

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**19 DECEMBER 2007**

### **STATEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR HELEN SWIERS**

#### **TRADING STANDARDS & REGULATORY SERVICES**

##### **Avian Influenza**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> November, Defra confirmed Avian Influenza in a turkey flock on a premises located on the Suffolk/Norfolk border. It was subsequently confirmed that the Avian Influenza was the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain. Poultry on four other premises associated with the infected premises were culled as a precautionary measure. The total number of birds culled at the infected premises and the associated premises was 28,600. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> November, no further cases have been confirmed. The source of the infection has still not been discovered and wild birds can not be ruled out. Further surveillance, testing and epidemiological work on this outbreak is ongoing.

##### **Economic Impact on North Yorkshire Farmers**

The recent outbreaks of foot and mouth disease and bluetongue virus and the resulting disease control measures have had a major impact on the trade of livestock. Farmers are faced with a severe reduction in the prices paid for livestock. Their plight has been made worse by the dramatic increase in the price of animal feeds due to shortages of grain following the wet summer in Europe and droughts in other parts of the world.

The Trading Standards & Regulatory Services officers are liaising with the farming support networks and the NFU to monitor the situation. The Service is also working with operational partners to raise the profile of the issues and continues to provide support to North Yorkshire farmers in terms of advice and guidance.

##### **Crime & Disorder - Doorstep Crime**

Trading Standards & Regulatory Services has pioneered various initiatives to tackle 'doorstep crime', particularly when directed against older adults in the County. One particularly effective initiative has been the development of No Cold Calling Zones, set up in partnership with the police and local communities. The first zone was launched in November 2005 at Great Ayton and zones can now be found right across North Yorkshire. The service has now celebrated the launch of the 100th zone on 7th November 2007, when residents of older persons sheltered housing around Queen St, Filey, were covered. The zone was created in conjunction with North Yorkshire Coast Community Partnership, the town council and local police, who had identified the area as one being targeted by criminals preying on vulnerable residents. County Councillor Geoffrey Cullern, the local member, represented the

County Council at the launch of the 100th zone, which is the first of several zones planned for Filey

Another initiative undertaken to heighten partnership awareness of doorstep crime has been the training of North Yorkshire Police. Over the last four years Trading Standards officers have been providing training to the police on doorstep crime activities. In the latest series of training sessions approximately 200 police officers from Central Division covering York and Selby received an insight into what the County Council's Trading Standards & Regulatory Services do and how the two services can work together to reduce this crime. The training has been well received and the County Council's Officers given high praise by the police for the work undertaken to date.

The Service continues to prosecute cold-calling traders who deceive residents and recent persecutions included a fish seller; an alarm company Director and a Tarmac. All were convicted and fined for a variety of offences.

### **Weight Restriction Orders**

Trading Standards & Regulatory Services has also continued to enforce the various weight restriction orders in place on the county's roads and bridges. This work is popular both with residents, whose quality of life is seriously affected by heavy vehicles passing close by their homes, and with Highways, who have a lower repair bill for the county's historic bridges. October and November saw a total of sixty six drivers being convicted of breaching the restriction on the old A1 at Fairburn with fines of between £150 and £300 and orders for prosecution costs being imposed. Work has also started on the restriction on Quaker lane in Northallerton with the first two cases being heard at Northallerton Magistrates' Court in November.

### **Safety of Sports Grounds - FA Cup second round**

Harrogate Railway Athletic reached the second round of the FA cup playing Mansfield Town and were expecting a crowd of much greater capacity than usual at their Wetherby Road Stadium. They initially planned to install two temporary stands with a seating capacity of over 500 each. This would have necessitated a temporary safety certificate and advisory visits were carried out by Trading Standards and Regulatory Services officers who administer the legislation to ensure that safety requirements would be satisfied.

The club in the end decided to limit the number of spectators to suit the existing facilities. However, Trading Standards and Regulatory Services was still involved in working with the club to ensure that spectators could be accommodated safely. The match, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December passed off smoothly with no crowd troubles. Sadly the club lost 3-2 to Mansfield Town.

## **DEVELOPMENT & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES**

### **Economic Development**

#### **2012 Olympics**

A proposal was agreed by the York and North Yorkshire Partnership Executive last week to develop a sub-regional response to “Yorkshire Gold”, the regional plan to maximise opportunities arising from the Olympic and Paralympic games. This focuses on 5 key themes – sport, communities, culture, tourism and business. It is hoped to set up a small team in the York & North Yorkshire Partnership Unit to champion and develop these themes, particularly the culture, tourism and business elements. The objective is to use the Olympics as a means of promoting economic development leading up to 2012 and to provide a lasting legacy.

#### **Festivals and Events and Creative Industries**

North Yorkshire Culture has published a high quality promotional copy of the Creative Industries and Festivals and Events business plan proposals. The proposals set out a case for investment in both sectors as a cultural tourism asset and economic driver for the sub-region. The proposals are being distributed to key regional economic development, tourism, and cultural policy makers and funders, as well as business leaders. Proposals are currently being developed to take forward the initiatives in these sectors.

**County Councillor Helen Swiers  
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