

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Friday 8 January 2021 at 9.30am

This meeting was live broadcast on the North Yorkshire County Council YouTube site and a recording is available using the following link - <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/live-meetings>

### **Present:-**

### **Members:-**

County Councillor John Mann (in the Chair); County Councillors Philip Broadbank, Jim Clark, Richard Cooper, John Ennis, David Goode, Michael Harrison, Don Mackenzie, Zoe Metcalfe, Cliff Trotter, Geoff Webber and Robert Windass

### **In Attendance:-**

County Councillors Carl Les (Leader of the County Council), David Chance (Executive Member for Stronger Communities), Gareth Dadd (Executive Member for Finance and Assets and Special Projects) and Caroline Dickinson (Executive Member for Public Health, Prevention and Supported Housing)

County Council Officers:- Karl Battersby (Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services), Gary Fielding (Corporate Director - Strategic Resources), Rebecca Gibson (Senior Transport Planning Officer - Projects, Highways and Transportation), Allan McVeigh (Head of Network Strategy, Highways and Transportation) and Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

5 members of the public

### **Apology for Absence:-**

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Paul Haslam

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**Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book**

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### **73. Minutes**

#### **Resolved –**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2020, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **74. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**75. Update by County Councillor Carl Les (Leader of the County Council)**

County Councillor Carl Les reported verbally concerning the work which the County Council was undertaking in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including the new variant of the virus. He highlighted:- concerns associated with the age of volunteers; general fatigue amongst volunteers and staff in councils and emergency services in responding to the pandemic; the impact of prolonged periods of social isolation; and the need for the Council, during the pandemic, to continue to provide other services, eg winter gritting, and to continue making service improvements eg Harrogate transport improvements.

**76. County Council Budget 2021/22**

Considered -

Gary Fielding (Corporate Director - Strategic Resources) gave a presentation detailing the budget proposals for 2021/22 in respect of the overall County Council and on a Constituency area basis and invited Members' comments. A copy of the presentation slides has been published on the website alongside the documents for this meeting.

Members questioned Gary Fielding in respect of the following issues:-

- Adult social care precept options.
- The need to strike the correct balance between providing Services and not raising Council Tax more than necessary.
- The suggestion of lobbying to ensure that the County Council was not penalised for its level of Reserves and good financial management.
- Services available for residents who fell into financial difficulty, to help them retain their independence and receive help with welfare.
- The reasons why the cost of providing Domiciliary Care in the Harrogate and Knaresborough Constituency was higher than in other constituency areas in the county.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the presentation, and Members' comments thereon, be noted.
- (b) That Members' comments be forwarded, for consideration, to the Executive Member for Finance and Assets and Special Projects.

**77. Public Questions or Statements**

The Chairman advised that six notices had been received from members of the public of questions or statements for this meeting. All six notices related to the update on the Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme which was the next item of business on the agenda. Therefore all six public questions or statements would be put to the meeting during the Committee's consideration of the update on Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme.

**78. Update on Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme**

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services which updated the Committee on the outcomes of the Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme (HTIP) study and advised of recommended next steps in the HTIP development work streams.

The Chairman welcomed the following officers to the meeting:- Karl Battersby (Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services); Allan McVeigh (Head of Network Strategy, Highways and Transportation); and Rebecca Gibson (Senior Transport Planning Officer - Projects, Highways and Transportation).

Karl Battersby introduced the report. *(On the recording of the meeting available at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/live-meetings> Karl Battersby's introduction of the report commences at 1 hour 9 minutes from the start of the meeting.)*

The Chairman invited members of the public who had given relevant notice, to address the meeting. They each used the opportunity to express the views of their respective organisations concerning the HTIP. Their contributions are set out in full in the Appendix to these Minutes. They were:-

- Councillor Phil Ireland of Harrogate Borough Council
- Councillor Howard West of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council
- David Siddans of Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents' Association
- Kevin Douglas of Harrogate and District Cycle Action
- Rebecca Maunder of Harrogate and District Green Party – Her statement was read out on her behalf by Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer)
- Rod Beardshall of Zero Carbon Harrogate Transport Working Group

Allan McVeigh (Head of Network Strategy, Highways and Transportation) responded to each and County Councillor Don Mackenzie expressed comments as the Executive Member for Access. These responses and comments are also set out in the Appendix to these Minutes.

Committee Members discussed the report, asked questions and expressed opinions. Members' opinions are set out below:-

- County Councillor David Goode expressed concerns about the report on the grounds that:-
  - It lacked detail.
  - It did not identify "quick wins".
  - It appeared to focus on speeding traffic rather than reducing traffic volumes and significant behavioural changes.
  - It lacked recommendations relating specifically to Knaresborough. In particular:-
    - There were no recommendations to improve traffic volumes in Knaresborough, especially on the A59, and associated air pollution.
    - There was no recommendation for a Park & Ride to the east of Knaresborough on the A59.
    - There had been no reaction to Knaresborough Town Council's suggestions with a view to introducing more cycle lanes in Knaresborough.
- County Councillor Geoff Webber highlighted that he and Bilton residents would wish to know, as early as possible, the roads which were being considered for closure as part of a possible Low Traffic Neighbourhood.
- County Councillor Geoff Webber expressed the view that having only one P&R site would be incorrect. He suggested that more than one site would be required as otherwise the majority of Harrogate residents would be detrimentally impacted by the measures necessary to get P&R to work eg fewer parking spaces in the town centre and higher parking charges, whilst only those who could access the

one P&R site would benefit from the facility. He felt a discount on parking should be available to Harrogate residents.

- County Councillor Geoff Webber suggested that an Environmental Impact Assessment needed to be carried out, in particular to assess the impact which having fewer parking spaces in the town centre, and higher parking charges, would have on people with disabilities, people in rural areas who came into town, and people on low incomes.
- County Councillor Michael Harrison (local Member) expressed support for including Killinghall bypass on the Council's major schemes portfolio on the grounds that the business case for a stand-alone Killinghall bypass had been shown to stack-up. County Councillor Michael Harrison also referred to comments made by some members of the public and highlighted that Killinghall was different to the western arc of Harrogate because there was a protected route for a Killinghall bypass which had been on plans since 1990. He added that Killinghall had more than doubled in size and that most of its traffic was through traffic.
- Some Members expressed the view that traffic congestion was not cured by building more roads. The following issues were also highlighted:- the importance of reducing carbon; the Council's previous approval of a carbon reduction programme; and that it needed to be made clear to the public that sustainable transport, and its implications, would necessitate difficult/uncomfortable decisions.
- Various Members expressed support for considering the creation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). Members highlighted, however, that LTNs could be very divisive and there needed to be maximum transparency in taking this work forward.
- A statement was read out on behalf of County Councillor Paul Haslam who had submitted apologies for the meeting. This included a request for a train station at Claro Road and a request for faster progress to be made in reducing traffic congestion in Harrogate and Knaresborough.

#### **Resolved -**

That Members' comments be noted and be forwarded to the Executive Member for Access.

#### **79. Committee Work Programme**

Considered -

The report of the Principal Democratic Services Officer which invited Members to consider, amend and add to the Committee's work programme.

Ruth Gladstone (Principal Democratic Services Officer) introduced the report, highlighting that, subject to parliamentary business, the Rt Hon Andrew Jones MP would be attending the Committee's next meeting which was scheduled to be held on the morning of Thursday 18 March 2021 by Microsoft Teams.

Members were invited to contact the Chairman or the Principal Democratic Services with suggested business for future meetings.

#### **Resolved –**

That the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.35pm.

RAG/JR

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### Public Questions and Statements, the Officer Reply, the Comments of County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member for Access) and the Supplemental Questions

#### Members of the Public put the following Questions and Statements to the meeting:-

(a) **Councillor Phil Ireland (Harrogate Borough Council) made the following statement:-**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak chair.

We welcome the further work that has taken place and can confirm that Harrogate Borough Council officers have seen the background reports and understand the conclusions reached. The work is starting to come together to create a good package of measures and the corridor based approach represents a positive way forward to tackling congestion on the key routes across the area. There are, however, some areas where we feel further work is required to address the fundamental issues at play across Harrogate and Knaresborough. These are;

1. Wetherby Road/Skipton Road. The proposed measures provide low levels of intervention on Wetherby Road (Woodlands junction excepted). This is the busiest corridor in the Harrogate urban area as per data from the study work and HBC considers there to be further opportunities for sustainable transport on this route. We would be keen to discuss NYCC views on Empress Roundabout at the earliest possible opportunity as there are significant Stray Land implications that may render a major overhaul undeliverable.
2. Improved opportunities for aligning with development proposals. Officers from both councils are currently working together and with developers to deliver sustainable transport focussed development to the west of Harrogate and in other locations across the district. We are keen to collaborate to ensure congestion reduction and development management projects come together coherently. Improving the linkages of the HTIP work with development will only help a major scheme business case.
3. The Killinghall Bypass. Whilst the business case work is understood and that there may be a high level of value for money associated with the project this piece of work should not necessarily form a standalone scheme. A Killinghall bypass is likely to expedite the flow of traffic towards Harrogate and therefore impacts at New Park roundabout and on the Ripon Road and Skipton Road corridors will need to form part of the Killinghall bypass project, therefore integrating with the HTIP scheme. If the Killinghall bypass proposal does not include comprehensive complementary sustainable transport infrastructure, including cycling links between Killinghall and Harrogate and consideration of the Nidderdale Greenway and measures to address likely increased flows on Ripon Road then it would be very difficult for HBC to support the project.
4. Ambition. There is an excellent opportunity to deliver to the Department for Transport a comprehensive sustainable transport package which could provide an exemplar blueprint for medium sized towns across the country. I would be interested to see what officers and WSP consider a more gold plated aspirational package to look like, perhaps incorporating ideas such as our future mobility proposal around electric shared vehicles, a wider network of cycle routes, including the Bilton to Starbeck route and further low carbon transport enhancements. This could be delivered through the proposed business case work.

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I would like to finish by thanking those involved for their work on the project and agree, that with additional considerations incorporating the points above, the project should be progressed to major scheme business case development stage.

**(b) Cllr Howard West, Chairman of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council made the following statement:-**

Yet again, we feel the need to express our disappointment at the way congestion problems on Harrogate's Western Arc have been neglected. Because of the politicisation of the manner in which NYCC went about its investigation, there was only going to be one response – nothing for the Western Arc.

The consultants should have been asked to investigate how congestion could be improved from the current (pre-Covid) daily congestion plus the effects of up to 4000 new houses. However, it's patently obvious, by use of continued misnomers like bypass and relief road, promulgated by some, their brief was along the lines of, "What is the benefit/cost ratio for a link road between the A61 and Otley Road (or even further)?" That was doomed to failure, so the nett result is that there's nothing proposed other than tinkering in an attempt just to cater for individual construction sites on the Western Arc.

Despite denials, the Congestion Study was very limited in its scope to primarily the northern relief road which became a fight against destruction of the Nidd Gorge. It was only after campaigning from those of us on the western side of Harrogate that as an afterthought, an investigation was launched into congestion between the A61 and Otley Road. This was now against the background of a significant campaign from hard-line protesters, whose opinions on the Nidd Gorge were interpreted as a universal dislike of any form of road-building. The statistics from the narrow-scoped Congestion Study were then used as ammunition to read across to deny a western bypass.

No-one apart from a couple of county councillors had even asked for a relief road/bypass, so this was set up as a project which could not possibly gain favour, given the parameters against which it would be judged.

What is left is the joint workings of HBC and NYCC to satisfy the requirements of the Parameters Plan which was instigated by HM Government's Inspector for the local plan - who knew that nothing had been planned (with respect to highways) to cater for the explosion of housing numbers in the west of Harrogate. The congestion issues are largely forgotten.

After a Campaign for Sustainability had been launched, we received lamentable comments like, "Tell us what you want". It had been patently obvious that it is NYCC's job to tell us what they could do to solve the congestion, given that a bypass wasn't wanted by locals but instead, some radically improved access.

When David Bowe attended our parish council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019, it was made clear what was wanted. A meeting was held between a senior officer from NYCC and representatives of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 and it was also clear from that meeting what was wanted. Discussion points then were agreed as confidential and still remain so. One thing that can be stated however, is that at that meeting the idea of an access road was suggested but a western bypass was recognised as a non-runner. Why would anyone ask therefore, "What do you want?" having pressed ahead with an investigation into something that wasn't wanted?

We sympathise with Karl Battersby, having inherited a "hospital pass" but still emphasise that the Parameters Plan is only there to cater for the demands of considerable additional

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housing to the west of Harrogate. No-one has yet demonstrated how the road system might be configured and enhanced to deal with those demands plus the existing congestion. Think again please NYCC Highways.

**(c) Mr David Siddans of Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents' Association made the following statement:-**

We fully support the statement submitted by Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council to this committee.

As we have stated before, we agree with the transport policies to achieve more sustainable travel behaviour, but are concerned about:

1. How far this can be effective for the trips generated by the developments in the west of Harrogate, and
2. The huge long-term uncertainties thrown up by the current pandemic and other behavioural changes arising from carbon reduction policies, such as the drive to electric vehicles.

On the first point, we note that the conclusions of the recent congestion study, arising from the work on the Northern Relief Road, have little relevance to the situation here in the west which is all to do with locally generated traffic, not through traffic.

On the second point, there is worrying evidence to suggest that attitudes to public transport have worsened considerably as a result of the pandemic and that this may have long-term consequences. We know that, outside London, public transport usage has been in steady decline for decades. The concern is therefore that persuading people out of their cars will be significantly more challenging in the future and that this will impact vehicle generation. The switch to electric cars may have similar consequences.

When it comes to transport planning, uncertainty is now greater than it has ever been in my experience and, as decision-makers, your job is becoming increasingly difficult. I can find no reference to uncertainty in the congestion study reports and only one in the report in front of you today – in paragraph 4.4. No transport assessment that I have ever seen refers to uncertainty, despite government advice to do so.

The only certain thing is that, on the west side of Harrogate, we will see up to 4000 new dwellings in the next 15 years and that, unless effective measures are taken, there will be a further deterioration in the state of the roads and the quality of life for our communities.

Please bear this in mind when you are considering the future programmes for the whole of Harrogate.

**(d) Kevin Douglas, Chair of Harrogate and District Cycle Action made the following statement:-**

Consultation and Engagement - Firstly I would like to express our disappointment that there has been no consultation and engagement with interested parties about the ongoing work related to the HTIP. The Harrogate District Cycle Forum on which the Executive Member for Access and relevant Officers sit has had no engagement or update reports brought to that Forum despite this being an ideal vehicle to involve key local groups and draw upon local knowledge and expertise that would enhance the plan and help gain local support. I am sure members of the committee would agree this is a key document in the development of a cycle network and should have involved the Cycle Forum.

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Our comments on the report relate to the cycling aspects of the plan.

Government Guidance - Since the production of the Congestion Study (July 2019) and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Harrogate (July 2019) the Government has issued two important documents relating to Cycling. These are the DfT 'Gear Change' document and the Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20. These two documents provide guidance to local authorities on delivering high quality, cycle infrastructure and sets standards to achieve that. However, there is no mention of either document in the report and I would ask Officers to confirm that the LCWIP has been updated to take account of these two documents.

Priority Corridors - Whilst it is recognised that the 4 key cycling corridors are still relevant there has been little work undertaken to highlight the improvements needed to bring them up to suitable standard. The acknowledgement of a need for segregated cycle facilities on these routes is welcome but the detailed designs do need to be agreed, adopted and then implemented.

The HTIP needs to go a great deal further than these 4 corridors. Even with the 'primary routes' identified it does not go far enough to give sustainable transport routes to the majority of new developments.

Low Traffic Neighbourhood - The identification of Bilton as a 'Low Traffic Neighbourhood' is welcomed but shows little ambition in that other areas have not been identified. The work on Bilton should be seen as a pilot for other areas in the District and a plan drawn up to implement and evaluate it. Also other potential areas should be identified that could become LTN's so that if opportunities arise these can be developed.

Killinghall By Pass - The proposal to add the Killinghall By-Pass to a the Future capital programme list is at odds with the outcome of the Congestion study findings and comes before any plan or proposals for Sustainable Transport measures in the area have been agreed and implemented. The lack of cycling facilities, particularly linking to the Harrogate Greenway, despite the number of Housing Developments highlights the need for a comprehensive cycling Improvement plan which would have shown proposed routes and sought developer funding.

Outcomes and Next Steps - The report only touches upon broad outcomes but does not set out any recommendations (other than that relating to the Killinghall By pass) or timescales for the actions identified.

With regard to Cycling there has been no Infrastructure development since 2014 and even those schemes that are funded are severely delayed and have not yet started and we feel it essential that target dates and resources are set out in order that any outcomes are achieved and not delayed.

We would therefore recommend to the Committee that they ask that a Detailed Action Plan be developed from this report identifying the key actions, target dates and resource allocations in order that progress can be monitored.

**(e) On behalf of Rebecca Maunder, Coordinator, Harrogate & District Green Party, the following statement was read out:-**

1. The development of improved cycle lanes on roads in and around Harrogate are welcome. However to be meaningful, improvements need to facilitate continuous cycle lanes rather than stop/start lanes which do little to make cycling safe throughout the journey. To be effective, cycle lanes are needed



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- throughout the town and suburbs, including on all main routes into and out of the town- A61, A59, A661 and B6162.
2. The proposals for a Park and Ride are welcome.
  3. The proposals for a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in Bilton is very welcome but the majority of the District could benefit from this and it could be extended much wider.
  4. Improved bus routes are welcome - there needs to be consultations with local people to find out what they need in their area - for example in Harlow there is a need for an evening bus service and also a service which takes visitors directly into the Harlow Carr Gardens car park.
  5. While small changes are all useful, they will have little impact unless there is a whole system approach to the local transport system. This needs to give meaningful priority throughout to walking, cycling and public transport and include infrastructure and financial support and incentives (eg: more and better cycle lanes, more pedestrian crossings and wider walkways and pedestrianising large parts of the town centre). Local people need to be consulted to find out what they need in their local areas to help them move away from using their cars.
  6. The proposal for a bypass at Killinghall runs counter to evidence of the effectiveness of these measures; conflicts with the council's carbon reduction aims, and is contrary to the public lack of support or desire for bypasses and the need and support (77% of the 2019 consultation) for improved cycling and walking infrastructure.

**(f) Mr Rod Beardshall, Chair of Zero Carbon Harrogate Transport Working Group read out the following statement:-**

I would like to make some observations on behalf of Zero Carbon Harrogate about the update on the Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme (HTIP). Whilst the report arose from a consideration of local traffic congestion, I hope we can all agree that transport policy is a key lever in addressing issues of climate change, especially given that almost half the regions carbon emissions come from transport (49.4% in 2018, the latest figures available). If you have not already done so, I advise you to study the report published on 9th December, 2020, by the Climate Change Committee (CCC) entitled "Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget". The report concludes that around 33% of emissions can be influenced by local authority "place-shaping leadership". We should do everything within our power to influence what we can.

There is much to commend about the HTIP report, especially the emphasis on active travel and consideration of low traffic neighbourhoods. I would like to congratulate the council for their achievements to date, securing funding through the Transforming Cities Fund and the roll out of superfast broadband which will influence working and therefore travel behaviours for the better. We now need a significant acceleration of the rate at which considerations, discussions and reports translate into actions on the ground.

The HTIP report talks about improvements at five key junctions. These alone will inevitably lead to more traffic flowing, so I am very pleased to note that paragraph 5.22 emphasises the need to focus on reducing traffic volumes to ensure that junction improvements do not have unintended negative consequences.

Unfortunately, these aims appear to have been ignored in the decision mentioned in paragraph 6.7 that a standalone Killinghall bypass be added to the county council's existing major schemes development list. Residents of Killinghall would understandably love to see less traffic on the A61 through the village, but a bypass would induce more traffic overall, encourage more development, destroy more countryside and could damage the Nidderdale

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Greenway. Consider also that any increase in traffic in the Killinghall area will go somewhere, much of it into Harrogate. This will make it much harder to meet the stated aim of traffic reduction at key junctions in town. All non-road solutions to Killinghall traffic should be considered before a bypass: lower speed limits; vehicle weight limits; road narrowing; a safe cycle link from Killinghall to the Greenway. We would support legislation requiring that non-residents pay for the right to drive through villages such as Killinghall, especially at peak times. It would be a much more environmentally beneficial solution than a bypass. It would also be flexible, unlike a bypass which would be permanent, even when rendered irrelevant by progress.

The Department for Transport's Decarbonising Transport document of March 2020 calculates that between 2018 and 2050, with current policies, car kilometers travelled will increase by more than 35% and car greenhouse gas emission will fall by 52%. However, it is now generally accepted that we need to be much more ambitious. This acceptance comes from a wide range of sources from the UN, to UK Business Secretary Alok Sharma, to the Climate Change Commission, which concluded that a 70% reduction in transport emissions is needed by 2035.

We need a consistent coordinated approach to traffic management. ZCH asks you to oppose a Killinghall bypass and to call for a district wide travel strategy to get to net zero, supporting disincentives to car travel and wider and more rapid uptake of active/public transport initiatives, as this is key to cutting emissions in the next 10 years.

### **Mr Rod Beardshall, Chair of Zero Carbon Harrogate Transport Working Group asked the following supplementary question:-**

Do we have a ball-park budget of costs in financial terms and carbon emission terms of the bypass? What area of tree cover in our district would be required to off-set those carbon emissions?

### **Allan McVeigh responded, as follows, to the statement from Councillor Phil Ireland of Harrogate Borough Council**

Thank you Cllr Ireland for your comments on behalf of Harrogate Borough Council.

The HTIP study sought to identify where the greatest opportunities lie from a multimodal perspective, on key corridors in the study area. It is these recommended corridors, which are considered to have a greater opportunity for a variety of modes (bus, cycling and walking) to see improved facilities. Cllr Ireland's comments though are welcomed with regards to Wetherby Road and Empress Roundabout and we will look into them further, and consider how the A661 corridor could be brought forward as part of any major scheme bid development.

Cllr Ireland's comments in relation to development planning are also welcomed. Our officers are working on a weekly basis with Harrogate Borough Council officers on this and related matters. For example, it is the same officers and teams focused on solutions for the West of Harrogate who are also closely involved in HTIP, so the right connections exist internally, as well as with colleagues in Harrogate Borough Council.

With regards to the Killinghall bypass, the Council recognises the important role that active travel and sustainable transport solutions will play as part of a low carbon future. At the same time, the council has a duty to consider all viable options, including measures to remove through traffic from Killinghall, a village which is growing very rapidly and whose residents, (and local elected member), are concerned about the effects of increasing traffic

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flows on their daily lives, road safety and air quality. The recommendation is that the potential scheme is added to the County Council's reserve list of major schemes.

In addition, it is worth highlighting that with the recently issued Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20, the Department for Transport would now expect any significant new road-based infrastructure to make provision of a high standard for pedestrians and cyclists.

Cllr Ireland's comments regarding ambition of approach are noted. Officers are keen to understand the projects referred to in more detail and will continue to work with HBC on what practical opportunities may exist to add value to HTIP. More generally, we will start informal discussions on this with the DfT at the first appropriate opportunity.

### **County Councillor Don Mackenzie, Executive Member for Access, made the following comment in response to Councillor Phil Ireland of Harrogate Borough Council:-**

I have little to add to what Allan McVeigh has said on behalf of the County Council. Councillor Phil Ireland is a member of the HTIP Steering Group that I chair. You know, already, the great priority we give to active travel schemes and you will know also, of course, why we are looking at including, certainly at this stage, consideration of a bypass for Killinghall. Killinghall, as we have discussed, is the fastest growing village in the county. Harrogate Borough Council has decided that it is an area of rapid residential growth. It is doubling in size and we have a duty to respond to the many residents and the local Member, County Councillor Michael Harrison, who feel that they want to take some of this traffic out of their village and that includes, of course, 44 tonne lorries that could not be replaced by a person walking or cycling. That is why we firmly believe that further consideration of a bypass, to take this traffic out of Killinghall, is needed. I note you have made the comment, as others have also, that all we are doing is speeding traffic on its way into Harrogate or to the New Park roundabout. In fact, as you know, any stand-alone bypass for Killinghall would actually take traffic away from the New Park roundabout, further west on the A59. Apart from the comments made by Allan McVeigh, I have nothing further to add but I do welcome Harrogate Borough Council's support of most of the aspects of our recommendations.

### **Supplementary Questions were asked by the following Members of the Public:-**

#### **(a) Councillor Phil Ireland (Harrogate Borough Council)**

Clearly, I am all for reducing the flow of traffic through Killinghall as well as I am a regular user of that road and I appreciate, as a stand-alone project, that it has high value. However, my thoughts are centralised on this question:- How do you plan to integrate cycling links between Killinghall and Harrogate into the Killinghall bypass project to provide a more sustainable transport infrastructure? Taking aside the flow of traffic, how do you plan on improving these cycling links?

#### **(b) Cllr Howard West (Chairman of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council)**

Given that the daily vehicle flow through North Rigton has grown from 836 in November 2011 to 1,931 in November 2020 (that's a 130% increase) even in the middle of a pandemic; and in November 2020 some 5,400 vehicles a day went through Burn Bridge and some 2,500 through Pannal. Why has no provision been made to accommodate those numbers, let alone what will come from the 4,000 western arc houses when they are built? Continued neglect from North Yorkshire County Council highways is, I am afraid, unacceptable. One supplementary question is – where is the park and ride site proposed near the A61 in Pannal please?

#### **(c) Mr David Siddans (Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents' Association)**

There appears to be an inconsistency between the approach to Killinghall and the rationale behind Killinghall bypass and the proposals, or lack of them, in the west of Harrogate where

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there is perhaps four times as many development proposals coming forward than there are in Killinghall.

The second thing is that this report, on traffic modelling, we have always had serious reservations about the way traffic modelling and the way it deals with new developments particularly. This report in front of you is advising you (paragraph 4.5) that the existing modelling and appraisal approaches are not fit for purpose. So, given all the uncertainties, and the problems in the west, are you content to carry on with a package as it's presented to you?

### **(d) Kevin Douglas (Chair of Harrogate and District Cycle Action)**

Given the importance of the Government's Local Transport Note 1/20, does the County Council plan to formally adopt that as policy and therefore ensure that future development and schemes and developers conform to those standards?

### **Allan McVeigh responded to the supplementary questions as follows:-**

In relation to the cost, at the moment this is very much a high level estimate, but it is in excess of £20,000,000 at the moment. But clearly there is much more work to be done, should it be considered to take that to further stages.

### **Allan McVeigh responded, as follows, to the the questions and statements put to the meeting by Cllr Howard West, Mr David Siddans, Kevin Douglas, Rebecca Maunder and Mr Rod Beardshall:-**

#### **(a) In response to Cllr Howard West (Chairman of Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council):-**

We thank Councillor West for his comments and respond as follows:

As he notes, what is now the HTIP study did indeed start out as the Harrogate relief road review, then became the Harrogate Congestion Study and in its latest form is the HTIP study. This reflects the shift in emphasis both for the county council, and also in transport planning nationally, on responses to congestion and transport problems and on the way in which bids for funding are developed. This is very much focussed on a wide-ranging options appraisal process ultimately leading to a number of possible options to be worked up to preferred option stage.

Officers leading the HTIP were tasked with undertaking further development work on thematic areas, based on those that had been well-supported through the 2019 public and stakeholder engagement. NYCC officers did meet with the Parish Council in January, and a discussion on the Parish Council's key concerns took place. All of the information provided by the Parish Council has been passed to the relevant teams within the Authority with it either being fed into the HTIP work, or that being undertaken as part of the Local Plan, in partnership with Harrogate Borough Council. That said, we will revisit the work undertaken, in particular on the junctions work stream, to ensure that all relevant consideration has been given to those areas of concern in the western area.

In terms of the Parameters Plan and related Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is in development between HBC, NYCC and the developers, this will identify the infrastructure required to mitigate the impacts of the allocations and the apportionment of the costs. Of course, developers are not required to address existing issues on the highway network and

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this is why the Council is working to ensure that other opportunities to deliver improvements are taken wherever they arise.

**(b) In response to David Siddans (Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents' Association):-**

Thank you Mr Siddans for your comments.

Many of the points made have been covered in the previous response to Councillor West. In addition, with regards to comments on the uncertainty of forecasting and planning, there is as yet, no definitive advice from the Department for Transport on how changing behaviour, as a result of the pandemic, should be accounted for in transport planning, and indeed what longer term impacts on commuting and working patterns are likely to be. Once that information becomes available, it will form part of the approach on transport planning and appraisal. Sensitivity testing and uncertainty planning does form part of our modelling and appraisal approach in line with DfT guidance and is applied at the appropriate stage in scheme development.

It is recognised by NYCC and HBC that the highway requirements to accommodate the impacts of the development in the western area are significant. Whilst developers are only required by planning policy to mitigate the impacts of their development, there are however clear opportunities in the present circumstances to explore ways to bolster the infrastructure delivered through the HTIP work and to ensure the requirements of both work streams are delivered cohesively. As set out earlier, in light of the comments raised, officers working on both projects will review again the relevant HTIP work streams to ensure that all opportunities for intervention have been explored.

**(c) In Response to Kevin Douglas (Chair of Harrogate and District Cycle Action):-**

My thanks to Mr Douglas for his comments.

The work undertaken on HTIP followed on from a very long period of extensive consultation and stakeholder engagement, and in the case of the cycling work stream, built on significant partnership working as part of the development of the local cycling infrastructure plan (LCIP). This review of the LCIP was a technical review intended to reassess existing priority schemes and their ongoing suitability for delivery.

The LCIP and HTIP more broadly have been reviewed in light of Local Transport Note 1/20 in order to ensure it took account of the most recent Government guidance. Gear Change features in the policy section of the Walking Infrastructure Plan, (which forms part of the wider HTIP), and points clearly to the use of LTN1/20 in guiding the design and implementation of cycling and walking provision. All of the LCWIPs prepared by the county council look to deliver cycling and walking infrastructure in line with current government guidance and policy, and this a key theme of those documents. The LCWIPs have already allowed the County Council to attract funding for active mode investment, and will continue to guide the development of cycling and walking schemes in the county.

On priority corridors, the technical reports set out more detail on the measures necessary to bring routes up to the suggested standard. There is also a second stage of assessment in the LCIP review, which considers a further list of six potential corridors for development. Of these, four are considered to have potential.

In terms of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, outputs from the various thematic work streams in the HTIP have shown that Bilton displays several key characteristics (propensity for cycling,

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support demonstrated in the public engagement, and two cycling routes identified as priority corridors through the LCIP) that could contribute to a successful LTN. The HTIP did not set out to study LTNs, but having established Bilton as a possible location for further development, we will consider further suggestions for LTNs on a case-by-case basis and in-line with any future, adopted policy approach on the matter. It would also be essential to undertake public and stakeholder engagement as part of scheme development.

Moreover regards to any of the work streams being discussed in HTIP, further public and stakeholder engagement will take place at an appropriate stage of scheme development, as a key part of bringing projects forward.

Turning to development planning matters, when considering the impacts of planning applications, priority is given to more sustainable forms of transport, with pedestrians and cyclists given the highest priority, followed by public transport options and ultimately the car. This approach does however need to take a realistic account of prevailing car use and modelling outputs.

Whilst active travel is desirable, in some cases the extent of modal shift required to reduce vehicle numbers in any meaningful sense, is significant and difficult to deliver practically. Dispersed origins and destinations leisure and work for example, can represent a particular challenge in seeking to provide effective provision for sustainable modes.

With regards to the Killinghall bypass, please refer to my earlier comments.

**(d) In response to Rebecca Maunder (Coordinator, Harrogate & District Green Party):-**

We thank Ms Maunder for her comments, several of which have already been raised and answered above. With regard to continuous cycles lanes, that is very much what the LCWIPs aim to deliver and LTN 1/20 would be the expected standard for any new cycling infrastructure.

Turning to Ms Maunder's comment on pursuing a 'whole system approach' to transport, we would endorse this wholeheartedly and reiterate that is very much the recommendation of this report, through which we consider a corridor-wide approach. The report recognises that piecemeal delivery is unlikely to achieve tangible benefits in the longer term.

With regard to consultation and building on the comprehensive 2019 public engagement exercise, it is very much our intention to seek the views of local people and stakeholders as projects develop further. Specific consultations related to bus routeing, again, would take place as part of project development. This is in the context that the majority of bus services within the district are operated commercially, and therefore any input that the county council may have is based on working in partnership with the bus operators, rather than being able to directly specify routes.

**(e) In response to Mr Rod Beardshall (Chair of Zero Carbon Harrogate Transport Working Group):-**

I would like to thank Mr Beardshall for his comments.

Many of his points have been addressed above, but to summarise, the county council is required to consider all options for addressing through traffic in Killinghall. The recommendation on Killinghall bypass is that the potential scheme is added to the County Council's reserve list of major schemes for development.

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We recognise that there has been a shift in focus at a national level on carbon reduction and a renewed emphasis on walking and cycling from the government, and we are now considering how best to embed this into our policies and projects at a countywide level. As is also noted, where funding is available, schemes such as the Transforming Cities Fund and superfast broadband aim to support ongoing changes to travel and commuting behaviour and offer viable alternatives to daily commuting by car. For assurance, the Council will continue to take every opportunity to bid for grant funding, which seeks to promote sustainable transport and encourage a low carbon future.

In all cases, where any projects are taken forward for further development, public and stakeholder engagement would form a key part of project development and would be undertaken at the appropriate stage.

### **County Councillor Don Mackenzie, Executive Member for Access, commented as follows regarding the questions and statements from the members of the public:-**

I wish to reassure Councillor Phil Ireland that any proposal for a stand-alone bypass for Killinghall would be accompanied by facilities for active travel, in other words, a cycle path and path for walking. That is something that we believe is essential to any decision to build a bypass. Let us not forget, in Killinghall, its not just the A61 that is seeing increased levels of traffic but also the B6161 which is the Killinghall to Otley road on which there is a community centre, a primary school. We have received, as elected Members, and the local Member will agree, huge numbers of communications from that school, from parents and others, asking us to take traffic away from the B6161 which, even now, is a weight restricted section of road, because of the sheer volume of traffic, not just the road safety aspect but the air quality aspects of having high levels of traffic in front of primary schools.

I wish to comment briefly to Kevin Douglas. As Kevin knows, I am a member of the cycle forum in Harrogate, Harrogate District Cycle Forum. He and I have met also separately. He asks why we have not asked specifically for the comments of the Cycle Forum in the way we have brought forward this report. Well, there are so many parties we could be asking for comments from, such as the bus operators, the railway company, the taxi companies, the ramblers. There is a long, long list of potential advisors whose opinions we could seek. Kevin, you are here today and this is part of the process and we welcome your comments.

Briefly, to David Siddans – As both David and Howard West know, we have met together ourselves. We met just before Christmas, alongside Karl Battersby, and we know full well your concerns that somehow we are missing out on doing anything for the western arc. I have to say, I still remain puzzled as to exactly what you want us to do in order to improve the situation in the western arc. I know, Howard, you say it's not for you to suggest and that it's for us to suggest and you can say "yes" or "no". But in fact we are genuinely puzzled because it sounds to us as if you are wanting a major road investment whilst, at the same time, saying that is not what you want. Clearly, in the west of Harrogate, we are engaged upon a cycle path at Otley Road; we are engaged upon junction improvements; you have the 36 bus service along the A61, the A61 which actually doesn't pass through your village unlike in Killinghall. The A61 bypasses your village. There are aspects of the A61 corridor will look for bus priorities and will look for cycle lanes. We are doing all of these things but, at this stage, and you know this, we are not looking at a western bypass or a western relief road or, for that matter, we are not looking for an access road as you called it earlier this morning. At this stage, we are going to be relying upon active travel measures and other aspects of improving public transport in the west of Harrogate. I know that is something you don't like to hear us say but that is the situation we are in at the moment. If you feel this is something we are getting wrong, then come back at us or work through your local elected Member and we may be able to take that further.

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Finally to Rod Beardshall – Rod, you know that you have met with Karl Battersby and me. We know your views on this matter. I just remind you that, in addition to active travel which you totally support, and I know your group doesn't really hold with any investment in highways at all, we, as elected Members, and as the County Council, have to take into consideration the thoughts of others who want to see us take effective measures to take transport to take traffic away from the centres of their communities and that is why we are looking further at a Killinghall bypass.