

## Leader's Statement - 9 January 2014

I always feel that the New Year is a good time to look back and see what we have achieved over the last 12 months. I think we as a Council have a lot to celebrate.

The adoption of our Local Plan must count as a great relief and cause for celebration for the District. Planning applicants (householders and employers) will have more certainty about their investment decisions and this is good news for everyone in Ryedale.

The opening of the Brambling Fields junction has opened the way for future expansion of employment land in Norton and is expected to contribute to improved air quality and a reduction of traffic in the centre of Malton and Norton.

The roll out of super fast broadband will help existing businesses and hopefully help attract new businesses to our District.

Our apprenticeship scheme was very popular and has supported local businesses over the next 2 years to employ 35 new apprenticeships for young people.

The Opportunity Knocks event was a massive success, connecting young people in our schools with potential future employers.

The opening of Derwent Lodge, our facility for supported accommodation is a great achievement - thanks to our dedicated staff who don't seem to know the meaning of the word 'no'.

Last, but not least, this week we have seen the official start of work to implement the latest stage of the flood alleviation plans for Pickering - which has only been possible because of the money pledged by this Council.

These are just a few of the things we have achieved.

Looking forward to the coming year

We need to continue to work on the Local Plan and the site allocations document for housing and employment land including the Helmsley Plan.

This year should see our community infrastructure levy agreed, examined and in place. Through work with our partners we hope to put in place infrastructure which will make Ryedale an even more attractive place for employers to locate their businesses.

Hopefully our bids for funding through the Local Enterprise Partnership will be successful, thereby allowing more economic growth in our district.

We have now received planning applications which if approved will aid the relocation of the Livestock Market. In fact the planning department is going to be very busy as we have the resubmitted Gladman's application at Kirkbymoorside and the application for a supermarket on WSCP. To that end resources are being put into the planning

department to ensure that we have the capacity to deal with this unprecedented workload.

After we have evaluated the success of our apprenticeship scheme we shall be able to decide if we wish to repeat the scheme and help more young people into work.

Now that our New Homes Bonus is not to be top sliced, we shall have extra money in 2015/16 which we need to decide how to use. That could be for economic development or housing, but we mustn't lose sight of the need to fund the delivery of the LEP projects. On that subject I am very pleased to tell you that Julian has been selected for secondment to the LEP, specifically to work on delivery of their housing responsibilities, this secondment is initially for 3 days a week until the end of March 2014.

It has been awful to hear of the flooding and storms in other parts of the country and I extend my thoughts and sympathy to those who have suffered in recent weeks.

Cllr Linda Cowling

Ryedale District Council