

North Yorkshire County Council

Executive

17 December 2019

Area Constituency Committee Feedback

1.0 Purpose of the Report

To bring to the attention of the Executive key issues considered at the following recent Area Constituency Committee meetings:

- Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee – 7 November 2019
- Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee – 8 November 2019
- Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee – 20 November 2019

2.0 Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee on 7 November 2019

2.1 The Grove Pupil Referral Service

An update on the situation regarding The Grove Academy was reported to the Committee. The Committee decided to refer, to County Councillor Patrick Mulligan (Executive Member), the comments which County Councillors made at its meeting. The comments included the following:

- Members were pleased that the County Council was attempting to address the issue of children excluded from school. A Member commented that he continued to have concerns due to the issues which needed to be discussed once The Grove had been transferred to the new sponsor, for example, the additional £5k contribution from each school to jointly commission preventative places with the Local Authority and local Pupil Referral Service.
- A strong communication plan would be required as part of implementation of the arrangements, in particular, to ensure information was passed to parents and carers.

2.2 National Productivity Investment Fund - West Harrogate Improvement Package

The Committee considered progress concerning the various highways schemes within the West Harrogate Improvement Package which comprised sustainable measures to improve safety and alleviate traffic congestion along the Otley Road corridor. It was noted that difficulties, including considerable public opposition, were being encountered with a scheme to provide an Otley Road Cycle Route.

The Committee decided to refer, to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member), comments which County Councillors made at its meeting, which included the suggestion that communication needs to be very effective, and tell of the complete package, to persuade people to use sustainable transport rather than drive.

2.3 Bond End Junction Improvement

The Committee considered the success of the junction improvement scheme at Bond End in Knaresborough completed in November 2018 and had, as its primary objective, contributing to an improvement in air quality by improving traffic flow and reducing the propensity for vehicles to come to a standstill.

The Committee decided to refer, to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member), the comments which County Councillors made at its meeting which included the observations that the improvement appeared to be working very well, with less stop-start traffic, and that the Communication Plan had been excellent.

2.4 A1(M) Junction 47 Improvement

The Committee considered an update concerning safety improvement works at the A1(M) junction 47 which are scheduled to commence on site in March 2020. The Committee decided to refer, to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member), the comments which County Councillors made at its meeting, which included highlighting that, during the work, the operation of traffic controls needs to recognise when traffic is backing-up onto the A1(M) main carriageway.

2.5 Harrogate Railway Line

The Committee considered an update concerning the Harrogate York railway improvement project which aims to increase the frequency of rail services from one train per hour to a reliable two trains per hour, in each direction, between Harrogate and York. It was noted that the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP had agreed to partly fund the project subject to conditions which had not yet been met. In particular, at present, Network Rail was unable to provide absolute certainty that the investment would be able to guarantee that two trains per hour could operate successfully between Harrogate and York. It was noted that, should the outcome of Network Rail's current timetabling work indicate that the required two trains per hour is not achievable, the LEP was likely, in the very near future, to withdraw its funding offer and the project would consequently cease.

The Committee decided to refer, to County Councillor Don Mackenzie (Executive Member), the comments which County Councillors made at its meeting, which included massive frustration at the current situation, and the comment that it was unacceptable that two trains per hour might not be achieved at this stage, whilst, at the same time, the County Council intended to ask people to use sustainable transport rather than drive.

2.6 Committee Work Programme

The following have been added to the Committee's work programme:

- Progress of the Harrogate Parking Study.
- FibreNation rollout in Harrogate.
- Six-monthly updates on work arising from the Harrogate and Knaresborough congestion study.
- The Member of Parliament for the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee, to be elected on 12 December 2019, to be invited to attend the Committee's meeting on 9 January 2020.

3.0 Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee on 8 November 2019

3.1 Mental Health, Housing and Homelessness

The Interim Head of Service for Mental Health Services, Karen Siennicki introduced a report on issues around mental health, housing and homelessness, how they correlate, how these matters had been addressed and to consider where improvements could be made to the services provided in addressing those issues. She highlighted the development of a collaboration agreement with the District and Borough Councils which would see £39k being invested in Selby to support homeless prevention for vulnerable people. The following issues were raised during discussion of the report:

- The low level of homelessness in the Selby District compared to other districts in the County.
- A recent high profile case in Tadcaster and the difficulty encountered in trying to obtain a response to the situation due to the lack of a co-ordinated approach. It was explained that the collaboration approach was expected to address this.
- Issues around capacity and temporary refuge accommodation.
- The need for pro-active work to prevent homelessness and address mental health issues.

3.2 Proposed Special Free School

Jane le Sage, Assistant Director Inclusion, CYPS and Jane Harvey, Strategic Planning and Development Officers, CYPS, presented a report on the proposed development of a Special Free School at Osgodby, Selby.

Representatives of the Osgodby Residents Action Association were in attendance and made a statement as follows:

“Residents of Osgodby believe that land at Millfield Ings, Osgodby, is unsuitable for any development, including that of a SEND school. We also believe that both residents and councillors have been kept in the dark and told half truths about the processes and decisions in selection of this site.”

Issues around the need for the school, the benefits of the provision, how it would operate and the choice of site were outlined. It was noted that the development of the school had yet to go through the planning process which would provide an opportunity for community representatives to outline their concerns regarding the site choice.

The following issues were raised during discussion of the report:

- Local Members had no involvement in the decision making process for the location of the school as that was the responsibility of the relevant Executive Member, as detailed in the guidance, however, the choice of site had been communicated to Members, and, initially few concerns had been raised.
- The choice of site had been limited due to the constraints set by the DfE in relation to obtaining the grant funding for the development to take place.
- It was acknowledged that communications could have been undertaken more effectively and lessons had been learned for future projects.
- The proposal was still subject to final approval by the DfE and had yet to go through the planning process, therefore, there were still opportunities for concerns to be outlined.

3.3 Superfast North Yorkshire - Broadband - Update

The Executive Member for Access, County Councillor Don Mackenzie, provided an update on the development and provision of Superfast Broadband in the constituency area. He provided details of the work already undertaken in Phases 1 and 2 of the

project, the work underway in Phase 3 and the launch of the local full fibre network project.

The following issues were raised during discussion of the update:

- Areas that were not yet connected through the project and the frustration felt by those communities, which was acknowledged by the Executive Member who emphasised that the aim was for all areas to be connected eventually, however, this had to be measured up against ensuring that it was value for money to deliver the connections.
- Ensuring that available funding was appropriately targeted was emphasised and it was noted that many new developments were incorporating full fibre connections, which should allow funding to be diverted to other, existing properties.
- The need to ensure that business development in the area was fully connected was emphasised.
- Members, in noting the difficulties faced in providing 100% connection, emphasised that, overall, the project was a huge success for the county, which should not be lost sight of.

3.4 Work Programme

A Member emphasised the need for the Committee to be more pro-active, and develop issues that were important to the local communities and could be progressed further, rather than having reports of interest to note. Members were requested to identify such areas for future consideration and it was suggested that Fairer Funding, tourism and traffic congestion should be considered, together with more opportunity provided to hold discussions with the local MP.

4.0 Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee on 20 November 2019

4.1 BT Phone Box Provision in Richmondshire

Members agreed to support to Richmondshire District Council in seeking to retain landline phone boxes, as requested by Parish Councils responding to a BT consultation exercise, in view of mobile connection difficulties in some areas, and a letter to that effect be sent to Richmondshire District Council.

4.2 Ingleby Arncliffe Former School Playing Field – Sale and Development – Petition

Issues relating to delays in developing an affordable housing scheme, as part of the Ingleby Arncliffe Village Plan, due to lengthy negotiations in relation to the purchase of the former Church of England Primary School playing fields, were outlined by representatives of the Parish Council. It was noted that the delays had seen the proposals put in jeopardy which were important for the retention of a vibrant and sustainable local community, therefore a petition requesting that the impasse be resolved had been submitted to the Leader of the Council.

Since the delivery of the petition, there had been significant progress on this matter and there was some confidence that this would now come to a successful conclusion, with the playing fields being made available for housing and it was emphasised that the support from NYCC's Property Services had been helpful in this process.

It was noted that the Leader expected to provide a response to the issue, at the meeting, but was unable to attend and would, therefore, provide a written response.

4.3 Schools, Educational Achievement and Finance

Andrew Dixon, Howard Emmett, Cerys Townend and Joy Willis from Children and Young People's Service presented the report informing Members of the local educational landscape, educational achievement and the financial challenges which affect schools in the Richmond Constituency Committee area.

The following issues were raised during discussion of the report:

- The introduction of Cambrai School at Catterick Garrison and the destabilising effect that was having on the numbers on roll for the existing schools in that area. It was explained that the school had been provided in anticipation of an increase in the local population, but there had been some delays in that. There had been no single school disproportionately affected, however, the situation would continue to be monitored.
- Concerns were raised that developer funding (Section 106) was not being used effectively for Catterick Garrison but it was explained that this could not be utilised to improve existing facilities only increase school places. School condition grant funding was being used to provide improvements at the existing schools.
- In response to concerns raised the Strategic Plan for SEND pupils was outlined and how this was implemented in the areas schools was detailed.
- The current use of isolation units to address possible exclusion incidents, mainly in Primary Schools, was outlined, together with the current strategy which attempts to prevent pupils from getting into situations where they could be potentially excluded. It was noted that fixed term exclusions were the lowest they had been for the last three years.
- Issues around Elective Home Education (EHE) were discussed, including how the County Council supports the children and parents/carers who are undertaking this. It was noted that the issue had been discussed at the Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee and details were available from that report.
- The issue of catchment areas was discussed, particularly in relation to ensuring schools remained viable and addressing school deficits, and details were provided in respect of the process required for these to be changed. It was emphasised that account had to be taken of parental choice and Home to School Transport costs when considering changes to these.
- Other issues highlighted included the need to closely monitor housing development at Stokesley in relation to increased numbers of children requiring school places, the provision of a new Primary School in Northallerton in response to new housing developments and ensuring that any increase in capacity at Middleton Tyas Primary School did not destabilise schools in neighbouring communities.
- A Member referred to sections of the local community removing their children from school at the transition from primary to secondary school stage and proposed a resolution to the Executive, requesting them to work closely with Central Government and the appropriate bodies to prevent this practice from taking place.

4.4 Public Health Overview - Hambleton

Victoria Ononeze provided Members with an overview of some of the Public Health priorities, services and challenges in the area constituency area, with specific reference to the Hambleton District, following on from a report to the previous meeting which related to the Richmondshire District.

The following issues were raised during discussion of the report:

- Members noted the current position in relation to the Healthy Child Programme, with a partnership arrangement being sought for the delivery of this. A further report would be

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submitted to the Committee clarifying the position of the delivery of the Programme, when this was in place.

- A report was requested on the health implications of e-cigarettes. This would be provided following the publication of national guidance.
- Details were circulated relating to 'killed or seriously injured' statistics in respect of the constituency area's roads. Concerns were raised in particular to the number of incidents at 60mph and above, and at 30mph when compared to 20mph. The Area Highways Manager stated that he would liaise with Public Health with a view to providing the Committee with a detailed report in relation to the circulated figures.
- A report on how mental health issues were being addressed in the Constituency area was requested and would be provided to a subsequent meeting.

4.5 Cyber-Crime and Scams – Overview

Jim McClusky provided a presentation outlining an overview on issues relating to the prevention of cyber-crime and scams.

The following issues were raised during discussion of the presentation:

- How to respond to telephone scams by contacting the Police, National Trading Standards or through the National Consumer Helpline and the development of technology to assist in blocking these calls.
- The need to keep updating awareness in relation to the prevention and detection of cyber-crime and scams as incidences continued to grow and become more complex.

4.6 Cycle Paths and Cycling

A report was provided allowing Members to consider the provision of cycle paths in the ACC area and the benefits of cycling in terms of Public Health.

The following issues were raised during discussion of the report:

- The provision of a cycle path on the Swainby to Stokesley route, along the A172, on the wide grass verge.
- Plans for a cycle route, Stokesley to Great Ayton A171, route alongside the River Leven on private land.
- Development of 6 km of cycle path within Catterick Garrison by Sustrans.
- A request for further details on a potential route for the Brompton-on-Swale to Scorton.
- The provision of additional off-road cycling routes in Swaledale.
- The potential for the provision of a designated footpath between Abbersett and Hawes.

4.7 Work Programme

The following items were added to the work programme:

- Development of the Healthy Child Programme
- The safety of e-cigarettes
- Safety on the roads in the constituency area.
- Mental Health Services in the constituency area.

5.0 Recommendations – That:

- 5.1 The Executive notes the report and considers any matters arising from the work of the Area Constituency Committees detailed above, that merits further scrutiny, review or investigation at a county-level.

5.2 That the County Council works closely with the Association of Directors of Children Services (ADCS), Central Government and any other relevant bodies, in relation to initiatives being undertaken to prevent sections of the community from removing their children from full-time education, particularly at the transition from primary to secondary school.

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December 2019

Background Documents: None

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