

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

22 JULY 2015

**STATEMENT FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH,
STRONGER COMMUNITIES, LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
AND THE ROLE OF AREA COMMITTEES**

COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVID A CHANCE

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health Grant

The Public Health Grant has allowed the Council to lay the foundations for our Distinctive Public Health Agenda for the county. This has included a transformation of public health services inherited when public health responsibilities transferred to us and development of new services and initiatives that address particular challenges for our residents. Among these new initiatives are the Stronger Communities programme and the Targeted Prevention services aimed at helping older people to remain independent and well.

The recent announcement of an in-year cut to the overall grant to local authorities by £200 million is concerning. We do not know the details of how this will be applied locally or whether there will be further reductions in future years.

Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice

One of the aims of the county's Joint Alcohol Strategy is to identify people who drink alcohol in harmful or hazardous ways and offer interventions to help them drink safely and responsibly. The New Horizons service has been providing specialist treatment for people who need support to manage their alcohol addiction since October 2014.

We have now commissioned pharmacies to deliver brief advice interventions to people who do not need specialist treatment but consume alcohol at unsafe levels. This new service will be available from July in pharmacies and later in the year from GPs. In addition, we have provided training in alcohol identification and brief advice interventions to frontline workers who are in regular contact with people who drink to excess. An early group for this training are custody workers in Scarborough.

Walk Wise Road Safety Education Programme

The Grant has allowed us to support initiatives like the Walk Wise Road Safety Education Programme through the new joint funding approach between Public Health, Highways Road Safety and 95 Alive Partnership (from North Yorkshire Police). The programme aimed at pre-school children and their parents includes its

own website, learning through play resources and story books that help parents and carers to teach road safety lessons appropriate for this age group e.g. holding hands, using a car seat in a structured but enjoyable way. There is also an early years setting package so that playgroups and nursery schools and groups can use the same resources and images to reinforce these important principles and behaviours. The programme will be delivered at no cost to those who join in the Selby, Harrogate and Scarborough areas - where the evidence shows that children are more likely to be hurt on the roads and where demographic and deprivation factors make this more likely than for most children in the county. We will offer membership through a number of channels, principally via early years settings as almost every child now attends an early years setting through the government voucher scheme.

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North Yorkshire Horizons

In the first seven months, the new drugs and alcohol service has been used by 2243 people. One-third are male and one-fifth are between 35 - 39 years of age. The profile is therefore similar to that seen across the UK.

The Single Point of Contact telephone line gets about 1000 calls per week. About a fifth of calls relate to people who need assessment for treatment. Self-referral and referral by family and friends represent a large proportion of new clients to the service.

The Recovery and Mentoring Service has increased the number of recovery groups across the county that allow people to access support to maintain their recovery from drugs and alcohol. There has been an estimated 500-800 attendance per month at these groups.

Health Checks

The NHS Health Check invites adults aged 40 to 74 - without previously diagnosed heart disease, diabetes or chronic kidney disease (CKD) - for a free health assessment. The Check aims to identify those at risk of serious, but potentially avoidable, conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and certain types of dementia, the programme is an important measure to help reduce early death from these diseases. The uptake has been disappointing with less than 50% of those offered the check coming forward to receive it.

The Public Health Team has been working with GP practices on an improvement programme to increase uptake as well as specific outreach initiatives to raise awareness and boost uptake.

Sexual Health Services

The new sexual health service started on 1 July 2015. This brings together all aspects of services in an integrated way and will be easier to access. In addition to treating sexually transmitted infections and reducing unwanted pregnancies, the new service will have an increased focus on prevention and early intervention, including targeted services and outreach work for young people and most at risk groups.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR LOCALITY BUDGETS

The Leader has proposed piloting County Councillor Locality Budgets, allowing every County Councillor to respond to local needs by making small grants to support projects or activities that benefit the communities they represent. The allocation envisaged for grants is £5,000 per County Councillor per year.

The Executive has agreed to earmark £792,000 in total from General Working Balances for a two year pilot, with a brief evaluation at the end of each year. A report proposing the detailed scheme for the administration and decision making will be considered by the Executive on 28 July 2015.

It is envisaged that the first stage of the pilot will open for applications in October 2015 with awards being made up to March 2016, followed by an interim evaluation. Prior to the start of the pilot a briefing will be provided to County Councillors, probably via Area Committee meetings in September 2015.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The work of the Stronger Communities programme continues to gather pace across the county with a range of community groups and projects benefitting from the package of support available. To date over 30 grant applications have been received from groups delivering projects across all four of the programme's priorities.

23 projects have been approved; the total value of grants awarded is £142,626 against total project costs of £374,367. Examples of projects supported include the relocation of the library in Pateley Bridge to co-location with Nidderdale Plus and Tourist Information; the development of a new older people's centre in Scarborough by Age UK; a range of activity groups based in village halls on the Wolds in Ryedale; piloting Good Neighbours schemes across the county with Rural Action Yorkshire; support to Craven Volunteer Centre to provide outreach services in Settle and a digital outreach service by Hambleton and Richmondshire Citizens Advice. A further 75 projects are currently being developed by the team. Early findings would illustrate that there is a healthy appetite to develop universal community managed services for older people and adults however community managed transport services are proving

more challenging and some targeted work to stimulate interest in community transport is being planned.

The programme continues to support the work of the Directorates and the Council's 2020 programme in a number of service consultations including libraries, children's centres and transport helping to identify opportunities for services to come together and enabling the communities to add value by working in partnership with us to maintain services.

As part of the package of support to communities, a number of buildings and community assets are being offered for transfer to community ownership or management. To support this initiative the Stronger Communities team has secured government backing and financial support as part of a new Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) funding programme – Community Ownership and Management of Assets (COMA). This is good news for groups interested in for example managing community libraries as government funded grants, of up to £10,000 each, will be available to them for feasibility work.