

Local Government North Yorkshire and York

7 December 2012

General Updates

Report of the Honorary Secretary

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide a brief update on issues which do not require a full paper.
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2.0 Chancellor Autumn Statement – Report of Gary Fielding (Corporate Director – Strategic Resources, North Yorkshire County Council)

2.1 At the time of writing, it is anticipated that the Chancellor will make his Autumn Budget Statement on Wednesday 5 December. The Statement will provide an update on the Government's plans for the economy based on the latest forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility. It is likely that it will provide some high level indication of public sector expenditure for the remaining two years of the current CSR. It is anticipated that the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement will be announced approximately 2 weeks later.

3.0 Update on Credit Union – Report of Gary Fielding (Corporate Director – Strategic Resources, North Yorkshire County Council)

3.1 The North Yorkshire Credit Union (NYCU) was wound up following an order of the High Court on 31 October 2012. Liquidators have been appointed and the County Council and the City of York Council have been contacted as creditors.

3.2 Savers of the North Yorkshire Credit Union have all now been contacted by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and payments have been made. Separate correspondence was made to savers and this included information about the new Credit Union for North Yorkshire as offered by South Yorkshire Credit Union (operating at Ridings Credit Union). This was as close to the "one envelope" approach as was manageable given the situation.

3.3 At present less than 200 people have joined the South Yorkshire Credit Union from the North Yorkshire Credit Union. This is seen as disappointing and most are from the Harrogate and Northallerton area. More advertising is to be done particularly in the York area and it is hoped to build up this business. The search is underway for premises in York and Scarborough and Scarborough Borough Council have offered a lease for an unused cash office in their St Nicholas Street Customer Contact Service Centre. There is also interest in operating from Eastfield Library.

3.4 Louise Branford-White from the City of York Council attended the South Yorkshire Credit Union Board of Directors' meeting on the 26 November. The accounts were discussed and show a relatively healthy position. The South Yorkshire Credit Union have indicated that they are happy to have officers or Members from any of the sponsoring councils attend any of their Board Meetings.

4.0 Council Tax Support – Report of Paul Shevlin (Chief Executive, Craven District Council)

4.1 December is likely to be a busy month in respect of our local council tax support schemes. Across North Yorkshire councils will be confirming their local schemes in advance of the deadline of 31st January 2013. Although at the time of writing no schemes are final, it appears that the intention across the county is to limit the impact on claimants and keep the reduction in benefit to below 8.5%, which will allow councils to claim the one year transitional grant funding which is on offer. The gap between the reduced benefit and the transition grant will be met mostly by raising additional revenue from council tax (by taking the opportunity to amend selected exemptions and discounts).

4.2 Following the recent announcement by the Government that they will not be implementing the unadjusted tax base for parishes, finance teams are now scratching their heads as they try to solve the conundrum of how to distribute fairly an amount of funding, that is currently unknown, and how parish tax-bases should best be calculated.

5.0 Tour de France

5.1 Recent correspondence has been exchanged between Authorities subsequent to LGNY's last meeting which Members may wish to discuss today.

6.0 York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership – Report of James Farrar (Assistant Director, Economic Partnership Unit, Business and Environmental Services Directorate, North Yorkshire County Council)

6.1 The Minutes of the LEP Board meeting held on 7 September 2012 are appended.

6.2 An issue I would like to highlight, although it is mentioned in the appended Minutes is as follows:- The LEP is currently undertaking a piece of work to better understand the planning approvals across the area and in particular where approvals are not being developed out and why. Phil Morton from Hambleton is leading a piece of work considering the impact of Community Infrastructure Levy and other charges e.g. Section 106 on proposed developments. This will be used to direct discussions with central government and in particular Homes & Communities Agency when considering investment priorities.

7.0 NYnet Roll-Out – Report of John Moore (Chief Executive, NYnet)

7.1 The Superfast North Yorkshire (SFNY) project has now moved into "planning for delivery" mode with BT.

7.2 The physical roll out will begin in January 2013 and continue until the end of 2014. There are over 700 cabinets to be upgraded in that period. As the detailed plans are signed off the details will be placed on the SFNY website.

7.3 The roll out will ensure that at least 90% of the residential and business premises in North Yorkshire and the City of York areas will have access to broadband of at least 25Mbps. For the remaining 10% (equivalent to 40000 premises) BT are required to provide a minimum of 2 Mbps.

- 7.4 The SFNY Vision is to provide equivalent superfast broadband to 100% of premises. Work is therefore in hand, in partnership with all the local authorities in North Yorkshire, to establish an overlay of community (wireless based) schemes that will provide, as far as is practically possible, comparable broadband to that available in the 90 % areas.
- 7.5 The SFNY team have recently provided briefings to Members , and local groups, in a number of areas of the County and are available to do more if that would be helpful in getting the message across about what is happening.
- 7.6 A practical issue is the need to ensure that the roll out process is not delayed by "bureaucracy". To this end constructive meetings have already been held involving staff from the SFNY team and BT with senior officers from both Highways and Planning authorities. The aim is to ensure applications/approvals re cabinets are progressed both efficiently and with due regard to local policies and circumstances etc. The intention is to avoid situations where the conclusion becomes, to put it simply, "no cabinet no broadband".
- 7.7 For further Information on any aspect of the SFNY project please contact John Moore on 01423 323961 or john.moore@nynet.co.uk

8.0 Sub-Regional Housing Board – Report of Wallace Sampson (Chief Executive, Harrogate Borough Council)

Progress report as at 21 November 2012

Enhanced two tier project title: Affordable Housing

Project Description: Working together to increase the number of affordable housing units

Project Lead: Colin Dales, Richmondshire District Council
01748 827007. E-mail: colin.dales@richmondshire.gov.uk

8.1 Progress to date/update

- a) The Housing Partnership has established links with the newly established Health and Wellbeing Board via regular updates on how housing can contribute to health and wellbeing outcomes. Hopefully this new relationship will bear fruit in terms of new investment and partnership opportunities.
- b) A Rural Housing Week, organised by the Rural Housing Enabler Network, was held in October and proved to be very successful with events held throughout the county and gaining good media exposure in terms of raising the profile of affordable rural housing.
- c) A North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy for Local Authorities – a new statutory requirement introduced by the Localism Act – has been approved by LG NY & York Housing Board and is currently being considered by individual Local Authorities via their own decision-making processes.
- d) The North Yorkshire Housing Strategy and North Yorkshire Homeless Strategy have been merged into one key document.

- e) The LG NY & York Housing Board has considered how to make the links stronger between housing, spatial planning, economic development and transport across the county. There is some appetite among partners to strengthen these links but a lack of clarity on how this can be achieved without diluting the focus and delivery record of the Housing Board. To this end, **the Board is recommending a conference in the new year in order to explore how links can be made stronger.** This will be an elected member conference and will be organised by the Housing Partnership. All elected members will be invited to attend.
- f) Work on a new bank account developed in partnership with the North Yorkshire Credit Union – the “Jam Jar” account – to help financially excluded tenants manage the move to the direct payment of benefits as part of the new Universal Credit system has been suspended due to the demise of the Credit Union. Other alternatives are being considered, including a partnership with a private sector financial institution. Further updates will be given.
- g) The North Yorkshire Housing Strategy post, currently funded by Local Authorities, has been reviewed and the LG NY & York Housing Board has agreed that the post will continue to be supported beyond 31 March 2013 – this is good news for the Housing Partnership.

8.2 Barriers to progressing the project over the next period

- a) The main barrier continues to relate to current housing market conditions which are hindering the contribution that the planning system can make to affordable homes delivery.
- b) Lack of suitable land continues to be a barrier to the delivery of affordable housing.
- c) Homes and Communities Agency funding has been cut as part of CSR by approximately 70% which has created a great deal of uncertainty in terms of future outputs. Funding is based on a new affordable housing model whereby rents are up to 80% of market levels. This will impact differently across the county depending on housing benefit levels and the strength of the private rental market.
- d) Private sector housing improvement funding ceased from 1 April 2011 as a direct result of CSR. Local Authorities still have the freedom to fund private sector housing renewal from their own funds, but current feedback from Local Authority colleagues is that this area of activity has stopped with Disabled Facilities Grants being the core business.

9.0 Sub-Regional Spatial Planning and Transport Board – Report of Ian Stokes (Development Officer (Transport Strategy), City of York Council)

- 9.1 A meeting of the Spatial Planning and Transport Board’s Transport Officer Group will be convened on 29 November 2012. A meeting of the Board will be held shortly thereafter.

10.0 Yorkshire and Humberside European Regional Development Fund Performance Management Board for North East and West Yorkshire – Report of Councillor Derek Bastiman (Scarborough Borough Council)

- 10.1 At the meeting on 29 October 2012, it was reported that the programme value stood at £498.5m, that the ERDF Programme was legally committed at £309.8m, and that the project pipeline remained strong and continued to be subject of ongoing review. To meet the target of £298.3m, a sum of £23.9m spend was required by the end of November. The Board noted that project spend for 2012 was lower than contracted or forecast due to the pace and value of claims following the push of n+2 2011 and a £14.7m deficit currently existed against the £23.9m target requiring additional project approvals to deliver the required level of spend. I am pleased to report that progress is being made and the position is improving. Over £25m of claims have been processed, or are being processed, since our previous meeting. There were no projects to be approved for our area and only 1 in the Hull area which was for a development at Priory Park at Hull comprising the provision of services to a 15 acre brownfield site and the construction of 19,600 sq mt high quality employment space aimed at hi-tech industries over several phases.

11.0 Recommendation

- 11.1 That the report be noted.

Richard Flinton

Honorary Secretary to Local Government North Yorkshire and York

York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (YNYLEP)

Friday 7 September 2012 at The Station, Richmond

MINUTES OF MEETING

PRESENT

Barry Dodd	Chairman
Shaun Watts	Chameleon Business Interiors
Nigel Pulling	Yorkshire Agricultural Society
Ruth Smith	PM Management Consultants
Robert Miller	Bluebird Vehicles
Shaun Watts	Chameleon Business Interiors
Colin Mellors	University of York
Cllr Stephen Parnaby	East Riding
Cllr John Weighell	North Yorkshire County Council
Cllr Tom Fox	Scarborough
Cllr Stephen Parnaby	East Riding
Cllr Keith Knaggs	Ryedale – also rep. Hambleton & Richmondshire
Cllr James Alexander	City of York Council
Pat Oxley	17 Burgate

IN ATTENDANCE

James Farrar	Chief Operating Officer
Richard Flinton	North Yorkshire County Council
Andrew Leeming	York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Enterprise Partnership
Michelle Walker	York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Enterprise Partnership

1. APOLOGIES

David Bruce	Nestle UK
David Kerfoot	The Kerfoot Group Ltd
Neil Warman	The Nostrum Group
Cllr Chris Knowles-Fitton	Craven – also rep. Selby and Harrogate

2. Minutes of last meeting, matters arising

Minutes agreed

An Ageing population task and finish group has not been created. PO to discuss off line further. The increasing cost of health is a major challenge for all Local Authorities going forward.

3. LEP Plan Update

The plan has been circulated and also presented to Local Authority Chief Execs.

Local Authority Chief Execs – Two key points were raised;

1. We need stronger reference to collaboration with neighbouring LEPs. This was agreed.
2. There should be greater acknowledgement of existing strong sectors, for example Visitor Economy. These sectors are supported within objective 1 – Support and encourage small businesses to grow. The supporting delivery plans will acknowledge these sectors.

It was noted the business support lacks an international trade and export offer.

Action: TF to strengthen the relationship with UKTI to address this.

Potash - It is strongly supported by the board that, at the appropriate time, a representation should be made to the North York Moors National Park supporting the planning submission.

Action: LEP to strongly support the Potash planning application

Agri-Innovation – JA raised the issue of solar farms and their potential, particularly around the old North Selby Mine sites. Questions were raised about the economics and viability of these farms given the recent change in feed in tariffs.

Action: AL will research the opportunity.

4. Communications Paper

A broad discussion was held on how to build on progress to date and improve the impact of our communications;

It was agreed to allocate specific areas of responsibility to Board members and a permanent T&F Group be created to provide support and direction on our forward comms strategy.

Actions:

JF/BD to create a proposed responsibility matrix for Board Members

TF to create a comms T&F group to provide directions and support

5. Growing Places Update

The revised investment process with a stronger emphasis on strategic fit was agreed. A core change is that once strategic fit has been agreed, we will utilise the Board T&F Group at an earlier stage to support development of an investible business case.

The two priorities are;

Investing to encourage small business growth, and

Investing in to support major growth opportunities.

A wide discussions was held on what type of projects are we investing in. It was agreed that where investing in small businesses, the benefits must be wider than to the individual business in terms of growth and employment.

Action: AL to develop a revised prospectus by the end of September.

6. Potential deal with Government verbal update

A potential second round of Deals with Government are expected in September. We will not be 'allocated' a deal and would have to bid based on a major growth opportunity.

7. AOB

A Supplementary paper handed out giving an economic update.

Meeting closed at 12.25pm