

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

12 November 2025

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND ASSETS

Technology Services

Over the past quarter, Technology Services have achieved further major infrastructure improvements, including completing the rollout of Windows 11 across the Council. Cyber security has been strengthened with the installation of a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solution and we are progressing through the Government's Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) full certification is planned to follow the ISO27001 audit later this year. This proactive approach with regards to our certification means that we will exceed the requirements set out in the recent ministerial letter on cyber security.

Service management has been enhanced through monthly performance reviews and exception-based reporting, contributing to a 15% reduction in service disruption and a 20% increase in customer satisfaction scores. The Digital Champions Network now includes over 265 members across the Council, supporting digital skills, early adoption of new technologies and peer-led training sessions on Microsoft 365, Copilot, and other AI tools. These achievements position the Council to deliver secure, efficient and innovative technology services for residents and staff.

Transformation

The Transformation Service continues to collaborate across the Council, driving a broad range of improvement initiatives. Key highlights include:

- **Revenues & Benefits Integration:** All seven legacy Revenues & Benefits systems have been successfully migrated onto a single platform, with aligned processes, procedures and reporting. This consolidation – unmatched in speed and scale by any other council – marks a significant achievement.
- **Centralised GIS Database:** The completion of a centralised GIS asset database now provides enhanced mapping functionality for users and is expected to reduce GIS contract costs over time. This system proved pivotal during the recent Langdale wildfires, enabling multi-agency information sharing and supporting effective decision-making through a holistic visual overview.
- **Ongoing Systems Projects:** A number of major systems projects are underway, including:
 - Procurement and implementation of new parking machines, alongside a new Parking Permit and Enforcement system.
 - Migration of Planning Services onto a single system, with the former Harrogate Planning team and Building Control function already integrated.
 - Consolidation of Environmental Health and Trading Standards onto a single system, with information and processes being migrated on an area basis.
 - Procurement of a single Leisure Management System to support the new Active North Yorkshire service.
 - Implementation of a replacement finance system to modernise and streamline financial processes and reporting.

Property

Corporate Property Strategy

Members may be aware that the Corporate Property Strategy (CPS) 2025 – 2035 was formally agreed by the Executive earlier this month and I thank the members of the Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their support in reviewing and agreeing the document prior to it being presented to the Executive for approval.

I have provided previous updates on the Council's successes with asset rationalisation, and the savings and capital receipts that have already been delivered from our extensive estate. The CPS will build on these successes and establish the framework for the future management of our portfolio; supporting our overarching ambition to:

“Develop an optimised land and property asset base that is professionally, resiliently, and increasingly commercially managed; enables excellent service delivery; serves our thriving communities; and responds to climate and sustainability objectives.”

I encourage all Members to review the document and look out for the progress updates against the delivery of the strategy, which will be reported to the **Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee** throughout the year.

Call for Sites – council owned land

In line with elected member aspirations around asset rationalisation and maximising value and outcomes from the Council's property portfolio, and the outcomes set out in the CPS, a review of the estate has taken place to identify sites that are considered to have development potential.

47 new, potential future development sites have been identified and are proposed for submission to the Council's Local Plan Call for Sites exercise. These sites will be reported to Executive on 4 November, with further details being provided at the Member Seminar on 5 November. Local members have been notified about any sites located within their division, alongside Town and Parish councils.

It is important to note that decisions to include sites in the Local Plan will be part of the statutory plan making and consultation process, led by the planning service, and there is no guarantee that any council owned sites will make the shortlist.

Budget

We now eagerly await news of the Chancellor's forthcoming Budget on 26 November. Alongside that we are awaiting the government to make a policy announcement about Fair Funding 2.0 following the consultation with local government. As explained to Members, the impact is not good for North Yorkshire (and other super-rural places) and it looks like we will lose something like another £18m per annum of funding after we lost £14.3m on Rural Services Grant in this year. I am also aware of some speculation ahead of the policy announcement that changes are afoot to help inner London councils and that is likely to be to the detriment of “remoteness”. If that is the case then we can expect the situation to deteriorate even further for this Council. This is also on top of an expected deterioration in the Q2 revenue budget position as pressure increases on the people service budgets.

Given these headwinds, we are very much into the process of identifying savings proposals. The Leader and I are holding savings challenge sessions with our Executive Member colleagues and their respective Corporate Directors and the fruits of these sessions will be brought to the December Members Seminar for Members to consider in more detail. I would

also encourage Members to put energy into identifying savings opportunities as they are going to be essential – none of us were elected to make savings but financial stability is the platform upon which a good council and good services are delivered.

COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD