

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16 February 2011

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

Budget

The Corporate Director - Adult and Community Services, and his senior management team continue to focus on the Budget. This is both for the current year to ensure that initiatives will deliver agreed savings but also for the next two years now that the details of the settlement are known. This will mean that savings will have to be accelerated and the Adult and Community Services Directorate is working to an expected budget reduction of £17M over the 2 year period. As I reported in my last statement, this will mean that some very difficult and painful decisions will have to be made. However, the Directorate is determined to make the best use of the resources that are available and protect front line services and those members of our communities who are the most vulnerable.

Library Services

As I reported in my last statement, the Library Service is consulting on proposals for the future delivery of services including the closure or transfer of some libraries to local communities. The Library Service is expected to save £1.1M during 2011/12 out of a total of £2.1M over 4 years. Library and Community Services will also be required to find an additional £0.2m in income over the 4 year period. I can report that positive discussions have begun with local communities since the start of the consultation process on the 6th December which will last 3 months. Much debate has already taken place about how libraries can be run by local communities with professional support from the Library Service. Along with the Corporate Director - Adults and Community Services and the Assistant Director of Library and Community Services, we have so far attended 6 area committees and 3 public meetings. More public meetings are planned before the consultation formally closes on 28th February.

Adult Social Care Operations- restructure

A consultation process has commenced within Adult Social Care Operations with the intention of reducing the current 4 localities to 3. These proposals include a reduction in the number of managers, and an increase in the number of essential frontline staff to cope with increasing demand. Formal consultation closed on 21st January with a Management response with regard to staff feedback due by 7th February.

Weather

Despite the severe adverse weather conditions, staff at all levels across the County made an extra effort to ensure that care services continued to be delivered. Staff used all means to deliver care and support services to the vulnerable including accessing vehicles that were able to cope with the wintry road conditions, using other family cars or getting lifts in to work as examples. Home care staff delivering front line services use the same initiative and were also provided with 4 wheeled drive vehicles as and when required. Staff are to be thanked for their sterling efforts in ensuring that essential services continued to be delivered in the severe conditions.

Dignity Action Day – 25th February

I would also like to this opportunity to encourage everyone to take part in this day. Dignity Action Day will take place on Friday 25th February and for the second year the theme is: “giving the gift of time”. The aim of the day is to remind us all that many older people in our communities maybe feeling lonely or isolated. This day is asking us all to commit to spending time with a friend, relative or a neighbour. This is something simple but important we can all do to help. The Dignity in Care national campaign aims at putting dignity and compassion at the heart of our care services, and we can all help to make it real in our communities. At County Hall there will be displays in the Brierley building and North Block and people will be encouraged to sign up as Dignity Champions. There will be activities organised by the Council's care services as well as services delivered by our partners. So please take part.

County Councillor Chris Metcalfe