

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

21 JULY 2010

**SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Centres for Independent Living

1. Over the last year we have assessed how people with a disability are supported in the community. This looked not so much at how services were provided nor coverage, but how disabled people can be supported towards independence and play an active and meaningful part in decisions that affect their lives and the community they live in.
2. The final piece was a review of progress made on the development of Centres for Independent Living (CIL) in the North Yorkshire area. A CIL is an organisation which provides innovative services to allow disabled people to gain choice and control over their lives. They vary in scope and a vast majority are located in the voluntary sector.
3. For the Committee it is key that the development of CILs in North Yorkshire is geared towards management by disabled people themselves and they operate according to the principles of the social model of disability.
4. We were fortunate to be advised by chief officers from two disablement action groups in the county, Nigel Statton and Bridget Hardy, who confirmed that establishing a CIL within North Yorkshire continues to be a challenge due to the rural nature of the county. Whilst the drive is coming from disabled people themselves and statutory organisations can play a role of facilitation, with the very uneven spread of voluntary and community sectors within the county controlled by disabled people this is a challenging undertaking. Furthermore there is limited awareness about the philosophy and reality of a CIL.
5. It is unsurprising therefore that a good deal of work thus far, has had to be focussed around capacity building in order to develop the CIL and support services.

Participatory Budgeting

6. There is great potential for Participatory Budgeting (PB) to be a tool that local authorities and partners can use to bring local communities closer to the decision making process about how local budgets are spent. A presentation was received from Bill Cross from Rural Action Yorkshire, who has been appointed to undertake work on behalf of the Yorkshire Local Councils' Association and the North Yorkshire Police

Authority. The aim being to build understanding, confidence and capacity of parish councils in North Yorkshire so they are able to take the lead in delivering PB.

7. Five parishes have been chosen to take part in a pilot project which will run until September. At the conclusion of the pilot a toolkit is to be compiled for use by other parish councils interested in committing to PB.
8. Overall the response from parish councils to PB had been mixed and to a certain extent the response level was in line with what was anticipated. It remains the Committee's view that PB can be used as a mechanism for increasing public engagement and localism.

Community Safety Matters

9. The Committee has invited Jeremy Holderness, the North Yorkshire Police Authority Chief Executive, to come to the first meeting of the new Corporate and Partnerships Committee in the autumn to talk about how that authority contributes to the Community Safety agenda. This is part of the continuing dialogue with strategic leaders around Community Safety matters and will ultimately lead to an assessment of the effectiveness of the Community Safety Strategy.
10. In addition to this strategic level perspective the Committee strongly recommends a piece of work in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour Minimum Standards. Different areas have a different definition of what is anti-social behaviour and differing methods of recording it. For the Committee, this renders well nigh impossible any attempt at comparative performance measurement, when one of the objectives of the Safer Communities Forum, in its current Plan, is to ensure data continuity.
11. This is something that the new Committee, which will be the designated Crime and Disorder Committee at County level, could usefully look into. It would entail more than just reviewing the seven anti-social behaviour documents currently compiled but would look towards establishing a North Yorkshire standard and then judging performance and outcomes against that.

County Councillor David Jeffels
Chairman
Safe and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall
Northallerton
7 July 2010

Background Documents: Nil