

North Yorkshire County Council

16 May 2012

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chairman's Statement

One Council

- 1 Since my last update our One Council Task Group has met with all the project leads and project managers for each of the workstreams. We did this to get a deeper insight into the scope of their review, the proposed staffing structures and process changes, along with the financial savings.
- 2 We have scrutinised the reasons why some workstreams have put forward different staffing structures from others and the extent to which these arrangements will foster a corporate approach. Any further opportunities for restructuring the organisation along One Council principles should be grasped - be it in phase one or phase two of the programme. However we recognise that not everything can happen all at once, and have been pleased to note that most workstreams expect to exceed their financial savings expectation figures.
- 3 As mentioned in one of my earlier statements, realising cultural change - getting staff to work to One Council principles - is going to be a bigger challenge than the shorter-term realisation of cashable savings. And yet changing staff behaviours (values, expectations, leadership styles etc.) will be just as important. In recognition of this the Task Group has decided that its future approach should include the cultural change agenda. Also, whilst we will continue to have a strategic overview of the programme's performance and the organisational model we will focus in greater depth on the Customer Access workstream.

Libraries

- 4 At our meeting in March the Committee received a progress report on the re-organisation of libraries. We expressed our appreciation of the help and guidance that Julie Blaisdale and her staff had provided to Members and community groups throughout the process. And we also noted the important role that relevant voluntary and community sector organisations had played in providing knowledge, skills and advice to the library community groups.
- 5 We discussed the 'lessons learned' from the consultation process and where the Library Service could improve on its future consultation and engagement with local communities. Also the suggestion was made about lobbying at a national level through the LGA for a change in the law to ensure that community-run libraries do not have to be subject to the same rules as local authorities in having to provide a free library service. Enabling community-run libraries to charge users an annual

membership fee would help increase the chances of community-run libraries becoming sustainable over the longer term.

Post Offices

- 6 Post Office Ltd. will be making changes to the branch network over the next three years. This will include the roll-out of 'Post Office Locals', and more community involvement in the running of post offices. Post Office Locals have already been piloted in various parts of the country including North Yorkshire. They are operated in retail premises, with post office services provided over the counter of the shop rather than at a dedicated post office counter. Consequently they are able to offer longer opening hours and a quicker service but do not provide the more complex paper-based transactions. Steve Bruckshaw, Senior Stakeholder Manager (North East) for Post Office Ltd. will be attending the Committee's meeting in June to appraise the Committee about these developments.

County Councillor Liz Casling Chairman

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall
Northallerton
2 May 2012

Background Documents: Nil