



NYCC County Area Committee for the Harrogate District

16.3.17

Public Questions or Statements:

The Sustainable Transport Plan Option for Harrogate District

Representing Zero Carbon Harrogate, I am very pleased that a standalone sustainable transport package will be considered alongside the relief road proposals, as stated in the report for today, and that sustainable transport measures will also be required alongside the various relief road options. I seek your reassurance that the standalone Sustainable Transport option is indeed being thoroughly scoped, as it is barely discussed or mapped on the website and the County Councils, framework consultant Mouchel, has been commissioned to undertake the relief road review, is a highway consultant which appears to have no experience in sustainable transport planning.

The name of this whole process is indeed misleading as it is being called the “Harrogate Relief Road Review” pre supposing it is only looking at road options. Could it be renamed a “Transport Review” or something similar in order to help the public better understand the options being considered?

Developing multifaceted sustainable transport across the District would not only resolve our current traffic congestion issues, it would bring substantial benefits to the area. There is plenty of evidence from other towns and cities to demonstrate the economic, social and health benefits of this approach.

Walthamstow, in North London, invested £27 million in a “Mini Holland” plan to make a number of improvements to make their streets, making them fit for everyone to use - walkers, cyclists, using public transport or driving. Overall traffic levels have fallen by 16% in the District and in 12 key roads in the “village” area of Walthamstow traffic flows fell by 56%, or 10,000 fewer vehicles a day. Imagine what that would look like on Skipton Road!

In Vancouver they have calculated that a quarter of the city’s energy is used on transport. Moving to trams, buses, electric vehicles and a dense cycle and walking route network is helping to reduce their energy bills, saving their businesses and residents money and giving them more choice about how they travel.

Copenhagen has invested extensively in its segregated cycle infrastructure. Last year the city recorded more bike journeys than cars journeys, bucking the downward trend of cycle use in Denmark as a whole. It’s a vibrant and attractive tourist destination.

A multifaceted transport solution is more complex than a “one road solves all” option. It requires more subtle changes in infrastructure, and investment in behavioural changes too, with a package of 20 or 30 initiatives running concurrently. However, the health and social benefits of active and

shared transport are significant, reducing pressure on Harrogate Hospital, with improved physical and mental health for residents. Reduced vehicles on the roads and more electric vehicles would help to tackle the District's pressing air quality issues and help to meet our carbon emissions targets. Sustainable transport is more in keeping with the District's healthy Spa image and would enable us to protect both the beauty of our towns and our surrounding countryside.

Could I therefore have your reassurance that a multifaceted sustainable transport plan will be thoroughly scoped and considered before any of the relief road options are progressed?