

North Yorkshire County Council

Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Ryedale Indoor Bowls Club, Scarborough Road, Norton on Thursday 20 September 2018 at 10.00 am.

Present:-

County Councillors Lindsay Burr MBE, Keane Duncan, Caroline Goodrick, Janet Sanderson, Helen Swiers, Roberta Swiers and Greg White.

Officers in attendance: Graham North (NYCC Transport Development), Barrie Mason (Assistant Director Highways & Transportation), Melanie Carr, (Principal Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer), Daniel Harry (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager) Alice Gill (Business Support Officer).

Also in Attendance: Simon Jones (Highways England) & MP Kevin Hollinrake
2 Members of the public attended the meeting.

Apologies: County Councillors Val Arnold, Robert Baker, Gareth Dadd, Caroline Patmore and Peter Sowray.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

10. Minutes of the meetings of the former Hambleton and Ryedale Area Committees

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Thirsk & Malton Area Constituency Committee held on 4 July 2018, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

11. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest at the meeting.

12. Public Questions or Statements

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

13. Introduction to East West Connectivity & its Impact on Economic Growth

Considered -

The report of NYCC's Network Strategy Manager providing an introductory rail update on the Scarborough-Seamer-Malton-York rail line and Thirsk Station.

Graham North, who leads on rail matters at NYCC provided a detailed overview of the report, providing additional information on a forthcoming national review of the rail industry to be undertaken in 2019. He confirmed that the review was likely to lead to the most significant changes in the delivery of rail services since privatisation. He

confirmed that NYCC continued to work with Transpennine Express to ensure the best service possible for the region, including highlighting issues with timetabling etc. He also drew attention to the plans in place to improve rail reliability across the North from December 2018, and the long term plans to upgrade routes which would have a beneficial effect on travel times and capacity between Malton and Manchester.

Graham North also highlighted the 26% increase in users of Malton station and the 38% increase in users of Thirsk Station in the last 10 years, and the plans to develop a feasibility report to identify the future need and associated improvements required to those stations. In particular, it was noted that any future improvements would address the fact that Thirsk station was not access compliant.

County Councillor Lindsay Burr welcomed the new addition of an early from Malton that get passengers in to York before 7am enabling them to travel on to London by 9am, and the new late train from Scarborough which would support tourism in the area etc. However she highlighted the ongoing issues with travel chaos in Malton around the level crossing and the associated problems with air pollution etc and recognised that those issues would only worsen with the addition of extra trains and increased capacity. She asked that it be recognised that those problems were issues affecting the whole of Ryedale and not just Malton and Norton as residents from across the district use Malton train station to access the wider region and beyond.

Barrie Mason, AD for Highways & Transportation confirmed that work was ongoing with Ryedale District Council, Network Rail and other partners to address the traffic situation in Malton. He also confirmed that a new working group had been formed to look at future measures to improve access for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians and that funding (600K) was available to support the introduction of those measures.

County Councillor Keane Duncan expressed concern that Network Rail had not attended recent stakeholder meetings and sought reassurances that they would in the future. Graham North confirmed that NYCC continued to work closely with Network Rail to improve signalling and traffic light co-ordination that could help improve air quality.

County Councillor Helen Swiers expressed concern for the potential loss of smaller stops as a result of increased train speeds through the future introduction of new improved rolling stock, and officers reassured her that the policy was not to make improvements that would affect other aspects of the current service. Councillor Swiers also suggested there needed to be improved connectivity between rail and bus services and Barrie Mason agreed that a review of the parking strategy for the area around Malton station would also be helpful.

County Councillor Janet Sanderson highlighted the number of accidents that happen at level crossings between Malton & Scarborough. Graham North confirmed that North Yorkshire had a high number of level crossings and that Network Rail's remit was to close as many as possible in order to reduce the risk of accidents. Any such intervention work could be co-ordinated with rail line improvements and would include looking at diverting public rights of ways etc.

County Councillor Greg White suggested Thirsk Station should be a credible station to use but that timetabling issues affecting connectivity resulted in long waiting times at York/Leeds.

Finally, County Councillor Roberta Swiers drew attention to the knock on effects that new housing estates can have on road capacity giving Cayton South as an example, and suggested that railway investment in those areas would help. Officers confirmed that a study was currently underway at Seamer Station to take account of new housing and the new Business Park in that area.

In summing up, County Councillor Caroline Goodrick confirmed her view that Ryedale and Scarborough had to grow and that road and rail connectivity were paramount to enabling that growth.

Resolved -

- (i) That the report be noted;

14. Attendance of RT Hon Kevin Hollinrake MP for Thirsk & Malton

County Councillor Caroline Goodrick welcomed the MP to the meeting and The Rt Hon Kevin Hollinrake provided the following views on connectivity and other issues:

In regard to improving connectivity, MP Hollinrake was pleased to note the joint working being undertaken between NYCC and TPE as he believed it was the best way forward and would enable positive change. He also confirmed that strategically, there was a need for equality of opportunity for all regardless of where you lived – urban or rural, and offered his future support.

He confirmed that:

- The gap between the first city and other cities was larger than in any other country, but future investment per capita across the north would exceed that of London.
- Proposals from Transport for the North would accelerate the proper distribution of expenditure across the country. However, the consequence of future road and rail investment was likely to be delays caused by the improvement works - diversions etc.
- Investment in the A64 was crucial to improving connectivity - additional stretches of the road required dualling – firstly the stretch between the Hopgrove and Barton Hill.
- Improvements to the A64 would also improve air quality issues in Malton and Norton.
- Digital Network connectivity was also crucial to economic growth - Phase 3 would ensure 97% of the county is connected by 2021. Connection in rural areas needs to be delivered at the same rate as urban areas

In regard to Fairer Funding, he confirmed that:

- For too long there had been disparity between Local Authorities and adult social care was a huge issue for Local Authorities – North Yorkshire currently received approximately £770 per person, and MP Hollinrake confirmed he would recommend moving to the German model of social care
- A Fairer Funding deal was also needed for schools.

On other issues he stated:

- High streets were not dead but free parking is critical, and business rates for companies need addressing.
- His support for Fracking only if air, water and land quality could be guaranteed.
- In regard to Yorkshire Devolution, a solution was required that would unlock money and provide the powers to use the funding. He wanted to see local people re-empowered and would not choose to have one Yorkshire but instead a York city region encompassing York, North Yorkshire and East Yorkshire only.
- In regard to Brexit, the next 3-4 months would be the most turbulent yet, and that in his view 'no deal' was not an option as it would result in chaos. He acknowledged the difficulties of identifying a deal that be fair to businesses, recognising that they had been working in a certain way (In line with EU regulations) for 30-40 years and they could not be expected to change overnight.

In response to MP Hollinrake's comments on the A64, Simon Jones from Highways England confirmed that a traffic model had been constructed to show the high usage of the route which supported the business case for further dualling works. Those works

would require an increase in funding, which was currently being lobbied for. He confirmed that scheme was on track and that the project team were meeting with CYC & NYCC to provide updates on the study and their plans for public consultation.

In regards to the future dualling of the route passed Malton, Simon Jones confirmed they were awaiting a DFT announcement in 2019 regarding the funding of that stage.

In regards to the joint working of highways England and NYCC on the east west connectivity study, Simon Jones confirmed that work was ongoing to look at the A64 corridor route and to raise its profile to increase awareness of future requirements.

County Councillor Janet Sanderson referred to MP Hollinrake's comments on disparity of funding for schools and drew attention to the gap in funding for Disabled Children Services which had widen in recent years, with NYCC ranked 138 out of 150 Local Authorities. County Councillor Caroline Goodricke highlighted the high cost of transport for children with Special Educational Needs and agreed that fairer funding was needed to support those with SEN, the elderly and the vulnerable.

Daniel Harry, Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager also highlighted the rapid pace of change in health provision and the lack of sustainability of that provision resulting in some services needing to move to James Cook at Middlesbrough (outside of the region), which had an adverse effect on patient transport.

The MP accepted that closing a unit in a rural area had a greater impact than in an urban area and used this an example of where regional devolution would be of benefit. County Councillor Caroline Goodricke suggested that smarter working would reduce the need for travelling e.g. consultations over Skype.

In regard to MP Hollinrake's comments on fracking, County Councillor Greg White accepted the legislation on fracking but did not accept not allowing for regulation of fracking at a local level i.e. not whether it happened but how it happened. He confirmed he did not agree with edits from central Government to allow fracking without restriction. He also drew attention to NYCC's Minerals & Waste Plan and expressed disappointed that it had not been well received

County Councillor Burr confirmed she was unhappy that the Minerals & Waste Plan was being fought against by big business and with the issues around permitted development. She asked the MP to support NYCC to ensure the Plan was upheld.

MP Hollinrake agreed that fracking needed to be regulated properly by central and local Government, and not by businesses.

County Councillor questioned whether the Executive had made representations and asked that the Norton & Malton Study be brought to the next meeting of the committee for discussion and endorsement.

Barrie Mason, Assistant Director for Highways, confirmed that the Study was scheduled to be approved by the appropriate Executive Member later in September and that following that, a working party would be formed to progress the work.

County Councillor Keane Duncan reiterated his view that the study needed to come to Committee so it could decide how to support and monitor the work going forward. He also requested that the consultation on the HGV ban be brought to the November 2018 committee meeting as part of the Study update.

Resolved -

- (i) That the information provided and issues highlighted be noted.
- (ii) That the Norton & Malton Study be added to the work programme for the next scheduled meeting of the Committee in November 2018.

15. Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee Work Programme

Considered -

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) providing a Work Programme for the Area Constituency Committee to consider, develop and adopt.

Members undertook a discussion of future potential items for the Work Programme and agreed to the addition of the Norton & Malton Study for November 2018

Resolved -

- i) That the work programme be agreed subject to the changes above.
- ii) That the next meeting of the Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee be held on Wednesday 28 November 2018 at 10 am

The meeting concluded at 12:05pm

MLC