

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

21 May 2008

SCRUTINY BOARD

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Scrutiny Board met on 29 April 2008.

Corporate strategic issues

The Leader, County Councillor John Weighell and John Marsden, the Chief Executive, joined the Board to discuss a range of strategic priorities facing the County Council over the next twelve months.

Issues covered in the discussion included:

- Implications of the Sub-National Review and the role of Yorkshire Forward
- Recognition of the important role of the region but also to ensure that the rural voice is heard
- Leeds City Region issues
- The budget and medium term financial strategy including the importance of delivering the efficiency programme
- Continued emphasis on service improvement and customer focus
- Recognition of good positive partnership working across the board with particular emphasis on waste, transport and customer access
- Comprehensive Area Assessment(CAA) replacing CPA from next year and the recent appointment of the Audit Commission's CAA Lead for this area, Michael Newbury.

Corporate services issues

County Councillor Carl Les joined the Board together with Justine Brooksbank, Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources and Organisational Development) and Carole Dunn, Head of Legal Services to discuss key corporate services issues for the next year. These included:

- Increasing managers' capability in order to improve service outcomes
- Improved staff communication and engagement
- Supporting the transformation/changing and improving agenda
- A proactive approach to the health and well-being of staff
- The merger of Legal and Committee Services
- Governance, ethics and standards and the role of Monitoring Officer
- Training issues for Members
- Provision of services to external bodies

Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny

The Board approved the Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny for 2007/08 and it is attached to this statement. It provides a very positive account of the role that Overview and Scrutiny plays at the County Council and I would like to thank all Members for their enthusiasm and hard work that have made this such a success. I would also like to thank the Scrutiny officers for their invaluable support.

Annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Board agreed to present the 'at a glance' summaries of each committee's annual work programme to the Executive at its next quarterly performance monitoring meeting in June.

Local Involvement Network (LINK) for North Yorkshire

The Board was informed that the North Bank Forum for Voluntary Organisations has been appointed as the 'host' organisation and has started work to set up and support the LINK for North Yorkshire. This follows a joint procurement with the City of York Council and the same organisation has been appointed to support the LINK for York.

Workshop with District Scrutiny Members

The Board is planning a workshop on 26 June for O & S Chairmen and Vice Chairmen with leading Scrutiny Members from district councils to explore ways of improving cooperation in scrutiny of the outcomes of partnership working and the Local Area Agreement. I will be meeting soon with the IDEA who are going to facilitate the event.

County Councillor Paul Richardson
Chairman of Scrutiny Board
12 May 2008