

Leader's Statement – Full Council 5 September 2013

I am pleased that we have been able to consider the Ryedale Indoor Bowls Club this evening. The report on the agenda tonight has offered a way forward in terms of keeping the bowling activities going until the end of this year. It is my intention that we should give as much assistance to the Ryedale Community and Leisure Centre (RCLC) as reasonably possible to enable them to put together a successful bid to buy the building.

One of the main reasons I felt able to support the temporary licence was the financial benefit to the tax payer. Occupation of the building until 26th December is dependant on the rent and bills for the premises being paid.

I am also committed to ensuring that the council can sell the site with vacant possession after the 26 December 2013 should the RCLC be unable to acquire the building.

It is a great relief to finally be able to say that the Inspector has found our local plan sound, subject to agreeing some minor modifications. As you are aware this has been a laborious and demanding piece of work for a number of years and I wish to thank both Officers and Members for their hard work during this lengthy task. It is rather ironic that on the very day that former Councillor, Keith Knaggs, is to be made an Honorary Alderman of this council we are at last able to consider adopting our very own local plan. During his time as Leader of this council he was tremendously supportive of the process. We can now turn our full attention to the sites document which has a separate examination process.

I am equally pleased to report that we have made good strides in getting apprenticeships into Ryedale. Our Council has appointed 8 apprentices who have already started work and are settling in throughout the Council. In addition to that and on the agenda this evening we have the opportunity to help create a number of new apprenticeship posts within businesses in Ryedale.

Turning our attention to finances we are preparing our plans for the budget round. You will be aware that there is a consultation about transferring a % of the new homes bonus to the LEP this could be as much as £400,000 per annum to Ryedale from 2015/16. We will send our response to the consultation which in summary attempts to limit the amount of New Homes Bonus to the LEP and protect the housing spend. This is an important issue, our medium term financial plan assumed some use of the NHB from 2015 would support the Revenue account as further cuts in Government Grants are made. Later this month the Policy and Resources Committee considers the budget strategy for 2014/15, when difficult decisions will be a necessity in order to balance the books.

I have been working with the Local Government Association and Local Government Yorkshire and the Humber plus experts in the housing field to host a housing event in Ryedale, the purpose of which is to find innovative ways of building low cost and affordable homes in Ryedale. The invitations will include Local Authorities and developers who have some examples of best practise to share as well as financiers. I have invited Mark Prisk, the Housing Minister, to attend and hope that he will be able to find the time to visit us.

Finally, I am sure we are relieved to learn that the Fitzwilliam Malton Estate has agreed to extend the licence for the livestock market operation subject to sufficient funds being in place. The existing operators will continue and plans for a relocated livestock market site are expected to come to the Planning Authority later this year. There is still a lot of work to do but at least the real threat of having no market after 4 October has been removed.