

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**13 November 2013****STATEMENT OF THE LEADER
COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN WEIGHELL**Budget Update

It has now been confirmed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give his annual autumn statement to Parliament on 4 December 2013. That will be a precursor to a number of announcements that impact upon the Council's finances. The most significant of these is the Local Government Finance Settlement which we are expecting around 19 December and the Government has indicated that it will identify funding levels for local government for both 2014/15 and 2015/16.

We also anticipate that the Government will make an announcement on the future of the New Homes Bonus at that time. We have expressed our disappointment with the proposal that removed all New Homes Funding from the County Council in order to protect Districts. I remain hopeful that the Government will see the strength of the argument put forward by County Councils and ensure that the financial pain is felt proportionately across the whole of local government.

The Local Government Finance Settlement will help to provide more certainty about the exact challenge over the next 2 years. We are already in the third year of a four year programme to save £94 million. We are now modelling the next four years starting from 2015/16 that will require the Council to save another £77 million. These are enormous figures and whilst we have done well to date we need to pull new plans together. This will involve re-evaluating every part of the Council.

Further information will be provided at the Member's Seminar 8 January 2014 and the Executive will consider the budget at its meeting on 4 February and it will subsequently be discussed at County Council on 19 February.

York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP

The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership continues to develop its 5 year strategy which will bid into government for a share of the single local growth fund and European Funding.

Its five priorities are:

1. Profitable, ambitious small and micro businesses – “Ambitious businesses that are supported to innovate, improve and grow”
2. A global leader in food, agri-tech & bio-renewables – “Driving growth by building on our international reputation in agri-tech and biorenewables”
3. Inspired People – Growing businesses able to access ambitious people with the right skills and the right attitude”
4. Successful and distinctive places – “Enhanced growth and opportunities in targeted locations”
5. A well connected economy – “Businesses with strong connections to their customers and markets”

As ever these processes are quite bureaucratic and I regret the way that some elements of Local Government funding have been pulled into the single local growth fund. Nevertheless we need to try and maximise the opportunity for North Yorkshire.

Helen Taylor - Director of Health and Adult Services

As colleagues will be aware Helen Taylor will be leaving North Yorkshire County Council at the end of November to take up a new role in Essex. Naturally I and other colleagues are sorry to lose Helen who has made a strong contribution to the work of the County Council during the time she has been here, particularly, her work in helping to establish the Health and Wellbeing Board and for her continued efforts to work closely with health colleagues. I am sure all members will join with me in wishing her well for the future.

A recruitment process to appoint a new Director of Health and Adult Services is underway with interviews scheduled to take place on 4th and 5th December. Sally Burton will be acting as the Interim Corporate Director of Health and Adult Services from the beginning of December until a successful candidate is appointed and takes up post. These arrangements will ensure a smooth handover and continued momentum in some key areas of work particularly around the integration agenda and implementation of the Care Bill