

## **COUNCIL – 7 NOVEMBER 2022**

### **STATEMENT BY CLLR JANET JEFFERSON CABINET MEMBER CORPORATE RESOURCES**

#### **FINANCE**

The Accounts Department have been busy finalising the 2021/22 Financial Statements for publication. This has been ongoing alongside continued work regarding LGR. Current LGR finance work stream highlights are the continuation of works on the consolidation and transfer of financial systems, preparation of 2023/24 budgets, 2022/23 forecasting and procedural work regarding treasury and banking accounts and systems.

#### **Revenues**

The main £150 council tax fuel rebate scheme closed on 30 September 2022. Before this date the local taxation team posted any remaining £150 rebates where it had been unable to obtain payment details from the customer to the relevant Council Tax account. Leading to this point the team did send 3 separate letters to all these account holders and also utilised the Local Taxation outside inspector to visit to minimise the number of grants not claimed directly. The team have paid or allocated a total number of 45,643 grants with a value of £6,846,450. The discretionary scheme remains open until the end of November and £29,550 has been paid so far but work will start this week to ensure all funds are allocated.

#### **Housing Benefits**

Over the past few months work has been ongoing on a single Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the new council which if agreed will start from April 2023. A nine week public consultation saw over 2000 responses of which over 60% were in favour of the proposed scheme. The scheme was presented to and agreed by the County Council Executive on 18 October with final approval being sought from Full Council in November.

Work has also commenced on phase 3 of the Household Support Fund which sees County, Borough and District colleagues working together to help the most needy households with rising household costs. This phase of the scheme will have an element of direct award and also an application process for those not eligible for the direct award. Payment of any awards will be made in the new year. Households who are struggling to pay for food, energy and other essentials before then can find out information about support schemes and organisations which may be able to help on the North Yorkshire County Council website cost of living support page <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/cost-living-support>

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **Apprenticeship public sector target**

The public sector apprenticeship target was introduced in 2017. Public sector bodies with 250 or more staff in England have a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff as new apprentice starts annually over the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2021.

As at 1 October 2022 there were 19 employees registered on an apprenticeship training programme in 9 areas: Chartered Management Degree, Horticultural and Landscape (Levels 2 and 3), Environmental Health, Team Leader/Supervisor, Countryside Worker, Motor Vehicle Technician, Safety, Health and Environment Technician, Human Resources and Business Administration. Of the 19 employees 7 are in apprenticeship roles.

Based on an average of 600 full time equivalent employees this equates to 3.1%, 0.8% above the public sector target set. Throughout October, however, a further 4 employees have been appointed into apprenticeship roles, 3 commencing a gardening apprenticeship and 1 in Business Administration.

The Council's levy fund is supporting all apprenticeship training and currently stands at:-

As at 1 October 2022 - Levy fund	£123,988
Funds spent in the last 12 months	£84,491
Estimated total funding for next 12 months	£182,853
Estimated planned spending for next 12 months	£54,990

As at 1 April 2023, the Council's levy account will cease as a result of the local government reorganisation with North Yorkshire Council taking responsibility of the new apprenticeship levy. All existing apprenticeship training commitments will continue in the new Council.

## **HARBOURS**

### **Shellfish Mortality**

Following on from previous updates given to Members, Sir Robert Goodwill MP has recently (25<sup>th</sup> October) chaired a formal meeting (oral evidence session) of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee. The session received evidence regarding the mortality event from representatives of Whitby Commercial Fishing Association, North East Fishing Collective, CEFAS, NEIFCA, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation, amongst others.

## **Future Facilities at Whitby and Scarborough Harbours**

The Harbour Master has recently commenced a consultation with stakeholders with regard to future facilities at both Whitby and Scarborough Harbours. The online survey style consultation has received a good response from stakeholders and will form the basis of a future plan for the facilities that users would benefit from and like to see added/improved. Stakeholders are encouraged to complete the survey which includes the opportunity to submit their own ideas for harbour improvements. Once completed, the results will be anonymised, where necessary, and made available to interested parties.

## **Scarborough Harbour Fish Quay Sheet Piling**

Ground investigations on the Fish Quay at Scarborough Harbour have now been completed and a report will shortly be presented to the Council's Executive Management Team detailing options to rectify the sheet piling issues in this area.

## **CIVIC**

Both the Mayor and Mayoress joined the nation in their deep sadness at the passing of HM The Queen in early September. The Mayor was honoured to read the Proclamation from the Town Hall balcony on Sunday 11 September and hold a minute's silence a week later at the same venue. He also took part in an SBC Podcast remembering HM The Queen.

The Mayor and Mayoress attended the Whitby Fish and Ships launch event in mid September, with the Deputy Mayoress attending the annual Blessing of the Boats Service held in Whitby. The Mayor visited GCHQ Scarborough informally, and the Rotary 1040 Centenary Conference and dinner. Both the Mayor and Mayoress have attended local events such as a concert for Singing for the Brain and Scarborough Guiding. The Mayor has hosted a Civic Reception at the Town Hall for Honorary Aldermen and Freemen who were bestowed their honours virtually in December 2020 during the pandemic and has welcomed students to the Town Hall from both Spain and Thailand. The Mayor has also assisted the Salvation Army and Rotary Club of Scarborough Cavaliers launch their annual Toy Appeal and both the Mayor and Mayoress have attended the Laying of the Crosses Ceremony in the Garden of Remembrance in Alma Square, Scarborough.