

**North Yorkshire County Council**

**22 July 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 8 July 2015.

**Committee – 8 July**

Highways England

- 2 In April 2015, the Highways Agency was transformed into Highways England, changing it from a government agency to a government-owned company.
- 3 Roger Wantling Highways England Service Delivery Team Leader for Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire provided an update to the Committee. This chiefly focused upon the various programmes of work on the A64, A1 and A66 being undertaken in this financial year.
- 4 Highways England has not inherited the Highways Agency's planning powers like-for-like. The key implication of this could be a speeding up of planning applications for development near the strategic road network. More responsibility will be placed upon local planning authorities in deciding whether a development will have a sufficiently serious traffic impact to merit involving Highways England.
- 5 At the meeting we briefly explored the links that Highways England has with the local authorities in North Yorkshire. I feel that it is especially important that all continue to work closely together in the future so that local plans and Highways England's growth plan dovetail and influence each other.

Rail North and Franchise Update

- 6 We were provided with an update on the work of Rail North Ltd. and the progress of the TransPennine Express and Northern rail franchises. Invitations to tender closed on 25 May for the TransPennine franchise and 26 June for the Northern franchise. Three companies have been shortlisted for each of the Northern and TransPennine Express franchises. The bids are now in the process of being evaluated and the successful bidders will be known this autumn.
- 7 We were pleased to hear that the minimum specification set out in the Invitations to Tender represent a marked service enhancement from what is currently operated, particularly for the Northern franchise. The County Council, together with the LEP, has also met with the bidders to articulate its 'asks' and provide intelligence in relation to the local economy and known housing growth, both of which support better and more frequent train services.

- 8 We sought clarification on the various governance arrangements of Rail North Ltd. and also Transport for the North. The latter's role is to set out a high level transport strategy for the North of England. North Yorkshire County Council is not on Transport for the North's partnership: the membership comprises the six northern cities. The County Council does however sit on the wider reference group of the remaining non-city northern local transport authorities. This is at least providing us with the opportunity to set out North Yorkshire's key strategic transport requirements and to highlight the importance of improving rail connections across the whole of the North of England.
- 9 As part of our discussion of the Northern Transport Strategy the Committee agreed that all Members would benefit from a follow-up Members Seminar on the devolution agenda. This would be in particular around the current thinking about the geographic coverage of a Combined Authority that the County Council could be part of.

#### Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2016-2046

- 10 The Committee received the results of the initial consultation on LTP 4 carried out recently to establish people's views on priorities for LTP4.
- 11 The results showed that the priorities have not changed to those in LTP3. Most respondents attach greater importance to services relating to maintenance (e.g. road maintenance) rather than those relating to the provision of new facilities.
- 12 Members emphasised the need for the County Council to work closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure that cross-border transport schemes can come to fruition. We were assured that this would be the case by building upon our current working relationships.
- 13 We will be receiving the draft version of the LTP4 at our next committee meeting in October.

#### **Task Group review of Residents Parking Schemes**

- 14 The Committee has set up a task group to review the County Council's Residents Parking Scheme Policy.
- 15 To date the task group has visited Skipton to investigate the parking issues on the Regent estate adjacent to Skipton Building Society's Head Office, which triggered the review. Skipton Building Society is offering to act as third party sponsor for the scheme. However the estate is currently not eligible for a residents parking scheme because most properties have off-street parking. The task group met with Skipton Building Society and leading residents campaigning for a Residents Parking Scheme (RPS) to understand the issues fully there including why residents do not see other solutions such as yellow-lining as appropriate.
- 16 Further visits are planned to other parts of the county in July to look at examples of:
  - The impact of hospital car parking charges on surrounding streets with off-street parking (Harrogate and Scarborough)

- On street parking by non-residents in streets with sheltered housing, which is making carer and medical access more difficult (Selby district)
- The impact of visitor/sporting attractions on surrounding streets with off-street parking currently not eligible for a residents parking scheme (Ripon Racecourse)

### **Member Working Group on Minerals and Waste Development Framework**

- 17 A number of Members from the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee sit on the Members Working Group on Minerals and Waste Development Framework.
- 18 The various stages of the process for developing the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan with the City of York Council and the North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority are complex with a lot of information and views to feed in to the process.
- 19 The group met in April and May to provide feedback to officers on the preferred options (key policy directions) for waste and minerals, in advance of the public consultation. The group will meet again in late autumn to receive the feedback from the consultation and to discuss any potential policy changes arising therefrom.

### **Fracking**

- 20 The Ryedale Area Committee at its meeting on 10 June 2015 considered the Petition opposing Fracking and all other forms of unconventional fossil fuel extraction in North Yorkshire. The Area Committee recommended that further investigation is commissioned into the implications of fracking by the Transport and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and recommended to the Executive:

“That the Executive consider taking the action the petition requests [as per option (i) in the petition report] after hearing the views of the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Scrutiny of Health Committee [as per option (iii) in the petition report].”

- 21 The Executive at its meeting on 7 July 2015 supported this approach.
- 22 Our Committee has agreed to investigate the environmental impacts of fracking at its committee meeting in January next year.

### **County Councillor Andrew Backhouse Chairman**

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

9 July 2015