

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

13 NOVEMBER 2024

STATEMENT OF CHAIR OF THE TRANSPORT, ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Destination Management Plan for North Yorkshire (DMP)

Since the last Full Council meeting in July, the committee met informally on Thursday 26 September to provide comments and feedback to officers on the Destination Management Plan for North Yorkshire ahead of consideration by the Executive in October.

Members raised the following main points:

- The importance of better transport links and adequate traffic management to enable smoother journeys to and from destinations
- The provision of accessible and affordable public conveniences
- Managing the delicate balance between the needs of visitors and residents in popular destinations
- Raising the profile of less visited 'hidden gem' destinations as part of the plan

Subject to taking into account the issues raised, there was endorsement by those present of the Destination Management Plan document and the associated action plans, as it went on to be approved by the Executive last month. The committee looks forward to playing a part in the annual review process for the plan, to check that it reflects the prevailing economic conditions and wider opportunities that may arise.

We then met formally on Thursday 17 October at County Hall. Three public questions were received regarding 1. Public and vehicle access to the racing circuit at Oliver's Mount, Scarborough via Jackson's Lane; 2. The application of the 20mph speed limit and zone policy around schools and 3. A perceived lack of progress with delivering active travel schemes. The committee went on to consider the following reports:

NY Highways Performance and Progress

The report looked back at the achievements and areas for improvement during the final year of the 5 Year Plan for NY Highways, following the formation of the Teckal company back in 2019.

Members were particularly pleased to note the commitment to NY Highways of taking on apprentices across several business areas, with 24 taken on during 2023/24.

Queries were raised about the operation of the cyclical gully cleaning programme and the operation of the risk based/data led approach. Members and interested parties were encouraged to feed in information to Highways teams, so that it can be added to the system for when the gully cleaning schedules are reviewed.

There were also enquiries about the emergency planning arrangements in place during flooding events, with contact details and protocols to be recirculated to provide clarity.

Review of Future Household Waste Collection Options

The background work to develop one consistent approach to waste and recycling was outlined by officers, in particular the work undertaken with WRAP and the environmental consultancy Euromia to evaluate the existing approaches and the options to harmonise collections.

Members welcomed the proposed change in some legacy areas from boxes and bags to a wheeled bin, providing greater capacity in the recycling bin, and hopefully leading to less recycling going in the residual waste bin.

There was also strong support for officers to link in with Planning service colleagues to ensure the new Local Plan for North Yorkshire reflects the extra storage space required externally for the additional wheeled bins and exploring communal bins further when considering prospective new housing developments.

There were concerns highlighted about ensuring any new service is flexible enough to meet local needs, with a range of bespoke collection methods including smaller bins, bags, frequent collections of smaller containers and community recycling points to be considered on a case by case basis.

In the discussion officers were referred to a recent decision by a neighbouring local authority to adopt co-mingled collections due to diminishing amounts of paper and card. Officers have established that residents in the neighbouring authority were issued with a small, wheeled bin insert called a caddy, for paper and card. However, experience in North Yorkshire suggests that restricting the capacity of recycling containers, such as a caddy, adversely affects the quantities of recycling collected.

Members also queried:

- The level of engagement to date with stakeholders such as the National Parks?
- Whether it was expected that introducing bespoke collection methods would create additional unexpected costs to the service, given the different factors to account for in towns/villages across North Yorkshire?
- How any changes would be communicated and explained to residents and households to make the new arrangements as clear as possible?
- Whether a harmonised single online calendar would run alongside the new collection arrangements?

I am pleased that the feedback has been taken into account by the Waste Harmonisation Task and Finish Group in finalising the household waste collection proposals to be brought forward in the new year to Executive and to our next Full Council meeting in February 2025.

Climate Change Strategy Performance

This was the first of our bi-annual look as a committee at the progress of the Climate Change Strategy, and it was good to get a snapshot of performance to date. When we next assess progress again in six months, it is expected to include the 'Adaptation' strategy that is currently in development and the underlying actions associated under this theme.

Performance of the actions listed is generally on track across the board so far, but it will be important for us to continue to track progress and outputs, particularly with many externally funded projects due to complete by the end of March 2025.

Update on development of Tree and Woodland Policy

The development of this policy has been long awaited by committee members, so the update report on progress was well received. It was exciting to hear about the different disciplines working as part of the new Tree and Woodland team and the variety of specialist work they will be undertaking. Given North Yorkshire Council has a legal duty and powers to manage the risk and to protect trees on the land that we manage and within the private realm, it is a key policy to provide a clear way forward for how trees and woodland will be managed in the future.

We look forward to reviewing the new policy once it is fully developed in the new year.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the committee will take place Thursday 30 January 2025, starting at 10am.

COUNCILLOR DAVID STAVELEY
October 2024