

## North Yorkshire County Council Meeting

Wednesday 8 November 2017

### Leader's Statement

- Over half of The Tour de Yorkshire 2018 will pass through North Yorkshire. This will now be a 4 day event, making it an even more prestigious event in the international cycling calendar, and the elevation of the Women's` Race to a 2 day event makes this the most important event in Women's` cycling to date. Our officers have developed significant expertise in the planning and delivery of the support needed to make this a great success, and the international television coverage will showcase once again the beautiful countryside we enjoy every day. Not only will this bring additional visitor spend during that weekend, and beyond, but communities are also be preparing, once again, to make an event of the event.
- Alterations to Parliamentary boundaries are proposed, but the Boundary Commission has announced its does not intend to review NYCC divisional boundaries at this time.
- The Police & Crime Commissioner has submitted her business case to take over the governance of Fire and Rescue Service to the Home Office. Both Tier 1 authorities, ourselves and City of York objected to this plan, as well as nearly all District and Borough Councils. The Act called for increased collaboration between the blue light services, which we have always supported, but not necessarily a change in governance. We feel that although savings programmes have been identified, even before the Commissioner`s interest, it is too big a leap of logic to say they can only be achieved by the PCC taking over the responsibilities of 16 elected Members from all over the County and York. The Police and Crime Panel, the only statutory body that scrutinises and challenges the Commissioner between 4 yearly elections, has also raised concerns about taking on additional responsibilities, especially as the Home Office have stated that there will be no additional money over the present £66k to provide administration, fiscal and legal support. Because of objections, the business case will now be referred to independent scrutiny, not by a panel as intended, but by a single individual, before a final decision is taken, probably at the turn of the year.
- Stronger Communities are delivering excellent work, helping communities to help themselves, if not in every individual division, certainly across the County. We rely on volunteers to help deliver services and last week we were able to celebrate successes at our own Wider Partnership Conference. Sometimes that celebration is more widespread, and I was delighted to see Walter Head and his team at the Little White Bus / Upper Dales Community Office recognised by the Yorkshire Post in their Community Group of the Year Award. No doubt the local Member will say some more about this.
- I recently attended the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF) annual meeting with stakeholders. NYLAF provides support for vulnerable people to move into or remain in the community. Awards are made in kind, goods or services, not cash and must be essential and critical. Typical awards are household furniture and equipment, beds and bedding, food vouchers and utility top-up vouchers. 6287

awards were made in the last financial year, 4417 for food vouchers and utility vouchers and 1870 for other items. This is an increase of around 30% on previous years and stakeholders suggest a strong link to reductions in welfare benefits and the introduction of Universal Credit. Officers are continuing to work with our contractor and network of authorised agents to carefully manage the fund using the existing criteria and levers. I was pleased to hear that stakeholders are very positive about the help the scheme provides to some of the most vulnerable people in county.

- One of the benefits of attending Party Conferences is the numerous fringe events put on for opinion gathering or education. In Manchester last month I noticed an event organised by the Royal British Legion about Supporting Service Children, which I thought would be interesting to NYCC. I was very pleased to see in the presentation that in every one of the key themes, Admissions, Pupil Wellbeing, Funding Support, Networking, NYCC was shown as best practice. I congratulate our CYPS directorate for achieving this position for the benefit of our Service children who are spread across the County.