

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

13 October 2010

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

Budget

The budget position continues to be the focus of the Director of Adult & Community Services and his senior management team, with their priority being the delivery of better outcomes for the people of North Yorkshire at a lower cost. The total of the schedule of savings projects amounts to £8.279m for 2010/11 and this target continues to be monitored and will be presented at the corporate budget monitoring group in October. The Adult & Community Services Management Board are encouraged by the achievements of their value for money projects which have produced savings of £4.7m.

Voluntary Sector Efficiencies

You will be aware from the briefing notes to members of the need to make decisions regarding efficiencies in the voluntary sector. Adult & Community Services have asked voluntary organisations to deliver a 3% reduction in budget in the current year (2010 -2011). In doing this they have been asked to consider how they will best deliver the efficiency target with as little impact as possible on service users. The expectation is that they will look to their structure and organisational costs to deliver these efficiencies and not front line services. I am pleased to inform you that we are receiving some very positive responses to this request from voluntary organisations and we will continue to update you on progress.

Harrogate Library Re-opens

NYCC's flagship library on Victoria Avenue, Harrogate will re-open to the public on Monday 18 October at 11.00am. We have spent two years working towards this day and we are delighted to be able to show the residents of Harrogate the results of all of the hard work and effort.

The newly refurbished and extended Carnegie library will host a vast range of easily-accessed books, new meeting rooms, an internet and computer suite, a café area, a changing place, self service kiosks, a dedicated area for teenagers and increased space for local studies. An official opening of this fantastic facility for Harrogate will be arranged in the next few weeks.

Helmsley Library Named best in North Yorkshire

Helmsley Library and Customer Services Centre has been named North Yorkshire County Council's Library of the Year for 2010.

Team members at the library were recognised for their outstanding performance throughout the year and for their excellent customer care.

More than 250 new members joined the library during the year, with over 1,500 people borrowing books, using the internet and taking part in the activities. Since the opening of the new library facilities, visitor numbers have increased by 30% to over 45,000 per year.

Much of the increased popularity is due to the partnership with Ryedale District Council, operating from the centre on Fridays. There is also access to Helmsley town council services on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Hawes and Grassington Libraries

The Library Service continues the expansion of library outlets across the county, developing services shaped to their particular communities needs with the help of the Council's expertise and support. Julian Smith MP launched the Grassington Hub partnership, including the new Grassington Library on 25 September. The Hub has over 20 volunteers allowing the library to open for over 30 hours per week, replacing the previous 14 hours. The Hub Library offers books, information and public access internet facilities.

Hawes Library becomes the first branch library to be transferred to the community, extending the collaboration with the Upper Wensleydale Community Partnership. After five years of working together the Community Partnership will now take on the full day to day delivery of the full range of library services.

These initiatives are good examples of community engagement leading to the running of public services for the community by the community.

Older Persons Day

NYCC joined in the world wide celebrations for Older People's Day on October 1st. Libraries across North Yorkshire had special book displays highlighting the experience, achievements and potential of older people. The "glad to be grey" displays also included information about local groups and organisations that can be found on the Engage in North Yorkshire online directory.

County Councillor Chris Metcalfe