

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

17 May 2023

STATEMENT OF CHAIR OF THE TRANSPORT, ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a remit that includes the following:

- 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 and regeneration, the work of the Local Enterprise Partnership and helping people develop their skills, including lifelong learning;
- Sustainable development, climate change strategy, countryside management, waste management, environmental conservation and enhancement flooding and cultural issues.

The Committee last met on 12 April 2023 in the Brierley Room at County Hall.

Corporate Director for Environment Karl Battersby updated the committee on how the move to North Yorkshire Council had progressed for the directorate, as well as a wide range of issues including:

- Progress with major projects such as the A59 Kex Gill upgrade and the Transforming Cities Fund projects in Harrogate, Skipton and Selby;
- The approval of a new taxi licensing policy for North Yorkshire with the scope of an Inclusive Service Plan agreed;
- Waste collection and harmonisation – currently modelling scenarios ahead of going out to public consultation later this year;
- £6.5m for pothole repairs funding awarded to the Council in the Spring Budget

Following this, questions were raised from members on topics such as winter road maintenance, active travel schemes and how the allocation of the pothole repair money will be prioritised across the county.

Preventing flooding on highways – Gully clearance and maintenance

Members heard about the risk-based approach now used for gully clearance and maintenance across North Yorkshire and how this has been phased in over time. It was reported that 2022/23 has essentially been a transition year with regard to fully deploying the new risk-based approach to clean and maintain the 164,171 gullies on the highway network in North Yorkshire. This year, good progress through March, which was less-impacted by adverse weather and included some weekend / longer-day working, meant that completion of the full cleaning and maintenance programme was on track to be achieved.

By April 2024, all parts of the county will have had at least twelve months of the new Kaarbontech risk-based regime and therefore any inefficiency in attending gullies under the old regime/programme that would have been part of the 2022/23 year will be removed.

Issues raised by members on this subject included: working more collaboratively with officers to target known hot spot locations in their divisions where gullies overflow and are difficult to maintain; getting staff out on site to see issues first hand and deliver effective and long lasting

solutions; the best ways for councillors to feed in intelligence to ensure a quick resolution and the potential financial savings that could be realised from the new risk-based approach.

Civil Parking Enforcement

The financial performance and allocation of the civil parking enforcement annual surplus and general working balance for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years were also considered, leading into a discussion regarding the running of the service before vesting day and now following local government reorganisation. The focus of the parking management service (charges, policies and enforcement) for North Yorkshire has been on getting to 'safe and legal', but will be subject to a county wide review by officers to ensure a more consistent approach to enforcement. The committee were keen to be involved in the review at the appropriate point to feed in their views.

As part of questions to officers, the difficult parking situation in several rural villages and tourist areas was highlighted and the different tools available to combat unreasonable parking were discussed.

The committee were joined by a representative from North Yorkshire Police (NYP) to set out their role and responsibility with regards to parking enforcement. Details were provided on the assistance NYP can provide through neighbourhood policing and problem solving teams if a situation escalates into a traffic policing offence, due to a vehicle causing a hazard or obstruction.

The unhelpful approach of some private car park operators in the county was also noted and any influence that the council can have on this is to be considered as part of the overall parking review process.

Work Programme

Under the work programme item, topics raised for discussion at future meetings and mid-cycle briefings included updates on the active travel schemes that are progressing around the county, the service transformation of the Environment directorate as it develops and a report on moorland conservation work.

The next meeting of the committee will be at 10am on Thursday 25 May.

COUNCILLOR DAVID STAVELEY
CHAIR, TRANSPORT, ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
4 May 2023