

North Yorkshire Council

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18 January 2024

Question referred from Harrogate & Knaresborough ACC (1)

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To detail the referral of a public statement from the Harrogate & Knaresborough ACC on 23 November 2023 for the matter to be considered.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee on 23 November 2023, it was resolved that a public statement be referred to the next meeting of the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This provision is outlined in Council Procedure Rules section 9.10 (page 210) of the North Yorkshire Council Constitution.

- 2.2 The public statement submitted was:

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 actually 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 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.

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.

2.3 The officer response to the question at the meeting was as follows:

Officers would like to thank Hazel Peacock for the submitted statement.

The 20mph review has considered and applied the guidance within North Yorkshire Council 20mph Speed Limit and Zone Policy and the Department for Transport’s (DfT) Circular 01/2013. It has been acknowledged that the existing NYC 20mph speed limit policy does already allow for the implementation of 20mph 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 also recognises the need to ensure that any 20mph 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 to be submitted to the Environment Executive Members meeting for consideration 18th December will detail the roads considered and provide the rationale to support the final recommendation. This 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.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 The Committee is asked to consider the matter and agree any next steps.