

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**20 February 2013****STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN WEIGHELL****Tour de France**

Members will be aware of the fantastic announcement on the 17 January 2013 of the route for the Tour de France Grand Depart Yorkshire 2014. The race will be hosted in Yorkshire on the 5th and 6th July 2014 and the route for both stages one and two travels through North Yorkshire. Le Tour has the potential to bring significant economic benefits given the number of people who will visit the County and with a three and a half billion global TV audience affords a unique opportunity to enhance the international perception of North Yorkshire.

Stage 1 of the route passes through:

Leeds - Harewood - Otley - Ilkley - Skipton - Kettlewell - Aysgarth - Hawes – Reeth - Leyburn - Ripon - Harrogate

And stage two passes through:

York - Knaresborough - Silsden - Keighley - Haworth - Hebden Bridge - Elland - Huddersfield - Holmfirth - Sheffield

Fifty two per cent of the combined route for stages 1 and 2 travels through North Yorkshire, which equates to some 204km of our highway network. This presents a unique challenge and there is a responsibility on the County Council, the District Councils, North Yorkshire Police and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, to manage the route through North Yorkshire. At this stage it is too early to say what the exact implications on the highway network will be in terms of works required, traffic management arrangements and road closures, but clearly the needs of both residents and spectators will have to be taken into account.

Selby Partnership

There has been an announcement earlier in January, about a project between NYCC and Selby District Council to consider the possibility of closer working relationships between the two councils. We have embarked on an initial 3 month investigation, to see what opportunities would exist, if the two councils worked more closely together. That investigation is looking at how we can pull together back office services and align more closely the services that we provide together to the public. We will be exploring the possibility of achieving efficiencies, increased resilience and providing better more joined up services to the public, through this approach. This is a genuine attempt by both councils to look at how we can make working between the two-tiers of local government more straight forward for the benefit of the public.

Rail Services

High speed 2

The proposed route of high speed 2 was announced on the 28th January. In relation to NY the route and times are better than I expected. With a direct route to York and a stop at Darlington. However I am aware of concerns in the south of the county regarding the proposed route and still believe a major investment in the East Coast main line would have been cheaper completed at an earlier date and more beneficial to a greater part of North Yorkshire.

Devolution of Rail Service

On the 4th February I attended a meeting of representative of the 33 transport authorities in the North of England which agreed to continue to support the devolution of rail services across the whole of the North of England. The franchises that operate in North Yorkshire are due to be renewed subject to the DfT confirming the timescales. The meeting agreed to work together on a long term rail strategy for the whole of the North of England. It also agreed the draft governance arrangements, namely a large leaders group to oversee the strategy, and a small officer group to progress the proposals.

Recruitment for a new Director of CYPS

I have great pleasure in announcing that Peter Dwyer has been appointed to Director of Children and Young People's Service and will join us in early April. He is currently Director of Adult and Children's Services for City of York Council and brings with him a wealth of experience and skills.

JOHN WEIGHELL