



REPORT TO:	EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
DATE:	17 FEBRUARY 2015
REPORT OF THE:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE JANET WAGGOTT
TITLE OF REPORT:	REPORT OF THE 'UNPACKING FRACKING' PUBLIC MEETING 4TH FEBRUARY 2015
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the public meeting, 'Unpacking Fracking' held on the evening of the 4th February 2015.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:

(i) Members receive this report

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council resolved at its meeting of 18th December 2014 as follows:

'Ryedale as a non decision making body agrees to facilitate an impartial public meeting on fracking to raise public awareness.'

Once Members have had an opportunity to have the public meeting on fracking then the issue be reported to a future meeting of the Council.'

4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS

- 4.1 There are no significant risks associated with this report as it is a report of the public meeting and does not offer any opinion not expressed at that meeting.

REPORT

5.0 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 The following resolution was unanimously agreed by Council at its meeting on 18th December 2014:

'Ryedale as a non decision making body agrees to facilitate an impartial public meeting on fracking to raise public awareness.

Once Members have had an opportunity to have the public meeting on fracking then the issue be reported to a future meeting of the Council.'

- 5.2 A public meeting was arranged and took place on Wednesday 4th February 2015, at 6.30pm at the Milton Rooms, Malton.

6.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1 The meeting was arranged following a decision of Council

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The meeting was arranged following a decision of Council

8.0 REPORT DETAILS

- 8.1 A public meeting was held on Wednesday 4th February to enable an open exchange of information relating to Fracking. The handout for the event is attached at annex A.
- 8.2 Due to the potential level of interest in attending the meeting, members of the public were asked to apply to the Council for a ticket for the event.
- 8.3 The seated capacity of the Milton Rooms for the evening was 300 and all tickets were allocated and all requests for tickets were accommodated.
- 8.4 The meeting was chaired by the Chief Executive of Ryedale District Council and the agenda was as follows:

Agenda

6.00pm	Registration
6.30pm	Welcome from the Chair – Janet Waggott, RDC
6.40pm	Professor Richard Davies, Newcastle University
6.55pm	Mike Hill, Chartered Electrical Engineer
7.10pm	Chris Redston, Frack Free Ryedale
7.25pm	John Dewar, Third Energy
7.40pm	Questions submitted by members of the audience
8.15pm	Open Q and A session

- 8.50pm Next steps and close
- 9.00pm Close

The event ran close to time and due to the level of interest in the room for the Question and Answer sessions, the event was closed by the Chairman at 9.15pm.

- 8.5 The meeting was filmed and recorded in its entirety and the audio and video recordings are available on the Council website at <http://www.ryedale.gov.uk/pages/council-information/news/1497-unpacking-fracking-in-ryedale.html>
- 8.6 The presentations provided to the meeting are also available on the Council website.
- 8.7 Following attendance at the public meeting a view has been expressed by a member of the Ryedale business community who has asked that their view be presented to Council and these can be found attached at Annex B to this report.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The following implications have been identified:
- a) Financial
 There are no financial implications associated with this report
 - b) Legal
 There are no additional legal implications within this report.
 - c) Other (Equalities, Staffing, Planning, Health & Safety, Environmental, Crime & Disorder)
 There are no additional implications within this report.

Clare Slater Head of Corporate Services

Author: Clare Slater, Head of Corporate Services
Telephone No: 01653 600666 ext: 347
E-Mail Address: clare.slater@ryedale.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Council minutes of meeting held on 18th December 2014
<http://democracy.ryedale.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=114&MId=1346&Ver=4>

Audio and Video Recordings of the meeting available on the Councils website at
<http://www.ryedale.gov.uk/pages/council-information/news/1497-unpacking-fracking-in-ryedale.html>

Background Papers are available for inspection at:
www.ryedale.gov.uk

Annex B

Good morning Ms Waggott,

I will try and make this brief, hence the bullet points. You may remember I recently e mailed you voicing I am pro fracking in Ryedale. I particularly noticed that you wanted to know what businesses and residents views were on the issue of fracking in Ryedale. At the meeting really only the anti fracking opinions or fears were heard from the audience which is normal at such events. This of course does not then give a true sense of what the general feeling is in Ryedale. Sadly, many of the local residents and business proprietors, who perhaps have a more middle of the road view on the topic, hardly ever make the effort to attend such events. The anti people always make more effort to be seen and to metaphorically 'shout the loudest'.

I see that you are holding an extraordinary meeting of the council at the Milton rooms on **Tuesday the 17th** of February. I do feel very strongly about this issue and the opportunities it could hold for this area. Membership of Frack Free Ryedale represents less than 2% of the population. Not all members are even residents. I fear that no one is giving the other side of the story.

- I would like to present a local business persons perspective.
- I believe in facts not fiction.
- I have the vision to see that this new development could work well in Ryedale. As discussed at the public debate there will not be thousands of gas wells but a few 'gas farms' which look like a farmsteads.
- This could bring in a new vibrant economy which will easily work alongside tourism and agriculture.
- We need to think of the future, Ryedale needs young people and they need opportunities, we need a vibrant local economy.
- The media has pandered to FFR without researching the facts and just run alarmist stories which makes good headlines and sells papers.
- At public debates it is much easier for the likes of Mike Hill and Chris Redston to orate alarming statistics without fear of reprisal. Third Energy and Professor Richard Davies have to be truthful as their every word is open to scrutiny by FFR and all.
- I have researched many of the alarmist statistics that they spoke of at the meeting, especially the issue of 30% higher rate of birth defects. This has been officially discredited, I have copies of the documentation.
- I strongly feel that the opposite opinion should be heard from a local resident. I am well aware I will be out numbered by the FFR element at the meeting but they are not the only ones with an opinion.

I know the council will try to be impartial but it is easy to think that everyone is against fracking just because an element of 2% of the population make their views readily available.