

North Yorkshire Council

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee

22 October 2025

Service Update – Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism

Report of the Corporate Director for Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with a progress update on the activities and strategic priorities of the Council's Economic Development, Regeneration and Tourism services
- 1.2 To outline and seek Committee views on emerging work to develop a pipeline of North Yorkshire Capital Growth Priorities, to feed into strategic work with the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

2.0 BACKGROUND / STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 2.1 The North Yorkshire Council Plan 2025-2029 sets out a corporate vision based around four key themes
- support thriving places and empowered communities that live, work, visit and do business in North Yorkshire
 - develop more sustainable and connected places across North Yorkshire
 - ensure the people of North Yorkshire are safe, healthy and living well
 - maximise the potential of North Yorkshire's people and communities
- 2.2 The work of the Council's Economic Development, Regeneration and Tourism services delivers against all four of these key themes but is largely focused on delivering corporate priority actions that **support thriving places and empowered communities that live, work, visit and do business in North Yorkshire.**
- 2.3 The Council also has a corporate **Economic Development Strategy** (adopted October 2023), a **Destination Management Plan** (adopted October 2024) and a **number of place-based plans and visions** which also make up the strategic framework underpinning the Council's work to support thriving businesses and thriving places.
- 2.4 New staffing structures were implemented for the Council's Economic Development, Regeneration & Tourism (EDRT) teams in Summer 2024. In May 2025, these teams were then brought together with the Council's Planning Services under a single Assistant Director for Place-shaping & Growth - to more closely align the Council's resources and work to proactively plan for and enable economic growth (jobs and homes) and thriving places across North Yorkshire.

- 2.5 Since Local Government Reorganisation, there have also been significant levels of legislative, strategic and structural change in relation to national and regional economic development, regeneration and tourism agenda's – most notably the expanding role for Combined Authorities through increased devolution of powers and funding to regions.
- 2.6 The establishment of a York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (YNYCA) in 2024 has brought about significant changes to the strategic, funding and operational context within which we now operate. There is an increasing need to work proactively and collaboratively with the YNYCA to ensure that our evidence base, strategies and priorities for economic growth in North Yorkshire are positively aligned (where possible) and to ensure clarity of roles and effectiveness of delivery mechanisms, and to maximise future funding opportunities and positive economic benefits for our area.

3.0 SERVICE PRIORITIES – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, REGENERATION, TOURISM

- 3.1 Taking the above strategic context as it's driver, the current vision for the Council's Economic Development, Regeneration and Tourism services is **“We work well together, and with others, to help create the right conditions for the North Yorkshire economy to grow and its businesses, places and people to thrive”**
- 3.2 The EDRT **Service Plan Priorities EDRT 2025-2027 are set out in Annex A** to this report, for information, with more detail provided in the associated **EDRT Priority Action Plan at Annex B**. The latter sets out how these priority EDRT actions link across to the Council's strategic priorities and what outcomes will be achieved, together with an update on project status/timescales.
- 3.3 The slides provided at **Annex C provide an overview of some key achievements/case study examples** in relation to work across the EDRT service. Notable successes include:
- Securing c. £131 million of external funding for delivery of economic growth priorities in North Yorkshire
 - Delivery of the North Yorkshire Small Business Grant Scheme Programme - securing c.£3.3m of public/private investment into c.400 local businesses, helping to create c. 50 jobs and safeguard a further c.150 existing jobs
 - Delivery of the inaugural 'North Yorkshire Business Week', with c.750 people attending 34 events across 5 days of business-facing activity
 - Whitby Maritime Training Hub capital project (£10m) commenced on site and on target for completion in April 2026
 - Catterick Levelling-up capital project (£21m) - construction of a new community hub commenced on site and on target for completion in November 2026
 - Town Deal Programmes in Scarborough and Whitby (£37m) progressing well and on target to complete project delivery by March 2027

- £1.2m secured from YNYCA to develop Town Investment Plans (TIP's) in 32 settlements across North Yorkshire, to help create shared visions with local communities and support future funding applications for local priorities
- North Yorkshire Destination Management Plan launched and a wide range of visitor economy activity underway, including a successful high-profile media campaign 'There's more to North Yorkshire' launched for Autumn 2025

These are just a sample of some key headlines rather than a comprehensive list of everything that has been done but will hopefully give a flavour of positive economic activity being delivered by the Council.

3.4 Given the breadth/cross cutting nature of the high-level strategies that govern these particular service areas, there will always be a need to make choices about how/where best to focus the Council's capacity and resources in this regard – to ensure the best outcomes for the Council, the local economy and North Yorkshire's places, residents, businesses and visitors. Work is underway to develop a performance framework for EDRT services to ensure a clear way of monitoring and communicating performance and progress against priority work areas & projects and should be completed by Q4 2025/26. This will sit alongside regular monitoring and reporting of the health of the local economy.

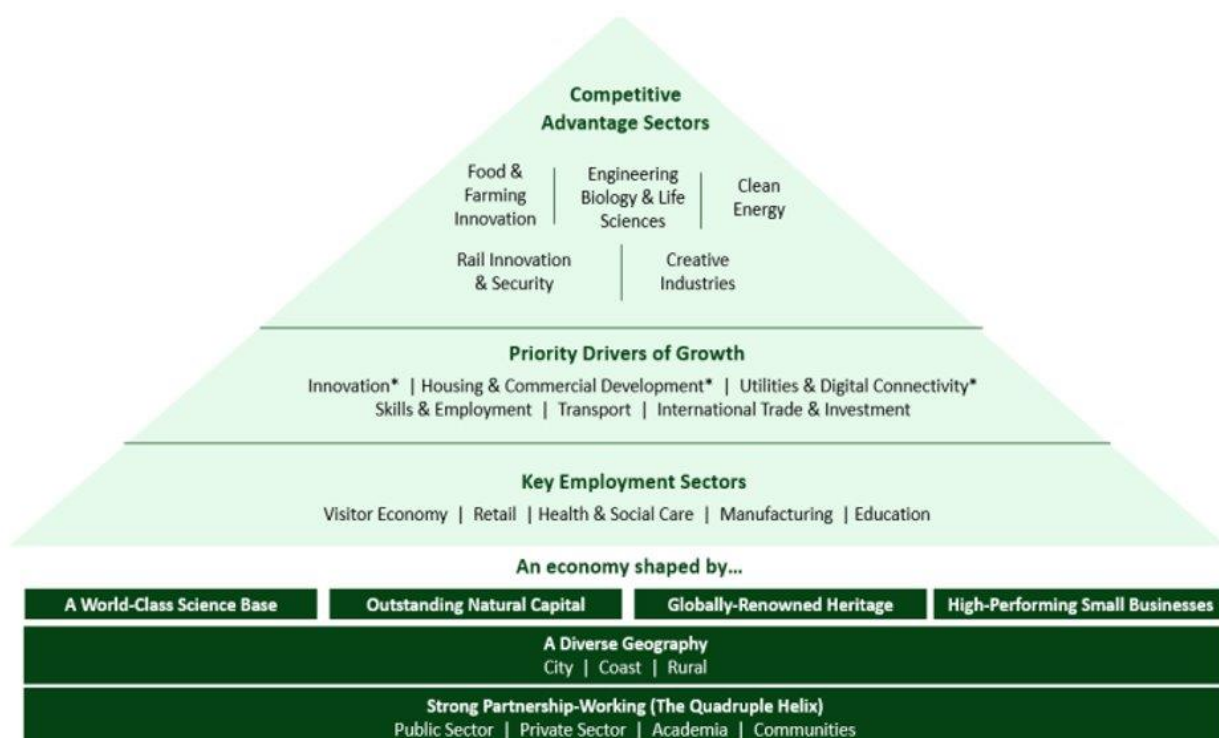
3.5 The Committee are asked to note the information above and attached in Annexes A-C and consider whether there are any specific areas of Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism service work that it might wish to add its future work programme.

4.0 ESTABLISHING A PIPELINE OF NORTH YORKSHIRE CAPITAL GROWTH PRIORITIES

4.1 All Combined Authorities (CA) were asked earlier this year by Government to produce a regional Growth Plan aligned to the National Industrial Strategy. The York and North Yorkshire Growth Plan was adopted in September 2025.

4.2 The YNYCA Growth Plan framework is summarised in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: YNYCA - York and North Yorkshire Growth Plan Framework



- 4.3 There is currently no specific national funding allocated directly to Combined Authorities for the delivery of their Local Growth Plans. The most recent Government economic funding announcements (the ‘Pride in Place Programme’, which provides 10-year investment to disadvantaged neighbourhoods) has been done via a direct allocations process rather than via a competitive bidding process. This resulted in a £20m allocation for Scarborough in Phase 1 (which supported 75 towns) but no other allocations for York and North Yorkshire towns in Phase 2 (which supported an additional 169 neighbourhoods). It may be that future CA funding settlements are linked to Local Growth Plans in some way, but this is not yet confirmed. What we do know is that future funding will inevitably be limited and a key consideration for the CA and the Government is likely to be around understanding what local ‘investible projects’ can help enable accelerated delivery of the Growth Plan, with a particular initial focus on things that can be delivered within the next 3-4 years.
- 4.4 This new strategic context brings an increasing need for North Yorkshire Council to be able to confirm and communicate an agreed pipeline of major capital economic growth priorities for North Yorkshire. Producing and agreeing a pipeline of priority schemes will enable informed discussions with YNYCA, central Government departments, and the private sector, including feeding in to work to develop a detailed 10-Year Delivery Plan for the YNYCA Growth Plan which is scheduled for completion by Spring 2026. If a priority pipeline is not agreed by North Yorkshire Council, there is a risk that North Yorkshire could miss out on future funding opportunities, which could in turn impede delivery of local growth projects and associated economic benefits.
- 4.5 Whilst prioritising our key growth projects is a necessary exercise for the reasons set out above, that is not to say that it is an easy task. For an authority/economy/place the breadth and scale of North Yorkshire, there are

inevitably a very long list of places, projects, sites and economic sectors which might require different types of support, intervention and investment to grow and thrive fully in the future. However, in terms of access to future funding, it will be important that our capital priority growth projects align with the priorities and criteria set out within the emerging Investment Framework being developed by YNYCA. This might mean that different projects will end up progressing earlier within the prioritised list depending on the funding available and its goals.

Recognising this challenge and to help shape our own prioritisation work, it is therefore proposed that the following high-level principles be applied:

- Adopting a **flexible approach** that identifies a manageable number of place-based and thematic priorities but also allows the Council to be **responsive to funding opportunities** and other external factors as they arise (i.e. a flexible priorities 'grid' rather than a rigid, numerical priority list).
- Ensuring that our priorities are **evidence based and targeted at areas of greatest economic need, economic opportunity and/or scale**
- Remaining mindful of **project deliverability and realistic timescales**, particularly for priorities being identified for the next 3-4 years (funding opportunities often require schemes to be 'shovel ready' not just at concept or feasibility stage)
- Acknowledging that it will be critical for the **pipeline to continue to evolve over time as more evidence-based work is completed** and large scale infrastructure requirements to deliver economic growth (homes and jobs) are better understood.

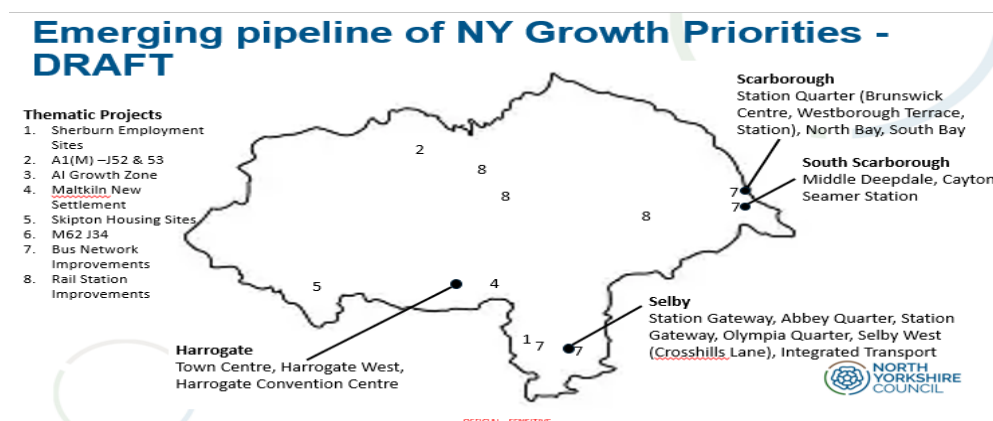
4.6 With these key principles applied, the following key themes are emerging as priorities for the North Yorkshire pipeline approach:

- **Enabling place-based investment and regeneration projects in the areas of greatest economic need, economic opportunity and/or scale** with an initial focus on the key urban centres of Scarborough, Selby, Harrogate (as the places which currently provide the best fit with the principles set out in para 4.5)
- **Accelerating business growth and jobs by unlocking key strategic employment allocations and sector-based opportunities** including an initial focus on sites near major transport networks e.g. A1/M62
- **Housing delivery focused on accelerating and unlocking key strategic housing allocations and existing planning permissions** including an initial focus on large scale allocations such as the Maltkiln new settlement

- **Delivering Strategic Transport Schemes that support and enable economic growth** including an initial focus on bus network improvements and railway station developments

- 4.7 As new/updated evidence emerges in the months ahead through the evidence base/development work for the **North Yorkshire Local Plan, Local Transport Plan, Destination Management Plan** and **other NYC strategies**, it should be recognised that new investment projects will emerge which may have a stronger alignment/strategic fit (either geographically or thematically) and will need to be incorporated in to the priorities pipeline over time e.g. larger scale infrastructure requirements to support future housing growth
- 4.8 Concurrently, 32 **Town Investment Plans (TIPs)** are being developed across all of North Yorkshire’s key settlements. The outcomes from these will also be able to feed in and contribute to the pipeline in future years, as appropriate, including key growth projects identified in TIPs for the urban centres detailed above. In addition, it is expected that some priority investment projects for the future pipeline may also come through the TIPs for other settlements e.g. potentially some projects from the TIPs for the Principal Service Centres (Knaresborough, Malton & Norton, Northallerton, Richmond, Ripon, Skipton, Thirsk and Whitby) may be of sufficient need/opportunity/scale to be considered in future pipeline updates, particularly where they deliver against key thematic priorities. It is important to acknowledge that there will also be smaller scale investment projects identified through all TIP’s that will be important at a local place level and that may be appropriate for future ‘in kind’ support from the regeneration team to help bring local investment forward e.g. through the development of business cases or targeted applications to other external funding organisations. Agreeing appropriate capacity and support for projects of all sizes will be subject to ongoing monitoring and review.
- 4.9 Figure 2 below maps out what the geographic spread of the emerging place-based and thematic approach might look like in terms of priorities for the next 3-4 years. This is included for illustrative purposes only and should not be considered a fully developed plan at this stage. NB Longer term ambitions and priorities are not identified on the map

Figure 2: Emerging place-based and thematic capital priorities pipeline for North Yorkshire



4.10 The Committee are asked to consider and comment upon the proposed 'high-level principles' for pipeline prioritisation set out at paragraph 4.5 and the emerging, draft place-based priorities and themes set out at paragraph 4.6/figure 2. Comments received will help inform the drafting of a decision report for the Executive later this year in relation to establishing a pipeline of North Yorkshire Capital Growth Priorities.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS / REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 A significant amount of work has been undertaken by Economic Development, Regeneration and Tourism Services over the past 12-18 months (highlights are summarised at paragraph 3.3 and in Appendix C) and there are a wide range of clear priority work areas in place for the next 18 months (as set out in Appendix A and B). Officers are happy to work with the Committee if there are any specific areas of the EDRT service plan that are of particular interest to the future TEE&E O&S Work Programme.
- 5.2 There is an increasing need for North Yorkshire Council to agree a future pipeline of capital growth priorities for North Yorkshire, to enable informed discussions to be undertaken with YNYCA, central Government departments, and the private sector. An emerging approach to prioritisation is set out in Section 4.0 of this report and the Committee are asked to feed in their comments on these proposals, prior to a decision report being taken to Executive later this year.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

i) note the information above and attached in appendices A-C and consider whether there are any specific areas of Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism service work that it might wish to add to its future work programme.

ii) consider and comment upon the proposed 'high-level principles' for capital pipeline prioritisation set out at paragraph 4.5 and the emerging, draft place-based priorities and themes set out at paragraph 4.6 and in figure 2

ANNEXES:

Annex A – Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism Service Plan 2025-27

Annex B – Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism Priority Action Plan 2025-27

Annex C – Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism Key Achievements 2024-25

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[North Yorkshire Economic Growth Strategy](#)

[North Yorkshire Destination Management Plan](#)

[York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority Growth Plan](#)

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Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.