

North Yorkshire County Council**18 February 2015****Transport, Economy and Environment
Overview and Scrutiny Committee****Chairman's Statement**

- 1 My statement for this full council includes details of the Committee meeting held on 21 January 2015.

Committee – 21 JanuaryRingway Performance 2014/15 (April to September 2014)

- 2 Senior representatives from Ringway gave us an interim update on the performance of the Highways Maintenance Contract. The interim report related to Q1 and Q2 of 2014/15.
- 3 The half-yearly picture shows steady improvement with a reduction in the number of primary and secondary performance indicators that are failing to meet agreed targets. Whereas in 2013/14 nine out of 23 primary performance indicators were failing, in the year to date three out of the 23 are failing. Of those that are still below target most have seen an improved level of performance compared with the previous financial year.
- 4 Members raised a number of concerns about faded road markings on junctions and asked for their renewal to be given priority, and also called for different types of work to be planned in a more co-ordinated way within a local area. We were pleased to hear therefore that in this regard a 'LEAN Review has been undertaken of Basic Maintenance to look at processes and systems.

Road Safety

- 5 Provisional records suggest that there were 45 fatalities up to the end of December 2014 compared to 51 to December 2013. This modest but welcome reduction has mainly been amongst motorcyclists, older drivers, passengers and pedestrians. A note of caution is due though as the 2013 figure was a 65% rise on the figure of 31 for 2011.
- 6 We noted the various initiatives being taken to reduce accidents including road engineering measures and road safety education and information. These include the Enhanced Pass Plus programme to young and novice drivers – a programme commissioned and delivered by the County Council's road safety team.
- 7 A concern expressed at the meeting is the impact that continuing government funding cuts are and will have upon the delivery of such worthwhile preventative measures. We were pleased to hear that County Council officers are now exploring the potential for alternative funding mechanisms for delivering the most effective and key priority programmes.

- 8 Will Naylor, Chief of Staff for the Police and Crime Commissioner gave an update on the four trial areas for the Police Community Speed Watch Programme. I feel there is more scope for the Police and the County Council to join up on road safety initiatives. The joint Speed Management Protocol covering City of York and North Yorkshire should help foster this. Also the Committee called for the revenue raised from penalty notices from the mobile safety camera vans to continue to be put back into road safety initiatives.

Civil Parking Enforcement

- 9 We received an update on the operation of the county wide Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme. There has been a focus on market towns and tourist hotspots to date, as well as parking outside schools, and this will continue in the near future. Some Members called for there to be more resources deployed to other areas with parking problems. We were informed that in future resources will be deployed to these areas when contravention rates become lower in key market towns. Members were asked to highlight to officers where the problem parking areas are within their divisions.
- 10 We were reassured to hear the surplus raised from the CPE scheme is being reinvested in transport and highways related projects. Over time this surplus is likely to reduce. This is because contravention rates are expected to fall.

Local Governance for Economic Growth

- 11 The devolution agenda has obviously accelerated in the last six to nine months spurred on by the Scottish referendum on independence!
- 12 We were informed that simply retaining the *status quo* of the existing local governance structures in the county (Local Govt. York and North Yorkshire etc.) is not an option if we want the government to devolve further powers and responsibilities to us. Both the major parties are committed to Combined Authorities and LEPs as key building blocks for devolving further powers and responsibilities to local areas.
- 13 The outcome of our discussion was that we agreed it would be useful to have a Members Seminar on the subject of devolution to bring all Members up to speed with where developments are at. The next few months leading up to and immediately after the General Election need to see a lot of work being done to try and present a unified county-wide voice - and possibly making regional links as well - to press the case for devolving powers from the incoming government.

County Councillor David Jeffels
Chairman

Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
Northallerton

5 February 2015