

**North Yorkshire County Council**

**21 February 2018**

**Transport, Economy and Environment  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Chairman's Statement**

1. Since my previous statement, the Committee met on 23 January 2018. It was a busy meeting with lots of interesting discussion.

**Committee – 23 January 2018**

Update on the North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

2. The Committee was provided with an overview of the work of the North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Partnership. It is one of 48 in England created by the government in 2012 to address the value that the natural environment can bring to economic growth and improving people's health. More recently the government has set out its 25 Year Environment Plan looking at ways to improve the environment over a generation by creating richer habitats for wildlife, improving air and water quality etc. The work of the LNP dovetails in well with that approach.
3. The officer's report made the strong case that 'nature tourism' (tourism based on the natural attractions of an area) has the potential to add millions of pounds to the whole of the North Yorkshire economy. And that more could be done to signpost visitors to areas of the county beyond the 'honey traps'.
4. We expressed the view though that there is a need to guard against drifting too far towards conservation and away from economic growth in rural areas. This is particularly so if it means that agricultural productivity will suffer. We were reassured that there has been a move locally to balance the two aspects, for example establishing how farms could be better managed and at the same time looking at the environmental benefits for a farm by changing its working practices. A sound reason to prioritise nature tourism is to generate farm income especially in upland farming areas where it is more difficult to make a profit from farming alone.

YNYER Local Enterprise Partnership annual update

5. The Committee received an update on the work of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP relating to:
  - 2017/18 Delivery Update
    - Business
    - Skills
    - Infrastructure
  - National Review of LEPs Governance
  - LEP funding

- Future Priorities

6. It was good to hear about the range of work that the LEP continues to lead on from the support provided to businesses via the Growth Fund through to initiatives to improve the quality of careers advice in schools through to funding new buildings at Scarborough TEC and Harrogate College to attract more students. Our hope is that more businesses can benefit from the LEP though, especially in terms of being able to tap into its funding streams.
7. The government's recently published Industrial Strategy positions LEPs to lead the development of Local Industrial Strategies. Local Industrial Strategies are intended to set out the long-term priorities for the area, to capitalise on existing opportunities in the economy and to address local weaknesses. A key risk though is the hiatus whilst government decides which route to take on overlapping geographies. It could impact on the YNYER LEP's ability to become one of the first tranche of Local Industrial Strategies.
8. Nationally two reviews of LEPs have taken place recently: the Mary Ney Review focusing on transparency and accountability of LEPs; and a Ministerial Review, currently underway, focusing on the structures of LEPs and consistency of approach to support the delivery of the government's Industrial Strategy. The YNYER LEP has undertaken an appraisal of current LEP processes against the findings in the Mary Ney Review and the key considerations in the Ministerial Review to date. The LEP has concluded that its current governance is strong but is putting in place various actions to make further improvements, as detailed in the report.
9. The House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry into overview and scrutiny committees has expressed concerns that public scrutiny of LEPs seems to be the exception rather than rule. That Committee has recommended that upper tier councils, and combined authorities where appropriate, should be able to monitor the performance and effectiveness of LEPs through their scrutiny committees. We were informed at the meeting that the YNYER LEP is proposing that as part of its increased governance discussions with government it will have an annual overview and scrutiny meeting across all member Local Authorities. The purpose will be to present the performance within year and priorities for the coming year including finance and governance arrangements.

Allerton Waste Recovery Park update (AWRC)

10. The Committee received an update on Allerton Park Waste Recovery Centre immediately prior to it becoming fully operational.
11. The Allerton Waste Recovery Park is something that the County Council should be rightly proud of. It is a great step forward with landfilling waste becoming increasingly unviable and the environmental problems that it brings. Plastics that go to this plant will be either recycled or used to produce electricity and no longer be a risk to the land or sea. We look forward to the opportunity to visit AWRC later this spring.

## **Vehicle Activated Signs review**

12. The Committee has signed off the scope of its task group review to consider providing parish councils with the opportunity to fund the purchase and maintenance costs of Vehicle Activated Speed signs. As part of the review, parish councils will be surveyed to find out how many would be prepared to pay for a VAS; what their perceived issues are of speeding in their local area; and their reasons for not taking part in other initiatives notably the Community Speed Watch initiated by North Yorkshire Police. We will begin this work next month and hope to present a report to the Committee in July 2018.

## **Future items**

13. The following items will be brought to our next committee meeting on 10 April 2018:
  - Update report from the Adult Learning and Skills Service on the measures put in place in response to the Ofsted inspection held in June 2017;
  - Consultation responses to proposed policy changes with regards to SEND Home to School Transport;
  - An update on the County Council's progress in supporting apprenticeships in North Yorkshire including responding to the new apprenticeship levy introduced

## **County Councillor Mike Jordan**

### **Chairman**

Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
County Hall  
Northallerton

8 February 2018