

North Yorkshire County Council

Business and Environmental Services

Executive Members

26 January 2018

Department for Transport – Community Rail Consultation – Moving Britain Ahead

Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Transportation

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To highlight the role of Community Rail Partnerships within North Yorkshire County Council and to agree the County Council response to the consultation.

2.0 Background

2.1 North Yorkshire communities have a long history of being involved in the railways, in more recent times there was the community led campaign to “Save the Settle & Carlisle line” – the Development Company still exists and has gone from strength to strength, the limited service on the Esk Valley generated the need for community engagement and it became one of the founder Community Rail Partnerships (CRP), more recently the very successful Leeds – Lancaster – Morecambe CRP and Yorkshire Coast (Scarborough – Hull) CRP have also been formed, most also have people who look after individual stations (station adopters) as part of their organisations.

2.2 In 2004 the Department for Transport (DfT) published the Community Rail Development Strategy formally recognising community rail and the role CRP’s in supporting the strategic aims of the national railway. In 2007 the Government further reviewed it’s policy and the aims of the strategy are:-

- Increasing ridership, freight use and net revenue
- Managing costs down;
- Greater involvement of the local community; and
- Enabling local rail to play a larger role in the economic and social regeneration.

2.2.1 The DfT believe the time has come for the consultation to shape the future of community railways so that they continue to develop and thrive, they have been seen by Government and various reports as being very successful. The Rail Minister (at the time) in his foreword highlighted the key themes for the future as

1. including connecting people and places,
2. integrating communities to create a fairer society and encourage diversity and inclusion;
3. supporting local and regional economies and sharing opportunities;
4. suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works, including Heritage railways

2.3 The Government has supported CRP’s and in recent and future franchises (including the Northern franchise) encouraged bidders to fund (Northern have committed £500,000 a year across all Northern CRP’s) and support and work closely with Community Rail Partnerships as part of their franchises.

- 2.4 The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) are the overarching membership organisation for CRP's. ACoRP provides support, advice and information to the community rail movement, particularly through membership services and our events. They share good practice and connect those working in community rail, while also sharing insights from the wider voluntary and community sector, rail industry and beyond.
- 2.4.1 ACoRP also represent and advocate for community rail, providing a link between members, national and devolved governments, partners and industry, promoting understanding of their contribution and how this can be nurtured. ACoRP also aim to raise awareness of community rail more widely, explaining its importance, and promoting engagement with (and travel by!) community rail.
- 2.4.2 ACoRP has various funding allocations (relatively small) that CRP's and Friends groups can apply for to support individual schemes, these can range from station notice boards, local marketing campaigns, to station improvements and studies to bring redundant buildings back into use.
- 2.5 In North Yorkshire there are four Community Rail Partnerships
- Esk Valley Rail Development Company (EVRDC) – line designation – includes responsibility for infrastructure
 - Leeds – Lancaster – Morecambe CRP (LLMCRP) – service designation – no responsibility for infrastructure other than at stations
 - Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership – not yet received designation, delayed by this consultation but members of ACoRP. Community Rail Humber Ltd - the funders employ the Community Rail Officer
 - Settle & Carlisle Development Company – members of ACoRP
- 2.5.1 As can be seen each of North Yorkshires “Community Rail Partnerships” operate differently but all are successful. It is clear that within community rail there is not a one size fits all approach.
- 2.6 North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) have supported the four Community Rail Partnerships from their inception, through both staff resource, presence at meetings including Board meetings and funding however, with the reduction on County Council finances funding has been reducing and is currently £3,500 per annum for each CRP. Each CRP produces annual Action Plans for their lines. More recently links have been developed with other departments within NYCC to work more closely in partnership going forward, examples include the Stronger Communities team and tackling rural isolation, Health & Adult Services team – working with the Leeds – Lancaster - Morecambe CRP Dementia Rail project.
- 2.7 Rail North are also responding to this consultation and NYCC as members of Rail North support their response.

3.0 Community Rail Consultation

- 3.1 Based on the four themes outlined by the Rail Minister twelve questions have been asked and the questions will form the basis of the NYCC response. The deadline for responses is 28 January 2018.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any financial implications arising from the recommendation. NYCC do fund CRP's as described in 2.6 and would recommend funding continues but reviewed on a regular basis.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any legal implications arising from the recommendation. It is the view of officers that the recommendation will not have any legal implications.

6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any equalities implications arising from the recommendation. It is the view of officers that the recommendation will not have any equalities implications, therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required and a copy of the EqIA screening form is attached as Appendix 2.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The consultation is timely and should be welcomed as a lot has changed in the last ten years and more changes are likely in the future.
- 7.2 A copy of the draft North Yorkshire response to the Department for Transport – Community Rail Consultation – Moving Britain Ahead is provided at Appendix 1

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 Members are asked to note and comment on the report.
- 8.2 Members approve the draft response to the consultations subject to final amendments agreed by the Corporate Director.

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Background documents: None

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Date

Dear Kul

Community Rail Consultation – Moving Britain Ahead

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your Community Rail Consultation – Moving Britain Ahead.

Please see below the response from North Yorkshire County Council and attached copy of the report approved by North Yorkshire County Council, Business and Environmental Services, Executive Members on 26 January 2018.

General

North Yorkshire communities have a long history of being involved in the railways, in more recent times there was the community led campaign to “Save the Settle & Carlisle line” – the Development Company still exists and has gone from strength to strength, the limited service on the Esk Valley generated the need for community engagement and it became one of the founder Community Rail Partnerships (CRP), more recently the very successful Leeds – Lancaster – Morecambe CRP and Yorkshire Coast (Scarborough – Hull) CRP have also been formed, most also have people who look after individual stations (station adopters) as part of their organisations.

In North Yorkshire there are four Community Rail Partnerships (CRP's) and below are examples of the diverse range of projects they have each been involved in more recently:

- Esk Valley Rail Development Company (EVRDC) – line designation – includes responsibility for infrastructure – one of the original Community Rail Partnerships – they have:
 - Lobbied for an early morning commuter train as part of the franchise, to provide access to employment and education and the improvement to an all year round Sunday service improving the all year round tourism economy.
 - Encouraged the York Potash mine development through a Section 106 agreement to provide additional services and potential infrastructure improvements
 - Worked closely with the North Yorkshire Moors Railway
 - Developed station adopters, including Botton Village and the Camphill Community.
 - Run a very success Summer Friday night music train with local business support
 - Support local events through their website, newsletter and attendance at Summer Agricultural shows.
 - Esk Valley Railcard for the local community

- Developed links with MoorsBus to encourage travel into the National Park
- Esk Valley railway is also used as part of NYCC School Transport with significant numbers of children travelling from villages along the line to schools in Whitby.
- Leeds – Lancaster – Morecambe CRP (LLMCRP) – service designation – no responsibility for infrastructure other than at stations. This line received designation in 2012 and has been very active and successful in:
 - Lobbying for improvements to rail timetables.
 - Bringing Bentham station back into use, with the help of funding from NYCC and co-operation from the rail industry and continued innovative improvements, including introduction of CCTV.
 - Strong friends group / linked to activities in the town for Bentham Station
 - Development of a series of Rail to Trail walking maps and literature to encourage healthy activity.
 - Creating a link between stations on the line and Forest of Bowland, including a connecting bus service at weekends
 - Dales Railcard for the local community
 - Aiming to make the line as a centre of excellence in terms of understanding how community rail can assist in helping those with dementia to still lead an active life and continue to be part of society. Stakeholders including the rail company, Alzheimer's Research UK and NYCC are already engaged in this project.
 - Creating a Marketing Group for the line.
- Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership – not yet received designation – due to the current consultation process - members of ACoRP.
 - Community Rail Humber Ltd has been created by the funders employ the Community Rail Officer as the CRP were not able to take on these responsibilities
 - Lobbied for an all year round Sunday service and increased weekday frequency both of which have been successful.
 - Successful bid for a new website linking the Yorkshire Coast railway line to tourism
 - Evolving plans to bring Cottingham Station back into use and improvements at Filey station.
 - Station Adopters including the award winning Hutton Cranswick – Britain in Bloom.
 - Promoting the line through station events and successful on train events such as Santa Specials.
 - Providing support for the bus link between Driffield Station and Driffield Showground and identifying the needs of passengers using the station.
- Settle & Carlisle Development Company – members of ACoRP but not a designated CRP as such they could be seen as one of the original community led rail groups after being formed to prevent closure of the Settle & Carlisle Railway Line which was successful.
 - Continue to lobby for improved rail services along the line
 - Dales Railcard for the local community
 - Providing ticketing, retail and waiting facilities at stations
 - Successful website with on-line merchandise sales and also promotion
 - Ensuring that stations retain the character and feel of the line
 - Provide catering facilities at stations and on train
 - Developed a group travel offer and provide guides to groups travelling
 - Promoting local businesses and offers through their own e-mail database
 - Work closely with and promote the Dales Bus services

The examples shown is not an extensive list but tries to show the wide variety of roles each plays, as ever there is a lot of other work that Community Rail supports that would be too long to list.

Each of the CRP's in North Yorkshire employ a Community Rail Officer helping the local economy, most are on a part-time basis and funding reflects this. If the roles of CRP's were to grow then understanding the future implications on funding / resources and complexities of employment law are very important.

A significant amount of time is taken up with attending various stakeholder events or being engaged in consultations from DfT, ACoRP, train companies and other stakeholders and this can drain the resources available to develop things locally. There is also usually a financial cost in attending these events.

As can be seen each of North Yorkshires "Community Rail Partnerships" operate differently but all are successful. It is clear that within community rail there is not a one size fits all approach and this should be reflected in any future thinking.

North Yorkshire County Councils response to the themes / questions that have been raised within the consultation are as follows:

Theme: Connecting people to places and opportunities

Question 1a: What role can community rail play in improving end-to-end journeys?

Question 1b: How can community rail help to:

- Make Journeys more sustainable?
 - Encourage more healthy travel?
 - Reduce the environmental impact of travel?
1. As can be seen from our response so far North Yorkshires CRP's are already working with other transport providers and this should be encouraged. NYCC use the Esk Valley to transport children to and from schools in Whitby.
 2. With more responsibility for stations and facilities CRP's could develop cycling and other sustainable projects for their stations, station facilities and upkeep of stations are very important to rail users.
 3. Developing and promoting walking routes to/from stations, working with rail operators to deliver projects has already started in North Yorkshire.
 4. Working with local organisations such as National Parks to help meet their sustainability targets and potentially access other sources of funding.
 5. A lot of Local Authorities support Community Transport providers and there is a role for the CRP's to work more closely with these organisations in the future.
 6. Co-ordinated fare offers and products such as local railcards, relevant to the communities served and drive demand and awareness.
 7. Many Community Rail stations are quite isolated and do not have mobile phone coverage and can therefore feel less secure, the Governments recent announcement about improving connectivity for rail passengers is to be welcomed but connectivity on "local" lines will not be high priority. Options for funding how this might be developed on lines run by a CRP could be considered.
 8. Work more closely with the Local Authority and it's objectives in Health and Adult Services, Children and Young Person Services and Stronger Communities, (LLMCRP) – Dementia Rail project is a good example of this. Similar cross Government department working could also bring thinking and direction together at a national level.
 9. With specialist health services being more concentrated at key regional hospitals it is important for communities to see improved access to hospitals. The EVRDC have identified James Cook University Hospital and it's relative new station as an area for them to develop and promote

going forward, especially with the increased services planned for the future and how the timetable can also better meet visiting times in the future.

10. Should there as part of the CRP role be an annual environmental statement for each station, with targets set each year to reduce. This is an area where innovation funding and news funding sources could play a role but must also be done alongside meeting the franchisees commitments.

Question 2: How can community rail help:

- Communities have a voice in influencing the provision of rail?
 - Complementary transport services and development of the rail network?
1. Community Rail Partnerships all have Boards, it is important that within their structures they accommodate rail industry representatives. The Boards need to be sensitive to local needs whilst retaining a wider and at times more realistic view of what is achievable.
 2. Being clear in who they are representing and clarity in their decision making processes – help with understanding governance would be welcome.
 3. Community Rail should not be seen as just about being the local rail experts, they need to involve engage and understand the wider community and the outcomes they are wanting to achieve.
 4. Local knowledge can be vital influencing decisions, EVRDC saw the opportunity and had very early discussions with York Potash to develop the opportunity for increasing the rail services on the Esk Valley. Local housing and economic development helped increase the level of train services at Hunmanby on the Yorkshire Coast.
 5. It is vital that community rail is seen as more than just a “lobbying organisation” and does add to the timetable planning process both LLMCRP and S&C have both been very pro-active and reasoned in their arguments for improvements to services west of Skipton from the May 2018 timetable. They can help provide independent evidence for future developments along the lines they serve.
 6. In the Northern franchise there is a commitment to provide a train planning resource for a limited time to CRP’s this is a welcome development that should be extended as it is beneficial to all parties.
 7. Having good links with other organisations such as their Local Authorities at all levels (including LEP’s), National Parks, education establishments, business groups and other local stakeholder groups.
 8. Having a clear future realistic / achievable / monitored - Action Plan for their lines
 9. The rail industry itself also needs to get a better understanding of how to engage with CRP’s, the wider rail industry needs to understand the need to consult with CRP’s where decisions are being made about their lines .
 10. Directly involve local stakeholders, including other transport operators on CRP Boards to demonstrate wider diversity.

Question 3: Where should the Government encourage community rail to develop on parts of the network currently without active CRPs or other community participation?

1. The 2004 Community Rail Development Strategy has provided the foundation for the success of Community Rail.
2. Government and ACoRP need to develop a process / criteria that people understand on the requirements of a Community Rail Partnership. NYCC have looked extensively for guidance and have not been able to find any.

3. Understanding the need for a governance structure for all areas when starting a CRP is also a key part of the process.
4. Why is their service and line designation this leads to a lot of confusion and should be reviewed, the current criteria between the two feels outdated.
5. There is a need to ensure that a line that becomes a Community Rail Partnership is seen as a positive development for a line and the benefits explained, there is a perception that becoming a CRP downgrades a line
6. Being clear about what a CRP is and is not is also critical to the wider community
7. Examples of successful CRP's and why they are successful (not just individual schemes) as case studies should be developed.

Theme: Supporting communities, diversity and inclusion

Question 4a: What is the role of community rail in supporting:

- Community cohesion?
 - Promoting diversity?
 - Enabling social inclusion?
- Esk Valley Rail Development Company (EVRDC)
 - Lobbied for an early morning commuter train as part of the franchise, to provide access to employment and education and the improvement to an all year round Sunday service improving the all year round tourism economy.
 - Encouraged the York Potash mine development through a Section 106 agreement to provide additional services and potential infrastructure improvements
 - Worked closely with the North Yorkshire Moors Railway a heritage railway
 - Developed station adopters, including Botton Village and the Camphill Community.
 - Run a very success Summer Friday night music train with local business support
 - Support local events through their website, newsletter and attendance at Summer Agricultural shows.
 - Esk Valley Railcard for the local community
 - Esk Valley railway is also used as part of NYCC School Transport with significant numbers of children travelling from villages along the line to schools in Whitby.
 - Leeds – Lancaster – Morecambe CRP (LLMCRP)
 - Lobbying for improvements to rail timetables including earlier and later trains providing greater access to jobs and education in Leeds and Lancaster in particular.
 - Bringing Bentham station back into use, has developed as a community hub, with the help of funding from NYCC and co-operation from the rail industry and continued innovative improvements, including introduction of CCTV.
 - Strong friends group / linked to activities in the town for Bentham Station
 - Dales Railcard for the local community
 - Aiming to make the line as a centre of excellence in terms of understanding how community rail can assist in helping those with dementia to still lead an active life and continue to be part of society. Stakeholders including the rail company, Alzheimer's Research UK and NYCC are already engaged in this project.
 - Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership – not yet received designation – due to the current consultation process - members of ACoRP.
 - Lobbied for an all year round Sunday service and increased weekday frequency both of which have been successful and will provide improved access to employment, education (better access to Scarborough UTC as an example) and the tourism economy along the line.
 - Station Adopters including the award winning Hutton Cranswick – Britain in Bloom.

- Settle & Carlisle Development Company – members of ACoRP but not a designated CRP as such they could be seen as one of the original community led rail groups after being formed to prevent closure of the Settle & Carlisle Railway Line which was successful.
 - Continue to lobby for improved rail services along the line
 - Dales Railcard for the local community
 - Providing ticketing, retail and waiting facilities at stations and creating employment.
 - Promoting local businesses and offers through their own e-mail database
 - Work closely with and promote the Dales Bus services

Question 4b: How is this best achieved?

1. The CRP's in North Yorkshire operate in some of the most isolated areas of the country, how various schemes to reduce rural isolation such as man sheds already being developed in Sleights by the NYCC Stronger Communities team, some of the CRP schemes can be more co-ordinated needs to be developed.
2. Closer engagement with local authorities, who have various departments within them that could support the work of Community Rail Partnerships, examples in North Yorkshire include Health and Adult Services (Dementia project), Children and Young Person Services (education) and Stronger Communities team.
3. Similar to the closer engagement with Local Authorities there is a role for the Department for Transport to explain the wider objectives across Government departments and how policies can be applied within a CRP.

Question 5: How can community rail help to make sure that the railway is accessible to as many people as possible?

1. See comments in previous sections above.
2. Links to local bus, taxi and community transport services.
3. With the CRP's station role innovative ideas for improving access for all.
4. As previously mentioned many of the routes in North Yorkshire have infrequent levels of service, increases in train services and earlier and later trains will improve access to employment, education and health.

Theme: Supporting local and regional economies

Question 6: How can community rail support local economies and railways grow through:

- Increasing employment?
- Education and training opportunities?
- Supporting small businesses?
- Social enterprise development?

The answers to the previous questions apply, working with the LEP's and to develop the skills agenda and economic growth.

Encouraging use of station buildings as hubs, many railway stations are seen as economic drivers from previous national reports and this could be built on for future development potential for CRP lines.

Settle & Carlisle – have been very active in developing their stations and employ people locally. A lot of work has gone into developing the station models / promotion of local businesses via the website

Question 7: What role can community rail play in making best use of:

- Station buildings?
 - Railway land?
1. See previous answers and many of the North Yorkshire CRP initiatives that are already starting to come to fruition. It is not just station buildings and railway land there could be other amenities close to stations that could be brought back into use, an example of this is work Esk Valley are doing to open Glaisdale public toilets.
 2. A constraint in the past and still current is the difficult and costly process for CRP's to bring Network Rail buildings back into use and the on-going maintenance, to accelerate the process and reduce financial risk on the community the whole process is in need of review.

Theme: Suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works**Question 8: How can community rail be best supported to act:**

- Innovatively?
 - Effectively?
1. The work that the Esk Valley did in developing the options for the funding for the York Potash Section 106 was very innovative and working with local planners should be encouraged.
 2. The LLMCRP also introduced CCTV at their station, through local knowledge and solutions at a fraction of the cost to the rail industry, this innovative scheme won a Community Rail Award.
 3. Though Local Authorities may not be able to directly fund schemes they can provide staff support, technical advice to Community Rail Partnerships.

Question 9: What opportunities are there to secure a:

- Diverse income base for community rail?
 - Sustainable income base for community rail?
1. There is no planned change to NYCC existing 'cash' funding but this is subject to annual review and we will continue to offer officer support if required from across the Council.
 2. Government should explore the potential for CRP's to directly access funding from planning agreements (S106).

Question 10: How can community rail designation be developed to more fully realise its potential?

1. Previous answers apply to this section.
2. Line designation leads to confusion as to what it is, there should probably be a clear remit developed from this Consultation that clearly defines a "designated / official" CRP. Some organisations believe that a line being "designated" is actually a down grading of the line, when actually the opposite is true and the benefits of a CRP need to be emphasised, this gets lost in the current process.

Question 11: How can community rail:

- Support the development of rail line and stations improvement?
- Contribute to the development of rail line and station improvement?
- Make greater use of heritage railways

1. CRP's / ACoRP need to develop stronger links to Sub National Transport Bodies (TfN / Rail North?) and other devolved organisations.
2. CRP's work with developers / planners on housing, employment, education, delivery etc., and potential funding opportunities through Section 106's.
3. Give CRP's an understanding of the Planning process and how they could engage.

Question 12: Do you have any other comments on how Government can best support the future of community rail?

It should be recognised that relatively "small" amounts of money / funding from various sources can go a long way in a CRP. However, the paperwork and time to apply for some of these funds can be extremely time consuming for volunteers, the processes to apply for funding need to be kept simple and quick. Making small funding competitive may deter some organisations from applying in the first place as they believe their valuable time is better spent actually doing something

How do all stakeholders ensure that the potential demands on a CRP / Community organisation are fully understood and can be funded without putting the whole CRP at risk / over committed, many have a CRO that works only 2-3 days a week and yet the railway operates 24/7. A lot of the work relies on volunteers but there is a tipping point. If wider roles are developed as part of this consultation then the resource implications need to be fully understood.

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 and Transportation		
Proposal being screened	Response to DfT consultation on Community Rail Consultation – Moving Britain Ahead		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Graham North		
What are you proposing to do?	To agree a NYCC response to the DfT consultation Community Rail Consultation – Moving Britain Ahead		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To input NYCC views into the current and future importance and development of Community Rail in North Yorkshire to all stakeholders.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No resource commitment or impact on budget		
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? As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? 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	No		

inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.					
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.	None				
Decision (Please tick one option)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>EIA not relevant or proportionate:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td>Continue to full EIA:</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full EIA:	
EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full EIA:			
Reason for decision	The consultation is looking to develop and enhance further the current roles of Community Rail Partnerships.				
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	<i>Barrie Mason</i>				
Date	<i>15.01.18</i>				