

North Yorkshire Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Harrogate Civic Centre on Thursday 23 November 2023 commencing at 10.10am.

Councillors Present: Councillors Chris Aldred, Philip Broadbank, Sam Gibbs, Hannah Gostlow, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, Peter Lacey, John Mann, Pat Marsh, Mike Schofield, Matt Walker and Robert Windass

Officers present: Mark Codman (Democratic Services Officer), Charles Casey (Democratic Services Officer), Matt Hewison (Head of Sport and Active Wellbeing (Development), Keisha Moore (Senior Transport Planning Officer), Rachael Hutton (Principal Policy and Delivery Officer) and Kate Dawson (Community Development Manager)

In Attendance: Councillors Arnold Warneken and Carl Les, Lulu Halloum and Luke Warburton (the leadership team from Harrogate Youth Council), Chloe Thwaites (Youth Voice and Creative Engagement Officer, Children and Young People's Services - North Yorkshire County Council), Jamie Duncan (Environment Agency), Lizzie Boyes (Northern Powergrid)

Apologies: Councillor Monika Slater

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

27 Welcome by the Chairman, introductions and apologies for absence:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted.

28 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

29 Declarations of interest

Councillor Peter Lacey declared an interest regarding minute number 35 on the basis that he was a director of Knaresborough District Chamber of Trade and also a director of a company within the sector.

Councillor Hannah Gostlow declared an interest regarding minute number 35 on the basis that she was a Member of Knaresborough Town Council.

Councillor Matt Walker declared an interest regarding minute number 35 on the basis that he was a Member of Knaresborough Town Council.

All the above were not considered pecuniary interests and therefore the Members remained in the room and voted on the items.

30 Public Questions and Statements

There were two statements that had been submitted prior to the Committee:

The following statement concerned an item not on the agenda and was read out by Gia Margolis on behalf of Harrogate District Cycle Action:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I am here to ask you to scrutinize the council's lack of delivery of Active Travel schemes. Consultants over many years have written reports which have all come to the same conclusion. Most short journeys are less than 1.6 miles and too many are made by car. We have yet to see any implementation of recommendations to increase use of public transport, to walk and cycle.

The proposed Active Travel team is not due to start until at least next year and will have no budget. Officers tell us that no schemes can be delivered without getting funding bids. Yet despite receiving millions of pounds of funding no schemes of any value have been delivered. Schemes have repeatedly been abandoned, consultations completed, reports written but not made public. NYC's Active Travel England rating is only 1 and unlikely to get raised any time soon.

We are asking you to stop talking, give us false hope that things will change, and look at why the council has failed to deliver any significant active travel scheme over the last nine years.

Planners and Highways between them failed several years ago in allowing a local plan and developers to build large housing estates on the edges of Harrogate with no safe cycle or walking routes or frequent bus services into the town centre and most of the estates served by rural country lanes which have become rat runs. The local parish councils, HAPARA and ourselves have all tried to work with officers and councillors to come up with solutions. The latest round of solutions for the "Western Arc" proposed by the developers together with officers have come up with a raft of junction improvements to get traffic through. Any cycling or walking elements are entirely within the developments themselves.

We believe that as councillors and officers our town has lost what were great opportunities to make changes to the way we get around. The council introduced a great scheme on Beech Grove which worked for 18 months but was withdrawn. Every other scheme has been abandoned and you will be told the same things, that schemes are being worked on and conversations held with Active travel England.

No doubt you will be told the next set of delays will be because next year the appointment of a Mayor and changes to more direct funding will be the solution. And so it goes on.

Until there is a change of policy and officers are given the directive to design and deliver effective sustainable transport schemes we will not see any delivery in our lifetime.

Harrogate could by now have had a first-class cycle and walking network which would make such a difference to all our lives, but we are bound by the focus on people in their cars and to keep them moving.

We have failed our children and grandchildren in not considering their future.

Councillors, please learn more about the failure of delivery of any meaningful scheme for safe cycle infrastructure, the failure to spend funding bids and to fall back time and again on allocating more space at junctions to cars. Investigate what is going on and stop accepting a litany of excuses why not.

The Chair thanked Gia Margolis for the statement and invited Mark Codman (Democratic Services) to read out a response on behalf of the Council's Highways Team:

"North Yorkshire Council Highways Officers would like to thank the Harrogate District Cycle Action Group for their submitted statement regarding their concerns with active travel scheme progress in Harrogate. The group's disappointment in active travel project delivery has been noted and previously acknowledged via emails and detailed meetings with senior managers. The west of Harrogate promoters have given consideration towards active travel as part of the west of Harrogate parameters plan with a proposed bus route extension to service the new housing sites together with funding for the pump priming of the service. In addition, walking and cycling schemes have been put forward which includes; Otley Road phase three, Windmill Farm housing sites at Harlow Moor Road, plus an active travel scheme encompassing Whinny Lane and Panal Ash Road. Planning applications will include a cumulative transport assessment which will have appendices to the indicative layouts for all proposed off-site highway schemes and active travel proposals allowing those with interest to offer their comments through the plan planning process. North Yorkshire Council are committed to delivering successful active travel projects and the highways team will continue to submit bids that they are eligible for to enable active travel across the county. The team have had a successful year engaging positively with local user groups such as HAPARA the road safety campaign group and local school communities. Such positive partnerships will prove to support successful delivery going forward in addition to this it should also be noted that at the request of members from the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee there will be quarterly updates regarding active travel progress to this committee and the next one is planned for March 2024. Thank you Chair."

The Chair invited Hazel Peacock to read out a statement on behalf of Oatlands & Pannal Ash Road Safety & Active Travel Campaign:

Thank you chair. I am Hazel Peacock from the Oatlands & Pannal Ash Road Safety & Active Travel Campaign and I am here today to ask for your help.

The final sign off of the 20mph zone for Oatlands and Pannal Ash presented to you in September is shortly to be made. There are important additions to this which without only 5 of the 9 schools in the zone will be fully covered with 20mph roads immediately surrounding them; leaving 4 schools (with over 3,000 pupils) without; and 30mph at St John Fishers and Willow Tree Primary Schools and a mixture of 30mph and 20mph in the case of Harrogate Grammar School and Oatlands Infant School.

With 16 children killed or seriously injured in road crashes every week on their way to or from school, we are all acutely aware of the case for 20mph around schools and across communities (especially in urban areas) and sadly the death of two pedestrians (aged 70 and 90) involved in separate collisions in Harrogate in the last 2 weeks, is a very sad reminder of the catastrophic outcomes of road accidents.

The NY 20mph policy and the DfT Guidance (from which the NYC policy is developed) has been repeatedly cited as the barrier to implementing 20mph on these roads and was also cited to you here in September. The NYC policy states, "Officers will check...The Road is not a network hierarchy Category 2 road". However, the DfT Guidance 01/2013 includes two clauses allowing for 20mph on "main streets", which could be and are not currently included in the NYC policy. It states: "Traffic authorities can, over time, introduce 20mph speed limits or zones on major streets where there are - or could be - significant numbers of journeys on foot where pedal cycle movements are an important consideration, and this outweighs the disadvantage of

longer journey times on the motorist”. This is in addition to residential streets, in cities, towns and villages, particularly where the streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles, there is community support, and the characteristics of the street are suitable.”

At Full Council last week, Cllr Duncan replied to our request for this amendment stating: “our current 20mph speed limit and zone policy does in fact already allow for the implementation of 20mph on major streets as defined by DfT guidance, therefore no amendment to that policy is required”. This reassurance is welcomed, but it is not stated, nor explicit in the NYC policy. So this is where we need your help; for the purposes of openness, transparency and clarity, and to deliver the best outcomes for the Oatlands and Pannal Ash scheme and other future ones, we are urging you to:

- support a motion at the next Full Council meeting on the inclusion of the DfT clauses in the NYC 20mph policy
- and secondly to ask NY to supply the categories of the roads mentioned, as outlined in the NYC Carriageway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan.
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With your support, we hope we can get the best possible scheme for the schoolchildren and community in Oatlands and Pannal Ash and future ones.

Thank you.

Mark Codman (Democratic Services) read out the following statement on behalf of the Council’s Highways Team:

“Officers would like to thank Hazel Peacock for the submitted statement. The 20 MPH review has considered and applied the guidance within North Yorkshire Council 20 MPH speed limit and zone policy and the department for transports DFT circular 01 2013. It has been acknowledged that the existing NYC 20 MPH speed limit policy does already allow for the implementation of 20 MPH on major streets but the policy is also clear that this should be considered in line with the appropriate function and place with suitable characteristics and highway environment. Both NYC’s policy and the DFT guidance recognise the need to ensure that any 20 MPH implementation is self-enforcing this is achieved by ensuring the correct sites are taken forward. Officers would also like to remind members and the road safety campaign group that these proposals will be subject to further consultation with the public before implementation. The report is to be submitted to the Environment Executive Member’s meeting for consideration on the 18 December and will detail the roads considered and provide the rationale to support the final recommendation. The report will be publicly available a week before the meeting date and there will be an opportunity for both members and the public to offer comments at this point should they wish thank you chair”

Councillor Hannah Gostlow proposed that the public statements be forwarded to North Yorkshire Councils Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee for consideration for scrutiny, this proposal was seconded by Councillor Mike Schofield. Members voted to approve the motion with seven Members voting for the proposal, two against and three abstentions.

31

Petition referred to the Committee for Consideration - 'Recognition for Rachel Daly in her hometown':

Considered – Mark Codman, Democratic Services, introduced the petition stating that it had been referred to the Committee under the Council’s Petitions Scheme due to the number of signatories being above 500. He outlined the options that the committee had under the Petitions Scheme, including the following:

- (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 Chair invited John Plummer to introduce the petition:

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.

The Chair thanked Mr Plummer and invited Members to debate the petition.

Members debated the options outlined in the report.

Councillor Peter Lacey proposed option four of the report recommendations and this was seconded by Councillor Sam Gibbs.

Resolved –

That the Committee notes the petition and agree that:

- iv) it be recommended to the Executive that they consider the feasibility of developing a civic honours type scheme for the new Council within 6 months with decisions about local recognition made in the appropriate area, and that Rachel Daly's achievements are recognised through the new scheme.

32 Youth Council Update:

Considered: The presentation provided by Lulu Halloum and Luke Warburton (the leadership team from Harrogate Youth Council) Lulu and Luke spoke about the Youth Council, its structure, current campaign topics, and the difficulties the Youth Council faced. Lulu highlighted the some of the Youth Council's current campaign topic. One in particular was the new mental health early intervention project HG1 which sought to renew well-being for young people and had launched in September. Harrogate and Skipton Youth Councils had also worked with North Yorkshire Council to help formulate questions for the Let's Talk 2.0 survey on climate and transport.

Members welcomed the presentations and applauded Lulu and Luke for their work and the Youth Council's activities.

In response to Members' questions, it was highlighted that the YC was looking at surrounding regional schemes as part of an initiative to provide subsidised bus passes to young people in the region. Members also offered to discuss usage of their remaining 23/24 locality budgets that may assist the YC in any current or upcoming projects.

33

Northern Powergrid:

Considered: The presentation by Lizzie Boyes Local System Planning Engineer for Northern Powergrid. The role of the Local System Planning Engineer was to consult with Local Authorities and gather local data that would assist in the strategic planning for NPG to achieve NetZero and to assist NPG to make accurate forecasts on local use and issues.

The presentation provided an overview of the work of NPG explaining how the company was regulated by OFGEM. Further information was given on NPG's public role and included details on support for vulnerable individuals. The presentation gave further information on growth and decarbonisation efforts, a breakdown of connections provided and timescales and costs related to providing connections. The presentation concluded by providing information on how NPG worked with Local Authorities. The company's Local Area Energy Systems Teams undertook such functions as providing a Local Authority Portal and also sought to collect local intelligence on future network needs and support to local area energy planning.

- In response to Member questions LB explained that as part of OFGEM regulation NPG were not permitted to prioritise any company or individual when it came to the queue for connecting. LB also confirmed that NPG would work with North Yorkshire Council on formulating the Council's new Local Plan to assist in Local Energy Planning.
- In response to another question LB advised that the average wait for connection was around two years but this could be longer if there were issues outside of their control such as the transmission grid or wayleaves.
- In response to a question from Cllr Lacey about EV charging points LB explained that NPG provided use of their GIS data to plan implementation and worked with partners to advise on the best course of action regarding timescales, finance and ease of connection. LB advised that NPG had recently completed the last round of tenders for flexibility services for domestic properties.
- In response to a question from Cllr Haslam regarding the recent announcement from Government to reform the grid connection process to cut waiting times and free up over 100 GW of capacity and how much would be allotted to North Yorkshire – LB informed that this was substantially an issue for the transmission network but she was aware that there were plans to alter the National Grid's ability to manage queues and prioritise.
- Cllr Aldred thanked LB and NPG saying that updates on the effects of weather on the grid and other emergencies were valuable to officers and local Members who were tasked with taking action when emergencies occurred.

The Chair thanked LB for the presentation and responding to questions.

Environment Agency:

Considered: The presentation by Jamie Duncan of the Environment Agency on the water quality of the River Nidd. The verbal presentation gave details of the quality issues with the River Nidd, what priorities were concerned with addressing water quality issues and the financing and planning issues that would be required to address the many historic issues facing the area of the River Nidd.

The presentation provided detail of some of the key issues facing the river, upstream old mining works leached heavy metals into the water, further down the course there was a significant amount of slurry and other chemical wash off from farms that were in the basin of the river. It was explained that the EA worked with the Nidderdale AONB on improvements such as improvements in slurry storage methods to reduce leakages into the river. There were also significant issues with the sewage plants and the network and the EA were working with partners to address sewage issues but there was no quick fix for overcoming problems associated with the largely Victorian sewage network.

- In response to a question from Cllr Gostlow JD stated that there were opportunities to prevent leaks in rural areas where for instance tree roots were breaching pipes. There were also opportunities to improve the network in urban areas but this would take collaborative work with Yorkshire Water and a significant amount of intelligence, planning and implementation.
- In response to a question from Cllr Warneken JD explained that partnership work was ongoing into how to manage peat bogs that sought to prevent further breakdown and to reinstate bogs where possible.
- In response to a question from Cllr Harrison JD informed that attenuation takes, associated with new developments, only captured surface water run-off and not sewage but this lessened the overall impact on the network. He also explained that when it came to planning new developments, questions to Yorkshire Water would need to be detailed and explicit in order to drill down on key details regarding how any new development would impact the existing network. Questions should be about how the development would impact the sewage network and whether the overflow occurrences would increase or stay the same.
- In response to a question from Cllr Haslam it was explained that there were maps of where the sewage network ran that could assist in planning developments. The detailed maps allowed for the assessment of flow rates and other variables but it took detailed review and assessment. Questions about developments could be about the impacts on this network plan
- Cllr Mann asked a question regarding the use of S106 money, coming from new developments, and whether this could be used to make network improvements – engineer Steve Johnson explained that the EA were consulted when it came to new developments. The EA always provided a detailed assessment of the proposals and made all possible efforts to ensure the development impacted the area as little as possible.

Cllr Paul Haslam submitted a number of written questions and it was agreed that JD would provide responses after the meeting.

JD stated that he was the local representative for the EA who dealt with the river Nidd and that if Members had any queries, they should contact him direct. It was agreed to circulate contact details to Committee Members.

The Chair thank JD for the presentation.

Response to the petition received - Electrical Vehicle Charging Points in Knaresborough:

Considered: Keisha Moore (Senior Transport Planning Officer) presented report containing the Councils response to the petition previously considered by the Committee about Electrical Vehicle Charging Points in Knaresborough.

- Cllr Walker stated that he was disappointed in the Councils response to the petition – EVs were expensive and many people could not afford them, residents of Knaresborough were not consulted on whether they wanted EV charging points placed at Chapel Street Car Park and the temporary signage still had not been erected and therefore there was a lot of confusion over use of the bays. He expressed surprise over the reference to the Air Quality Management Zone at Bond End which was over half a mile away from this site and there were multiple issues with access to the town from the York Place Car Park.
 - o KM explained that evidence demonstrated that there was no slowing in the uptake of EVs in the Harrogate area
 - o The Council had consulted with the Town Council and local partners during development of the EV strategy but full public consultation had not yet occurred as the TRO for the area had not yet been formulated
 - o Signage for the CP was currently being developed as part of the larger Local Transport Plan and therefore not yet ready for use
 - o The Council was currently assessing access to and from the York Place CP and looking at improvements
 - o Putting up temporary signage was not straightforward as there were conditions that had to be met
- Cllr Lacey asked if the Council could consider the future development of car parking and EV bays and develop a unified strategy and look to introduce on-street charging points. KM stated that there was an ongoing piece of work looking at street charging but there were challenges relating to installation, management and maintenance that would need to be addressed
- Cllr Aldred stated that the Councils record on active travel could be better, it need to be more ambitious and progressive
- In response to a question from Cllr Schofield it was confirmed that the Council was looking to work with local businesses and other parts of the public sector to install more EV points – the NHS had already offered to work with the Council to use land they hold
- In response to a question from Cllr Warneken KM explained that the Council was working with Local Town and Parish Councils to look at how EV points could be installed in rural locations, the Council had identified ten sites in the Rydale area and another fourteen sites, two of which were in the Harrogate area that could also be developable

KM agreed to provide more information after the meeting about the issues raised.

Resolved –

That the Committee notes the response to the petition.

The Chair thanked KM for the report.

Playing Pitch Strategy:

Considered: The presentation by Rachael Hutton (Principal Policy and Delivery Officer) and Kate Dawson (Community Development Manager) on North Yorkshire Councils Playing Pitch Strategy.

The presentation provided an overview of the Playing Pitches Strategy's purpose and reasons for development. Every Local Authority must develop a PPS to cover a list of ball/team games such as football, cricket and rugby that were based in the local area. The main aims were to inform and shape local planning policy, direct open space contributions and support external funding bids, it was evidence based and had followed guidance from Sport England. The PPS assessed the number and condition of playing pitches across the County, headline figures included that 17% of football pitches had no changing facilities and 17% had poor facilities. Currently 37% of pitches were in poor quality and therefore one simple way of increasing provision would be to increase pitch quality on those poor pitches – this would in turn reduce demand for new pitches.

The presentation also provided a detailed overview of future shortfalls for a range of sports and ages and the recommendations from the PPS. Information was provided about use of the PPS as evidence that would enable the Council to apply for and utilise open space commuted sums to improve and develop playing pitches. The presentation concluded with how the PPS, through the SPD, was delivered and then finally what was next for the project team, including development of the Local Plan.

- In response to a question from Cllr Schofield – KD confirmed that local partners were contacted when there was a pot of money that could be applied for, if there were people that were being missed then Members could refer individuals to officers to discuss potential options. There was a particular question about the lack of requirement or money for ball strike netting at certain cricket clubs and it was considered that these cases were most likely brought about before the implementation of the PPS and current SPD but information would be provided about the cases highlighted
- In response to a question from Cllr Walker It was confirmed that the Council had worked with Brimhams to allow adjacent footballs teams to use the changing facilities. This would also be undertaken with Knaresborough Leisure Centre when adjacent football pitches were let.
- In response to a question from Cllr Aldred – Rachael confirmed that the Council supported sports such as Rugby League and Lacrosse

In response to a request, it was agreed to organise an informal briefing about Commuted Sums with Committee members.

The Chair thanked RH and KD for the presentation.

Committee Work Programme:

Considered – The report of the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager that invited Members to consider, amend and add to the Committee's work programme.

Mark Codman (Democratic Services) provided an overview of the Committee's current work programme. He advised that he was still pursuing the Member visit to Bilton Water Treatment Works and was awaiting confirmation from Yorkshire Water.

Climate Change Working Group Update

The Chair invited Councillor Paul Haslam, Chair of the Climate Change Working Group to provide an update/presentation:

- Cllr Haslam emphasised the importance of climate change action and advocated volunteers to be climate change champions and take on any action suitable to furthering the climate change agenda. The presentation then detailed the Councils developing Local Plan and how critical it was that every opportunity was taken to include climate change objectives within the plan.

Bathing Water Quality Working Group Update

The Chair of the group Cllr Hannah Gostlow confirmed that the group had not met since the last Committee meeting

Station Gateway Working Group Update:

The Station Gateway Working Group had not yet met, Cllr Aldred proposed that a formal meeting of the group be organised for as soon possible after the next Executive meeting (Tuesday 28 November 2023).

- o Members voted unanimously for the proposed motion.

The Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group

The Chair of the Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group Cllr Peter Lacey provided an update. He stated that the group had met with Officers in Localities and reviewed funding arrangements, including routes to funding and the slides were circulated. Cllr Peter Lacey confirmed that the group had been assured that funding was being rolled over and that reviews were ongoing. The group had requested details of the outcomes of the reviews and the arrangements for a community anchor organisation in Harrogate.

Cllr Walker raised concern over public safety issues regarding the collapsed wall on Briggate in Knaresborough, there had been a lack of action to rectify the situation and residents were very concerned that they would be an accident caused by the collapse

- In response Mark Codman gave the following statement on behalf of the Council:
- "Officers are aware that Council Walker has raised this with Mr Battersby, the corporate director for environment, Mr Battersby has provided Councillor Walker with a detailed response offering assurances that the team are working diligently with the utility companies and contractors to ensure works are coordinated appropriately. Councillors should be advised that whilst we cannot avoid emergency road works there is a coordinated embargo on strategic route restricting planned utility works from taking place across Harrogate and Knaresborough this embargo commences from 27th of November. Current utility Works in Knaresborough will be complete by Monday the 27th of November, the wall repair at Briggate will commence from Monday the 27th of November to ensure the safety of Highway users the highways team are not able to remove the lights until the wall repair is complete which is why this work has been granted an exception to the Christmas restrictions. The team are aware of the Christmas activities and will ensure the signals are manually control during the Knaresborough market event times to support the movement of traffic. The local highways team are consulted on the events and work with the event organizers to ensure events

can take place safely on or in the vicinity of the new highway as well as take into consideration any impact these may have on the wider Network. Thank you.”

Mark Codman confirmed that he was following up the request to discuss the Urgent Care strategy made at the last meeting and to invite representatives from Urgent Care and Harrogate Foundation Trust.

Resolved –

Members noted the current work programme with amendments.

38 Any other business which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances:

There was no urgent business.

39 Date of Next Meeting

Friday 12 January 2023

The meeting concluded at 1.58 pm.