

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

15 NOVEMBER 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.

Since the last Council meeting on 19 July 2023, the committee have been busy on a number of fronts.

26 July 2023 – Call In of the Executive decision – Review of the 20mph Speed Limit and Zone Policy

The committee met to consider a call in of the 4 July 2023 decision of the Executive. This decision was to reject default area-wide 20mph zones in North Yorkshire, and that a series of planned review and a speed management strategy be implemented to deliver local traffic management schemes.

During the meeting, Councillor Andy Brown presented the case for the call in, putting forward concerns regarding the Executive decision, such as insufficient weight given to the effectiveness of speed management schemes and inadequate consultation with Parish and Town Councils. The committee also heard statements from members of the public who attended both in person or via proxy and where appropriate officers engaged to address the points made.

The committee then heard from Allan McVeigh, Head of Network Strategy, and the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation, Councillor Keane Duncan, in responding to the points raised, setting out the benefits of the evidence-based approach outlined in the revised policy.

Following a debate and discussion by members, it was agreed that no further action be taken. Officers responded to the decision by reiterating that the Council would proactively engage with Parish and Town Councils to explain the next steps, and that members would be consulted to help shape the policy going forward.

The meeting was streamed online on YouTube and can be viewed [here](#).
(Link: tinyurl.com/56cbefdt)

August 2023 – Train Station Ticket Office Consultation

Following concerns raised at the July committee meeting about the proposals out to consultation to close/reduce ticket office hours and changes to availability of staff at railway stations across the county, committee members were given the opportunity to meet informally with officers and train company representatives to feed in views and comments to be considered as part of the final response letter sent from North Yorkshire Council.

While many of the concerns raised by members reflected those of the wider community, it was felt by all parties present that the session had been a useful exercise and brought a fresh perspective to the challenges faced by rail users under the suggested proposals.

It is pleasing that the plans to close rail ticket offices in England have now been scrapped following the wide ranging concerns raised as part of the public consultation.

13 October 2023 - Visit to Allerton Waste Recovery Park (AWRP)

Ahead of consideration of the annual report on AWRP to the committee at our October meeting, five committee members took the opportunity to visit the site to learn more about what happens to the residual waste received and treated there. The group were able to tour around the facility, including the Mechanical Treatment (MT) plant that sorts the 'black bag' waste to extract and recycle items, the Anaerobic Digester that processes 40,000 tonnes of food and organic waste each year and the Energy from Waste process using the remaining non-recyclable waste.

It was encouraging to hear that everyone who attended the visit found it useful and learnt something from the tour and Q&A with AWRP staff.

19 October 2023 – Committee Meeting

The October meeting was dominated by consideration of the Notice of Motion on the agenda today regarding improving water quality to benefit health, wildlife, biodiversity and the economy. It was reassuring to hear from officers about the work already underway on a number of fronts to tackle this important issue. In the meeting, it was also clear that all committee members want to see water quality improvements, but the debate brought forward a range of opinions about the best way of achieving this through the motion text put forward, leaving the committee with numerous recommendations in an attempt to bring the motion into an effective form of words.

It was unfortunate that due to the overrunning discussions on the water quality motion, the reports on Rural Connectivity and the York and North Yorkshire LEP Capital Investment Programme and Delivery Plan Review had to be deferred. These items will be brought forward to a future meeting as soon as is practical.

Despite this, the annual report on Allerton Waste Recovery Park performance was still considered, with questions asked around potential improvements to the annual planned maintenance shutdowns in future years and the effect this could have on performance, the ability to reach the contract waste recycling target going forwards and whether the site is able to adapt to take advantage of rapidly improving technology.

Highways Reinstatements

A working group set up to look in more detail at the highways reinstatements process is set to meet for the first time on Friday 17 November 2023.

Work Programme

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled to take place on 18 January 2024, but it is expected that an additional meeting date will be convened ahead of then to consider the reports on Rural Connectivity and York and North Yorkshire LEP that were deferred at the October meeting.

At the January meeting, there is expected to be reports considered on the development of a new Local Transport Plan, rural bus services, a strategic update from National Highways and the development of a Climate Change Action Plan.

COUNCILLOR DAVID STAVELEY
2 November 2023