

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
20 February 2008

**ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Chairman's Statement

The Committee has met once since my last Statement, on 9 January 2008, when the agenda included:

1. **Local Biodiversity Action Planning** – Members received an update on biodiversity plans and had a wide-ranging discussion on the importance of partnership working for the management of road-side verges for conservation.
2. **Environmental Issues in the Planning Process** – An update was given on how planning policy guidance is being used to encourage measures for energy efficiency and renewable energy. The role of Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments was also discussed.
3. **Fairtrade** – It was noted that the Executive had supported the continued promotion of Fairtrade projects on Council premises and through Council publications. Members looked forward to further progress being made in due course towards North Yorkshire becoming a Fairtrade County.
4. **Preparing for Peak Oil** – The Committee received a very interesting presentation on research by the Oil Depletion Analysis Centre. The presentation covered the problems that will arise if alternative resources are not developed sufficiently to fill the gap when demand for oil outstrips supply. It discussed ways in which the Council can prepare for oil scarcity, including looking at the use of biogas as a road transport fuel.

The provisional agenda for the next meeting of the Committee, on 5 March 2008, includes the following:

1. **Adaptation to Climate Change** – To update the Committee regarding national and regional adaptation studies.
2. **Use of renewable fuels in fleet vehicles**
3. **Management of Litter** – To update the Committee on the work of the Y & NY Waste Management Partnership Litter Management Sub-Group.

County Councillor John Blackburn
11 February 2008