

NYC COUNCILLOR'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025.

BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

The original plan set out by the Boundary Commission was due to be confirmed in tablets of stone on 2nd September. There were however many howls of complaint from individuals, PCs and Councillors and others in various places so the review which was set in place has been extended allowing further consultation until October.

The final decision on the boundaries of the 89 council divisions is now set to be announced in early January. This all really makes no difference in our part of the world to what was originally planned.

SCOTCH CORNER.

Well despite what we were told in June there is no sign yet of work recommencing on the Designer Outlet. I have asked the developer for a further update. The knock on effect is that the promised upgrade to the transformer and power system would hopefully mean that power cuts which many residents in villages like Stapleton, Cleasby and Manfield have to endure, will not be resolved in the near future.

And whilst the upgrade to the A66 which we have waited for 4 decades for will now commence, specific dates for the work are still to be revealed but the one that many are waiting for is the plan for Scotch Corner roundabout. Again if there was progress on the Designer Outlet we have a better idea of what is likely to happen in terms of the roundabout.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT.

I am working on an initiative to try to persuade bus companies like Hodgsons and Arriva to alter their routes in some cases and tweak their times in others so that pupils from villages like Cleasby, Manfield, Eppleby and Aldbrough can use their services to travel to and from the Richmond Schools. Hodgsons charge £1 per journey for anyone under the age of 19. This would mean a cost of £390 or so for a pupil who attends every school day throughout the year, hence a saving of more than half of the County cost of £816pa.

Arriva charge £1.20 per journey. The Hodgson service from Barnard Castle to Richmond taking in villages from Newsham via Gilling should fit the bill now. However, the Darlington to Richmond service doesn't arrive in Richmond until 9.40am. A new service would be required from Croft, Dalton on Tees, North Cowton, Moulton and Middleton Tyas and this I am working on.

Integrated transport including bus services is part of the Mayor's portfolio. A substantial grant was awarded by the government to support integrated transport (I think £6 million).

NYC's dire financial position is going to require considerable 'thinking outside the box'. I fully appreciate that no one wants to pay for something they have had for free but as things stand, without a further substantial increase in funding from the government, which earlier this year they said not only would there be no further funding, but they actually imposed further cuts in funding, then NYC will face bankruptcy in the year 28/29.

Naturally we are working on whole raft of savings initiatives to avoid this terrible prospect. The hated new Home to School Transport Policy was one. But the cost of school transport in the school year just ended was £52.5 million against a Government grant for this service of £44 million.

RICHMOND SCHOOL.

I had a most interesting and informative meeting with 3 Governors and the head Jenna Potter in June. It helped me to have a better understanding of their admissions policy which I really appreciated. I have had one parent contact me saying that due to the school being full they had been advised that their child would not be able to have a place. Given that pupils are being bused from Northallerton, Catterick and Leyburn this seemed harsh treatment for a child from a village not 5 miles from Richmond.

However, the school were at pains to point out that they would do their utmost to accommodate children from villages which are in their catchment area. There is a right to appeal if all else fails.

I am having a similar meeting with the head and 3 Governors from SFX. Hopefully this will increase my understanding of their admissions policy and other factors in the day to day schooling within this Ofsted Outstanding school. The SFX admissions policy is one which I am frequently asked about by parents.

RICHMOND SWIMMING POOL.

Following a public consultation which resulted in an overwhelming majority wishing for the pool to be kept open, it is proposed to spend £1.2 million to be taken from the strategic reserve fund, to do all necessary repairs including the main problem which is the roof. This work is likely to take 6 months or more.

Best wishes,

Angus Thompson.

15th September 2025.

E & OE.