

North Yorkshire County Council

Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee held on 31 August 2018, commencing at 1.00 pm, at Skipton Town Hall.

Present:-

County Councillors Margaret Atkinson, Philip Barrett, Michael Harrison, Robert Heseltine, Stanley Lumley, Stuart Martin MBE, Gill Quinn, Andy Solloway and Richard Welch (Chairman).

Officers: Daniel Harry (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager), Alice Gill (Business Support).

In attendance: County Councillors Carl Les and David Chance. Also in attendance was the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP.

There were members of the public and press present.

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Mike Chamber MBE, David Ireton, Patrick Mulligan and Robert Windass.

11. Introduction by the Chairman

The Chairman, Cllr Richard Welch, informed members of the committee that Cllr David Ireton had recently taken ill. All members of the committee passed on their best wishes and wished him a speedy recovery.

12. Minutes of the Craven Area Committee Meeting held on 31 May 2018

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2018 be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. Any Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

14. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

15. Appointments to outside bodies (Gouthwaite Reservoir Board of Management)

Considered -

The report of the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager.

Daniel Harry highlighted that the resignation of Nicola Wilson from the County Council had created a vacancy on the Gouthwaite Reservoir Board of Management. He said that prior to the meeting no nominations had been received and so asked for committee members to nominate someone to fill the vacancy. No nominations were forthcoming.

Cllr Stanley Lumley suggested that he could seek nominations when he attended the meeting of the Pateley Bridge Town Council on 4 September 2018 and then bring back to the committee.

The committee discussed the best way of filling the vacancy and resolved that Cllr Stanley Lumley act on their behalf.

Resolved -

Cllr Stanley Lumley to seek and make a nomination for a County Council representative on the Gouthwaite Reservoir Board of Management, on behalf of the committee.

16. A59 Kex Gill update

Considered – the report of Rebecca Gibson, Transport and Planning, North Yorkshire County Council.

Rebecca Gibson was not in attendance and so Daniel Harry presented the report. Daniel Harry noted that this report had been provided in response to questions raised at the previous meeting of the committee. The update provided an opportunity for members to consider whether there were any specific lines of enquiry that they wished to pursue.

Cllr Stanley Lumley said that it was important that all committee members were kept informed of the progress being made with the realignment of the A59 at Kex Gill as this was something of key concern locally. He said that there would be a second, planned closure of the road as part of the maintenance of the existing road and the realignment process. This would need to be communicated effectively to local people and businesses.

Cllr Stanley Lumley said that a recent public engagement meeting to look at the options for the realignment of the A59, held at Norwood Hall, had been well attended and that the proposed route had received unanimous support.

Cllr Andy Solloway asked what funding was being made available by central government to support the work on the A59.

In response, Cllr Carl Les said that no funding would be committed by the government until a final route had been agreed and plans submitted. He said that the local MPs, the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP and the Hon Andrew Jones MP, were supportive of the plans. Also, that the A59 had been recognised as a strategic transport route by Transport for the North.

Cllr Richard Welch stressed the urgency of situation and the need to complete the realignment work as soon as possible. He then asked committee members to consider what lines of enquiry that they wished to pursue and what questions needed to be asked of the Transport and Planning at North Yorkshire County Council.

Cllr Robert Heseltine queried what progress had been made with the Coniston Aire Causeway and the option that the committee had resolved to support at its meeting of 31 May 2018. That was Option 5, the construction of a multi-span causeway with an estimated cost of £9.5m.

Daniel Harry said that an update could be brought back to the next meeting of the committee in December.

Cllr Robert Heseltine asked whether Parish and Town Councils were made aware of the decisions of the committee.

In response, Daniel Harry said that all of the Parish and Town Council clerks were sent details of the Area Constituency Committee meetings in advance and that the papers for the meetings, including the minutes were published on the County Council website. Specific updates on resolutions or decisions were not provided after the meeting but could be done on a case by case basis, where there was a local issue of particular concern that was being reviewed by the committee.

Cllr Robert Heseltine expressed his concerns about the impact of the road closure that was in place in June and July 2018, upon local people and local businesses. The extent of the closure appeared excessive and greater thought could have been given to the closure and detour so that the impact was minimised. He asked whether it would be possible during any further closures of the A59 to administer some form of pass system that would enable local people and businesses to have some additional access, when it was demonstrated that this was essential.

Cllr Stanley Lumley said that lessons had been learned from the first road closure and it was recognised that there had been problems with the signage for the diversion and the length of the diversion and road closure. He said that a pass based system that enabled additional access to areas along the road closure for local people and businesses was unlikely to work as it would be very difficult to police.

Daniel Harry summarised the issues raised by the committee members.

Resolved -

- 1) In response to the update provided by Rebecca Gibson, seek answers to the following questions:
 - When will the realignment work be completed and the new route for the A59 around Kex Gill be opened?
 - When will the necessary diversion be put in place around Kex Gill to enable the work to be done to the existing road and also to enable to realignment of the route?
 - What will the route of the diversion be?
 - What plans are in place to ensure that any such diversion does not have a disproportionate impact upon local businesses and also allows as free as possible movement for local people?
 - How will the diversion be communicated to local businesses and local people?
 - Is it possible to have some sort of 'pass' system that enables local people access to parts of a road closure, where they have a specific need (for example, caring responsibilities or business requirements)?

Answers to be provided ahead of the next meeting and circulated to the members of the committee. An agenda item to be added to the next meeting of the committee.

- 2) An additional update was sought on the progress with the resolution of the problems experienced with the Coniston Aire Causeway and the preferred Option 5.

17. Castleberg Community Hospital, Giggleswick

Considered – the report of Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager providing a summary of the current position with regard to the development of the Castleberg Community Hospital.

Daniel Harry summarised the key points in the report and asked that committee members consider what aspects they would like to consider in greater depth at a future meeting.

Daniel Harry said that the Chairman of the Scrutiny of Health Committee, Cllr Jim Clark, had requested that the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee take a lead role in the scrutiny of the plans for the development of community and in-patient services in and around the Castleberg Hospital site and report back to the Council's Scrutiny of Health Committee as appropriate.

In response, Cllr Richard Welch said that he welcomed the opportunity to undertake some in-depth scrutiny of the plans for the development of the Castleberg Hospital. In particular, what was happening to the old middle school site and whether it was going to be used as a GP surgery or community health centre.

Cllr Richard Welch said that it was important to understand what would be different about the services provided in and around the hospital site and how they would add value to the health and social care system that is currently in place in the area. There was a real opportunity to develop services that met need, rather than simply rehash what was there before.

Cllr Robert Heseltine said that the local NHS had an opportunity to start planning services with a blank sheet of paper. The focus should be upon identifying what should be provided and what would be sustainable in the long term.

Cllr Richard Welch said that the consultation that had taken place about the future of the Castleberg Hospital had demonstrated how widely used it was by the people of Craven. Some estimates suggested that 60% of the population of Craven fell within the scope of the hospital.

Cllr Michael Harrison said that he had a seat on both the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee and the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee. This was because his electoral division was covered by both committees. He said that he would routinely attend the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee and only attend the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee when there was something directly relevant to him.

Cllr Michael Harrison said that the lines of enquiry that had been outlined in the report seemed sound and that community hospitals continued to play a key role in the rehabilitation of patients, after specialist treatment in an acute hospital. He said that the County Council has a key role to play in reducing demand for acute hospital care through supporting people to live independently in the community.

Cllr Richard Welch queried whether mental health services would be provided as part of the development of the Castleberg Hospital.

Cllr Philip Barrett agreed with the need for mental health services to be considered as part of any provision. He also raised concerns as to why further surveys were being carried out of the buildings. This suggested that the hospital site was in a worse condition than previously stated and that this would lead to further delays in the development of the site and ultimately when it would re-open.

Cllr Andy Solloway stated his support for the committee taking a lead role on this piece of scrutiny and noted that it would be important to link in with District Council colleagues, such as Craven District Councillor Wendy Hull.

Daniel Harry summarised the issues raised by the committee members.

Resolved -

- 1) Invite Sue Pitkethly from AWC CCG, colleagues from NHS Property Services, NYCC HAS and the Airedale FT to the next meeting of the committee to respond to the following:
 - When will the hospital re-open? Is the second survey likely to highlight significant issues with the structure of the building and so significant delays?
 - What progress has been made with plans to use the old middle school site as a GP surgery?
 - What health, social care and mental health services should and could be provided?
 - How will it be different to what was there previously?
 - What will the links be with primary care (GPs)?
 - What role does the County Council and the District Council have to play?
 - What will the links be with the voluntary and community sector?
 - Will this new model be sustainable?
 - Is there a model that could be applied elsewhere in the area of the county?
 - What lessons have been learnt?

18. Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee Work Programme

Considered - the report of Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager on the committee work programme.

Daniel Harry introduced the report outlining those items for scrutiny that had been scheduled for the next two committee meetings. He invited members to comment on the work programme and make suggestions for additional items to be included.

Cllr Robert Heseltine said that it was important to look at school performance and sustainability.

Cllr Andy Solloway noted that many of the changes that were happening to high schools in Skipton and surrounding area had already happened in Ripon. As such, there was a lot that could be learned from the Ripon members of the committee.

There was a discussion about the venue for the next meeting of the committee. It was decided to hold the meeting in either Pateley Bridge or Bolton Abbey.

Resolved -

- 1) The agenda for the next meeting of the committee at 10am on 13 December 2018 at either Pateley Bridge or Bolton Abbey:
 - Schools and educational achievement - some of the factors affecting the short, medium and long term sustainability of schools in the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee area
 - Road network and transport infrastructure - briefing on A59 at Kex Gill and an update on the progress with the Coniston Aire Causeway
 - Castleberg Community Hospital, Giggleswick - briefing from Sue Pitkethly from AWC CCG, colleagues from NHS Property Services, NYCC HAS and the Airedale FT
 - Phase 3 Broadband roll out - Broadband access and economic infrastructure.
- 2) The draft agenda for the meeting on 14 March 2019, venue to be confirmed:
 - Road network and transport infrastructure - Highways England – local developments

- Community safety - Overview of community safety issues, including updates from: Police; Fire and Rescue; Community Safety; Highways – road safety; Stronger Communities; and Public Health – identification of any further lines of enquiry
- Stronger Communities - Community showcase.

19. Adult social care funding, the Green Paper and fairer funding for local government

Considered – the report of the Director of Health and Adult Service at North Yorkshire County Council providing an overview of adult social care funding and provision in the committee area and also the likely approach of the government to the adult social care funding Green Paper.

At this point in the agenda, the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP was in attendance.

Cllr Michael Harrison introduced the paper summarising the current position, as below:

- Adult Social Care is the largest single service and budget area (excluding schools) for the County Council
- The average hourly rate paid to providers for domiciliary care is 15% higher in super rural areas compared with the rate in urban areas
- Key adult social care workers in the county spend 45 minutes on average as “downtime” – for each visit in rural areas. This compares with 20 minutes in urban areas
- A high proportion of care home placements for older people in the constituency cost the Council more than our agreed rates with providers
- The Improved Better Care Fund is due to cease in March 2020, with no government plans as yet for its continuation
- Prevention and early intervention is important with over 200 people in the constituency referred to the Living Well service
- The County Council works with 38 residential and nursing homes and home care providers in the area
- National research suggests that county councils will face a funding gap of £1.6bn in social care by 2020/21
- Local Government Association has launched a consultation on a Green Paper of its own called “The lives we want to lead”. This outlines possible solutions for paying for adult social care in the long-term.

Cllr Richard Welch said that central government had known the funding pressures faced in the adult social care for at least the past 8 years but had yet to address it and come up with a sustainable funding solution. He then invited the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP to comment upon the presentation on adult social care and also to raise any other issues that he felt were of particular local concern.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that he welcomed the new ways of working being adopted by the Area Constituency Committees. He said that the issue of greatest concern for him was that of sparsity and the impact that this had upon the provision of services, particularly adult social care.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that the County Council had found new ways of providing adult social care services that had made a big difference locally. He cited the example of the extra care units and the Living Well programme of prevention and early intervention.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that the challenge facing government was to come up with a funding formula for adult social care that was fair and ended some of the inconsistencies around funding.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP raised a query about how social care and health care was managed for those people who moved between young people's services and adult services.

Cllr Robert Heseltine said that the Council has made significant savings to date and introduced innovative solutions to difficult problems. There was, however, only so much that you can do before you have to start making significant cuts to service provision. As such, there is a need to look again at the Fairer Funding Formula for local government and address the in-balance between funding for rural and urban areas.

Cllr Robert Heseltine said that the Local Government Rural Services Partnership had 10 years of evidence of the inequality in funding between urban and rural areas and the impact that this had upon services in areas like North Yorkshire.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP agreed that funding was important and said that work was underway, led by the Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, to review the funding formula for local government. He said that the funding issue would not be resolved in the short term and so the emphasis remained on innovation and new ways of working.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that increased funding to the NHS would have a positive impact upon social care and that devolution, with its promise of more funding to rural areas, would also benefit the county.

Cllr Robert Heseltine said that urban areas typically receive 50% more funding than rural areas because the formula is based upon urban deprivation and health outcomes. This ignores the issues of rural deprivation and also the fact that people live longer in the county and have more complex health problems.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that there was a fixed amount of funding nationally and it would be difficult to re-distribute it as urban areas would put up some strong arguments as to why they needed the funding that they currently received.

Cllr Robert Heseltine asked that the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP do everything in his power to right the wrong and not to perpetuate it.

Cllr Stanley Lumley noted that the NHS faced huge challenges around the over use of its services, particularly acute in-patient services, and that more needed to be done to ensure that people received the right care at the right point of time and at the right point in the system.

Cllr Andy Solloway said that the role of unpaid carers needed greater national recognition. Without them both adult social care and the NHS would not be able to function. He also ask that all MPs, regardless of their party affiliations, worked together to find a sustained solution to the problem of adult social care funding.

Cllr Richard Welch asked whether funding currently committed to overseas aid could be channelled into social care and the NHS.

The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that the cross-party Health and Social Care Select Committee had done a lot of work on health and social care funding and the integration of services.

In response to the query raised by Cllr Richard Welch, the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP said that the overseas aid budget was used in the national interest to provide help where it was needed.

Cllr Michael Harrison said that the government's Green Paper on the funding of adult social care had not been released yet and probably would not be until the end of the year. The discussions that had taken place at the committee would help inform the Council's response to the Green Paper and other sector wide discussions that were being led by the Local Government Association and the County Council Network.

Cllr Carl Les noted that the work on the Fair Funding Formula was being led by the Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP.

Cllr Andy Solloway said that the current reliance upon an annual 2% levy on Council Tax to increase funding for adult social care was not sustainable.

Cllr Carl Les agreed saying that the levy was not fair and that local authorities should get a greater share of the £20 billion that is going to the NHS.

Cllr Richard Welch thanked the Rt Hon Julian Smith MP for attending the meeting and drew the meeting to a close.

Resolved -

1) The following issues were raised as part of the discussions that will be considered by the committee as items for the work programme:

- The role of unpaid carers and the support that is given to them
- The transition between young people's and adults health, mental health and social care services and how this is managed
- Contribute to the NYCC response to the anticipated Government Green Paper on adult social care funding (email response to a draft that will be circulated by Richard Webb).

20. Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

There were no items of other business.

The meeting concluded at 3.15pm

DH