



Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24 October 2019

Report of the Corporate Director for Business and Environmental Services

Growth and Heritage Services

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Growth and Heritage service to the committee.

The report is for information. The only recommendation is the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the content of the report.

2.0 Key Background Information

Growth and Heritage Team Overview

- 2.1 The Growth and Heritage Services is led by the Growth and Heritage Services Manager who reports to the Assistant Director Growth, Planning and Trading Standards (GPTS) within the Business and Environmental Services Department.
- 2.2 The team is formed of the previous two teams of Heritage Services and the Strategic Policy and Economic Growth Team (SPEG). Expertise within the team covers the areas of Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Natural and Historic Environment and Environmental policy and projects.
- 2.3 There are three GPTS objectives supporting the overall corporate objectives. Primarily the Growth and Heritage team is responsible for delivering objective 3: *Enable sustainable economic growth and safeguard environment and heritage assets.*
- 2.4 The team has an extensive brief which relies upon its position to work with external organisations such as District Councils, National Parks and national bodies such as DEFRA and Natural England as well as with other service areas across the Council. Officers are relied upon to advise and work on the policy and delivery of a wide range of matters from Biodiversity net gain to the Local Industrial Strategy, District Local Plan Development and sub-regional Spatial Planning delivery and Devolution. Officers will work closely with partners delivering green infrastructure within the M62 energy corridor.

2.5 Below is a brief breakdown of the types of work carried out by service. A more detailed account of the service and its progress to date is available in the GPTS Service Plan Q1 review.

3.0 Heritage Services Activity – Historic Environment

3.1 Providing services to safeguard and develop the North Yorkshire historic environment, the team provides historic environment advice to all seven District Councils under service level agreements (SLAs), consultancy and to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC). The team has also held training workshops with District Councils upon their request.

3.2 The team maintains and enhances the Historic Environment Record (HER) which holds North Yorkshire's archaeological data with the exception of the archaeology within the National Park geographies. The record is held at Northallerton Library, is open to the public by appointment and used to as a reference for research and to check development proposals across North Yorkshire for likely archaeological impact. The team earns income from carrying out searches of HER data. This year the team is carrying out Historic England audit recommendations to ensure GDPR compliance and improve data recovery procedures. The team also works on improving access of heritage assets to the public for example by attending Northallerton's Hidden Heritage event as a member of its specialist panel and history projects funded by external bids such as the national lottery project Ryevitilise.

4.0 Heritage Services Activity – Natural Environment

4.1 The team supports three Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) teams. These are the Howardian Hills AONB team hosted by the County and the Nidderdale and Forest of Bowland AONB teams. This includes meeting statutory obligations to conserve and enhance the designated landscape through planning advice and grant funded conservation work. Examples would be the development and delivery of the five year management AONB plans.

4.2 The team supports the delivery of statutory obligations for marine and historic designated sites such as Flamborough and Filey Head EU Marine Conservation Zone and Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site.

4.3 Delivery of environmental policy, ecology and landscape advice: This is done directly with North Yorkshire County Council and to District Councils under SLAs and consultancy terms. This includes engagement with major projects such as power stations, HS2 and briefings on the Rural Economy and Environmental matters as well as responding generally on planning applications and undertaking ecological surveys. The team undertook paid work from Hambleton District Council to assess sites for their emerging Local Plan.

- 4.4 The team provides expertise in environmental assessment and has organised the requisite sustainability appraisals and Habitat regulations assessments for the Joint North Yorkshire and York Minerals and Waste plan.

5.0 Environmental Improvement

- 5.1 The team is working with the Local Nature Partnership, the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership and Directors of Development to improve regional understanding of natural capital assets, develop the 25 year environmental plan and embed emerging policy on biodiversity net gain.
- 5.2 The team works with a range of partners to deliver green infrastructure projects including the Local Nature Partnership, the Environment Agency and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership such as improved land management techniques in river catchments to improve bio diversity and prevent flooding and drought. In addition, the team develops wider green infrastructure plans in partnership with Leeds City Region and North Yorkshire Districts.
- 5.3 The team influences and advises on national policy including post Brexit environmental and Agriculture bills, clean growth strategies, climate change measures and rural strategies.
- 5.4 The team supports North Yorkshire and the Local Nature Partnership (LNP), hosting the LNP Development officer, to deliver knowledge and projects relating to conserving and enhancing biodiversity, sustainable economic growth health and nature projects. For example through the delivery of the Natural Capital data assessment project and anaerobic digester research project using green waste. The team engages in strategic partnerships to ensure the maximum joined up environmental investment working.

6.0 Growth: Local Plan and Development Planning

- 6.1 The team engages with each of the local planning authorities to ensure Local Plan policies are developed with consideration for North Yorkshire County Council operations such as Highways and Schools. Engagement is made through the duty to co-operate, responding to consultations and leading and participating in periodic meetings such as the Development Plans forum.
- 6.2 As part of the Growth Plan Steering Group structure the team has developed district liaison meetings at which infrastructure projects and infrastructure funding requirements are considered and prioritised. This requires the co-ordination and participation of a number of service areas throughout the council, particularly the Highways and Education authorities.
- 6.3 The team co-ordinates responses and represents the County Council on national infrastructure projects such as HS2 and NSIP applications such as

the redevelopment of Eggborough and Drax Power Stations. In the cases of NSIP applications the team has co-ordinated responses on behalf of both NYCC and Selby District Council. This ensures that NYCC aspirations are considered in these applications.

- 6.4 The team has developed Planning Performance Agreements for the NSIP applications and some of the larger Town and County Planning Act applications in partnership with Selby District Council.

7.0 Growth: National and Regional Economic Development

- 7.1 The team engages with national and regional policy consultations when required for example Community Infrastructure Levy consultations. It has led on YNYER strategic planning framework resulting in the launch of the Spatial Framework and the development of Strategic Development Zones. This is developed and consulted through the Directors of Developments and other external partners and consultants.
- 7.2 The team provides specialist advice and guidance to the Council on economic policy matters including in relation to Brexit. Specifically the implications of shifting from EU funding to the Shared Prosperity fund.

8.0 Growth: Deliver Economic Growth

- 8.1 The team authored, manages and monitors the Council Plan for Economic Growth. The 'Growth Plan' is currently being refreshed by the team with input from all service areas across the Council. The contents and success of the Growth Plan has been the focus of the Q1 report to Council for the last two years.
- 8.2 The team shapes and influences the emerging Local Industrial Strategy in line with NYCC objectives through the Growth Plan Steering Group and the LIS steering group.
- 8.3 The team facilitates and leads the development of the Cultural Plan for North Yorkshire in Partnership with District Councils, NPAs and the Cultural Sector.

9.0 Key Implications

Local Member

All

Financial

The costs of the team are primarily staffing costs. Some staff in the heritage part of the team work a dual role with other District Councils and a significant portion of the funding is acquired through the SLAs referred to above.

Human Resources

None – No recommendations for change.

Legal

None – No recommendations for change.

Equalities

None – No recommendations for change.

10.0 Conclusion

The Growth and Heritage service is a dynamic team, bringing together private and public sector partners to deliver the County Councils growth and environmental aspirations overseeing infrastructure development across the County.

11.0 Recommendation(s)

The Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report.

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Background papers relied upon in the preparation of this report:-

1. GPTS Service Plan Q1 Update report

For further information contact the author of the report

Appendices:

None