

North Yorkshire County Council**12 November 2014****Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee****Chairman's Statement**

- 1 My statement for this full council includes details of the library workshop held on 1 September and the Committee meeting held on 13 October 2014.

Library Workshop – 1 September

- 2 The purpose of the workshop was to look at the criteria for the categorisation of libraries. We wanted to reassure ourselves that any decisions taken around libraries in the future were based on sound evidence. Criteria used as a guide for establishing how future library services might be provided include: population, business levels, geography & rurality, socio – demographic & equalities. We suggested that in addition to these, areas to be put forward for closer consideration by officers should be 'accessibility' (transport, use of Section 106 agreement monies/and broadband availability) and future residential developments. We felt that any future review of libraries should not just be about closing or transferring libraries but also establishing if they are in the right place. Could they for example be re-located and incorporated into other buildings?

Committee – 13 OctoberProperty rationalisation

- 3 In a similar vein the Committee received a report on the 2020 Property Workstream. Part of its focus is to slim down the County Council's operational property portfolio and review the way that property is managed across directorates. (This excludes schools, pupil referral units and our non-operational property portfolio such as farms.) The intention is that there will be more shared accommodation across directorates. Property reviews will be taken on an area by area basis, working with directorates to establish what their future requirements will be.
- 4 I am keen to ensure that when the County Council disposes of property it gets optimal value especially when selling on the open market. No doubt many local authorities will be seeking to redevelop land and assets over the next few years and there is a risk that assets could be undersold because of pressure to do deals quickly.
- 5 We also noted that there could be more opportunities to share property with other public sector partners, and there are several examples of best practice already in the county but also examples of where property appears to be under-utilised.

- 6 We will be holding a workshop in December to explore property planning further.

Workforce update

- 7 The Committee received an update on the County Council's changing workforce and details of the Workforce Plan which takes the workforce up to 2020.
- 8 Staffing reductions have to date focused mainly on managerial and back office post. However, inevitably there will be a bigger impact on frontline posts from now on due to the budget savings that we need to make.
- 9 A key aspect of the 2020 Workforce Plan is to ensure that staff are supported, maintaining their personal resilience during the on-going period of uncertainty and change. This includes having the right skills for the right job. A number of Members on the Committee will be attending the Members Workforce Development Group in December to discuss in further detail what measures are being taken to support staff resilience. It will give us an opportunity to consider this work in detail and determine whether it is sufficient and adequate and to contribute our views and additional ideas.

**County Councillor Derek Bastiman
Chairman**

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
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