

North Yorkshire County Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 12th October, 2022 commencing at 10.00 am at Harrogate Civic Centre.

Present: County Councillor Pat Marsh in the Chair, and County Councillors Chris Aldred, Philip Broadbank, Sam Gibbs, Hannah Gostlow, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, Peter Lacey, Mike Schofield, Monika Slater, Matt Walker and Arnold Warneken.

Officers present: Mark Kibblewhite, Allan McVeigh, Louise Neale and Ruth Gladstone.

Other Attendees: Nine members of the public .

Apologies: County Councillors Margaret Atkinson and John Mann.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

15 Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2022 and the special meeting held 28 July 2022

Resolved –

- (a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2022, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- (b) That the Minutes of the special meeting held on 28 July 2022, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

16 Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Philip Broadbank declared that he was a member of Harrogate Civic Society.

17 Public Questions or Statements

The Chairman advised that five notices had been received from members of the public who wished to make statements or ask questions at this meeting. Four were taken at this stage of the meeting and one was taken under item “20mph Speed Limit and Zone Policy”.

Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents’ Association – Otley Road Cycleway

Mr Rene Dziabas, on behalf of Harlow and Pannal Ask Residents’ Association, advised of the results of a survey which the Association had conducted of residents and businesses along Otley Road regarding the Otley Road Cycleway, and requested full, meaningful and proper consultation during option development stage for the remainder of the scheme. Louise Neale (Team Leader Transport Planning, Highways and Transportation) responded. The full statement, together with the response provided by Louise Neale, are set out at Appendix A to these minutes.

Harrogate and District Cycle Action – Cycling Related Issues

Mr Kevin Douglas, on behalf of Harrogate and District Cycle Action, made a statement to explain the background of the organisation, highlight some key issues, and outline some proposals that they felt would address lack of progress. Louise Neale (Team Leader Transport Planning, Highways and Transportation) responded. The full statement, together with the response provided by Louise Neale, are set out at Appendix B to these minutes.

Harrogate Civic Society

Mr Stuart Holland, on behalf of Harrogate Civic Society, made a statement to bring the Society's work to the committee's attention and expressing the wish to play an active and constructive role with the new North Yorkshire Council. Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer) read out a response of County Councillor Simon Myers (Executive Member for Planning and Growth). The full statement, together with the response of County Councillor Simon Myers, are set out at Appendix C to these minutes.

Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council

Parish Councillor Howard West, on behalf of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council, made a statement asking what had happened to the costed and detailed plan for traffic on the west of Harrogate to cope with the housing developments and projected employment sites in the west of Harrogate. The Parish Council also asked for the Maltkin survey to be shelved until the matters regarding the lanes and former cart tracks to the west of Harrogate had been solved. Louise Neale (Team Leader Transport Planning, Highways and Transportation) responded. Parish Councillor Howard West asked a supplementary question, to which Allan McVeigh (Head of Network Strategy, Highways and Transportation) responded. The full statement, supplementary question, and the responses provided by officers, are set out at Appendix D to these minutes.

A Committee Member proposed referring, to the County Council's Executive, the statement of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council, together with the response provided by officers, in order to obtain a clear policy from the Executive about its view concerning the urban expansion to the west of Harrogate. The motion was seconded.

A Member who supported the motion commented that he was intrigued about the Parish Council's request to shelve the Maltkiln survey until the matters regarding the lanes and former cart tracks to the west of Harrogate had been solved. The Member commented that he was interested to hear what the Executive said about that. Another Member questioned whether that request was being referred to the wrong organisation because he understood that the Maltkiln survey was a Harrogate Borough Council planning consultation. Following discussion, the proposer of the motion agreed to amend his motion to refer the Parish Council's statement, together with the response provided by officers, to both the County Council's Executive and to Harrogate Borough Council. A vote was taken, and it was

Resolved –

That Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council's statement, together with the response provided by officers, be referred to both the County Council's Executive and to Harrogate Borough Council.

18 20mph Speed Limit and Zone Policy

Considered: A statement from 20's Plenty for North Yorkshire Harrogate, and a joint report

of the Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services and the Principal Democratic Services Officer concerning 20mph speed limits.

Note: During discussion, County Councillor Pat Marsh declared an interest on the grounds that she and her late husband, 15 years previously, had asked the County Council to implement 20mph speed limits.

Malcolm Margolis BEM, on behalf of 20's Plenty for North Yorkshire Harrogate, made the following statement:-

“20s Plenty is asking your committee to support making 20mph the default speed limit in towns and villages in this constituency as the first step to implementing default 20mph throughout North Yorkshire. This is in order to: (1) achieve a 20mph speed limit on roads which are currently 30mph, with exceptions where a higher speed limit is demonstrably safe, particularly for vulnerable road users, and (2) demonstrate to the Highways Authority the demand for 20mph county-wide, making it both cheaper and easier to implement across the county and achieving better driver compliance.

Speed limits are set by the County Council as the Highway Authority. Demonstrating widespread community support is critical to securing the County's agreement to implement 20mph widely.

28 million people in the UK live in areas where the highway authority supports 20mph. Counties such as Oxfordshire and Lancashire in England, have agreed 20mph for every settlement, as has Wales. Scotland has decided to offer 20mph widely and places like Warrington have 20mph in all their satellite villages. Well over 100 North Yorkshire parish councils have voted for default 20mph.

20mph is popular. Government and other surveys consistently find 70% support in residential streets which rises after 20mph limits are introduced. 20mph saves lives, reduces severity of injuries, CO2 and NOX emissions, improves quality of life, is quieter, very cost effective, costing £3-£5 person with payback in a few months thanks to fewer casualties. It means fewer potholes, a major cost saving, and is sustainable, encouraging more people to walk and cycle. It has little impact on journey times. It is enforceable like any speed limit. Valuable speed reductions occur, even without regular police enforcement. The DfT says for every 1% reduction in average speed there are 6% fewer accidents. Making 20mph the norm does not require humps and chicanes. Signed schemes and public engagement offer seven times better value for money than heavily-engineered schemes.

20mph zones around schools only, achieve little or nothing. 80% of road accidents involving children are not on school journeys. People need to be able to walk and cycle safely from home to school, friends, relatives, play areas and other destinations.

The 30mph limit was introduced in 1935 to tackle a spate of road casualties. I hope you agree it is no longer fit for purpose. For the many social, environmental and economic benefits described above, please support default 20mph to make our communities safer and better places to live. Thank you.”

Allan McVeigh (Head of Network Strategy) responded, as follows, to the statement from Malcolm Margolis:-

“The County Council recognises the benefits which 20mph speed limits can bring and the revised 20mph policy acknowledges the role they can play in improving the sense of place, community and local environment. In so doing, the policy,

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approved by the Council's Executive earlier this year introduce a revised process that allows for the consideration of more qualitative and not just quantitative assessment criteria, against which to determine 20mph speed limit requests, including for example links to other active travel initiatives and the potential for 20mph speed limits and zones to make routes potentially safer, more accessible and encourage greater active travel uptake.

The Policy though also recognises the importance of complying with existing national guidance on the subject and taking each case on its own merits, including the Department for Transport Circular 01/2013, which provides the framework for local (highway) authorities when setting local speed limits. North Yorkshire Police also adhere to the guidance and as they are responsible for enforcement too, it is important that we work in partnership with them and seek their support for any proposed changes in speed limits. North Yorkshire Police has confirmed in the review that led to the revised 20mph policy that they do not support the countywide default application of 20mph speed limits.

The economic and social cost of fatal and serious collisions are well understood and the Council already spends a significant amount of effort and resources in treating known collision sites, which are more a problem on the high speed rural network than elsewhere. The Council also needs to consider how the application of 20mph speed limits across wide areas may influence journey times and the performance of its network for all road users.

A 20mph speed limit or zone should be appropriate for that part of the network. Importantly, it must also be self-enforcing. Introducing a 20mph speed limit or zone to a road(s) where drivers do not already generally conform to lower speeds, will likely result in poor speed limit compliance and consequently, understandable local complaints and community expectations of police enforcement.

It is possible to achieve 20mph speeds through signing and road markings alone, on roads with an average speed of 24mph or less. Where speeds are in excess of 24mph, it is necessary to introduce physical traffic calming measures in order to engineer a reduction in speed, eg through chicanes, speed cushions, speed tables etc.

Please be assured that the County Council is committed to making the network as safe and accessible as possible for all road users and will continue to engage with local communities to consider what options and alternatives may exist to allay road safety concerns and improve the sense of place and community."

County Councillor Arnold Warneken moved, and County Councillor Mike Schofield seconded, a motion which, during discussion, they agreed to amend to "That the Executive be advised that the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee wishes a 20mph speed limit to be piloted throughout towns and villages in the constituency area where a need has been identified, and that the Executive be asked to recommend the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when it considers the County Council's 20mph Speed Limit and Zone Policy on 19 January 2023, to consider appropriate amendments to the existing policy to enable such a pilot to be introduced".

The Committee debated the motion.

Key points made by Members who supported the motion were:-

- 20mph limits would:- improve the environment, air quality and the well-being of

residents; reduce traffic by getting more people to walk and cycle safely; support a modal shift, which was a key objective of the existing policy.

- More evidence was now available to show that traffic pollution potentially caused cancers. Particulates were a key issue in changing speed between 20mph and 30mph.
- A 20mph limit was needed throughout a journey, rather than only around a school.
- The new Maltkiln development would be exemplar in terms of active travel but this would be “useless” if cycling was less user-friendly at the Maltkiln boundary marked on the planning application.
- The current policy was self-fulfilling, ie by considering requests on a case-by-case basis, and there needed to be a culture change. The existing policy was from a different era and needed to be challenged. (Allan McVeigh responded that, since the current policy was introduced with a dedicated budget for 20mph schemes, multiple applications for 20mph limits had been requested and some had already been successful. This was quite different compared to prior to January 2022.)
- 20mph should be introduced now rather than in 20 or 40 years’ time.
- The benefits for pedestrians and cyclists, of having 20mph limits, needed to be treated with greater importance.
- Many parish councils within the Harrogate Borough Council area had said they wanted 20mph limits in their parishes.

In response to a question about costs, Allan McVeigh advised that the introduction of 20mph across the Harrogate and Knaresborough area, was likely to cost more than £1million and would take 12-18 months for options testing, surveys and analysis, assuming that various tasks were run concurrently.

Enforcement of 20mph limits was discussed and Members expressed various opinions, namely:-

- A Member suggested that enforcement was a “smokescreen” which should not be allowed to stand in the way of doing the right thing.
- Another Member commented that it was important to bring the Police on-board because, if there were no consequences, the limit would be ignored.
- Another Member said that speed cameras should be used to enforce speed limits until behaviours changed.

Allan McVeigh reported that “signed only” limits had the expectation that people would abide by that reduced speed limit and therefore, attached to any pilot, trial or implementation, it was really important to have a publicity/behavioural-change campaign. There would be cost to have such a campaign.

With regard to the need for engineering measures to support 20mph limits, Allan McVeigh advised that it was important to look at the data and evidence base regarding speed limits. For this reason, the Government, in 2017, had commissioned Atkins and another major consultant, to look at this in detail. Allan McVeigh suggested that, if there had been such a compelling case for signed-only limits, the DFT would have looked to potentially change its existing speed limit guidance. However, it had not done so. The DFT still said that, for locations where there were speeds in excess of 24mph, in order to ensure those speeds came down, some sort of physical horizontal or vertical features were required. The study also concluded that signed-only limits typically reduced speeds by less than 1mph, depending on the location. Therefore, there was no significant impact in having a signed-only limit. This was the reason why there was still a reliance on engineering, coupled with the advice in LTN120 which said that, to ensure speeds were reduced, such limits should be linked to physical features.

Key points made by a Member who did not support the motion were:-

- Existing 20mph limits with only “signs and lines” did not necessarily result in reduced traffic speeds. It therefore came down to the same arguments of enforcement and capital spend.
- The Member was reluctant to ask for anything which would have a revenue spend because there were items relating to his Division that Highways needed to look at, which had been requested a long, long time previously, but there had been no money to get them done. The Member wanted money spending to remedy those items first.
- The motion put to the meeting had been contradicted by supporting statements made by Members who supported it, namely, the motion referred to 20mph speed limit being piloted throughout “towns and villages” but Members who supported the motion had referred to a 20mph limit at Maltkiln being “useless” beyond the Maltkiln boundary. The Member suggested that, in any event, the whole area would need to be reviewed to determine where the ‘red line’ for a 20mph limit was, and there would be a cost associated with carrying out such a review.

Most Members who expressed an opinion supported asking the TEE Overview and Scrutiny Committee to approach Oxfordshire and Lancashire to ask them how 20mph limits were going. Another Member suggested also asking Leeds City Council about their 20mph limit in Otley. Allan McVeigh reported that the 2021 Scrutiny review of the 20mph policy had looked at the examples in Oxfordshire and Lancashire and other locations, although there was an opportunity to look at that again, recognising the passage of time.

There was discussion about the words “where a need has been identified” within the phrase within the motion “... 20mph speed limit to be piloted throughout towns and villages in the constituency area where a need has been identified ...”. The mover of the motion was asked whether there was a framework for identifying “a need”. The mover responded that there were expert officers who went through the process of identifying whether a need existed and that he would work with them, if this pilot went through, to assist that process.

Resolved –

That the Executive be advised that the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee wishes a 20mph speed limit to be piloted throughout towns and villages in the constituency area where a need has been identified, and that the Executive be asked to recommend the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when it considers the County Council’s 20mph Speed Limit and Zone Policy on 19 January 2023, to consider appropriate amendments to the existing policy to enable such a pilot to be introduced.

19 Climate Change Sub-Group - Report of the Meeting held on 27 September 2022

Considered: A report of the proceedings of the recent meeting of the Committee’s Climate Change Sub-Group.

County Councillor Arnold Warneken, Chair of the Sub-Group, introduced the report, commenting that this had been a very interesting and informative meeting. He expressed his thanks the officers who had contributed to the Sub-Group’s meeting. He suggested the following:-

- The Sub-Group should meet again to discuss where they saw it could take this on behalf of the Area Constituency Committee in terms of which of the topics and priorities should be taken on.
- The Sub-Group should spread its learning and therefore:-

- The presentation, which had been given at the Sub-Group's meeting by the Climate Change Officers, should be forwarded to all Committee Members. Ruth Gladstone undertook to email the presentation to all Committee Members.
- All Members and staff should be encouraged to do the 90 minutes on-line Climate Change training available via the Learning Zone.
- A full-day's carbon literacy training should be provided for all Members of the County Council. Another Member commented that this was already available.

There was a discussion about whether other area constituency committees had Climate Change Sub-Groups. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman undertook to raise this suggestion at the meeting to be held on 21 October 2022 of Area Constituency Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

Resolved –

That the report, together with discussion at this meeting, be noted.

A short comfort break was held at this stage of the meeting

20 Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme - Stage 2 Update

Considered: A report of the Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services which provided an update on the progress of stage 2 of the Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme which built on the findings of the extensive Harrogate Congestion Study public engagement of 2019.

Louise Neale (Team Leader Transport Planning, Highways and Transportation) introduced the report and highlighted, amongst other things, that a further report, setting out the findings and recommendations at the conclusion of the study, would be brought to a meeting of this Area Constituency Committee in the first half of 2023.

In response to Members' questions, Louise Neale confirmed the following:-

- When the Council received new Active Travel Fund announcements, officers looked back through the full range of previously suggested schemes and brought forward those which were the 'best fit' for the criteria accompanying that announcement.
- A high level assessment was progressing for a stand-alone Killinghall bypass. A report had been received very recently and officers were currently assessing it.
- The funding which the County Council had available was Action Travel Fund. Officers had had conversations with Active Travel England who accepted that the County Council, along with other councils, had not been able to deliver within the very short timescales which were initially set out. Active Travel England were happy for officers to work with them to come to agreed designs. There were no suggestions about having to hand funding back.

Members discussed the report and made the following points:-

- The earlier reports by consultants WPS had included some easy quick wins, eg putting electric signs on bus shelters to show what time the next bus/train would be arriving. County Councillor Paul Haslam asked to see a checklist of all those easy quick wins, together with information to show what had happened to each.

- Consideration should be given to train travel. In particular, the latest Integrated Rail Transport Policy covering Leeds included a very interesting type of metro system and this should be extended to include Harrogate and York. Harrogate Borough Council had already written to Leeds to ask for Harrogate to be part of that system.
- To take traffic off the A61, there should be a train station on Claro Road. This was supported by the Liberal Democrat Group.
- A Member asked for a footpath to be provided between Killinghall and the Greenway in order to take traffic off the road network.
- Any assessment undertaken for a new cycling scheme or a new walking scheme should include a measurement of the number of cars which that scheme would take off the road.
- It was a puzzle how safe cycling could be introduced along Wetherby Road and Skipton Road, which were amongst the busiest roads in Harrogate.
- The traffic tail-backs along Wetherby Road were unbelievably long and continuous 24/7, and this road needed to be looked at.
- The Showground would be a better location for park and ride rather than Leeds Road. Leeds Road was so close to the town that it would not encourage many people to not take their cars into the town centre.
- There were no buses in very large urban Wards so modal switch amongst elderly people would be very difficult to achieve.
- A subsidised bus service running along Hookstone Chase ran too late in the morning to take people to work or pupils to school.
- All Harrogate secondary schools were on one side of town. A new secondary school was needed for the New Park area to decrease the amount of cross-town travel and consequently help tackle traffic congestion.
- It was really important to progress those Active Travel schemes for which funding had already been secured, despite the impact of staff vacancy levels and LGR which were recognised by Members.
- Members were frustrated by the length of time, and the number of reports/consultants/investigations, taken to achieve highway improvements.

The Chairman asked the officers to communicate more with Members because they lived at these locations and understood the problems.

Resolved –

- (a) That the content of the update be noted.
- (b) That the officers take cognisance of Members' comments and consider the input which Members have made.

21 A Cultural Framework for North Yorkshire

Considered: A report of the Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services setting out the Cultural Framework for North Yorkshire which had been endorsed by the County Council's Executive on 8 March 2022. The Executive had asked for the Framework to be submitted to each of the area constituency committees.

Mark Kibblewhite (Senior Policy Officer, Growth, Planning and Trading Standards) introduced the report and gave a presentation to highlight key issues within the Framework. He highlighted that the Framework was part of an on-going conversation to provide an overarching direction of travel, and to act as a catalyst for conversation, partnership brokering and investment including securing both public and private sector funding. The intention was for the new North Yorkshire Council to produce a Cultural Strategy and this Framework was a first step into something much bigger and better than

was rooted in the work of the new Authority. The Framework made a good case for the role of culture in supporting health, local economies and local communities.

In response to Members' questions, Mark Kibblewhite provided the following further information:-

- Mark Kibblewhite was unsure whether the "Think Harrogate" study had been used in the Framework. He was aware, however, that colleagues from Harrogate Borough Council and Destination Harrogate had been on the partnership working group which had developed the Framework.
- There was nothing in the document that said that school halls could not be used as cultural spaces or that those spaces were not valid or important.
- Each community network would decide the content and development of its own 10 year plan.

Members discussed the report and made the following points:-

- There were many gaps in the Framework, for example, there was no mention of brass banding, the Bad Apple Theatre Company, and there were several gaps relating to Knaresborough such as the Castle, Knaresborough FEVA, and the great Knaresborough bed race. In response, Mark Kibblewhite accepted the limitations of the audit but highlighted that the Framework supported the value of these events/work. As such, when the organisation talked to authorities/Arts Council about what it did, it was supported by the work which had been done to highlight the benefits of that activity.
- A Member advised that he was really disappointed by the Framework because:- it did not set a direction in terms of that which can now be used within the heart and the cultural drive which he believed would come through community networks; there were many gaps in the Framework; the Framework felt very top-down, whereas it should have been bottom-up; and he had checked the credentials of the arts development company Mustard& who had been commissioned to develop the Framework and he felt that the two individuals in Mustard& had not had the skills to produce a strategic Framework of this sort. The Member expressed that opinion that someone should have 'pulled the plug' on the Framework during the process because Covid had made it really difficult to deliver this sort of engagement process. He felt that those involved had clearly struggled through to produce something; that time had moved on; and he would not be using it in his community network to think about how they developed culture. He asked about the procurement process through which Mustard& had been commissioned and how much the Framework had cost North Yorkshire County Council.
- The biggest factor around deprivation was considered, by a Member, to be education. However, education was not mentioned in the Framework.
- A Member welcomed the report and its recognition of the issue of funding and the organisations which contributed so much to the culture in the county. He cited Harrogate International Festival as a good example of a festival from whom other groups could learn and which the Framework was trying to reflect.
- A Member commented that he was pleased to see that arts and culture featured highly in the Chief Executive's proposed structure for the new North Yorkshire Council.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Cultural Framework for North Yorkshire be noted.

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- (b) That a written response be provided, to be circulated to all Members of the Committee, advising of the details of the procurement process through which Mustard& was commissioned, and how much the Framework has cost North Yorkshire County Council.
- (c) That the comments which Members have made during this meeting be taken into consideration.

22 Committee Work Programme

Considered: The Work Programme for the Committee to consider and amend.

Ruth Gladstone suggested the following changes to the Work Programme:-

- The deletion of the North Yorkshire Rural Commission's Update because a report on this matter was scheduled to be considered by the Executive in November 2022.
- The inclusion of a report on the Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme – Stage 2 Findings and Recommendations, for a meeting of the Committee to be held in the first half of 2023.
- The inclusion of a report on the Harrogate Station Gateway project, for a meeting of the Committee to be held in early 2023.
- The scheduling of a presentation about fuel poverty, for the Committee's meeting to be held on 24 November 2022.

County Councillor Hannah Gostlow referred to river pollution at Knaresborough and suggested that this should be an issue for discussion with the MP at the Committee's special meeting on 10 November 2022. She also advised that the Knaresborough community felt that having a Designated Bathing Area was the only way to get action from Yorkshire Water in terms of making the river water cleaner. However, fast action was needed for the submission of an application for a Designated Bathing Area and the investigation could not wait until the Committee's meeting in March 2023, as currently indicated on the Work Programme. She proposed the setting up of a Task and Finish Working Group to investigate the submission of an application for a Designated Bathing Area. Various Members volunteered to be part of the Task and Finish Group.

Members asked about the timing of the submission of further information concerning the Harrogate Station Gateway project.

The Chairman reported that she was pressing the LGR Member Working Group on Planning to have for responsibility for planning devolved to a sub-committee of this Committee so that Harrogate and Knaresborough Members made decisions locally instead of decisions being made by Members from across North Yorkshire. She was also pressing for the Committee to be a consultee on licensing and highway matters because it was very important that Harrogate and Knaresborough Members had input into such consultations.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Work Programme be approved, subject to the suggestions put forward by Ruth Gladstone.
- (b) That river water quality at Knaresborough be put forward for discussion with the MP at the Committee's meeting on 10 November 2022.
- (c) That a Task and Finish Group, comprising County Councillors Hannah Gostlow,

Monika Slater, Paul Haslam and Arnold Warneken, be established to investigate the submission of an application for a Designated Bathing Area at Knaresborough.

- (d) That Highways Officers be asked to provide a short briefing note for Members in two months' time containing a further update on Harrogate Station Gateway project.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 pm.

Otley Road Cycleway

Harlow & Pannal Ash Residents Association (HAPARA) Submission to NYCC Area Constituency Committee – 12 October 2022

Now that stage 1 of the Otley Road cycleway has been finished, HAPARA believed it was a good time to seek the views of local residents in relation to the scheme as a whole.

At the end of June leaflets were distributed to homes and businesses along the Otley Road. A copy was also posted on the HAPARA website and on social media, with residents being asked to submit comments on the issues raised in the leaflet.

On the recently constructed **Phase 1**, comments were very heavily negative with safety issues for both pedestrians and cyclists being voiced as the major area of concern. Here are just some of the comments:

“Fundamentally flawed - a nightmare - an accident waiting to happen – unworkable in its crazy golf construction – and many more comments of a similar nature

A recurring theme being expressed related to poor segregation between cyclists and pedestrians in Phase 1, that had made Otley Road less safe for all users while at the same time making it aesthetically less pleasing.

Only two responses supportive of the current scheme were received.

A summation of the feedback received by HAPARA indicates the overwhelming majority do not want a continuance of the Phase I approach and consider the scheme as it stands to be entirely misguided.

Very little comment was received in relation to **Phase 2** from Cold Bath Road to Beech Grove since residents are confused as to what exactly the design involves and when it will commence.

The scope for constructing **Phase 3** with full segregation of cyclists and pedestrians, the so called LTN 1/20 standard, was considered limited and would involve a significant loss of green landscape, since verges along the Otley Road are simply too narrow to accommodate both paths.

Given the poor track record of this scheme we are asking the committee to:

- 1 Carry out a full, meaningful and proper consultation with residents and businesses along Otley Road during the option development stage for the remainder of the Otley Road scheme, before designs are firmed up.
and,
- 2 In the meantime, issue the timetable for implementation of phases 2 and 3 of the cycleway scheme plus route details.

The general feeling is that this scheme will do very little, if anything, to offset the impact of the huge housing growth to the west of Harrogate, and nothing that has been proposed so far convinces us that the core traffic problem will in any way be mitigated.

In response to the Harrogate and Pannal Ash Residents Association (HAPARA) – News Letter featuring Otley Road cycleway.

A consultation with residents and businesses in the vicinity of proposed phase 2 will be undertaken in October 2022, we will be seeking opinions from residents and key stakeholders on 3 options. As part of this, residents and stakeholders will also be invited to a meet the designer event, allowing them to discuss these options further.

This additional engagement and further consultation is to ensure that all user groups and residents views have been carefully considered.

Phase 1's final road safety audit has been completed and the contractor will undertake necessary amendments and remedial work. At the time of preparing this response a date is not yet confirmed but they hope to secure road space early in November to complete this.

Statement of Harrogate and District Cycle Action, together with the response provided at the meeting by Louise Neale (Team Leader Transport Planning, Highways and Transportation) which is shown in red and italic font

Thank you for the opportunity to make a statement to the Committee today about Harrogate and District Cycle Action (HDCA),

The organisation is known to a number of Members as we have made presentations to this committee on cycling related issues and also been in active contact with a number of you regarding cycling

The Organisation is made up of representatives from various cycling organisations in the District and we have over 300 plus Supporters and we have an active website which is available to our Supporters and general public which is <https://harrogatecycleaction.org.uk> Over the past 7/8 years HDCA has tried to work closely with the Local Authorities to facilitate the improvement of the cycling infrastructure and is an active Member of Harrogate District Cycle Forum. We have regular monthly meetings with Officers on current projects and we have input on various projects to give local knowledge and insight which has helped in securing funding. Whilst the Authority has been successful in securing funds our major concern is the delivery of those Projects.

These include:-

- a) Otley Road scheme where funding was secured in 2017 and is still less than one third complete. *Response – We accept that there has been a delay, with various design issues and land issues having delayed delivery, but phase 1 has now been completed with consultation on phase two due imminently.*
- b) Victoria Avenue and Knaresborough Road where funding was secured in 2020 and still not started or final designs agreed. *Response - Active Travel England, who are the funders, have been involved in discussions about these schemes and are keen to be involved in the ongoing design work. They are fully aware that these schemes have not yet been delivered and they have suggested further design work as a way forward.*
- c) Oatlands Feasibility Study-which is still only internal work with no public involvement so no likely outcome in 2022. *Response – We are ready to go with public engagement due to start this month and this will be publicised very shortly.*

We believe this lack of progress will impact on potential future funding bids as the authority has already been unsuccessful in the ATF3 bid and is unlikely to be successful in ATF4 unless good progress is made on the current schemes. *Response - Ongoing dialogue with Active Travel England will help us deliver strong bids in the future as well.*

We see the major problem as a lack of an Officer who leads on the Cycling agenda in the local area and who has local knowledge and authority to deliver these schemes. We believe that the Area Committee must play a key role in helping shape local strategies and plans and the need for action in a number of areas. *Response – There is now an officer within the Area 6 Highways Team who is responsible for delivering specific projects, so the larger projects. This is not specifically Active Travel but it is picking-up on a lot of Active Travel projects.*

These areas are:-

1. The development of a detailed Cycling Plan for Harrogate District which will inform future development and transport infrastructure.
Response - This is in progress and officers have been working with Harrogate and District Cycle Action on network and zone plans over the last year. This work is being pulled together alongside some updates to the priority corridors that we looked at through the Local Cycling Network Infrastructure Plan and these are being updated to LTN1/20 standard.
2. The appointment of a dedicated Cycling Officer for the District at a senior level to monitor projects, and input into planning and other developments.
Response - North Yorkshire County Council have a duty to ensure future active travel delivery takes place across the county where opportunities allow so this would

need to be carefully considered if considering a role in one District alone. It is however recognised that the improvement schemes in Harrogate do have a significant impact on the Local Highways team on top of their existing business as usual delivery requirements. As a result they are recruiting to a new manager role – ‘Improvement Project Delivery Manager’ who will be able to invest time into ensuring the delivery of improvement schemes across the District.

3. A local area budget to deliver the small-scale improvements and schemes that arise. This could be managed via the Local Area Committee.
4. The transfer of the Harrogate District Cycle Forum to the County Council and brought under the auspices of the Area Committee with Area member involvement.

Response to 3 and 4 - The development of the area constituency committees is being picked up through the Member Working Group on Locality and Governance. Any county councillor can attend the Working Group's meetings and participate in discussions so the future arrangements for a cycle forum will be picked up as part of that process.

Conclusion We welcome the opportunity of being able to make this statement to give you some background on our organisation, highlight some of the key issues and outline some of the proposals that we feel will address the lack of progress.

Statement from Harrogate Civic Society to the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee, Wednesday 12 October 2022

Members:

We are grateful for the opportunity to bring the work of the Harrogate Civic Society to your attention. Most of you will be aware of the Society, but with the advent of the unitary council and potential devolution, this seems a good opportunity to set out our stall afresh.

Harrogate Civic Society is a charity, now in its 51st year, and our constitution sets out our objectives which are to protect, preserve and enhance the character and amenities of Harrogate. We do this through lectures and various events, including the commissioning of brown plaques of which there are 92, and by submitting comments on planning applications and proposals which impact the town and in particular its conservation area.

We are a growing society with currently 320 members and the day-to-day running is carried out by a committee of which I am chairman. We are active on social media, maintain a website and issue regular newsletters to our members and to yourselves this morning.

We have established close co-operative relationships with a variety of other organisations such as Harrogate BID, Harrogate Theatres, Yorkshire Agricultural Society, Friends of Valley Gardens and many others, in order to further the aims and objectives of our society.

We wish to maintain and strengthen the engagement we have with the local authority both informally and more formally through the consultation process, not just on specific applications and projects, but also on the Local Plan process which is bound to evolve through reviews and as a result of changing policies.

We are keen to play an active and constructive role with the new North Yorkshire Council, helping where we can to enable the council achieve outcomes which – as our strapline goes – celebrates our past, enhances our present and shapes our future.

Stuart Holland
Chair
Harrogate Civic Society

Response to the statement from Harrogate Civic Society from County Councillor Simon Myers (Executive Member for Planning and Growth) read out in his absence at the meeting by Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

‘I am delighted to read the positive statement from Harrogate Civic Society. Their desire to strengthen their engagement with the new Council is exactly what we wish to encourage in all our community and organisational partners. I welcome their commitment to constructive engagement with North Yorkshire and I look forward to working with them in the future.’

**Statement from Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council for Harrogate and
Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee - Wednesday 12 October 2022
at 10.00AM**

Relating to item 7 on the agenda, Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council wish to make the following comments:

For the first time, to our knowledge, (HTIP recap 3.3) reference has been made in the public domain to the plight of Pannal and Burn Bridge relating to the explosion of housing and projected employment sites to the west of Harrogate. It is amazing that, despite our making NYCC aware of this prior to 2019, there is at last some recognition and realisation that, apart from tinkering at the edges, nothing of significance has been planned to mitigate what will be gridlock in Harrogate's Western Arc.

We believed that all relevant factors were taken into account but it appears the wheel is being reinvented. In HTIP recap 3.1, it refers to the conclusion of the first stage of HTIP. We're still awaiting the second stakeholder meeting (promised for October) concerning the fully costed and detailed implementation plan that was missing from the West of Harrogate Parameters Plan. So how can the first stage of HTIP be complete? The Otley Road cycle path, increased bus frequency and active travel were meant to be the panacea for all ills to mitigate congestion into Harrogate. None of these plans would have any real effect on the huge increase in traffic through Pannal and Burn Bridge arising from the Western Arc developments.

Consultations with, and consultants from, developers and others seem to have delivered next to nothing since 2019. The timescales in points 4.1 to 4.4 allude to kicking the can further down the road as if there is something new and unforeseen that has arisen since 2019. There isn't anything other than what we in the Western Arc have been telling NYCC and HBC for years.

There are now so many acronyms that we have lost track of what is going on. Some clarification is needed please – HTIP (Mk 1 or 2), WHIDP, WHIDS, IDS, IDP, WoH (that's brand new for us), WHPP, etc. Does HTIP v 2 include WHIDS as it would appear to concentrate on the A61 rather than what is needed to Harrogate's west? Has the costed and detailed plan for traffic on the west of Harrogate that was promised, been shelved, delayed - once again - or incorporated into HTIP v 2 or WoH or both?

We're sure a detailed response to our comments will be provided by NYCC but, as HBC will cease to exist within a few months, has it given up the ghost with its participation with NYCC but continues with its liaison with developers? Efforts are being made to have a complete plan for Maltkiln, which is probably many years away – something that was sadly lacking for the Western Arc of Harrogate. Please shelve the Maltkiln survey until you have solved the urgent matters for what is happening now in the lanes and former cart tracks to the west of Harrogate.

We come to item 9 in the report where recommendation is made to merely "consider this update and note its content". Our recommendation is for Members to effect the equivalent of a kick up the backside (immediate action) to get meaningful results now rather than procrastination and excuses.

Howard West
Chairman, Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council

Response to the statement from Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council from Louise Neale (Team Leader Transport Planning, Highways and Transportation)

There are two main workstreams which are separate but very closely linked. HTIP is the Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme which is being lead by NYCC as the Local Transport Authority, the focus of which is “...to improve facilities for all road users, but would particularly seek to improve provision for pedestrians and cyclists, provide bus priority to enhance the experience of using passenger transport, and also seek to tackle some of the most problematic junctions in the study area.” This workstream seeks to address existing congestion issues and promote more sustainable modes of transport. Upon completion of the study work, it is anticipated that a business case will be submitted to the DfT to secure funding to deliver the works on site.

The other workstream is focussed on mitigating the impacts of the developments in the West of Harrogate urban expansion, which seeks to deliver 2500 new houses, two schools, local centres and employment land. The promoters have commissioned a transport consultant to prepare a transport study, which looks at the cumulative impact of all of the developments, as well as other committed developments in the study area and identifies junctions and links which require mitigation as a result of these developments. This work will be funded by the developers through Section 106 contributions and delivered by the Local Highway Authority. Should the bid for funding for HTIP be unsuccessful, then there would still be an intention to deliver these improvements through the Section 106 contributions.

As such, the workstreams are separate, but intrinsically linked, and any delay in one work stream can unfortunately impact the other. Much of the relevant information is being worked up by consultants representing different development companies, plus planning officers from HBC working with our own officers to understand the assessment of highway impact and then consider potential approaches to mitigation. Due to the complexity of the planning matters involved, including the number of developers, the timelines to which they are working, and the cumulative effect of the developments overall, that work in itself has been extremely time consuming and complex, and much of the detail relevant to HTIP has only recently become available.

NYCC have engaged with an external consultant, RPS, to undertake a buildability and costing exercise on their behalf. Since the mitigation works are being constructed by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) and funded through S106 contributions, the LHA requires certainty that enough funding will be secured, and also that the proposals being brought forth by the promoters can be delivered. This workstream is also still ongoing, though good progress has been made and it is nearing its conclusion. The outcome from this work and the cumulative transport strategy will feed into the West Harrogate Infrastructure Delivery Strategy.

NYCC and HBC are working closely on all West of Harrogate workstreams and this will continue after local government reorganisation.

Supplementary Question from Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council

Parish Councillor Howard West commented that there were actually 4,000 new houses, rather than 2,500 as mentioned in the response.

Parish Councillor Howard West asked where, in all the work carried out by the County Council, Borough Council and developers, was there any clarity or commitment on deliverables that would truly off-set the effects of the excessive developments proposed for the western arc of Harrogate. So far, everything the Parish Council was seeing constituted tinkering around the edges, is process driven, and lacks real solutions. Compare this with what has happened in Maltkiln. Two totally different worlds.

Allan McVeigh (Head of Network Strategy, Highways and Transportation) responded that a huge amount of work was already in progress regarding junction mitigation. This is the RPS study mentioned by Louise Neale. Officers are also pushing the process very hard in relation to Active Travel and Sustainable Transport. Proposals were coming forwarded which included bus service improvements too. An awful lot of work is on-going but, at the moment, it is still 'work in progress'.