

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### **STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN**

**21 February 2007**

#### **The Social Model of Disability: Empowering Disabled Groups in the Community**

1. As part of the roll-out of corporate equalities training I was pleased that the Committee devoted considerable time to how the County Council empowers disabled groups to play a full part in the Community. To help us in this task, Bridget Hardy, Voluntary Sector Member of the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chief Officer of Scarborough Disabled Action Group explained how groups like hers can encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.
2. The Committee asked a number of searching questions about the relationship we have with disabled people's groups and how we make it easier for them to take part in shaping services. We want to know how NYCC helps overcome some of the particular barriers in supporting disabled groups in a largely rural community and how we integrate disabled people into our community planning decision making structures.

#### **Community Safety Strategy Development**

3. In the past our concern with the current Community Safety Strategy is that it tends to be little more than a statement of what we do and therefore fails to capture some of the more dynamic, local dimensions of community safety.
4. The strategy should reflect some of the wider range of our responsibilities - for example to facilitate community leadership. The Committee therefore looks forward to receiving the comments of all Area Committees on its revamped strategy, to help it take a view on the final version.

#### **Future Work**

5. More detailed in depth working is planned on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups and Domestic Violence. Also, I am anxious to press ahead with planned work on how a Councillor can be supported and empowered to pursue community based interests and projects through their local crime and disorder reduction and local strategic partnerships.

## **Credit Union**

6. A report is being prepared for the Executive to be considered on 27<sup>th</sup> February which looks to fix the level of resources and support the County Council is willing to give to the development of a Credit Union.
7. Nationally, the credit union movement is growing and reaching out to more people who need access to low cost credit. Many existing and developing credit unions are merging or contemplating expansion to gain from economies of scale. There are successful credit unions on our county borders and whilst collaborative options have hitherto only been talked about. It is something that the Committee is now actively considering.

**PAUL RICHARDSON**

**Chairman**

**Safe and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

12 February 2007

Background Documents - Nil