

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Friday, 25th June 2021 commencing at 2.00 pm.

County Councillor Caroline Goodrick in the Chair, plus County Councillors Val Arnold, Robert Baker, Lindsay Burr, Gareth Dadd, Janet Sanderson, Peter Sowray, Roberta Swiers and Greg White.

In attendance: County Councillor Caroline Dickinson.

Officers present: Andrew Santon, Daniel Harry and Melanie Carr.

Other Attendees: MP Kevin Hollinrake and Mr Ian Conlon.

Apologies: County Councillors Caroline Patmore and Helen Swiers.

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

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### **95 Welcome by the Chair - Introductions & Updates**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the Executive Member for Public Health, Prevention & Support Housing Caroline Dickinson. It was confirmed that MP Kevin Hollinrake, would be joining the meeting at 3pm and therefore the Chair agreed to bring forward other items of business on the agenda, ahead of his attendance.

### **96 Minutes of the Formal Meeting held on 26 March 2021**

Members of the Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee considered the draft Minutes of their previous formal meeting held on 26 March 2021, and having agreed they were a correct record of the meeting:

**Resolved** – To recommend to the Chief Executive that he confirm them as a correct record using his emergency delegated powers.

### **97 Apologies & Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from County Councillor Caroline Patmore, and there were no declarations of interest made, at the meeting.

### **98 Public Questions or Statements**

A registration to speak at the meeting was received from Mr Ian Conlon. Mr Conlon attended the meeting to read out the following statement/question:

"I welcome our new Police Fire and Crime Commissioner Philip Allott's support for default 20mph speed limits in our towns and villages. This is also government policy, and I have had support from our MP for local implementation of this. Surveys repeatedly show that such Area wide default 20mph speed limits become more popular once implemented, with support rising from 70% to 90% once implemented. The evidence is

clear from both rural and urban counties that this does lead to reductions of accidents, and that the costs of implementing area wide speed limit changes without any new speed bumps, i.e. changing and adding the speed limit signs, pay back in 8 months in costs saved from the reductions in accidents, according to 20s plenty cost calculator based on Department for Transport figures. There is no evidence of increased aggressive behaviour as a result of the changes elsewhere, certainly not that leads to any increase in accidents or decrease in feelings in safety: quite the opposite in fact: children are more likely to be allowed to play outside in the street unsupervised, children walk and cycle to school more, cycling in the upper primary age in particular shows a huge increase, and this neatly ties in with LEP ambition to increase cycling rates by 9-fold. Combine this with a higher priority and support for dedicated cycle routes, and selective closure of routes, part-time or full time, to through motor traffic such as Castlegate in the AQMA in Malton, and the health and quality of life benefits, in a district that has disgraceful obesity levels, are obvious. Average journey times in areas that have implemented area wide 20mph are 1 minute longer. I must remind members that, rural though our constituency is, most people live in a town or village that would welcome traffic travelling at speeds that are not as likely as not lethal on impact. 30mph is NOT a safe speed to be hit at, and has a high fatality rate, pedestrians are rarely killed at 20mph. And its not just children: the more frail elderly and other vulnerable people are disproportionately excluded from our public space and healthy exercise by lethal speeds in their own communities. I am please to be part of a new Community Speedwatch group, but I would much rather all our locations in Malton and Norton were 20mph, so all communities benefit from traffic travelling at safer speeds. My question is simple: Will each councillor here pledge to support a 20mph default speed area limit in North Yorkshire's towns and villages as a matter of urgency?"

In response, Andrew Santon – NYCC Highways Customer Communications Officer confirmed a relatively recent review of the existing 20mph speed limit policy had been carried out by the County Council's Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with input from NYCC Traffic Engineering, Road Safety and Public Health officers, along with representation from North Yorkshire police and the '20's Plenty' Campaign Group.

He confirmed the review had been substantially in response to a national research project which evaluated the performance of 20mph speed limits and the need to update the County Council's policy. As a result of that review, the task group had determined that it was not appropriate to apply a countywide default 20mph speed limit in all residential roads and similar, but did make a series of recommendations in its report (approved by The Executive), concerning the future application of 20mph speed limits and zones, to facilitate more schemes being introduced.

He also confirmed:

- It was still necessary to carry out a robust assessment when determining the need for and extent of any 20mph speed limit or zone as it must be appropriate for that part of the network and fitting with its current operation.
- The County Council was substantially guided by the Department for Transport document 01/13 Setting Local Speed Limits, which provided advice to Local Authorities on the appropriate assessment and application. Given the thorough nature of that document, there was no reason to deviate significantly from it and the revised policy would be based on that advice whilst incorporating, where possible, the report recommendations.
- Applying a speed limit to a road(s) that drivers consider inappropriate, would highly likely result in it being disregarded and the cause of enforcement problems and complaints. Furthermore, it may consequently result in drivers failing to comply with a lower speed limit where it had been appropriately applied and was essential to do so.
- Where mean speeds were in excess of 24mph it was necessary to introduce physical traffic calming measures to forcibly reduce speed. Such measures were designed to be negotiated by travelling along that road(s) at a consistent speed, but in reality, driver behaviour was often to speed up and slow down which resulted in greater emissions

and noise, generally negating any actual or perceived benefit.

- Effectively 20mph speed limits or zones must be self-enforcing, either by existing behaviour or through physical measures.
- Introducing a countywide 20mph speed limit or zones would also require significant financial and resource input as well as future maintenance costs, which is broadly prohibitive.
- As part of any speed limit change or review, the County Council always consulted with North Yorkshire Police to seek their support, on the basis they are the enforcing authority - He confirmed that North Yorkshire Police did not support the countywide default application of 20mph speed limits.
- A major consideration when assessing the need for a 20mph speed limit or zone was the collision record for that part(s) of the network. The Traffic Engineering and Road Safety teams carried out annual and in year assessments of collision data to identify high risk sites and routes. This information included the main causation type e.g. speed, failure to look etc. as well as the road user type. Such data was used to inform the task group review and data from that time indicated that, in total across the three year reporting period, there were 59 injury collisions in areas with a 20mph speed limit. Of those 59 collisions, eight had been associated with careless/reckless driving or in a hurry and two were recorded as exceeding the speed limit being the main contributory factor to the collision. Therefore 10 out of 59 collisions resulting in injury were possibly speed-related. In total across the same three year reporting period, areas with a 30mph speed limit there were 1626 collisions. Police records showed that of those, 70 were attributed to speed (just over 4% of the total), averaging out at 23 per year. Therefore it could be concluded that the need for default 20mph speed limit is not justified through there being a collision problem associated with 30mph speed limits.

He went on to confirm that the benefits of lower speed limits, were absolutely accepted and the County Council was actively working to encourage and facilitate modal shift from cars to other sustainable and healthy travel choices, such as cycling and walking. Having a safe highway environment to support that was fully understood and supported. However, the County Council as Local Highway Authority also had a statutory duty to manage its highway as set out in the various Traffic Management and Highways Acts, and applying inappropriate speed limits, could be the cause of congestion and delay, which it was required to reduce.

He noted that although the policy position was not to apply a countywide 20mph limit, he assured Mr Conlan that the county council was fully committed to its road safety and traffic management duties and continuously monitored collisions data to ensure it was able to react accordingly. To that end, he confirmed that a draft 20mph Policy would hopefully be completed in the next couple of months for consultation with elected members and officers, prior to seeking Executive approval to formally adopt it.

County Councillor Lindsay Burr confirmed there was currently a campaign underway in Malton for a 20mph speed limit around its schools, with parents being canvassed for their views. She suggested that the NYCC's policy should be re-considered in regard to having a 20mph speed limit around all schools across the county.

Other Committee Members agreed that a countywide approach was not the way forward as it had the potential to create associated problems in individual areas, but rather each school environment should be considered on its own merit as and when an ongoing problem was reported.

Attention was again drawn to the recent scrutiny review carried out by the Transport, Economy & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which concluded having carried out a very thorough review, that a blanket approach was not the best way forward. They did however make a number of recommendations for changes to the policy, which were subsequently approved. In light of that, members of the Committee expressed their

confidence that the issue had been properly reviewed, including taking account of the views of a range of interested parties, and experts in the field.

In addition, it was noted North Yorkshire Police had in the past confirmed they would not enforce any 20mph speed limits, and that they would have to be designed out by the County Council.

The Chair thanked Mr Conlan for his contribution.

## **99 Attendance of MP Kevin Hollinrake**

The Chair welcomed MP Kevin Hollinrake to the meeting. The MP provided an overview of how things were at Westminster and his views on issues affecting his constituency. This included:

- The management of the new Covid-19 variant, the pandemic's effect on the economy, and the steps to be taken to get life back to normal. He also confirmed there was no parliamentary appetite to extend the lockdown beyond the 19<sup>th</sup> July;
- Levelling up – the increased investment in many different areas, including highways which boded well for the A64. He noted that work was ongoing on the plans for dualing the A64 from the Hopgrove to Barton Hill, with an expected decision in 2023.
- Future job opportunities as a result of treasury jobs moving to across the region;
- The awaited decision on the unitary bid, which if successful would open the door to devolution;
- The UK & Australia trade deal, and the associated concerns of the farming community;
- The future of Social Care – he noted a plan was due later in the year and confirmed his preference for the introduction of a national social care insurance, payable by all.

In response to questions from members of the Committee, the MP confirmed:

- Levelling up was not just good for people living in the north but for the whole country, as it would raise prosperity and tax intake which would benefit everyone;
- The current planning system was a barrier to increasing home building and needed to be reformed, together with improving access to financing for SMEs;
- The Local Needs Occupancy clause in the Ryedale Plan and land banking by big developers was not helpful;

County Councillor Greg White thanked the MP for his intervention at Westminster regarding Black Grouse, and it was agreed that an holistic view with a balanced policy was the best way forward for the protection of any endangered species;

The Chair thanked the MP for his attendance.

## **100 Attendance of North Yorkshire Police**

Considered - The presentation produced by North Yorkshire Police (NYP) providing data on the levels of crime and incidences committed in 2020/21 in the Thirsk and Malton Constituency Committee area.

In the absence of a representative of NYP at the meeting, Daniel Harry, NYCC Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager, gave an overview of the presentation. He confirmed that prior to the pandemic, work was initiated to identify some appropriate data sets that would assist Members from a policing perspective, to better understand what was happening in

their local communities, so that they could understand why crime was being committed and start to look at possible prevention measures. It was noted that work had been put on hold due to the pandemic and other pressures on the NYP Intelligence team.

Daniel Harry highlighted the following:

- The data provided for the period April 2020 – March 2021 covered the pandemic period and therefore it would not provide a true comparison with previous years;
- The peaks and troughs in the graphs provided, married up with periods of lockdown;
- Anti-social behaviour went up, which appeared to be because Covid 19 related incidents of crime were recorded under that category;
- The number of personal safety and welfare incidents went down (previously increasing year on year);
- There had been a rise in domestic incidences;
- The number of road traffic collisions reduced;

County Councillor Caroline Goodrick drew attention to the percentage increase in drug offences in the Scarborough/Ryedale area and queried why was it so much higher in that area compared to others; what was behind the 20.71% increase; what actions were being taken to address it; and what could County Councillors do to help.

Members agreed it was a key issue of concern and agreed to ask NYP to provide a more detailed response on that particular issue.

It was suggested that in future, an NYP update be received annually, and that ahead of the relevant meeting based on the information in the update, a decision be taken whether a representative of NYP is required to attend.

**Resolved** – That:

- i. The presentation be noted;
- ii. A request for a more detailed response on the increase in drug offences in the Scarborough/Ryedale area, be submitted to NYP;

## **101 Appointments to Local Bodies**

Considered – A report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Democratic Services) presenting the appointments to Local Bodies in the Thirsk & Malton Area Constituency Committee (ACC) area, previously made by the Hambleton and Ryedale Area Committees, which were to be extended in light of the deferment of the planned County Council elections to May 2022.

Members considered the list of relevant Category 2 appointments shown in the report and noted there were no vacancies to fill.

In regard to the vacancy on the John Stockton Education Foundation, County Councillor Val Arnold confirmed she was in discussions with a nominee and would be in a position to confirm the nomination in the next few days. The Committee agreed to delegate to County Councillor Val the nomination on that basis and thanked County Councillor Val Arnold for her efforts.

The Committee also noted the vacancies listed on the Thirsk and Sowerby Swimming Baths Charity Management Committee and the Poad's Educational Foundation (Newton upon Rawcliffe), and agreed to nominate Cllr Robert Baker and Cllr Greg White respectively to those vacancies.

The Committee agreed that all nominees should be forwarded on to the Chief Executive Officer for his approval.

**Resolved:** To recommend to the Chief Executive that using his emergency delegated powers he:

- Extend the current appointments to the Category 2 & 3 outside bodies that fall within the remit of this committee to the end of the current Council in May 2022.
- Appoint to the John Stockton Education Foundation, the nominee to be confirmed by Cllr Val Arnold following the meeting, to the end of the current Council in May 2022
- Appoint County Councillor Greg White to the Poad's Educational Foundation (Newton upon Rawcliffe) to the end of the current Council in May 2022
- Appoint County Councillor Robert Baker to the Thirsk and Sowerby Swimming Baths Charity Management Committee to the end of the current Council in May 2022

## 102 Work Programme

Members considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) which contained the Committee's current work programme for the remainder of the municipal year (2020/21).

It was noted that at the last meeting County Councillor Janet Sanderson had requested Yorkshire Water be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to provide an overview of the issues around the increasing levels of pollution in the water courses/streams running through various villages. It was confirmed an invitation had been issued and that a representative from Yorkshire Water had subsequently confirmed their availability to attend the Committee's meeting in December 2021. County Councillor Janet Sanderson confirmed she had been in correspondence with the Environment Agency who had recently confirmed a feasibility study on the siltation of Thornton Beck, which included some of the issues she had raised would be going out to public consultation in early July. She confirmed she was due to have a pre-meeting with them and suggested Committee members may also want to look at the Study. It was agreed that the Environment Agency also be invited to attend the December Committee meeting.

County Councillor Caroline Dickinson provided a brief overview on COVID, which included an update on reported cases, with a focus on those in education settings and care homes, and the number of vaccinations across the constituency areas, including the number of young people being vaccinated. She also provided a brief update on a number of Health Services, which were trying to get back to business as usual. It was noted that £2.4m had recently been secured to support those households across Hambleton, Richmondshire, Ryedale and Scarborough living in fuel poverty.

Finally, it was noted that at a meeting of the ACC Chairs and Vice-Chairs in early August, the awaited decision on local government review would be discussed and a plan formulated for how the individual ACCs participate in and contribute going forward. It was agreed that at that stage, an associated item could be added to the work programme for the October meeting if required.

**Resolved** – That the work programme for the remainder of 2020/21 be updated as discussed.

The meeting concluded at 3.41 pm.