

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

21 February 2024

COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD

Revenue Budget

I am pleased that Council is today considering the revenue budget for 2024/25 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the two years thereafter. I am pleased because, whilst many councils are facing section 114 notices, we have pulled together a plan that starts to deliver on the fruits of local government reorganisation.

I don't intend to repeat details that are covered in the Revenue Budget report or repeat comments on the MTFS in the Leader's statement but I had promised to keep Members abreast of the tally of savings as a consequence of LGR. The report that Council is considering today sets out how £35.7m (78% of the total savings proposed of £45.8m) is as a result of unitarization. If we then add the savings of £3.2m that were saved in last year's Budget for 2023/24 then the savings barometer is set to rise to £38.9m and we know that there will be further opportunities ahead. I am sure further financial challenges will emerge – noting that we still have to find another £48.2m over the MTFS - and we will have to be prepared to make some difficult decisions but the unitarization savings provides this Council with a key advantage to financial sustainability that others will envy.

Property Rationalisation

Good progress is being made on property rationalisation and we are on track to deliver all six projects by end March 2024. with revenue savings up to £225,000 and potential for a further £490,000 if sublets are successful from vacated sites.

Three projects have already been completed. In Malton the 2nd floor has been mothballed and discussions are taking place with a Public Sector Partner to let the vacant space on a temporary basis. In Harrogate the Adult Social Care service that had been occupying Jesmond House has moved into vacant space in the Civic Centre which will allow the lease on Jesmond House to be relinquished. This move was completed in January 2024 and vacates 14 250 sq ft of office space. And in Skipton 11,000 sq ft of space on the 2nd floor of Belle Vue Square has been emptied with staff consolidated on to the ground and first floors. Discussions are at an advanced stage to let the 2nd floor commercially.

Three further projects are scheduled to complete by end March 2024. In Richmondshire the Children and Families Service from Richmondshire House will relocate into Mercury House, utilising spare office accommodation created following LGR, freeing an asset for capital receipt potential let or sell. In Scarborough Health and Adult Services staff currently in North Yorkshire House will move to Castle House with Castle House staff moving to the Town Hall where there is a significant amount of vacant space. And in Northallerton upper floors at Stonecross will be mothballing with staff consolidated in Stonecross or at County Hall.

Workforce

NJC Pay Award 2024-2025

During March we will feed into national discussions on the pay award for 24/25. Trade unions will submit their NJC pay claim by end of February.

Restructures

We are progressing with restructures following the movement to North Yorkshire Council. We have now moved onto wider staff groups with significant staff engaged in consultation. There is no proposal for large scale redundancies however there will be proposed changes to structures and roles.

Everyone approaches change differently and no one size fits all, there is support available for all staff through the Employee Assistance Programme and online modules available to support resilience. The web site also provides information on 'Looking After You'. [Looking after you \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Support for Managers

Managers are key in driving the restructures and delivering the services required to the council. A lot of support is being made available to managers through face-to-face training, tool kits, CEX managers sessions to name a few. These are being well received and we will continue with this programme of development and engagement throughout the next 12 months.

GARETH DADD