

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16 MAY 2007

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

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Recycling

I am pleased to report that provisional end of year performance for 2006/07 has improved on the previous year and met the Waste Strategy target for recycling and composting target of 34% and waste for the second year running is down by nearly 2%.

It is particularly pleasing to note that the success in achieving the recycling and composting target is in a small way due to the County Council's network of household waste recycling centres diverting nearly 60% of the household waste delivered to them, up from 43% in 2005/6. The remainder of the improvement has come from better district council recycling and composting performance, supported by nearly £2.5million in recycling credits from the County Council.

Household waste recycling centres

An important part of the recycling improvements in 2006/7 was the contribution made by Burniston household waste recycling centre. Since the County Council took over Burniston from Scarborough Borough Council in January last year there have been significant improvements in the service. Residents now have access to a much wider range of recycling containers and I am pleased to report that the site recycled over half of the waste delivered to it in its first year of operation by the County Council. Opening times have been extended to bring the site in line with other HWRCs in the County and there have been no unplanned closures. Whilst Burniston is already a success story, further works to improve the access road and bridge are to be carried out this summer.

New arrangements for Pateley Bridge and Boroughbridge mobile household waste sites commenced in April 2007. The County Council has introduced recycling to both these services which now benefit from the separate collection of green waste and hazardous household items such as fridges and TVs for recycling. The Pateley Bridge service continues to operate on the first Saturday of each month except January at Pateley Bridge Showfield. The Boroughbridge service has changed from skips to compactor wagons, and now operates on the second Saturday of every month except January at Back Lane car park.

Discussion with the landowner for a site to the west of Harrogate have progressed and are now near completion. Final agreements are due to be signed very shortly and a planning application is expected to be made quickly afterwards. The delivery of this site remains a priority.

Waste Partnership

Despite issues of potential local government review, I am pleased to report that the waste partnership is still building links and becoming stronger, with 6 district councils now delivering kerbside collected green waste to County Council contractors for composting. In this arrangement the County Council pays contractors to process the materials and pays a reduced recycling credit to the district council, resulting in reduced costs for the district councils and administration efficiencies for the County Council.

Members may be aware that regulations that will introduce new controls on the reuse, recycling and disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment come into force on 1 July. Officers have taken steps to ensure that the service delivered to members of the public will not be affected and the current high quality of service will be maintained”.

COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES

Rights of Way Improvement Plan Statement

The preparation of a Rights of Way Improvement Plan is a statutory duty contained in the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. All highway authorities have a duty to prepare a plan by November 2007. Subsequent guidance from the Department of Transport states that the plan will become progressively integrated with the local transport planning process.

The plan provides:

1. An assessment of the extent that local rights of way meet current and likely future need.
2. Assesses opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment.
3. Assesses the accessibility of local rights of way to the blind, partially sighted and mobility restricted and
4. Looks at the contribution that rights of way play to the Governments four shared transport priorities of reducing congestion, enhancing accessibility and safety and improving air quality as part of an integrated local highway network.

A draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan has been produced for North Yorkshire by the County Council in partnership with the North York Moors National Park Authority and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. A steering group has also monitored its progress and provided comment at key stages. This group includes members of the three Local Access Forums in North Yorkshire, District Councils and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The draft plan is currently available for a statutory public consultation period which ends on 30th June 2007. Responses will be reviewed and considered in the preparation of the final Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North Yorkshire. The plan will then be published and subsequently reviewed in 2011 at the time that the next Local Transport Plan for North Yorkshire is produced.

INTEGRATED PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Public Transport Information

The council has developed a new web site to make it easier for people to find information about public transport services in the county. The web site has been designed to enable people to view and print bus timetables for their local service. The site brings together existing sources of information such as the traveline telephone enquiry service and the internet based journey planner and provides additional information about rail services, community transport and local information. The site is accessed from the NYCC main web site as www.northyorks.gov.uk/businfo .

Renewal of contracts

Some members will be aware that contracts for local bus services have been renewed in Hambleton, Harrogate and Richmondshire. This is the first contract renewals which have been undertaken in line with the councils Bus Strategy which forms part of the Local Transport Plan. By using the Bus Strategy we have been able to ensure that we target funding at priority areas and ensure that we maintain value for money. While this has meant that there have been service reductions in some areas there have been improvements in others. Bus users in Thirsk will benefit from brand new low floor buses which have been built by Plaxtons in Scarborough and will be operated by John Smiths Coaches. In Northallerton, additional journeys are available to the expanding industrial estates along Darlington Road. In Richmondshire daytime services between Reeth and Richmond have been regularised to prove the same journey pattern Monday – Saturday.

County Councillor Clare Wood
16 May 2007