

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**12 NOVEMBER 2014****COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARL LES****North Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

I am the Council's representative on the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel. The panel continues to meet regularly, having met six times already this calendar year. At our most recent meeting in October, we carried out two of our statutory responsibilities: A review of the Commissioners' Annual Report, which we thought was a fair summary of her achievements over the previous year; and, prior to its publication, a review of her refreshed Police and Crime Plan 2013-2016, which we also supported - especially the selection of the four key priorities: Protect vulnerable people; Cut crime and anti-social behaviour; Prevention and early intervention; and Improve victim care. We liked the approach to presenting information by "local plans for local areas" because people can see what is being done to help them "feel safe and be safe" where they live.

When questioned about the recent Jay report on Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham and the HMIC inspection of South Yorkshire Police, Julia Mulligan, confirmed that, whilst she was largely satisfied at Chief Constable reassurances, that appropriate processes and practices are in place, she had asked for a thematic, in depth 'health check'. The Panel was satisfied that the PCC and Chief Constable are committed to the very best practices in child protection.

Come January, we enter the precept cycle - one of other key statutory responsibilities. We'll also take a closer look at how the PCC has responded to some recent HMIC inspections of NY Police activity.

Regional Macro Employer of the Year 2014 – National Apprenticeship Award

NYCC are the Regional Winners of the BT National Apprenticeship Award for Macro Employer of the Year 2014. This recognises NYCC's continued commitment to apprenticeships and young person's employment. Keeley Metcalfe, HR Adviser in Resourcing & Reward accompanied by Samantha Bredeson- Library Apprentice, her manager Amanda Ledson and Cllr Mike Jordan accepted the award on NYCC's behalf. In the recent economic climate, young people's unemployment has significantly increased and therefore it remains important that NYCC champion young person's employment where the opportunities exist.

Pay Award

NYCC like the vast majority of local authorities, is part of the national pay structure and arrangements which determines the annual inflationary pay award. The industrial action planned for last month was suspended pending further national negotiations. These have now progressed with a new proposal for local authorities and the trade union side to consider and hopefully reach a decision next month.

This proposal covers the outstanding award for 14/15 and 15/16 and is made up of a variable percentage pay award from January 2015 with staff on the lowest pay (below £14k) receiving the highest amount 8.56% and staff at the mid point upwards getting 2.2% with a sliding scale for the grades in between. It also includes a one-off lump sum payment of variable amounts between £325 and £100 pro rata paid in December 2014 again with the lower paid staff receiving higher amounts . The financial assessment so far is that the proposal is within the budgeted amount of 1% for 14/15 and 2% for 15/16 and so is affordable.

The increase in the lower pay grades will impact on some services such as cleaning and catering traded services and will increase the cost of those services and contracts for example to schools. However it will address the recent difficulties with the National Minimum Wage at the bottom of the pay band whereby pay had to be increased to meet the legal requirement last month and a likelihood that a further adjustment will be needed in October 15 when the national minimum wage increases again.

The County Council's view will be fed into the regional Employers Committee in November when the national employers side attends to consult on the proposal

Performance

A series of performance items at Members Seminars has been programmed for this year. This is a new initiative and gives an opportunity for Members to engage with officers on performance issues across the Council.

This follows comments from Members that there was insufficient time and opportunity at Quarterly Reports to the Executive to explore themes at directorate level. The programme started with the BES directorate at the Members Seminar on 1 October, and it seemed to be a useful session for all. Future dates include HAS performance on the 3rd of December and CYPs performance on 4 March 2015. Views are welcomed from Members so we can understand if they are helpful and if any further changes would be beneficial.

Procurement

Procurement continues to be an area of significant activity during 2014 with no less than 29 significant projects currently in progress. Procurement related savings of £3.4m were achieved for the period 2013/14. The Forward Procurement Plan is continually being reviewed and now reflects procurement activity associated with the 2020 North Yorkshire Programme.

The existing Corporate Procurement Strategy is currently being updated. The revised Strategy will also identify an Action Plan in order to deliver further financial savings and other areas of benefit. Details will be brought to Member's attention in the near future through Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Audit Committee and the Executive.

CARL LES