

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

23 JULY 2008

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

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Recycling and Waste Minimisation

In 2005 the County Council let new contracts to manage its network of household waste recycling centres (HWRC), at the time it required contractors to recycle or compost 50% of the household waste delivered to the sites. Both of our contractors, Environmental Waste Controls and Yorwaste, gave undertakings to exceed that target and achieve an average of 60% across the network. I am please to report that an average of almost 62% was achieved last year and I would like to congratulate contractors, officers and members of the public for achieving this significant milestone. I would single out Leyburn HWRC for special praise, as that site became the first site in the County to achieve more than 70% over a year. This is a fantastic effort and I hope colleagues will join me in congratulating all involved.

The York and North Yorkshire Waste Management Partnership has also achieved some significant milestones this year. Two of the headline targets in the Waste Management Strategy have been achieved one year early, those were to recycle or compost 40% of household waste and to reduce the growth in waste volumes to zero. A concerted effort by all of our partners has contributed to these achievements, but the partnership has agreed to go further and have all signed a Service Level Agreement that will see all partners benefit from achieving beyond the targets in the strategy. Challenging targets for waste management have also been included in the new Local Area Agreement, demonstrating all partners' commitment to continually improving performance

The partnership is committed to improving knowledge and understanding of waste issues amongst the population and has successfully bid for assistance from WRAP, the government's Waste Resources and Action Programme, to train staff to deliver the latest messages in the most effective manner. The main theme over the next 6 months will be to reduce the amount of food waste produced and thrown away. In my last statement I mentioned that, on average, one third of the food we buy ends up in the bin. This message is becoming more widespread because of the knock on effects on the economy, transport and fuel costs, carbon emissions and the worsening global food shortage.

Waste Treatment

The Waste Management PFI procurement continues on programme with the team currently evaluating submissions received from the four short listed participants. This stage of the process will be completed at the end of August when the final two participants will be announced. The competitive dialogue process will continue with these two companies until the call for final tenders in October. The Preferred Bidder will be announced early in the New Year. The Preferred Bidder will be responsible for securing planning permission through the normal planning process. No decision has been made yet on either the technology or site for the new waste management facility.

North Yorkshire County Council is also concluding negotiations with waste management company SITA UK for a five year 'interim' contract to manage a proportion of the county's residual household waste until the PFI becomes available. From April 2009 25,000 tonnes per year of residual household waste from within the county and the City of York will be treated at SITA UK's Energy from Waste (EfW) facility on Teesside. This tonnage reflects the maximum merchant capacity available at the present term. This procurement project is a partnership with City of York, although it is led by the County Council.

INTEGRATED PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Skipton Bus Station

The refurbishment of Skipton Bus Station is on track to get underway later this year. The £1m scheme was given planning approval in June and the County Council expects to award a contract for the works before the end of July. This will enable work to start in late August or early September. During the construction period, which is expected to take approximately 4 months, the car park and bus station will be closed. The Council will be working with Craven District Council and bus operators to ensure that people are aware of the alternative arrangements.

Public Transport Information

Easy access to public transport information is essential if we are to encourage more people to leave their cars at home and use public transport. It is a little over twelve months since the Council launched its dedicated public transport information web site. The site now attracts over 7000 visitors each month with information about the Leeds - York - East Coast services being the most popular. The website is complemented by a "timetables by post" service which was introduced earlier this year and now has some 1,800 people registered. In Scarborough, the Council is working with East Yorkshire Motor Services to introduce real time information on most bus services in the Scarborough Area. This will mean better information for the public through the internet and text messaging and enable the bus company to monitor and improve service reliability.

TRADING STANDARDS AND REGULATORY SERVICES

The sale and promotion of tobacco products

Officers from Trading Standards & Regulatory Services have recently been involved in a series of meetings with the Department of Health's Tobacco Control National Support Team. The Department of Health is seeking to gain an in depth understanding of the challenges presently faced by authorities in tackling tobacco related issues, such as underage sales, advertising, counterfeit cigarettes and illicit sales. The Department of Health has provided this Service with £25,000 of direct funding to undertake work on tobacco enforcement issues in the County, during the next 12 months.

Successful prosecution results

A number of high profile prosecutions have been brought by the Trading Standards Service recently. These include:-

- Three individuals trading as Tourist Information Services defrauded 30 small businesses in Scarborough and Harrogate, given suspended prison sentences and ordered to pay compensation and prosecution costs totalling £57k.
- A roofer from Cumbria was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment and forced to pay compensation of £8,300 for poor workmanship and misleading his customer.
- A gas fitter falsely claiming to be a member of CORGI sentenced to 100 hours community service and ordered to pay costs and compensation in excess of £2k.
- A counterfeiter was required to pay £30k to court as a result of a confiscation order brought under the Proceeds of Crime Act by the Trading Standards Service.

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