

North Yorkshire Council

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10 April 2024

Report of the Highways Reinstatements and Road Closures Working Group

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1 To present the notes and action points of the working group concerning Highways Reinstatements and Road Closures.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following an initial workshop with officers back in November 2022, in July 2023 the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a member working group to look at Highways Reinstatements and Road Closures.
- 2.2 The working group met with officers back on 17 November 2023 via Microsoft Teams. All committee members were invited to join the working group, with a range of political groups represented. The membership of the working group included:
- Councillor David Staveley (Chair)
 - Councillor David Jeffels
 - Councillor Melanie Davis
 - Councillor John Cattanach
 - Councillor Subash Sharma
 - Councillor Mike Jordan attended as a former member of the committee and his interest in the topic

3.0 ACTION POINTS

- 3.1 There were six action points put forward by the working group to officers as follows:
1. Feedback a desire by members to ring fence funds raised from permits or FPNs, either in full or in part, to allocate them to community infrastructure spending, to offset disruption caused by road closures and other works.

Officer Comments

Unfortunately, the permit scheme does not allow for a surplus to be generated, it is required to be cost neutral.

Regarding FPNs, the relevant code of practice only requires for reasonable costs to be recovered by councils, to cover off its own costs incurred in operating the inspection regime.

The proposed Lane Rental Scheme (LRS) for North Yorkshire though, which is a live project, does allow for a surplus that can be spent on improvement works, innovations and infrastructure to offset the impact of road works, once the cost of

the LRS have been covered. Should North Yorkshire Council gain Secretary of State approval, it is anticipated an NYC LRS will be introduced in 2025/26.

Therefore, it is proposed that this action point is not taken forwards.

2. Confirm and communicate the precise definition of works to communities and partners, ensuring first time completion and the use of temporary reinstatements only when necessary (especially in conservation areas). Look to limit any attempts to exploit the 48 hour grace period with repeat works.
3. Recommend that the business case for change in resources or working patterns to allow increased inspector efficiency, up to and including additional recruitment, to improve the inspection rate in the face of anticipated continual increases from fibre.
4. Contact bus service operators in North Yorkshire, confirming their preferred procedure for informing them of short notice road closures and asking for information on their onward communication and contingency processes, ensuring that this is being done to mitigate and communicate the effect of closures.
5. Confirm a timescale for the improvement of One Network information.
6. Contact Parish Councils to inform them of the One Network tool for monitoring and communicating road closure information.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no legal implications resulting from the action points put forward.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial requirements resulting from the action points put forward, which are presented as an update only. It is possible that future recommendations could have a financial implication, but in that case a separate report would be prepared setting these out in detail.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications resulting from the action points put forward.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct climate change implications resulting from the action points put forward.

8.0 NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Action points 2 to 6 to be progressed, and it is suggested that the committee continue to monitor implementation of these going forwards. In the event that specific proposals arise from these action points, a separate report will be prepared for the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny committee to consider.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the report be noted and action points 2-6 be endorsed by the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 9.2 That a further update on this topic is considered in the 2024-25 civic year.

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