

Councillor Paul Haslam (Member Champion for Climate Change) asked for his comments on Item 5 to be included as part of the minutes. They are reproduced below.

Thank you for this valuable and insightful update which makes a good start. There is far too much prose and insufficient data here. I have sent Hugh my detailed comments. I will comment on 3.1.3 separately. I appreciate as a Councillor, I may not know or be privy to all the protocols and rules. Notwithstanding that please find below my thoughts.

I would like to see a more robust reporting framework providing greater **transparency** of the results and progress. The work also needs to cut cross work silos so councilors see both the overall picture and our limited officer resources are maximized rather than work being duplicated. We need to know precisely who is responsible for the actions including recording and reporting of those actions.

Partnering will only be successful if there is clear governance with responsibilities. We need to adopt “black box” thinking (whenever there is a plane crash, the safety is the number one issue, not the blame – that comes later) that is not fixated on blame but on effective solutions.

I believe we have a public health duty here and that department should be represented within this team with monitoring in place to ensure they have the correct information to provide insight and recommend potentially lifesaving action.

It should be remembered that our rivers suffer from four major problems:

1. Combined sewage outflow
2. Run off: Farmers field runoff including from “treated” sewage on the land that still contains phosphates. Run off from roads.
3. Residual pollution from old industrial workings such as lead mines (near the source of the Nidd several lambs died as a result of lead poisoning).
4. The rivers are too straight leading to problems with aquatic life able to “anchor” to places and the resulting flooding after periods of heavy rain which is becoming more prevalent as a result of climate change. [Why we will get constant rain by 2034 - according to a climate scientist \(inews.co.uk\)](#)

It's quite clear to me that the water companies have some essential analytical work to do!

They need to map the sewage network including width of pipes etc so they can see the impact. Without this I don't understand how they can carry out their job effectively to either protect the resident from sewage backing up or sewage discharging on the streets or more likely into the watercourses.

Have they evaluated the impact of the changing rainfall patterns? Sewage workings are based on a base level of sewage they deal with on regular basis. This base level is multiplied by three for sizing to cover when it rains. At the moment it can be sixfold, and this results in raw sewage being discharged.

The water companies need to explain to councillors exactly how sewage treatment works are sized and why they are struggling to deal with the increasing rainfall that is often in more concentrated deluges than in the past and how this can overwhelm the system – they need to be invited to a members seminar- I asked for this over a year ago.

This is also an issue for Ofwat and they must be copied in our comments to add pressure and support to resolving this issue.

Finally, it appears incredible that residents had to get water bathing status to get work done on what is a national disgrace in our water courses.

3.1.3 comments.

3.1.3 Ask the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee to invite senior representatives from Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Dales River Trust, Nidd Action Group, Natural England, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, the National Farmers' Union and other interested groups to attend a meeting to allow for a better understanding of the current levels of pollution and remedial action being taken in this regard.

i. After further discussion initiated by Richard Flinton, the inaugural meeting of a new North Yorkshire River Catchments Forum (NYRCP) has been arranged for 24 June.

It was incredibly crass to consider that no councillors, no elected representatives were allowed to / invited to attend. With the best will in the world, the officers never receive or get the anger and rage on the doorstep that elected officials do. This in effect becomes a talking shop not a doing shop! "Let's kick the can down the road" attitude is prevalent here. It needs actions and deeds not just words – we know how eloquent people can be on explaining why they are "not doing nothing". It is impossible for officers to truly represent residents' anger or the need for urgency. This is a very poor decision that I urge to be reversed. We must provide the resource to play our part in this work. We need to show we are serious in our desire to resolve these increasingly frequent problems! That may include political pressure to get additional government funding.

People and partners will do what you inspect, not what you expect.