

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

21 July 2010

**STATEMENT OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER
(Corporate Services, Finance, Performance Management and Procurement)**

COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARL LES

Supporting staff during the budget review process

The County Council's budget decisions and announcements from the new Government have obviously resulted in an increase in the number of reviews of services and structures being planned or undertaken in Directorates. Careful consideration is also being given to all vacancies before steps are taken to fill these.

The communications team have been busy dealing with media enquiries and have been working alongside Directors in getting information to staff in a timely and relevant way. It is important that our staff get information on budget savings which might affect them, direct from the County Council and not the media.

Staff have been kept updated through news on the intranet, with regular stories providing updates on announcements and what they mean for local government. Recent media interviews by the Chief Executive have also been summarised and made available to staff through the intranet. In addition there have been updates in County Talk and through the Chief Executive's fortnightly message.

HR Services has for the last few months been planning and working to help staff and managers deal successfully with the level of restructuring and change needed to address the budget gap. The mainstay of this work is the development of two online resource packs for staff and managers.

The manager's resource pack will assist managers through the process with standard documentation and checklists.

The resource pack for employees details their entitlements especially in relation to redeployment and to the support mechanisms available to those whose jobs will be at risk because of the reviews.

Approaches have been made to York City Council and the Districts and other public sector employers to see if there is a possibility of working together to identify redeployment possibilities across organisations.

Abolition of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

The Government has announced the abolition of the CAA. The Audit Commission has ceased all work on updating the area assessment and the organisational assessment. These assessments will not be updated on the Oneplace website. No new scores will be issued for these or for the Use of Resources assessment carried out by our appointed auditor Deloitte. Ofsted still has a statutory obligation to carry out an annual inspection of

children's services and is continuing with the children's services assessment for 2010. The Care Quality Commission is continuing with its assessment of adult social care.

Deloitte, will continue to deliver their statutory audit and will give a value for money conclusion alongside their opinion on the financial statements. The Audit Commission is currently continuing with a programme of risk-based inspections on specific issues. In respect of the County Council, this includes an inspection of flood risk management across the North Yorkshire and York sub region.

The Government is reviewing the overall performance framework, including the national indicator set, and further announcements can be expected in due course.

Small steps big difference - care, carbon, cost

The County Council's internal 'small steps big difference' campaign is being launched on 28 July 2010. This is a 12 month campaign about:

- Care - caring about the environment
- Carbon - reducing our carbon footprint
- Cost - saving money - saving services and jobs

Over the 12 months we will focus on four areas: travel, energy, waste and water with the aim of helping the environment and saving money at the same time.

The initial focus will be on travel, both cutting the number of business miles travelled by officers and elected members, and minimising the cost and impact of travel that is essential. We all need to question whether there is a real need to travel to a meeting at all and if an alternative could be used eg video conferencing or teleconference. If a meeting is required, participants should consider using public transport or sharing a car journey. A reduction of 10% in business mileage would result in savings of approximately £600k per annum which would make a valuable contribution towards the Council Councils savings.

Savings can also be made by better driving. We will have an eco driving simulator at County Hall on 28 July between 10:00am and 4:00pm, which is provided free of charge by Sustainability 4 Yorkshire. If you are already in County Hall that then why not email smallsteps@northyorks.gov.uk to book a go to see if you are as economical a driver as you think you are!

Procurement Activities

In anticipation of the stringent budgetary restraints recently announced, procurement has begun to formulate a programme to support emerging initiatives including better ways of managing demand through contracts and a review of existing contractual arrangements to ensure these are flexible in the light of future requirements. The intention is to ensure the Council is able to work with suppliers to drive out and deliver savings and cost reductions wherever possible from existing and future contracts.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken across the region to strengthen the Council's relationship with local suppliers including the BuildNorthYorkshire network and the establishment of regular structured meetings with representatives from local organisations

such as the Federation of Small Businesses, Chambers of Commerce, the Regional Food Group as well as Yorkshire Forward. In keeping with this theme the Council is also continuing with its annual round of Meet The Buyer events. Venues are:

2nd September - Thirsk Racecourse
14th September - York National Railway Museum
30th September - Spa Complex, Scarborough

12 July 2010