

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

23 JULY 2008

STATEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR GREG WHITE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community Engagement / Duty to Involve

As part of our response to the new duty to involve and engage our communities more in our decision making processes, we have agreed with our partners the need for a community engagement framework at North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership level. The aim is to adopt a more co-ordinated approach, agreeing shared principles, avoiding 'consultation fatigue', and ensuring that findings are shared where appropriate. A task and finish officer group has been established to progress this work.

North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership

The North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (NYSP) will be publishing its Sustainable Community Strategy 2008/18 (SCS) and related Local Area Agreement 2008/11 (LAA) in mid-July. The SCS sets out the NYSP's ten-year vision for making North Yorkshire an even better place in which to live, work and visit. The LAA - which received Ministerial sign-off in early June - is the 'delivery mechanism' for the SCS, setting out specific targets to help ensure this vision is achieved.

The NYSP Executive recently reviewed the draft 'Strategic review of the impact of inward migration from the EU Accession States in North Yorkshire'. The draft review will shortly go to consultation with NYSP partners and representatives from migrant communities, to help draw up an action plan of key priorities.

Post Office closures

Senior Marketing Development Managers from Post Office Ltd met with the county-wide Access to Services Steering Group on 27th June. Two approaches were discussed in relation to how local authorities and other public sector organisations could support post office services. These included money transmission services (cash collection / bill payments / housing benefit fraud detection etc) and public consultation services (poster-leaflet campaigns / surveys etc).

Post Office Ltd's money transmission services are of greatest relevance to district councils and they have been asked to contact the Post Office direct if they are interested in working with Post Office Ltd. on this agenda. We will also be looking into the possibility of the county council and other public sector organisations making use of Post Office Ltd's consultation services. More broadly, Post Office Ltd. are carrying out various pilots in different parts of the county with local authorities to see how partnership working can help sustain the network and we will be looking to see if similar arrangements can be put in place in North Yorkshire.

At the time of writing we are still awaiting the decision from Post Office Ltd regarding the possible closure of the Aspin Lane branch in Knaresborough.

Community Safety

The York & North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum is working to deliver the newly agreed Community Safety Agreement for North Yorkshire. Work plans are being developed by the Joint Co-ordinating Groups that sit below the Forum to deliver against the priorities of alcohol, domestic abuse, prolific and other priority offenders, road safety and violent crime. Other key issues for the Forum are establishing new arrangements for funding according to need, developing effective communication links and monitoring performance of the safer elements of the Local Area Agreement.