

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

19th May 2010

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

Adult & Community Services lead the way

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Adult & Community Services' Workforce Development Unit has become the first local authority department in England to be awarded the prestigious Training Quality Standard for Employers (TQSE). TQSE is tough to achieve and is something a successful organisation can be proud of achieving. North Yorkshire County Council joins a growing list of organisations that includes BMW, Scania, Rolls-Royce and the FA Premier League which have been awarded the standard for their in-house training. Gaining this certification is a great achievement for the Directorate. It shows our dedication to providing excellent services to the people of North Yorkshire by providing high quality training for all of our staff.

Crosshills Celebrates a bigger library

I am pleased to advise you that Crosshills library has now been extended to more than twice its former size in a £345,000 revamp. The library now has hugely improved book lending facilities with a self-service machine to reduce waiting times and £17,000 worth of new books. It also has a new and extended children's area providing books, DVDs and story tapes as well as a venue for children's events and activities. Not only does this investment provide a much improved library for the community but it offers the opportunity for other agencies and organisations to deliver and promote their services. These include Adult Learning Services, who will be using the library out of normal opening hours to run courses for local parents, while other partners such as North Yorkshire Police and Craven District Council plan to offer advice sessions and surgeries while the library is open. In the coming weeks we will be holding two author events as well as inviting many local pupils to visit the library and see the services now on offer.

The early response from the local community in the first few weeks of opening has been impressive, with a 43% increase in issues; a 36% increase in public use of computers, and 5 times as many new members joining the service compared with the same period last year.

Scarborough Literature Festival hailed a great success

Around 3,000 people enjoyed the events organised by North Yorkshire County Council's Library Service for The Long Weekend, the fourth annual Scarborough Literature Festival held this April. As well as attracting a wealth of literary talent to the coast, a long list of local groups, organisations and businesses added their support, expertise or own programming to contribute to the festival's growing success.

The festival is more than just the Long Weekend, a significant amount of work goes on in the run up to the festival, working with schools, colleges and youth groups, organising lead in activities and engaging local people. This year saw the development of an education programme which resulted in an excellent 'Literary Review' of original work created by children from Gladstone Road Primary School. It also saw Scarborough Library host the first Scarborough Literature Festival Student Conference which gave 60, 16-18 year olds from across the County the opportunity to spend a day working with renowned writers.

Whilst the line up for the festival continues to impress it has been particularly heartening to see so many local young people given the opportunity to be involved in this year's festival. The organisers worked in partnership with the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Rollercoastival Festival organisers and local children to launch the Long Weekend with a memorable evening which showcased young, local talent.

This event has now become a popular feature in the North Yorkshire cultural calendar, attracting visitors from all over the British Isles. So as well as attracting household names, providing a literary feast for book lovers, it generates a significant input into the economy of Scarborough.

The Festival, which received financial support with a lottery grant from the Arts Council England, could not have happened without the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff at Scarborough Library, and our sincere thanks go to all of them.

North Yorkshire launches Dignity in Care Charter

Adult & Community Services and the Independent Care Group are urging care providers and commissioners of services in the county to sign up to an important Dignity in Care Charter which they have jointly launched. The Charter was launched to coincide with the national Dignity Action Day and it underlines what a person can reasonably expect when they need or use care and support services. Offering older and vulnerable adults respect and maintaining their dignity is a fundamental part of any care relationship and can make a real difference to people's lives.

Extra Care information open day in Tadcaster

North Yorkshire County Council, Selby District Council and Hanover Housing Association invited people in the Tadcaster area to join them for an information sharing event for their new housing development in March.

The partnership are working together to deliver an extra care housing scheme at Leeds Road in Tadcaster, on the site of The Beeches elderly persons home. People were able to view the plans and hear about the services that will be on offer in the new development.

County Councillor Chris Metcalfe