

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**  
**COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN**

**20 FEBRUARY 2008**

**Gambling in the Community**

1. We have looked at the impact and support for those with a gambling dependency in our community. We received representations from Sir Geoffrey Godbold OBE who is Chief Executive of GamCare a registered charity. It has become the leading authority on the provision of counselling, advice and practical help in addressing the social impact of gambling in the UK. GamCare is looking to extend the provision of counselling support services to this region.
2. We also heard from Roger Sykes, Regional Manager for North East Council on Addictions who work with GamCare under contract to provide those services across the north east.
3. A recent British Gambling Prevalence Survey confirmed that since the last major survey in 1999 the nature of gambling in Great Britain is changing substantially – due to changes in legislation, and the increase in the number of gambling products available. The study found that the rates of problem gambling had remained relatively static at 0.6% of the population. It is estimated that a further 3-5% are at significant risk of becoming problem gamblers.
4. For many reasons it would be difficult to assess the scale of the problem that might be evident in the North Yorkshire areas, although there was every reason to believe those percentages would apply in our communities. The difficulty is that gambling, perhaps more than any other addiction, is hidden, not talked about, associated with shame. It can go undetected for years.
5. Further work is now planned to assess the feasibility of a partnership arrangement to provide counselling services in North Yorkshire. This would entail the County Council and its partners providing premises suitable for counselling services, for example they would need to be private, accessible, soundproof etc. The County Council's "input" could therefore be nil-cost other than that required to provide and maintain the premises. It would be entirely feasible to "co-locate" within existing NYCC or partner premises.
6. A business case will then be prepared for discussion with the Executive before any further action is taken.

## **Injury Minimisation Programme for Schools**

7. Last year the Committee encouraged Area Committees to find money from within their budgets to support, on a short term basis, the continuation of the Injury Minimalisation Programme for Schools Project in the Scarborough area. The scheme teaches children how to recognise potentially dangerous situations and prevent injuries. The programme also equips children with first aid and resuscitation skills, helping them to respond effectively if an incident occurs
8. It is now time to consider the feasibility of rolling out this project across the County. Your Committee has asked for meetings with the Executive Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Service to discuss the future of this valued scheme.

## **NYSP, Communities and the role of Councillors**

9. At the last meeting we looked at three issues which touch upon one or all of the above themes -
  - **Draft Guidance - Prosperous Communities.** We offered a number of comments for inclusion in the County Council's response.
  - **Latest Draft of Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008/2018,** out of which we believe scrutiny needs to take a closer look at the different elements and the delivery of, the Alcohol Strategy.
  - **Local Area Agreement 2 -** where we recognised that good work has been done with partners and submit draft proposals in accordance with the deadline from Government Office.

**PAUL RICHARDSON**  
**Chairman, Safe and Sustainable Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**County Hall**  
**NORTHALLERTON**

**8 February 2008**

**Background Documents: Nil**