

**North Yorkshire County Council**

**16 May 2012**

**Statement of the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder  
(Corporate Affairs, Performance Management)**

**County Councillor Carl Les**

**Heroes Welcome**

The County Council has supported the launch of the Heroes Welcome campaign throughout North Yorkshire. This provides a way for businesses and organisations to show their support for armed forces personnel. Those that sign up can display a sticker to show that they offer a warm welcome to serving, or former, armed services personnel. Some businesses will also offer service upgrades or discounts, but that is up to them.

Heroes Welcome in North Yorkshire was launched on 5 March 2012 at an event at County Hall hosted by the Chairman of North Yorkshire County Council, Cllr John Fort, and attended by personnel from the county's military bases.

Heroes Welcome stickers are available free from NYCC libraries or from NYCC customer services centre.

Heroes Welcome complements the North Yorkshire Armed Forces Community Covenant, an agreement signed last year between the armed forces and representatives of the community of North Yorkshire. The covenant encourages everyone within the community to support the local armed forces community and make it easier for service personnel, their families and veterans to receive the support available from the Ministry of Defence, public bodies, charities and voluntary groups. In return, the armed forces are encouraged to do as much as possible to integrate the service community into civilian life.

North Yorkshire has one of the greatest concentrations of military bases anywhere in England and the military presence is hugely significant for the county - both socially and economically. Thousands of members of the armed forces based in North Yorkshire will be on active deployment in Afghanistan and elsewhere during 2012.

**'One Council' Organisational Change Programme**

Following the submission of workstream Implementation Plans at the end of February 2012, an overall Programme Plan has been produced which moves the programme from a 'development' to 'implementation' phase.

The Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny 'One Council' Task and Finish Group will be consulted, in advance of the Programme Plan being considered by the Executive on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012.

### **e HR Progress**

The e HR work programme automates much of the administration process around staffing.

Electronic Document Record Management System (EDRMS) for employee personal files is underway with rollout across the whole council due to conclude at the end of December 2012. This sees the move of 25,000 employee files from paper format to electronic and automates the majority of manager and staff input around the employee file such as changing hours, new information, sickness, maternity, filing and automatic updating of systems when documents are filed.

The shift from paper pay slip P60s, timesheets and expense claims to electronic is now firmly in place with only 52 of the council's workforce (non schools) not accessing the documentation online using MyView self service. Roll out to schools staff is underway. Savings to date are estimated at over £40k.

e-leave management for all leave including annual, maternity and sick leave was introduced just last month with e-Appraisal and e-CRB just now being introduced. e-CRB processing has a number of benefits including a reduction in process time from an average of 6 weeks to 5-10 days.

### **Newspaper Partnership**

The council is now over half way through a pilot which involves a partnership with Johnston Press, to include council information in six of their newspapers. This partnership has resulted in one page per month appearing in newspapers across the county at the start of each month. The content of these pages has covered services from across the council, with specific local updates and news stories. Consultations and case studies have also been included, with typically three or four main stories and a similar number of smaller news items.

Evaluation is ongoing and on conclusion of the pilot at the end of June, a full review will be undertaken to consider its success with feedback from residents, members and newspaper readers. A recommendation will then be made on whether to develop this partnership further, and whether to revisit partnerships with other newspaper owners.

### **Apprentices**

The County Council continues to support young people's employment which is increasingly important in the current economic climate. Since September the County Council has employed 59 apprentices mainly in admin roles, but

with a significant increase in adult social care apprenticeships. In addition we have brokered 7 apprenticeship appointments with partners and supported 6 apprenticeship appointments within North Yorkshire schools.

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April we held an event for young people in Selby the “Selby App Event”. Over 200 young people arrived at Selby Abbey despite very wet weather and a significant number of them were able to find and leave with real employment opportunities with organisations such as Blue Arrow and Yorkshire Fresh Fruits. A number are now prospective candidates for current NYCC apprentice posts in Health and Adult Services and a couple of local schools.

In addition the executive agreed on the 24<sup>th</sup> April to provide £400k to support young people by providing on a one off basis funding for an additional 34 apprentices. There are across a range of employers including council contractors, and some services including libraries, adult education and community libraries. This funding will also support to some 60 young people with getting them ready for employment as this is a key issue and barrier to young people’s employment.

## **Statement of Children's Services Portfolio Holder**

### **County Councillor Carl Les**

#### **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The Statement to Council on 13 October 2010 set out the approach being taken under the Children and Young People's Service Savings and Transformation Strategy which is committed to giving highest priority to frontline services, while acknowledging that the scale of savings needed means that they cannot be protected completely. In 2011-12 the initial CYPS MTFs target as of £9.150m has been more than achieved. As reported to Executive in Q2 and Q3, acceleration of our MTFs by over £2.6m will give a cash benefit (although the overall 4-year target does not change) and will begin to contribute to the One Council savings.

The Directorate is facing a number of cost pressures over the next few years, principally arising from external changes in policy and legislation (e.g. troubled families, costs of secure remand and the transfer of responsibilities from the Young People's Learning Agency) and is committed to meeting these pressures from within its own resources

A specific MTFs reserve for the Directorate has been set up to ensure that cash savings are achieved over the next 4 years. This is still the intention and these will be used in addition to the acceleration referred to above to ensure the maximum cash benefit for the Council.

This information appears in the Statements to Council for both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service as this reflects their joint responsibility for all the relevant resources.

#### **Progress in implementing the Special Educational Needs & Disability Improvement and Integration Strategy 2011-2014**

The SEND Strategy 2011-14 was approved by the Council at its meeting in February 2012. It sets out the strategic response to the developments proposed in the Green Paper 'Support and Aspiration'. It is the vehicle for delivering the commitments in the Children and Young People's Plan to improve integration and impact for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

I can now report that Phase 1 of the organisational restructure (to form an integrated assessment and decision making service) has been completed and was implemented on 1 March 2012. Planned opportunities to achieve integration in the operation of the new integrated SEND service and with other CYPS services are being taken forward (e.g. Short Breaks, Early Support, and Transition). Public consultation was launched, on 4 May, on the Council's draft strategy for meeting the needs of children and young people with autism. The consultation will be supported by a series of local public meetings

The Council's Short Breaks Statement has been revised and approved by Executive Members at their meeting on 24 April 2012. Operational arrangements for considering requests from parents for support are being implemented, thus bringing the work of the Disabled Children's Teams and Integrated Services into alignment and simplifying the process for parents.

Significant improvements have been made to deliver personalised pathways into education/ workplace provision for young people post 19. This has involved close partnership with local colleges of further education, workplace providers, Health and Adult Services, and Health and contributes to improving Transitions for young people with SEND.

SEND information on the County Council's website has been significantly revised and relaunched thus improving information for parents.

#### **Working with Troubled Families**

The Government's Troubled Families programme is a major initiative which aims to turn around the lives of 120,000 such families nationally by 2015. The Director General of the Troubled Families Team within the Department for Communities and Local Government wrote to all Local Authorities on 28 March 2012 to set out a Financial Framework which covers the process for identifying the families

eligible for the programme, the arrangements in regard to up-front payments and the basis on which government will make available 'results' payments. In summary, Troubled Families are identified as households who:

- o Are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour
- o Have children not in school
- o Have an adult on out of work benefits
- o Cause high cost to the public purse

DCLG will make available up to £4000 for each troubled family eligible for the payment-by-results scheme consisting of an up-front "attachment fee" which varies over the three year programme and a results-based balancing payment. On the basis that this work will be entirely consistent with CYP priorities, enable a helpful extension to current practice and provide some additional (albeit one-off) resource, NYCC has committed to work with the number of troubled families identified by DCLG for North Yorkshire - a total of 845 over the next three years (704 of whom would be eligible for funding under this programme). Work in North Yorkshire will be directed by a Multi-Agency Steering Group established as a sub-group of the Children's Trust.

### **North Yorkshire Parenting Strategy 2011-14**

The Parenting Strategy 2011-14 has been now approved and published. Parents and carers are the most influential people in a child's life. A child's home life has a significant impact on achievement and well-being, and parents want and need support in different ways through their children's lives.

The Parenting Strategy brings together in one place the range of support that the Council and its partners in the Children's Trust can offer. Parenting support includes work undertaken by universal providers, such as schools and early years providers, and more targeted and specialist work through children's centres, social care, health visitors, child and adolescent mental health services and third sector organisations. We are particularly concerned to make sure we can target the most vulnerable families. One key element of support is made through parenting programmes. North Yorkshire has been delivering parenting programmes through a variety of settings for many years. The Strategy provides the framework to ensure that in North Yorkshire staff are delivering well supported parenting programmes that are based on need and are tried and tested. They are offered in a variety of settings, both within schools and community venues such as children's centres.

The delivery and success of the plan will be assessed through a set of performance measures. These will provide evidence of progress in delivering commitments and, importantly, will demonstrate their impact on the lives of children and young people.

### **Barnado's Campaign – Cut Them Free Campaign**

The Children and Young People's Service and partner agencies in North Yorkshire share the growing national concern about the sexual exploitation of children and young people. The LSCB has a multi-agency sub-group which is examining the issue in the county, and it is also securing appropriate training for staff from a range of agencies. The Children and Young People's Plan includes a project to improve our work with multiply-vulnerable teenagers as one of its highest priorities for the current year. The Children's Trust has received an interim report based on an audit of cases and key issues, which also includes concern about the potential for sexual exploitation. The LSCB and the Children's Trust are to take forward a coordinated piece of work to ensure that commissioned services, guidance and procedures, and service practice are all focussed on the importance of identifying and responding effectively to this type of risk. I will be receiving further reports arising from the multi-agency work which is in train.

### **County Councillor Carl Les, Executive Member for Children's Services**

## **North Yorkshire County Council**

### **Annual Statement of the Chairman of the Looked After Children Member's Group**

**16<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

As the newly appointed Chairman of the Looked after Children's - Members' Group I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of the previous Chair - Cllr Melva Steckles who was a great advocate for all young people in the care system.

I am pleased to present this Annual Statement from the Looked after Children's Members' Group which continues to steadily develop since it became an Executive delegated function.

The Looked after Children's Member's Group is not a Committee of the Executive but a non-decision making member working group responsible for supporting the Executive, and the Council as a whole, in its role as corporate parent. The group meets regularly with the Lead Executive Member for Children's Services at the quarterly meetings or at any stage, should any issues arise in the interim which they consider should be drawn to the attention of the Executive and Corporate Director.

The Looked after Children's Members' Group comprises of between five and ten members, appointed annually by the Executive, and may include members and co-opted members from the Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In summarising the purpose of the Looked after Children's Members' Group (LAC-Members' Group) in its capacity as a Corporate Parent it monitors all aspects of care for children and young people and concentrates on things that really matter such as young people's education, their safeguarding and protection, health and well-being, placements and that care leavers are well prepared for successful adulthood with suitable accommodation.

The LAC Members' Group meet on a quarterly basis and over the course of the year Officers from the Children & Young Peoples Service have provided us with briefings and progress reports and as Corporate Parents we feel better placed to take a view on how effectively we care for the children looked after. There is regular feedback from the Young Peoples Council and a number of us took the opportunity to visit all the Residential Children's Homes and Resource Centre's across the County. Something we would like to repeat at a later stage.

The safeguarding and protection of the current 452 children and young people in our care remains high on our list of priorities. At each meeting we are provided with quarterly information which provides an anonymous profile of the young people in our care. It can include how old they are, whether they are boys or girls, have they had a health and dental assessment and how far are they placed away from home. We feel it is important to have update training from time to time and discussions have just taken place with the Local Safeguarding Board who have agreed to provide refresher safeguarding training for Members later on in the year.

All of us would wish the best prospects for children in care and it is important that we follow their educational attainment of looked after young people through the Education of Looked after Children Virtual School Team whose work is paying off as we now have 17 young people either in or about to commence courses in Further Education which is fantastic news.

Briefings from the Adoption and Fostering Service helped us to understand the processes undertaken to recruit new foster and adoption families and we heard first hand from a Foster Carer what it is like to be a foster family and the support available to them.

At our last meeting in March we welcomed the young Chairman from the Young Peoples Council and a representative who brought along their latest DVD which grew from a

Residential Week-end Away. It gave the young people the opportunity to share their views about being in care, what would help and how they felt about being in care. Representatives from the NHS North Yorkshire & York and the Harrogate District Foundation Trust were impressed by the DVD and asked if it would be possible for the young people to show this at their respective Management Board meetings.

Over this next year I would like to provide all members of the County Council with the opportunity to watch the DVD produced by the looked after young people and to encourage you all, as Corporate Parents to learn more about these truly remarkable young people we would all want to live happy lives and have the best prospect for their futures.

We are always looking for Members to undertake quarterly Regulation 33 Inspections at the Councils Residential Children's Homes – its both an invaluable experience and rewarding to meet the young people in these homes and the staff who care for them and if you are interested I would be very happy to explain it further.

**County Councillor John Batt**  
**Chairman Looked after Children-Members Group**