

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

24 JULY 2013

STATEMENT OF THE HIGHWAYS AND PLANNING SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER
COUNTY COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD**Highways & Transportation****Highways Maintenance Contract – Evaluation Panel**

On 25 May we held the first Evaluation Panel meeting for the new highways maintenance contract. The meeting considered a report on Ringway's performance over the last twelve months and agreed that the contract period should remain at ten years but with a number of action plans to improve performance going forward. This meeting will be held in May every year and enables us to hold Ringway to account for their performance, as we have the ability to remove up to 2 years from the ten year contract in any one year. These decisions must be based on the performance indicators in the contract and, if performance is poor, could ultimately see the contract period reduce from ten years to six years. The contract stipulates that in the first year of the contract only the winter maintenance performance counted towards a potential reduction, but going forward the full raft of performance indicators will come into play. This matter will have been reported fully at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 July where Members will have had the opportunity to make known their views to, and ask any questions of, senior officers of Ringway along with myself and senior Highways Officers.

Bedale, Aiskew and Leeming Bar Bypass

The Bedale, Aiskew and Leeming Bar Bypass (BALB) passed another significant milestone with the completion of the Public Inquiry which took place at The Lodge, Leeming Bar between 21 and 23 May 2013. There were a total of eight objections to the scheme. The Inspector listened to the concerns that were being expressed along with the responses from our project team and concluded the Inquiry with a site visit. In his closing remarks the Inspector stated that his recommendation would be submitted to the Secretary of State within 7 weeks but that he could not indicate how long it would be before the SoS notified all parties of his decision. It is currently anticipated that a response will be received in October/November. Subject to the outcome of the SoS decision, the scheme remains on track to commence construction in 2014 and to be completed by 2016.

Street Lighting Energy Reduction Programme - Crime Review Harrogate & Knaresborough

As part of the street lighting energy reduction programme a total of 8,800 street lights have been converted to part-night lighting in Harrogate town, Knaresborough and Scarborough Town.

During the consultation process some residents raised concerns that the part-night lighting may contribute to an escalation in crime. In March 2013 the County Council commissioned a review by North Yorkshire Police to assess the levels of crime in the Harrogate and Knaresborough district following completion of the scheme in that area.

The review concluded that during the three months after implementation there was an overall reduction in crime of 15% (19 crimes) when compared to the same period in the previous year. Crime also decreased by 13% (19 crimes) when compared to the three months prior to the implementation of part-night lighting. A review of crime levels will be undertaken in the Scarborough area in September 2013.

We are currently preparing the final touches in the district of Hambleton, jointly with the District Council, prior to public consultation. We shall be rolling the programme out to the rest of the County over the next 2 years and, as was the case with previous areas, local Member involvement is paramount.

Planning Services

Allerton Park Waste Recovery Park

The Decision Notice in respect of the AWRP application granting planning permission was issued on 14 February 2013. However, the permission itself is now the subject of a legal challenge in the High Court. Papers in connection with the Court Proceeding seeking the quashing of the planning permission have been submitted on behalf of the Claimant in this case, the Marton-cum-Grafton Parish Council. An argument for the matter to be expedited was placed before the Court on behalf of the County Council as the Defendant. This has culminated in a Court Hearing set to take place over two days on 30 & 31 July 2013. At that Hearing, it is expected that the presiding Judge will, firstly, rule on whether an arguable case lies before the Court and secondly, dependent upon the first ruling that an arguable case subsists, then the Case will move to a full Hearing where the Claimant and Defendant will present their respective arguments. If the case goes to a full hearing, judgement may be given on 31 July, but there is a strong possibility that judgement could be reserved in which case we may not know the outcome until September.

Minerals and Waste

Following agreement to a new project plan in April 2013, work has been taking place on the production of a joint minerals and waste plan, in partnership with City of York Council and the North York Moors National Park Authority. Preparation of a joint plan is expected to deliver improved co-ordination as well as overall cost savings. An initial consultation exercise took place during May and June 2013 and responses are being assessed. It is expected that further consultation on issues and policy options will take place later this year. Consideration is to be given to establishment of a Joint member body to take decisions at key stages of plan preparation, in order to help streamline the process. It is also intended that a meeting of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework Member Working Group will take place later this year, in order to provide informal member input into the Plan.

York Potash

The North York Moors National Park Planning Committee will consider the application for the mine (at Sneaton near Whitby) at a special meeting on 29 July. The County Council has commented on the application, including two further consultations on additional material. The responses recognised the significant economic opportunities presented by the proposed development, whilst suggesting ways in which any negative environmental or social impacts could be avoided or mitigated. The County Council is also involved in negotiations on a unilateral undertaking which includes funding for highway works, skills training and the Esk Valley Railway. The pipeline element to transport potash from the mine to Teesside for processing has been deemed a nationally significant infrastructure development and will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate. If the mine application is approved by the Park, it is expected that the pipeline application will be submitted to PINS soon after.

City of York Local Plan (Preferred Options)

The City of York Council is currently consulting at the Preferred Options stage on its draft Local Plan following the withdrawal of its draft Local Development Framework last year due to serious concerns raised by the Planning Inspector. The proposed Local Plan aims to ensure that York fulfils its role as a key driver economically and culturally. It marks a radical change from previous proposed approaches by committing to seek to accommodate all of its growth and needs within its boundaries by allocating land in its greenbelt for development. However, York is planning for high levels of economic growth, ie over 16,000 additional jobs between 2012 and 2030 despite significant decline in recent years. To match this aspired level of growth the proposed Plan aims to deliver between 1090 and 1250 new homes each year. This is much higher than previously planned for. 40% is planned to be provided within two major urban extensions, both on the outer edge of the Outer Ring Road at Clifton Moor (4,000

homes) and to the south-east of the City (5,600 homes). The potential impact of such high levels of housing growth, including within these two locations on traffic flows and connectivity along the Outer Ring Road (A19/A64T) is a concern. Despite the statutory Duty to Cooperate in plan-making, the County Council first became aware of many of the Plan's proposals through coverage in the York Press. The City of York Council scheduled an Extraordinary Meeting of the LGNYY Spatial Planning and Transport Board on 2 July to consider the document and its cross-boundary implications despite the plan already being subjected to public consultation. The Board, strongly urged by myself, was critical of York's approach to cooperation and urgent discussions with neighbouring Local Authorities are to take place. If any concerns relating to the cross-boundary implications of the draft Plan for North Yorkshire remain after these discussions, then I will ensure that that they are fully and strongly reflected in the County Council's formal consultation response in due course. This plan will be the blueprint for the next 15-20 years and it is vital it is both deliverable, sustainable and not detrimental to our residents within this County.

GARETH DADD