

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

18 March 2026

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

The Corporate & Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee oversees corporate performance, governance, transformation, workforce matters, partnership activity, and resilience planning across the Council.

Since my last statement to Council, the Committee met on 15 December 2025. The following items of business were considered:

- Community Safety Update
- Home Working Arrangements & Sickness Absence
- Transformation Update
- Annual Review of Equalities Objectives
- Annual Performance Update on National Resilience Standards

Members received a Community Safety Update with a focus on hate crime. The Committee discussed community engagement, the impact of misinformation, and the importance of joint communication between NYC and North Yorkshire Police. We also received an update on the activities of Community Safety Hubs which included an overview of the anti-social behaviour hotspots, the notable success in Harrogate with a significant reduction, delivered through a wider collective approach, and other ongoing initiatives in other areas.

The Committee considered data on sickness absence trends and hybrid working. Members discussed workforce age profiles, training to reduce injuries, and the importance of balancing flexible work with team-based learning. We noted that for the first two quarters in 2025/26 sickness absence in every directorate was increasing and requested further data in order to better understand the direction of travel. Given the age profile of the workforce, we also questioned whether age was a factor for some of the reasons for sickness absence. In regard to hybrid working, we noted the Council's Hybrid Working Policy, its application, and which teams have the ability to work in that way and the way it is managed.

In regard to ongoing transformation work, the Committee received an update on the convergence of systems, progress on major IT transitions, and the development of the Council's new Transformation Strategy. We were pleased to note the workstream around 'how we will work' aimed at delivering more effective governance and less bureaucracy and welcomed the launch of a staff suggestion scheme, recognising that employees are best placed to identify ways of increasing savings.

We reviewed progress on the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion objectives. Having received no comparative data from previous years, we queried the level of progress against the initiatives contributing to the achievement of the objectives. We suggested that future updates include more comparative and national data.

The Committee received an annual performance update on the National Resilience Standards and discussed emergency planning activity and recent incidents. We queried the cost to the council of dealing with the incidents and how they had been funded. We also discussed the Council's approach to sandbag use and requested improvements to sandbag storage locations.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW WILLIAMS

