

North Yorkshire Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Committee

26 March 2026

Harrogate, Knaresborough and Boroughbridge Town Investment Plan update

Report of the Corporate Director of Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Area Constituency Committee on progress with the development of Town Investment Plans for Harrogate, Knaresborough and Boroughbridge, including recent engagement activity, emerging priorities and proposed next steps.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The North Yorkshire Council Economic Growth Strategy 2024–2029 includes a commitment to develop investment plans for the county’s towns and their hinterlands, or to refresh existing plans, to drive economic growth and productivity in line with the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and other key strategies.
- 2.2 Town Investment Plans for key urban centres and market towns form part of the suite of documents required to move the Economic Growth Strategy from high-level ambition into delivery on the ground.
- 2.3 Within this framework, work is underway to prepare TIPs for Harrogate, Knaresborough and Boroughbridge, providing an evidence base for future business cases and coordinated investment across the area.
- 2.4 The Town Investment Plan programme provides a coordinated, place-based framework for regeneration and investment, helping the Council and the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority to understand local investment priorities and opportunities.
- 2.5 The programme is intended to act as an evidence base for future funding bids and business cases, and to guide decisions by public, private and community partners over the medium to long term.
- 2.6 TIPs are being developed through active collaboration, bringing together business networks, community and voluntary organisations, developers, public sector agencies and other stakeholders, with co-design and community participation as core principles.
- 2.7 Across the three towns, the focus is on identifying real, positive changes that will help neighbourhoods to thrive and improve quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors.

3.0 HARROGATE TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

- 3.1 A substantial programme of consultation and engagement has been delivered to inform the Harrogate TIP, spanning autumn 2025 to early 2026. Key activities and indicative reach are set out below.

Engagement activity	Indicative reach / audience	Format	Timing
Online survey	Nearly 600 respondents	Online and paper survey	Sept 2025 – Feb 2026
Four thematic workshops	50+ participants	In-person	Sept/Oct 2025
Town Council workshop	10+ participants	In-person	Sept 2025
Elected Members session	Councillors	In-person	Sept 2025
Youth Council	Young people	In-person	Oct 2025
Harrogate High School workshop	Students	Workshops	Jan 2026
Public engagement event	Residents	In-person	Nov 2025
Disability Forum	Forum members	In-person	Nov 2025

- 3.2 This engagement has provided a robust evidence base, centring on local priorities, issues and opportunities, including the perspectives of young people and residents with disabilities.
- 3.3 Participants consistently highlighted Harrogate’s historic heritage and architecture, including its Victorian spa character and elegant townscape, as central to the town’s identity and visitor appeal.
- 3.4 Engagement identified a series of pressing issues which residents and stakeholders see as priorities for the TIP to address. Those issues include traffic, infrastructure gaps, the state of the town centre, youth facilities, service provision and higher prominence of heritage. These issues are informing the emerging priorities and project concepts within the Harrogate TIP, particularly around transport, infrastructure, youth provision and town centre renewal.
- 3.5 Based on the consultation feedback, a recommended draft vision is emerging for Harrogate as a “heritage-led wellness destination” which integrates the town’s spa history, green assets and wellbeing offer. Further work with stakeholders is proposed to confirm the preferred vision.
- 3.6 Work is underway to structure potential interventions for Harrogate into three broad phases: quick-win initiatives, medium-term programmes and long-term strategic projects.

- 3.7 The immediate priority is to confirm a single strategic vision for the Harrogate TIP, ensuring it reflects community priorities and aligns with sustainability and inclusion objectives. A detailed longlist of projects is being prepared, including assessment of strategic fit, deliverability, potential funding routes and phasing across the short, medium and long term.
- 3.8 It is proposed to establish an Advisory Board for Harrogate to support refinement of the vision, oversee project development and champion the TIP with partners and funders. Ongoing engagement will be maintained through regular updates and opportunities for community participation in decision-making, to sustain trust and ensure the TIP remains rooted in local priorities.

4.0 KNARESBOROUGH TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

- 4.1 Work on the Knaresborough TIP is at an earlier stage, with a strong focus on community engagement and evidence-gathering to shape priorities and the emerging vision.
- 4.2 A programme of public community engagement events is currently underway, aiming to reach a broad cross-section of residents and stakeholders.
- 4.3 An online survey is live until 6 April 2026, to capture views from residents and businesses who cannot attend in-person events.
- 4.4 Feedback from these activities will be analysed to identify what people value about Knaresborough, key challenges and opportunities, and to inform early vision-setting and project ideas for the TIP.
- 4.5 Further updates on emerging themes, draft vision options and potential interventions for Knaresborough will be brought to future meetings once the engagement phase is complete and analysis has been undertaken.

5.0 BOROUGHBIDGE TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

- 5.1 Boroughbridge TIP development remains at scoping stage with work progressing on defining the evidence base, engagement approach and priority themes.
- 5.2 It is proposed that Boroughbridge follows the same core methodology as other towns, with a place-based evidence review, stakeholder mapping and a programme of engagement to inform a draft vision and longlist of projects.
- 5.3 A more detailed update on Boroughbridge, including engagement plans and early priorities, will be presented to the Committee at a subsequent meeting once this preparatory work has advanced.

6.0 FINANCIAL, LEGAL, EQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Harrogate TIP engagement has deliberately sought to involve a wide range of voices, including young people through the Youth Council and school workshops, and disabled residents through the Disability Forum, to ensure that diverse needs and perspectives inform the emerging vision and project concepts. Similar attention to equalities, community participation and climate resilience will be incorporated into the development of the Knaresborough and Boroughbridge TIPs as engagement and project scoping progresses.
- 6.2 At this stage, the TIPs are being developed as strategic frameworks and evidence bases, and there is no commitment to specific capital or revenue expenditure beyond existing budgets for strategy and engagement activity.

6.3 Any future projects emerging from the TIPs that require Council investment will be subject to separate business cases, detailed financial appraisal and decision-making through the Council's governance processes.

6.4 Legal implications, including any procurement or statutory consents, will be assessed at individual project level as schemes move from concept to delivery, with early consideration given through the TIP process where relevant.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The Harrogate TIP is progressing well, underpinned by extensive engagement and a strong emerging vision that reflects both the town's heritage strengths and its contemporary challenges and opportunities.

7.2 Knaresborough is in an intensive engagement phase, with a comprehensive programme of events and an online survey underway to shape priorities and a draft vision for its TIP.

7.3 Boroughbridge is at an earlier scoping stage, with preparatory work on evidence, alignment and engagement design underway so that a structured TIP process can commence in due course.

7.4 The three TIPs will collectively support delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy and help to guide future investment decisions across the Harrogate, Knaresborough and Boroughbridge area over the coming years.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the Area Constituency Committee notes the progress made in developing Town Investment Plans for Harrogate, Knaresborough and Boroughbridge.
- ii) That Members provide any views on the emerging vision options and priorities for Harrogate to inform the next stage of TIP development.
- iii) That Members note the engagement activity underway in Knaresborough and the proposed next steps for Boroughbridge and indicate any additional local priorities or stakeholder groups that should be considered as the TIPs progress.

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