

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**15th February 2017****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 continues to be supporting the final stages of the library service reconfiguration in the run up to 1st April. Two libraries, Pateley Bridge and Boroughbridge have already transferred to community ownership and good progress is being made across the county with the remaining 18¹ community library management committees to ensure they have the resources and capacity in place to successfully manage and operate their library from 1st April.

Utilising the experiences and lessons learned over the past two years, work is underway to revise the existing Stronger Communities grants scheme with the intention of launching the new scheme from June 2017. Based on a prospectus of a small, select number of proven projects that are replicable and deliver desired outcomes, the new grants scheme will have clearly defined boundaries and focus funding in areas of identified need. The projects will all feed into an Impact (Measurement) Framework to provide a deeper evidence of the tangible difference the Programme is making, building on the feedback of the LGA Peer Review to 'achieve even more'.

118 community groups and projects have been supported so far in 2016/17 with investment of circa £909k.

Libraries – Supporting community and hybrid libraries

Significant progress has been made to date with community library management committees, achieving key milestones on their journey to transform how the library service will operate from April 2017. All business plans have been approved and all community management committees, where applicable, have submitted constitutions to the Charities Commission. Support from Stronger Communities in the final quarter of 16/17 will focus on supporting the groups and the library service with a range of operational matters prior to handover.

¹ Catterick, Colburn and Richmond libraries are being managed by one community library management committee.

It is important to note that the community and hybrid libraries will continue to need support from the Council following handover and as such, libraries will continue to be a priority for the Stronger Programme for 2017/18 and beyond.

Services for Older People and Vulnerable Adults

The focus in 2016/17 has been 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 has been achieved through a number of internal projects including: identifying and mapping demand for services, refining the funding process around the national 'Five Ways to Wellbeing', a number of workshops with the Living Well Service, 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 future 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.

Stage one of this project has now concluded. An overarching brand has been co-designed with community transport operators and market tested with the public promoting the theme of 'Go Local'. In addition a marketing plan has been drawn up with steps that the Council can take to maximise the awareness of the brand and its ideals.

Services for Children, Young People and Families

Building on the work with the Prevention Service and North Yorkshire Youth in 2015/16, this year has seen 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.

Syrian Refugees

North Yorkshire has now resettled 125 Syrian refugees (26 families) across Craven, Harrogate, Selby and Scarborough districts as part of the government's commitment to help refugees from Syria. Ryedale, Hambleton and Richmondshire districts will follow later this year. The County Council is providing the overall project management.

Funding for the resettlement scheme comes from central government and the refugees who are arriving have been specifically selected and vetted by the government, in conjunction with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), prior to their arrival. Having escaped violence and torture in their own country, the refugees that we are resettling have been identified as some of the most vulnerable people – a number include disabled adults and children.

We continue to work closely with the district councils, the police, CCGs and the Refugee Council to prepare for the families' arrival. The support that the Refugee Council provides is proving to be invaluable: helping the refugees with language support, access to services such as GPs and integration into the community. This support will be in place for a year but is most intensive in the first few weeks. The Refugee Council is also working with local volunteers to provide longer-term befriending support to ensure that the refugees can become independent as quickly as possible. A good base of volunteers now exists in each of the current resettlement districts and the families themselves are providing their own support network. Our input post-arrival includes providing English language support and supporting families that have more complex health and social care needs.

A number of schools have commented on what a delight it is to have the children in their school especially as they set a good example in their eagerness to learn. Some of the adults have started volunteering, providing a first step to employment.

Plans are underway to utilise the government's funding for Years 2 to 5 of the families' resettlement, to provide some level of continued support including employment support.

We hope that step by step the families will be able to rebuild their shattered lives and regain independence and control.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Health Protection

The outbreak of avian influenza in poultry that was reported in Craven in January 2017 highlights the key role that the Council has for assuring that the necessary plans and arrangements are in place to protect our residents from environmental and infectious disease threats. We work with a number of agencies to ensure that we can respond quickly to these threats and minimise harm to the public.

In the past few months our Public Health Team has worked with colleagues in Public Health England, NHS and District Environmental Health Department to manage outbreaks of food poisoning, Norovirus, influenza and water-borne infections among others. Each of these had the potential to escalate if not properly controlled with the effect of causing illness in large numbers of people, disruption of health and social care services through prolonged closure of hospital wards and care homes and adverse impacts on the tourist trade where hotels, food establishments and tourist attractions are affected.

NHS Health Check Annual Report 2015/16

NHS Health Check is a mandated programme which aims to reduce the risks of cardiovascular diseases such as stroke, diabetes and vascular dementia. During 2015/16 the number of eligible people offered a health check has increased when compared to 2014/15. The number of people who received a health check increased from 12,832 in 2014/15 to 16,784 in 2015/16.

The Public Health Team continue to closely monitor the levels of invitation and uptake. Individual practice reports are produced to feedback to GP practices about their performance. The team continue to work with practices to improve the quality of the Health Check programme and to understand the reasons for variation of uptake across the county.

Tobacco Control Annual Report

North Yorkshire Tobacco Control Alliance led by Public Health has produced an excellent annual report which highlights the range of activity that has taken place over the year across the 5 priority areas of NY Tobacco control strategy, working towards the vision of 'inspiring a smoke free generation in North Yorkshire'.

Key points to note:

- Smoking prevalence in adults is 13.3% across North Yorkshire although there is wide variation across the county (Harrogate 10.2% and Hambleton 17.2%).
- North Yorkshire currently has significantly higher rates of smoking at time of delivery 14% compared to England at 10.6% with our highest Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area being Scarborough and Ryedale at 19%. Scarborough and Ryedale CCG and Hambleton Richmondshire and Whitby CCG have received Department of Health funding to do targeted work on this issue and we are working with them to develop or enhance action plans.
- **Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.** In September 2016, the Council signed up to the local government declaration on tobacco control, alongside all five of the North Yorkshire CCGs who signed up to the NHS Statement of support for tobacco control. The statements provide a public commitment to work towards further reducing smoking

prevalence in our localities. This is an impressive display of commitment across North Yorkshire.

- **Protecting our children from second hand smoke with the creation of smoke free play areas across the county.** Last year Scarborough Borough Council launched a smoke free play area and has committed including a smoke free message in all replacement signage over forthcoming years. Harrogate Borough Council as launched smoke free play areas in Valley Gardens, Knaresborough Pool and Ripon Spa Park in response to requests from local parent groups championing the agenda. Richmondshire District council is also working with local people to have their say on smoke free play areas.
- **Reducing illegal tobacco available in our communities.** Survey work was undertaken to evaluate prevalence of illicit tobacco in the county and North Yorkshire is now part of regional work to raise awareness of the issue in communities. In February 2016 Trading Standards took place in Operation Henry 2, a regionally funded operation using specially trained dogs to detect illicit tobacco at suspected premises.

Smoke free Workplace Policies

The Council has launched a refreshed smoke free workplace policy which coincides with January's Health Harms campaign, aimed at helping smokers quit in 2017. Nearly 60% of our employees who smoke want to quit and the new policy ensures that we provide a supportive environment and access to the local stop smoking service for those who wish to quit.

In addition to the refreshed smoking policy, a new policy has been introduced which deals with the use of e-cigarettes, also known as vaping. Public Health England estimated that e-cigarettes are 95% safer than smoking tobacco and has become the most popular stop smoking aid. The new policy allows the use of e cigarettes on Council sites – outdoors only and away from doors and windows.

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA)

Members may be aware of the planned NHS England reforms to pharmacy funding. The Public Health team work with local pharmacies to deliver a range a health improvement services including stop smoking, chlamydia screening, emergency contraception, brief advice about alcohol and falls prevention.

In addition the Council has a responsibility through the Health and Wellbeing Board for developing and updating the local pharmaceutical needs assessment (PNA). The PNA is used by NHS England to commission pharmacy services for our residents. The current North Yorkshire PNA covered the period 2015 to 2018 and a new PNA is being planned for publication early next year.

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

County Council Election

Preparations are well underway for the four yearly County Council election which will take place on Thursday 4 May 2017 covering all 72 seats, across 68 divisions. The County Council co-ordinates activity across the 7 District Councils. The Richmondshire North vacancy following the death of County Councillor Michael Heseltine, will remain until the County Council election - as it arises within 6 months of the scheduled election. The Notice of Election will be published on 20 March 2017 and therefore the pre-election (purdah) period will run from 20 March through to 4 May 2017. As in previous years the counts will take place on the Friday 5 May 2017 in each of the 7 District Councils, Legal and Democratic Services will then collate and publish the results across the County as they come in.

DAVID CHANCE