

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

14 DECEMBER 2011

**STATEMENT OF RURAL SERVICES, WASTE DISPOSAL, PUBLIC PASSENGER  
TRANSPORT, TRADING STANDARDS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS METCALFE****WASTE AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES****SEAMER CARR LANDFILL SITE**

Seamer Carr landfill site at Scarborough will close at the end of January, when it will be full. The landfill site has served the Scarborough area since the 1970s, and more recently has also taken waste from the Whitby area when the Mickelby landfill site closed in 2005. From the first of February, all of the residual waste collected in the Scarborough and Whitby areas will be transported to Harewood Whin landfill site at York for disposal. This is the most cost effective option for waste from Scarborough until such time as alternative treatment capacity is available at Allerton Park.

The site, which is owned by the County Council and operated by Yorwaste, is planned to remain as the location for the processing of 'co-mingled' recyclables collected by Scarborough Borough Council, along with separately collected recyclable materials from household waste recycling centre and commercial sources.

The closure of the landfill will have no impact on refuse collection and residents will not notice any difference. The household waste recycling centre will of course remain.

**COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE**

The Council provides advice to Scarborough Borough Council and Natural England on the management of the internationally important archaeological site of Star Carr in the Vale of Pickering, where Britain's oldest known house 10,000 years old has been found. The Vale of Pickering is the subject of a number of projects addressing habitat, landscape and archaeology in which the council as a partner offers specialist advice and support. The University of York has been awarded €1.5m from the European Research Council for a programme to focus on the problems of deterioration of the site and for options for making the historic landscape better appreciated, potentially contributing to local tourism.

**TRADING STANDARDS****CITIZENS ADVICE TAKE OVER FROM CONSUMER DIRECT**

As part of the Government's plan to simplify the consumer protection landscape, Consumer Direct, the national consumer advice helpline, is to close down and its work will be transferred to Citizens Advice in April 2012.

Consumer Direct deals with over 10,000 enquiries from North Yorkshire residents each year and provides front line consumer advice. The new Citizens Advice consumer helpline will be delivered by Agilisys, an IT and business services provider, which will deliver a Citizens Advice-branded phone and email service. Any complaints which identify breaches of criminal legislation or complex problems in need of specialist intervention, will be referred to Trading Standards.

**DOORSTEP CRIME: OPERATION ROGUE TRADER**

During the week commencing 17 October, officers from Trading Standards were involved in a range of activities aimed at helping their fight against Doorstep Crime in the County. Their efforts formed part of 'Operation Rogue Trader': a national initiative involving all trading standards services and police forces across the country.

During the week, County Council officers

- Established the county's 400th No Cold Call Zone in the Thirsk area, to protect vulnerable residents from cold callers, and undertook preparatory work in relation to two further zones.
- Advised older people's groups and Age Concern staff and volunteers by delivering presentations on the subject.
- Provided posters and advice leaflets to 48 banks in the county, to encourage their staff to report incidents where elderly or vulnerable customers withdraw unusually large sums of money from their accounts.
- Provided over 1,500 educational packs for delivery by the Council's Library Services Home Delivery Service for housebound residents.

### **OPERATION ZINNIA – CAR CLOCKERS SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS CUSTODY**

Following their earlier guilty pleas five individuals, including four brothers from the same family, were sentenced at Leeds Crown Court on 14 November. This followed a successful prosecution by North Yorkshire Trading Standards and Planning Services. The brothers were prosecuted for conspiracy to commit fraud between January 2008 and August 2009 in relation to their businesses selling clocked cars from their home addresses in North and West Yorkshire. All received custodial sentences of from 3 to 18 months.

A Proceeds of Crime Act confiscation hearing will also now follow, to confiscate assets held by the gang. Substantial assets have been restrained by trading standards for a number of months, pending the outcome of the case.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding LEP, having identified its priorities, has focused on developing initiatives which will support the many small businesses in the region. A launch week in January will launch five initiatives in five days.

The initiatives being launched in January are:

- A new website with business support integrated;
- A network of networks bringing together the business networks in the region to provide support to small businesses;
- A Certificate in Business Growth to help new businesses to access finance;
- A small food producers support programme to help food manufacturers to trade beyond their local markets.
- A broadband support programme to help businesses maximise the potential of high speed broadband.

Further initiatives are planned for February and March including International Trade and Visitor Economy support programmes.

The LEP has been successful in attracting £6.2m from the national Growing Places fund to remove infrastructure blockages to release developments. Whilst the fund can be utilised for projects which will release housing or job creation, the LEP Board are favouring projects which will create jobs and economic growth.

The LEP has also been successful in attracting an Agri-Food Innovation Showcase to be delivered in partnership with DEFRA and Technology Strategy Board.

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### **STATEMENT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

#### **Libraries**

Members will be aware of the Executive's decisions of 22 November and the breadth of activity within the Library Service in order to continue progress in developing a wide range of community solutions to future service delivery. At its meeting in November, the Executive approved further proposals for work to continue with all 3 categories of libraries involving a wide range of partners and agencies including local Members, community groups, County Council officers and independent support from voluntary and community sector organisations. As a result, work is ongoing to provide opportunities for communities with libraries in both Categories 1 and 2 libraries to consult with local communities on the proposed "staffed" opening hours and to supplement these by working with volunteers and other agencies. This work will continue up to the introduction of the new hours on 1 June 2012.

Further work is ongoing on the development of community led proposals for Category 3 libraries. The November report set out in detail the tremendous amount of work that has been undertaken by local communities with libraries in categories 2 and 3 who are doing their utmost to maintain and enhance the library service that they clearly value, and the first "category 3" library is due to open at Masham on the 1 February 2012.

Work also continues in exploiting the new "supermobile" routes within communities, which to date is currently outperforming the combined visitor/membership of the previous fleet. Work is also ongoing to explore further opportunities to develop library outlets / book corners and "reading rooms" where communities have expressed a local demand for collections. In addition, further opportunities for volunteering within the service are being pursued in a number of areas including reading activities, ICT sessions and the extension of the already successful Home Library Service; which will be taking up former users of the mobile service who are unable to access the library service by any other means.

#### **Registration Service**

North Yorkshire Registration Service has had good feedback recently from two sources.

Firstly, the General Register Office (GRO), the government agency responsible for civil registration, inspected the Service in September this year. They observed staff at work and measured the service against statutory standards and performance targets and as a result, judged the level of service attained as excellent. Strengths identified included an excellent standard of customer care; very good customer access to the service - in terms of opening hours and the location of offices; a good standard of office accommodation and the wide

range of non-statutory services on offer such as baby-naming ceremonies. The GRO also praised the introduction of an online appointment booking service for the public which is due to come into operation during December.

As well as this, the Service's customers have been fulsome in their praise and of the 4,000 customers invited to complete a questionnaire; 91.5% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the service.

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LIBRARY & COMMUNITY SERVICES**