

North Yorkshire Council

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

29th September 2025

Update on Transformation Portfolio

Report of the Corporate Director for Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To update the Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the transformation activity within the council, including the Customer Experience Strategy and draft Corporate Property Strategy which are appended to the report.

2. SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The Transformation Portfolio of activity continues to progress. A large number of services have been working on bringing together policies and processes onto single systems as they move towards harmonised ways of working and delivering the benefits of unitarization. The portfolio of activity continues to evolve as services look at delivery of transformation opportunities and cross cutting themes and programmes deliver major change at an organisational level.
- 2.2. The Customer Experience Strategy has been drafted (attached as **Appendix 1**), setting out the council's approach to achieving its vision for putting the customer at the heart of everything we do. Supported by staff development, culture change, improved use of data and insight and the adoption of new technology to make it easy for people to access the services they need.
- 2.3. The draft Corporate Property Strategy (attached as **Appendix 2**) provides the overarching framework for the management of the Council's property portfolio. Views are sought from the committee ahead of the strategy progressing to the Executive in October.

3. TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO UPDATE

- 3.1. Work in the portfolio is spread across three key areas; Cross-Cutting themes, Delivering the Target Operating Model and Service Specific programmes of work. The paragraphs below set out an update on some of the progress since the last report to the Committee.

Cross Cutting Themes

- 3.2. **Customer Experience theme** - Delivering excellent customer experience remains central to North Yorkshire Council's ambitions. As outlined in the Council Plan, "A strong focus on our customers is essential if we are to achieve these goals." This commitment underpins our approach to ensuring services are accessible, responsive, and deliver genuine value to our communities.
- 3.3. **The new Customer Experience Strategy sets out a clear vision:**
"We are an organisation which puts the customer at the heart of everything we do to continuously improve their experience."
- 3.4. This strategy will be delivered through the Customer Transformation Programme, which embeds our Customer CARE commitments—Consistent, Accessible, Responsive, Easy

across all services. It introduces a new operating model that blends digital innovation with personalised support, ensuring every customer receives the right help at the right time.

- 3.5 A key focus of the strategy is transforming the organisational culture to become truly customer focused. This means shaping every team, process, and decision around the needs, preferences, and expectations of our residents, businesses, and visitors. We are committed to making every customer journey seamless—removing barriers, simplifying interactions, and making it easy for people to access the support and services they need.
- 3.6 The Customer Transformation Programme is the vehicle for delivering this ambition. Through staff development, leadership masterclasses, better customer data and insight and the adoption of new technology and embedding customer-focused approach across all services. Our goal is for every member of staff to understand their role in delivering excellent customer experiences and to work collaboratively to continually improve how we serve our communities.
- 3.7 A major component of our transformation is the adoption of new digital technologies. Since the last committee update, we have continued with the procurement of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform and Contact Centre as a Service. Once the contract is awarded, we will begin the journey to implement the new systems. These systems will unify customer interactions across all customer contact channels, eventually providing a single view of each customer interaction.
- 3.8 Customer Experience Masterclasses: Senior managers have participated in dedicated sessions to strengthen leadership and embed a customer-focused culture. This will continue in October and November.
- 3.9 **National Customer Service Week (6–8 October 2025)** - North Yorkshire Council will mark National Customer Service Week with a series of events and communications to celebrate and promote customer excellence. Planned activities include:
- Staff Recognition: Celebrating outstanding contributions to customer service.
 - Best Practice Sharing: Showcasing innovation and excellence from across the council.
 - Digital Transformation: Highlighting improvements in digital channels and self-service options.
 - Training and Development: Promoting ongoing learning opportunities to build customer-centric skills.
 - Engagement and Awareness: Launching a new animation and internal campaign to raise awareness of our customer commitments and transformation programme.
- 3.10 This week provides an opportunity to reflect on our achievements, share success stories, and reinforce our commitment to putting the customer at the heart of everything we do.
- 3.11 **Service Convergence** – progress has continued with the bringing together of services – their budgets, processes, systems, customer focus and people issues. A large number of system consolidations and upgrades have been completed since the last report, these include:
- Launch of a new Destination Management System to support the strategic change to the management of Tourism across North Yorkshire and the promotion of North Yorkshire as a destination. This included creating visitnorthyorkshire.com for visitors covering all tourism related information for the county, replacing five previous websites that did not fully cover the whole of the council's geography and provide a one-stop shop for the Tourism Service.
 - Implementation of a new Library Management system that manages stock, borrowing records, payments and transactions (issues, returns, renewals and reservations) currently numbering circa 3.5m transactions per annum.

- Replacement of the council's Concessionary Travel system to support the management and issue of travel permits to eligible residents.
- Migration of all 7 legacy Revenues & Benefits systems onto a single system with aligned processes, procedures and reporting that will enable further transformation within the service.
- Launch of a new online form for housing tenants to report mould, damp and condensation, ensuring that the council complies with Awaab's Law.
- Completion of the implementation of a single case management system in the Legal Services team with all historical data transferred.
- Consolidation and rationalisation printer contracts, reducing the cost of printing and have a consistent approach for staff moving between locations.

3.12 Work is also underway on a large number of other projects, including:

- Procurement and implementation of new Parking Machines as well as a new Parking Permit and Enforcement system.
- Migration of Planning services onto a single system, with the former Harrogate Planning team and the whole of the Building Control function already migrated, the remainder will now move over in a staggered fashion over the coming months.
- Consolidation of Environmental Health and Trading Standards onto a single system is also underway, with information and processes being moved over on a locality by locality basis.

3.13 The organisation wide upgrade to Windows 11 is now almost complete achieving 97% completion with over 7200 users upgraded.

Delivering the council's Target Operating Model

3.14 A number of programmes are in place to help the council achieve its Target Operating Model. As well as the work mentioned above there are a number of other activities that will help shift the council's operating model towards its target state. A highlight of just some of the progress made this period is given below:

3.15 **Finance programme** focusses on delivering a finance function that meets the needs of the new council. Detailed work has been completed in designing the new finance system that is due to be in place for the start of the 26/27 Financial year next April, extensive work will now be needed to build integrations with the council's other business systems, as well as carry out testing and training for all the relevant users. Consolidating the council's income management systems is also making good progress with expectation that all former systems will be moved over by the end of December 2025. Decommissioning of legacy systems will also take place to simplify and rationalise systems number, contracts and support needed.

3.16 **Data programme** brings together work around the council's approach to data and how the council can make best use of this to inform decisions, delivering targeted early intervention and preventative services. A project to have a centralised GIS database to store assets has now been completed, allowing GIS users mapping services with increased functionality and over time reduce the cost of GIS contracts to the council. Work on the council's Data Strategy and Data Architecture project continues.

Service Specific Programmes

3.17 There are several service specific programmes of work, key updates in this period are set out below:

3.18 **Sport & Active Wellbeing Programme** consolidation of sport and active wellbeing activity under the Active North Yorkshire banner has continued, with the Richmondshire

Leisure Services brought in house in the spring. The roll out of the branding of the Active North Yorkshire has also continued with the sites that were already within the council management structure following LGR (Craven & Hambleton) and the procurement of a single Leisure Management System to support the whole service is beginning to take shape. Work has also progressed on proposals for investment in Active North Yorkshire sites across the county as part of the council's vision to promote healthy and active communities across the county.

3.19 **Waste Programme** – the adoption of a 4-day working week is continuing to be rolled out, changes have successfully taken place in Northallerton with Scarborough and remedial Harrogate changes scheduled for September. Consolidation onto a single waste management system being another key element of this programme to help rationalise numerous systems and ways of working.

3.20 **Other Work** – other transformation project activity has also been undertaken to support the council's journey. This includes:

- Scarborough Museums Trust – the activities of the Trust were successfully transitioned into the council on 1st July, now sitting within the Culture & Archives Service.
- Within Health and Adult Services the implementation of a cost modelling tool, providing detailed insights into market rates for building-based care placements and helps ensure care packages are fairly priced through a consistent, data-driven approach.
- Roll out of a new Translation tool that both reduces the cost of translation and speeds up the process for providing documents to customers.

3.21 **Property Programme** - Good progress continues to be made on the Property Programme and consolidation of the council's property assets. Previous reports have referenced the Corporate Property Strategy (CPS), which will provide the overarching framework for the management of the Council's portfolio. The Strategy has now been drafted and is attached at Appendix 2. The Committee are asked to review the Strategy and provide feedback prior to it being presented to Executive for final approval on 21 October 25.

3.22 The CPS document sets out that the delivery of the strategy will be the responsibility of the Corporate Property Board, with progress updates to this Committee.

4.0 REPORT RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on:

- i) The draft Customer Experience Strategy at Appendix 1 and;
- ii) The Corporate Property Strategy at Appendix 2.

Gary Fielding
Corporate Director – Resources
County Hall
Northallerton

18 September 2025

Report Author – Brigitte Giles, Director of Transformation
Presenter of Report – Brigitte Giles, Margaret Wallace, Kerry Metcalfe

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Customer Experience Strategy
Appendix 2 – Draft Corporate Property Strategy

Background Papers: None