



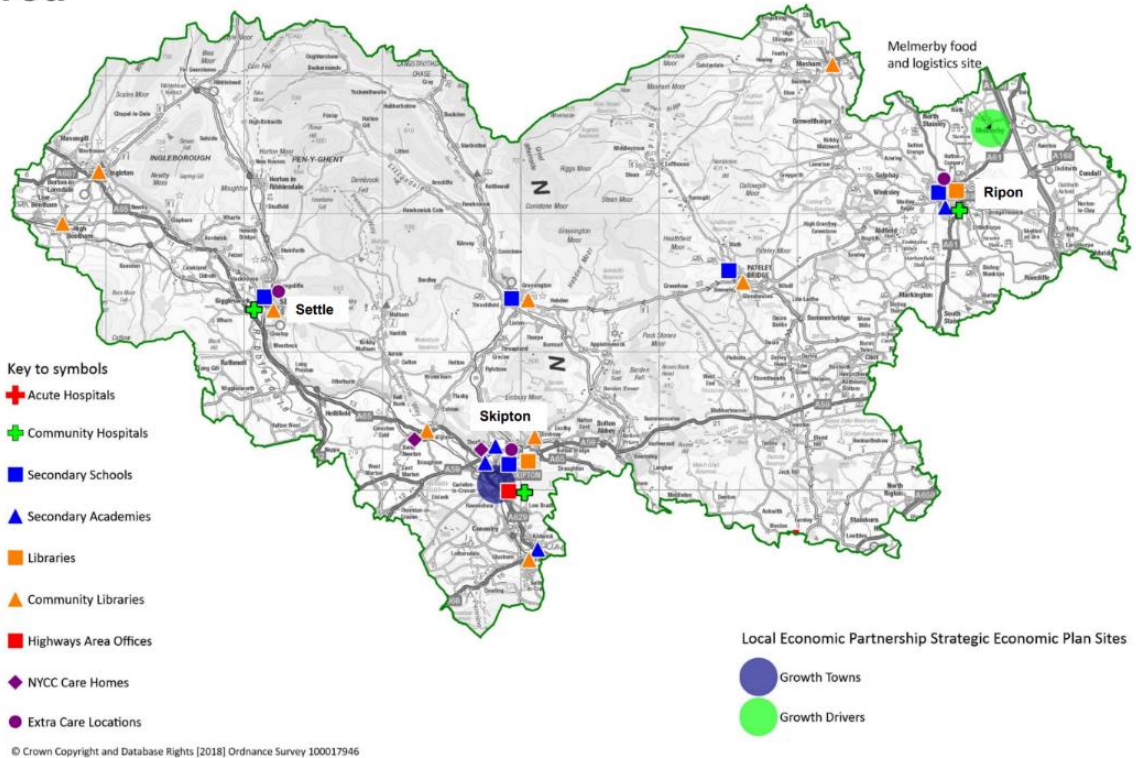
Skipton and Ripon Area Committee Annual Report 2025/26

4 June 2026

Membership

Councillors Robert Heseltine (Chair), Andy Solloway (Vice-Chair), Philip Barrett, Barbara Brodigan, Andy Brown, Nick Brown, Felicity Cunliffe-Lister, Richard Foster, Nathan Hull, David Ireton, Andrew Murday, Simon Myers, David Noland, David Staveley and Andrew Williams.

Skipton & Ripon AC Area



Introduction

Area Committees (ACs) are a forum for visible local democracy and accountability, where members of the public and local groups can raise specific issues which affect the local area. ACs can also act as consultees for the development of plans and policies which affect the area and monitor performance data to ensure services are being delivered effectively and efficiently. ACs provide meaningful scrutiny of local issues within their area, complementing the strategic work undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Annual Report 2025/26 provides a summary of the Committee's activity over the last year and an overview of what has been achieved.

The work of the Committee

There were four formal meetings of the Committee in 2025/26. The agendas, reports and minutes of those meetings are available on the Council's website.

A summary of the key themes at each meeting are as follows:

[29 May 2025](#)

- The Rt Hon Sir Julian Smith MP provided an update on the work undertaken in the constituency which included plans to follow up on the Sutton Lane footpath, challenges around SEND provision and funding as well as the need for social care reform.
- Updates on:
 - Localities Service
 - Community Safety and CCTV Service
 - Impact of tourism in the Craven area
 - Countryside Access Service
 - Natural England

[11 September 2025](#)

- The Rt Hon Sir Julian Smith MP provided an update on the work undertaken in the constituency which included the potential for mixed development at the Summerbridge Sawmill site, funding challenges and a possible ministerial visit to Nidderdale National Landscape, and efforts to address job losses following the closure of the Kerry factory in Birstwith.
- Considered a report on the Nidderdale National Landscape Management Plan review, including the current public consultation and the process for adoption by North Yorkshire Council, before adoption by Full Council.
- Updates on:
 - The work of Skipton Youth Council
 - Strategic parking principles
 - Destination Management Plan

[4 December 2025](#)

- The Rt Hon Sir Julian Smith MP provided an update on the work undertaken in the constituency which included endorsing the execution of the Kex Gill bypass and adult social care performance, highlighting priorities such as farming challenges, an update on Ripon hospital, and concerns about the impact of the Government's budget on the hospitality industry and small businesses.
- Considered a report on developing town investment plans and endorsed the proposed schemes to enhance a section of the canal towpath in Skipton and improve the marketplace in Ripon. The Committee requested that NYC Highways explore the pedestrianisation of Ripon city centre.
- A progress update on the proposed Wyvern Link Road in Skipton. Members requested that officers submit a draft business case for consideration by the Executive within 6 months.
- Updates on:
 - Housing need, provision and strategy
 - The work of Skipton Youth Council

5 March 2026

- The Rt Hon Sir Julian Smith MP provided an update on the work undertaken in the constituency which included highlighting pressures from the cost of living crisis and international instability, alongside concerns about SEND reform, local government and rural funding, and the financial impact of proposed employment and economic changes on businesses and the hospitality sector.
- A presentation from the Airedale NHS Foundation Trust on the Airedale Hospital rebuild.
- Considered an update on the performance of schools in the area.
- Considered an options appraisal of the feasibility of a Ripon Mobility Hub.
- Updates on:
 - Rural energy policies and local fuel pricing disparity in the area
 - Wyvern Link Road progress update

In addition, there were two informal briefings which helped to inform the work of the Committee by providing context and background on issues in the area. This included:

- Economic development briefing, covering sector growth opportunities in health, pharmaceutical and life sciences, an update on work undertaken to consider the feasibility of a mobility hub for Ripon and an update on the development of the Langcliffe Quarry project.
- Budget briefing

Public participation

A key element of the work of the Committee is engagement with local people and organisations and listening to concerns raised. In 2025/26, there were 7 public questions and statements. These covered issues including:

- Concerns around the Home to School Transport policy
- Ripon Town Investment Plan
- Issues relating to road safety during winter
- Concerns affecting rural bus services

- Progress on the Nidderdale Greenway Extension
- Opportunities to reuse vacant space above shops in Skipton
- A request to progress the provision of a safe pedestrian pathway in Sutton on Craven

The Committee meetings are recorded and broadcast. Recordings on the Council's website and YouTube channel have had 564 views, an average of 141 per meeting.

Recordings of the meetings are available here - [Live meetings | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Engagement with the local MP

The Rt Hon Sir Julian Smith MP has attended all Committee meetings of the 2025/26 year remotely. This process ensures that the Committee receives briefings on Westminster developments that may affect the area, while also providing an opportunity for Members to raise local concerns for the MPs to address at Westminster.

Work Programme for 2026/27

The Committee work programme is a live document that is owned by the Committee. Members are able to suggest items for inclusion in the work programme, both as part of discussions and debate at meetings of the Committee as well as in-between meetings. Any item identified for inclusion with the work programme will be reviewed by the supporting officer and at the MCB to determine: 1) whether it is within the scope of the committee; 2) what the expected outcome of the debate and discussions would be; 3) whether it is being reviewed by another committee of the Council; and 4) whether it could be considered as part of an informal briefing as opposed to at a formal committee meeting. The work programme can be seen at the end of every agenda.

Some of the key areas of investigation currently included in the draft work programme for 2026/27 are:

- Attendance by the MP for Skipton and Ripon
- Attendance by the Mayor of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority
- Opportunities to explore new funding sources
- Regular updates on Council services operating in the area
- Updates from the Youth Councils

Contact Information

Chair

Cllr Robert Heseltine

Cllr.Robert.Heseltine@northyorks.gov.uk

Vice Chair

Cllr Andy Solloway

Cllr.Andy.Solloway@northyorks.gov.uk

Senior Democratic Services Officer

Harriet Clarke

Harriet.Clarke@northyorks.gov.uk