

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

17TH December 2008

STATEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER (Adult Social Care, Library and Information Services)

Adult Social Care Services Star Ratings - Judgement

I am delighted to announce that Adult Social Care Services has been awarded the highest possible 3 star rating with a judgement of showing an “excellent” capacity for improvement and delivering “good” outcomes for people. The judgement of “excellent” for capacity for improvement is a combined judgement of Leadership and Commissioning/“Use of Resources”. This clearly shows that the Council’s key objective of providing affordable care continues to be met.

The judgement is not just about Adult Social Care Services but also reflects positively on the wider Council and its partners.

Members can be rightly proud of their 3 star achievement, particularly as the Commission for Social Care Inspection commended and I quote: “...**determined and competent leadership within adult services supported by strong member commitment.**” I would like to pass on my thanks to Members for their tremendous support for Adult Social Care over the past few years.

Whilst it is right that we celebrate this ground breaking achievement, we are of course aware that we face many significant challenges in the immediate future. Our communities must cope with increasing numbers of older people, greater expectation with regard to the quality of care provided and the effects of the economic downturn. I am confident though, that we have a strong platform on which to move forward with this challenging agenda.

North Yorkshire First at Putting People First

The County Council’s Adult & Community Services Directorate and the NHS have signed up to a number of important local partnership arrangements that will help transform the health and social care landscape.

North Yorkshire has become the first county, if not Local Authority in the country, to formulate and implement an over-arching, multi-agency concordat to co-ordinate adult health and social care services. “Putting People First in North Yorkshire – Making it Happen” is modelled on the Department of Health’s national concordat which was introduced earlier this year.

Complementing this partnership agreement a Joint Vision Statement and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has also been embraced. Their aim is to ultimately allow all individuals to lead independent lives, supported wherever necessary by professional care, and to establish a system of early intervention with preventative measures involving statutory and voluntary agencies. These are all designed to keep people healthy, out of hospital and living independently in the environment of their own choice.

Celebrating Social Care Workers

It was an honour to participate in the Great North Care Awards, a joint venture between partners including Adult & Community Services and the Independent Care Group which attracted 300 nominations and 650 attendees at the award evening itself. These awards (the first of its kind) will raise the profile of care work and recognise the great commitment and innovation of staff which helps raise the standard of adult care in North Yorkshire to the highest levels.

It was good to support a number of Adult Social Care staff who had been nominated across the 14 categories and a pleasure to congratulate Susanne Lee, winner of the 'Home Care Worker of a Specialist Service Award'. A worthy winner for her commitment and ability displayed in forming and developing a night service in the Craven area.

Effective Partnership Working Improves Welfare Benefit Take-up

It is important for the Council to demonstrate leadership in this difficult time economically. I am therefore pleased to advise that the North Yorkshire Welfare Benefits Service (a partnership between Adult & Community Services, the 8 Citizen Advice Bureaux and the Welfare Benefits unit) continues to successfully provide help, advice and information to the people of North Yorkshire. Ensuring they receive the benefits they are entitled to along with 'peace of mind'.

In 2007/8 the ACS team secured in excess of £1.1 m additional money for communities through successful claims for Disability Living and Attendance allowances.

In addition to this NYCC funded the CABs £121,802 to support their voluntary and paid staff welfare benefits service. Records show that the gain in benefit income for people in North Yorkshire, as a result of this involvement of the 8 CABs, is at least £1.6 million.

County Councillor Chris Metcalfe