

## **LEADER'S STATEMENT - COUNCIL 10 DECEMBER 2015**

### Flooding

I would like to start by expressing my heartfelt sympathy for the residents of Cumbria and other parts of the country who have been so badly affected by flooding over the last week. What a timely reminder of how lucky we are to have our flood defences completed in Pickering.

### Combined Authorities

As yet no consensus has been reached despite the most recent meeting of the APPG being held in Leeds on Friday 4 December 2015. A meeting is planned for the new year for Leaders to meet to discuss and agree the geographical footprint for our Combined Authority area. Proposed amendments in the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill could have far reaching effects for us as, in exceptional circumstances, those amendments could allow some of our District Councils in North Yorkshire to effectively become part of a West Yorkshire combined authority.

Director of Public Health's Annual report is available now on the NYCC website. It contains some interesting information and I am sure our Health & Wellbeing Board will be concentrating on the recommendations from that report.

### Comprehensive Spending Review

Much of the detail from the CSR will not become evident until our local settlement is announced later in December. We expect the announcement on either 17 or 23 December which will be reflected in our Budget.

The main issues for this Council are:-

- 1.The move to 100% retention of business rates - which would come with additional responsibilities
- 2.There will be an extension to the doubling of small business rate relief for the 12 months to April 2017
3. Possible reforms to NHB
4. The ability for NYCC to increase council tax to cover Social Care
5. Of course from my point of view the increase in the state pension had to be good news - the largest real term increase in 15 years.

We had some good news and some bad news around the announcements on Enterprise Zones. The news that Fera have been awarded Enterprise Zone Status and investment of 50 million pounds is very good news but it was disappointing that the Coast & Country Enterprise Zone application was unsuccessful. This of course included the Malton proposal, but does not affect the Food Enterprise Zone status which was successful earlier this year.

Tonight on our agenda, as well as other items, we shall be looking at our safeguarding policy, hopefully confirming the increase in wages to our lowest paid employees and at long last we are in a position to adopt our CIL Charging schedule

Looking ahead to the new year we shall be confirming our budget for 2016/17 and starting work on challenges including working on our Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Towards 2020 transformation programme.

Finally, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.