

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

13 November 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR OPEN TO BUSINESS

Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism & Skills

UK Shared and Rural Prosperity Fund (SPF & REPF)

Delivery of £15 million Year 3 the UK Shared and Rural Prosperity Fund is on track with 44% already spent on grant programmes this year. The three-year £23 million programme ends on 31 March 2025. Evaluation of the whole programme is in full swing to celebrate but also highlight future funding needs for North Yorkshire.

Year 3 of the UKSPF Small Business Grants Programme opened for applications on 6 May 2024 with a 9-week application window which closed on the 12 July 2024. Over 300 applications have been received with 266 of those proceeding to panel with a total grant request of £1.8m. Final panel meetings will be held in November to determine which projects will be funded.

NE Regeneration

The majority of the preconstruction conditions have now been successfully discharged for the Catterick Garrison LUF project and the DIO have started demolition of property and site clearance. Procurement of the contractor is progressing well and it is expected that work on site will start January 2025, with completion Autumn 2026.

Progress continues the Town Deal programmes in both Whitby and Scarborough. Whitby Maritime Hub received planning in July 2024 and technical designs are complete and report will be taken to Executive in January 2025 to decide on the award of the construction contract. Across the bridge, tenders have been received for the Old Town Hall. And finally, approval of the Project Adjustment Request has cleared the way to build 49 affordable, sustainable homes in Whitby.

In Scarborough, work will begin on the sea watching platform in October as part of the Wild Eye project and Scarborough Lights festival will return for the second year in November. The planning determination for the West Pier was postponed but is expected to be taken to committee in November with the anticipation that work can start on site early 2025.

Although Government instructed us not to submit the Vision for Scarborough Long Term Plan for Towns, officers have continued to work with partners to work up project proposals, recognising that these address priorities for the town. This will ensure that we are in the best position to secure future funding opportunities.

Elsewhere in the area, regeneration officers are considering the approach for Investment Plans for towns and working with Area Committees to finalise allocations and start projects under the Economic Development fund.

SE Regeneration

The Combined Authority for York and North Yorkshire has now approved all the recent bids made by NYC for the Mayoral Investment Fund. These are:

- £700k towards the improvement of public spaces surrounding Selby Station, as part of the Transforming Cities Fund scheme
- £700k towards a new boat lift and associated works at Scarborough
- £175K towards new EV charging infrastructure in Northallerton / Bedale / Stokesley / Thirsk / Easingwold / Gt Ayton
- £500K towards improved junctions, traffic signals and public space in central Harrogate, linked to the Transforming Cities Fund scheme.

In addition, the Combined Authority has approved funding bids from NYC to develop the detailed business cases of future regeneration, transport, and housing projects:

- £150K for Selby Abbey Quarter
- £90K for Wyvern Link Road at Skipton
- £80K for Ripon mobility hub
- £100K for town centre regeneration sites at Scarborough
- £80K for proposals to deliver 200 new homes across several housing sites.

A report will be considered by Executive on 17 December 2024 to formally accept the funding awards and identify project leads and details.

The proposals to fully refurbish and enhance the Tadcaster bus station building start on site in November, with completion in March 2025. Work on site is expected to start on site in January 2025 and is expected to complete in summer 2025.

Tourism

The Destination Management Plan for North Yorkshire was approved by Executive on 15 October following extensive consultation with over 500 stakeholders. Delivery against the action plans has already begun.

On 21 October the Council's new destination management and marketing service, *Visit North Yorkshire* was launched to the industry at an event at Castle Howard. Around 70 key stakeholders attended to hear about progress to date, plans for the future, and opportunities for businesses to get involved.

Officers continue to meet with Make it York, City of York Council and Visit England on a monthly basis to continue development of the York & North Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP). Engagement with the Mayoral Combined Authority on the draft growth plan and partnership agreement has begun.

A 'Christmas in North Yorkshire' campaign is now live, encouraging visitors to enjoy all the festive activities and events on offer across the county in the lead up to Christmas.

Planning

Delivery and Infrastructure

The hearing sessions into the Maltkiln Development Plan Document ran from 17-20 September. Overall, the general feeling is that the sessions went well and we are confident that most policies, including those with an aspirational climate change thrust, will be retained.

The next step is for officers to submit proposed modifications which emerged from the sessions to the Inspector for consideration.

Building Control

The Building Control service is currently going through another recruitment campaign to fill the vacant posts that it is currently running with.

The team is also working hard to complete the validation of surveyor competence which is now a requirement of the Building Safety Regulator. To date most surveyors have had their competency validated but there are still a few that are either waiting for their results following their competency assessment or are waiting for an assessment date.

Planning Policy & Place Team

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

- Targeted informal consultation continues with members, infrastructure providers, the development industry, businesses, neighbouring authorities, and other key stakeholders.
- Preparation of the local plan evidence is well under way, including the Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment.
- Whilst the Council awaits the outcome of the Government's consultation on changes to national planning policy (which includes a mandatory housing target for all local authorities), the launch of the first major public consultation on key issues and options for the new plan has been paused. The revised National Planning Policy Framework is expected towards the end of the year.
- The initial "Call for Sites" consultation has taken place and officers are starting to assess the sites submitted for consideration to help to meet the future needs of North Yorkshire. This work will feed into the second stage of consultation on the local plan after the issues and options consultation has taken place.

Harbours

Responsibility for the harbours has now passed to the Assistant Director for Regulation and Harbours. A new Head of Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure has also recently been appointed.

The report of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) on the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Health-check is still awaited, but we are satisfied there are no significant issues and are chasing issue of the report. A report will be presented to the Area Constituency Committee at the end of November.

Dredging licence applications for both Scarborough and Whitby have been submitted and a large number of technical queries from the MMO have been responded to. It is likely that the Scarborough licence will be received first, hopefully in November, and once this is received the dredging programme will commence as soon as possible. The contract with the external dredging company has ended and we propose to bring the operation of the dredger back in-house. Initially this will involve employing an agency captain in the short term, but in the longer term a new post has been created internally to fill the role. All mechanical issues with the dredger have been resolved.

Repairs to the surface of the East Pier have been completed and the ladders have been replaced.

Dive surveys have been completed to the piles of the Fish Quay with no significant adverse findings. However, repairs are required to the fendering which is in poor condition. A report is being prepared for Executive to consider funding for the next stages of a number of essential harbour infrastructure projects including Eskside Wharf and Fish Quay at Whitby, and West Pier Inner Piling and the Bullnose and Lighthouse Pier Piling at Scarborough.

We are in the process of securing planning consents for the West Pier Regeneration project and this includes the consents necessary for the project to deliver a boat lift at Scarborough Harbour. Funding is time limited and discussions are ongoing with the local MP, Mayor of North Yorkshire, DEFRA and the Minister of State For Food Security and Rural Affairs to seek a solution.

Harbour User Groups have now been reconvened and meetings at Scarborough, Whitby and Filey Cobble Landing have all been held.

During Science and Engineering Week the Chief Executive and Officers attended a very useful meeting on Doing Business in the Maritime and Renewable's Sector to network with wider industry contacts and launch the offer of the North Yorkshire ports to this exciting and emerging sector.

COUNCILLOR MARK CRANE