

North Yorkshire County Council

Transport, Economy and Environment

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 23 January 2013 at 10.00 am.

Present:-

County Councillor David Jeffels in the Chair

County Councillors John Blackburn, Mike Cockerill, Michael Heseltine, Robert Heseltine, Mike Jordan, Penny Marsden, John Marshall, Don Mackenzie, Stuart Parsons, John Savage, Richard Welch

Officers

David Bowe	Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services
James Farrar	Assistant Director Economic Partnership Unit
Barrie Mason	Assistant Director Highways and Transportation
Geoff Wall	Assistant Director Central Finance
Lorraine Laverton	Corporate Development Officer

Also in attendance:

County Councillor Chris Metcalfe

No members of the public attended.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

105. Minutes

That the Minute of the meeting held on 7 November 2012, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

106. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public statements or questions

107. Business & Environmental Services Directorate

Considered –

Additional Budget Savings Required in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The Corporate Director for Business and Environmental Services; David Bowe gave a full overview of how the Directorate would achieve the savings required. He informed Members that the savings of £4.7m could be met and the Committee members expressed the view that they sincerely hope that there would not be a knock on detrimental effect on the quality of service provided.

Members discussed the performance of Ringways; the County Council's highway maintenance provider. There was a mixed reaction from Members with some feeling that the company was doing very well whilst others were vehement in their displeasure with Ringways. Both Dave Bowe and the Executive Member present County Councillor Chris Metcalfe were keen to hear of the detail of any problems and felt it might be one of poor communications rather than a problem with the quality of work. They assured the Committee that they would arrange a meeting with the Managing Director of Ringway to discuss any problems and ensure they were addressed. County Councillor Jeffels; the Committee Chairman offered to attend this meeting once it had been arranged, with a view to inviting the Managing Director to a future Committee meeting.

Resolved –

The Committee resolved to:

- note the plans for achieving budget savings across the BES Directorate so that any comments may be taken into account by the Executive at its meeting on 5 February 2013.
- invite the Managing Director of Ringway to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

108. Economic Development

Considered –

The presentations of NYCC officers; James Farrar, Barrie Mason and Geoff Wall focussed on Economic development.

Economic Development

Local Enterprise Partnership – Presentation by James Farrar Assistant Director Economic Partnership Unit

James Farrar the Assistant Director of the Economic Partnership Unit gave a presentation that took the Committee through the international and national economic picture before looking more closely at what is happening in our area. He informed Members about; small business growth with over 1,300 businesses supported and plans to have 1 – 1 business mentors with 73 mentors attracted already. The Committee went on to discuss major growth opportunities particularly around potash mining in the Whitby area, development of the underused site at Sandhutton that is currently sole use of the Food & Environmental Research Agency but with potential for campus development in science and innovation as well as agri-food innovation, the future plans at Drax power station as a producer of bio-mass energy and the future plans to provide carbon capture and storage facility. The Committee suggested that one opportunity that has captured the imagination of many, especially the cyclists in the County is the Tour de France. Mr Farrar informed the Committee that Welcome to Yorkshire will be leading the work in this area but the LEP is a key partner and intends to support rural businesses around the route to maximise the potential for income. The Committee expressed the view that it is important to encourage visitors to the area and to also encourage them come back and enjoy the wider county. Mr Farrar also made mention of some work that would be done with Market Towns and suggested the Committee might like to look at this in more detail in the future

Considered –

Highways & Economic Development – Presentation by Barrie Mason (NYCC Assistant Director Highways and Transportation)

Mr Mason gave a presentation that demonstrated how the Local Transport Plan, the Local Plans (formerly Local Development Framework), Local Sustainable Transport Fund, the Infrastructure Delivery Steering Group all worked together with the Local Enterprise Partnership and encouraged a pro-economy mind set. The Committee agreed that economic development is a role for everyone across the County Council and not just the LEP and the Economic Partnership Unit.

Considered –

How the County Council Procurement Activity supports the Economy of North Yorkshire – Presentation by Geoff Wall (NYCC Assistant Director Central Finance)

Mr Wall took the Committee through how the County Council's procurement activity supports the economy of North Yorkshire. He advised Members how the County Council informs local businesses about what we want to buy and what other engagement activity takes place; this includes working with partners such as the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and the North Yorkshire Forum. The County Council also work with the District Councils to put on 'Doing business in North Yorkshire' events. The Committee went on to say that it is always useful to remember that as well as giving business to local business where the County Council can, many of our services are provided by local people even if the employing organisation is not located here. This importantly helps to keep employment and earnings in the local economy.

Resolved –

The Committee resolved to:

- thank Mr Farrar, Mr Mason and Mr Wall for what they thought were excellent and informative presentations
- note the information in the presentations
- receive a report on Market Towns at a future meeting of the Committee

109. Work Programme

Considered –

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader asking the Committee to:-

- (a) Note the information in the report.
- (b) Confirm, amend, remove or add to the list of matters shown on the work programme.

On consideration of the Work Programme a Member raised an item for consideration around the maintenance of street lighting

Resolved –

The Committee resolved to

- (a) Note the information in this report.
- (b) Agreed to request a briefing on the maintenance of street lighting

The meeting concluded at 12:30

LL/ALJ