

North Yorkshire County Council**Craven Area Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Craven Area Committee held on 9 November 2017, commencing at 10.00 am at The Herriot Hotel, Skipton.

Present:-

County Councillor Richard Welch in the Chair; County Councillors Philip Barrett, Robert Heseltine, David Ireton, Patrick Mulligan, Gillian Quinn and Andy Solloway;

Co-opted Members: Councillors Veronicka Dancer, David Taylor, and John Waterhouse; Mark Hopley (Community First Yorkshire).

NYCC Officers: James Malcolm (Area Highways Manager – Boroughbridge/Skipton), Graham North Policy Support Officer – Rail, Josie O’Dowd (Legal and Democratic Services), Marion Tweed-Rycroft (Stronger Communities Delivery Manager - Craven) and Sally Lacy (Business Support).

Others in attendance: Inspector Geoff Crocker (North Yorkshire Police), Group Manager Phil Whild (North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service), Helen Hirst – Airedale, Craven and Wharfedale Clinical Commissioning Group.

3 members of the public and 1 media representative were also present.

Apologies for absence: Hazel Chatwin, Alan Sutcliffe, Marion Swales.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

28. Minutes**Resolved -**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2017, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

29. Any Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Patrick Mulligan declared an interest in the North Yorkshire Police update report and he left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

30. Public Questions or Statements

Mrs Julie Holmes presented a petition to the Area Committee, making the following statement which had been circulated to all present:

“My name is Julie Holmes and I am speaking this morning on behalf of the group which was instigated by the sad death of local man, 20 year old Edward Brier on Friday, 13 October 2017 at the junction of the A6131 where it crosses the A65.

An online petition, which is still ongoing, was set up on Change.Org to ‘Make safe dangerous Junction A6131 (Skipton North) crossing A65 (Harrogate). As at Sunday, 5 November at 15.45 the number of people who have signed the petition stands at

5279 (will update this at the meeting). A paper petition is also being circulated around the area. I wish to present to the Committee the current list of online signatures together with some of the signatories on the paper petition.

A Freedom of Information request has also been submitted on the number of accidents at the junction, but unfortunately, the relevant authority which holds this information has not yet been determined.

There have been numerous accidents over the years (not all of them will have been recorded with North Yorkshire Police) due to the misleading and unclear road markings and the three 'give way' junctions which leave motorists confused and lead them to sometimes make impulsive/rash decisions whilst trying to enter or exit the junction.

There is also the development of the 'pig field' on the Knaresborough Road which will increase the use of this junction to be taken into account.

Some suggested safety improvements include a roundabout, 40 mph speed limit or improved signage. There is also the suggestion from District Councillor John Dawson which was reported in the Craven Herald last week. The right-hand turn from the east-bound side of the A65 into Skipton should be blocked off and traffic required to go to the roundabout at the A59/A65 junction and come back to the Skipton turning.

The Group is aware that Members of the Committee and Highways Officers are not able to report on or to comment on this matter until the Coroner's Report has been issued.

However, the group wishes to make Members of the Committee aware of the depth of feeling of users of the road that some changes do need to be made.

If Members wish to view the online petition it can be found at www.change.org

Thank you for your time."

The Chairman County Councillor Richard Welch thanked Mrs Holmes for bringing the petition to the Committee's attention and he advised that the concerns raised would be debated at a future meeting after the release of the Coroner's report.

31. Refocusing Area Committees

County Councillor Gareth Dadd attended the meeting to present the report. He explained the desire for internal devolution, the aspiration being for decision making to be devolved downwards. He recognised that this may be challenging to implement in practice but he felt there is great merit in the approach; advising that informal soundings and individual views are invited. Regarding and the geography of the proposal, County Councillor Gareth stated that a key aim is to achieve a more even spread across 6 constituency committees compared to the considerable variance in size between the present 7 Area Committees. He stated that the constituency focus should aid the move to the committees becoming more outward looking and strategic – alongside the devolution of more powers to local Members. It is hoped to engage more regularly with the local MP and so build upon the relationship to enhance the understanding of issues affecting the localities.

In response Area Committee Members made the following points:

- The future role to be played by Parish and District Councillors, and concerns regarding the potential loss of representation and risk of disenfranchisement if co-opted members were no longer to be appointed.

- 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 Member also commented that he would like to have seen included the option to return to the former committee system as a model of strong democracy.

The Police and Voluntary Sector representatives were broadly supportive of the proposal to move to Constituency Committees and confirmed that they were happy to be formally approached during the consultation on the proposals.

Concluding, County Councillor Gareth Dadd reiterated that local Members should be already be involved in traffic regulation matters in their area, adding that very parochial issues should be the domain of the local Member for example schools with falling rolls. He thanked the Area Committee Members for sharing their views on the proposal.

Resolved -

That the report is noted and comments set out above will be forwarded to the Executive.

32. 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 arising due 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.

A Members asked about the impact on Craven of policing KM8 at Kirby Misperton. Inspector Geoff Crocker advised that whilst some Craven officers are involved every day, normal policing has been maintained. He explained that NYP largely police KM8 utilising their own resources, with occasional mutual aid from other Forces. It was noted that creative solutions were sometimes required, for example using officers from Harrogate and more specialist teams for issues such as road crime. Inspector Geoff Crocker assured Members that safe staffing levels are being maintained in Craven, adding that the level of resourcing should improve from the New Year.

A Member enquired about the drop in performance reflected in the satisfaction survey data. Inspector Geoff Crocker acknowledged the decrease but commented that the

performance was better than that of many other Forces. He advised that there has been a significant change in why people call the Police, reflecting reductions in other public services. He stated that there is always a response to a 999 call, where this is not the case with 101 which is reflected in the satisfaction levels. Inspector Geoff Crocker explained that there will be greater emphasis on the control room in future – 101 calls will go through to landline, radio and mobiles, which should help improve performance and satisfaction. He also spoke of the change in culture which is embodied in the 'Thrive' approach to threat, harm and risks – whilst it is recognised that some issues are not matters for the Police, the public are still asked in satisfaction surveys about their experience – this may relate to issues such as noise, fraud etc. The public's expectations are greater than the reality of certain situations.

A Member asked about the cost of policing KM8 at Kirby Misperton. Inspector Geoff Crocker advised that this information is published on the NYP website and he agreed to circulate the information via the clerk. The Member explained that a constituent had been wondering if these costs should have been taken into account when the County Council's Planning Committee granted permission to Third Energy.

Resolved -

That the report is noted.

33. 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, including Social Services, on preventative measures – 'making every contact count'. Similarly he noted that work with young people regarding road safety is on-going. Phil Whild also advised of the desire to work more closely with Health partners in future. Incidents of note were also discussed and thanks were recorded for the work undertaken supporting older people. A Member commented upon the absence of Fire representation at recent Over 50s events in South Craven and Phil Whild confirmed that this will be reinstated.

Resolved -

That the report is noted.

34. 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. Helen Hirst acknowledged the problem but stated that Airedale is still in a better position than most. She explained the lack of suitable beds in care homes as result of a number being deregistered and also family choice/preference. She

confirmed that there are ongoing issues regarding the assessment of care homes.

- An incident of incorrect advice on discharge medication notes was related and the resulting implications of this.
- Deterioration in ambulance response times. Helen Hirst confirmed that the CCG is very sighted on this issue and continues to monitor the situation closely. She advised that commissioners across Yorkshire and Humber are like minded, and it is helpful to have an overview across the region – she advised that ambulance response times have held but not improved. She stated that recent discussions had focussed upon the need to design services with rural communities in mind. She commented upon the London centric view of Ministers who do not understand the geography, and her on-going battle to raise awareness of the needs of rural communities. Helen acknowledged that hard decisions are often needed to achieve compromise.
- The NHS now seek to deliver much more than basic care and perhaps should seek to get the basics right first. Helen Hirst advised of the difficulties faced regarding nurse recruitment, similarly with doctors – she expressed concern that potential young recruits are just hearing negative information about the roles which puts them off applying. She spoke of the workforce strategy which will commence with getting youngsters interested in the NHS via work experience which will include participation in workshops with patients. She also noted that in future a medical school may be established in Bradford.
- A query was raised regarding the role played by Leeds in the model. Helen Hirst clarified that Leeds Teaching Hospital is included, the CCG works in partnership and contracts with them locally – they are integral to the model of care, and also in relation to the provision of specialist services.

Resolved -

That the presentation is noted with thanks.

35. 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.

A Member commented upon the success of the Little White Bus in adjacent Richmondshire, and opportunities to learn lessons from that project – perhaps involving their assistance with the production of a toolkit for Craven.

Resolved -

That the report is noted.

36. 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.

Resolved -

That the report is noted.

37. 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;
- Winter maintenance programme.

Resolved -

That the report is noted.

38. 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 £14m cost – the GRIP process was explained, which leads to the identification of a more realistic price.
- 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.

In summary, the key issue for the County Council is the absence of funding for the scheme, and the steps required to achieve a better BCR would incur significant costs. Graham North observed that some investment may be justified as this would be a lesser investment than say for a new bridge.

Resolved -

That the report is noted and it is agreed that the recommendations be strengthened, as set out below, to be forwarded to the Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services and the Executive Members:

- i. That Members note the outcome of the feasibility study into a new station at Cross Hills and that a decision will be taken by the Corporate Director, BES, in consultation with the BES Executive Members;
- ii. Members agree that given the high cost and low Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) figure, no further work be undertaken on a new station proposed for Cross Hills until funding has been identified
- iii. That the site suggested for a new station at Cross Hills be treated as protected land in the Local Plan, in readiness for when the required funding becomes available in future.
- iv. That periodic reports are provided for the Craven Area Committee to update on the outcome of the investigation into the reduction of downtime of the Kildwick Level Crossing.

39. 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.

Resolved -

That the report is noted and the suggestion of periodic future updates welcomed.

40. Future Meetings

Considered -

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) advising of the present work programme for the Area Committee and inviting Members to consider any amendments and/or additional items for future meetings, also to determine the venue for the next meeting.

Josie O'Dowd, Democratic Services Manager, advised that had been hoped to hold the next meeting at either Bradley or Burton in Lonsdale Village Hall, unfortunately Bradley will be closed and there are meetings already scheduled at Burton in Lonsdale. The suggested venue for the meeting 8 February 2018 was therefore Ingleborough Community Centre, Ingleton.

Josie O'Dowd, confirmed that it was her last meeting and she stated that future support for the Area Committee would be advised once her successor has been appointed. Mutual thanks and appreciation were noted.

Resolved -

- (a) That work programme is noted
- (b) That the next meeting on 8 February 2018 be held at Ingleborough Community Centre, Ingleton.

The meeting concluded at 13.40

JO'D