

Cllr David Chance – Statement for full Council 11 November 2015**Stronger Communities**

The work of the Stronger Communities programme over the last quarter has focussed on two principle priorities: working with the library service to open the dialogue with communities interested in managing the proposed 21 community libraries with a view to receiving formal expressions of interest over the next quarter; and aligning the inter-dependent Stronger and Living Well programmes to ensure the benefits of this investment is maximised for both individuals and the communities and community led services that support them. The Stronger Communities programme, in partnership with the Living Well Service, is working with the Universities of York and Central Lancashire to evaluate the impact of the two programmes under the title 'Connecting People: Connected Communities'.

The programme continues to support grass roots community projects across the county. To date 75 applications have been received from groups delivering projects across all four of the programme's priorities. A total of 57 projects have been approved; the total value of grants awarded is £412,143 against total project value of circa £1.5m. One project supported in the last quarter is the development of a universal community led pre-school support package developed in partnership by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the council's 0-19 Prevention Service and piloted in Selby and Scarborough districts. Further capacity building support has been given to a number of voluntary care services providers in Richmondshire; a community bakery project providing supported employment opportunities and a community shop.

In addition to the on-going support grass roots community projects, strategic projects being delivered include commissioning North Yorkshire Sport to deliver a county wide social inclusion project. The three year 'Club as the Hub' programme will offer training and support to voluntary sports clubs across the county to develop social activities and support for people with additional support needs. The programme is also working with Selby District Council as part of the Better Together partnership to develop a district wide 'good neighbour' offer and with Scarborough Borough Council on digital inclusion and well-being projects. Community transport continues to be a challenge and discussions are taking place with providers to shape and inform a new package of support in order to generate a higher take up in the sector, this will include a targeted campaign to recruit volunteer drivers. Work is progressing well on the development of the Community Directory, a project that involves over thirty public and voluntary sector partners in the development of a county wide comprehensive database of services and assets.

One significant highlight in September was the opening of the Pateley Bridge Community Library in partnership with Nidderdale Plus.

Community Awards

The first County Council Community awards were presented by the Chairman of the Council at the North Yorkshire Wider Partnership conference on 16 October 2015. In all, there were 114 nominations from a diverse range of community groups, organisations and individuals from across the county. The winners were:

Best community group - Osmotherley Community Group

The group tackles social isolation and loneliness in a rural community. It provides opportunities for social interaction between people of all ages, including young children and families, the elderly, recently bereaved, men living alone, those with recent health issues, and the housebound. Through its monthly coffee mornings and soup lunches, the group enables people from a variety of ages and backgrounds to come together. It also builds community links by setting up events that expand the local volunteer base and promote opportunities for volunteers to develop their skills. As well as tackling social isolation and loneliness, the group raises money for local and national charities.

Other shortlisted entrants were: Craven children's comic collective Pink Fluffy Ketchup Covered Flower Ponies and the Parish of Hemingbrough Historical/Heritage Society.

Best community project - Corrina and Friends Homeless and Vulnerable Project

After nearly losing her home when her partner had cancer, Corrina set up the Corrina's Homeless and Vulnerable Project to support residents who are forced to sleep rough or can't afford food to feed their families. Corrina has opened Harrogate's first non-profit pay-what-you-feel café, which operates like any other café, but uses food donated by businesses and the public and all proceeds go to the project. Every day at 5pm, the cafe opens to the homeless and vulnerable to take leftover meals or food. Between its opening on 1 May and the end of June, the cafe served 1,186 meals to the homeless and vulnerable. More than 35 volunteers now work in the café. The project also supplies furniture to local people in need who require items to furnish their home.

Other shortlisted entrants were: The Hovingham Village Market and Clapham Village Store/Clapham Community Shop Ltd

Volunteer of the year - John Scoble

After retiring from his post as a primary school head teacher, John read that learning a new musical instrument helps to ward off Alzheimer's and memory loss and decided to learn to play the ukulele. Eighteen months ago, in Ryedale, he initiated a Music in the Community project, aimed at all ages, with inclusion as its driving force. He now provides free ukulele tuition to a variety of groups in the Ryedale and Scarborough areas. These groups have gone on to perform in public, helping to raise thousands of pounds for charity and entertain many hundreds of people. John's love of music and his enthusiasm have enriched the lives of a large number of people aged nine to 90.

Other shortlisted entrants were: Kevin Axelby of Ryedale and Ian Robinson of Richmondshire.

Young people volunteering - Easingwold School Youth Peer Mentors

The peer mentors help other young people with many issues: the transition from primary to secondary school, confidence and self-esteem issues, family issues, socialisation, illness, sexuality and gender, equality, resilience, responsibility. The group are recognised as a support within school and are written into policies directly. The mentors do a lot of work around self-esteem and can signpost their mentees to other agencies when needed; because of their age and the trust built between them, they have much success in this area.

Other shortlisted entrants were: North Yorkshire Railway Junior Volunteers Group and Lucy Taylor of the Football Futures project at Skipton.

The winners each received a prize of £1,000 for their project, group or a nominated local charity. All finalists receive a trophy and certificate.

Details of the work of all shortlisted entrants and a full list of nominees is available on the North Yorkshire County Council website at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/communityawards>.

Locality Budgets

The Locality Budgets programme launched on 7 October 2015. I have already agreed support for 14 projects, totalling £14,308, recommended by 5 County Councillors.

Annual Report of the Director of Public Health

This year Dr Sargeant has chosen the health of our children as the focus for his third annual report as Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire. This report highlights the many factors that influence health and help to build resilience in children and young people. We know that if we get prevention and early intervention services right for children and young people it will have a big impact on improving their life chances.

I join with my colleagues, Cllrs Barker and Sanderson, in welcoming this report and working with them to take forward the recommendations. A key recommendation is about reducing the impact of child poverty which affects 1 in 10 of our children and reduces their life chances and health.

Healthy Child Programme

On 1 October 2015, the Council took on the responsibility of commissioning the 0 - 5 Healthy Child Programme which includes health visiting services. This offers exciting

new opportunities to improve the support offered to children and their families in the important early years of child development.

We have also marked the start of a new lifestyle service as part of the 5-19 Healthy Child Programme to help children and families manage overweight and obesity. As Dr Sargeant notes in his annual report, 1 in 5 children start school with excess weight and this increases to 1 in 3 by year 6. This new service is one of many actions that will be taken forward in a “Healthy Weight, Active Lives” strategy that is being developed with our partners.

Smoking

We launched our Tobacco Control Strategy which aims to inspire a smoke free generation in North Yorkshire. The Strategy emphasises the importance of preventing children and young people from starting the habit of smoking. We welcome new legislation that came into effect last month which makes it illegal to smoke while a child is in the car. October also saw the conclusion of a tender process for stop smoking services. We are currently implementing a new service that will begin in January named Smokefree Life North Yorkshire. The new service will target key groups such as pregnant smokers.

Suicide Prevention

We are working with partners across the City of York and North Yorkshire to develop a suicide implementation plan aimed at reducing the number of suicides across the county. Suicide devastates the lives of individuals, families and communities. It is a problem across the UK as well as in North Yorkshire. Those bereaved by a suicide are at increased risk of mental health and emotional problems and may be at higher risk of suicide themselves, so receiving the right support is essential. We are committed to supporting people in crisis and those experiencing feelings of despair or hopelessness by developing a network of services to help them cope and provide an alternative to ending their lives.

Winter Health

The draft winter health strategy is completed and out for consultation. Partners are working together to develop an implementation plan. This is being led by Rural Action Yorkshire following successful award of approximately £400k from the British Gas Energy Trust (BGET”).