

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

10 OCTOBER 2007

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

WASTE MANAGEMENT

WASTE PFI

The Government announced on 31 August 2007 that the County Council and City of York's bid for private finance initiative (PFI) support for the development of a long term waste management infrastructure had been successful. The Councils request for £65 million of PFI credits was granted following a detailed review of the business case by Treasury Project Review Group.

The award of PFI credits represents a significant milestone in delivering a long term and sustainable waste management service. Procurement has now begun using the new Competitive Dialogue procedure whereby solutions are developed with bidders prior to inviting final tenders. The project programme indicates that the preferred bidder will be confirmed at the end of 2008. The contract when awarded will be for the diversion of specific amounts of waste from landfill and no particular technology has been identified in the contract specification.

REUSABLE COTTON BAGS

In July, I reported that the County Council had begun to sell reusable cotton bags as part of a drive to reduce the amount of rubbish that is sent to landfill sites. I am pleased to report that sales are so far exceeding expectations, and that around 7,500 have been sold to date. The reusable cotton shopping bags retail at £1 and are available from a number of shops, council offices and libraries across North Yorkshire.

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES

At the last meeting of the Council I reported that a planning application had been submitted to provide a new household waste recycling centre to serve the west of Harrogate. It is with regret I inform members that this planning application has been withdrawn due to objections from the Police relating to security against terrorism. The County Council was not made aware of the objection until late in the planning consultation process and indeed our planners were unaware of the requirements until specified by the Police. These required a 400 metre extension zone around the site. Discussions with the Chief Constable indicated that this was a fairly new requirement and as such it was felt that the planning application should be withdrawn. The

County Council obviously would not wish to prejudice the security of the Army College despite the need for a HWRC in the area. The County Council remains committed to developing a new household waste recycling centre in the area and officers are reviewing potential sites. Further proposals will be developed once a suitable site has been identified.

WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (WEEE)

The County Council has entered into an agreement with WEEECare of Leeds to collect and recycle end of life electrical goods to allow us to comply with new legislation that came into force on 1st July 2007. Collection is carried out by Yorwaste with processing carried out by WEEECare.

The agreement was originally limited to household waste, but negotiations with the Company has allowed WEEECare to extend its operations to provide a service to benefit businesses in North Yorkshire, and to collect electrical goods produced by the County Council itself.

ILLEGAL DUMPING

Working relationships are being developed between Waste Management and Trading Standards services to crack down on illegal dumping of waste at household waste recycling centres, and to ensure waste is dealt with properly. Discrete surveillance equipment will be used to improve the ability to identify culprits and take the necessary action.

INTEGRATED PASSENGER TRANSPORT

SCARBOROUGH PARK & RIDE

The council invited tenders for the provision of Park & Ride services as part of the Scarborough Integrated Transport Strategy. The tenders attracted interest from four bus operators. The specification includes provision of a high frequency high quality bus service from the sites on Seamer Road and Filey Road. It is expected that the services will commence in summer 2008 and contribute to a significant reduction in traffic in Scarborough.

TRANSPORT AREA REVIEWS

Tenders have been issued to renew home to school transport and local bus services in Ryedale and Craven. This is part of the councils normal contract renewal process. Local members, District and Parish Councils have all been invited to comment as part of the process.

New contracts will be introduced in April 2008.

COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES

HERITAGE OPEN DAY

On Saturday 8 September, the County Council for the very first time opened up its doors to the general public as part of 'Heritage Open Days'. This is a national programme aimed at celebrating England's architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually either closed, offer restricted access to the public or charge for admission. The Countryside Service teamed up with the Archives Service and Committee Services to welcome the public into County Hall. They were assisted by volunteers from a variety of sources, as volunteering is a key element of the Heritage Open Days concept.

The day proved to be a big success with nearly 130 people coming through the doors to admire the architectural glories of County Hall. Coming from as far away as Sunderland, Skipton and Leeds, with most more locally from Northallerton, Romanby and Brompton, they all appreciated being able to see beyond the front door. Many said how impressed they were with County Hall as a building and "had no idea it was so grand"!

County Councillor Clare Wood
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