

North Yorkshire County Council

Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee

13 September 2021

Parish Portal / Members' Dashboard

Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Transportation

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the Parish Portal and Members' Dashboard, and to seek the Committee's support for wider roll-out of the latter.

2.0 Background – Parish Portal

- 2.1 Members will recall the briefing note submitted to your meeting of 29 July 2020. By way of update/recap, there are some 731 Parish councils/meetings in North Yorkshire. Of this number, it is understood that around 570 are currently active. When we first reported in December 2018, some 382 parish portal accounts existed - this figure increased to 397 last July and has increased further since to 411. This means that almost three out of every four active parish councils/meetings now has a parish portal account.
- 2.2 15,894 service requests have been made via the portal since the launch. The target set for activity is 11,000 service requests annually on an on-going basis. Whilst currently short of the annual target, volumes are steadily increasing and there has been a marked increase during the Covid 19 lockdown periods. In fact the figure has almost doubled from the 8,748 service requests reported last July thus demonstrating the value of the portal and this increasing use / buy-in continues to be reinforced by those parishes using the facility who see it as being of benefit.

3.0 Ongoing / Continual Improvements – Parish Portal

- 3.1 As per the last update, work has been ongoing to increase the list of services that can be requested via the Portal to make the portal more attractive to Parishes. Those currently 'integrated' into our asset management system (Symology) are Roads, Pavements, Drainage, Vegetation and Street Lighting. This means that we have the mechanism to provide direct feedback to the Parish on any cases they may raise in these specific categories. Work continues to improve this amenity and the aspiration is to include the following elements asap:

- Boundary fences and walls
- Bridges and structures
- Concern about roadworks
- Pedestrian crossings
- Road markings
- Road safety and speeding issues
- Signs including illuminated signs
- Street furniture
- Surfacing works

- Traffic signals
- Unauthorised activity
- Winter maintenance

3.2 Therefore, the priorities for overall improvement of the parish portal remain as:

- Extend the number of services available through the portal.
- Reduce the number of non-integrated services.
- Review parish feedback and continually refine the product
- Work with Members to understand how they can benefit from the information in the parish portal (and the customer portal) to understand reported and resolved issues in their divisions
- Work with Members to further-increase the number of parishes registered and the number of service requests received through the portal.

4.0 Members' Dashboard

4.1 Members previously told us that they felt they would benefit from having an overview of what Parishes and the Public were reporting in their Division. To achieve this, we have been working on the development of a Members Dashboard. The notion of a Members portal was considered, however it was acknowledged there was a danger this could become confusing and essentially duplicate the Parish Portal, which Members can already access.

4.2 Using existing Business Intelligence data, we have developed a dashboard that will create a more streamlined means of Members being able to access data in their ward in sufficient detail that would allow vision of all parish portals registered in their Division without the need for Members to register for every individual parish. The Members Dashboard also includes reports made via the Customer Portal thereby giving Members an encompassing perspective of demand for service in their Divisions. Screen shots of the functionality that could be achieved were attached to the previous briefing note and discussed with Members at that earlier meeting.

4.3 It was agreed that a small number of Members from this Committee would be engaged in 'Beta Testing' in the late summer/early autumn of 2020. Whilst COVID did impact this initial timetable, officers are pleased to announce that Beta Testing phase was undertaken this summer. Thanks go to Cllr Randerson, Cllr Les, Cllr Peacock and Cllr Goodrick for their time. Feedback was very positive and the Dashboard was seen to be a good source of information for Members, with the following specific comments also being received in addition to some very positive support from Cllr Les (Leader). Cllr Mackenzie (Executive Member for Access) and other members of the Beta Testing team:

- Cllr Randerson – *'easy to access and navigate I see this as being very useful to Members'*
- Cllr Peacock – *'simple to open and filter for information think this will be a big help in knowing what is being reported in my Division'*

4.4 Based on the testing done and feedback received, we feel this system is now ready to roll out to all Members as an easy to use but effective tool to access real-time information regarding activity and service demand in their Divisions. This allows Members to keep a true 'finger on the pulse' of local issues on a local level and will benefit the Members as well as the parish councils/meetings they support, especially as Members can access data immediately in advance of any formal parish council meetings.

5.0 Equalities Implications

5.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse equality impacts arising from the recommendation. It is the view of officers that the recommendation does not have an adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010 and a copy of the completed decision that "Equalities Impact Assessment is included with this report

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 Given the system uses existing Business Intelligence data, any maintenance of the system will be negligible. Some officer time will be required to brief / upskill Members in how to access and navigate the system. This can be rolled out as part of the Highway Customer Communication Officer (HCCO) role. Any training can be facilitated via the local weekly Member Highways surgeries that now exist, so Members could have area-based or one to one training depending on their preference. The fact that Members can also 'self-serve' using the dashboard if they wish means that HCCOs will have more time to support Members with more-complex queries.

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications with these proposals.

8.0 Climate Change Impact Assessment

8.1 If officer recommendations are supported and the Members' Dashboard is rolled out there would be no environmental / climate change impact. Access to data would be online using existing IT equipment issued to Members. The Climate Change Impact Assessment form is attached to this report

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Members of this Committee:

- i. Note the content of this report
- ii. Endorse the positive outcome of the Members' Dashboard Beta Testing and
- iii. Support the roll-out of the Members' dashboard to all County Councillors at the earliest opportunity, following approval to do so from the Corporate Director (BES) in conjunction with Cllr Don Mackenzie, Executive Member for Access and the Leader, Cllr Carl Les (as appropriate)

BARRIE MASON

Assistant Director – Highways & Transportation

Authors of Report:

Nigel Smith, Head of Highway Operations
Deborah Flowers – highways Customer Communications Officer

Background Documents:

- Briefing Note dated 29 July 2020 to informal Skype Meeting of O&S Committee
- Report to O&S Committee December 2018

Initial equality impact assessment screening form (As of October 2015 this form replaces 'Record of decision not to carry out an EIA') This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
Directorate	Business and Environmental Services		
Service area	Highways & Transportation		
Proposal being screened	Update on Parish Portal & Roll-out of Members' Dashboard		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Nigel Smith		
What are you proposing to do?	Provide Update on Parish Portal use & Proposed Roll-out of Members' Dashboard following Beta Testing		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	O&S Committee are keen to keep pace with take-up / use of the portal and the rollout of the Members' dashboard to provide County Councillors with a simple means of accessing service request data salient to their Division will improve Members' ability to keep track of those service requests and support the local community as strongly as possible		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No. the portal is already up and running and the Dashboard uses existing business intelligence data. Upskilling Members can be incorporated into regular liaison meetings between local highways contacts and Members		
Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics? No			
If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be a significant adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.			
Protected characteristic	Yes	No	Don't know/No info available
Age		√	
Disability		√	
Sex (Gender)		√	
Race		√	
Sexual orientation		√	
Gender reassignment		√	
Religion or belief		√	
Pregnancy or maternity		√	
Marriage or civil partnership		√	
NYCC additional characteristic			
People in rural areas		√	
People on a low income		√	

Carer (unpaid family or friend)		√	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	√	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision	<p>The recommendation to expand the services available via the parish portal is intended to make access to those services easier for the parishes across the county. The expectation is that the parish staff will use the additional facilities in the portal for the benefit all members of the communities that they serve.</p> <p>The expansion of the Members dashboard has no direct impact on people with protected characteristics.</p>		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	<i>Barrie Mason</i>		
Date	31/08/2021		

Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
 Environmental Impact Assessment
 Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Update on Parish Portal & Roll-out of Members' Dashboard
Brief description of proposal	Provide Update on Parish Portal use & Proposed Roll-out of Members' Dashboard following Beta Testing
Directorate	BES
Service area	H&T / Highway Ops
Lead officer	Nigel Smith
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Nigel Smith – Head of Highway Operations
Date impact assessment started	August 2021

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

No – Following discussion at previous O&S Committees, this is an evolution of the Parish Portal Concept by allowing Members a means of accessing Business intelligence Data through a dashboard

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

Given the system uses existing Business Intelligence data, any maintenance of the system will be negligible, if any. Some officer time will be required to brief / upskill Members in how to access and navigate the system. This can be rolled out as part of the Highway Customer Communication Officer (HCCO) role. Any training can be facilitated via the local weekly Member Highways surgeries that now exist so Members could have area-based or one to one training depending on their preference. The fact that Members can also 'self-serve' using the dashboard if they wish means that HCCOs will have more time to support Members with more-complex queries.

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel		X		<p>There might be a small reduction in travel if Members do not travel to Highways Offices to seek information about service requests in their Divisions once this can be accessed online</p>		
	Emissions from construction		X				
	Emissions from running of buildings		X				
	Other		X				
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>			X				
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>			X				

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)		X		Potential for reduced CO2 emissions if travel to meet officers reduced		
Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers		X				
Enhance conservation and wildlife		X				
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape		X				
Other (please state below)		n/a				

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

Not directly, however the ability to access this information online and remotely will be of benefit to users (Members)

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

If officer recommendations are taken then the proposal is to seek permission from the Corporate Director and Executive Member for access & Leader to roll this facility out to all County Councillors, however there is no environmental / climate change impact.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Nigel Smith
Job title	Head of Highway Operations
Service area	Highway Operations / H&T
Directorate	BES
Signature	N Smith
Completion date	31 August 2021

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):

Date: