

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**19 December 2012**

**STATEMENT OF THE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR CLARE WOOD**

**Hospital provision in North Yorkshire**

As I write this, there is great concern amongst the public of North Yorkshire about the future of health services. This has been caused by the leaking of proposals from KPMG, who have been commissioned by the PCT to review the future of acute health services in the County.

There is no doubt that change is required in the NHS in North Yorkshire. We have a system that is funded significantly below health services in most other areas and a health system that has a long history of running in deficit. We have a vast rural area covering over 3000 square miles and we have an ageing population with increasing needs for health and social care.

We all want a health system that cares for people when and where they need it most. This means redressing the imbalance between care that is provided in hospital and care that is provided in the community.

There are services which are currently provided in hospital which could be provided in community settings. Shifting the balance of care is possible and desirable but the way that the Primary Care Trust has gone about this review is deeply concerning to myself as the Lead Member for Health and Adult Services.

In the largest rural County in England, access to health services is a critical issue. Proposals to centralise services and close community hospitals would reduce access for our residents. Communication has been dreadful. It is outrageous that it took 7 days for the PCT to respond to the press coverage with weak statements that have reassured no-one. We are now told there will be no further public statements until the PCT's Board meeting in 5 weeks time.

I am aware that budgets are a reality that need to be faced up to. I am clear, however, that we do not need knee jerk reactions from a PCT that will be defunct in a matter of months. We do not need rationing of treatment or a loss of quality in our local health services. We need a considered discussion with the new Clinical Commissioning Groups who will replace PCTs.

It is essential they pay due regard to the geographical spread of North Yorkshire, investing in community services and expanding roles for community hospitals to secure them for the future.

The development of a robust system of local services will enable local clinicians, families and carers to look after people close to their homes for longer and reduce the need for referrals to acute centres for routine care.

It is this that will lead to a sustainable system with improved health outcomes for the people of North Yorkshire.

## **Opening of Jubilee Lodge**

I am delighted to announce that on 1 November, North Yorkshire's newest purpose-built respite scheme for people with learning disabilities was opened. Jubilee Lodge has replaced the respite service at Gargrave Road in Craven. The £1.6m modernisation scheme has a range of facilities which include five bedrooms with en suite bathrooms and a private garden area. This is a vital resource for both our carers and the vulnerable people in their care, providing much-needed breaks from caring arrangements, and emergency cover should it be required.

## **North Yorkshire – Warmer Together**

I am pleased to confirm that the Health and Adult Services Directorate has been awarded £148,000 by the Department of Health's "Warm Homes, Healthy People Fund". The funds will support a wide-ranging programme of initiatives to ensure that people across North Yorkshire, particularly those who are elderly or have long term health conditions to stay warm and healthy this winter. The initiatives range from the provision of "keep warm" packs for people at immediate risk, information and advice on combating cold weather, as well as supporting our local communities to co-ordinate help for our most vulnerable residents.

## **Safeguarding Adults Conference**

I recently attended the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Conference in Harrogate. Overall 160 delegates attended from over 90 organisations, including health, police, fire and rescue services, probation services, Trading Standards, Health and Adult Services, the private and voluntary sectors and district councils. This showed that there is a genuine multi-agency commitment to support vulnerable people within North Yorkshire. An awareness raising poster campaign was launched at the conference.

## **Lower Greenfoot Extra Care Housing Scheme**

I had the pleasure of attending the 'ground breaking' ceremony of the Lower Greenfoot Extra Care Housing scheme in Settle last month. The Lower Greenfoot scheme is a £6.7m development which will provide 60 apartments either to rent or to buy. The scheme will include 21 apartments to help meet more complex needs including people living with dementia. The scheme is expected to open in July 2014 and is another excellent example of how the County Council is working with its district council partners and housing associations to help older people in our communities to live as independently as possible.

## **Appointment of the Director of Public Health**

Members will be aware that the County Council will take over statutory responsibility for Public Health functions from NHS North Yorkshire and York from 1 April 2013. Dr Lincoln Sargeant has now commenced work as the new Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire. Lincoln has joined us from NHS Cambridgeshire and I know he is looking forward to working with the Council and other local partners to improve the health and wellbeing of the local communities in North Yorkshire.

**CLARE WOOD**