

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

24 JULY 2019

CORPORATE & PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Since my last statement to Council, the Corporate and Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee has held one formal meeting on 17 June 2019.

The Committee met with the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership and received a bi-annual update on Community Safety Plan delivery and partnership working. We were pleased to note that the Community Safety Hubs that have been introduced across the region are going from strength to strength, with good practice being shared between them etc. We were particularly pleased to note that the Scarborough Hub was leading the way in regards to development and that this approach to multi-agency collaboration is considered a national exemplar. The Committee also received an update on North Yorkshire & York's joint Domestic Abuse Strategy. The joint commissioning arrangements in place are unique and have also generated lots of interest nationally.

The Committee considered an annual update on the operation of the County Councillor Locality Budgets, which provided a summary of the scheme and a breakdown of the committed funding for the financial year 2018/19. It was concerning to note that in one electoral division none of the locality budget had been spent, which is a lost opportunity for community and voluntary organisations in that area, particularly when considering the possible matched funding it could have generated. I would therefore encourage ALL members to make the very most of the available budget for your communities.

In regards to the Parish Portal and Parish Council engagement, the Committee learned that 390 parishes are now using the portal, and that there are plans to integrate a number of other services that will further improve parish self-serve access to services and information. It would be helpful if all members could encourage those parishes who are currently not on the portal or those registered but not using it, to do so. The Committee have for a long time been asking for a similar portal for Councillors. However, having received information on an alternative tool under consideration, we look forward to having that introduced, and we will be receiving an update on that later this year.

The Committee also considered a draft final report arising from our review of Adult Reoffending Rates in North Yorkshire. The report detailed the work undertaken by the Committee since 2017 to keep a watching brief on the ongoing work to embed changes to the delivery of probation services under the Government's Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.

Our key finding from the review centres on the lack of appropriate and timely access to education and training, a recognised barrier to reducing re-offending rates. We were therefore pleased to note that the Ministry of Justice is aiming to drive down reoffending through a wider education and employment strategy.

Having learnt that a new delivery model is now to be introduced, we will be recommending to the Executive that they write to the National Probation Service to seek assurance that the provision of fast and efficient access to appropriate education will be addressed

through the design of the model. We will also continue to monitor the work of the National Probation Service.

Finally, we received a detailed year two update on the delivery of library services, and an overview of the planned review of NYCC's Library Strategy. Whilst some concerns were highlighted around maintaining community library committee membership, volunteer recruitment, IT parameters and GDPR, the Committee were pleased to note that many community libraries are looking to extend their services, and that the delivery model in place is considered a national trail blazer, with positive articles appearing in various national newspapers.

However, the update on library services did bring to light a number of barriers to community library sustainability. Issues around short term leases and rents were identified. In response to this, and as the committee has previously expressed an interest in reviewing NYCC property and land holdings and opportunities for shared use of council owned buildings, at our forthcoming mid cycle briefing later this month we will be considering an appropriate remit for such a scrutiny review.

Cllr Derek Bastiman

Chairman - Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

12 July 2019