

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

10 October 2007

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The main areas of the Committee's work that I would like to highlight are set out below.

Committee Meeting 21 September 2007

1. This meeting focused on the implications which the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration announced in July 2007 could have on the County Council. Paul Whitaker, Head of Development Service, guided Members through the proposed changes which include local authorities being given a duty to analyse the economic circumstances and challenges in their local economy, the introduction of Multi Area Agreements, funding for 6th forms and Further Education being transferred from the Learning and Skills Councils to the local authorities and more devolution to the regions.
2. The government is planning to consult on these proposals later this year and we look forward towards contributing to the County Councils' response.
3. The Committee also received an up date from Jonathan French (Executive Manager, York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit) on the progress in reviewing the Sub-Regional Investment Plan (SRIP). We heard that a new delivery framework comprising 23 programmes across six priority groupings has been developed. For each programme there is an outcome and a series of programme elements. We heard how more detailed work is now on-going which will lead to detailed proposal being discussed with potential funders. A funding strategy for the plan will be completed by December this year.

Scrutiny Project: Supporting the Rural Economy and Diversification in Agriculture

4. Work on this project is continuing and I hope that an interim report will be coming forward later during the autumn.
5. Yorkshire Forward has recently let a new contract for advice services and on 2 October 2007 we will be meeting with Tim Frenneaux (Rural Strategy Manager, to hear how advice is provided to farmers and rural businesses. We will also be exploring funding streams that may be available in rural areas.
6. A visit to the Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton, York is being arranged when we will find out the potential for farmers to diversify into bio-fuels/mass locally. This follows on from the excellent seminar which County Councillors, Les Parkes, Jim Snowball, Robert Heseltine and myself attended last month in Newcastle on the same subject.

Adult Learning Plan

7. On 24 July 2007 the Member task group which comprised Les Parkes, Jim Snowball, John Blackie and myself. As I was unable to attend Councillors Parkes and Snowball presented our report and contributed to the Executive's discussions on the Adult Learning Plan (ALP). We supported the ALP and particularly welcomed proposals for expanding non-accredited courses and Adult Learning Clubs but raised a number of suggestions which were taken on board by the Executive and reflected in the version of the Plan.
8. As part of this work on the ALP we were provided with a copy of the Ofsted report on the Adult Learning Service which assessed the service as "good" in 11 out of 12 grades and satisfactory on the remaining one – an excellent achievement.

County Councillor John Savage

Chairman - Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee

01 October 2007