

## North Yorkshire County Council

24 February 2016

### Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

#### Chairman's Statement

1. My statement for this full council includes details of the Committee meetings held on 16 November 2015 and 18 January 2016.

#### Reconfiguration of the Library Services

2. At the meeting on 16 November 2015, the Committee reconsidered the reconfiguration of the Library Services. The Committee looked at the progress being made with the community groups towards the proposed reconfiguration of libraries, into seven core, five hybrid and a further twenty one community managed libraries, with the reconfiguration due to come into effect in the Spring of 2017, prior to it being considered by the Executive.
3. The Committee noted that this was an extremely challenging programme of change and the Library service together with a representative from Stronger Communities had met with the majority of the councillors with a prospective Community Library in their area as well as most councillors with a Hybrid library.
4. The officers had also been having meetings with prospective groups, as well as Parish and Town Councils, in order to explore different options and to help the groups to understand what they will need to do. Across the County there have been 38 meetings with local groups/town and parish councils and 31 Volunteer Information sessions.
5. The Committee considered the Red, Amber, or Green (RAG) status for each of the Libraries and noted that the intention was to apply the council's resources proportionately to the RAG status of the Libraries with the most resources being focused to those Libraries that had a red RAG status. The Council did not want any of these Libraries to fail and would explore all viable options with the local community to seek an appropriate solution.
6. The Committee further noted that of those Libraries that were marked as being green it was expected that progress could be made relatively swiftly with the library at Pateley Bridge, having already transferred to community management and was now operated by Nidderdale Plus, in their new premises with the support of volunteers and some dedicated library staffing. There may be some scope for the other libraries to transfer to community management prior to 2017.
7. The seven amber rated libraries had either an established group in place or have made some progress towards establishing a group and identifying volunteers, but require further support to progress further. In addition to the above, four of the hybrids were currently rated amber on this basis.

8. Of those marked red, the unique civilian - military community of the Catterick garrison, means that for a community - managed library to succeed all possible routes to sustainability must be considered, including joint proposals across Richmond – Colburn - Catterick. It was noted that for this work to succeed it would require a significant focus by officers over a number of months. However, the local County Councillors were working well together which could significantly help this process along.
9. In respect of Kirbymoorside Library, this too would require some focused work over a number of months, particularly to resolve the issue of funding the current premises for the community library.
10. The Committee noted that in respect of Stokesley Library, the Parish Council was potentially considering raising the Parish precept to enable additional support to be given to the community library.
11. The Committee further noted that there was still some way to go in respect of the other Libraries that were marked as red – Crosshills, Settle, Thirsk and the hybrid library at Pickering and it was hoped that progress may be a little quicker with these libraries to reach a solution.
12. The Committee welcomed the report and agreed that it would like to be kept informed of the progress being made through an updated Library RAG status list being submitted to the Committee's meeting on 18 January 2016 and a further update report on the library reconfiguration programme of work be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 18 April 2016.
13. The Committee expressed its thanks to the Library staff for their level of commitment during such a difficult period of change and would like them to know how much it is appreciated.

### **Customer Strategy**

14. In respect of the Council's customer strategy, the committee was advised that the vision for the strategy was that in five years' time the way in which the Council transacted with its customers would be increasingly on-line. The aim was to have 70% of customer contact managed by digital self-service channels with the remainder supported through "assisted digital" channels.
15. The Committee noted that assisted digital was support for people who can't use or access online services on their own. The support can be someone guiding a user through the digital service, entering a user's information into the digital service on their behalf or providing a location where people can access the equipment and connectivity to get on-line.
16. The customer strategy aimed to put the customer at the heart of the design and delivery of the Council's services and in doing so would enable the council to achieve the savings of £33 million detailed within the 2020 programme. This could be achieved, in part, via an improved customer experience through consistency of services and re-use, supporting customers to be self-reliant so that they could use

cheaper means of contact and through a marketing campaign aimed at changing customer and staff behavior.

17. It was intended for there to be a clear customer engagement in the service design process with a full customer involvement during the testing stage for service changes. Furthermore, priority resources would be given to those projects where benefits delivered from the use of customer components was clear.
18. There was a role for the councillors in helping to communicate the customer vision with customers; supporting the consultation on the customer strategy and being ambassadors for the customer theme. It was also intended to create a Customer Members Support Group to aid officers and Councillors Bateman, Blackburn, Lunn, Parsons and Swales expressed an interest to be part of this group.
19. The Committee commented that currently 70% of all contact to the council was by phone and that a change to get to 70% online would require quite a bit of work particularly for those older people who do not go online or are unable to get online. It agreed that it would like an update as the strategy developed on the changes in channel switching.

#### **Police and Crime Commissioner**

20. At the meeting on 18 January 2016, the Committee heard from Julia Mulligan, Police and Crime Commissioner, on the Community Safety Priorities and Activities within the Police and Crime Plan.
21. The Commissioner advised that victim services for North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire had been provided out of a call centre in Wakefield. Dissatisfaction with this service had resulted in it being moved to York when the Commissioner took office just to serve North Yorkshire and York. As a result of this the range of victim support services offered had been expanded.
22. In addition, money has been provided for specific support services for specific types of crime such as child sexual exploitation, for which there had been no prior provision. Domestic abuse services have also been developed to include medium risk offenders for earlier intervention to prevent them becoming high risk.
23. Protecting vulnerable people is the number one priority in the Police and Crime Plan. Unfortunately, in North Yorkshire there have been increases in the number of crimes affecting vulnerable victims, such as domestic abuse, sexual exploitation and cyber-crime. North Yorkshire Police though, launched a cyber-crime unit in April 2015 to tackle the increases in online criminal activity.
24. The Commissioner commented that a big area of work had been getting partners to sign up to the Mental Health Concordat which sets out a consistent approach among partners as to how people with mental health difficulties should be dealt with. Improving the work of the street triage approach was important as well as ensuring that people who need services can access those services easier and quicker, preventing them from being picked up by street triage further down the line. North Yorkshire has 3 section 136 facilities in Scarborough, Harrogate and Northallerton

whereas before 2012 there were none. North Yorkshire is far from where it needs to be in supporting vulnerable people with mental health difficulties but it has come a long way.

25. The Commissioner stated that she had helped to set up the Rural Crime Network in July 2014. This was in response to a lack of hard evidence that citizens were not satisfied with the service they received from the police in rural areas. The network was continuing to challenge the Government on the funding formula for police forces and the Government had agreed to reconsider its review. The Commissioners in the Network had made it clear that the new formula needs to be linked to how the police forces are structured and not in isolation of each other.
26. The Commissioner noted that in respect of rural cross border crime, Land Rover Defenders being stolen was a problem nationally as the parts are valuable. Police forces were looking to move to borderless policing where the police can pursue perpetrators across police boundaries. Closer cooperation between forces, as well as merging certain units such as the dog unit allow for increased activity across a larger 'greater' force area.
27. The Committee was advised that there would be no possibility for Parish Councils to buy their own mobile speed camera or to contribute to the cost of one to be installed in their area. North Yorkshire Police have made a significant £1m investment into automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology. In addition, the force was the national lead into developing ANPR software and networks nationally to allow for greater cross force cooperation to tackle offenders.
28. The Commissioner stated that the 101 number was a national system that has been in place for three years. The service is in the process of being re-procured and the Commissioner is involved with this. There were a number of issues that need to be addressed in that procurement. There are question marks around how people with disabilities can effectively access the service. There are resilience issues, the number went down over the New Year as a result of the flooding in York and the police had to put other measures in place. It costs £0.15 per call to the number and this cost needs to be reduced. Finally, what can be offered in terms of better promotion will be considered as considerable work needs to be done on this area.
29. The Commissioner had recently completed a review of the First Contact Customer Experience provided by North Yorkshire Police and she commented that members' frustrations were in line with the findings of the review. A £1.6m investment was being spent upgrading the phone system to ensure that the system will always route a call through to someone so that you will always receive an answer. Mobile technology is also being considered for certain officers, Sussex police force is leading the way on communication with lots of contact information and means of communication online. The closest North Yorkshire officers can come to that, at the moment, is calls being routed through the airwave radios.
30. The Commissioner was asked to provide an update on the development of the 101 number to the committee in 2017.

## **Transforming Rehabilitation**

31. Martin Weblin (Purple Futures Community Rehabilitation Company) and Wendy Capes (National Probation Service) attended the meeting to answer the Committee's questions regarding the changes to the delivery of probation services under the Government's Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.
32. The Committee heard that reoffending rate measures were being reviewed by the Government and only once that has been completed will organisations be able to measure success. The split between organisations for high risk offenders and medium and low risk offenders will make it difficult to make a direct comparison to historical data where one service managed all offenders.
33. The key measure for Purple Futures to judge whether the changes in the delivery of the service had been a success was payment by results. This was split into in 17 service level targets which covered every area of their work. Purple Futures have four Ministry of Justice staff that work with them and were solely focused on monitoring effectiveness against outcomes. It was too early to say how successful the changes had been but as most of the targets were currently green it looked like the targets were achievable.
34. The Probation Service had 23 similar national measures with a few reds for North Yorkshire but overall it was an improving picture.
35. The Committee noted that significant pathways out of reoffending varied depending on each individual as the individual responded differently to the various pathways of support. There are three general areas of support that are key to preventing reoffending; these are: finding the individual stable work, secure housing, and improved emotional and psychological wellbeing particularly, improving self-esteem. Partnership working and good relationships with other agencies such as housing associations can be key to the success of preventing reoffending.
36. It was noted that the criminal demographic in North Yorkshire hasn't changed significantly in the last few years. The number of sex offenders and historical sexual abuse offenders had increased and they tended to be older and present different needs such as health and social care requirements. There continues to be a low number of female high risk offenders in the Probation Service.
37. The Committee questioned how mental health issues were dealt with, the National Probation Service are heavily involved with personality disorder services as that is often a common issue. Practitioners could work more effectively within a holistic framework. Community Mental Health Nurses do offer advice on cases, however, traditionally the link with the mental health services is not as strong and difficulty is often found engaging with those services. The County Council's Health and Wellbeing Board were more of a strategic group and don't necessarily consider the forensic detail of issues.
38. The Committee agreed that the North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board be requested to look at the significance that mental health issues have in leading to

criminal justice and to consider whether it should be and how it could be given higher priority within its plans.

39. The Committee noted that in respect of links to Youth Offending two probation service officers were seconded to the youth offending service to allow for a longer lead in time for transition between custody and being out on supervision. A probation service representative sat on the Youth Justice Board and contributed to the ongoing discussion of issues and improving links between the organisations.
40. The Committee noted the advice on when new offending rates would be available and agreed that the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company, Purple Futures, be invited to a Committee meeting in 2017 to advise on the changes in the reoffending rates within North Yorkshire.

### **North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service**

41. The Committee was advised that the current service delivery model for the Youth Justice Service has been in place since 2000. Over recent years, the cohort of young people has changed with the service now working with a considerably smaller and more challenging group of young people. In addition, there has been significant change in the wider criminal justice landscape: regionalization of Courts and the Crown Prosecution Service, introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners and Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.
42. In addition to these changes, the Youth Justice Service Partnership was facing significant financial pressures with the overall budget being reduced by over £1million since 2011. There was a projected overspend of £309,571 by the end of 2017/18.
43. Consequently, there was to be a 2020 review of the service to consider the most appropriate approach to meet the needs of young people whilst meeting the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Parallel to this review was a national review of the Youth Justice Service announced by the Ministry of Justice, which would look at the evidence and current practice in preventing youth crime and rehabilitating young offenders which would report back at the end of summer 2016.

### **Prevent**

44. The Committee were informed that from the 1 July 2015, Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a statutory duty on the County Council and other specified authorities in exercising their functions to have “due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism”.
45. The Committee noted the work that been progressed so far by the County Council. Whilst the police had an important role in the development of Prevent it was not a police programme and its success was dependent on partnership working across local authorities, statutory agencies and community

organisations. Prevent centred on early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before a crime occurs.

46. The Committee considered the action that had been undertaken in relation to the key areas within the statutory guidance and agreed that a session on Prevent should be included, at the earliest opportunity, in a future Members' Seminar.

**18 April 2016**

47. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for 18 April 2016 and will be looking at the Council's workforce and key workforce data; the Council's requirements and approach on equalities; video conferencing and the updated progress on the Library reconfiguration programme.

**County Councillor Derek Bastiman**  
**Chairman - Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
County Hall, Northallerton  
28 January 2016