

## Leader's Statement

### BUDGET CONSULTATION

At the time of writing 6 of the 7 budget consultation meetings have been completed, with large attendances at Craven and Harrogate. In general the position of the County Council was well understood; in particular that frontline services for vulnerable people be a top priority. Very few ideas for cuts were forthcoming, although the suggestion was made that highway lighting be switched off in areas where there were unlikely to be pedestrians at night. At the largest attended meeting in Harrogate an organised group of people expressed the view that the Coalition Government cuts should not be accepted and were very worried at their potential for a negative effect on public services and on public sector jobs.

### COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW (CSR)

The CSR was announced on 20th October. Members will now be aware of most of its contents. The Executive has been working on how to address forthcoming budget constraints for some months, but what was not expected, and has made the task very more difficult, is the front-loading of those cuts. This means that out of the period of four years of cuts the most significant percentages fall in the first two years. It will not be until the provisional settlement is announced after I write this statement that we will have a clearer picture of what needs to be done.

### LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS (LEPs)

It was disappointing that the proposal put forward by North Yorkshire, York and the seven districts was not accepted by government in the first phase along with Leeds and Sheffield. We do however believe with more work, support from the business sector and a strong commitment from all 9 partners that our proposal will be favourably considered when the phase 2 announcements are made shortly.