

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR OPEN TO BUSINESS

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

Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism & Skills

The UK Shared Prosperity Funds and Rural England Prosperity funding is in the final year of delivery to complete by the end of March 2025. The third year of the programme carries a £15m budget following expenditure of £7m across years 1 and 2. North Yorkshire Council has been the most successful local authority in delivering its Year 1 and 2 allocations and as a result has received all of its Year 3 allocation funds paid in advance. Work has started on evaluating the programme and understanding the impact of the funding in supporting businesses and communities and promoting Pride in Place.

Joint working with the Combined Authority for York and North Yorkshire continues and NYC officers are currently producing detailed business cases to submit 'Gainshare' funding bids towards the improvement of Selby Station (to reflect the surrounding Transforming Cities Fund scheme), a new boat lift at Scarborough, new EV charging points in several market towns, and improved junctions, traffic signals and public space in central Harrogate, linked to the Transforming Cities Fund scheme. Funding is also being sought to develop the detailed business cases of other future projects including Selby Abbey Quarter, Wyvern Link Road at Skipton, Ripon mobility hub, regeneration sites at Scarborough, and several housing sites. With funding from the Combined Authority, detailed technical, design and costing work will be undertaken for each project to support future funding bids to the Mayoral Combined Authority and to government.

The proposals to fully refurbish and enhance the Tadcaster bus station building gained planning permission in March and the work for this scheme is now out to tender, with cost proposals due back mid-July. Start on site is still anticipated in September, with completion in March 2025. The enhancement scheme for part of Low Street shopping area in Sherburn-in-Elmet was approved by Planning Committee on 1 May. The team continue to work with the Town Council and relevant landowners to finalise the scheme, and secure licences for access to complete the works.

Good progress has been made on the Scarborough Long Term Plan for Towns against the short timescales set by Government for submission of the Vision and Short Term Investment Plan for Scarborough. The Long Term Plan for Towns provides Scarborough with circa £20m to spend on local priorities over the next 10 years, and will help attract other private sector and public sector investment into the town. The Town Board, made up of local partners and the Council, has engaged widely to review and develop an initial set of priorities which can form the basis of the initial submission to Government required by August. Work will continue over the summer to further refine and test the proposals and a final list will be considered by the Town Board and then the Council in the early Autumn.

Planning applications for the West Pier in Scarborough and the Maritime Centre in Whitby have been submitted. The appointment of contractors and start on site are scheduled for Autumn this year.

The Catterick Garrison LUF project is still due to complete in late summer 2025. We now have a construction contractor Wilmot Dixon who are working to complete the Stage 2 Cost plan and detailed program of works for a start on site in September 2024. The Catterick Garrison LUF now has an Artist (BEAM) involved with the project and completed on a very successful initial workshop with local community groups and schools. A joint community roadshow event was conducted over the last week of May and first week of June in Catterick Garrison and Richmond Town Centre with the Catterick Integrated Care Campus. Both aspects were very well received and all feedback from local residents was very positive even gaining positive feedback from residents that were initially sceptical on the last roadshow. Overall the Catterick Garrison LUF development is progressing well, and remains within scope and budget for completion in September 2025.

The Destination Management Plan (DMP) is in the final stages of development. 2023 STEAM data has now been returned and is being analysed in order to develop growth targets. York & North Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) officers meet with Make it York, City of York Council and Visit England on a monthly basis to continue development of a Y&NY LVEP Framework, Growth Plan and Partnership Agreement. Input from the Mayoral Combined Authority will be sought once the Framework has been developed.

In a bid to attract more business event organisers to choose a venue in North Yorkshire, the tourism team had a stand at The Meetings Show with stand partners Harrogate Convention Centre and Scarborough. The team also hosted a Visit North Yorkshire stand at the Great Yorkshire Show, showcasing North Yorkshire as a visitor destination, and encouraging those who visit the Great Yorkshire Show to explore more of the county and extend their stay in future years.

A campaign named 'Find your escape' is currently live, looking to encourage visitors to explore North Yorkshire's gardens and outdoor spaces. The campaign targets a family audience as well as couples aged 50+ travelling without children and will run until October.

Planning

The Planning Service continues to make significant progress on the Council's future planning policies and land allocations:

- The initial stage of targeted informal consultation is underway with members, Infrastructure providers, the development industry, neighbouring authorities and other key stakeholders.
- Work has begun on the preparation of the evidence base for the new local plan, including the Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment, which will determine the level of new homes and jobs that the new plan will need to provide for.
- The 'Call for Sites' consultation has taken place and Officers are currently taking stock of the sites submitted for consideration to help to meet the future needs of North Yorkshire.
- The service is on track to launch a public consultation on key issues and options for the new plan before the end of 2024 – the first major stage of consultation on the plan.
- The final stage of formal public consultation on the Selby Local Plan closed on 19 April and Officers are currently reviewing comments and key issues raised.
- The service continues to support the preparation of numerous Neighbourhood Plans, led by local communities across North Yorkshire.

From 1 April until the middle of June the service had dealt with 32 major, 335 minor and 699 other and 5 County matter applications. In addition, we have also dealt with a considerable number of other types of applications, including prior approvals, screening opinions, scoping reports, trees, hedgerows, discharge of conditions, telecommunications etc. Performance across all application types is within statutory targets. During the same period, the Constituency Area Planning and Strategic Committees have now met 15 times. In terms of Planning Enforcement, since 1 April 2024, we have closed approximately 355 cases.

West Harrogate Infrastructure Delivery Strategy (WHIDS) and update to the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule was signed off on 24 June. The WHIDS is a coordination tool to capture the inter-dependences of site delivery and the roll-out of key infrastructure. This is particularly important for West Harrogate as there are multiple allocations/sites and multiple ownerships, promoters, and developers. Separately the site promoters have concluded work on the cumulative transport strategy and will submit this alongside each of their planning applications.

As part of the certification of the Building Control Services Quality Assurance Systems under ISO 9001:2015 the external audited from TRADA visited the service earlier this year to interrogate the processes that are in place to ensure that the service provides a high-quality service to its service users. This audit was completed without any non-compliances or opportunities for improvement being highlighted which means that the QA system has been re-certified for a further 3 years.

The QA certification covers all aspects of the service including the processing applications, inspection of work, enforcement of the building regulations requirements, handling dangerous buildings, customer requirements, Policy, Training, complaints, continual improvement etc.

Having such an accolade in place is important to the service as it demonstrates and provides confidence to service users that they will receive a quality service from the team. Since 6 April it has now also become a requirement of the Building Safety Regulator that Building Control services have a QA system in place and to have one that is externally accredited allows the Council to provide that reassurance to the regulator.

Harbours

The Harbours have undergone a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Health-check, the health-check appeared to go well and we will wait for the report and action any recommendations. The Harbours also recently underwent an annual Local Aids to Navigation (LAtN) inspection, conducted by Trinity House acting as the General Lighthouse Authority (GLA). This inspection also appeared to be positive.

Unfortunately, we have experienced some unforeseen mechanical and staffing issues with the dredger, which we now hope to be rectified by mid-July. We have also sounded Whitby Harbour and identified key target areas for dredging, and it is our intention to still complete our full dredging program. In Scarborough Harbour, we are waiting for a Marine Management Organisation (MMO) licence for dredging, once we are in receipt of this, we shall schedule the Scarborough Harbour Dredging Program.

During the winter period the East Pier at Whitby sustained significant surface damage to some sandstone and pointing, we have now spent £15k on remedial repairs in keeping with the historic aesthetics of the pier. Also, on inspection we identified that some ladders needed repair, and we are actioning repairs as soon as possible and the Pier will remain closed until this work is complete.

Extensive repairs are required at Whitby Fish Quay as identified in the Harbours Infrastructure programme. Dive surveys have been commissioned and following receipt of the findings our engineers will develop a programme of repair work to this area.

COUNCILLOR MARK CRANE