

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

21 FEBRUARY 2007

STATEMENT OF THE BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR CLARE WOOD

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste Minimisation - Home Composting Campaign

Members might remember that during 2006 we were offering home composting bins at a reduced price across the County. I am pleased to report that 8,637 bins were sold across the County until December. This means that since we began countywide campaigns in 2003, more than 40,000 home compost bins have been purchased by our residents.

To build on the success of the home composting campaign and to continue to divert garden waste away from landfill, the County Council is now the lead partner with WRAP on their 2007 campaign. We are the lead partner on behalf of the seven district/borough councils and the City of York Council. WRAP - the Waste Resources Action Programme - is a not-for-profit company set up by Government to promote resource efficiency.

As a full partner in this scheme, we benefit from:

- The provision of a range of home compost bins and accessories to be sold at subsidised rates across the area. Storage, order processing and delivery of the home compost bins to individual households.
- Promotional material, advertising and PR, advice and support services for home Composting activity.
- Additional materials and events such as seminars and training to support the scheme
- Access to a free helpline for all householders.
- A dedicated home composting advisors to support activities in our area.
- Help with and support of volunteer groups to promote home composting.

Exact details are still being finalised but there will be a leaflet drop to every household three times this year and WRAP's staff will attend awareness raising events around the county. There are three different sizes of bins being sold this year, a 220 litre bin, a 330 litre bin and a 250 litre bin. Prices range from £8-£20. Customers can order on-line to receive a further £1 price reduction.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

Improvements to household waste recycling centres continue. Tholthorpe HWRC has been extended to almost double the area available to the public. Works were completed on time and within budget in August 06. A wider range of recycling provision is now available, and recycling performance has improved from 47% to 51% immediately and is continuing to get even better.

Burniston HWRC was refurbished in August 06. We are now anticipating a recycling rate of over 45% for the first full year of operation, rising to 55% next year when we see the full year benefit of improving the site.. We have also extended the opening hours at the site. More works are due this autumn to improve a bridge on the access road.

We now have the necessary permission to extend both Malton and Selby HWRCs, and works will start in March. It will take 3 months to complete both projects.

Performance on the household waste recycling centres is improving greatly. We expect the average performance across all 20 sites to increase to 57% for this financial year, from 43% achieved in 2005/06 and 37% in 2004/5. Four sites, at Tadcaster, Selby, Seamer Carr and Leyburn recycled more than 70% over those first 6 months of this year, and are on target to exceed 60% for the full year for the first time.

INTEGRATED PASSENGER TRANSPORT

East Coast Main Line

Just before Christmas the Department for Transport announced that it was inviting expressions of interest for the East Coast Main Line rail franchise. The service has been operated for a number of years by GNER. The company advised the DfT that it was not prepared to continue to operate the franchise on the same basis. GNER will continue to provide services until the franchise process is complete. The East Coast Main Line provides important links from North Yorkshire to London and the South East and it is essential that we seek to retain our current level of service.

Bus Service Regulation

Following the publication of the Eddington report which examined the long term links between transport and economic growth, the government has signalled its intentions to review the regulatory framework for bus services. It is expected that draft legislation will be issued in spring this year, however the government has set out its proposals in "Putting Passengers First". The key changes being considered are:

- Greater partnership working between local authorities and operators, making it easier for local authorities to have a say in bus frequency, timetables and fares.
- Shared responsibility for punctuality , giving Traffic Commissioners greater powers of enforcement , holding not just operators but for the first time local authorities to account for the performance of local bus services.
- Introduction of quality contracts (franchising) in the right circumstances making it a realistic option for local authorities to introduce schemes tailored to local needs.
- Greater emphasis on community transport to provide services in areas poorly served by other transport.
- Refocusing bus operators grant to be better aligned with performance and targets.

We will want to be sure that none of the proposals will adversely affect bus services in our area and will make an appropriate response when the consultation is issued.

County Councillor Clare Wood
12 February 2007