

## North Yorkshire County Council

### Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

23 January 2012

#### Update on newspaper partnership

##### **Purpose of Report**

To provide an update on the progress made with the partnership with local newspapers to provide information to residents in the County.

##### **Background**

Following the cessation of NY Times, which provided savings of £200k, the council approved exploration of a partnership between the council and the two major newspaper publishers in North Yorkshire, Johnston Press and Newsquest. The objective was to provide a cost-effective means of communicating with residents.

The Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Executive that a pilot partnership with local newspapers be pursued, reviewed after six months and that an electronic publication also be produced.

##### **Update**

After lengthy negotiations, agreement has now been reached with Johnston Press to include council information in six of their newspapers. This partnership will result in one page per month appearing in the following publications;

- Scarborough Evening News;
- Harrogate Advertiser;
- Whitby Gazette;
- Malton and Pickering Mercury;
- Selby Times; and
- North Yorkshire News,

with the first information from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2012.

There is flexibility on the amount of space, with the option to increase or reduce the content, depending on the council's requirement for resident information in those areas at a particular point. It is likely that each page will include up to six council news items, which relate to the local area, with links made to both the council and newspaper websites. The cost is linked to the council's level of public notices in these publications, with the anticipated

monthly cost being in the region of £2,300, (compared to a monthly cost of approximately £36,000 for NYTimes).

As this is a pilot, use of the local newspapers over the next six months will be monitored and measures put in place to evaluate its effectiveness, which will be reported to members.

Negotiations with the other newspaper group in the county continues, although this is not at the stage where a deal has been agreed.

The council now has its own e-newsletter, North Yorkshire Now, which is linked to an improved online news service via the council website, to which residents can subscribe. This has been published since August 2011 and has in the region of 4,000 subscribers.

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Background Documents: None