

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE CORPORATE & PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Since the Chairman's last statement to Council on 15 May 2024, the Corporate & Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met once on 10 June 2024, when the Committee considered the following items of business:

- Transformation Strategy Presentation
- Annual Workforce Update
- North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Update
- Annual Review of Councillor Locality Budgets 2023-24
- Notice of Motion - Increase Residents Right to Grow

The Committee were pleased to note the progress to date in transforming the organisation and recognised the complexity of restructuring the council's workforce and its influence on the timing of service transformation. The Committee noted the savings proposals, sought clarity on member involvement and requested an updated timeline for completing the work. It was agreed the Committee should receive regular future overview updates as well as a specific update on delivering the customer objective at their next meeting in September and an update on technology improvements at a later meeting.

The Workforce update provided the Committee with an overview of the changing workforce supported by a range of workforce data. It drew attention to a number of challenges e.g. sickness levels and the staff age profile, and in response, the Committee will be receiving a detailed report on sickness levels at its September meeting.

In regard to the update on the UKRS and Afghan resettlement programme in North Yorkshire, the Committee noted the higher than expected number of Afghan refugees and the growing number of Pakistani and Iranian refugees. They also noted the reliance on using MOD housing and the future challenge that would bring given that the MOD properties would only be available for three years. Members recognised the use of MOD housing made it impossible to achieve an equal geographical spread of placements across the county and expressed concern about the potential future strain it would put on the provision of Council housing at the end of the three-year period. They were therefore pleased to note the Council was working closely with the MOD on a local plan to actively seek a solution.

In regard to the annual review of Councillor Locality Budgets 2023-24, the Committee were disappointed to note that some members had spent less than half of their allocated budget.

In regard to the notice of motion to increase residents right to grow, the Committee agreed there was likely to be much to consider in regard to the proposal and therefore agreed that officers should be given sufficient time to gather all the relevant information for the Committee's consideration at its next formal meeting in September 2024, with the intention of reporting back to full Council in November 2024.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW WILLIAMS