daniel Harry (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, North Yorkshire County Council), Emily Mellalieu (Development Management Team Leader, Business and Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council), Paul Mitchinson (Route Manager, Programme Development, Highways England), Matt O'Neill (Assistant Director, Growth, Planning and Trading Standards, Business and Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council), Vicky Perkin (Head of Planning Services, Business and Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council).

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**Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book**

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### **141 Introductions and apologies for absence**

County Councillor Stanley Lumley welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded the committee that the meeting was being held informally and that any formal decisions would need to be taken in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer using his emergency powers.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley read out the following statement:

You will have seen the statement on the Agenda front sheet about current decision-making arrangements within the Council, following the expiry of the legislation permitting remote committee meetings. I just want to remind everyone, for absolute clarity, that this is an informal meeting of the Committee Members. Any formal decisions required will be taken by the Chief Executive Officer under his emergency delegated decision-making powers after taking into account any views of the relevant Committee Members and all relevant information. This approach has been agreed by full Council and will be reviewed at its February meeting.

### **142 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **143 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest to note.

#### **144 Public Questions or Statements**

No public questions or statements were received.

#### **145 Highways England annual update on maintenance and improvement activity – Report of the Team leader, planning and development for Operations Yorkshire Humberside and the North East**

Considered – A report by Paul Mitchinson, Route Manager, Programme Development, Highways England regarding key works underway and planned on roads managed by Highways England in the county.

The list of highways improvement schemes for 2022-23 were presented to the committee. Paul Mitchinson stressed that the timing and scope of the schemes may be subject to change.

There followed a discussion with the key points as summarised below:

- Concerns about the number of fatal accidents that had occurred on the A64 in recent months and the need for safety improvements to be made as a matter of urgency
- The economic impact of slow moving traffic and queues at peak times along the A64 between York and Malton was highlighted. There is a need to ensure good connectivity and ease of access or people will be deterred from going to York and Malton.
- Improvements to junction 47 on the A1 were being led by the Council's Highways service and not Highways England
- Concrete barriers between lanes are safer for motorcyclists than steel barriers or steel poles connected with steel wires. Steel tends to be used as it is cheaper and easier to maintain and can also help with the management of drifting snow across the highway.
- Regular meetings are held between Highways England and Transport for the North
- Overhead message boards on dual carriageways and motorways could be used for promoting carbon emission reduction from petrol and diesel vehicles, such as suggesting low emissions cruising speeds.

County Councillor David Jeffels asked what progress was being made with regard to improvements on the A64 between Hopgrove and the Jinnar Restaurant and the consideration of dualling stretches of the A64. He also asked about the Rillington by-pass and improvements at Golden Hill, Malton.

Paul Mitchinson said that the Highways England were aware of the concerns and that discussions were taking place at a senior level regarding long term improvements to the A64. Consideration was being given to additional safety improvements, such as the use of speed cameras, but major schemes were not yet on the drawing board.

Paul Mitchinson said that nothing was yet planned with regard to a by-pass at Rillington.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley queried the extent to which Highways England and the Highways service at the County Council worked together on the planning of road improvements.

Paul Mitchinson said that there were close links and that the current plan of works had been presented to senior officers in the Council's Highways service in October 2021.

County Councillor Paul Haslam asked what policies were in place to ensure that when roads are built, maintained and improved that waste is minimised and the associated carbon emissions reduced and/or mitigated.

In response, Paul Mitchinson said that a carbon reduction team is in place nationally at

Highways England and they are looking at ways of reducing and mitigating carbon emissions. One aspect is offsetting through planting of trees and hedges on road verges.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley summed up and thanked Paul Mitchinson for attending the meeting.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That Paul Mitchinson comes back to the committee in 12 months to provide a further update.

**146 York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership Annual Report - Report of the Chief Operating Officer**

Considered – A report by James Farrar, Chief Operating Officer of the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) regarding performance against the LEP delivery plan.

The key points from the presentation are as summarised below:

- Overall delivery is on track, except for items which are dependent on issues outside the control of the LEP
- The LEP secured £15.4m from the Getting Building Fund of which £7.7m was spent in 2020/21 leaving a target for 21/22 of £7.7m. It is envisaged that all of the grant will be delivered by the end of the financial year
- A Labour Market Information toolkit has been completed and a Training Session delivered to Career Leaders in schools and colleges, with a focus upon Key Stage 3 and 4 students (11 to 16 years of age)
- Continue to work with local businesses and education providers so that the local economy is able to respond to economic shocks and labour shortages, such as recent shortage of HGV drivers
- There is a strong focus upon the development of a skilled, local workforce that can meet current needs but is also well placed to meet future demands
- There are opportunities to place North Yorkshire and York at the centre of the national de-carbonisation programme and it is one of the few areas within the UK which has the potential to go beyond net zero
- The LEP continue to play a role as an advocate for the area and encouraging investment inwards. Recently, this has included work around the possible re-location of the Great British Rail headquarters to York
- A national review of LEPs is underway by Government to set out the future role of LEPs. The review has been integrated into the Levelling Up White Paper, which is expected to be published in February. At present, there is a lack of clarity over access to future funding
- The LEP is involved in Local Government Re-organisation locally, in particular the economic regeneration work stream.

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

- The LEP has been engaged in the work of the Rural Commission and its report and recommendations
- Part of the work around carbon reduction has involved mapping out the electric supply and generation infrastructure in the county, as part of understanding the impact of an increased demand as a result of the move from heating oil and gas and petrol and diesel vehicles to electric power
- The Convention of the North will be held in Liverpool on 8 February 2022
- The LEP is engaged in discussions about the development of the Olympia Park site in Selby

- Further work could be done to ensure that a framework is in place for the accurate measurement of progress with the de-carbonisation programme.

County Councillor David Staveley asked what regular and in-depth scrutiny was being done of the work of the LEP, over and above the annual reports to this committee.

James Farrar said that a scrutiny meeting was planned for February but acknowledged that the scrutiny arrangements may need to be reviewed.

County Councillor David Goode queried whether the outstanding £5m in grants not spent would actually be spent in this financial year.

James Farrar said that he was confident that all of the grant monies will be spent in year. There would also be an opportunity to do a capital switch with the Council, if needed.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley said that there was a need to develop skills locally so that local people saw the benefits of economic development and that skilled workers were not simply brought in from outside the county to fill vacancies.

James Farrar said that the LEP continued to work with local universities and colleges of further education to map current and future skills vacancies to existing training provision. He said that it was important that people were helped to meet their economic potential and that local people were supported to stay in the county and development their skills.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley summed up and thanked James Farrar for attending the meeting.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That James Farrar comes back to the committee in 12 months to provide a further update.

**147 Update on the implementation of the North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy - Report of the NYCC Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services**

Considered – A report by Emily Mellalieu, Development Management Team Leader, Business and Environmental Services at the County Council regarding the implementation of the North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The key points from the presentation of the report are as summarised below:

- An update was last brought to the committee in 2019. Since then, there have been two significant flood events (Upper Dales and Aire catchment) and the Section 19 reports arising has resulted in the diversion of a significant amount of resource from the team
- The flood risk programme continues to be delivered. Particular progress has been made with the delivery of the Malton, Norton and Old Malton flood management scheme, which is nearing completion
- A review of the North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Strategy is presently underway. Public consultation on the revision is planned during 2022. The original strategy was published in 2015
- Community encouragement and the use of local knowledge is a key element of the management of flood risk
- The Resilience and Emergency Team work with communities to develop locally owned and implemented resilience plans, in the event of a flood
- The dispersed nature of flood risk in North Yorkshire has meant that the approach taken is one whereby flood protection measures are installed at an individual property level,

- using measures such as flood barriers, to prevent water ingress
- Robust advice on surface water drainage and flood risk during the planning process of new housing developments is provided and critical to ensuring that a new development does not heighten the flood risk
  - Since 2011, the Council has undertaken flood investigation at over 200 sites
  - A reactive budget is available for the delivery of low cost (below £10,000) works identified during flood risk investigations which would help reduce local flood risk.

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

- There is a need to tackle complacency in local communities, key stakeholders and commercial developers
- Flood events can have a negative impact upon people's health and wellbeing, impact upon house prices and undermine the local economy and businesses
- Often work is needed upstream to prevent flooding incidences downstream. The costs may be carried by those upstream to the benefit of those downstream. This can create disincentives
- Climate change poses some increased risks as winters become warmer and wetter
- Ongoing concerns about housing developments on flood plains and areas that are known to have flooding and drainage issues
- There is a need for the drainage infrastructure to be improved so that it can cope with higher volumes of rainfall during extreme weather events and move water away from built up areas quickly and efficiently
- When flood mitigation is being considered, it would be helpful to also consider whether small scale hydro-electric power generation projects could be included.

County Councillor David Goode asked whether the planting of trees in upland areas would effectively increase the water holding capacity of the land upstream and so reduce the volume and rate of water released into water courses downstream.

Emily Mellalieu said that tree planting is part of an overall approach of natural flood management but was seen as being a complementary measure and not a key tool in flood risk mitigation.

County Councillor David Staveley said that more attention needed to be paid to local people and their understanding of the flood risk in a given area. Often, planning consent is given for a commercial housing development in an area where it is known to regularly flood but this local intelligence has not been captured or considered.

Emily Mellalieu said that community knowledge and intelligence could be taken into account as part of planning decisions but the national planning framework had to be followed. There has to be a formal flood risk assessment undertaken by the Lead Local Flood Authority, as opposed to a summary of local opinion on flood risk.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley summed up and thanked Emily Mellalieu for attending the meeting.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That Emily Mellalieu comes back to the committee once the new strategy has been signed off, for a further update on key issues arising around flood prevention and response.

#### **148 Draft Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Policy - Report of the NYCC Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services**

Considered – A report by Vicky Perkin and Matt O'Neill, Business and Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council regarding the proposed Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Policy.

The key points from the presentation of the report are as summarised below:

- The Council had adopted its first Planning Enforcement Control Service Pledge in March 2000 and a revised version was adopted in 2005. As such, it is timely to complete a review and refresh
- The overview and scrutiny committee is asked to review the draft policy and comment ahead of it going to the meeting of the Executive on 22 March 2022 and then County Council on 18 May 2022 for adoption
- The draft Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Policy has been prepared to comply with paragraph 59 of the National Planning Policy Framework
- The approach to planning enforcement is not one of immediate prosecution. Instead, it is about working with all parties to find a solution.

County Councillor Paul Haslam said that there is a need to make people aware of the rules around planning and so avoid the excuse of people being unaware of the rules when they are found to have made an infringement.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley summed up and thanked Vicky Perkin and Matt O'Neill for attending the meeting.

#### **Resolved:**

- 1) That the draft Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Policy be reported to the Executive for approval and recommendation to County Council for approval and adoption.

#### **149 Committee Work Programme - Report of the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, NYCC**

Considered -

The report of Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, North Yorkshire County Council regarding committee work programme schedule.

Daniel Harry introduced the report. Committee members reviewed and commented upon it.

#### **Resolved:**

- 1) That the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm.