

North Yorkshire County Council**Ryedale Area Committee
February 2017****Stronger Communities Progress Report****1 Purpose of this paper**

- 1.1 To update the Area Committee on progress made within the Stronger Communities programme in Ryedale.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The first few weeks of 2017 bring the date of the library service transformation closer, with intensive activity by volunteer management groups, library staff and the Stronger Communities team. Other projects are still on-going but the library service changes will still take priority in the next couple of months.

The Stronger Communities Team has worked on a presentation to support their nomination for the LGC awards and Marie- Ann Jackson delivered this presentation to the judging panel at the end of January. The result will be announced at a ceremony in London in March.

Library Service transformation progress

- 3.1 This section gives a summary of the progress for the 3 Ryedale community libraries and Pickering Hybrid library.

All of the volunteer groups are currently going through library operations training, a rolling programme that will continue through February and March.

Priorities for all community libraries in this period also include:

- Lease finalising
- Service Level Agreement signing
- Establishment of Policies and Procedures
- Development of a suitable rota system
- Marketing
- Volunteer inductions and training
- Opening Events
- Building or layout modifications

- 3.2 **Helmsley Community Library:** The group has submitted an application to the Charity Commission (CC) to establish a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) – At the date of writing this report, the CC has not yet registered this organisation. This represents a matter of concern, as the group must be registered before entering into a lease and Service Level Agreement. The group continues efforts to recruit more

volunteers. At present there are 24 interested volunteers – it is estimated that 35 will be needed to maintain current opening hours. A successful application to the National Park Section 106 funding has resulted in £6,000 towards the next 3 years running costs. The group is working to establish policies and procedures for the charity.

3.4 Kirkbymoorside Community Library: Good progress has been made with volunteer recruitment, discussion on a name and logo, and fundraising. A successful pre-Christmas market stall will help with revenue costs. The group are planning a celebratory opening event, involving a talk and book signing by the author Madeleine Bunting. Lease negotiations are progressing, but need finalising with the Diocese. Policies and procedures have been agreed.

3.5 Norton Community Library: The Norton group has been successful with applications for capital funding to Ryedale District Council, the NYCC Stronger Communities Fund, Norton Town Council, as well as some sponsorship from Bright Steels Ltd., a Norton manufacturing company. This funding has allowed the group to give the engaged building contractor the go-ahead for the first phase of the building improvement work. Starting on March 6th, this work will create improved disabled access and toilet facilities, a new kitchen, and refurbished training/meeting room.

The library will be closed between April 1st and April 10th 2017, to allow for decoration and cleaning following the above work.

The group has officially established a management group from the previous steering group, including 7 Trustees and 6 others.

More volunteers are still needed for the proposed increase in opening hours from the current 10 to 22 per week. A volunteer sub-group are working hard to achieve this.

A new name has been agreed : *Norton Hive – Library and Community Hub*, and work on a new logo has been commissioned.

3.6 Pickering Hybrid Library: Excellent improvement has been made with establishing a strong management group for Pickering, moving from 3 members in December to 10 by late January. This has allowed volunteer recruitment to proceed well – 45 now going through training. The group will be issuing a monthly newsletter for all volunteers starting this month.

4 Stronger Communities Projects

4.1 Five projects have been, or are being developed with a range of voluntary and community sector groups across the area:

- Establishment of WiFi for Sherriff Hutton Village Hall, including advice on a Broadband use policy

- A community use PC at Thixendale Village Hall to support various village organisations
- A complete re-equipping of the outdated IT room at Next Steps in Norton. This provides important IT access for their service users, especially as Ryedale has now gone for the complete Universal Credit implementation.
- A 'Sloppy Slipper' exchange event planned with Yorkshire Housing to promote falls prevention.
- Support for the development of Hutton-Le-Hole Bowls Club

5 County-wide projects

- 5.1 The County wide volunteering project for young people will be starting this quarter in Harrogate and Hambleton
- 5.2 The Single Funding Agreement for VCS Infrastructure has been awarded for the period starting April 1st 2017. It has been awarded to a partnership between Rural Action Yorkshire and the North Yorkshire and York Forum.
- 5.3 The County Wide Community Directory Project, led by NYCC, progresses: consultation with a wide range of potential users and work on data sharing agreements with partners has now completed. Initial designs for the visual look and feel of the directory are also being agreed. Uploading of data has started and it is anticipated that the directory will be ready for testing with partners and stakeholders in late Spring before going public.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Area Committee notes the contents of this report.

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 February 6th 2017