

North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership - Executive

26 June 2008

Proposal to use NY Times to further the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy

Purpose of report

1. The report explores the potential for NY Times to highlight and support work to address the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy. If agreed by the NYSP Executive it is proposed that the editor of NY Times meets with representatives of each thematic partnership to draw up a plan of specific projects that could be featured over the next 12 months.

Background

2. NY Times is a 20-page tabloid publication produced monthly by North Yorkshire County Council and distributed by Royal Mail to 270,000 homes and 30,000 businesses across North Yorkshire.
3. Its purpose is to inform the county's residents of the services available from and the work done by North Yorkshire County Council and its public sector partners. This can include any aspect of partnership working but it could be an ideal vehicle for highlighting and furthering work being done to address many of the ten priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the associated improvement targets now included in the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Public perceptions and the Place Survey

4. A number of the indicators in the LAA depend on the answers members of the public give to surveys. The Place Survey will ask for perceptions, such as how well people from different backgrounds get on in the local area (NI 1) or whether drunk or rowdy behaviour is a problem (NI 41). The answers to these questions will in part depend on what people believe is happening in the area and NY Times can have a role to play in providing information. Other questions are about the activities people engage in such as civic participation in the local area (NI 3) and volunteering (NI 6). NY Times can also have a role in providing information about opportunities for such participation.

Potential areas for coverage

5. Much of the content of NY Times already addresses the SCS priority areas. NY Times' policy has been to engage readers through real-life examples and it is proposed that this approach continues when targeting the SCS priorities, with the use of case studies to show how work being done towards the priorities is making a real difference to

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real people across the county. A few examples of recent features are included as Appendix 1.

6. Listed against the priorities below are brief outlines of some of the coverage NY Times has already given and some suggestions of how that coverage may be extended. Hopefully, this will suggest further specific ways in which coverage could be developed. If the NYSP Executive agrees, a plan could be drawn up detailing specific projects that might be reported over the next 12 months, or longer, to address the priorities in a balanced and sustained way. By developing a structured plan for such communications, the NYSP will also be able to ensure that it takes a more targeted and proactive approach to aligning coverage of the priorities with the timing of specific government releases and publications, such as on the Place Survey and forthcoming Sustainable Communities Act.

Access to services and public transport

- Informing people of community transport schemes: NY Times has covered access to bus services and several community transport schemes.
- Follow the practical applications of the NYnet broadband network, which NY Times has covered since its inception.

Affordable housing

- Independent living for the elderly and vulnerable receives ongoing coverage.
- NY Times could follow the progress of an affordable housing development from start to finish (something it is doing with an Extra Care development).

Alcohol

- Reducing harm to health from alcohol: This could be addressed as part of our proposed health series.

Children and young people

- Teenage pregnancies: another issue that can be addressed through our health series;
- Participation in sport: this could be targeted through our dedicated monthly sports page, which is run in conjunction with North Yorkshire Sport. This page is designed to promote sport and physical activity for all ages and social groups.

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Community cohesion

- NY Times has carried an extensive feature on Eastern European migrant workers. No doubt there is scope to return to this subject and the contributions of other minority groups.

Community Safety

- NY Times runs a regular column highlighting the 95 Alive partnership. It has also run features focusing on the Drive Alive scheme, mature drivers and motorcycle safety.

Economy and enterprise

- NY Times already promotes internal tourism within North Yorkshire through promotions with county attractions, its extensive events listings, its regular walks column and recently launched columns from both national parks.

Environment

- Waste management has always been a major topic for NY Times.
- Energy efficiency: NY Times runs a regular energy column.
- NY Times is promoting the work of the national park authorities through quarterly columns.

Health and wellbeing

- It is our intention to begin shortly a series of health-related features in association with the PCT. These can be targeted to the priority areas.
- The regular sports page and walks column promote physical activity.

Older people

- Independent living: NY Times has already extensively covered such things as Telecare, Extra Care housing and other home care services. No doubt this could be expanded to cover other projects.
- Active involvement in community. NY Times regularly covers volunteering opportunities, as well as such things as Silver Surfer courses for older people.

Cost considerations

7. At present, budget considerations mean that NY Times is limited to a 20-page format. However, if the Executive see sufficient opportunities to make use of the publication, it may be that more pages would be useful.

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8. Within the printing and distribution contracts, it is possible to increase the number of pages, though there would be a cost. However, this is relatively modest considering the extensive circulation, so partners may feel individually or together that it would be a worthwhile investment to help get their message to the whole county.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that the NYSP Executive support the proposal that the editor of NY Times meets with the Chair and/or representatives of each Thematic Partnership to consider what aspects of the work of each Partnership could be featured in NY Times over the next 12 months.

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