

**North Yorkshire County Council**

**14 December 2011**

**Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Chairman's Statement**

**One Council**

- 1 As Members will be aware the Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee have formed a Task Group to monitor the development and delivery of the One Council change programme. The Task Group has now met twice.
- 2 The October workshop provided an opportunity to gain a more in-depth understanding of the One Council Change programme. We discussed the Vision and Approach document and went through the design principles and the areas that each of the nine workstreams will cover.
- 3 At our second workshop we talked through the emerging programme issues set out in the Executive report. The Task Group had a number of questions relating to the 'hub and spoke' model and how this would work in practice. We noted that within this operational model various approaches could be taken. We also noted that there are a number of themes which are common to all the workstreams such as staffing structures, cultural change amongst staff and customer access. It makes sense for these to be phased in together and we were pleased that this issue is recognised and that it will be addressed once workstreams have developed their Implementation Plans.
- 4 Our next workshops to be held in February and March will take a more in-depth look at each of the workstream implementation plans. The February workshop will receive a programme/workstream progress update and the March workshop will take a strategic view of the Implementation Plans.

**No Cold Calling Zones**

- 5 The No Cold Calling Zone (NCCZ) initiative has proved to be both effective and popular with residents, with the result that there are now 400 NCCZs in the County. The popularity of No Cold Calling Zones has meant that a backlog of requests has developed with demand exceeding staff capacity.
- 6 At our meeting last month, the Committee discussed proposed changes to No Cold Calling Zone protocols and enforcement. We recommended that the proposed prioritisation criteria for No Cold Calling Zones should be adopted, which would ensure that those communities with greatest need are at the front of the queue. The Committee also agreed that the

wording on the NCCZ signage should be changed. This is in order to afford the opportunity to enable criminal sanctions to be made against cold callers who ignore the wishes of residents within a NCCZ. We also recommended that there should be a policy requiring 75% agreement amongst residents for a NCCZ, rather than 100% agreement as is currently the case.

## **Equalities**

- 7 Recent High Court judgments serve to reinforce the fact that councils need to be able to demonstrate that they have fully complied with public sector equality duties owed to vulnerable social groups when undertaking service changes.
- 8 The Committee is undertaking a review to examine the Council's use of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to identify:
  - o whether they meet their purpose of ensuring that decision makers pay due regard to the impact of decisions of people with characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010;
  - o whether they are used appropriately to assist in identifying budget savings and identifying the cumulative impact of service changes on people with protected characteristics; and
  - o whether there is evidence of the EIA process failing to identify in advance negative impacts which do result from service or policy changes and if so whether the process can be strengthened to reduce this risk.
- 9 To help us do this we are looking at a number of recent EIAs produced by each directorate (Reablement, Reduction in Bus Subsidy, Residential Parking Bays, Adoption Procedures: prospective adopter policies, and Credit Control). In the future we will also be looking at the EIA process for service changes to be made to Transforming Learning Disability Services and Home to School Transport.

## **County Councillor Liz Casling Chairman**

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall

Northallerton

28<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Background Documents: Nil