

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

17 MAY 2023

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR OPEN TO BUSINESS

including Economic Development & Regeneration, Planning, Visitor Economy, Broadband, and Harbours

The Planning Service is fully operational and work will start soon on a new structure to support the service moving forwards.

Development Management

Planning applications are being successfully submitted and decided both by committee and under the approved scheme of delegation. The first planning committee for North Yorkshire Council was held for the Richmond Area on 13 April and other meetings in the corporate calendar are now following.

Before the first meeting a considerable amount of work relating to the constitution and the scheme of delegation was undertaken by planning officers supported by legal colleagues. This was to ensure that decisions are made in a safe and legally sound way.

In addition, whilst it is appreciated many Members have previous involvement in Planning, training was offered to all to ensure that everyone has up to date information and understands the processes we are now working too.

Work and training has also been carried out by officers to ensure that reports are produced and presented in a consistent way.

Finally, a large amount of work has been done relating to the planning IT systems to ensure that the customer experience of submitting, viewing and commenting applications remains unaltered. Alongside this all the planning related letters, and notices we issue have also been updated.

Planning Policy and Strategy

Following approval of the Council's approach to plan making at its meeting in February, work has already started to prepare a new Local Plan for North Yorkshire.

The key milestones for preparing the new plan (the Local Development Scheme) and a Statement of Community Involvement are being prepared along with a comprehensive programme of engagement with Members and key stakeholders. A consolidated planning policy framework has also been drawn together and approved, which sets out all of the planning policies that currently apply across North Yorkshire.

In addition, work is continuing on Selby's Local Plan and the Maltkiln New Settlement DPD. Selby's Local Plan reached its publication stage last Autumn and Officers are now considering the associated technical work.

In future reports to Council I will provide information on the number of applications we have dealt with in each quarter and highlight progress on some of the more significant applications for Members.

Investment Zones

You will recall that the 8 North Yorkshire Local authorities submitted an Expression of Interest for designation of several sites in the county. In the Government's March 23 budget they launched a refocused Investment Zones programme to catalyse 12 high-potential knowledge-intensive growth clusters across the UK, including 4 across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each cluster will drive the growth of at least one of our key future sectors - green industries, digital technologies, life sciences, creative industries, and advanced manufacturing. A range of Mayoral Combined Authority locations have been shortlisted to begin discussions on hosting an Investment Zone with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and HM Treasury, with a view to agreeing Investment Zone proposals by the end of the year. They include the Tees Valley, West Yorkshire, East Midlands, West Midlands, Liverpool, Greater Manchester, and the proposed Northeast Mayoral Combined Authority. York & North Yorkshire were not shortlisted. The shortlist will remain under review, with scope for future discussions with other areas. We have raised this with government officials as we see real potential for a bio-economy Innovation Zone for York & north Yorkshire that draws on the world class capabilities of FERA, the University of York and other partners but also connects into wider North Yorkshire opportunities through a strongly networked 'hub and spoke' model. Each English Investment Zone will have access to interventions worth £80 million over 5 years. This includes a single 5-year tax offer matching that in Freeports, consisting of enhanced rates of Capital Allowance, Structures and Buildings Allowance, access to flexible grant funding to support skills and incentivise apprenticeships, and provide specialist business support and improve local infrastructure. Local partners will be able to choose the number and size of tax sites, within the £80 million envelope, up to a maximum of 3 sites totalling 600 hectares.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund, funding agreement was formally approved in December and work undertaken to complete year 1 activities by the end of March 2023. At the end of the year £1.5m of funding was utilised to support projects including town centre urban realm improvements in Skipton and Northallerton, enhanced business support in the York and North Yorkshire Growth Hub and feasibility work to deliver zero carbon roll out in businesses, including farm businesses and public buildings. £0.5m of funding can be carried into year 2 of the programme (2023/24) which will have a total value of £4.6m.

In February the fund was formally launched in North Yorkshire with potential applicants invited to submit expressions of interest prior to submitting a full application. To date over 100 EOIs have been received and the first tranche of full application forms are being sent out.

Rural England Prosperity Fund

The Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs has confirmed North Yorkshire's allocation of the Rural England Prosperity Fund. The County has received an allocation totalling £5.4m spread over two years until the end of March 2025. The REPF is a rural capital programme which is closely linked to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and shares the same aspirations of supporting local businesses, strengthening communities and places, and investing in people and skills.

Applications to the REPF will use the same process as the UKSPF in North Yorkshire and expressions of interest are invited from prospective applicants.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund

aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.

Levelling Up Fund Round 2

Following an application for round 2 of the Government's Levelling Up Fund, submitted by Richmondshire District Council, an initial approval has been given for £19m of development in Catterick Town including development of green urban landscape and the creation of a new community centre, managed workspace, and catering facility.

The bid package comprises three complimentary projects, improving walking and cycling routes through Coronation Park, creating a new public square on Shute Road and providing a new mixed-use Community and Enterprise building. The detailed design is currently being worked up and it is anticipated to submit the planning application in August 2023. This town centre transformation project is due to be completed by 2025.

In round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund Bids were also submitted for Scarborough Station Gateway, Harrogate Convention Centre, and a Transport Bid to develop railway facilities at Malton and Thirsk. Although unsuccessful at this time these projects may be able to reapply in future rounds.

Treadmills

Final phase of development is progressing well. Everyman cinema is due to open May 19th. Open Jar, new food and drink offering, opening mid-July. Three food and drink units remaining but interest remains good, viewings on two of these on Tuesday 9th May. Ray Lonsdale sculpture due to be installed mid-July. C4DI continues to flourish, only six offices remain to let though some of these may be retained to offer as touchdown space as part of membership packages.

Dalton Airfield Industrial Estate

MP Kevin Hollinrake convened a meeting on 21st July between the estate businesses, Northern PowerGrid (NPg), LEP and NYC to discuss the power supply issues facing the estate. Growth of key businesses such as Severfield Plc, Cleveland Tube and Steel, Inspired Pet Nutrition could be hampered if additional supply capacity is not created and new businesses such as l'Ansons and those expressing an interest in the Citivale/Greenbox development are being given connection dates between 18-36months in the future. Feed in capacity is also limited and equally as important to businesses to be able to meet their Net Zero Carbon ambitions. A collaborative approach to the increased forecast demand is being brokered with the involvement of NYC, the LEP and the estate businesses to enable NPg to develop the most appropriate solution.

Scarborough and Whitby Town Deal

Progress continues with the delivery of the Scarborough and Whitby Town deal programmes.

Scarborough - Investment in the Green Construction Skills Village is now complete and the Skills Village team are now delivering low carbon construction training and apprenticeships to the first cohort of learners.

Scarborough Cricket Club are moving into the 3rd and final phase of delivering much needed upgrades to their ground which will enable the club to retain first class cricket on the site. The new festival director for Scarborough Fair is due to start with the authority in June and capital works are underway at Scarborough Spa and Open-Air Theatre to provide new infrastructure for the festivals programme.

Works to create the new pedestrian gateway around Scarborough Station are awaiting planning determination and subject to approval works will commence later in the year. All remaining projects including the Wild Eye natural history and arts trail, Scarborough West Pier Project, and Improvements to local cycling and walking infrastructure are still in development and are progressing according to programme.

Whitby - The Eastside Community Centre and Whitby Boxing Club projects are now complete with an official opening of the facilities on the 5 May 2023. The projects were delivered on time and on budget by the community centre team.

Planning and listed building consent submissions have been made for the Whitby Old Town Hall and Market Place improvement project. Subject to the outcome of planning works to renovate and enhance this much-loved asset will commence following technical design and procurement of a conservation contractor later this calendar year.

The landowner for the Broomfield Farm Carbon Neutral homes project is encountering difficulties in securing a house build partner after the recent withdrawal of their previous partner. Officers are working with the project sponsors to explore alternative options and ensuring the investment remains in Whitby.

All remaining projects including development of Whitby Maritime Training Hub and the pedestrianisation of Whitby Swing Bridge are progressing according to programme.

TCF schemes

'Regeneration staff at the former Selby, Harrogate and Craven Districts are working closely with the Major Projects Team in Highways and Transportation and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to accelerate delivery of these transformative station gateway schemes.

North Yorkshire Economic Strategy

Work to produce an economic strategy for the new Council is progressing well. Following agreement of an initial framework for the strategy, a series of workshops and consultations have been held over recent weeks with key stakeholders. A draft of the strategy, which will guide the economic development and regeneration activities of the new Council, is expected in late May and will be subject to internal and external discussions and refinement before submission to the Executive.

Tourism

Work is progressing well to develop a new Destination Development Plan (DDP) for North Yorkshire. Significant engagement with the sector and key stakeholders is taking place during April and May, including 2 sessions planned for all Councillors on the 3rd and 4th May. The work will also shape how the Council and a new Local Visitor Economy Partnership will drive forward the tourism sector in North Yorkshire which is worth £1.5bn per year to the economy, employees over 40,000 people and represents 11% of the NY economy. We are being assisted by consultants from Visit Northumberland and the Newcastle-Gateshead Initiative, two recently accredited LVEPs, who were part of the national pilot the government launched on how it wants to work with Destination Management Organisations going forward. The DDP will be completed by the end of June and then will go to the Executive for approval. We then intend to submit a proposal for a NY LVEP in the summer. We have worked closely with Visit England in developing our approach. We are also in close dialogue with York to identify opportunities for more collaboration on key issues such as international marketing and in to maximise opportunities

for City to be a key gateway into North Yorkshire for tourism. We are also focussed on supporting existing businesses during development of the plan and have secured £50k of Shared prosperity funding for year one to deliver North Yorkshire marketing activity including attending the Great Yorkshire Show as Team North Yorkshire, delivering a digital marketing campaign, to start late Spring/Early Summer, and obtaining new film and photography for use across campaign.

York and North Yorkshire LEP

The York and North Yorkshire LEP continues to deliver whilst also transitioning towards the planned Mayoral Combined Authority. In particular the LEP secured £2.3m for Skills Bootcamp programme in 2023/24. This will be delivered across in excess of 15 providers across 20 industry led subject areas.

Alongside this, the LEP continues to deliver careers and enterprise support to every school, whilst support for business growth is delivered through the Growth Hub and an Inward investment service.

The LEP net zero work continues apace, with all Local Area Energy Plans now published. The whole of North Yorkshire is covered by these detailed plans which are available on the LEP website. Within this the LEP is working closely with both North Yorkshire and City of York to look future energy infrastructure needs. The lack of capacity is providing both a barrier to growth and to our ability to deliver our net zero ambitions.

The LEP is managing the Brownfield and Net Zero funding on behalf of the future Combined Authority and shortlisted projects are currently developing their full business cases with a view to securing a decision in September.

Shore Power Feasibility Study for Whitby and Scarborough Harbours

An application for funding to conduct a feasibility study into the future provision of enhanced shore power at both harbours has moved a step forward by achieving shortlisted status with the LEP. The study will investigate ways to provide electrical power to vessels to encourage greener operations and meet future carbon reduction aspirations across the Council and industry.

Dogger Bank Windfarm Support at Whitby Harbour

Whitby Harbour have recommenced supporting windfarm vessels operating from the port on the Dogger Bank Windfarm project. Operations are now regularly taking place on Endeavour Wharf and the Fish Quay to support a large multipurpose vessel and a barge with associated tug. The Port continues to encourage development of this type of vessel traffic and has received positive feedback from operators.

COUNCILLOR DEREK J BASTIMAN