

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

15 February 2017

COUNTY COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD

Budget / Medium Term Financial Strategy

One of our key decisions today is to consider the County Council's budget for 2017/18 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy. I think it is fair to say that much of the Budget / MTFS will feel very familiar to members as we continue with our medium term strategy which has stood us in good stead.

By the end of March 2017 we will have delivered £127m of recurring savings and the delivery of this programme has meant that we have also been able to invest in many of the initiatives that the Leader has mentioned in his statement to Council. Good progress continues to be made but, for the first time, the savings programme in 2016/17 has fallen slight behind the plan. Our approach allows us to work our way through any on-off shortfalls but it is a good reminder to us all that we can not afford complacency.

£11m of new savings proposals (alongside a further £22m that were included in last year's report) are put forward for consideration in the Budget / MTFS yet we still estimate that we need to find a further £10m of savings over the life of the MTFS. There are also many uncertainties and variables so we are likely to see this position change over the next few years. We hope that rural councils get a better deal and that social care receives the necessary funding to ensure we continue to protect the most vulnerable in society but, whatever happens, I am sure that we will need to generate further savings as we strive to be as efficient as possible.

As this statement is written we are disappointingly still not in possession of the Final Local Government Finance settlement. As a result there may be some last minute news to share with Members on the day but I do not anticipate any fundamental changes.

Property

Members will be aware that extensive and essential building works continue to be undertaken to the Brierley Building, include work recently undertaken to reinstate the Council Chamber Ceiling and ongoing works to the roof. The works to the Council Chamber were undertaken following an inspection which identified that the ceiling as a result of its age, water ingress and an inadequate number of fixings. It should be noted that the ceiling was of similar construction to that in the Apollo Theatre, London which collapsed onto an audience in December 2013.

The work has been undertaken in accordance with consent that was required to be obtained from the Conservation Officer and involved a detailed analysis of the decoration to ensure that the redecoration scheme was close to the detail of the original scheme. External works are now being undertaken to address extensive areas of deterioration to the original lead work above the Council Chamber, and other associated works – damage which has occurred over the last 100 year period.

The scaffolding, with roof, was provided to ensure that working area remains watertight and to protect the ceiling. The work will be completed and scaffolding removed by May

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