

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL**

**12 NOVEMBER 2025**

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

Since the Chairman's last statement to Council on 16 July 2024, the Corporate & Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee has held a Call-in meeting on 16 August 2025 and a formal scheduled meeting on 29 September 2025.

The call-in meeting related to a previous Executive decision on the awarding of a contract for Whitby Harbour Infrastructure West Pier Inner Sheet Piling Strengthening. We took account of all the information provided by the lead call-in member, relevant officers and the Executive Member for Open to Business, and on the basis that it was necessary to progress the planned repair scheme to prevent the potential for further damage leading to the closure of the harbour, voted in favour of upholding the original Executive decision, which we agreed had been a sound decision based on the appropriate evidence being considered.

At the September meeting the Committee considered the following items of business:

- Bi-annual Community Safety Update
- Bi-annual Update on the work of the Localities Service, including an update on volunteering
- Progress Update on the Convergence and Transformation of Services, which included consideration of a draft Corporate Property Strategy, and a draft Customer Experience Strategy

The Committee noted the progress against the Community Safety Partnership's priorities. We were particularly concerned about the increase in incidents across all of the hate crime categories. We were also somewhat frustrated at the lack of data on other types of crime not detailed in the report such as burglaries, street crime, shop lifting etc. Having discussed issues around repeat/persistent offenders, the ongoing work around prevention plans, and the work of the Neighbourhood Policing Teams, we requested a further update for our next meeting in December 2025 with a specific focus on Hate Crime and the work of the Community Safety Hubs.

The Committee noted the regular Localities update and were particularly pleased to note the recent DFE announcement confirming the Government's decision to extend their Holiday Activities and Food Programme for free school meal eligible children.

The progress update on the Convergence and Transformation of Services highlighted a number of notable achievements across a range of service areas. In regard to the draft Customer Experience Strategy we noted the initial lessons learnt and the focus on accessibility throughout the strategy. We welcomed the proposals around data collection at first point of contact and the move towards a new CRM platform, recognising it would allow Members to have a better understanding of all incoming customer contact.

In regard to the draft Property Strategy, we were pleased to note the Council now had a full understanding of its property portfolio and that the savings achieved to date from property rationalisation were higher than had been expected.

Whilst we broadly supported both strategies, we agreed that any new strategy should include dates of expected outcomes to enable progress to be monitored. We were therefore pleased to note that a high level Transformation Plan was currently being mapped out and we will be considering that at our next meeting in December 2025.

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW WILLIAMS (Chair)**