

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL**

**21 February 2024**

### **STATEMENT OF THE CORPORATE AND PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**

Since the Chairman's last statement to Council on 15 November 2023, the Corporate and Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met once on 4 December 2023, when the following items were considered:

- Bi-annual Property Services Performance Update
- Council Plan 2024-2028 Development Update
- Progress Update on IT Network and Systems Consolidation
- Annual Update on National Resilience Standards & Current Performance

In regard to Property Services the Committee requested quarterly reports that provided a detailed overview of the ongoing asset rationalisation work. They agreed that a Strategic Asset Management Plan was required to ensure that future asset disposal would not affect other service areas, and asked that the planned programme be delivered with greater urgency given the wider context of financial pressure on the council's budget. The need to retain commercial and private sector expertise among staff was also highlighted.

In regard to the Council Plan 2024-2028 Members recognised the Plan would provide overall strategic guidance to decision makers rather than setting out specific policy proposals. The Committee called for clarity and simplicity in the wording of the Plan, to make it more accessible to all.

The Committee discussed the ongoing work to consolidate and rationalise IT systems in the new council, with a view to delivering savings, simplifying processes, and reducing unnecessary duplication. Members were pleased to note the ongoing risk-based consolidation of contracts inherited from predecessor councils, to identify where savings could be made as those contracts lapsed and came up for renewal.

The presentation on Resilience Standards & Current Performance led the Committee into a discussion about the closure of Tadcaster Bridge as a result of flooding. It was confirmed the decision to close the bridge had been taken by North Yorkshire Highways, as a pre-emptive decision taken in fast-moving circumstances. The Committee was pleased to note that in that type of circumstance, a process of continuous review was employed to identify where the disruption caused by a closure or diversion was greater than that which might have been caused by the weather. Out-of-hours, those decisions were taken by North Yorkshire Police where a threat to life was identified, with the council being notified afterwards. Members highlighted how responsive community social media groups could be and were pleased to note that during a crisis, staff would use social media to provide local information.

The next meeting of the Committee is on 5 March 2024, when the following items of business are scheduled:

- Attendance of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
- Attendance of the Chief Fire Officer
- Community Safety Partnership Bi-annual Performance Update
- Equalities Update
- Property Services Presentation

COUNCILLOR ANDREW WILLIAMS  
5 February 2024