

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

08 November 2017

**STATEMENT FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES,  
LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES, CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT,  
SCRUTINY, AREA COMMITTEES, PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND  
LOCALITY BUDGETS****COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVID CHANCE****STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

In July 2017, the Stronger Communities Programme launched its new investment prospectus, Inspire, Achieve, Innovate; to more than 500 attendees at a series of ten roadshows held throughout the county. A range of Voluntary & Community sector and other partner organisations were represented, and feedback about the new approach has been overwhelmingly positive, with attendees praising the emphasis placed on collaboration, greater choice for the sector, and the accessible and user friendly processes and information.

Inspire, Achieve, Innovate sets out the offer available from Stronger Communities, examples of best practice projects, and how we plan to work collaboratively with communities moving forward. The new approach builds on the learning and experience from two years of operation, and on the feedback from the LGA to “achieve even more” (2016 peer review), and will enable the programme to focus in on what works, target investment to areas of greatest impact and to improve the way that investment is evaluated.

There are three investment schemes:

- **Inspire Fund** – open to communities, the Inspire Fund is primarily about supporting local social action. We want to encourage people to get involved in their local community by offering small grants to help establish new services, events or activities that help to increase social interaction, encourage neighbourliness and improve the well-being of individuals and communities. This could be a community festival, a good neighbour’s scheme or a lunch club to name a few. To date, 22 Inspire awards have been granted.
- **Achieve Together** – our main investment programme; we would like to build longer term strategic partnerships with communities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises who share our priorities. We are interested in designing with partners a range of social action projects and services that meet clearly evidenced need, are sustainable and where required, are capable of delivering at scale.
- **Time to Innovate** – to keep pace with both changing needs and an ever changing social and economic environment we are also keen to invest in creative new ideas that contribute to our priorities. The final format for this

investment has not yet been agreed. Options are being drawn up which include Member involvement in the award decision making process.

- A copy of the Prospectus has been sent to all Members. If you have not received this or you would like further copies to provide to community groups you are involved with, then please contact your local Stronger Communities Delivery Manager; or it is available online at:  
<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/stronger-communities>

### **North Yorkshire Connect**

North Yorkshire Connect, the new community directory for North Yorkshire, officially launches at the Wider Partnerships Conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. North Yorkshire Connect has been developed in partnership between the 2020 Customer Programme and Stronger Communities, and built in house by the development team within Technology and Change. It will contribute to key priorities of the County Council by helping to reduce social isolation, using technology to enhance the way we work, and encouraging more people to go online for help and support.

It is a resource for people of all ages and the professionals working with them, helping to build self-reliance in communities and supporting customers to access services and information for community and voluntary organisations online.

### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR LOCALITY BUDGETS**

Since the re-opening of the scheme in July 2017, I have approved recommendations from 48 Elected Members for funding totalling £110,441.19 (just over 30% of the annual budget) for projects that benefit the communities they represent. The new online recommendation system is working well and has made record keeping more efficient as well as speeding up the approval process. The final date for recommendations to be submitted this financial year is 28 February 2018.

### **LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

The Council's Legal Services Team have successfully applied for and obtained authorisation from the Solicitors Regulation Authority to be a licensed provider of legal services through a separate company named First North Law Limited. This company is the first Council owned solicitors firm in the north of England which has been set up to provide high quality legal advice in a number of sectors. The company will seek to provide legal support initially to the education sector outside the boundaries of North Yorkshire to provide a return to the Council.

DAVID CHANCE