

North Yorkshire County Council

Executive

19 December 2017

Feedback from the Area Committees

1.0 Purpose of the Report

To bring to the attention of the Executive specific issues considered at the recent meetings of the County Council's:-

- ◆ **Craven Area Committee - 9 November 2017**
- ◆ **Selby Area Committee - 13 November 2017**
- ◆ **Ryedale Area Committee - 15 November 2017**
- ◆ **Richmondshire Area Committee – 29 November 2017**

2.0 Craven Area Committee - 9 November 2017

2.1 Refocusing Area Committees

County Councillor Gareth Dadd attended the meeting to present the report.

The following issues were raised by Members:

- The future role to be played by Parish and District Councillors, concerns regarding the potential loss of representation and risk of disenfranchisement.
- The difference in the character of the areas to be brought together under a Constituency Committee.
- The opportunity for the devolvement of more decision making to local level was welcomed, but Members were keen to see the detail.
- It was suggested that perhaps a future Members' Seminar could focus on this issue.
- There was support for the MP's attendance at meetings – providing an opportunity for direct two way dialogue, but also some reservation was expressed regarding the risk of politicising meetings.
- The potential need to review the timing of meetings was noted, to help ensure the MP's attendance (at least once a year).
- There was interest in seeing Area/Constituency Committees regain the powers lost in recent years.
- Whilst the need for increased opportunities to influence, debate and lobby were accepted, one Member was particularly adamant that to seek to introduce the new arrangements for April/May 2018 would be too rushed.
- If the Area Committees do not support the proposal, is no change an option?
- A Member commented that he could not recall an MP attending an Area Committee over the last 20 years, and he enquired whether MPs have indicated their willingness to be involved – have they been approached?

The Police and Voluntary Sector representatives were broadly supportive of the proposal to move to Constituency Committees.

2.2 North Yorkshire Police Update

The detailed performance report provided by Inspector Geoff Crocker was noted and key statistics highlighted. Activity around Broughton Road in Skipton was flagged, noting tension in the community relating to the possible closure of Ings School. The local Member advised of on-line abuse relating to the issue – a public meeting had been held to air concerns and seek to dispel some myths. Other issues raised by Members included:

- The impact on Craven of policing KM8 at Kirby Misperton.
- The drop in performance reflected in the satisfaction survey data.
- The cost of policing KM8 at Kirby Misperton.

2.3 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Community Safety Update

Group Manager Phil Whild presented his report acknowledging the increasing emphasis on support to vulnerable residents, and working collaboratively with partners on preventative measures – ‘making every contact count’. Similarly work with young people regarding road safety is on-going. Incidents of note were discussed and thanks were recorded for the work undertaken supporting older people.

2.4 The role of West Yorkshire and Harrogate Sustainability Transformation Partnership (STP) in relation to Craven

A presentation was delivered by Helen Hirst of Airedale Wharfedale and Craven CCG which explained, and helped to clarify, roles and responsibilities. Helen Hirst assured Members that she takes every opportunity to raise the profile of Craven at regional meetings. She explained that the role of the STP is to help reconcile the rising demand for services whilst flattening out resource allocation – partnership and collaboration being seen as the means of achieving more sustainable solutions. This necessarily involves identifying workable compromises and prioritisation. She spoke of the emerging architecture of commissioning arrangements based upon neighbourhood, collaborations, and pathways to care.

Members were appreciative of the information shared and raised the following issues:

- Concerns regarding delayed discharges from hospital.
- An incident of incorrect advice on discharge medication notes was related and the resulting implications.
- The NHS now seek to deliver much more than basic care and perhaps should seek to get the basics right first.
- A query was raised regarding the role played by Leeds in the model.

2.5 Stronger Communities Update

Marion Tweed-Rycroft updated on the Stronger Communities Programme in Craven District, and she spoke of the following:

- Relating to the preceding item - her role sitting on the Craven Care Model Group, seeking to ‘rural proof’ arrangements.
- Achieve Grants – promising an update regarding the Hub at the next meeting.
- Community building in Skipton – the recent condition survey indicating that £85K is needed to make it safe – discussions are on-going with the Chair of Trustees regarding how to move forward.
- Transport in North Craven – a very successful community survey had been undertaken which highlights underuse of the community bus, and as a result of this, work is underway to look at the booking system and promotion.

2.6 Introductory presentation from Community First Yorkshire

Mark Hopley, the Head of Community and Volunteer Support, appraised Members of the work of the organisation – circulating an information leaflet. He explained the close links with Stronger Communities and the support provided to local projects, for example: governance training - regarding roles and responsibilities, how to access grants, the aim being to build the confidence of local groups to increase their success. The target audience may be new groups or long standing ones. Community engagement advice is also provided. The service is easy to access and an officer is assigned to offer support whether by phone or site visit. Training is available at a nominal fee of £26 per place, or this is free if the turnover of the organisation is below £5K. A key aim is help not for profit groups to be successful.

2.7 Highways Update

James Malcolm, Area Highways Manager updated Members regarding progress with: Consiton Cold Bridge – options and timetable; Long Preston Alms Houses – speed reduction measures; Kex Gill Realignment – project timetable; and the winter maintenance programme.

2.7 New Railway Station at Cross Hills

Graham North, Policy Support Officer - Rail presented the report explaining the opportunity to work with West Yorkshire regarding station development at Elland and Cross Hills, given the same consultant is being used. A highways depot is presently located on the site that could be used for a new station at Cross Hills, but this is not ideal. The feasibility study carried out suggests that £14m is required for new stations plus a 60% bias would mean £23m, before changes to the network are considered. Demand is expected to be significant with 21% users travelling to the station by car. Signalling would need to be changed, otherwise Kildwick level crossing, which is already a problem, will need to be down even longer. The benefit cost ratio is felt to be too low at 1.33 to take the project forward. Graham North advised of the interesting findings which had arisen during the process, for example the opportunity to reduce down time at Kildwick level crossing by changing the signalling.

Members welcomed the report but agreed that the recommendations should be strengthened to leave the door open to the possibility of future development should funding become available. Members commented as follows:

- How does the BCR for Cross Hills compare to those for other stations under consideration.
- Is there any scrutiny of the projected costs – the GRIP process was explained.
- Question of liability – it was confirmed that this would rest with the local authority.
- Possible reduction in downtime at Kildwick level crossing – it was confirmed that further work is required before this can be quantified, the next update report is anticipated in summer 2018.
- Question of parking provision if the station were developed – it is anticipated that 75 spaces would be required in the existing location. Concern was expressed that this could be inadequate.
- Members were keen to keep the option for the development alive even if this is a distant prospect.

2.8 Education in Craven

Summary statistical information was considered, which had been requested by the local Member, following concerns arising from the possible closure of Ings Primary Schools in Skipton. The information relating to numbers on roll at local schools,

academy conversions, and so on, was welcomed. Andrew Dixon, Strategic Planning Manager, confirmed that periodic update reports can be provided in future.

Members raised the following issues:

- Concern and disquiet in Skipton regarding educational matters – brought to a head by the Ings Primary School situation.
- Attainment levels at Aireville/Skipton Academy.
- Concern that in some cases academisation is failing pupils and impairing their life chances.
- Lack of involvement of local Members in discussions regarding new schools in Skipton.
- If the performance of a school declines, shouldn't the staff be changed?
- Craven District Council Local Plan and the inclusion of a requirement for a new school.
- The Executive Member for Education and Skills urged Members to remember the prevailing context in North Yorkshire, with 89% being deemed good or outstanding schools. He also acknowledged the 11% which require improvement and the worrying decline of schools in the most rural areas.

3.0 Selby Area Committee - 13 November 2017

3.1 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Community Safety Update

Group Manager David Dryburgh informed the Committee of the community safety initiatives undertaken by North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service since the previous meeting. The following issues were discussed:-

- Speed Management protocol and how this was delivered
- Community Safety events and education - delivery to local schools

3.2 Stronger Communities Progress Report

Tom Jenkinson, updated the Committee on progress made on the Stronger Communities Programme in the Selby District. The following issues were highlighted:

- The work being undertaken with Community First Yorkshire and local Village and Community Halls
- The winner of the volunteer of the year award category of the North Yorkshire Community Awards 2017, announced at North Yorkshire Wider Partnerships had been Su Morgan of 'Tadcrafters',
- Details of the proposed "Men's Sheds" project

3.3 Bus Service Provision - Update

Integrated Passenger Transport provided an update on the provision of bus services in the Selby area following the cessation of trading of Utopia Coaches. The County Council had now provided financial support for new longer term contracts and the services highlighted below came into effect from 30 October 2017:

Service 42 - York/Cawood/Selby/Drax
Service 493 - Sherburn/Pontefract
Services 492, 493, 494 - Tadcaster/Sherburn
Service 37 - Tadcaster/York.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Members congratulated Integrated Passenger Transport Services for the hard work undertaken to ensure that improved bus services were provided for the area.
- The need for an enhanced public transport provision was requested but it was emphasised that an increased use of the services would be required if this was to be considered.
- There was a request for the new services to be publicised and to ensure that services operated in areas where most usage would be generated ie near to older people's accommodation.

3.4 **Turpin Lane, South Milford - Proposed Stopping up of Highway Rights**

Gary Lumb of Area Highways provided details of a proposed 'stopping up' order on Turpin Lane, South Milford, the reasons for the proposal and the consultations that had taken place.

The Committee authorised the proposal.

3.5 **Highways Update**

Area Highways Manager, Nigel Smith, provided an oral update, highlighting the following:

- Capital Programme remained on track
- A63 Bypass had opened on time following the final stage of repairs
- Winter season had now commenced although there had not been a great deal of activity required to date
- Service involvement in a national event - "Our Day"
- "Better Together" initiative had been utilised to undertake some joint working between the Area Highways Office and Selby District Council

The following issues were highlighted by Members:

- The need to ensure that appropriate routes were provided for construction traffic when developments were taking place.
- The removal of road works signs when works had been completed.
- The protocol and deployment of Vehicle Activated Signs

3.6 **"Better Together" Initiative - Update**

Janet Waggott, and Joel Sanders, gave a presentation updating Members on the development of the "Better Together" initiative, highlighting the following:

Vision and Ambition

Governance

Benefits

Current/Future Initiatives

- Customer and Community Programme
- Smarter working Mainstream
- Regeneration and Investment Work-stream

The following issues were highlighted:

- The development of a "one stop shop", allowing the public to access services from one contact point, and the issues that were being addressed to be able to provide that.
- The development of a "one phone call" system, whereby queries could be answered on first telephone contact, without re-direction.
- Ensuring that information provided to the public was correct.
- Easy access for Members in terms of service information.

- Enhanced communication for Members on the development of the “Better Together” initiative to assist with the understanding of how it is developing.

3.7 Speeding Traffic in the Selby District

Representatives of the “95Alive” partnership (Gary Lumb and Nigel Smith - Area Highways), David Dryburgh - North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service) were present at the meeting to assist Members with their discussions. The following issues were raised:-

- Details of the Speed Management Protocol were outlined, together with how to communicate concerns around speeding.
- Discussions with local communities and Parish Councils indicated that they were unaware of where to report concerns in respect of speeding. Potential opportunities to address this were discussed and a plan for enhancing communication with local communities would be developed.
- Details of the www.roadwise.co.uk website, where details and reporting processes were provided, were outlined.
- A number of specific area concerns were provided.
- The work being undertaken by the Transport, Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee, in relation to this, was outlined.
- Issues relating to the deployment of Vehicle Activated Signs were discussed.
- Members emphasised that the major issue around the Speed Management Protocol was that of communication and it was felt that it would be appropriate for a refresh of the process to be provided to local Parish Councils and communities

3.8 Refocusing Area Committees

County Councillor David Chance attended the meeting and presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted by Members:

- The refreshed meetings should undertake meaningful work, with meaningful decisions, and should not be merely information providing vehicles.
- Further new business, than that outlined, would need to be developed for meetings of the refocused committees for these to have an impact in the areas they would cover.
- The location, date and time of meetings would be key to the attendance of MPs and that would have to be carefully considered for future timetabling. The quality of information, reports and debates at those meetings would also encourage attendance and this had also to be carefully planned.
- Concern was expressed that the discussions involving those brought in from the additional electoral divisions, to form the Constituency Committee, may not be relevant to councillors from the Selby District. There may also be issues relating to the coverage of more than one highways area within the remit of the Committee.
- Concerns were raised regarding the loss of the District Council representation from Area Committees as they brought a great deal of information to meetings.
- There would be a need to make best use of technology for the development of the meetings, utilising video conferencing and other available technologies to ensure attendance either in person or virtual, and encourage wider participation.
- Future elections could alter the position in terms of the number of dual-hatted members and careful consideration to this potential situation should be given when determining the constitution of the future committees.

4.0 Ryedale Area Committee - 15 November 2017

- 4.1 The Area Committee meeting on 15 November at Ryedale Community and Leisure Centre was suspended before any formal business could be conducted, when anti-fracking protesters staged a protest after a question they wanted to ask was ruled to be too late, having been submitted after the deadline.
- 4.2 The meeting will now be reconvened on Monday 11 December at the Ryedale District Council offices, Ryedale House, Malton. The Area Committee will be considering items of business that were on the agenda of the suspended meeting, including a petition regarding a local road junction, an update on the A64, a report on the progress of the Stronger Communities programme and regular reports on highways, police, and fire and rescue matters.
- 4.3 All members of the public who registered to speak at the meeting on the original date of 15 November are being sent written responses to the questions or statements they had provided in advance, but also offered the opportunity to speak at the reconvened meeting if they still wish to do so. A number of additional public questions and statements had been submitted after the deadline and these were declined due to pressure of scheduled business. All of the individuals submitting these questions will also be offered the opportunity to speak on 11 December.

5.0 Richmondshire Area Committee - 29 November 2017

5.1 North Yorkshire Police – update

Inspector Mark Gee and Superintendent Paula Booth were in attendance and the following issues and points were outlined:-

- A spike in the crime figures during October 2017 and the need for all crimes to be reported at the time that they occurred.
- The closure of the Northallerton Custody Suite and the arrangements in place in view of that. Concern over the extra distance away from communities in Richmondshire these facilities would be based were expressed, and it was noted that the police would ensure that people were transported back to their local area, in appropriate circumstances.
- The increased demand on the Force Control Room and how that was being addressed, including the new call back facility for the 101 number
- Criminal activity in villages alongside the A66 and policing activities undertaken in response.
- Policing related to Anti-Social Behaviour and the Christmas Lights in Richmond
- Police funding and numbers of police officers
- The response to an unusually large crime spree in Hawes and measures being taken in response.
- The excellent response from the Colburn community in respect of the consultation on a Public Space Protection Order and the development of a cadet scheme.

5.2 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Community Safety Update

Group Manager David Pitt was in attendance and the following issues and points were outlined:-

- Group Manager Pitt was leaving to take up the post of Protection and Prevention Manager and would no longer attend the Area Committee.

- Details of the 'Biker Down' Course, which aimed to show motorcyclists what should be done when an accident occurred.
- Work being undertaken by Community Safety Officers to support people diagnosed with dementia and vulnerable people in local communities.
- The Hawes Fire Station open day which attracted around 200 visitors and raised £1,800 for charity, the largest amount for such an event, in the country.
- The recruitment and retention of retained firefighters in Richmondshire.

5.3 Building a Sustainable Future for the Friarage Hospital

Janet Probert and Adrian Clements were in attendance and the following issues and points were outlined:-

- Details of the reasons for the consultation and the need to develop a sustainable service for the future at the Friarage Hospital.
- The hospital was not to close, but the current provision may have to change to ensure that it was sustainable.
- A wide ranging consultation exercise was being undertaken in relation to this.
- This was a workforce issue rather than a resource issue
- The consultation responses would be evaluated early in the New Year and a clear, sustainable vision would be set and agreed, which would then be discussed with all concerned to determine how to move forward.

Members highlighted the following:-

- Providing options may have been a better approach to the consultation.
- The difficulties facing communities in Richmondshire in terms of additional distance should facilities and services be removed from the Friarage and Darlington Memorial Hospital.
- The excellence of A and E facilities at the James Cook Hospital but the need to ensure that appropriate hospital services were available as near to local communities as possible.
- The current uncertain situation was detrimental in terms of recruitment to the Friarage.
- Many people considered that the consultation was pointless as their opinions were unlikely to be acted upon. It was emphasised that all opinions would be taken into account in respect of developing the future provision at the Friarage.

5.4 Councillor Query re Ambulance Coverage of Responsiveness

County Councillor Jim Clark, Daniel Harry and Janet Probert were in attendance and the following issues and points were outlined:-

- County Councillor Blackie, who raised the query outlined his disappointment with the response.
- County Councillor Jim Clark stated that the issues raised had been responded to by the Ambulance Service and apologies issued to those affected. Scrutiny of Health would continue to monitor this matter and further consideration of the Ambulance Service would be undertaken at the meeting of 16 March 2018.
- County Councillor Blackie outlined his continued concerns and his intention of attending the meeting.

5.5 Refocussing of Area Committees

County Councillor David Chance attended the meeting and presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted by Members:-

- It was suggested that the proposals were aimed specifically at Richmondshire Area Committee due to its current political balance.
- The proposals were unnecessary
- The area covered by the new committee was too big for meaningful area debate.
- Issues resulting from the previous shared service agreement between Hambleton and Richmondshire District councils would re-emerge under the proposals.
- It was unlikely that the MP would attend meetings.
- Richmond Town Council had unanimously voted against the proposals. They considered that the existing Committee arrangements could be modified, with additional powers provided, but the constitution of the Committee should remain as now.
- Issues raised at previous meetings had resulted in a profound effect on local service provision due to local communities being able to attend meetings held in that local area and express their views. The revised arrangements did not promote public engagement.
- An attempt was being made to make Area Committees more meaningful.
- The consultation allowed all views, including members of the public, to be taken into account.
- More decision making powers were being considered for the revised Committees.

A response to the Executive was approved that Richmondshire Area Committee strongly objects to the proposals to refocus Area Committees and requests that the proposals are reconsidered by those who are promoting them.

5.6 Items to be raised by Members of the Committee

County Councillor John Blackie

(a) Deeply Rural Depopulation and Decline

County Councillor Blackie invited Steven Stubbs, Chair of Arkengarthdale Parish Council, to address the Committee and he outlined his concerns for the area, a major factor being the lack of affordable housing.

Kate Jump of the Community Land Trust addressed the meeting and outlined plans being developed to build four sustainable, affordable properties in the area and other, similar proposals for local communities.

(b) Economic Development - The Failings of the LEADER Fund to deliver in Rural Areas

James Farrar and Helen Patchett were in attendance to assist with discussions.

County Councillor Blackie found the compliance details required for obtaining the fund to be extremely bureaucratic and difficult for small organisations to comply with and saw that as a barrier to the funding.

James Farrar acknowledged this factor, noting that the compliance system was now delivered via Central Government and had to be stringently met. He noted that LEADER had been particularly successful in this area with £1.8m of funding for the Dales, and as the best performing area in the UK in respect of the fund there was the potential for the Dales to obtain additional funding.

County Councillor Blackie welcomed the report back and stated that he would like to move forward and work together on developing opportunities for funding in the area

5.7 Stronger Communities Progress Report

Gillian Wall provided an update on the Stronger Communities Programme highlighting the following:-

- Inspire programme
- North Yorkshire Connects
- Achieve projects

5.8 Richmond Highways Office – Update

Neil Linfoot from the Area Highways Team was in attendance and the following issues were highlighted:-

- Ellerton Abbey to Grinton - saplings causing a hazard.
- Roadside running alongside local farm - damage caused by vehicles
- Winter maintenance – treatments had commenced – County Councillor Blackie paid tribute to the operative who provided winter maintenance on Buttertubs, Brett Calvert.
- Clarification was provided that farm contractors were in place to treat the priority 3 routes, when necessary.
- Hipswell roundabout resurfacing would be completed before the end of the financial year.
- White Shops, Catterick Garrison - the road had re-opened to two-way traffic and the remaining work of lining and slot cutting would be completed shortly.
- A bid of £10.5m had been made to the Safer Roads Fund in respect of the A684 and the A6108.
- The new configuration of the junction by the Bridge Hotel at Catterick Garrison. It was noted that this was in place to address safety issues.
- The Scotch Corner/Gatherley Road access road would close when the A1(M) improvements were completed.
- Hedge cuttings being left on local highways.
- The need to cut hedges alongside the highway at High Abbotside.
- Issues relating to the cattle grids on Buttertubs.
- 30 mph limit on the new road from Tunstall to Leeming Bar – a new speed limit would be introduced once work had been completed in that area.
- The recent provision of a non-slip surface on the highway at Middleham.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 That the report be noted.

6.2 **That it be recommended to the Executive** that Richmondshire Area Committee strongly objects to the proposals to refocus Area Committees and requests that the proposals are reconsidered by those who are promoting them.

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall
Northallerton

11 December 2017

Background Documents: the published agendas and reports for each of the meetings identified in the headings in this report.