

North Yorkshire County Council

16 May 2012

Statement of the Adult Social Care Services Portfolio Holder County Councillor Clare Wood

Appointment of an Independent Chair to the Adults Safeguarding Board

Members will be aware that the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board chaired by the Corporate Director for Health and Adult Services plays a critical role in protecting vulnerable adults by promoting co-operation and effective working practices between different agencies, such as district councils, health, the police, independent and voluntary sectors.

The Board is entering a new chapter with the appointment of Jonathan Phillips as the independent chair. The appointment of an independent chair is regarded as best practice. Jonathan has extensive knowledge and experience of safeguarding adults. He recently retired from Calderdale Council, where he was Director of Adult Social Services and chaired their Board until 2010. This and his previous senior management roles in the Social Services Inspectorate and the Commission for Social Care Inspection have given him a deep understanding of the importance of quality assurance for safeguarding and the value of partnerships, particularly with the NHS, care providers and community safety.

Dementia Strategy

On 26 March 2012, the Prime Minister challenged the nation to work harder at addressing the issue of dementia. The challenge asks authorities and partners to build on the achievements of the existing National Dementia Strategy to which North Yorkshire is already committed and has its own implementation plan and programme of work. The Challenge asks us all to raise awareness around dementia so that more people are diagnosed with dementia at an early stage and go on to receive the highest quality of service.

The County Council has agreed to work with colleagues in Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust and the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust, supported by a £100k investment in pilot work aimed at improving the experience of people with dementia. A new Dementia Collaborative has been established that will use quality improvement tools to bring about these changes. It will be made up of doctors, nurses, social workers and other health professionals. The outcomes from the work and any lessons learned from the pilot will be evaluated.

Appointment of the Director of Public Health

As you may know, the County Council will take over statutory responsibility for public health functions from NHS North Yorkshire and York from the 1st April 2013. I am pleased to confirm that the position of Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire is now being advertised and the closing date for applications is the 13th May. This appointment is one of the major steps in progressing this transfer. Interviews for the post will be held on the 14th and 15th of June in partnership with the NHS North

Yorkshire and York and the Faculty of Public Health. This will be a critical appointment for the County Council in light of the County Council's new health and wellbeing responsibilities. Work is underway to develop proposals for the structure of the public health team and it is anticipated that formal consultation with the existing staff will commence in June.

Carers' Consultation

Members will be aware of the vital role that carers play in supporting friends and family members to remain safe and well in their own homes. I attended a special session of the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider how the County Council can support a fundamental review of carers' services. The work of the Committee has contributed to a public consultation exercise which will help to shape future services that are vital to carers in our county. This is a joint consultation exercise involving the County Council and health partners and will help to shape the North Yorkshire Joint Carers' Strategy (2012-15). I would like to take this opportunity to encourage carers, as well as family and community members, to comment on the kind of support that they believe carers truly deserve and which will work in their best interests. The consultation exercise will consist of a questionnaire, available in hardcopy or on the North Yorkshire County Council's website and a series of engagement events which will be held until July.

Voluntary Sector and Innovation Fund

Members will recall that at previous meetings of the full County Council, I reported on the £1.5m Voluntary Sector Innovation Fund. This fund has been established to support our partners in the voluntary sector to develop innovative local services for the most vulnerable, in order for them to live independent and healthy lives in our communities. The fund totals approximately £1.5m over three years and is funded from the Performance Reward Grant. I am pleased to confirm that a second round of bids has now been evaluated and a further £625k has been awarded to 12 voluntary organisations across the County to support a range of initiatives, including the development of social enterprises and Supported Employment, linked to our overall strategy to improve day services. The new Supported Employment initiatives will aim to create an additional 100 places for people with a disability offering opportunities for employment or training pathways into paid work across the county. In total, the Council has now awarded £1m to voluntary sector organisations which is a commitment to the vital work that the sector carries out in our local communities.

CLARE WOOD