

**Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer Services
and Asset Management**

10 December 2013

Civic Centre

The Council has agreed an arrangement with the NHS North Yorkshire and Humber Commissioning Support Unit to occupy a room at the Civic Centre from the beginning of January 2014. This is the latest stage in the Council's plans to make the most efficient use of its office accommodation and should make a further contribution to the running costs of the building.

Thirsk Market Place

We are hoping to bring forward the next phase of renovation of Thirsk Market Place Cobbles. Weather permitting, work will commence in late February 2014 and take approximately 10 weeks. We will aim to keep any disturbance to a minimum, but there will be some effect on parking.

Part-Nighting

Steady progress is being made in conjunction with North Yorkshire County Council on part-nighting street lights in the district. As at 20 November the following parishes have been completed, Borrowby, Brompton, Cowesby, Kepwick, Knayton, Nether Silton, Over Silton, Upsall with Northallerton still ongoing.

Customer Services

Service demand from our customers continues to increase, largely due to the changes associated with welfare reform. Between April and June the number of telephone calls made to the contact centre was 23,042, between July and September this was 23,803 and in October alone 8,312 calls were made. Telephone contact is up 10% on the same period in 2012.

Similarly the number of visits to our three Council offices was 14,438 between April and June, 14,333 in the second quarter and 5,397 visits in October. Overall face to face visits are up by 2% on the same period in 2012.

This increase in contact is currently being managed through targeted resourcing at peak times. As a result out of 70 local authorities who use the same customer satisfaction monitoring system as Hambleton, we have remained within the top 2 authorities for face to face customer satisfaction during this period and were are now in the top 4 for telephone satisfaction.

Communities

• **Council Grants - Investing in Communities Fund (Capital)**

The Council has awarded £27,963 to 15 projects under the 'Supporting Area Action' element of the Fund. The total value of these projects once delivered will be £550,171, giving an indication of the positive impact and leverage that the grant scheme will deliver across the District.

Projects supported include tennis court improvements at West Tanfield, a replacement Scout & Community Hut in Tholthorpe, Easingwold, multi-sensory equipment for Pendragon Community Trust, Northallerton supporting people with physical and sensory disabilities, a computer system for Thirsk & District Community Minibus Association and training equipment for Yorkshire Ambulance Community First Responders in Stokesley & Great Ayton.

- **Community Grants Programme (Revenue)**

The Council is supporting 16 organisations this year with grants valuing £37,367 through the Council's Community Grants Programme. The total value of these projects with match funding is £74,628.

Under this programme, organisations supported to deliver new activities include Dalescare, Northallerton Badminton Club, Hambleton Foodshare, Crash Bang Wallop Youth Theatre and Thirsk8 Skate Park.

Feedback and monitoring is undertaken on all projects as they are delivered, including a summary of the benefits and impact of the grant funding on the wider community. Details of all of the grants provided will be listed on the internet.

- **LEADER Grants - Hambleton Small Scale Enhancements Scheme**

The Council has successfully delivered a Scheme funded through the European funding programme LEADER. Although only 18 villages in the District were eligible to apply for the £20,000 fund, support has been secured for the delivery of 7 projects, including restoration of church steps in Crayke, repairs to a heritage wall in Oulston, a community research facility in Kirkby & Great Broughton and outdoor gym equipment in Husthwaite. During 2014 Defra will be making a decision on how future LEADER funding programmes will be delivered across the UK.

- **Parish Liaison**

As part of our work to strengthen engagement with communities the inaugural Hambleton Parish Liaison meeting was held on 7th November at the Civic Centre. Representatives from 33 Parish & Town Councils & Parish Meetings attended together with Members and officers of both Hambleton District Council and North Yorkshire County Council.

Presentations were received from Julia Mulligan on the work of the Police & Crime Commissioner for York & North Yorkshire, Hambleton District Council on winter weather and emergency planning and the 2014/15 Parish Precept and from North Yorkshire County Council on highways winter maintenance.

Positive feedback from all involved was received both on the night and after the meeting. Copies of the presentations and minutes of the meeting can be found on the Council's website.

Community Safety

- **Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Legislation**

The Hambleton and Richmondshire Community Safety Partnership will lead on behalf of other Partnerships across the County in developing delivery of the new elements of the legislation. Working groups will be established to ensure consistency of approach and to introduce the legislation into working practices. Legislation is expected to be enacted in May 2014 and workshops will be offered county wide and facilitated by the Partnership.

- **Developing Stronger Families**

This is the North Yorkshire version of the national initiative – Troubled Families – which is being rolled out across the County by the NYCC Early Intervention Team. It officially launches on 9 December at Romanby Golf Club. Targeted support will be initially directed with 5 families in Hambleton to achieve the output of one family, one worker and one plan. Management of the initiative will take place at the monthly problem solving meetings facilitated by the Partnership.

- **Communications**

Communication to highlight the work of the Partnership and address community safety concerns recently include:

- Sheducate - offering free shed alarms to hotspot areas or repeat callers
- Light Up, Lock Up - dark nights, advising to light up houses early evening
- Domestic Abuse Christmas Posters
- Do you know where your children are?
- Road Safety week – 5 different messages on each day on Star Radio

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Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and Asset Management