

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Thursday, 27th May, 2021 commencing at 10.00 am.

County Councillors Margaret Atkinson, Phillip Barrett, Michael Harrison, Robert Heseltine, David Ireton, Stanley Lumley, Stuart Martin, Patrick Mulligan, Gillian Quinn, Andy Solloway, David Staveley and Robert Windass.

In attendance: County Councillors David Chance, Gareth Dadd. Carl Les.

Officers present: Daniel Harry (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager), Matt O'Neill (Assistant Director Growth, Planning and Trading Standards, BES), Sarah Fawcett (Inclusive Education Service, CYPS), Jane Le Sage (Assistant Director Inclusion, CYPS), Cathy Knight (Integrated Passenger Transport, BES), and Chloe Thwaites (Youth Engagement Officer, CYPS).

Other Attendees: The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP, a representative of the Youth Council, and two public speakers.

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

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### **107 Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

The committee Chairman, County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE, welcomed County Council David Staveley to the meeting as the newly elected county councillor for the Ribblesdale Division.

### **108 Minutes of the committee meeting held on 11 March 2021**

Considered –

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021.

The committee Chairman read out the following statement regarding the status of and process for decision making at the committee.

Under his delegated decision making powers in the Officers' Delegation Scheme in the Council's Constitution, the Chief Executive Officer has power, in cases of emergency, to take any decision which could be taken by the Council, the Executive or a committee. Following on from the expiry of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, which allowed for committee meetings to be held remotely, the County Council resolved at its meeting on 5 May 2021 that, for the present time, in light of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic circumstances, remote live-broadcast committee meetings should continue, with any formal decisions required being taken by the Chief Executive Officer under his emergency decision making powers and after consultation with other Officers and Members as appropriate and after taking into account any views of the relevant Committee Members. This approach will be reviewed by full Council at its July meeting.

## **Resolved -**

That the draft minutes were agreed by the committee as a correct record and the matter then referred to the Chief Executive Officer to consider, taking into account all relevant information exercising his emergency delegated powers.

## **109 Declarations of Interest**

There were declarations of interest from the following in relation to the matters raised about the Public Question from David Robinson, Chairman of the Henry Jenkins Community Pub Ltd on the basis that they were also Harrogate Borough Councillors: County Councillors Mike Chambers MBE, Stanley Lumley and Stuart Martin MBE.

County Councillor Margaret Atkinson also declared an interest as the local councillor for the division in which the concerns were raised in both of the submitted Public Questions and Statements. She also declared that she knew both of the Public Speakers.

## **110 Public Questions or Statements**

There were two public questions and statements.

1) David Robinson, Chairman, Henry Jenkins Community Pub Ltd – support for community pubs

I have lived in Kirkby Malzeard, a village in North Yorkshire since 1991 and feel I now qualify to speak as a Yorkshireman. For the past 4 years I've been the chairman of the Henry Jenkins Community Pub Ltd a community group trying to save a previously well-loved country pub from demolition and replacement by houses. Our Community Benefit Society has over 200 members, £236k pledged in Community Shares and recently, for the first time, the support of our Parish Council.

Our growing population with many new houses built and planned, demand that we stem the tide of lost facilities for residents and visitors too..

160 community pubs have been created and have survived the pandemic and not one has failed – what a record! Demonstrating how the whole country can stop the wanton destruction of local pubs and inject some revitalisation into rural communities.

Saving and redeveloping an ancient well-loved, pub will bring in more trade from tourism for all businesses in our local villages thus regenerating the local economy. It will provide jobs, provide choice & combat social isolation.

Kirkby can hugely capitalise on the huge explosion of sports tourism in North Yorkshire, walking, but especially cycling -as the Tour de Yorkshire has twice been routed up our main street . But it is undermined by a failure of local authorities to understand and support the desires of the local population.

I'd like to say here, that Kirkby is not alone in this situation. There are a large number of pubs in North Yorkshire suffering in the same way and I can provide details of these if requested,

What is completely dispiriting is the sense of being 'cast adrift' by our local authorities, both at borough and county level, who apparently have no policy to deal with this widespread and expanding dire situation.

Our example reveals a widespread public perception, rightly or wrongly, that the stance of Harrogate Borough Council management and particularly their Democratic, Governance and Scrutiny office has been more sympathetic towards the site owner-developers than

towards our local community group to whom they have a duty of care. In a table of authorities applying ACVs they are close to the bottom and they are strongly opposed to receiving any request for a CPO, both of which are intended for community groups trying to protect threatened community assets.

Strangely, the HBC planners, steadfastly refuse to allow change of use stating quite adamantly that they still regard the whole site as a community asset. One feels obliged to ask – where is the consistency? Where is the hope?

What help can this committee provide to me, the Save the Henry Jenkins campaign and the many other campaigning groups in North Yorkshire that have the same problems? Can a working group be set up to establish a consistent policy to support community groups within the county? Otherwise, many more pubs will go to the wall and many other communities will wither.

And finally will Mr Smith not reconsider what he said when we last met, now that his party has settled in with such a large majority, that he doesn't feel he can become involved in this issue within the heart of his constituency?

In response, Matt O'Neill, Assistant Director Growth, Planning and Trading Standards, Business and Environmental Services said:

Thank you for your letter of 24 May in respect of your community's efforts to save the Henry Jenkins Pub in Kirkby Malzeard as a community asset. Your achievements in raising funding and setting up a community group are commendable. Community owned and run public houses can certainly be a valuable asset to a local community.

As a representative of the County Council, I am not able to comment on the specific Assets of Community Value or Planning issues you mention as both the legislation and powers are the responsibility of the District/Borough Councils within North Yorkshire.

I highly respect your fundraising efforts and would like to draw your attention to the Government's recent announcement of the Community Ownership Fund about to be launched this summer, which offers up to £250,000 of matched funding to help community groups buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost. When the prospectus is launched I will ask one of my colleagues in our Stronger Communities Team to look at the fund and meet with you to discuss your aspirations for the Henry Jenkins Pub if this is appropriate.

North Yorkshire County Council's Stronger Communities service already works closely with local groups to support communities and has helped a number of community pubs over the years. Incorporating library services where none exists locally, promote a community space, community use PC, shop, meal delivery service to housebound people – all with a focus on meeting social needs in the local area. Where Stronger Communities has been unable to help it has encouraged pubs to seek help from Pub is the Hub <https://www.pubisthehub.org.uk/community-ownership/>.

The County Council is keen to support sound community and local business ventures to help themselves and create local solutions for service provision and we can certainly draw on colleagues expertise, both within the County Council and in partnership with local District Council's to explore further opportunities to support groups such as yours.

David Robinson made a supplementary statement, noting that he was aware of the Community Ownership Fund and would be looking further into it once it had been released.

2) Jane Aksut – Idling motor vehicle engines

I would like to raise the issue of car idling - cars running while the drivers wait, especially

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outside schools.

I am surprised that this is still a problem when pollution is such a major topic of discussion everywhere.

But it is a problem.

It would be great if we could create a culture where traffic idling is unacceptable and people who still have retained the habit of sitting and waiting in their running car make a conscious effort to change.

I think two small actions could make a huge difference:

1. Could the council persuade schools to message parents that cars need to be switched off when parents wait outside schools? It would also be nice if buses waiting in the bus park could also switch off their engines.
2. Could the council commission an engaging poster, perhaps with some facts and figures about exhaust pollution, that could be posted on social media or in shop windows? This would be especially useful for cafes with tables outside (then their customers don't have to sit alongside a car pumping out fumes) and for take away restaurants for which customers wait outside.

It is amazing that so many local vehicle drivers have not got the message from the news or documentaries on TV. For this reason, it would be good if NYCC could give those vehicle drivers a nudge and change some drivers' habits for the better.

In response, Daniel Harry read out the following that had been prepared by Fiona Ancell, Road Safety Team Leader, Business and Environmental Services:

The County Council is committed to reducing pollution and improving air quality. We have implemented a number of initiatives to support this ambition:-

We are currently consulting on an air quality strategy, due to be adopted later this year. The Air Quality Strategy is a county wide policy with the aim of protecting and where necessary, improving air quality in North Yorkshire to help reduce the health and environmental impacts of air pollution and ensure the county remains a special place for everyone to live, work and visit.

To achieve the aims set out above we plan to adopt four key objectives:

- Raise the profile of improving air quality in the context of North Yorkshire
- Work in partnership with borough and district councils and other appropriate organisations to protect air quality and address location specific air quality issues
- Ensure that improving or maintaining good air quality is a key consideration when planning and delivering County Council services
- Support the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) in North Yorkshire.

In addition:

- We are developing a climate change strategy, which will incorporate strategies to reduce vehicle pollution.
- We work with district council Environmental Health Teams to monitor pollution levels in key air quality assessment areas.
- During 2017 to 2020, our Road Safety and Active Travel Team, via the Department of Transport (DfT) Access Fund programme implemented a programme of active and sustainable travel initiatives in Skipton, Harrogate and Scarborough. This included

- engagement with businesses, the public and schools.
- Through the DfT Travel Demand Management programme, we have engaged in an intensive social media campaign, encouraging more active and sustainable travel to and from schools, as they return to school post Covid19 closures.
- NYCC has applied for a grant from the DfT Local Authority Capability Fund to increase our capability to plan good active travel infrastructure, including building more expertise and undertaking more evidence-based planning. This replaces the Access Fund and supports our commitment to the Local Walking and Cycling Plan, together with support for the Bikeability Cycle Training scheme.
- The council is working with the Local Enterprise Partnership to further develop the York and North Yorkshire Routemap to Carbon-Negative to reduce pollution from transport and increase levels of active and sustainable travel.
- In relation to parents leaving their vehicles idling outside schools, colleagues in the Highways and Transportation Department and Children's and Young Peoples Service will consider a programme of messages from schools to parents on this issue.
- The council will explore potential opportunities to develop and promote a dedicated campaign related to vehicle pollution and idling.
- With regard to buses idling, where there is vehicular access to a school site, then the School should have a traffic management plan for the site. If the vehicle access to the site includes a "bus park" then the school would usually include a requirement for the buses to have their engines turned off when dropping off or picking up.

Transport providers are made aware of the school's traffic management plans, including switching off engines, at the beginning of the school year. The Council support schools with these messages by issuing reminders to transport providers throughout the year and undertaking checks on school sites.

## **111 Update from the RT Hon Julian Smith MP**

Considered –

An update from the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP

The committee Chairman, County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE, invited the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP to give an overview to the committee of some of his areas of work, concerns and priorities. The key points are as summarised below:

- The vaccination programme has progressed well nationally and also in North Yorkshire
- There are low levels in Covid-19 infections in North Yorkshire but there is a need to monitor the impact of the Delta variant and any other variants that occur
- There has been lots of questions from constituents regarding travel restrictions and planning for summer holidays, which is understandable
- The hope is that the current restrictions can be relaxed as set out in the national roadmap
- There is a need to be mindful of how the transmission and infection rate could increase as people are less cautious and start missing more ahead of 21 June 2021.

There followed a discussion, during the course of which County Councillors made the following points:

- The mandatory vaccination of health and social care staff is a live issue and has significant implications for the human rights of all involved. The County Council has responded to the national consultation and awaits the Government's findings
- The success of the national and local vaccination programme has been down to the availability and commitment of volunteers. It is unclear how many times they can be drawn on to support additional vaccination drives
- The outcome of the Local Government Review will be announced in July.

County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE thanked the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP for attending the meeting and answering questions from the committee members.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP left the meeting at 10:25am.

**112 The visitor economy in North Yorkshire and the impact of Covid-19 – update May 2021 - report of Karl Battersby, Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services, NYCC**

Considered –

A presentation by Matt O'Neill, Assistant Director Growth, Planning and Trading Standards, Business and Environmental Services.

The key points from the presentation are summarised as follows:

- Previously provided an update at the 14 October 2020 meeting of the committee
- Tourism in North Yorkshire supports an estimated 41,200 jobs or 14% of all employment
- Total expenditure by domestic visitors is £1.536 billion per annum
- Total expenditure by international visitors is £168 million per annum
- Two thirds of food service and accommodation jobs in hospitality were furloughed at the peak of the pandemic
- There has been a big impact upon the performing arts and theatres and many music venues remain closed
- There has been a comprehensive package of financial support from Government and national and local support for the promotion of the tourist sector, including the 'Welcome to Yorkshire Recovery Plan'
- The aim is to attract new first time visitors and then convert these into habitual repeaters
- Historically, the basis of competition has been upon value. There is an opportunity to shift the focus to quality
- There are opportunities to build zero carbon tourism and to renew the focus upon an environmentally break in the countryside and national parks
- The traditional core industries in the county are food, manufacturing, creative and digital, manufacturing and agriculture.

There followed a discussion with the key points as summarised below:

- Good weather over the summer and autumn will help hugely with visitor numbers, in particular day visits
- Not clear whether it will be possible to convert day visitors into repeat visitors or people who book accommodation, once it is possible again to go overseas for a holiday
- There remains an issue with low wages and lack of career opportunities in the tourism sector. More support to the sector to develop long term career paths would be welcome
- More could be done to develop the out of season trade and create new attractions.

County Councillor Andy Solloway said that there was a need to encourage people to visit a range of different places, rather than a few 'honey-pots'. Otherwise, local communities and the local infrastructure will not be able to cope.

County Councillor Gareth Dadd stated that more could be done to generate greater profit and focus upon a high-end market that appreciates the local history and landscapes but expects the highest standards of accommodation and service.

County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE summed up and thanked officers for attending and answering the questions of the committee.

**Resolved –**

- a. The committee to keep a watching brief and so no further update required by the committee at this time. Matt O'Neill to keep Daniel Harry informed of progress with the recovery of tourism post pandemic.

**113 Elective Home Education update - report of Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services, NYCC**

Considered –

A presentation by Sarah Fawcett, Inclusive Education Service and Jane Le Sage, Assistant Director Inclusion from the Children's and Young People Service regarding elective home education.

The key points from the presentation are as summarised below:

- The numbers of children in elective home education has risen steadily over since 2017/18 and the pandemic and concerns about risk of transmission in schools has accelerated this rise
- There was a significant increase in notifications for elective home education during the Autumn term, which coincided with the return to school after a sustained period of home schooling nationally
- The experience of home education during successive lockdowns may have increased the number of parents and carers actively considering elective home education
- In many cases, the reasons for elective home education remain the same, despite the pandemic: bullying; anxiety; exclusions; and poor attendance
- It is anticipated that the numbers of children in elective home education will fall as the national vaccination programme progresses
- The Council has a duty to ensure all children in North Yorkshire are receiving an efficient, suitable full time education
- Where a parent/carer has stated that they want their child to be home educated, then the Council will meet with both the parent/carer and the school to discuss and go through the options available
- There are four Elective Home Education Advisors who work with families to support them and to ensure that the criteria of an efficient, suitable full time education is being met.

There followed a discussion with the key points as summarised below:

- The Council has a role to play in keeping in touch with those children who are not in school and ensure that they are safe and continuing to receive a suitable education. The EHE Advisor is key to this
- Some concerns were expressed about the lack of social contact experienced by a child being home educated compared to a child in school. It was felt that this key part of a child's overall education could be missing in many cases
- It is not possible to compel parents and carers to engage with the Council concerning the home education of their children. The EHE Advisors work hard to ensure that they build a strong relationship with parents and carers
- The limits upon our powers of intervention is frustrating and fresh Government guidance that gives the local authority greater leeway to intervene would be welcomed.

County Councillor Gillian Quinn asked whether the delays to the assessment of children with autism had contributed to the rise in elective home education over time.

In response, Jane Le Sage said that there may be a link but that every effort was made to engage with parents and carers at the pre-decision stage and to look at what options are

available.

Sarah Fawcett said that there was a need to take into account the views of children and the life that they want to lead after school and then use that to inform the decisions made.

County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE summed up and thanked officers for an interesting and informative presentation and for taking the time to attend and answer the questions of the committee.

**Resolved –**

- a. An update to be provided in 12 months, with a focus upon the number of children who are in elective home education and the work being done by the EHE Advisors with those families that have chosen to home educate.

**114 Digital Demand Responsive Bus Service - report of Karl Battersby, Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services, NYCC**

Considered –

A report on a demand responsive bus pilot by Cathy Knight, Integrated Passenger Transport, Business and Environmental Services.

Cathy Knight gave an overview of the report, the key elements of which are as summarised below:

- The pilot will be for 12 months from 1 July 2021
- It is a flexible transport service and buses vary their routes based on demand rather than using a fixed route or timetable
- The area around Ripon, Masham and Bedale is covered in the pilot
- Passengers will be able to book and pay for a journey using an 'app' or by telephone
- Drivers receive their routes based on advance or real-time bookings
- The fares charged will be similar to local bus fares
- There will be a marketing campaign which will target passengers in the pilot area.

County Councillor David Ireton asked what the impact of the pandemic had been upon commercial and subsidised bus services.

In response, Cathy Knight said that the use of buses was severely affected by the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. At its worst, the levels were 7% of the pre-pandemic level. It is anticipated that there will be a full recovery of the levels of bus use over the next three years.

County Councillor Stanley Lumley queried what financial support was in place for commercial and subsidised bus services.

Cathy Knight said that the Council had kept to all contractual agreements and payments throughout the pandemic and that additional financial support had been available from the Department for Transport (DfT). The DfT funding is in place until March 2022.

County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE thanked Cathy Knight for attending and answering the questions of the committee.

**Resolved –**

- a. Cathy Knight to come back to the committee in 12 months' time with an assessment of the pilot and details of any planned roll out of the scheme across the county.

**115 The Youth Council and engagement with the work of the Area Constituency Committee - verbal update - report of Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services, NYCC**

Considered –

A verbal update on the work of the Youth Council by Chloe Thwaites, Youth Engagement Officer, Children and Young Peoples' Services and a member of the Youth Council.

Daniel Harry introduced the item, noting that this was an opportunity for the committee to engage with young people and take into account some of the issues that face when considering the matters on the work programme.

Chloe Thwaites gave an overview of the work of the Youth Council and then the member of the local Youth Council outlined some of the key concerns for young people in the area. Of particular concern was mental health and wellbeing and the environment and climate change.

There followed a discussion. Committee members recognised that more could be done to engage with young people in the area and take into account their views, concerns and hopes.

County Councillor David Staveley asked how the Youth Council engaged with children and young people in the more remote, rural areas of the county, particularly during the pandemic.

In response, the member of the Youth Council said that remote access using zoom and other platforms as well as social media had helped maintain and expand contact and engagement.

Chloe Thwaites said that there were also strong links with schools, young farmers and other well established groups.

County Councillor Mike Chambers thanked Chloe Thwaites and the member of the Youth Council for attending. He thanked the member of the Youth Council for their insightful presentation to the committee and expressed his hopes that the committee and the Youth Council would be able to work together in the future.

**Resolved –**

- a. That the Youth Council be invited to future meetings of the committee and liaise with Daniel Harry in relation to any issues that need to be brought to the attention of the committee.

**116 Appointments to committee and outside bodies (extension of existing appointments) - report of Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, NYCC**

Considered –

A report by Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager regarding appointments to Local Bodies.

Daniel Harry introduced the report and said that there were two separate matters to consider:

- 1) The extension of existing appointments to Local Bodies in the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee (ACC) area, previously made by the Craven and Harrogate Area

Committees, to be extended through to the AGM in 2022; and  
2) To make an appointment to the vacant seat on the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

Daniel Harry said that the extension of all existing appointments to Local Bodies was needed as the deferment of the County Council elections from May 2021 to May 2022 meant that the term of the Council has been extended. Previously, appointments had been made on the basis of the Council term ending in May 2021.

Daniel Harry said that the vacancy on the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee had arisen with the sad and untimely death of County Councillor Richard Welch.

A vote was taken on the extension of existing appointment to Local Bodies and the committee were unanimously in favour.

County Councillor David Ireton was nominated and seconded for the position on the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee. An uncontested vote was held and County Councillor David Ireton unanimously elected to the position.

County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE reminded the committee that as these were both formal decisions, the views of the committee would be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for him to make a decision. Daniel Harry will progress this on the committee's behalf.

#### **Resolved –**

- a. The all appointments to Local Bodies be extended through to the end of the current Council in May 2022
- b. That County Councillor David Ireton be the Council's representative on the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

### **117 Executive member update**

Considered –

Updates from Executive Members present at the meeting.

The update provided by County Councillor Carl Les is as summarised below:

- Welcome County Councillor David Staveley to the meeting
- Good to see the engagement with the Youth Council
- Pleased to see the positive engagement with the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP
- The new Police and Fire Commissioner will be attending the meetings of the Area Constituency Committees once he has settled into his new role
- Transport remains a key issue for the county. Support will be needed to enable the network to recover from the impact of the pandemic and investment will be needed in road and rail to ensure long term prosperity for the county
- The Council is planning for a third wave of Covid-19. We hope that this does not happen but have to plan for all eventualities.

The update provided by County Councillor Michael Harrison is as summarised below:

- The levels of Covid-19 infection remains low, as does the number of people requiring hospital treatment
- At present, there are no Covid19 outbreaks in the 235 care homes in the county
- The Health and Adult Services Directorate is under-going a restructure to enable it to adopt cover 7 days a week in some areas

- The overall savings programme has been re-profiled to take into account the impact of the pandemic.

The update provided by County Councillor David Chance is as summarised below:

- Welcome the ongoing engagement with the local MP through the committee. It provides an excellent opportunity to make him more aware of grass roots issues and the impact of national policy at a local level
- The Community Support Organisations are now focussed upon building self-reliance, independence and enabling people to get back out into the community
- Befriending is a key issue as some more vulnerable and/or frail people need support to enable them to build their strength and confidence.

The update provided by County Councillor Gareth Dadd is as summarised below:

- The financial position has improved from Q3 to Q4 2020/21
- The ongoing savings programme will be adhered to
- There was some misunderstanding at a recent meeting of the Shareholder Committee about the financial position of the Brierley Group. This will be addressed at a Member Seminar.

The update provided by County Councillor Patrick Mulligan is as summarised below:

- The response of schools to the pandemic has been exemplary
- School funding and in particular that for small rural schools remains an issue due to the way in which the national funding formula is constructed. The Council continues to lobby the Department for Education. It would be a huge cost to the Government to provide much needed additional funding
- There will be a consultation about the future of the Bewerley Park Outdoor Education Centre.

County Councillor Mike Chambers MBE thanked the Executive members for their updates and for taking the time to attend the meeting.

#### **118 Committee work programme - report of the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**

Considered -

A report by Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, outlining the committee work programme.

Daniel Harry introduced the report and asked that Members review the committee's work programme, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the area.

#### **Resolved –**

- a. That the committee work programme be reviewed by members.

#### **119 Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances**

There was none.

Meeting end: 12:35pm