

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### Chairman's Statement

18 February 2009

#### 1.0 Community Leadership, Community Strategy and Community Engagement

1.1 At our last meeting we had the opportunity to comment on the Community Safety Strategy and the NYSP Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Management Framework. Separate documents, but our perspective on them was similar and it was pleasing to have the opportunity to comment. The overall direction of both is to be commended. Our primary concern was around the role of the elected member.

1.2 Community Safety is about keeping people safe in their localities and therefore the contribution the local member can make, as community leader, should neither be underestimated nor overlooked. It is important that local people feel that they live in neighbourhoods where people respect each other and where they can feel safe at any time of the day or night. Community leaders can empower communities so that they can work together to improve the way they live.

1.3 In respect of Community Safety we asked the Executive to include in the strategy a statement that the Council achieves its community safety objectives in part through its elected councillors as community leaders in their localities. For this reason they should receive appropriate support to carry out this role effectively.

1.4 It often seems unclear how the elected member can contribute and influence the infrastructure of partnership working groups that promote the Community Safety Strategy. It is important that our channels of communication are effective, not just to Scrutiny Committees and as Area Committee representatives on Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, but to the wider Council membership.

1.5 In part this might ease some of the concerns raised by Members that they feel excluded from local crime and disorder reduction activity and the work of the NYSP.

#### 2.0 Compact

2.1 We have received the annual update report of the North Yorkshire Compact which shows progress, particularly in developing 'Practice

Codes' for Funding and Volunteering. We are also supportive of the planned activity for 2009, particularly the Action Plan developed in conjunction with the NYSP to promote a thriving third sector.

- 2.2 We will examine this further in the context of an overview of the NYSP and the Local Area Agreement at our next meeting.

**3.0 Credit Union Progress**

- 3.1 It is pleasing that the Action Plan agreed by the York Credit Union to extend its common bond boundaries to include North Yorkshire is on track. The Committee will do all that it can to ensure not only that communities become aware that the Credit Union is in operation, but that North Yorkshire County Council is doing all it can through recruitment from Payroll to ensure that the venture is a success.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR PAUL RICHARDSON**

**Chairman**

**Safe and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**County Hall**

**NORTHALLERTON**

**9 February 2009**

**Background Documents: None**