

## North Yorkshire County Council

24 February 2016

### 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 22 January 2016.

#### Committee – 22 January

2. As reported in my previous update, our Committee agreed to set aside its meeting in January to investigate the impacts of fracking, including the safeguards that should be put in place. The meeting was a joint meeting with the Scrutiny of Health Committee.
3. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the broad strategic issues around fracking with a view to influencing the development of the Minerals & Waste Plan. A key aspect will be to assess the extent to which the Plan is “future proof” should there be a proliferation of wells across North Yorkshire.
4. We also wanted to tease out from the discussion any gaps or ambiguities in the regulatory framework and the general risks associated with fracking activity. This is with a view to then influencing how the Plan could address these problems, for instance, through the publication of supplementary guidance.
5. There was constructive involvement from members of the public. We received a number of informative responses from a range of agencies involved in the regulation of fracking in response to lines of enquiry set out in our report. These included senior representatives from Friends of the Earth, UK Onshore Oil and Gas, the Department of Energy & Climate Change, the Oil & Gas Authority, the Environment Agency, Public Health England, the Health & Safety Executive and Yorkshire Water. A sound recording of the meeting is available at:  
<https://soundcloud.com/northyorkscc/sets/fracking-overview-and-scrutiny-meeting-22-january>
6. In consultation with group spokespersons from each committee, Councillor Jim Clark and I will be producing a report which summarises our findings for submission to the Executive. This will fit in with the timescales for the planned production of the Plan which is likely to be early this summer.

#### County Councillor Andrew Backhouse Chairman

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

8 February 2016