

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

21 February 2007

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

Introduction

1. The Committee is continuing to manage its work programme by focussing on a small number of in-depth projects and interspersing that work, where appropriate, with a number of 'overview' projects. Overview topics could include briefings on emerging issues in ED&R or contributing to the County Council's response to national/regional consultations.

In-Depth Scrutiny Projects

Supporting the Rural Economy and Diversification in Agriculture

2. Part of this project involves looking at best practice in other parts of the country. Lancashire Rural Futures (LRF) is an agency which specialises in helping farmers identify and develop conservation and environmental projects. Due to the additional County Council meeting on 23 January 2007 the Committee's visit to the LRF had to be postponed. Arrangements are in hand for the visit to go ahead on another date.

Review of Management Arrangements for Adult Learning and the Youth Service (formerly Community Education)

3. A Joint Sub-Committee comprising both the ED&R and the Young Peoples O&SCs has been involved in this review. A Member task group drawn from that Joint Sub-Committee met with senior officers from the Children and Young Peoples service on 17 January 2007 and work is now in hand for the task group to contribute to the Post Implementation Review which will be completed in the spring of this year.

Sustainable Procurement

4. A task group drawn from the Corporate Affairs, ED&R and the Environmental & Heritage O&SCs and Chaired by County Councillor Margaret-Ann De Coursey-Bayley has been examining the potential for the County Council to procure goods and services in a more sustainable way. This could present opportunities for supporting the local rural economy and diversification in agriculture so has a bearing on the Committee's work mentioned above.
5. On 26 January 2007 the ED&R O&SC endorsed the proposals set out in the task group's report. The Committee also suggested that the task group may wish to consider setting out more detail on how the proposal for a £100k development fund could operate on an invest to save basis.

Work Arising Out of Committee on 26 January 2007

6. The Committee set up a task group to be involved in two initiatives:
 - a) NYCC ED&R Strategy - contributing to the development of the strategy by, for example:
 - Examining the Economic Development Strategies of other County Councils;
 - Research activities, e.g., Rural, Community/Local Economic Development, District Intelligence, Funding Support, Strategy link;
 - Engaging with other County Council Directorates;
 - Contributing to consultation/communication on the strategy; and
 - Taking a final view on the Strategy before presentation to Executive.
 - b) contributing to NYCC's response on the EU Structural Funding Consultation 2007-13

7. As part of the Review of Sub Regional Investment Plan 2007 - Transitional Themes partners are being asked to consider:
 - whether they feel they can engage with, and support, the aspirations of the plan as expressed through the five transformational themes and the suggested interventions;
 - what might be the most important issues for them.

The Committee is holding a workshop on Friday 16 February to look in detail at the Transformational Themes paper with a view to feeding into the County Council's response.

County Councillor John Savage

Chairman - Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 February 2007