

COUNCIL – 14 MAY 2018

STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR JOHN NOCK

CABINET MEMBER FOR LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

LEGAL SERVICES

Financial year 2017/18 has seen the Council's Legal Service go from strength to strength in terms of its commercial activities, alongside providing legal, strategic and risk based advice to the Council across all of its functions.

In the last financial year, our small team of 7 lawyers has generated over £177,000 in external income, representing over 55% of the total service budget. The service presently acts for four major external client organisations, with ad-hoc work done for numerous others, and additional public sector clients continuing to approach the team on the basis of word of mouth recommendation.

The income generated by the team subsidises the legal service provided to the Council to a significant degree, with the effect that the Council has access to a larger number of lawyers, encompassing a broader range of legal specialisms than would otherwise be able to be employed from its own budget allocation. Income has been used to invest in a new legal case management software solution, and to update essential legal research materials, at no cost to the Council, whilst also contributing to corporate savings targets.

The Legal Service has, in recent months, been heavily involved in advising on the Council-wide corporate Commercial Strategy, and the Commercial Property Investment Strategy which arises from it. These strategies represent the first step in the authority's journey towards expanding its commercial approach across all services of the Council. It is acknowledged that the advent of an overarching Commercial Strategy will signify something of a change in culture and direction for the authority, requiring targeted investment in training and the development of new skill-sets, and the Legal Service will be facilitating training for officers and Members in this regard over coming months.

Legal officers have been instrumental in bringing forward several new housing schemes over recent months, acting for YCH on the purchase of development land and new build properties set to deliver 74 new homes across sites in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey. These will encompass a mix of affordable rent, affordable sale, supported housing and units for the elderly. At the post-development end of the transaction, the service has also acted for YCH on the sales of a number of affordable homes to the new homeowners.

Across other Council functions, the Legal Service has assisted colleagues in the development of a commercial venture to open up the Town Hall to hold wedding ceremonies, has provided contract and risk based advice to the Council in relation to

the YCH-Coast & Country collaboration, and has assisted enforcement colleagues across the Council in implementing new practices and procedures to enable more robust and efficient prosecutions to be brought forward.

PROCUREMENT

- The North Yorkshire Procurement Partnership is to be extended (Scarborough Borough Council, Ryedale District Council, & Selby District Council) for a further year up to end of March 2019.
- The Procurement Partnership made a surplus of £9,717 for 17/18 with overall reserves standing at a healthy £117,534.
- The Partnership continues to generate additional income by providing procurement services to Craven District Council and Yorkshire Coast Homes
- Tenders currently advertised or at a tender stage:
 - Reactive works repairs. An EU let contract that has been broken into various work lots so SMEs and local businesses have the best possible opportunity to bid for the works and gain a place on the framework contract
 - Production and supply of plants
 - Refurbishment of roof areas, Scarborough Spa
- Tenders Awarded:
 - Provision of portable toilets for events
 - Open Air Theatre Summer Shows & Peasholm Park Entertainment Proposals
 - The provision of Herring Gull Dispersal and Disruption programme