

North Yorkshire Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

23 November 2023

Receipt of Petition 'Recognition for Rachel Daly in her hometown'

Report of the Director of Community Development

1.0 Purpose of the Report
1.1 To advise of a petition containing more than 500 signatures.
1.2 To ask the Area Constituency Committee to consider a response.

2.0 The Petition

2.1 A petition has been received by North Yorkshire Council. This is a paper-based petition with over 500 signatures, all of which are of people who live, work or study in the county.

2.2 The petition provided the following context:

"England footballer Rachel Daly has achieved an astonishing amount in her career: winning the Euros with the Lionesses, getting the Golden Boot as top scorer in the WSL with Aston Villa, and now reaching a World Cup Final with England. It is the first time the country has reached a global final since 1966, a date which has gone down in English football history. It is time Rachel Daly was recognised officially in her hometown, such as by naming the Harrogate Leisure and Wellness Centre (the Hydro) in her honour. We call on North Yorkshire Council to deliver a fitting honour for Rachel Daly, Harrogate's World Cup hero.

Why is this important?

The growth in women's football in recent years has been astonishing. Rachel Daly and her fellow Lionesses have done a huge amount to drive this forward, setting an example of what dedication and teamwork can achieve. There is no more prestigious match in football than a World Cup final. Now that Rachel has reached it, she should be recognised for all she has done".

3.0 The Council's Arrangements for Receiving and Responding to Petitions

3.1 The key features of the Council's arrangements for receiving and debating petitions, as published on the Council's website, are as follows:

- Receipt of the petition is published on the Council's website (which has been done in the case of this petition).
- If a petition contains 500 or more signatures (but less than 30,130 signatories), it will be scheduled for debate at the next meeting of the appropriate Area Constituency Committee.
- The petition organiser is offered the opportunity to speak for five minutes at the Area Constituency Committee meeting to present his/her petition. Subsequently, at the meeting, the petition will be discussed by Councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes and a decision will be made on how to respond to the petition.
- Possible responses by the Council to petitions are:

- (a) to take the action requested by the petition.
 - (b) not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate.
 - (c) to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee; or
 - (d) where the issue is one on which the council executive are required to make the final decision, the council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision.
- The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision. This confirmation will also be published on the website.

3.2 In accordance with the arrangements described above, the petition organisers have been invited to join today's meeting to present their petition.

4.0 Officers Comments Regarding the Petition

4.1 Rachel Daly's sporting achievements are significant and worthy of recognition.

4.2 There is a football pitch in Harrogate District named in Rachel Daly's honour. Earlier this year the Rachel Daly pitch was unveiled at Killinghall Moor Community Park (just outside Harrogate), the pitch where her football career began and home of the Killinghall Nomads Junior Football Club. This was part of a wider initiative by the Football Foundation, who have funded investment into the pitch, to name 23 Football Foundation pitches after each of the Lionesses that were part of the Euro 22 winning team. In March the Café at the Killinghall Club was also named after Rachel. <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/news/rachel-daly-visits-her-grassroots-club-to-unveil-pitch-named-in-her-honour>

4.3 The Harrogate Leisure and Wellness Centre (former Hydro) has been recently refurbished. It contains two swimming pools and a range of high quality facilities, however, it does not include football pitches at this location. Given there is no provision for football at this facility Members may wish to consider the suitability of this particular facility in this context.

4.4 There is no formal Council policy in relation to the naming of assets. A new NYC policy is being drafted which covers the naming rights for Council assets. This is likely to be completed in the New Year. There is, however, a precedent for naming facilities in recognition of local sporting achievement. The Council owned Jack Laugher Leisure and Wellness Centre in Ripon, which includes a swimming pool, is named after the local diver in recognition of his achievements.

4.5 Members may wish to consider undertaking further local consultation in relation to any proposal to gauge the wider views of the public.

4.6 Members may wish to consider recognising Rachel Daly's achievements in another way. Previously the former Districts have honoured local citizens with a civic ceremony and granting "freedom of the Borough/District". It is understood that the new Council does not have a similar process currently but Members may wish to consider recommending that a way of honouring exceptional achievement is considered.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In the event that the Harrogate Leisure and Wellness Centre was renamed this would require the signage to be replaced. Indicative costs for this are estimated to be approximately £29k to replace the signage and an additional £9k for roadside signage.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No specific implications. The Harrogate Leisure and Wellness Centre is owned by the Council and operated by Brimham Active, a company wholly owned by the Council.
- 6.2 There is a new NYC Policy being developed which covers the naming rights for Council assets and the ACC may wish to defer a decision pending the outcome of the new policy so any decision can be considered under the new policy once it is approved in the New Year.

7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The petition aims to recognise the sporting achievement of a high profile female sportsperson. An EIA screening has been completed and there are no adverse impacts.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 No specific implications. A climate change impact assessment screening has been completed and determined that a full impact assessment is not required.

9.0 Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Committee notes the petition and considers a response. This could include:
- i) Take no further action
 - ii) Defer consideration of renaming the asset pending the development of new Council Policy relating to the naming of assets.
 - iii) Recommend to the Executive that the Harrogate Leisure and Wellness Centre be renamed.
 - iv) Recommend to the Executive that they consider the feasibility of developing a civic honours type scheme for the new Council and that Rachel Daly's achievements are recognised through the new scheme.
 - v) Recommend some other course of action.

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Background Document: North Yorkshire Council's petitions information and advice, a copy of which is on the Council's website [Petitions | North Yorkshire Council](#)