

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

24 July 2013

**STATEMENT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENTION
COUNTY COUNCILLOR DON MACKENZIE****New portfolio for Public Health and Prevention**

Members will be aware of the preparations we have made as a Council to take on new statutory responsibilities for public health from April 2013. I am delighted to write this statement as the first portfolio holder for Public Health and Prevention. As a Council we aim to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and to give people effective support when they need it. I look forward to working with all Directorates of the Council to ensure that we deliver on this cross-cutting objective.

My colleague, Councillor Wood, has overseen the appointment of our Director of Public Health and the transition of public health functions to the Council. I wish to register our appreciation for the role she has played in ensuring a smooth and safe transition of these functions and look forward to working closely with her as she continues as portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Health Integration.

Public Health comes “home”

There is now an established Public Health Team led by the Director of Public Health and supported by three Public Health Consultants who each lead work around different domains of public health – health improvement, health care, health information and health protection. I am pleased to report that job offers have now been made to all remaining vacancies in the Team and we expect everyone to be in post by October.

In order to ensure that the Team works effectively across the Council, there is a Public Health Consultant link to the leadership teams in each Directorate. Members will also note the importance of District and Borough Councils for Public Health and Prevention in North Yorkshire. The team is working closely with the District and Borough Councils.

The Council has received a ring fenced grant of £19,021,000 for 2013/14 rising to £19,732,000 in 2014/15 to support commissioning of local public health services to meet the needs of our residents. The grant supports the mandatory services that must be provided but does give us some welcome opportunities to develop additional services to improve health outcomes.

Prevention Strategy

Our growing and ageing population means that we need to act as early as possible to support adults to remain able and independent for as long as they can. The Care Bill, currently going through Parliament, will give local authorities a new statutory duty to arrange services that help prevent or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support.

The Public Health Team is working with partners to develop a ‘Prevention Strategy’ which aims to identify the approaches that make a real difference in promoting independent living, reducing the issue of loneliness and isolation, and delivering the best returns in investment.

Supporting Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

As part of the Council's new public health responsibilities are the requirements to provide public health advice on healthcare services to support NHS commissioning and to ensure that our local Clinical Commissioning Groups have plans in place to protect the health of their population from outbreaks of infection or environmental hazards.

The Public Health Team has been working to build relationships with each of the six CCGs that fall wholly or partly in North Yorkshire to understand their needs in relation to public health support. Each CCG has a lead Consultant in Public Health who will support them as their first point of call and act as the public health conduit into their business.

Making Every Contact Count

North Yorkshire County Council is the largest employer in the county and our staff have contact with a significant proportion of residents. Each of our employees has the potential to be a champion for public health, in their day jobs and, as importantly, in their families and communities. By ensuring, where appropriate, every contact employees have with the public is a health-promoting contact, this will contribute to improved health and well-being in North Yorkshire.

I am pleased to inform Members that the Council will be offering training to staff under the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) initiative. MECC is a workforce approach that trains front line staff so they are confident and skilled to offer brief health advice to their customers and therefore make the most of all opportunities to help people stay healthy.

Re-configuration of adult substance misuse services

As part of the transition of the functions from the Primary Care Trust (PCT) all Public Health contracts that the PCT held with providers were transferred to the Council. We have successfully managed this transfer ensuring that there was no disruption to public health services. North Yorkshire County Council is now responsible for commissioning substance misuse services and has led a review of adult drug and alcohol services across North Yorkshire.

I can report that there was overwhelming support for a re-configured recovery focussed substance misuse service across North Yorkshire following a formal 12 week consultation exercise. The Council will seek to procure a new substance misuse service that will assist service users to overcome their dependence and lead productive lives, and we anticipate this will commence on 1st May 2014.

DON MACKENZIE