

Cllr Felicity Cunliffe-Lister Parish Report
Kirkby Malzeard/Markington : 26th June 2023

Transport

It has been announced that the UreBus pilot is coming to an end after two years. The cost of running this was £225K/year, effectively just over £15/passenger. I know this will be greatly missed by those who used it, but I also don't think it was ever going to reach a viable level of use – based on the limited funds available to subsidise public transport. It was really encouraging to see the younger age group using it and the impact that the booking app had to enable this. I will now be lobbying at County Hall for the funds spent on the UreBus to be spent on more regular and timely scheduled buses to destinations where there is demand for, to ensure that they become viable.

As previously reported, some of the bus routes in the Masham & Fountains division are currently at risk. If we are to return to the pre-pandemic levels of use there would need to be an extra 40 passengers per week on the routes 136 (Ripon/Melmerby), 138 (Ripon/Masham), 139 (Ripon/Sawley/Markington) & 144 (Bedale/Masham) and an extra 150 per week for the 159 service (Richmond/Leyburn/Masham/Ripon). It has also been announced that the Eastern Dales bus 825 (Harrogate /Brimham Rocks/Fountains Abbey/Masham/Leyburn/Richmond) will now only run on the first Sunday of each month.

A survey has just been launched by the North Yorkshire Council, and the feedback will be used to inform the first draft of the Local Transport Plan which will review all aspects of the region's transport – from cycling to rail, bus and car. This is a very important opportunity for residents to have their say, to ensure that investment and services are improved where they are most needed. This can be completed online at www.northyorks.gov.uk/LetsTalkNY - please encourage all the residents in your parish to complete this. The survey completes 17th July. This will be useful to help establish where the demand is for bus routes, but I also intend to issue a survey for the local area more specifically focussed on bus routes and potential demand for a community bus (see below).

Rural Broadband

Having met Robert Ling at County Hall in early May to discuss the options available for remote rural properties that will not be connected to superfast broadband in Phase 4, the final NYNet phase, he has agreed to attend a public meeting on 19th July at 6.30pm at Masham Town Hall. He will address the current issues with Phase 4, including the lack of clarity on what will be delivered, what options the Council might be able to support for those that remain without, and what the Gigabit project will deliver.

I'd recommend that all those that are currently without superfast broadband, both at home and at work, attend this meeting to find out what the options are and also to be able to make the case to Robert the extent to which the viability of living and working in a rural location is compromised. If there is funding or other support available at NYC I want to make sure that residents in the area are duly considered for it.

I am also aware the community voucher scheme has been withdrawn and that would have been of value to groups wanting to apply for a mobile mast to be erected in their locality. I know that

Markington, for example, has very poor coverage. I will ask Robert what else might be available for those that want to take this further.

Community Bus

Having established what support there might be at Council level for the purchase of a Community Bus, I am now working with Hayley at the Masham Community Office to first establish what might be available in way of spare capacity from the community buses that are in the surrounding area (Nidd, Bedale and Dales). At the same time I will work with her on a survey to establish what the demand might be from the community to use one, to which destinations and frequency. With the demise of YorBus there may now be more interest in this, from those who were users of the service. It would also be available to schools and community groups for excursions. If you are aware of a particular need for community transport please do not hesitate to contact me.

Council Meeting & Executive Decisions

It was decided by the Executive recently that the Community Partnership scheme is to be launched, with Ripon (along with Middleham and Leyburn) as one of the pilot hubs. The partnerships will provide a forum for work between businesses, public sector agencies and the communities they serve and will operate independently. They won't have a budget but they will have support in accessing sources such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. I have yet to establish what the relationship will be between them and Parish Councils and what the process will be to be appointed onto a partnership. The ambition is that they are there to "drive forward local action", so it might be that they will be of more influence in supporting and driving forward specific projects and campaigns. The pilot scheme will be useful in establishing more precisely what the role and scope is to be. About 30 partnerships are to be introduced centred around market towns, it has not yet been confirmed which.

Destination Development Plan

Good progress has been made with establishing Ripon and the surrounding area as a new tourism destination within the Council's DDP. This is in response to feedback from Councillors and stakeholders following a number of recent workshops. I have set up a meeting to be held next week in Ripon with the NYC Head of Tourism & Culture to discuss how to take this forward – to enable funding to be raised, and for attractions and hospitality providers within a short drive of Ripon to be better represented.

Highways

Kirkby Malzeard : I am waiting on dates from Area 6 for the gullies to be cleared on High Street and for the engineer's report on Back Lane. Orders have also been raised for repairs to be carried out at Galphay Road/Warren Lane junction.

Markington : the gullies at Wormald Green have been cleared. I am aware this is a long standing problem and a resident on the road will send me a photo of the road if the drain blocks again after rain – for this to then be investigated further.

Planning Enforcement

Kirkby Malzeard : please can we discuss the recent email from Nic Turpin; I have also had continued correspondence about the TPO sycamore St Andrew's Gate.

Schools

I very much enjoyed my trip to Markington school to visit the KS2 group. They were very engaged with politics generally and were all concerned about the lack of bins and levels of rubbish in the park – I have promised to look into this for them. I would also be happy to set up tours of the Allerton Waste centre to see the benefits of recycling and energy recovery in action – for schools and all groups generally.

Youth Councils

I have met with the Deputy Head at the Ripon Grammar School and the sixth form pupil who is the current Community Officer. They are keen to assist with helping establish Youth Councils in the areas surrounding Ripon, with all young people aged 11-18 invited to join. The ambition is to set up a group of satellite Youth Councils in the towns and villages surrounding Ripon, which would feed into the main Ripon Youth Council. This is an opportunity for young people to lobby for better services that impact day to day life for them (such as access to sport, connectivity and public transport), get involved in fundraising and helping organise community events – all very useful life skills - but also an essential way to raise awareness of issues that impact or are of concern to this age group. If any residents know of anyone who might be interested in getting involved please let me know. We should have a structure in place by the end of the summer term to launch properly in September.

20 is Plenty review

It was announced today that following a review of this proposal by Cllr Duncan, he will be presenting his proposal to the Executive on 4th July which is as per attached press release. In essence, he is proposing the introduction of a 20 mph limit only where part of a safety improvement scheme, not as a default in every town and village. In order to introduce these kind of measures the community will need to be actively engaged as part of the Council's strategic review of any one village – what is not yet known is which villages will be considered first for this.

FCL