

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

9 November 2016

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

COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVID CHANCE

#### **STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

The main focus of the Stronger Communities programme for 2016/17 is to support the final stages of the library service reconfiguration programme. Twenty community library management groups have been supported to complete business plans, recruit and train volunteers and develop their operating models prior to the hand over in April 2017.

The first half of 2016/17 has seen the Stronger Communities programme build on the success of its first full year of operation. Seventy-six groups have been supported in the first six months of 2016/17 with investment of circa £548k. Fifty-six voluntary and community sector groups were given help to expand or extend their existing provision and to build organisational capacity. Eleven library management groups have been assisted with start up support and costs. Nine new groups were also established providing activities and support to both adults and children and young people across the county.

The first annual report of the Stronger Communities Programme covering 2015/16 has now been completed and published. The report contains detail on the progress made against the Programme priorities, data on performance as well as short and medium term plans for the future of the Programme.

#### **Libraries – Supporting community and hybrid libraries**

Significant progress over this period has been made with community library management committees achieving key milestones on their journey to transform how the library service will operate from April 2017. With business plans and charitable status approved for many groups, discussions are now well underway on lease and service level agreement negotiations, as well as volunteer recruitment campaigns. However, it is important to highlight that each community library has its own set of unique challenges and opportunities and while some have progressed beyond expectation this is not universal, thus the Stronger Communities team is prioritising its staff resource to this priority until 1 April 2017.

## **Services for Older People and Vulnerable Adults**

The focus in 2016/17 is to utilise local experience and intelligence from within the established Stronger Communities Team and Living Well service coupled with emerging national research to inform a more targeted approach to reduce, prevent or delay demand for statutory services.

This is being achieved through a number of internal projects such as identifying and mapping demand for services, refining the funding process around the national 'Five Ways to Wellbeing', using a single outcome framework and measurement tool, and the creation of an officer sub-group of the Stronger Communities Programme Board to take a strategic lead on this issue within the County Council. This work will then inform and prioritise investment in the voluntary and community sector.

## **Community Transport**

The emphasis of support continues to be strengthening the existing community transport offer in light of the reduction in bus subsidies and changes to Integrated Passenger Transport to ensure access to services and connectivity across the County.

In order to seek to build the customer base for community transport providers and help make them more sustainable, a branding and marketing exercise was commissioned in August to establish a North Yorkshire community transport brand; re-positioning community transport as a universal service rather than one that is associated with either people on low incomes or for health services. Draft designs are currently being market tested and will be refined later this year.

## **Services for Children, Young People and Families**

Building on the work with the Prevention Service and North Yorkshire Youth in 2015/16, this year will see investment in infrastructure support services that ensure the long term sustainability of youth services in each locality, as well as continuing to support the development of new volunteer led groups/activities for children and young people across the county. A youth volunteering project is being developed in partnership with North Yorkshire Youth to help broaden the pool of volunteers in the county. In addition Stronger Communities will continue to support the implementation of the 0-5 Early Years Strategy 2016/17.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### **Launch of the 2016 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health**

Dr Sargeant's fourth annual report, called "Good work - good for you, good for business: The health and wellbeing of the working age population" has been launched. The report makes key recommendations around creating healthy workplaces and building a healthy workforce.

Although the levels of unemployment and numbers of people not working due to sickness or other personal reasons in North Yorkshire are low compared with other areas, this hides some major challenges. The young working age population has

reduced and continues to shrink, and we often struggle to recruit workers to fill jobs in key sectors such as the health and social care system. We need a healthy workforce to meet the growing needs of an ageing population in our county. The report outlines how we can 'work well' with employers, health and social care professionals, and employees, both current and potential, to raise the awareness of the health benefits of 'good work' and meet the needs of our residents.

The report promotes collaboration between local businesses, partner organisations and our residents to improve the health of our working age population so that North Yorkshire will continue to be an attractive place for people to live and work in the future. I encourage colleagues to use this report to discuss these important issues in our local communities so we can take the actions with our partners to promote and build a healthy workforce.

## **Stoptober**

As we have done in previous years NYCC are currently supporting smokers across North Yorkshire to quit their habit during the Stoptober campaign where smokers are encouraged to quit for the month of October. Smoking remains the biggest cause of ill health and early death in North Yorkshire killing over 1000 people in the County every year. This Stoptober we are working with our stop smoking service Smokefreelife North Yorkshire to support staff wishing to quit. I had pleasure in meeting stop smoking advisors from Smokefreelife North Yorkshire on one of the occasions when they brought their Wellness on Wheels van to the car park at County Hall. The van is visiting a number of Council venues over the month of October to give our staff the chance to sign up for support to quit during Stoptober.

## **Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives strategy**

The public health team have produced a North Yorkshire wide strategy for tackling overweight and obesity across all ages. The Health and Wellbeing Board has endorsed the strategy and it will now be launched formally in November.

Obesity is a major public health problem and real challenge for us in North Yorkshire. Over 66% of adults are overweight and obese. 1 in 5 children are overweight and obese at reception age which increases to 1 in 3 when they are 10-11 year old. Obesity is associated with a wide range of health problems including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

The strategy recognises that it is hard to lose weight and that unfortunately there is no easy fix. Our physiology, the environment we live in, influences from our society and cultures and the choices we make about the foods we eat and the activity we do all affect our weight. We all live in a world today that more readily promotes unhealthy rather than healthy eating. We also recognise that over the years people's perception of what is a healthy weight has changed. Not everyone is able to identify overweight and it being seen as the norm.

The strategy identifies numerous opportunities we have in North Yorkshire to address this challenging agenda. I would like to highlight that since the Council took on public health responsibilities we now have a range of new services in place to

support both children and their families to lose weight through our Healthy Choices service. We also have adult weight management services running in all seven District Council areas. Public health investment has been used to support other key initiatives such as 'bikeability schemes' in schools, the Pathways to Health initiative and the Healthier Choices programme which involves working with food outlets to promote healthier options.

Our challenge in North Yorkshire is to create the environment that supports us in developing and sustaining health eating and physical activity habits.

## **0-5 years Universal Healthy Child Programme (Health Visiting)**

Giving children a healthy start in life is the overall aim of the new 0-5 years Healthy Child Programme (HCP) in North Yorkshire which is now underway. Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT) has successfully retained the contract to deliver the HCP following a competitive bidding process.

Health visitors lead and deliver services to ensure a healthy start for each and every child in North Yorkshire, providing universal and targeted prevention and early intervention support during pregnancy through to school entry. HDFT is using a 'One Team' approach and service delivery model for the HCP integrated into the local children's services. This will help to deliver efficient and effective services at a community, local and individual level, providing a clear focus on prevention and early intervention to improve outcomes and tackle health inequalities.

## **End of life care deep dive joint strategic needs assessment**

End of life care is an area of increasing concern nationally, particularly in light of the UK's ageing population. Poorly-coordinated end of life care can lead to excess unnecessary hospital admissions, which are often unwanted for the patient and costly for the system. Several key issues need to be addressed in order to improve the quality of end of life care provided. These include increasing access for all, wider provision of training, improving service co-ordination, encouraging discussions around dying and focusing on patient-centred care. The North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board has recognised the importance of improving care at the end of life by including 'Dying Well' as one of the five key themes for the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2015-20.

NYCC public health team have produced an overview of end of life care in North Yorkshire, incorporating national guidance and local data to produce a set of key recommendations for commissioners across the County. This has been discussed at the Health & Wellbeing Board, with the Commissioners Forum member organisations identifying how best to share good practice across the county and how to improve services.

## **Syrian refugees**

NYCC and the seven district councils jointly committed to resettling 189 refugees under the Government's Syrian Vulnerable People (SVP) scheme, as part of the regional response coordinated by Migration Yorkshire. 67 people have arrived to

date (July to October) and resettled in Craven, Harrogate and Selby districts. We anticipate the remainder will arrive in 2017 with the majority being resettled in Hambleton, Richmondshire, Ryedale and Scarborough districts.

NYCC and six district councils (Craven DC, Hambleton DC, Harrogate BC, Richmondshire DC, Ryedale DC and Selby DC) have also jointly committed to resettling 22 refugees under the Government's Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS). We will be running this as an extension to the SVP scheme with refugees arriving in 2017 and 2018.

There is good partnership working between the local authorities, the NHS and local GPs, schools, the Refugee Council, DWP and the police with the rapid and flexible deployment of a range of services. Additional assistance and befriending is being provided by local voluntary organisations and volunteers, particularly with items such as TVs and cycles that cannot be provided using Home Office funding. Housing is a mixture of private sector and local authority, all sourced by district councils. The first group of refugees has also helped with welcoming subsequent groups.

Overall the communities of North Yorkshire have been very welcoming. A press release about the first arrivals attracted some critical (and in some cases offensive) comments, but this was more than balanced by comments welcoming the refugees and supporting the actions being taken by the County Council.

Our initial priority is to help families to quickly get settled in their new homes, to access public services such as health services and schools, and to gain basic English language skills. Overall, our aim is to enable every refugee to successfully integrate into our community, to gain good English language skills, and to be actively and gainfully engaged in education or employment. This requires intensive support during the first few weeks and months of resettlement, with additional and more targeted support over a longer period.

## **County Councillor Locality Budgets**

The programme is continuing to enable County Councillors to respond to local needs by recommending the allocation of small amounts of funding to support projects or activities that directly promote the social, economic, or environmental wellbeing of the communities they represent.

187 recommendations from 55 County Councillors have been approved since April 2016. This represents £168,542.06 of funding (46.81% of budget). The last date for the receipt of recommendations from County Councillors is 17 February 2017.

DAVID CHANCE