

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

20 July 2016

STATEMENT OF TRANSPORT, WASTE & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RAIL STRATEGY AND GROWTH, PLANNING & TRADING STANDARDS PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS METCALFE**Waste Services**

Since the last meeting of the County Council, contractors have passed the half-way point in the construction of Allerton Waste Recovery Park. The anaerobic digester has been built and tested, and is now being insulated and clad. The building for the mechanical treatment plant is almost complete and the installation of equipment will begin in December this year. Both combustion lines of the Energy from Waste plant are installed, and contractors are now working to connect the myriad of cables, control systems and pipework that join all the major parts together. The waste bunkers are complete, tipping hall construction is under way and work has begun on the connections that will allow the electricity generated by the facility to be sent to the National Grid. I'm pleased to report that the construction programme is still on schedule and waste deliveries from Harrogate will begin from May 2017 to allow the plant to be commissioned with full service commencement expected by 31 January 2018.

Members will remember that we introduced a resident's permit system at Stokesley household waste recycling centre on 1 April 2016, along with reduced opening hours and charges for tyres at all 20 of our centres. I am very pleased to report that this has gone well and that our colleagues in the borough and district councils have not seen a noticeable increase in fly-tipping since we introduced these changes. We have seen a drop in inputs to Stokesley of around 30% which should realise savings of approximately £50k in the current year. We have also seen some people from outside the County pay to use the facility which confirms that our decision not to exclude non-residents was the right approach to take.

Economic Development

The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding LEP fully delivered the first year of its growth deal, on time on budget. Whilst continuing to deliver the existing deal, it is also now bidding for an additional share of a new £1.8bn national pot.

Parallel to this, in partnership with NYCC the LEP is investing c.£3m in two flood defence projects. One will improve the bridge solution in Tadcaster, widening the pedestrian footpath, the other will help secure 300 jobs by addressing flooding at Dalton Industrial Estate.

The implications of the EU referendum result are evolving, in particular the impact on the €110m EU Programme for our area. We continue to press for delivery of current projects whilst greater clarity is forthcoming.

Trading Standards**Farming, Food & Health****Food Allergens Investigation Update**

The Crown Prosecution Service presented the prosecution case on behalf of both the Police and the Service. Mr Zaman was found guilty at Teesside Crown Court on Monday, 23 May, of manslaughter through gross negligence following the death in January 2014 of Paul Wilson. Mr Zaman was also found guilty on charges of employing illegal workers and six breaches of food regulations but was found not guilty of perverting the course of justice. He was sentenced to six years in prison and part of this sentence included 18 months in prison to run concurrently for

the six food safety related offences. The case attracted a large amount of interest from the media.

Public Health – Legal Highs Update

On 26 May 2016, the New Psychoactive Substances Act came into force which bans the production, supply and possession for supply of any substance which is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it. As such ‘legal highs’ are now illegal.

Any product that causes a ‘psychoactive effect’ ie those that stimulate or depress a person’s central nervous system or affect a person’s mental functioning or emotional state are caught by the Act. However the legislation creates an exemption for alcohol, nicotine and caffeine based products. Prior to the implementation of the Act three shops were known to supply “Legal High” type products (psychoactive substances) in North Yorkshire; one in Harrogate and two in Scarborough. Post 26 May, 2016 Trading Standards officers have visited each of the shops and found that they have all ceased supplying psychoactive substances yet continue to trade other products.

Trading Standards will continue to monitor complaints regarding the supply of psychoactive substances and work with the Police to address any allegations of criminality. The supply of legal highs is now a Police matter as the enforcement role now sits with them. Trading Standards will continue to work in partnership with the Police in a supportive role for example assisting with the gathering of any intelligence. In addition there are also enforcement and safeguarding steering groups in place to counteract any local safeguarding issues and Trading Standards Officers will continue to link in with all partner agencies as required.

Public Health – Illicit Tobacco Survey

In April 2016, Trading Standards and the Public Health team jointly commissioned an illicit tobacco survey to quantify the extent of the illicit tobacco market across North Yorkshire. The results of the survey indicated that in North Yorkshire 31% smokers have tried illicit tobacco and that illicit tobacco makes up 9% of the tobacco market. The percentage share of illicit tobacco compared to the overall tobacco market in North Yorkshire is on a par with neighbouring authorities such as West Yorkshire and the North East authorities.

The survey also indicates large variations in the illicit tobacco purchasing habits across the County. Ryedale at 39%, Selby 29% and Scarborough 21%, demonstrate significantly higher rates of illicit tobacco purchases as compared to other areas in the county, the County average being 19%. The lowest results are in Harrogate at 11%.

In response to the survey results, Trading Standards via the North Yorkshire Tobacco Control group will work with the District Councils and other partners to formulate an enforcement and education programme to identify and take action against those supplying illicit tobacco. Additional activities will be put in place to educate and warn the wider community as to the dangers of purchasing this type of product. The programme will cover the entire county however initial focus will be on Ryedale and Selby given the highest prevalence in those areas.

Planning Services

Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Consultation on a first full draft of the new Minerals and Waste Joint Plan has been completed and responses are being assessed. Further work is taking place to address issues relating to shale gas. A final draft Plan is programmed for completion by October 2016 and will be made available for further representations before approval is sought from Full Council to submit the Plan for Examination in Public.

CHRIS METCALFE

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

20 July 2016

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

COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS METCALFE

Libraries

Service reconfiguration

Since my last statement; this has been an intense period of activity for our library service. Members have been receiving regular updates as to the progress of the planned reconfiguration of libraries as agreed by the Executive in July 2015, i.e. 7 core, 5 hybrid and a further 21 community managed libraries, to come into effect by the spring of 2017.

The service and Stronger Communities continue to make progress and to meet regularly with all local community library groups and organisations across the county. Since my last report, officers from the library service and stronger communities have attended 47 meetings. These have included discussions on Heads of Terms for leases and Service Level Agreements.

Alongside of this; the Stronger Communities team has been working with groups on their constitutions and charity registration, and several groups have already sent their applications off to the charity commission. The Stronger team have also been helping groups to prepare their business plans; the first 6 of which have been considered by a multi-disciplinary assessment panel of established by the Library Service.

This panel, comprising County Council Officers from finance, legal, property, contracting, stronger communities and libraries had their first panel meeting on 7 July to consider the first 6 business plans to be submitted. It was agreed that the majority of these can proceed to detailed negotiations, subject to additional work in certain areas.

Milestones for the next 3 months include assessment of further business plans; agreement on Property Heads of Terms and continuing SLA discussions and I will be reporting on further progress on these at next Full Council.

At the same time work continues on the staff re-structure and the first appointments have been made. The service also continues to deliver first class services to its customers and of particular note are the activities aimed at supporting the development and increasing the life chances of children.

May saw **National Share a Story Month** celebrated across North Yorkshire's libraries. As well as story times in libraries and other locations, staff and volunteers shared storytelling skills with parents and invited schools in to visit and join the library. Over 800 children took part in activities.

This was followed up in June with **National Bookstart Week** with libraries across the county, in partnership with the Book Trust, hosting special story times and activities to inspire families to read together. 45 events were held in 38 libraries with 451 children and 193 adults taking part in the fun. As a result 96 new people joined their local library.

Many more children will have the opportunity to benefit from our libraries when the annual **Summer Reading Challenge** is launched on the 16th July.

The Summer Reading Challenge is a national reading initiative, co-ordinated by The Reading Agency, for children aged 4 to 11 and is running in all North Yorkshire libraries this summer. This year The Reading Agency is working in association with the Roald Dahl Literary Estate to mark 100 years since the birth of this ever-popular author and the title of the challenge is The Big Friendly Read.

There will also be over 100 activity sessions in libraries across North Yorkshire during the summer. Last year in North Yorkshire almost 10,500 children took part with over 9,000 of these finishing the challenge and children borrowed more than 126,000 books over the summer.

Skipton Library Code Club has just completed a 10 week course in coding for young people aged 9-11. What makes this club different is that it's being delivered by two 14 year old volunteers from Ermysted's Grammar School in Skipton. The teenagers came forward as volunteers to share their interest in coding and have done a wonderful job of inspiring the young people and leading the sessions. They hope to run another session in the autumn term and have encouraged other students to come forward as potential code club volunteers at other libraries in Craven.

Northallerton Library has held the first exhibition this month of work by "**Scribble Zone**", an experimental art workshop for young adults. The group has on average 10-14 young people attending every week and aims to provide local young people with the opportunity to experiment with their art, to discover a style with which they are confident and comfortable, and to explore ways in which their work can be shared with the community supported by local artists. Creative art sessions are popular in libraries, as demonstrated by the Arts Council funded Creative Residencies programme, now in its 3rd year and taking place in **Leyburn, Stokesley, Catterick and Bilton and Woodfield Libraries**, and challenge perceptions that young people and others may have that libraries are not for them. Libraries are community hubs with potential for a wide range of activities and are free, safe and welcoming.

Of course Libraries are for everyone in the community. **Catterick Garrison Library** is currently hosting an English class for older Nepalese residents. Run by a support worker and a young SSAFA volunteer acting as an interpreter, the class of 25 is working hard to improve their English in an informal atmosphere where they can also browse and borrow from the library. **Skipton Library** opened its doors to a community fair delivered to promote community cohesion in Skipton following concerns raised by an Asian Women's Group at the 'Craven Together' meeting attended by the library service. 17 organisations hosted stalls to raise awareness of the services and opportunities they provide. 260 people attended on the day and following this event many of the organisations involved are planning further information drop in sessions at libraries across Skipton and Craven.

This year being the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare; libraries have already been marking this throughout this year and they have now been awarded £1500 from the Arts Council for an innovative project taking place at **Scarborough Library** in which the Beach Hut Theatre Co. Will work with new community writers and actors to re-interpret scenes from Shakespeare for a modern audience, and performances will take place in the library on the 16th July.

Archives

The sixth Archives at Dusk event took place at the Record Office on May 12th and the audiences for this popular evening event have continued to increase. This year 180 people were welcomed to an informal evening of archive entertainment, highlighting the Record Office's holdings relating to North Yorkshire's historic homes and gardens, large and small. Visitors were able to explore behind the scenes at the office and to discover fascinating information about garden history, household management and interior design, the lost stately homes of the county and post-war housing. Visitors also had the opportunity to view the unique drawing of Howsham Hall of 1718 whose gardens were redesigned by Capability Brown.