

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

12 NOVEMBER 2025

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE TRANSPORT, ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

It has been a busy period for the committee since the last Full Council meeting back in July, with two formal committee meetings taking place on Thursday 4 September and Wednesday 22 October.

The September meeting considered the following reports:

- Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Plan for the provision of Public Conveniences
- Air Quality Management Areas Update
- Update on the North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The key points covered and the discussion points raised can be found as part of the minutes from that meeting at [Printed minutes: Thursday 04-Sep-2025 10.00 TEEE O&S Committee](#)

I will focus my statement on the latest meeting from 22 October, where the five substantive reports that were considered were:

Service Update – Economic Development, Regeneration and Tourism

The committee received a comprehensive update on economic development, regeneration, and tourism from officers. The report outlined the new integrated service structure, which brings together planning, building control, economic development, tourism and regeneration functions to accelerate growth and attract investment. Since its inception, the service has secured £131 million in external funding, launched a small business grant scheme programme and delivered initiatives such as the inaugural North Yorkshire Business Week, which attracted circa 750 participants to 34 events. Tourism developments included the launch of the 'Visit North Yorkshire' website and adoption of a Destination Management Plan, while regeneration projects such as the Whitby Maritime Hub and Catterick Community Hub are progressing well. Officers stressed the need for a pipeline of capital growth projects to ensure North Yorkshire is "shovel ready" for future opportunities that arise, with strategic focus on the key urban centres of Scarborough, Selby and Harrogate alongside transport and housing links.

Members welcomed the ambition of the service but raised concerns about local infrastructure bottlenecks, the importance of developing much needed construction skills jobs, and the need to embed sustainability and social value into future plans. Tourism delivery, particularly the future of Tourist Information Centres referenced in the report, was also debated, with general calls for consistency without losing flexibility and community involvement in progressing the next steps on this.

Concerns were also raised regarding the project pipelines being too focused on larger scale grant applications at the expense of smaller scale locally based initiatives, as they were previously a fertile source of small scale funding pre-LGR.

Overall, the opportunity to better understand the work of this service was welcomed, in order for the committee to fully scrutinise the 'Economy' and 'Enterprise' part of its remit. We will work with officers to develop areas of focus for the committee to look into at future meetings.

Notice of Motion on Dualling the A64

The committee considered a notice of motion on dualling the A64 to report back to full Council at this meeting with our recommendation. It was a good debate into the various issues on this important issue and the possible alternatives. The report from the committee is detailed in a separate item on this agenda.

Draft Speed Management Strategy

The committee considered a report on the draft Speed Management Strategy, which builds on the Council's updated 20mph policy introduced in 2022. The new approach represents a cultural shift from the previous reactive system, where communities were required to request speed limit changes, to a more proactive programme of reviews across the county. This draft strategy aims to improve road safety and encourage active travel by creating safer conditions through lower speed limits. It was explained that the strategy is currently out for consultation with internal teams and external partners, including the police, fire service, and national parks.

In discussing the report, committee members raised concerns about delays in processing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), with examples given by committee members of cases taking up to three years. In response, officers explained that capacity issues have been flagged, and the committee stressed the need for additional legal resources to avoid bottlenecks in the system. The presenting officer confirmed that a digitised TRO process is expected nationally in 2026, which should help reduce delays, and the Council is exploring ways to streamline internal processes.

Members also discussed the criteria for prioritising schemes, noting that reliance on collision data alone is insufficient. There were calls for greater weight to be given to community feedback, population density, and the potential for active travel. Questions were also raised about how near misses and local concerns would be factored in, and whether enforcement measures such as cameras would be considered. The presenting officer assured the committee that the strategy would adopt a holistic approach, including education and engineering alongside enforcement, and that community engagement would be central to the process. The committee welcomed the cultural shift set out in the draft strategy towards proactive reviews, but emphasised the importance of a clear assessment criteria, ongoing communication with residents throughout the process and robust consultation methods.

North Yorkshire Council Enforcement Policy

The proposed corporate Enforcement Policy aims to harmonise the legacy district and borough council policies into a single framework for North Yorkshire Council. The officer attending explained that the broad policy sets out key principles such as fairness, proportionality and collaboration, and seeks to position the Council as a confident regulator that supports communities while ensuring businesses comply with the law.

Members strongly supported the need for consistency on enforcement but raised concerns about the emphasis on targeting "the most serious cases," warning that smaller breaches often cause significant frustration for residents and undermine confidence in the system. Examples of these smaller breaches included unauthorised fences, retrospective planning applications, and long-standing enforcement delays. The committee argued that enforcement must be consistent and without fear or favour, with sufficient staff resource allocated to address these lower-level issues as well as major cases, and suggested defining a proportion of enforcement

capacity for such matters. Communication was another key theme, with members calling for better updates on enforcement cases and exploring options for public registers to improve transparency. Members also highlighted the need for increased levels of legal resource across all areas of enforcement to support a future policy, with concerns raised that failure to provide a suitable level of support would undermine deadlines and effective enforcement protocols.

In response to the discussion, the officer confirmed that planning service colleagues are developing a specific enforcement policy to sit beneath the corporate framework and acknowledged the importance of legal support for effective enforcement. Members also discussed the potential use of technology, such as cameras, to strengthen enforcement in areas like traffic restrictions.

The committee welcomed the overall direction of the policy, but stressed that its success will depend on adequate resourcing, clear service standards, and robust communication with both councillors and communities.

Climate Change Delivery Pathway Performance Report

The committee considered a bi-annual update on progress against the Council's Climate Change Strategy through the Delivery Pathway. The covering report noted that global temperatures and greenhouse gas levels continue to rise, but locally, North Yorkshire's 'territorial emissions' are reducing, although challenges remain in sectors such as agriculture and residential heating.

Key developments since the last update include work on a comprehensive 'Climate Risk and Vulnerability' assessment with partners, with a final report expected in early 2026, and progress on reducing operational emissions. It was also pleasing to hear that the Council has improved its data collection on energy use and is moving towards single energy and water contracts to streamline monitoring. Furthermore, gas consumption has fallen, and further work is underway to decarbonise the fleet and reduce grey fleet mileage.

Members welcomed these steps but pressed for clearer milestones and time-bound targets, noting the Council's commitment to achieve net zero for our own operations by 2030. There were also calls for stronger integration of climate objectives into the economic development plans discussed earlier on the meeting, as well as into procurement processes.

The discussion widened to cover peatland restoration, with members emphasising its importance for carbon storage and biodiversity, and concerns about the pace of adaptation planning given recent extreme weather events. Questions were raised about the viability of retrofitting new homes, the role of planning policy in the climate strategy, and the need for directorate-level accountability. Members also debated the relevance of external benchmarking by campaign groups, with mixed views on its value. The committee agreed that climate considerations must be embedded across all services and highlighted the need for political leadership to accelerate progress.

Alongside these formal meetings, two working groups set up on active travel and plans for the public conveniences across North Yorkshire continue to meet. The conclusions of the working groups will report into the main committee as recommendations are finalised. The next formal meeting of the committee is scheduled for Wednesday 28 January 2026.

COUNCILLOR DAVID STAVELEY