

COUNTY COUNCIL STATEMENT
FOR COUNTY COUNCILLOR HELEN SWIERS
COMMUNITY PLANNING

New guidance has recently been issued by the Home Office requiring a countywide agreement between statutory partners for crime and disorder related issues. This agreement will identify the key priorities for the county that will be addressed by partners. The new guidance also requires that I as the County Council Portfolio Holder attend future meetings of the York and North Yorkshire Safer Community Forum to help oversee the preparation of this agreement.

I look forward to the work that will be undertaken in the coming months to pull the countywide agreement together. A considerable amount of work has already been done in this regard which has identified alcohol and domestic violence as two key priorities that will feature strongly in any new agreement.

In relation to alcohol a new countywide strategy is being developed and is soon to be launched across the county, the County Council has been heavily involved in its development. This strategy is an exciting development which will tackle one of the main causes of a range of crime and disorder related problems. In particular the strategy will bear down on alcohol related violence, seek to reduce alcohol related admissions to hospital and to improve support and to identify vulnerable young people who are experiencing difficulties as a consequence of alcohol abuse, either by themselves or within their families.

The North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership has recently concluded a consultation exercise on its future structure. There was broad agreement that the Partnership was effective and a range of changes were agreed which would enable the Partnership to be more inclusive and open to influence by a broad range of partners from across the county.

The North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership has been heavily involved in developing the countywide Local Area Agreement and has just completed the first monitoring stage of that agreement. I am pleased to report that this mechanism operated smoothly with all partners providing information to update our overall performance against specific targets. The Government has issued new guidance in respect of Local Area Agreements and the Council is now focussed on refreshing the Local Area Agreement, with the involvement of all partners, in line with this new guidance. A key aspect of the development of the LAA will be to establish a Sustainable Community Strategy for the county, identifying the key issues that the county faces over the next five to ten years. Partners are currently engaged in consultation to identify these key issues and I look forward to be able to report on progress in the coming months.