

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

14th November 2018

**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

Get Inspired

In September, Stronger Communities hosted a series of pop-up events across the county in community libraries; the purpose of which was to encourage communities and voluntary groups to participate in grass roots social action and develop projects enabled by the Stronger Communities Inspire Programme. The events were targeted at those areas where there has historically been less traction with the Programme.

Stronger Communities Delivery Managers were joined by representatives from Community First Yorkshire, and collectively the events were attended by almost 100 individuals and organisations, many of whom had not previously engaged with the Programme. It is hoped that these will result in new activities and projects across the county.

The Inspire Programme offers support including small start-up grants for groups to develop activities that build resilience in their communities and help to deliver the aims of the Stronger Communities programme and as such Members are encouraged to promote the opportunity to those community groups they work with or contact their local Stronger Communities Delivery Manager for more information.

Go Local – Connecting People and Places

In anticipation of the main launch of the Community Transport brand – Go Local - next spring, Stronger Communities and the Communications Team launched a volunteer recruitment campaign for Go Local at the beginning of October, running until December. Activity has included a 30 second radio advert that played on Stray FM and Yorkshire Coast Radio for two weeks at the beginning of October. Press features focussing on real volunteer stories have been published and content has been circulated in Council owned channels such as NY Now as well as a series of adverts on social media.

By the end of October the campaign had received 43 expressions of interest which were forwarded to the closest community transport operator to follow up.

Shaping the Future

The Programme recently published Shaping the Future, the first in a series of reports tied into the evaluation, which will assist in the process of assessing the

effectiveness of the Programme and the associated investment activity in achieving its intended goal – for all communities to have greater collective control of their own well-being. Shaping the Future focusses on the first year of the evaluation, and each report in the coming years will build on the last to create a continuous and comprehensive narrative of change over time. The full report can be accessed here - [Shaping the Future Report](#)

Stronger Communities Evaluation

The evaluation of the Programme has now started, after a procurement exercise to appoint an independent evaluator concluded in July. The evaluator will work with the Programme on a long term and ongoing basis to assess its investment, support and activities against five key evaluation questions. They will also take the lead in producing the subsequent reports to Shaping the Future.

North Yorkshire Loneliness Strategy

While it is still currently at the inception stages, Stronger Communities are working closely with Community First Yorkshire in the creation of a North Yorkshire Loneliness Strategy. This closely follows the first National Loneliness Strategy launched by the Government in October this year. Tackling loneliness is an important issue, particularly in North Yorkshire where we have an increasingly elderly population, a wide range of statutory and other partners, and many rural and deeply rural communities.

North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF)

A new study, commissioned by the Council, has described the impact and value of NYLAF to both the individuals who apply, and the charities, treatment services and frontline Council teams who provide essential wrap around support to applicants.

NYLAF supports vulnerable adults to move into or remain in North Yorkshire, and families under great pressure to stay together. Applications are mostly made through trusted agencies and services who provide longer term support to applicants. Awards are made in kind, including white goods, furniture and other household items, as well as clothing, food and utility vouchers. NYLAF was established in 2013 when the government transferred responsibility and funding from the Department for Work and Pensions to upper tier local authorities.

The impact study found that:

- Applicants were in genuine poverty which was exacerbated by unexpected emergencies.
- The Fund is the only timely response available in all areas of the county to many emergencies, and provides an essential alternative to high interest loan companies.
- Many applicants were suffering from mental ill health caused by their circumstances, and that relatively small sums from the Fund have significant effects on the wellbeing of applicants.

- Stopping the Fund would have a detrimental effect on the ability of partners to support vulnerable people and would increase demand on their services and other agencies such as food banks.

The report can be read here:

[https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fileroot/Health%20and%20social%20care/Adult's%20social%20care/Local assistance fund %E2%80%93 impact study 2018.pdf](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fileroot/Health%20and%20social%20care/Adult's%20social%20care/Local%20assistance%20fund%20%E2%80%93%20impact%20study%202018.pdf)

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Area Constituency Committees – the North Yorkshire MPs attended the second round of meetings of the new Area Constituency Committees, during August and September to discuss local issues with councillors. The MPs promised to take a number of issues back to Westminster, including the need to:

- review the funding formula for local government and correct the current imbalance that favours urban areas over rural areas
- ensure that the Better Care Fund continues beyond 2020
- develop a long-term, sustainable proposal for the funding of adult social care, in the forthcoming Green Paper, that is fair, protects legacies, recognises the challenges faced in delivering services in rural areas and supports the residential and nursing care market
- address the increasing pressures upon school budgets
- support the development of the road and rail networks in the county, ensuring that they are fit for purpose and enable all our communities and businesses to grow and prosper.

The third meeting round of meetings of the new committees are due to take place over November and December and will involve the scrutiny of key issues such as: the roll out of phase 3 Broadband; the Harrogate Congestion Study; support for schools and the factors affecting their long term sustainability; road and rail infrastructure, including the A59 at Kex Gill, the A64 and J47 on the A1; economic development; and scrutiny of local health issues, such as the changes to services provided at the Castleberg Hospital site at Giggleswick.

Overview and Scrutiny – we await new statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny in local government. It is anticipated that this will be published in December 2018. The last guidance on scrutiny was issued in 2006. In 2017, the Communities and Local Government Select Committee conducted an inquiry into overview and scrutiny and concluded that the shape and form of local government had changed so significantly over the past decade that new guidance was needed to ensure that scrutiny was effective.

DAVID CHANCE