

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

24 FEBRUARY 2016

STATEMENT OF WASTE SERVICES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RAIL STRATEGY AND TRADING STANDARDS PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS METCALFE

Waste Services

Waste Management

I am pleased to confirm that construction work at Allerton Waste Recovery Park continues according to programme with over 300,000 hours' work completed. AmeyCespa's construction contractors are now assembling structural steelwork for both the Mechanical Treatment and Energy from Waste buildings, and work has already started on installing some of the process equipment. Works will begin soon on installing cabling necessary to connect to the National Grid in Coneythorpe which will involve directional drilling under the A1. Amey has begun consultations with communities affected by temporary road closures and will keep any inconvenience to a minimum. We have also started working with Amey Cespa and Yorwaste to plan for the commissioning and testing of the plant which will start in early summer of 2017.

I also need to share with you today our plans to change the operation of household waste recycling centres from 1 April 2016.

The first change is that sites will close earlier than they do now. New opening times will be 8:30 am to 5:00 pm between April and September, then 8:30 am to 4:00 pm between October and March. All sites will continue to close every Wednesday. Evidence has shown that the sites have been used by relatively few people between 5 and 7pm so by closing earlier in the summer we will save around £100,000 per year with minimum effect on users.

The second proposed change is that we will also start charging for the acceptance of vehicle tyres in addition to the other types of non-household wastes that we currently charge for. We estimate this will save £15k per year. The Council is not obliged to accept tyres and they are readily recycled by garages and tyre companies. By charging for their disposal we will recover our costs for what is a discretionary service.

Finally, we plan to change the operation of our Stokesley site to only allow North Yorkshire residents to enjoy free access. We estimate that one third of customers at that site are not residents of North Yorkshire. In the past we have been critical when neighbouring authorities have prevented our residents from using sites in their areas, so we have decided we will not be doing the same. We will first seek contributions from the neighbouring councils but if a contribution is not available, non-residents will continue to be welcome to use North Yorkshire HWRCs, but we will charge to do so. This means that residents of neighbouring areas will still have the opportunity to use the site that is closest or most convenient for them, but that they, or their local council will now have to contribute to the cost of providing the service. We estimate this will save over £40,000 per year.

The decision to introduce these changes will be considered by the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Rail Strategy

Over the next few months we will also see changes in our rail network as new franchises are put in place for both the Northern and Trans-Pennine networks. These offer some significant

improvements across the network including increased frequency between Scarborough and York and Harrogate and Leeds – both these are areas which the council has promoted positively to the rail industry

Trading Standards

Multi Agency Safeguarding Team

The safeguarding of vulnerable adults continues to be a key theme with 4 officers now assigned to the safeguarding role, namely visiting victims of scam mail and fitting of call blocking devices. These visits have resulted in a number of referrals not only to Health and Adult Services for a safeguarding assessment but to partner agencies (Fire/Age UK) for visits by these agencies to these residents. This approach is aimed at empowering these residents to remain independent but safe in their own homes.

In addition partnership initiatives have and are taking place with Barclays bank, advising their customers against fraud, Multi-Agency days with Ryedale Community Safety Local Delivery Group, joint visits with the Fire Service. A new initiative is being set up in partnership with Neighbourhood Watch to protect residents of certain Park Home sites that, if successful, can be rolled out to all North Yorkshire sites where there is a need. This has come about from intelligence gathered about specific scams aimed at Park Home owners.

The work of the team will be show cased at a parliamentary reception held in the House of Commons on 9 March. The event entitled “Safeguarding Adults from Financial Scamming” and hosted by Conor Burns MP. Speakers will include North Yorkshire Police ACC Tim Madgwick and Ruth Andrews, North Yorkshire County Council’s Team Leader, Multi Agency Safeguarding Team. The event will look at the impact, research and work being carried out on financial scamming in the UK. Chairman of the County Council Councillor David Jeffels will be attending.

Planning

NY/2015/0233/ENV – Planning application on land at Kirby Misperton on behalf of Third Energy UK Gas Limited

With regard to Third Energy’s planning application, further information requested by the County Planning Authority in October of last year has recently been received and is now subject to formal public consultation.

This is a statutory requirement and means that the County Planning Authority is not in a position to determine the application whilst continuing to seek the views of the community and consultees alike.

The number of representations, including those in objection and those in support, remains around 4,000; although this may change in light of the further round of consultation.

In line with Members’ decision made on Tuesday 20 October of last year, the Planning & Regulatory Functions Committee received formal training on Monday 2 November; the details of which are available to view on the County Council’s Online Planning Register.

Members will recall that no decision will be made on the application until a formal Site Visit has been undertaken by the Committee; a date for which is yet to be arranged.

CHRIS METCALFE

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24 February 2016

STATEMENT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - LIBRARY, CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS METCALFE

Libraries

Library reconfiguration

Work on the reconfiguration of the library service continues to progress well and Officers from the Library and Stronger Communities teams have met with local Members and have been working with them together with local communities and prospective partners to encourage expressions of interest from volunteers interested in forming and being part of local management groups.

A report on progress was considered by both the Executive (8 December) and Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16th November) for which RAG (red, amber, green) ratings for each library were produced. The ratings are based on whether a group has come forward; whether that group has submitted an expression of interest; whether there is the required volunteer capacity and whether there is support from the local parish/town council. Six localities with prospective community libraries are currently rated red and six are rated at amber at this point in time. Eight are rated green, with one additional library at Pateley Bridge, already transferred to community management and now operated by Nidderdale Plus.

Those groups that have submitted an expression of Interest will be supported by Stronger Communities team to produce a business plan which will be assessed by a panel comprising officers from legal, contracting, finance, property, libraries and stronger communities. In addition to the above, officers have begun work on simplifying the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) as well as production of guidance and draft heads of terms for leasing buildings.

A highly popular Community Libraries Conference took place on the 20th November in Harrogate . This was attended by 120 people and was aimed at local members and existing/potential partners/management groups. Feedback from the conference has been very positive, with people finding the workshops and opportunity for networking particularly beneficial. The sharing of experience by the existing community libraries was much appreciated. Delegates went away with a clearer idea of the task ahead but reassured that the support will be there for them. Specific comments included:

- It was a most interesting day, and I found the workshops extremely helpful
- Hearing experiences from established volunteers was useful, within the workshops and during networking
- Really enjoyed this conference and found it a very useful networking opportunity and opportunity to share best practice
- It gave space to think and listen to others' ideas / experiences
- Definitely worth spending a day and learnt a lot of valued info
- I have found the day very helpful and informative

One of the suggestions from the conference was that there should be more detailed seminars on some of the topics covered by the day, and we will be discussing options with colleagues as to how to take these forward.

An up to date Community Library Toolkit is also being produced. This will include useful information about the establishment, governance and running of an organisation, business planning, accessing grants and income generation, managing buildings, employing staff/recruiting and managing volunteers, marketing and publicity etc.

Work is also underway on the development of a comprehensive training programme for volunteers and a revision of the operations handbook which both staff and volunteers will use.

In addition to the above, a series of staff briefings took place over 2 weeks commencing the 18th January at the start of the formal re-structure of the entire paid library staff team. As Members will be aware, this remains an extremely challenging programme of change for the library service, and both the Library and Stronger Communities teams will continue to support local Members and communities in enabling them to maintain local library services into the future.

Wi-Fi Funding

Previously we informed members that we have been awarded funding from DCMS to install Wi-Fi in those libraries not currently providing this service, including many of our community managed libraries plus upgrading the system for the others. The installation programme is currently in progress and all installations are scheduled to be completed by the end of February.

New Thirsk Library

Thirsk Library was 'officially' opened in its new location within Meadowfields Extra Care housing scheme in December. In addition to Thirsk's long running Film Club and Book Groups the new venue now boasts four children's Code Club computer programming sessions as well as a popular craft club on a Friday evenings. Working in partnership with Adult Education Services there are several ESOL, Maths and literacy classes taking place in the library which also continues to provide a busy and volunteer led Home Library service to the people of Thirsk and the surrounding area. Working with businesses and organizations local to Thirsk the library is part of the Magna Carta anniversary celebrations and is currently displaying the facsimile copy presented to the town by the Lord Lieutenant. Since opening to the public in August visitor numbers and book issues have increased with a massive 75% increase in new members compared with this time last year. Looking to future developments the library will be collaborating with Bistro 21 to provide a magical feast for Harry Potter Night and a new Gallery space is also being developed for use by local artists.

Celebrating Diwali at Malton library

As part of the celebration of Diwali at Malton library a Skype connection was set by a member of staff so that a family that had been regular users of the library but moved back to India earlier last year could "attend" the storytime held at 2.30 pm local time; 7.30 pm in India.

The Library story corner was beautifully decorated for Diwali with lots of candles and story explaining the festival of light

The feedback from the family was "It is hard to express in few words the joy in being involved in such an international story session. A heartfelt thanks goes to everyone at Malton library to have made it a possibility. Stories, as they say, have no boundaries and in this case it has been proven that they can cross continents"

National Libraries Day.

Libraries across North Yorkshire celebrated National Libraries Day on Saturday 6th February, 2016, with a range of events and activities for library users and supporters to enjoy. We know libraries are loved and valued and in North Yorkshire; they were visited an astonishing 2.5 million times last year. This year, Libraries celebrated the work they do to promote literacy and enjoyment of reading; supporting people access information on-line, encouraging life-long learning and promoting community health and well-being. Residents were encouraged to visit their library to find out about the range of services on offer- from basic IT classes to free book loans, coding clubs to homework support and across the County there were quizzes, stories, classes, treasure hunts and a coding competition for children to design their own Scratch game.

Harrogate Library had a day of activities for all the family from exploring your ancestry to dragon stories and in Ryedale and Scarborough everyone who visited the library in the week leading up to 6th February was entered into a free prize draw to win a library hamper. Other activities included book sculpting in Catterick, young volunteers telling stories in Skipton and cake tasting in Selby. People were also encouraged to join the service on Social media by posting their #Shelfie on Twitter to @nycclibraries by taking a fun photo of themselves in front of a library shelf and spreading the word..

Registration

For the registration service, I can report that the figures for for the first three quarters of 2015-16 are good. The wedding market has bounced back from the downturn during the credit crunch and the provisional figures for ceremonies, both weddings and civil partnerships, for the year ending March 2016 indicate another record high. One example is the Selby office where two years ago the total for ceremonies at the office for the year was 56 and falling. This total has already been exceeded with a e figure of 76.

In addition, same sex couples are now opting for marriage rather than a civil partnership with the number of civil partnerships having fallen from a high of 60 five years ago to a position where a total of less than 12 is anticipated this year. A further 72 couples also opted for a conversion of their civil partnership to a marriage during this year.

The registration staff worked hard during the recent floods to ensure that no bride's big day would be ruined. This was due not only to the efforts of paid staff but also partners and family who also gave their own time to ensure that the registrars arrived on time.

Archives

Grounds for Appeal

The Record Office has secured funding of £8,500 from Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Grounds for Appeal' project which will explore and open up access to the North Riding military tribunals' appeals records 1916-1918. The tribunals were set up following the passing of the Military Service Act (1916), which introduced conscription and worked throughout the country to consider applications for exemption from military service. With few exceptions, the records created by the tribunals were ordered to be destroyed following the war but those for the North Riding survived and have remained undisturbed and hidden from public view ever since. This project will enable local communities to engage with these records for the first time and to gain a greater understanding of the sensitive issue of conscription, the work of the tribunals and of the social and working conditions which then prevailed.

Ripon Re-Viewed

Over the next two years, the Record Office will be working with Ripon Civic Society and the Library Service to build a visual record of the history of the city of Ripon. The project focuses on the city's photographic heritage, bringing together over 6,000 images in total, documenting and illustrating the changing townscape and the people living and working in the city over the past 120 years. By conserving, digitising and cataloguing the images, the project will create a new and lasting resource that is open and accessible to everyone in Ripon – residents and visitors alike. The Record Office will carry out the digitisation work and provide environmentally controlled storage for the collection; cataloguing work will be undertaken by volunteers.