

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16 FEBRUARY 2022

STATEMENT OF THE OPEN TO BUSINESS PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR DEREK BASTIMAN (INCLUDING GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING, WASTE MANAGEMENT, TRADING STANDARDS AND BUSINESS RELATIONS)

Economic Development

The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) continues to deliver whilst awaiting the Levelling Up White Paper which will clarify its future role. It remains on track to deliver its three core programmes on budget, on time. These are

1. Getting Building Fund
2. Business Support Growth Hub; and
3. Careers and Enterprise Company

In addition, it is developing the York and North Yorkshire Plan for Growth and will also publish a routemap to Carbon Negative in 2022.

Growth and Heritage Services

The County Council is being consulted on number of significant policies and projects in the Environmental sector:

- Biodiversity Net Gain Consultation – the duty for developments to demonstrate a net gain in terms of biodiversity from November 2023 is a key provision in the Environment Act 2021
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation - a further consultation on the details of implementation of LNRSs is expected soon. This could involve a single LNRS covering North Yorkshire and the City of York
- Final response to Landscapes Review - a 12 week consultation on Government's proposals to support the work of the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Nature responding to the Landscapes Review published in 2019
- Proposed Yorkshire Wolds Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) – Natural England are currently assessing the area of potential designation to advise on a potential boundary before going to public consultation.

Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Defra has offered all Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty a one-off 'top-up' to their 2021-22 core funding. The Howardian Hills AONB has been notified that they will receive an additional £33k.

The new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, a part of Defra's Agricultural Transition Plan, runs from summer 2021 to March 2024. It offers funding to farmers and land managers in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and National Parks for projects with themes of climate change, nature, people and place. The Howardian Hills AONB programme has a fund of approx £124k in 2021-22.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

Where there have been statutory consultations the County Council has responded in full to these major projects:

- Drax Bio Energy and Carbon Capture Storage (BECCS)
This NSIP is the creation of a Carbon Capture Storage facility at the Drax Power Station site to service the Bio-energy generators. Submission of the Development Control Order is expected May 2021
- Power Grid Ventures - Humber Low Carbon Pipeline Project

The project is to install a Carbon Capture pipeline to carry the carbon away from Drax and other facilities in the area and store it underground in the North Sea. The land within the North Yorkshire boundary is relatively small. Full statutory consultation is not expected until Summer 2022

- Highways England – A66 Improvements
This entails 10 separate highway improvement schemes, two are within the North Yorkshire boundary. Stephen Bank to Carkin Moor is one and there is a second scheme proposed at Scotch Corner. The statutory consultation came to an end in November
- Power Grid – Yorkshire Green Energy Project
The project will increase capacity of overhead lines between York and Selby – some but limited on the ground infrastructure. The statutory consultation completed in December.

Planning Services

Final representations have recently been sought from stakeholders on the emerging Minerals and Waste Joint Plan for North Yorkshire, York & the North York Moors; a Plan that will become the key reference for minerals and waste planning decisions up to 2030. This public consultation was launched on 21 July, ended on 15 September and is in the final stage of consultation.

The Plan which has been developed over several years by North Yorkshire County Council, City of York Council and the North York Moors National Park Authority is now reaching its final stages before formal adoption. After extensive public consultation, a Government Inspector examined the draft plan in public in 2018 and 2019 and following the Inspector's recommendations, further work has been done to prepare Main Modifications to the Plan which have been the subject of the most recent public consultation.

These modifications update and strengthen some policies, incorporate legislative changes and add further and revised sites to the Plan. The duly made comments received during this most recent consultation are in the process of being forwarded to the Inspector, who will then take them into account when writing her Report. Subject to the Inspector's Report, the final stage will be the adoption of the plan as an official policy document.

Business and Consumer Services (BACS)

The owner of a watch company pleaded guilty to six offences related to sale/possession for sale of counterfeit watches. He was sentenced to 12 months community order with 150 hours unpaid and the company was subject to a nominal fine for each offence. Confiscation proceedings to recover the criminal proceeds will follow.

At York Crown Court in December 2021, Mr H was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment and ordered to pay partial compensation of £4,500 upon his release for two offences in connection with building work.

Food, Farming and Health

Currently North Yorkshire has had 13 cases of High pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza confirmed in the County. The Animal Health team continues to work with our colleagues at the APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency) regarding the 13th case which was confirmed on 27 January 2022. For the previous 12 cases we completed foot patrol work, which involved knocking on all doors (including residential properties) of the premises to a radius of 3km around each infected premises, to locate registered and unregistered birds. This information was supplied to the APHA so they can carry out further surveillance as part of their procedures. In addition, we continue to respond to complaints of keepers not complying with the housing order, requiring all poultry and birds to be kept away from wild birds to reduce the spread of the disease. The number of reported cases is the highest we have ever seen in North Yorkshire.

Waste Management

The waste service continues to engage with Government to help shape major reforms to the waste management sector. Work continues with partners to establish how to meet new obligations and deliver best value to residents.

Since my last statement, the waste team have worked with Yorwaste to deliver the highly popular Reuse Santa initiative throughout November and early December. The campaign encouraged the donation of good quality toys, puzzles, books and games for distribution through a variety of partners to families who were experiencing hardship at Christmas. Whilst the final figure is not yet available, the campaign was on target to exceed last year's figure with more than 2000 items donated for reuse. The gifts were part of a Christmas family bag given to families in North Yorkshire and York.

The waste team has also successfully bid for grant funding to increase the amount of small waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) that is recycled through the council's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs). Launching in June, new brightly coloured containers will be available for smaller items such as razors, torches, electric toothbrushes, hairdryers etc in order to increase the amount recovered by at least 10%.

Countryside Access Service (CAS)

Following a high profile closure on public safety grounds of a very popular and well used footpath connecting St James Green with Marage Road adjacent to Cod Beck in Thirsk, the route was reopened in time for Christmas following temporary repairs.

The public right of way was closed in May after reports of cracks and movement of the pavement. An underwater survey together with detailed inspections have been carried out following the removal of vegetation along the route. This has revealed that the retaining wall has been severely affected by river erosion, damaging and reducing the structural integrity of the footpath leading to the iron footbridge.

CAS is currently working with colleagues in Bridges and Design Services to establish the most cost-effective and long-term sustainable solution to ensure that this important route remains open.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR DEREK BASTIMAN