

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING: 17 SEPTEMBER 2010**

**Statement from: Councillor Sue Woolley, Executive Councillor for Health, Housing and Third Sector**

Recently we have seen a number of the initiatives funded from our unique Health and Wellbeing Fund really coming into their own, delivering improvements in services and better prospects for good health for local people. Successful activities include community-run gyms in Holbeach St Marks through to countywide expansion of the LIVES service, and hundreds more people participating in walks to improve their fitness.

On average, the Council is leveraging in around £4m of investment from the NHS and partners in the individual projects for every £1m it invests into the Fund. This represents a great value investment in the current and future well-being of local people. The Team supporting the implementation of the Fund Board's projects are always happy to provide more detailed information to members on their local impact.

The Board has recently been considering its next phase of development and, in line with emerging national policy and with a mind to a move into austerity, has asked officers to work with the Third Sector to accelerate activities involving volunteering and community self help.

We already know that the Third Sector (voluntary & community organisations, charities, social enterprises, co-operatives and mutuals) plays a significant role in Lincolnshire. In July we published a research report entitled, 'The Economic Significance of the Third Sector in Lincolnshire'. The report reveals that Lincolnshire's third sector has a total direct economic impact of £410 million. This estimate of economic impact means that the value of the Third Sector in Lincolnshire is greater than the Hotels and Restaurants sector, and approximately 27% the size of the wholesale and retail sector. The full report and an Executive Summary are available on Lincolnshire County Council's website – [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/healthycommunities](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/healthycommunities)

Considering the obesity statistics for our county, I am very pleased to announce the inception of a new intervention to support people to improve their diets. Food4Life brings together schemes for improving access to fruit and vegetables for deprived populations through 'grow your own' activities, and educational activities to help people who are unused to cooking healthy foods to develop their skills.

Active play for children is critical to helping them to maintain a healthy weight in childhood and establish good habits for the long term. We have commissioned a project aimed at all schools in the county to enable playgrounds to be turned into active play zones by simply marking the surface of the playgrounds. These markings, combined with an intensive training

programme for staff, young play leaders and parents, will encourage their use and leave a long term legacy for children who need to be more active.

Employment is critical to well-being as it provides purpose, structure and income for individuals and households, enabling them to be fully involved in society. We have been successful in winning a place for Lincolnshire as a pilot scheme for disabled young people designed to enable them to 'Get a Life'. The scheme is delivering positive outcomes to more young people than we committed ourselves to, including work, work experience and returns to education with a clear goal in mind.

Provision of affordable housing remains an important issue for Lincolnshire. Although the days of 'Red Flags' in the Comprehensive Area Assessments may be over, we still need to recognise the weaknesses that exist. Of course, housing provision is not a primary responsibility of the county council. However, when it goes wrong, we may well pick ups some of the pieces. In Adult Services, people with disabilities or older people may seek more expensive support from the County Council if they do not have a suitable home in which to live. I am therefore evaluating two initiatives. The first is to use our property estate to identify potential locations for affordable homes. My aim is to make this self sustaining financially. The second initiative is to establish ways of helping older people to release some equity in homes they own. The concept is to enable people to obtain suitable care in ways that reduce long terms costs for them as individuals and the council.

I also want to understand better how the Council can contribute to tackling child poverty. I believe that the largest impact on this will come from national government policies and fiscal measures. However, I shall work with colleagues to ensure that wherever possible we ensure our actions do not hamper improvements for poorer children.