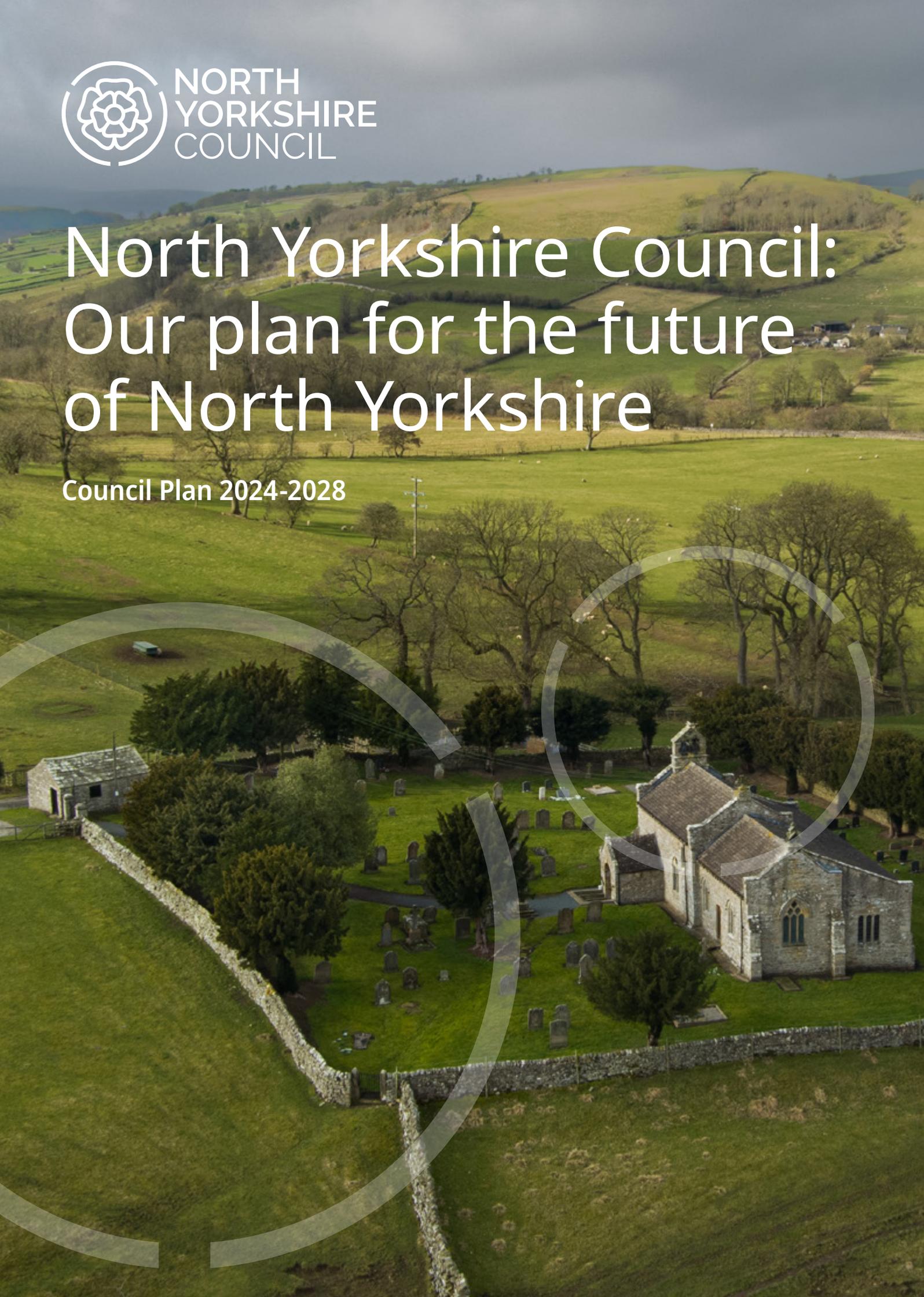




NORTH
YORKSHIRE
COUNCIL

North Yorkshire Council: Our plan for the future of North Yorkshire

Council Plan 2024-2028





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Your Council

Delivering Services for North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire Council is now in the second year of providing all of your local services from rubbish collection and recycling, Public Health, Social Care and education, roads, transport and leisure services as well as support for businesses. The council has brought together the services previously provided by eight councils into one, but there is still a significant

task ahead as we continue to transform services now and in the years to come. We are proud of what we have achieved so far, and we remain passionate about providing value for money services, and improving outcomes for local people, businesses and communities across North Yorkshire.

A few of our achievements from the first year of North Yorkshire Council:

We have already developed a strong Economic Growth Strategy which will drive clean growth in North Yorkshire and provide better opportunities for employment and skills.

A joint bid for a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for both York and North Yorkshire has been approved which will ensure we make the most of our natural assets and cultural offer, raise the profile of our fantastic places to boost the visitor economy and, of course, our unique food and drink offer. Tourism is worth more than £3.2 billion a year in the area, and more than 60,000 people work in the sector.

Our Children's Social Care service were judged outstanding as a service following an Ofsted inspection in Summer 2023. Therefore, the services families and young people receive in North Yorkshire are a high quality and deliver good outcomes to some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

We marked 20 years of extra care housing in North Yorkshire, which has seen the development of 28 schemes across the county, providing more than 1500 flats to buy or rent.

In response to sustained national shortages of staff across the health and social care sectors, North Yorkshire was an early explorer of the potential of international recruitment. This resulted in 22 recruits now working in teams in Harrogate, Scarborough and the Vale of York, with more people set to join us in 2024. Comprehensive induction and pastoral support arrangements are in place for the international recruits, and, as part of its wider, on-going support for the sector, the council plans to offer support to care providers looking to recruitment care workers from overseas.

In the first half of 2023/24 the Quality Improvement Team, working in partnership with the NHS to drive quality improvements and help sustain local care providers, has worked with 68 care providers. The team gives practical hands-on support alongside information, advice and guidance to help providers address serious quality concerns and to turn their business around, and is helping them achieve improved CQC ratings. Where provider failure or business closure has been unavoidable, the team has worked closely with providers to find appropriate alternative care provision and to minimise the impact on the people in receipt of that care.

Our Public Health Team secured a £5 million research grant. The grant is for the council to work in partnership with the University of Hull and the University of York to look at the issues affecting the health of people in North Yorkshire and how we can best address them.

North Yorkshire is receiving vital upgrades to infrastructure, for example the creation of a new stretch of the A59 at Kex Gill costing a total of £68.8 million. The Government has provided £56.1 million with the remaining £12.7 million allocated from North Yorkshire Council's capital reserves.

A £2.9 million overhaul of North Yorkshire's streetlights has been approved as part of a commitment to reduce energy use and tackle climate change. The anticipated savings are £440,000 with a payback period of about five-and-a-half-years. The council has secured £3.2 million of funding from the national Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot scheme to install 150 charging points across the county.

In 2023, Harrogate leisure and Wellness Centre reopened following a £13.5 million renovation and Knaresborough's new £17.5 million leisure and wellness centre opened. These projects complement a wider £47.9 million investment in leisure provision.



Challenging Times

Through our transformation programme we will continue to improve efficiency, effectiveness and join up services in a way that makes sense to residents, businesses and partners. However, like all councils in the country, we are facing major challenges now, and in the years ahead, due to climate change, the cost of living crisis, impact of inflation and a huge demand on our critical services such as housing, adult social care, services for children and young people and Special Educational Needs. There will be tough financial decisions ahead, but we are in a much stronger position to manage these challenges than some other councils. By joining-up services and maximising spending power, North Yorkshire Council will save between £42 million and £67 million in the next few years. This money will be critical to sustaining essential services in the face of the many significant challenges.

We are grateful to all our employees for their continued dedication and hard work to provide high quality services as we continue on this journey.

We also recognise that many of the challenges that the council and our residents face cannot be addressed by a single agency alone and as such we are proud to work in collaboration with our local partners, other public sector organisations, businesses, and communities.

The new York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

North Yorkshire Council will work with the county's MPs to give our county a stronger voice to attract inward investment and tackle priorities at a local level. The new York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority creates significant opportunities for increased funding and local control over more decisions. The devolution deal itself will bring in a minimum of £540 million new funding over the next 30 years to support economic development and to help fund transport priorities in this area. We have already seen new investment in Brownfield Housing and Low Carbon Energy projects in North Yorkshire, helping us towards our targets for reducing carbon emissions in the county and protecting and enhancing our environment. This existing deal is just the first step. With the election of a Mayor for York and North Yorkshire in May 2024, our sub-region will have a new route into influencing national policy as well as greater powers to determine what works best for our residents. There is potential for even greater devolution from central government in the future, giving us all greater say on what matters to North Yorkshire.

Local by design

North Yorkshire Council is built with local at its heart and aims to be the most local, large council in England.

There is a main office in each former district area, supported by additional customer access points located across the county. Staff work in the communities they serve, listening to the needs of individual places and supporting local priorities and action.

The council will continue to work closely with town and parish councils, wider partners and communities to ensure that local priorities drive locally led decision-making and local action. A number of Community Partnerships have been launched to bring together local Councillors, public sector agencies, communities and businesses to get things done in their local area.

North Yorkshire Council has made a clear commitment to listen to its communities. In autumn 2023, we launched 'Let's Talk Money', asking you to share your views on the councils budget, what is important to you and what we should prioritise. This has helped us to shape this plan and our services.

This plan sets out our vision, ambitions and priorities for North Yorkshire and the approach we are taking to achieve them.



Councillor Carl Les, Leader of the Council



Richard Flinton, Chief Executive



About North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire is an attractive place to live, work and visit. Our county has an enviable identity with a brand globally renowned for its culture and spectacular landscapes. The county has a varied and vibrant local economy, the lifeblood of which is defined by over 32,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) which form 99% of all businesses locally. We serve a diverse and dispersed population of an estimated 615,400 people across a geographical area of over 8,000 square kilometres or 3090 square miles. Large parts of the county sit within two beautiful National Parks and three National Landscapes. Ninety eight percent of the county is either sparsely (13%) or super-sparsely (85%) populated with just over a third of the population living in these areas. This results in a population density of just 77 people per square kilometre, compared with an England average of 434.

The county is the largest in England at **8,000** square kilometres (3090 square miles)



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615,400 people

24.5% aged 0-24 (England average = 29.2%)

50.5% aged 25-64 (England average = 52.4%)

25% aged 65+ (England average = 18.4%)



Average house price:
£294,779
(England average = £344,917)

Average household income:
£41,628
(England average = £43,966)

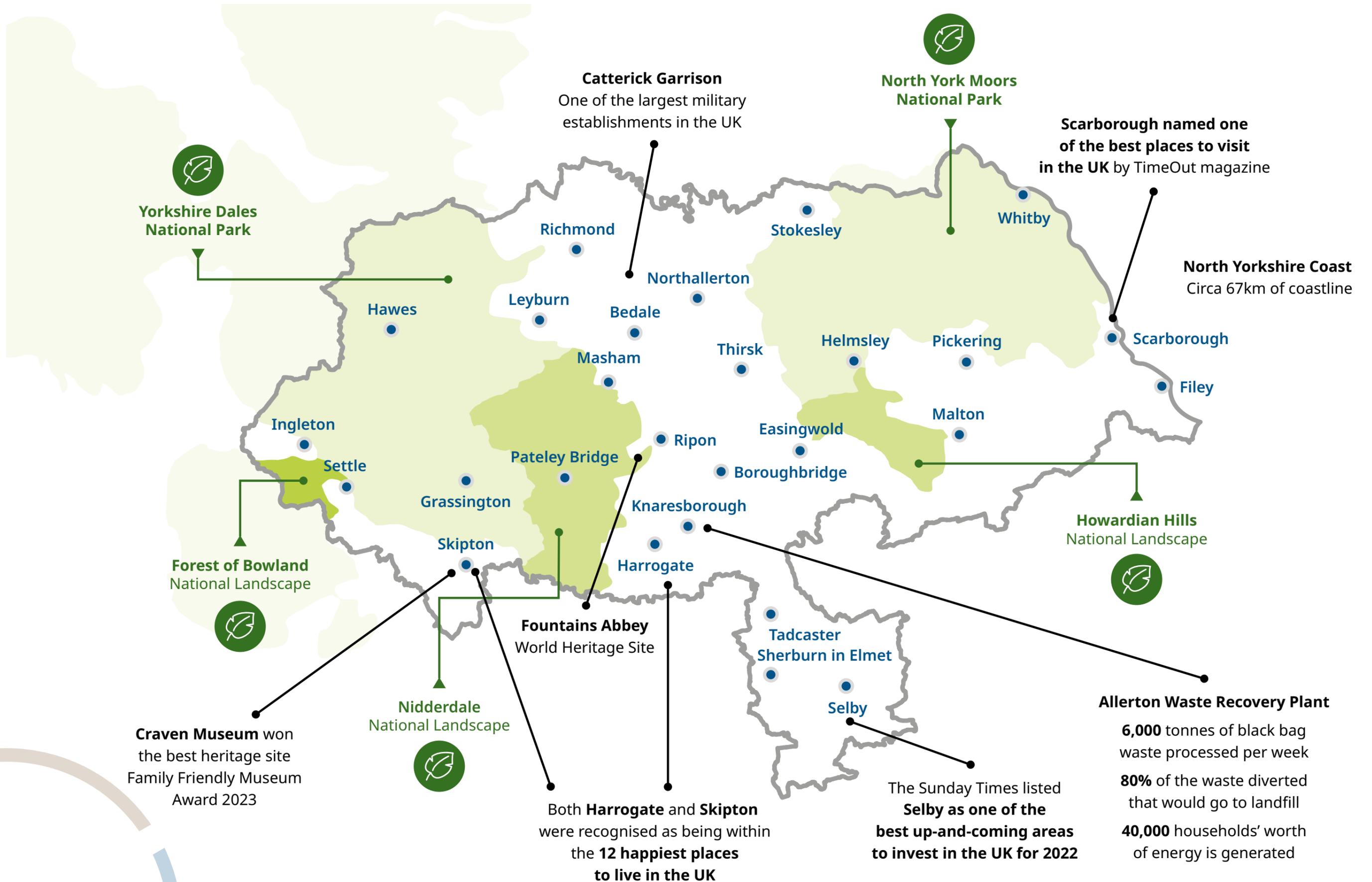
Average household income after housing costs:
£28,448
(England average = £28,248)

Strengths:

- Globally renowned brand
- Beautiful natural landscape and coastline
- Vibrant market towns and communities
- Popular visitor destination with leading heritage attractions, resorts, theme parks and unique events including international arts and sporting events
- A diverse and entrepreneurial business culture
- Strong partnership working
- Building on the records of the eight predecessor councils
- Devolution deal for North Yorkshire and York

Challenges:

- Tackling inequality and deprivation
- Changing demographics and support needs including meeting the needs of an ageing population
- Digital infrastructure and connectivity
- Rural nature of the county and sustainability of rural services
- Transport connectivity and traffic congestion (including air quality)
- Tackling climate change and environmental issues
- An appropriately qualified/ skilled workforce
- Housing affordability
- Cost of living





Delivering our Services

The council provides a wide range of services and facilities for its residents, businesses, and visitors, including:

<p>We maintain almost</p> <p>9,250km (5750 miles) of highway and are directly responsible for</p> <p>6,110km (3800 miles) of public rights of way</p> <p>Collecting around</p> <p>325,000 tonnes of waste from around 274,400 households of which around</p> <p>45% is reused, recycled or composted</p> <p>There are more than</p> <p>390 schools in North Yorkshire, serving over</p> <p>88,000 pupils</p>	<p>Managing and maintaining over</p> <p>8,330 council houses</p> <p>Processing around</p> <p>60,000 housing benefit changes every year</p> <p>We maintain</p> <p>1,645 bridges across the county</p> <p>Providing around</p> <p>29,600 hours of personal care per week to over</p> <p>4,400 people to enable them to live in their own homes</p> <p>Over</p> <p>10,000 children are provided with Special Educational Need support</p>	<p>Making approximately</p> <p>6,000 decisions on planning applications</p> <p>We provide</p> <p>19 leisure centres - including</p> <p>16 swimming pools, plus 3 health and wellbeing hubs and the Turkish Baths in Harrogate.</p> <p>Supporting</p> <p>3,300 people in permanent residential or nursing placements</p> <p>Over</p> <p>3,000 children and young people are supported by the Children's and Families Service</p>
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Some of the services we provide:

- Adult education
- Adult social care services
- Air quality
- Benefits service
- Cemeteries and crematoria
- Children's social care, including adoption and fostering
- Community development
- Community safety
- Council tax collection
- Culture and tourism
- Democratic services and administering elections
- Economic development supporting the growth of new and existing businesses
- Emergency planning
- Environmental health
- Food hygiene
- Health and safety
- Heritage and countryside management
- Highways including roads, bridges, street lighting and public rights of way
- Housing, including homelessness prevention and support
- Libraries and archives
- Licensing (including alcohol, entertainment and taxi licensing).
- Management of beaches and harbours
- Parking
- Pest control
- Planning and building control
- Public and community transport
- Public health, working to improve health and wellbeing
- Registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships
- Schools
- Sport and leisure services and facilities
- Street scene: fly-tipping, street cleaning and dog fouling
- Tourism services and major venues
- Trading standards and consumer advice
- Waste and recycling collection and disposal

We want to build on North Yorkshire's natural capital, strong local economy and resilient communities, to improve the way local services are delivered and support a good quality of life for all.

Our vision and ambitions

Our vision

We want to build on North Yorkshire’s natural capital, strong local economy and resilient communities, to improve the way local services are delivered and support a good quality of life for all.

Our ambitions:

Place and Environment	Economy	Health and Wellbeing	People	Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clean, environmentally sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit • A well connected and planned place with good transport links and digital connectivity • Communities are supported and work together to improve their local area • Good quality, affordable and sustainable housing that meets the needs of our communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically sustainable growth that enables people and places to prosper • Culture, heritage, arts and sustainable tourism all play their part in the economic growth of the county • New and existing businesses can thrive and grow • North Yorkshire has a high profile, is influential nationally and receives its fair share of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are supported to have a good quality of life and enjoy active and healthy lifestyles • Reduced variations in health through tackling the root causes of inequality • People can access good public health services and social care across our different communities • People have control and choice in relation to their independence and social care support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are free from harm and feel safe and protected • People can achieve their full potential through lifelong education and learning • People are better supported, by strengthening families or other appropriate networks • In times of hardship, support is provided to those that need it most 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality, value for money services that are customer focused and accessible to all • A well-led and managed, financially sustainable and forward- thinking council • A carbon neutral council • One council, where colleagues work together to achieve our ambitions and support each other

The four pillars of locality working at the heart of everything we do:

<p>Local services and access:</p> <p>Locally based and integrated council, partner and community services</p>	<p>Local accountability:</p> <p>6 area committees to oversee and champion local areas, strengthen local relationships, make important decisions locally and hold the council to account</p>	<p>Local action:</p> <p>Community Partnerships, bringing together local Councillors, public sector agencies, communities and businesses to get things done in their local area</p>	<p>Local empowerment:</p> <p>Devolution of services and assets to town and parish councils and community groups where they want to take these on and have the capacity to do so</p>
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Place and Environment

A clean, environmentally sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit

This outcome is around two main areas; the first is around mitigating the causes and impacts of climate change. This will include how we encourage people to reduce, reuse and recycle waste and therefore, in turn, how much of our waste ends up at landfill. The second aspect is around North Yorkshire as a beautiful place and our role in preserving that for future generations.

We understand the importance of mitigating the causes and impacts of climate change and therefore the council has officially declared a Climate Emergency. North Yorkshire as a locality emitted 6,386.7 kt CO₂e in 2021 (measure of emissions from the three main greenhouse gases). This equates to 10.3 per capita emissions (tCO₂e), which is higher than both England (5.5 per capita emissions tCO₂e) and Yorkshire and Humber (7.1 per capita emissions tCO₂e). We must work with partners to reduce carbon emissions across North Yorkshire; however, in the challenging times that local government now faces, this must be done in a financially sustainable way. Our goal is to support the region's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040. We will work with partners to make this possible and encourage residents, businesses and visitors to take climate responsible actions. We will do this in three ways: mitigation, reducing our impact on the climate by decreasing greenhouse gas emissions; adaptation, preparing for the climate to change; and supporting nature, helping the natural world, on which we depend to thrive.

The council has secured £3.2 million of funding from the national Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot scheme to install 150 charging points across the county.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To encourage and support sustainable living in our communities and towns as well as the transport in between, including making it easier to charge electric vehicles, access public transport that meets the needs of the user and promoting and encouraging active travel including walking, wheeling and cycling.
- To encourage and assist everyone to reduce, reuse and recycle waste to develop the circular economy.
- To promote renewable energy.
- To create a North Yorkshire Adaptation Plan to support services and residents, communities and businesses to prepare for our climate to change.
- To promote biodiversity and support nature recovery.
- To promote sustainable land use and green spaces.
- To prioritise nature-based solutions in climate change activity.
- To develop sequestration projects and carbon capture.

North Yorkshire is a beautiful place to live with large parts of the county sitting within the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors national parks, as well as three National Landscapes. We want North Yorkshire to continue to have clean and attractive streets, beaches and open spaces.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To protect and, where possible, enhance the local environment and ensure our air, streets, beaches and open spaces are kept clean and attractive.
- To reduce littering, fly-tipping and dog-fouling.

A well connected and planned place with good transport links and digital connectivity

The rural nature of the county presents a great challenge for digital and transport connectivity, as well as the sustainability of rural services. 94% of premises in North Yorkshire has access to superfast broadband, compared to 97.7% of premises nationally. Local bus services provide the primary mode of public transport, offering access to essential facilities; however, with low population density, commercial services in rural areas are not sustainable. Commercial public transport operators cater for 90% of all passenger journeys but less than 40% of parishes have a bus service operating more than three days per week. Their networks are concentrated in urban areas where services are more sustainable, leaving access for people in rural areas a challenge for the council. North Yorkshire Council will deliver a £68.8m major highway improvement scheme on the A59 at Kex Gill that will improve the resilience of this key east west route between Skipton and Harrogate by moving the road onto the opposite side of the valley.

We also recognise the importance of having well planned developments that are responsive to the needs of local residents and have access to essential services. As the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority takes on transport powers, we will work closely with them to develop the

strategic transport plan across the sub-region, making the case for greater investment to support rural transport, in line with investment seen in other Mayoral areas.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- Work with the new Combined Authority to produce a Local Transport Plan which supports sustainable transport for all residents and the transport of freight, and makes the case for investment in North Yorkshire's roads, rail, public transport and active travel.
- To seek improvement to transport connectivity and inclusion (especially east-west links), within North Yorkshire and into neighbouring areas.
- To support and encourage an effective and efficient public transport network that meets the user needs.
- Promote and encourage active travel including walking, wheeling and cycling.
- To maintain safe and functional highways and to seize opportunities to improve the network.
- To improve digital connectivity and inclusion.
- To ensure that developments meet the needs of all, consider health and social inequality and the specific requirements of younger, older and disabled people. Housing developments should also have easy access to employment and economic opportunities, as well as culture, leisure and outside space.

Communities are supported and work together to improve their local area

We want North Yorkshire to have strong, resourceful, resilient and empowered communities who work together to make decisions on local priorities, enjoy improved local accountability and have the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities to manage local assets where it is financially viable and provides value for money for all involved.



Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To support the six area committees to discuss local issues, provide direction and local leadership.
- To work closely with, support and empower town and parish councils and community groups to run assets and services where they want to take on additional responsibilities, have the capacity to do so, and where it would be value for money for all involved.
- To establish around 30 community partnerships, bringing together local Councillors, public sector agencies, communities and businesses to get things done in their local area.
- To establish and maintain strong and resilient partnerships across North Yorkshire.
- To support a vibrant, thriving and resilient voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire.
- To develop and work alongside a network of community anchor organisations to support communities to become more resilient to respond to local challenges and opportunities.
- To support the wider Council approach to businesses to assist in Resilience within North Yorkshire.



Good quality, affordable and sustainable housing that meets the needs of our communities

Housing affordability varies across the county, a person earning average local wages would need to pay over 8 times their income to buy a property which is substantially higher than Yorkshire & Humber averages of 6.07 times their income. This problem has been heightened by the current cost-of-living crisis. Energy efficiency of housing is another key challenge faced by many in North Yorkshire with the County's average energy efficiency rating for domestic buildings being below the national average. North Yorkshire Council will work with partners to ensure the future housing needs of residents are met.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To develop a strategic relationship with Homes England, including through the new Combined Authority.
- To help maintain housing supply, both market and affordable housing, whilst improving the quality of new homes.
- To raise the standard and improve the quality of private rented and owner occupied housing.
- To ensure that our council housing stock remains decent and continues to improve, with an ambition to become an exemplar social landlord.
- To prevent and tackle homelessness.
- To help meet housing needs, including those of vulnerable households and those with specific needs such as older or disabled people.
- To help ensure that people have a decent home to live in that facilitates their health and wellbeing.
- To encourage and support future work around decarbonisation and the retrofit of homes.

Economy

Economically sustainable growth that enables people and places to prosper

We have already developed a strong Economic Growth Strategy which will drive clean growth in North Yorkshire and provide better opportunities for employment and skills. We want to attract investment and grow our economy to create new and exciting opportunities for our residents and businesses. To achieve this, we need to make the most of our unique economic offer and set a new level of ambition for sustainable growth. The economic priorities for North Yorkshire have already been fed into the emerging Economic Framework for the Combined Authority, and we will continue to work with the Mayor and Combined Authority to capitalise on the assets of York and North Yorkshire in support of our residents and businesses.

We want the county to have economically vibrant and thriving town centres, market towns, villages, hamlets and communities, where places can work together to drive growth whilst utilising their distinctive cultural and physical assets. Larger centres such as Harrogate, Scarborough, Selby, Skipton and Northallerton can be growth connectors that will drive economic activity in the county. The Town Deal programmes in Scarborough and Whitby will see over £25m of government investment in each town including renovations to Whitby swing bridge. The blue economy is also important, we want to further develop offshore opportunities as well harnessing the opportunities our harbours present.

North Yorkshire has a lower proportion of young people than the national average, 25% are under 25 compared to 29% nationally. This is because many younger people who attended higher education decide to leave the county and put roots down in other parts of the country. It is important that we attract and retain young people to live and work in North Yorkshire.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To support and deliver major infrastructure and regeneration projects across the county to create vibrant places, such as the £30m Transforming Cities Fund Station Gateway Projects in Harrogate, Selby and Skipton to regenerate the areas around the train station and improve links into the towns. The Revitalising Towns project will see over £4.25m invested in the three town centres of Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet.
- To harness North Yorkshire's natural capital and promote the green and blue economies.
- To invest in land, buildings and sustainable infrastructure to support economic growth.
- To encourage and support an increase in good quality jobs, high value employment, wages and skills retention.
- To ensure the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is delivered, developing a Local Skills Action Plan to address pressing skills gaps for businesses in priority sectors.
- To ensure that skills meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries including cyber, agriculture and bioeconomy, creative sector and low carbon sectors.
- To attract and retain young people and working age adults to live and work in North Yorkshire.

- To ensure that the places where people live, now and in the future, create new opportunities, promote well-being and reduce inequalities so that people have better lives, in stronger communities and achieve their potential.

Culture, heritage, arts and sustainable tourism all play their part in the economic growth of the county

Culture, heritage, arts and tourism all play an important part in North Yorkshire's economy and the brand of North Yorkshire. Local businesses and cultural/event venues such as Scarborough Open Air Theatre and Harrogate Convention Centre, to name just a few, have an important part to play in the local economy. Harrogate Convention Centre has an impact on the local economy of around £30 million each year. This is also the case for events, including sporting events, held in the county. Past events include the Tour de Yorkshire and Tour de France cycle races. In 2024 the Long Course Weekend, an internationally recognised multi-sport event will be hosted by North Yorkshire.

We want to strengthen our tourist and cultural offer by ensuring there are year-round attractions and increase visitor spend. Tourism is worth more than £3.2 billion each year to York and North Yorkshire's economy, and in excess of 60,000 workers are employed in the sector. A joint bid for a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for both York and North Yorkshire has been approved which will ensure we make the most of our natural assets and cultural offer, raise the profile of our fantastic places to boost the visitor economy and, of course, our unique food and drink offer.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To promote and improve North Yorkshire's tourism infrastructure, sporting and cultural offer, to provide high quality, year-round attractions and venues to increase visitor spend.
- To promote accessible and environmentally sustainable tourism.
- To provide more opportunities for more people to participate in inclusive, relevant cultural activity.
- To increase opportunities to use engagement with culture, arts and heritage to improve health and wellbeing.
- To promote the importance of culture in place shaping and celebrating our distinctive culture and heritage. To maximise the impacts and benefits of Selby's Priority Place status and sharing the learning and approach more widely.
- To support a strong, connected and collaborative cultural sector.
- To increase the digital connectivity of our council cultural assets.
- To ensure a network of inclusive and accessible libraries across North Yorkshire that support and develop literacy and creativity; increase digital skills and connectivity; improve health and wellbeing and are welcoming focal point for community activity.

New and existing businesses can thrive and grow

North Yorkshire has 32,645 micro, small and medium sized enterprises and 90 large enterprises. We want North Yorkshire to be a place where businesses can thrive and grow, where businesses are supported and operational barriers to business growth are addressed by securing investment and improvement in digital infrastructure. We also want North Yorkshire to be a place where businesses are able to network and forge links with other businesses/ organisations.

In order to enable local businesses to thrive, North Yorkshire Council will continue to work with partners and support developments at strategic employment sites. This includes along the A1 corridor with the development at Junction 47 (Flaxby), new motorway services at Junction 52 (Catterick), and a new Designer Outlet at Junction 53 (Scotch Corner). Along the A64 corridor we will see the further development of the Eden Enterprise Park near Malton, the proposed expansion of the Pickering Industrial Estate, including new starter units, and the expansion of the Scarborough Business Park, all of which will create further employment and economic growth opportunities. Along the M62 corridor we will see the redevelopment of the former Kellingley Colliery site in Selby and Eggborough Power Station site in Selby, as a major new employment parks.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To support and attract new and existing businesses including in the cyber, bioeconomy and low carbon sectors.
- To ensure businesses have access to, and are able to benefit from, business support services.
- To create a fair-trading environment which enables businesses to thrive.
- To invest in modern technology to create jobs.
- To utilise improving digital infrastructure to support businesses.

North Yorkshire has a high profile, is influential nationally and receives its fair share of resources

North Yorkshire Council will provide a strong voice for North Yorkshire to attract inward investment and tackle priorities effectively on the wider stage. Working alongside the new Mayor, there is a chance to restate the importance of North Yorkshire in the regional and national economy, and highlight potential of our unique combination of assets.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To champion the case for a fairer share of resources for North Yorkshire and raise the profile of North Yorkshire on the national stage.
- To influence government policy.
- To realise the potential of devolution.
- To maximise access to external funding.

Health and wellbeing

People are supported to have a good quality of life and enjoy active and healthy lifestyles

We want everyone in North Yorkshire to live long, healthy and active lives. To make sure this is the case for children, we must work with families and partners to encourage, promote and facilitate healthy choices. While 70.1% of adults in North Yorkshire are already classed as “physically active” - compared to an average of 67.3% for the country as a whole - we will continue to promote health and wellbeing through positive choices and provision of information to help people stay healthy. We want to provide high quality opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity at all levels and at all stages of life. In 2023 Harrogate leisure and Wellness Centre reopened following a £13.5 million renovation, and Knaresborough’s new £17.5 million leisure and wellness centre opened. These projects complement a wider £47.9 million investment in leisure provision. Particular attention will also be given to the social, emotional and mental health.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To encourage people to make informed choices about their health and encourage active and healthy lifestyles.
- To improve mental health and wellbeing, in particular for those with severe and enduring mental illness.
- To transform our core leisure centres into local sport and active wellbeing hubs, with a focus on health, wellbeing and participation for all.
- To manage and provide high quality, sustainable and inclusive sport and wellbeing facilities.
- To work collaboratively with partners to develop locally based, accessible sport and active wellbeing services in a range of locations.
- Support community groups and local grassroots sports clubs in providing inclusive opportunities for people to become more active.
- Improve the skills of the sport and active wellbeing workforce to support a renewed focus on health and wellbeing.
- To maximise the potential of natural assets and environment within North Yorkshire to improve physical and mental health.
- To support a more active environment that makes it easier to move more and which prioritises opportunities for safe play, walking and cycling.
- To develop a centre for public health excellence including in research, training, and behavioural science.

Reduced variations in health through tackling the root causes of inequality

Health outcomes vary significantly across the county. For children these inequalities are apparent in areas such as breastfeeding initiation and smoking during pregnancy. For young people, the inequalities lie in areas such as hospital admissions for alcohol specific conditions. Childhood obesity, although low in general, is higher than the national average in parts of the county and although most adults enjoy a healthy life, too many people in North Yorkshire are living in ill health for the later years of their life and then dying earlier than their peers. The gap in life expectancy between our most and least deprived wards can be as much as 11 years for men and 13 years for women. We want to close these gaps and thereby reduce health inequalities.

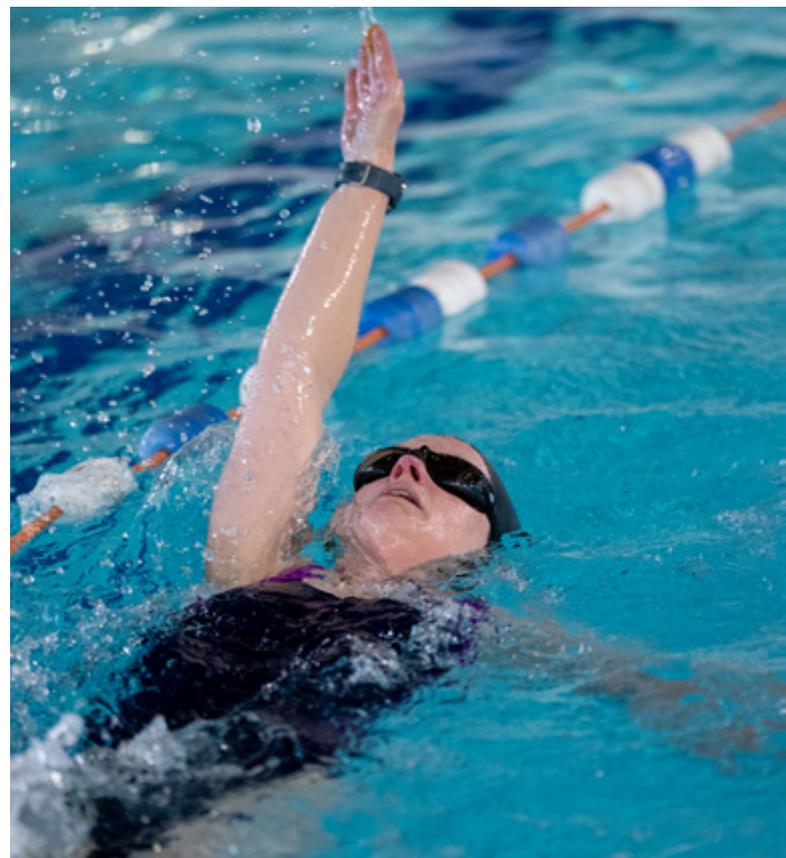
Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To reduce health and social inequalities through healthy place-shaping and targeted work with groups, communities and neighbourhoods.
- To address the wider social, economic and environmental determinants which influence health inequalities and compromise the health, well-being and life chances of children and young people, such as child poverty, home and road safety.

People can access good public health services and social care across our different communities

With the sparse nature of the county, the council faces a key challenge in the sustainability of rural services and ensuring the highest standard of social care for children and adults, wherever they live in the county. Costs in the care market can vary significantly from one part of the county to another.

For residents, the challenge is often accessing services; for example, the average travelling time to the nearest GP is three times higher than the national average in parts of the County and for many individuals will be significantly higher. Our Scrutiny of Health Committee will work to ensure that, where possible, rurality or other circumstances will not prevent people from accessing good quality health services in their area.



Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To work with community organisations to prevent, reduce and delay the need for long-term care.
- To support and develop care providers, improving sustainability and quality.
- To work with a range of organisations from the health, independent and voluntary sectors to develop a sustainable, diverse and innovative care market that meets the varied needs of the people of North Yorkshire and ensures quality and dignity for all.
- To work closely with local NHS partners to continue to prevent hospital admission, get people home from hospital and to support people to live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- To develop our in-house social care services, where appropriate, to improve choice, service availability and value for money.
- To continue to develop our extra care and supported housing services as an alternative to residential care.
- To reduce waiting lists for adult social care services wherever possible and to support people if they are waiting for longer-term care.
- To develop a broader range of support (including supported housing) for younger adults with disabilities and mental health issues and to expand drug and alcohol treatment services.

People have control and choice in relation to their independence and social care support

We want everyone to be able to live long and independent lives as far as possible. Adults supported through social care must feel that their time and experiences are valued and that their home is their choice.

We will work with partners to promote the use of modern designs and innovative construction techniques that create accessible, adaptable, and efficient homes that can meet people's changing needs over time and embrace technology together to enhance quality of life.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To support people to live independently in their home of choice by preventing, reducing and delaying the need for longer-term social care services.
- To support people to access preventative services, technology and supported housing, which helps them to live more independently.

People

People are free from harm and feel safe and protected

We want everyone to feel and be safe, with individuals, organisations and communities all playing a part in preventing, identifying, and reporting neglect or abuse. We also want North Yorkshire to continue to be a safe place to live, working with our partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, through our work with multi-agency children and adult safeguarding boards, we will work together to deliver our statutory duties and ensure all people are safe from harm and abuse, taking particular care of the 500 children in care, around 370 subject to a Child Protection Plan and the 1000 with a Child in Need plan.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To keep all people safe from harm or abuse.
- To safeguard children, as well as supporting families in difficulty to ensure they receive help at the earliest opportunity and working with families to set clear outcomes to enable them to stay together.
- Our Looked After Children's strategy sets out how we will deliver our duties as corporate parents. Where it is unsafe for a child to remain at home, we will provide safe, stable and secure permanence arrangements and ensure that children are well supported to leave the care system.
- To safeguard adults, with individuals, organisations, and communities all playing a part in preventing, identifying, and reporting neglect or abuse.
- To deliver effective community safety and public protection functions, tackling crime, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour and unsafe and unfair trading practices.
- To improve road safety in order to prevent injury, disability and death caused by road collisions.



People can achieve their full potential through lifelong education and learning

We want everyone to have opportunities to reach their full potential. There are over 88,000 children attending North Yorkshire schools and school nursery classes. More than 4,500 children and young people are supported with an Education, Health and Care plan funded by North Yorkshire Council. These children need to be school ready when they start their formal education and then supported in good or outstanding schools in order to raise achievement levels.

The majority of schools and attainment levels are good across the county; at the end of the 2022/23 Academic year 83.2% of schools in North Yorkshire were assessed to be good or outstanding by Ofsted and although this means the majority of pupils in the county do attend a good school, there is more to be done to reach and exceed the national level of 87.9%. Aspirations should be high and lifelong learning encouraged; the opportunities to access learning and develop skills should be with local providers whenever practical, enabling people to progress whilst remaining in North Yorkshire should they wish. This in turn will increase levels of social mobility that are currently low in some parts of the county, and lead to rewarding and fulfilling lives.

There are plans for new schools in North Yorkshire, such as a new £3.5 million development on the site of the former Woodfield Community Primary School in Harrogate and the new primary school to serve new houses in north Northallerton.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To work in partnership with school leaders to champion educational excellence so all children attend inclusive provision that is good or outstanding, have high aspirations and are supported to achieve their full potential.
- To create a strong partnership with Teaching School Hubs (TSH) in line with national developments.
- To ensure sufficient school places in the right locations of the right quality.
- To promote sustainability of small schools by continuing to support financial management, collaboration, curriculum delivery and quality of education.
- To focus on closing the disadvantage gap, particularly for children eligible for Free School Meals and Service Children.
- To support schools in preparation for the Ofsted inspection framework.
- To work with school leaders to improve the attendance of vulnerable groups.
- To work with school leaders to reduce the use of fixed term and permanent exclusions to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- To strengthen the early identification and the range of education provision for children with SEND.
- To work with school leaders to raise the outcomes for children and young people including SEND, identifying schools showing significant levels of under-achievement.
- To strengthen our work with partners and communities to improve outcomes through our Childhood Futures programme.
- To ensure that there are clear pathways for all people after education through the promotion of apprenticeships, training, work placements and further education including adult education.

People are better supported, by strengthening families or other appropriate networks

We all require support from time to time, starting with a supported family life and then support through appropriate groups and networks as we get older. In North Yorkshire Children's Social Care receive almost 5,000 referrals every year and the Children's and Families Early Help Team support approximately 8,000 children in more than 4,000 households each year. We want families to be empowered and resilient and networks such as schools, support organisations and the voluntary and community sector to understand and help address issues so that people can access appropriate support when they need it.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To provide early intervention, our education providers, Early Help team and health partners will work with children and families to overcome their challenges, thrive and be able to sustain this long term.
- To provide safe and healthy care within fostering and connected / kinship care households.
- To tackle loneliness and isolation.
- To embed the approach of working with people to help them draw on their strengths and assets, including what others around them, in their relationships and their communities, are, or could be, doing to support them. This is part of a programme to ensure confident and consistent practice that meets people's needs. In particular, we will focus on improving support for carers and people with mental health issues.
- To work with communities and partners in the voluntary sector to develop enriching activities and support for children, young people and families.

In times of hardship, support is provided to those that need it most

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of supporting each other and this has been further highlighted by the cost-of-living crisis. In times of hardship, support will be provided to those individuals and communities that require it, whether this is through the provision of information, advice and guidance, or by administering support funds that give financial support directly to where it is needed. In 2022/23 the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF) received over 11,000 applications for support and over £1.4 million was invested in the scheme to help local people who were struggling.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To administer support through ongoing schemes such as funds/ grants/ benefits.
- To support those that need help to access suitable accommodation, access to education and access to the help and support services they need.
- To ensure people of all ages know where to get information, advice and support when they need it.
- To establish an integrated refugee and resettlement service that welcomes and supports people to settle in North Yorkshire.

Organisation

Good quality, value for money services that are customer focused and accessible to all

We will provide efficient and effective joined up services that customers can access in the most appropriate way. It will be simpler and easier for residents to access services as there is one organisation, one website and one phone number for all the support and services they need.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To maintain a local office in every former district area and establish additional local customer access points across North Yorkshire to provide access to council and partner services.
- To provide good customer service and understand the needs of our customers.
- To ensure customers can access services in the most appropriate way, with customers being able to self-serve where they are able to do so.
- To have a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (see our Equality Objectives on page 35 for more detail).
- To deliver on our longstanding commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, to ensure that serving personnel, military veterans and their families continue to receive equal access to high quality local services, including education, housing and health care.
- To ensure services provide value for money.

A well led and managed, financially sustainable and forward-thinking council

North Yorkshire Council, through its elected members (councillors) and senior officers, will have strong leadership and vision. We will ensure that the council is financially sustainable through effective management of our resources, responsible budget management and income generation. This is increasingly important in the challenging climate of extreme financial pressures which local government faces. We will be flexible, adaptable and innovative in our ways of working to maximise our resources. Across all areas of the council transformation projects have been established to improve efficiency of services and join up services in a way that makes sense to residents, businesses and communities.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To deliver a successful transformation programme now and in the years to come, maximising the benefits of bringing eight councils into one to improve services for residents.
- To rationalise our property including making it more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.
- To operate on a commercial basis where it is appropriate to do so and invest in council owned assets to drive revenue generation opportunities to fund Corporate Plans.
- To be 'digital by choice', where possible to provide services online and also provide an alternative option for those who are unable to access the internet.
- To use data to inform decision making by councillors and officers.
- To ensure technology, organisational development and the corporate estate supports innovative, enterprising and inclusive working.
- To maximise the use of technology to provide more efficient services.



A carbon neutral council

We understand the importance of mitigating the causes and impacts of climate change, now and for future generations. Therefore, we are working towards our goal of the council becoming operationally net zero by 2030. To achieve this, we will reduce North Yorkshire Council's operational emissions.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To ensure that the council's property and assets support our climate change objectives through improved energy efficiency of our properties including heating, ventilation, water use, electricity use for power and lighting.
- To increase access to vehicles using alternative fuels such as electric, hydrogen and other low-carbon options and create a 'fleet decarbonisation plan' for all council vehicles.
- To reduce the amount of business miles travelled in employees' own vehicles by encouraging alternatives such as active travel, public transport, virtual meetings, and the use of technology.
- To understand and lessen the emissions embedded in goods and services associated with our operations.
- To ensure that wherever possible council waste is reduced, reused and recycled, and to reduce our use of single use plastics.
- To provide Climate Change Awareness Training for elected members (councillors) and employees.
- To embed climate change into every service and into policy and decision making so that taking climate responsible actions becomes 'business as usual'.

One council, where colleagues work together to achieve our ambitions and support each other

We want our council to be diverse and inclusive, and have a motivated, innovative, and committed workforce. We recognise the valuable contribution our employees make to deliver high quality services across the county.

Our priorities for the next four years are:

- To build on our diverse and inclusive culture, where colleagues are supported, valued and everyone can reach their full potential.
- Where our visible, respectful and accountable leaders support strong performance and innovation providing a welcoming environment for all.
- We listen to each other, providing open engagement, sharing ideas and acting on what we say.
- We are an employer of choice, with our ways of working and attractive career pathways providing learning opportunities for everyone.

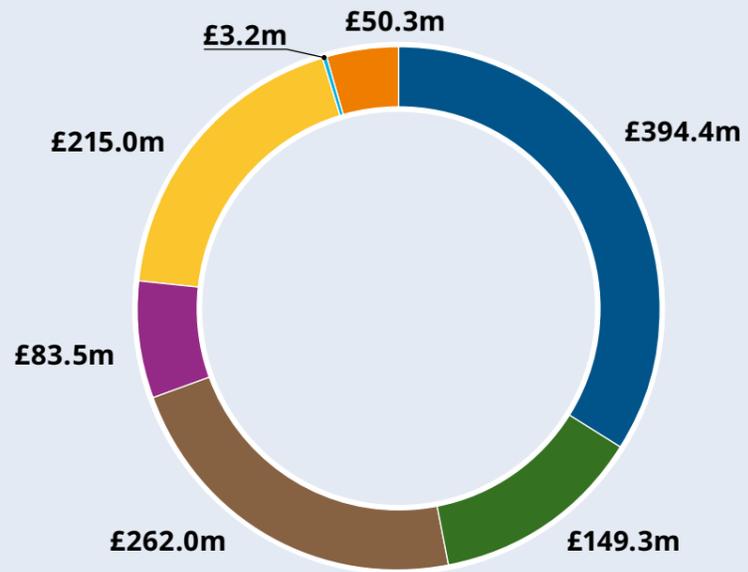


Finances

Revenue spending

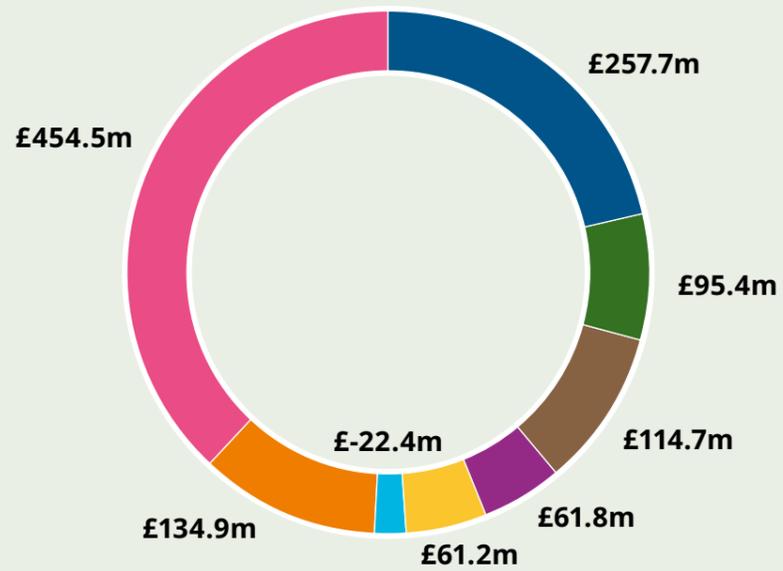
The total combined cost of services North Yorkshire Council provides will amount to **£1,158m** in 2024/25. A breakdown into our services and how they are funded is as follows:

2024/25 Cost of Services (£1,158m)



- Health and Adult Services
- Children and Young Peoples Services
- Central and Other Services
- Community Development
- Environmental and Regulatory Services
- Drainage Board and other Levies
- Other Corporate Miscellaneous

2024/25 Funding (£1,158m)



- Fees / charges / client contributions
- Government grants - centrally held
- Government grants - service-based
- Joint arrangements
- Investment/ commercial and other Income
- Use of reserves
- Business rates
- Council tax income



Council Tax

The North Yorkshire Council council tax charge for 2024/25 for a band D property is £1,847.36. The actual sum paid, however, depends on which of the eight valuation bands (A to H) the individual properties fall into.

This represents an overall **average** increase of 4.99% against 2023/24 and is made up of 2.99% for general tax and 2% for Adult Social Care. The **actual increase** will depend upon which former district council area the property is in.

The law requires councils to charge the same core council tax for all properties in the same band. However, for areas like North Yorkshire going through local government reorganisation the law allows an extended period to harmonise to a single charge. Councillors decided that a two-year harmonisation period was the most appropriate so for 2023/24 Council Tax differed by area with some paying more than the average and some below. For 2024/25 all areas will pay the same but the **increase** to meet this new standard will be higher for those who were paying a lower council tax in 2023/24.

Savings to be found

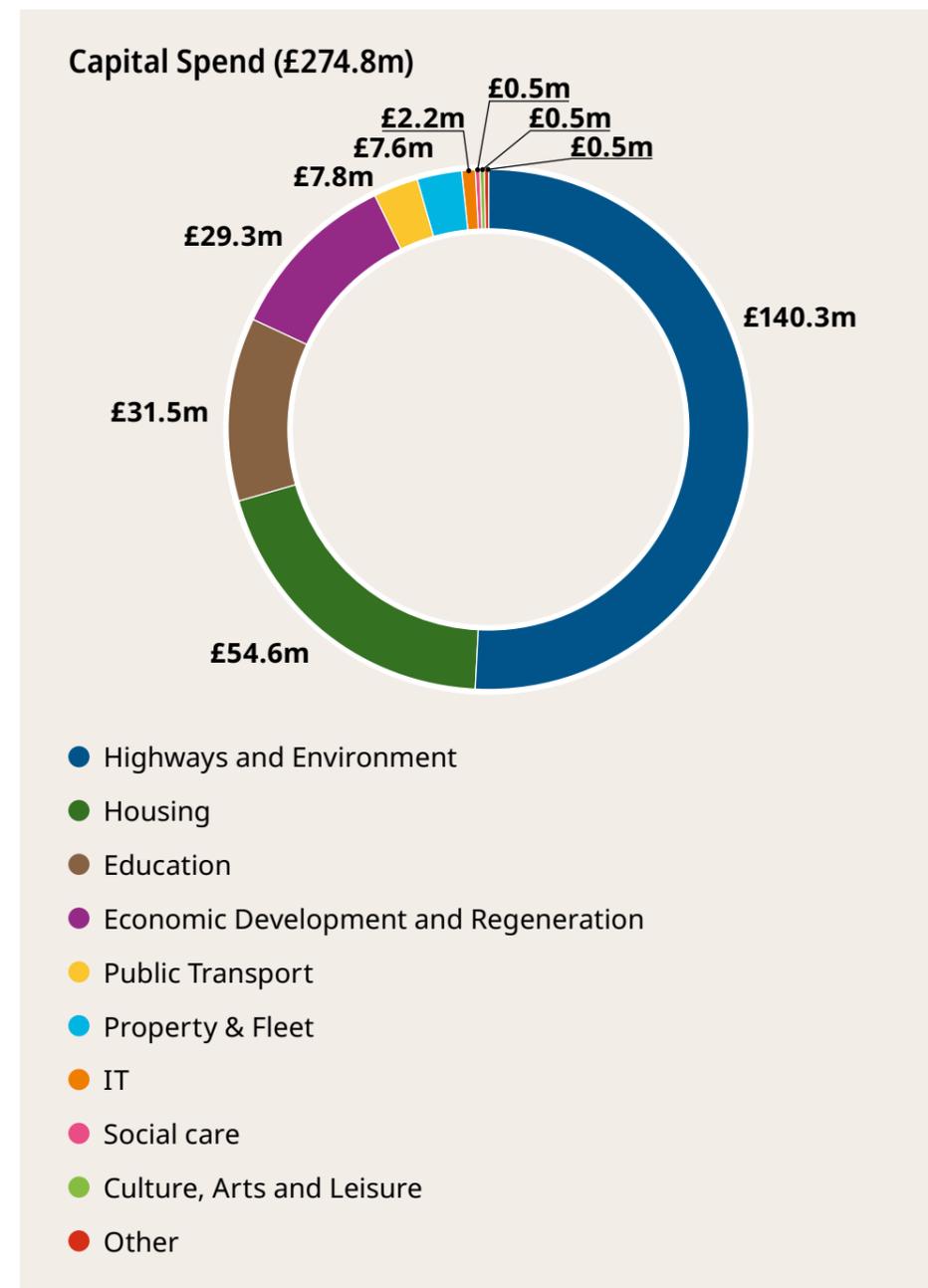
The overall funding provided by central government to local authorities to deliver their services has significantly reduced in recent years and this has come at a time of increasing demand and significant cost pressures. This presents a considerable challenge and the Council faces difficult decisions on spending and service provision.

The current medium term financial strategy for the new Council already assumes savings of £45.8m but on current estimates a further £48.2m of net savings or additional revenue will be required by 2026/27 to balance the books.

Although significant savings have been identified as a result of unitarization, with a number of immediate savings linked to structural reform, the council will be looking to deliver further savings as they look at transformation opportunities.

Capital spending

In addition to the revenue budget, the council also plans to spend £274.8m on capital projects in 2024/25. A breakdown into the services is shown below:



Our equality objectives

As a council, it is essential that we understand the communities we serve and ensure that our services meet their diverse needs. As an employer, we draw strength from a workforce that represents those communities and the different ideas and views generated from the range of backgrounds and experiences that our staff have.

Reflecting the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to work to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people with different characteristics when carrying out our activities.

As a part of that duty, we set ourselves high-level objectives, outlined below, which are regularly monitored and reported through our performance framework. At the current time of significant change across the council, these objectives will be reviewed to ensure they reflect new opportunities or challenges faced as we redesign consolidated services. They may, therefore, change over the period of this plan.

To understand the needs of our communities and work with them to meet those needs

We will:

- Collect, analyse and use data and information
- Carry out effective community engagement
- Foster good community relations
- Encourage participation in public life by all our communities
- Address local inequalities including:
 - Identify and address inequality in outcomes for ethnic minority customers
 - Improve health and educational outcomes amongst Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities in the county
 - Ensure service delivery and commissioning, particularly social care and public health, is inclusive of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans+ adults
 - Improve wellbeing, inclusion and feeling safe for vulnerable groups of children and young people
 - Improve the health and wellbeing of individuals with long-term health conditions including obesity and other life limiting conditions
 - Develop work and study opportunities for young people in the county

To demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion as an organisation, show leadership across the county and work in partnership to improve equality, diversity and inclusion

We will:

- Demonstrate political and officer leadership
- We will work in partnership to achieve shared priorities
- Complete equality impact assessments to ensure our policies and services do not discriminate against anyone
- We will monitor, review and scrutinise performance against our objectives

To provide responsive services and effective customer care to all

We will:

- Embed equality into our commissioning and procuring services
- Integrate equality objectives into planned service outcomes
- Ensure service design and delivery pays due regard to equality

To have a diverse and engaged workforce and fair and inclusive employment practices

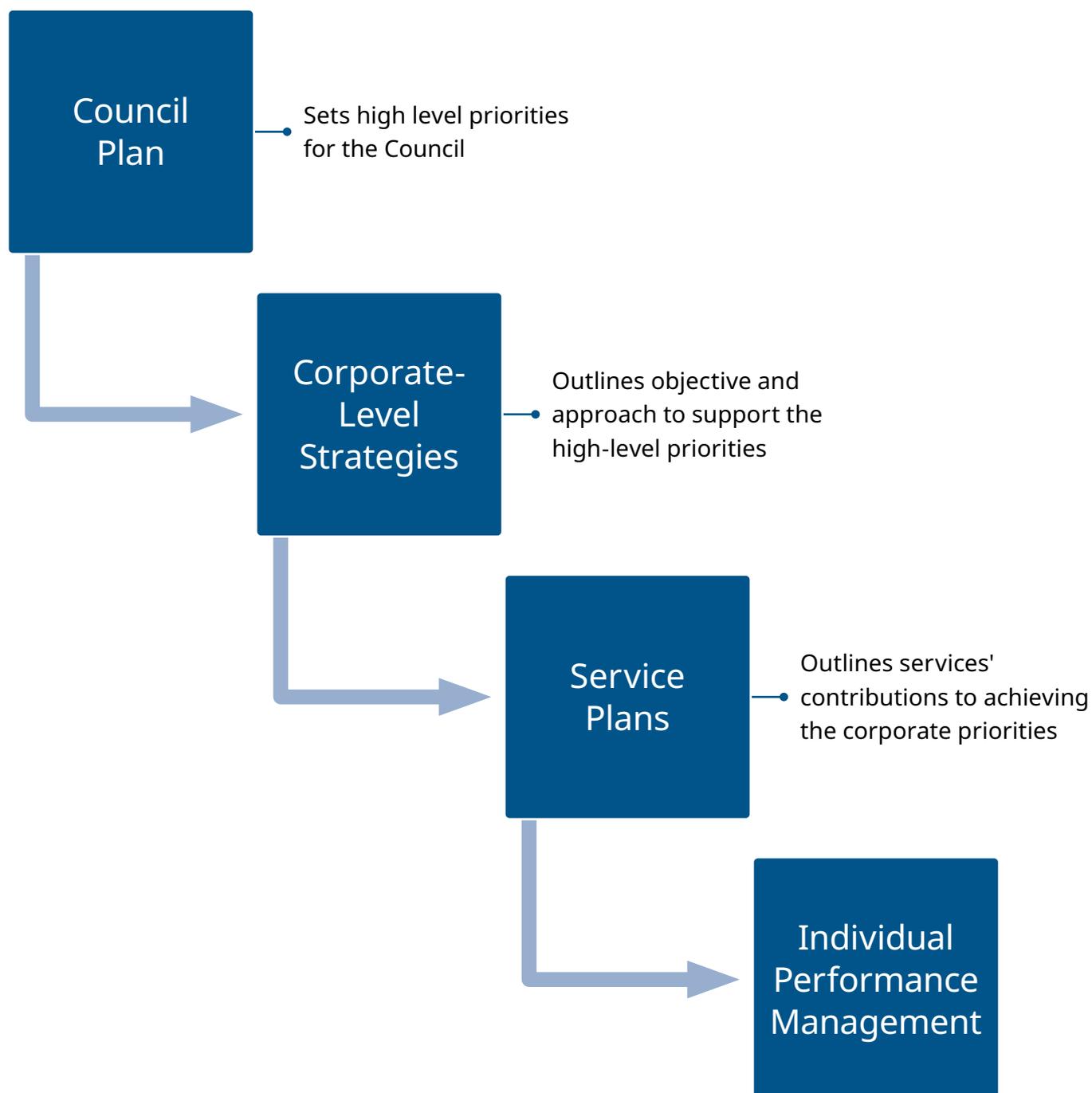
We will:

- Work to improve workforce diversity and inclusion
- Ensure our strategies and policies are inclusive
- Collect, analyse and publish workforce data
- Support the learning, development and progression of our workforce
- Support the health and wellbeing of our workforce



How we measure performance

Our strategic approach to measuring performance starts with this Council Plan, which sets out the council's key priorities. The Council Plan is underpinned by a number of corporate-level strategies which provide greater detail and guidance on priority areas such as Medium Term Financial Planning and Capital Plans, or Economic Growth. In support of these, Service Plans then identify the objectives and actions which services will undertake to deliver those strategies. The objectives and performance of each member of staff is then outlined and monitored through Individual Performance Management.



To assess performance across all these strategies and plans, the council has two types of indicators:

- Key Performance Indicators are our headline indicators. They are chosen to provide Elected Members, Senior Leaders and residents with a clear picture of our performance towards achieving the Council's strategic goals.
- Service Performance Indicators provide our service management teams with a detailed breakdown of their current performance against service plan objectives.

The Key Performance Indicators used to monitor the Council Plan will need to align with the emerging Office of Local Government (OFLOG) performance framework. New indicators are being brought forward in tranches, so North Yorkshire Council will use these as a basis for the KPIs which are reported quarterly. These will be supplemented with indicators which reflect the local context or in areas where OFLOG is not yet reporting.

Key Performance Indicators will be reported to Management Board and Executive on a quarterly basis, with Service Performance Indicators reported to service management teams as frequently as is operationally required.



Contact us

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We regularly ask people living and working in North Yorkshire to tell us about their views on specific issues or questions. To view our current consultations, visit: northyorks.gov.uk/current-consultations

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By telephone: For further information call **0300 131 2131** and say 'Council Plan' when prompted

North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

You can request this information in another language or format at northyorks.gov.uk/accessibility