

North Yorkshire Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 27 November 2025 commencing at 10.00 am at Harrogate Civic Centre.

Present: Councillor Peter Lacey in the Chair, and Councillors Hannah Gostlow, Chris Aldred, Philip Broadbank, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, John Mann, Robert Windass, Andrew Timothy, Mike Schofield, Monika Slater and Matt Walker.

In attendance: Phill Holdsworth (President of HDCC), Councillor Carl Les OBE, Martin Mann (Chief Executive of Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce).

Officers present: Melisa Burnham (Highways Area Manager), Dr Kevin Carr (Divisional Officer), Jasmin Gibson (Improvement Project Delivery Manager). Emily Revell (Scientific Officer),

Other Attendees: Five members of the public.

Apologies: Councillor Sam Gibbs

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Sam Gibbs.

24 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 25 September 2025

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2025, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

25 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Hannah Gostlow and Matt Walker declared non-pecuniary interests in Minutes 29, as members of Knaresborough Town Council. Councillors Chris Aldred, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, Monika Slater, and Andrew Timothy declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 29, as members of Harrogate Town Council.

26 Public Participation

Four public statements had been submitted:

- By Jenny Hayward, Dr Jenny Marks and Ruth Lily, in relation to Minute 28.
- By Hazel Peacock, in relation to Minute 28.
- By Stephanie Talbot, in relation to Minute 28.
- By Gia Margolis, in relation to Minute 28.

Statement submitted by Jenny Hayward, Dr Jenny Marks and Ruth Lily

We are calling once again for the full and expedited delivery of the South and West Harrogate 20mph Zone. Repeated delays to its implementation have left children and residents exposed to unnecessary risks, despite overwhelming community

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support for action.

Completion of Phase 2 has now been postponed until late 2026, far beyond the original 2024 target for implementation of the full scheme. In the meantime, roads with average speeds above 24mph remain unchanged, and traffic continues to speed in close proximity to children—placing them, and the wider public, at ongoing risk. This is particularly alarming given the serious accident involving two teenagers in February 2023, and the daily use of these roads by over 6,000 students from seven local schools, including Ashville, Rossett School, Rossett Acre Primary, Harrogate Grammar School, and Western Primary in the Pannal Ash Area, as well as St John Fisher's and St Aiden's in the Oatlands area. Many others also use these roads to get to sports and further education facilities in the area.

As a reminder, our application for a 20mph zone in the Pannal Ash Area was submitted in November 2022 under the Council's own policy. North Yorkshire Council acknowledged the need for speed reduction and traffic calming measures in 2023, announcing the South and West Harrogate 20mph Scheme that September.

The initial plan was to start with Green Lane and Pannal Ash Road, with public consultation showing strong support for speed cushions & a reduction to 20mph: 94.3% of respondents from properties directly fronting Green Lane and 62.7% from Pannal Ash Road supported the proposals, with similarly high backing from neighbouring streets.

Despite this, in September 2024 the Council announced that they were not progressing with this plan, citing the need to redesign traffic calming infrastructure. More than a year later, the situation remains stagnant. The ongoing delay has been attributed to awaiting results from a sinusoidal cushion trial in York—even though such calming measures have long been used successfully elsewhere across the UK and Europe. Meanwhile, other counties have moved quickly: Ilkley, for example, progressed from consultation on speed cushions to implementation within just four months (October 2023 to February 2024).

Residents' frustration is mounting. Testimonials from local families highlight daily anxiety about student safety and near misses "I can't let my child walk, it's just too risky" says one parent. "I was hit by the wing mirror of a car whilst I was walking my child to school" adds another resident.

In other parts of the country, we see school streets, targeted 20 mph zones, traffic calming measures (including sinusoidal cushions) and low traffic neighbourhoods becoming the norm, with measurable benefits in terms of safety, air quality, sense of place and general wellbeing. We in North Yorkshire are being left far behind.

As part of a recently established combined authority with fresh objectives for promoting active travel, we call on both the Council and the combined authority to demonstrate bold leadership and take decisive action to complete the South and West Harrogate 20mph scheme as soon as possible, instead of persisting with a partially implemented scheme that leaves residents and children exposed to speeding traffic.

Therefore, we ask:

What can be done to expedite the full delivery of the South and West Harrogate 20mph zone, so that this important safety measure is completed in full, rather than remaining a half-finished project that continues to put vulnerable groups at risk?

The following response was provided by Highways:

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Officers continue to work on this, but it is vital that traffic calming measures implemented are robust to reduce the speed and ensure any implemented 20mph are self-enforcing, this is paramount to ensure the safety of our vulnerable groups long term. These measures will vary in design depending on the site.

NYC officers have had initial discussions with colleagues in the police regarding the designs and further work will be taking place in December and January to ensure to ensure we have engineering solutions that will bring those speeds down.

Officers can offer reassurances that we will work to the timescales and offer updates on progress to the March committee.

In a supplementary question, it was noted that sinusoidal cushions had been used in Edinburgh in 1995 and that research had been ongoing for a considerable period. A query was made as to whether a resourcing issue existed that could be addressed by the council or combined authority, as the situation did not convey a sense of urgency.

It was agreed that officers would provide a response in writing.

Statement submitted by Hazel Peacock

Will this committee support a bid ready road safety and active travel scheme and seek to address barriers in NYC policy to realise it?

In 2023, over 900 people signed the petition for the 20mph scheme for southwest Harrogate which included Leadhall Lane, Hookstone Road, Hookstone Drive, Otley Road, and a key urban section of Leeds Road.

These roads were not progressed due to NYC policy and the NYC classification of them as "strategic", but most are C roads (Leadhall Lane, Hookstone Rd & Drive) and none are on the Key Route Network. Given 20mph is being rolled out on red routes in London, it would appear these policy and classification barriers are immaterial.

With six schools, colleges, shops, and businesses situated on or just off them, the roads are used every day by thousands of schoolchildren and community members. Yet, daily risks are faced on them due to speeding, risky driving and driver mobile phone use, all putting lives in danger.

Leadhall Lane is 1km long. With no crossing's schoolchildren are forced to dash across it at their peril. Otley Road has witnessed serious and even fatal collisions and is a key route to Harrogate Grammar School. On Hookstone Road, Oatlands Infant School has reported three near misses in the last year, and in January 2024, a young person suffered serious injuries at the Hornbeam Park Train Station crossing due to a collision at three-thirty in the afternoon.

Police and NYC data shows the 85th percentile speeds to be 40/40 mph on Leadhall Lane, 40/36 mph on Hookstone Drive, 35/30 mph on Hookstone Road, 32/31 mph on Otley Road, and 32/33 mph on Leeds Road.

TfL evidence shows a person hit by a vehicle at 30mph is up to five times more likely to be killed than if they were hit at 20mph, meaning children and community are at continued risk on these roads.

This is compounded with evidence in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) this month citing a 44% relative increase in the likelihood of death for an adult pedestrian or cyclist hit by a SUV or similarly large car compared with a standard car, and for children an 82%, relative increase in the likelihood of death. Evidence which is

especially alarming considering Harrogate is listed in the top 20 UK locations for SUV ownership (ref: Climate charity Possible).

The appetite for active travel is growing in our community – the Oatlands Bike Bus has seen 1,000 journeys in the past year and there is enormous opportunity for change, but road safety is a continued barrier.

We ask you to join us in putting children and community at the heart of decision making and support the delivery of this scheme.

Thank you.

The following response was provided from Highways:

We note your suggestion of developing a bid ready active travel scheme, however the decision not to include Leeds Road, Wetherby Road, Otley Road, Hookstone Drive, Hookstone Drive and Leadhall Lane was not due to budgetary constraints, it is due to the classification and use of these roads in line with NYC's policy. A detailed review of this matter was reported to Area Committee last November, these roads are either category 2 or category 3a roads (which are classed as Strategic Distributor or Main Distributer roads) in Harrogate. These category roads perform a key function in the overall road network and are either strategic routes or link urban centres to the strategic network. In urban areas in particular, speed limits are usually 40 mph or less, parking is restricted at peak times and there are positive measures for pedestrian safety. This general description of a category 3a road does represent the function of Hookstone Road and Hookstone Drive, as they form a key link between the two strategic roads (Wetherby Road and Leeds Road) and there are already some positive measures for pedestrian safety, mainly through several signalised crossing points along this corridor. Leadhall Lane is a category 3b road with no natural trip attractors, it is also considered that achieving a self-enforcing 20mph zone in this area would not be achievable. This decision is further reinforced when considering the existing vehicle speeds in all of these locations.

A decision not to proceed with 20mph and required Traffic calming on the strategic routes is in line by NYC's 20mph policy.

In a supplementary question, it was asked why Red Routes in London were subject to a 20 miles per hour programme for road safety, active travel, and air quality, whereas in North Yorkshire a 20 miles per hour limit on a C or B road was not considered possible.

It was agreed that officers would provide a response in writing.

Statement submitted by Stephanie Talbot

This is in relation to the delay of works and implementation around the Phase 2 area.

Imagine for just one second that you could be the decision maker for keeping the streets safer by reducing the speed of vehicles?

Now imagine that that process takes at least 4 years to complete.

During that time a child walking on those streets has started and almost left high school. That's the reality of my youngest child.

He no longer walks to school, he used to, until his older brother got hit whilst walking on the pavement to school and witnessing it. His parents are too scared to let him walk, as the devastation of the accident caused our families life to shatter.

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Now imagine a girl who had her first car for one month before it got destroyed by the very same vehicle that hit her brother and his friend. She eventually got another car but the mental toll it took on her, she'd only just stopped therapy this year, two and a half years later.

A few months after this, another speeding vehicle, the very people that are meant to protect you, the police, crashes her car off the road whilst travelling in the wrong lane. Her car rolls over 4 to 5 times. Another car destroyed and more trauma for her and our family again. She was very lucky not to have been killed or to have killed someone walking on the pavement, as her car landed in a garden.

Would you imagine this to be in your town? Because both accidents are within 5 mins drive of our house. So now we have to travel on 2 of our nearest roads and see the scenes almost every day.

All because no one can make immediate decisions within the council that could prevent accidents like these. Speed kills, injures and destroys lives.

I cannot comprehend how a council can ever get anything done if a decision about reducing speed for a certain section of the community takes 4 years considering there have been 2 major incidents in its location (Otley Road and Yew Tree Lane)

I have no faith in your system. I live with the fact that our roads are dangerous. I feel like living in this town, the council favours cars and convenience over its people.

I hope you feel safe walking on the pavements around Harrogate because I don't.

It was agreed that officers would provide a response in writing.

Statement submitted by Gia Margolis

Good Morning,

I would like to commend Jasmin and her team for the delivery of two schemes. Victoria Avenue, resurfaced, with improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. The original bid for Victoria Avenue was for cycle lanes but as happens with great regularity these were stripped out. Promises for future implementation are unlikely to materialize.

Victoria Avenue improvements would have had much more benefit for cyclists if the Beech Grove scheme had remained in place. It was safe for cyclists, had more supporters than detractors. It was hampered due to the failure to introduce the Victoria Road plug which would have stopped the rat run. The promise of a replacement scheme has never materialized and the battle for space from parked cars, and speeding cars using the road as a rat run means that this part of the cycle network is unsafe and broken. The council should be bold and reintroduce this inexpensive, simple design.

Wetherby Road crossing

Again great credit and thanks to Jasmin for steering through this project and listening to suggestions along the way. It is a far better design than the one planned back in 2014.

Active Travel Team

There is no mention in the report of the Active Travel Team. This has been promised

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for several years but is yet to be announced.

West of Harrogate

This is referred to in the Active Travel report with works due to be delivered in Summer 2026.

Where can the public see the designs?

Will there be consultations?

The last engagement looking at Draft mitigation schemes was in September 2023. All designs are focused on getting more traffic through junctions. There were no cycle schemes other than those within the developments. How many of the councillors are aware that Trinity Road is to become an official rat run? That in every design pedestrian space is being taken away for more vehicles. Have the councillors looked at the plans? I recommend you read the HDCA report.

How does North Yorkshire plan to deal with the ever increasing number of vehicles squeezing through our narrow lanes and congested streets? Where are the active travel projects in place to help modal shift and the messaging to ask people to walk cycle or take the bus if they can.

The only signs we see at the moment are studies on traffic flow and altering junctions to get more cars through. As this has been the strategy for the last 20 years and congestion has got worse what real vision do the council have to make a difference?

The next phase of work in Harrogate is centred around the ever increasing number of developments but not one of them has any safe continuous cycle route to access the town. Current schemes are already being met with "too difficult to achieve" Councillors we need you to challenge and help to bring about change.

It was agreed that officers would provide a response in writing.

27 Air Quality Management Update

Dr Kevin Carr (Divisional Officer Scientific) provided an overview of air quality management work, following the recent submission of the annual status report to DEFRA. It was explained that Local Air Quality Management, imposed by DEFRA, required regular review and assessment of air quality against statutory objectives, with nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter identified as the main concerns for North Yorkshire. Monitoring arrangements, including diffusion tubes and particulate monitors, were outlined, and recent improvements were noted, resulting in the revocation of several Air Quality Management Areas, with further revocations proposed. Members heard that an Air Quality Action Plan had been completed and that work continued with a multi-agency steering group to develop a council-wide Air Quality Strategy by March 2027. Reference was made to links with regeneration projects, housing improvements, and community campaigns, as well as forthcoming legislation on PM2.5 and the need to align with World Health Organisation guidelines. It was emphasised that while reporting obligations were met, implementation powers were limited, and ongoing collaboration across services remained essential.

During discussion, questions were raised regarding the contribution of electric vehicles to pollutant reduction, the adequacy of monitoring methods, and the timeliness of installing real-time equipment at Starbeck Crossing. Members expressed support for air quality work, noting concerns about rural pollution from agricultural chemicals, the impact of wood-burning stoves, and seeking further information about the historic implementation of

smoke control areas in Harrogate. Officers clarified that monitoring continued after AQMA revocations and that additional PM2.5 legislation would introduce further monitors. Issues relating to high-traffic junctions, funding for monitoring equipment, and dust from construction were discussed, with advice given on reporting nuisance complaints. The relationship between air quality and climate change was acknowledged, alongside paradoxes in fuel use and enforcement challenges. Suggestions were made for hybrid monitoring approaches and greater public engagement, and it was confirmed that existing monitors could be relocated to address emerging concerns.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

28 Active Travel Updates

Jasmin Gibson (Improvement Project Delivery Manager) presented a report which updated the committee on progress and expected delivery of Active Travel schemes across Harrogate and Knaresborough, following a request in March.

Members raised a range of issues relating to active travel and traffic calming measures. Support was expressed for the use of sinusoidal cushions, with suggestions made for a 20 miles per hour limit outside Oaklands Infant School on Hookstone Road. Questions were asked about the timing of implementation following consultation, and how differences between traffic calming types would be explained to the public. Officers confirmed that Phase 2 designs were being progressed for consultation the following year, with Yew Tree Lane included and Whinney Lane to be considered separately. It was noted that a 20 miles per hour limit had been introduced on the residential street adjacent to Oaklands Infant School, with further improvements planned, and that explanatory material for the public would be developed. The need to accelerate delivery of schemes in Harlow Hill, Panel Ash, and Hookstone was emphasised, particularly in light of housing growth in West Harrogate, and officers explained that design complexity and consultation requirements were influencing timescales.

Members sought updates on wider active travel projects, including the Bilton to Hornbeam Park cycle route, the A59 missing link, and the Knaresborough missing link, as well as the Wetherby Road junction near Sainsbury's. Officers reported that £150,000 of ATF5 funding, with match funding from the traffic signals team, had been allocated to the Wetherby Road junction to add pedestrian facilities, with delivery required by March 2027. On the A59 missing link, it was explained that design challenges remained due to the listed bridge, and further discussions with Active Travel England were planned. The importance of local knowledge in route planning was acknowledged, and officers committed to continuing stakeholder engagement.

Questions were also raised about the promised active travel team and its role in addressing policy barriers and coordinating work. Officers confirmed that the team remained a priority but had been delayed by network strategy restructures; development was planned for the following year within the network strategy team. It was noted that active travel schemes had progressed successfully during the year, particularly in Harrogate, and that collaboration with Active Travel England continued. Members highlighted the need for clarity on funding responsibilities between Active Travel England and the Combined Authority, and officers undertook to provide a detailed written response to all outstanding questions from the public and members.

Resolved: That:

- a) The Area Committee write to Councillor Malcolm Taylor (Executive Member for Highways and Transportation) and Karl Battersby (Corporate Director Environment), requesting that the delivery of the Active Travel programme in Harrogate and Knaresborough be fast tracked.

- b) The Area Committee request a report be taken to the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider this matter.
- c) The report be noted.

29 Town and Parish Council Communication

Mark Codman (Parish Liaison and Local Devolution Manager) provided an update on parish liaison, devolution, and community rights. It was reported that his team supported parish and town councils in their responsibilities, managed statutory duties relating to devolution and community rights, and acted as a single point of contact for 572 parish sector organisations. The Parish Charter, adopted in 2023, underpinned engagement and was reviewed annually with Yorkshire Local Councils Association representatives. Key initiatives included monthly updates, drop-in sessions, and a representative panel for feedback. The team had handled over 400 queries and was developing new surgeries and a parish website. Work on devolution included pilots such as Knaresborough market, development of a devolution framework, and promotion of community asset nominations. Changes in the forthcoming English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill were highlighted, including extended protection for Assets of Community Value and potential impacts on neighbourhood governance.

Members welcomed the update and praised the team's role in improving communication and supporting local councils. Questions were raised about lessons learned from double devolution pilots and whether an evaluation should be referred to committee. Officers confirmed that review processes were built into the framework and engagement with town councils would inform improvements. Members expressed interest in promoting the benefits of devolution more widely and were assured that this was being emphasised at meetings, with a standardised approach planned for future agreements.

Concerns were raised about consultation timeframes, with examples given where parish councils lacked sufficient time to respond. Officers acknowledged the issue and confirmed that a 12-week period was the ideal standard, though legislative constraints sometimes applied. Members also highlighted a range of specific queries and were advised to contact the team separately for further advice.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

30 Business Representation in Harrogate

Martin Mann (Chief Executive of Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce) an update was provided by the Harrogate Chamber of Commerce on its five key priorities aligned with the town improvement plan: leveraging spa heritage, using empty buildings, improving transport reliability, promoting sustainable construction and retrofitting, and enhancing the town's quarters and event rhythm. Proposals included stronger interpretation of spa heritage, a British Spa Museum, and a spa tour linking key sites; fast-tracking upper floor redevelopments and introducing a "space finder" service; improving public transport reliability and exploring park and ride options; positioning Harrogate as a regional hub for retrofit training; and enhancing public realm and event coordination to increase visitor dwell time and overnight stays.

Members welcomed the presentation emphasised the importance of collaboration between community and business organisations and the Council, with suggestions to invite representatives from Harrogate Theatre, the Convention Centre, and International Festivals to a future meeting. It was noted that better communication between organisations, including Knaresborough, was essential to avoid duplication and ensure progress. Members supported closer engagement with businesses and highlighted the need to address tired public realm features such as benches and street furniture,

suggesting this be considered in the committee's work programme.

Further comments stressed the need to involve Harrogate and Knaresborough Town Councils in discussions to align ambitions and avoid duplication. Harrogate's contribution to North Yorkshire's economy was recognised, and members emphasised that success locally supported success county-wide. The Chair noted that this marked the start of a wider conversation, with plans to include the topic in the mid-cycle briefing and link with town council plans. The fully-staffed economic development team was highlighted as an opportunity to progress delegated responsibilities in this area.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

31 Reports Circulated for Information Only

31a Harrogate Waste and Street Scene Performance Update

The Chair advised that he would pass any members' comments on the written report to the Mid Cycle Briefing.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

32 Committee Work Programme

Edward Maxwell (Senior Democratic Services Officer) presented the latest version of the committee's work programme, including items for consideration at future meetings, and an update of informal and working group meetings held since the last meeting.

- Councillor Gostlow requested that the active travel team, once formed in the new year, could be invited to a meeting.
- Councillor Gostlow also referred to the previous meeting's Section 19 flooding report and the Executive Member for Environment's decisions on further work, asking if he could be invited to a meeting to provide more information.
- Councillor Aldred reported that there had not been a meeting of the Station Gateway Working Group since the previous committee meeting. He noted that an Executive decision had been made for the Traffic Regulation Order to go ahead, with work expected to start in January 2026.
- Councillor Lacey noted that the Housing Liaison Working Group had held an informal meeting earlier that week, and notes had been circulated to attendees.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be approved, subject to the above updates.

33 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next ordinary meeting of the Committee, on Thursday 26 March 2026 at 10:00am, was noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.55 pm.