

Updates on Local Government Reorganisation from the joint North Yorkshire local government branches; Craven branch, Harrogate branch, North Yorkshire branch, Ryedale branch and Scarborough branch

Issue 6
27 April 2022

A bigger newsletter, keeping you informed about LGR

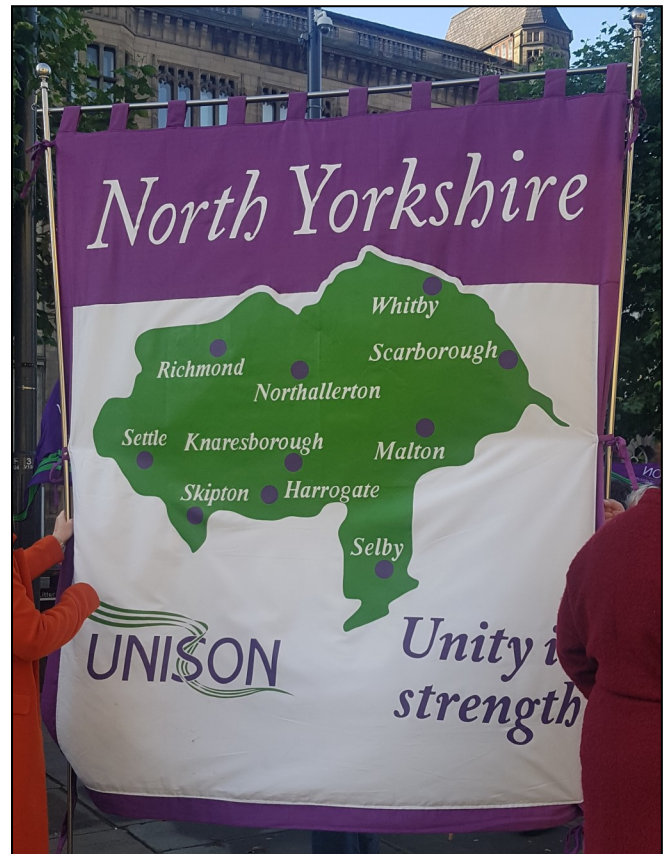
We hope you have found our regular updates informative and reassuring. As we move closer to our eight councils coming together as the new North Yorkshire Council, there is more to update you on so we have doubled the size of this newsletter.

The joint branch secretaries are meeting monthly to make sure we are working together in your interests, and this newsletter will be produced after each monthly meeting.

We will keep you updated on developments and our priorities, but also include more detailed features on particular issues that you may be interested in.

As always, if you have any questions or if you ever need support, advice or representation at work please do not hesitate to contact your branch. Contact details for all the North Yorkshire branches are included on the back page.

As we move into the new era, it is really important that as many of our colleagues as possible are UNISON members. The bigger our membership across all the councils, the louder and stronger our voice is to meet our aims to:



- 1. Protect jobs**
- 2. Level-up pay, terms and conditions**
- 3. Cause least disruption to staff and services**

Pay & Reward: Increments

The Pay & Reward work stream is one of the most important for our members. This is the work stream that is looking at what the new terms & conditions will look like at the new North Yorkshire Council.

Currently there are eight different sets of terms & conditions; one for each of the councils. It is important to note that your current terms & conditions are protected and cannot be changed as a result of transferring to the new council.

We want the terms & conditions of the new North Yorkshire Council to be the best around so the new Council can become a beacon of best practice and lead the way in local government.

One area that we are focussing on at the moment is the way NYCC deals with incremental pay progression. With the only exception being Selby District Council, all the current councils offer staff incremental pay progression in one form or another. This is where you progress through a pay band over a number of years.

At the district/borough councils this is generally automatic, but can be held back if there have been performance issues.

At NYCC the criteria is much tougher, and around 10% of staff have an increment withheld or removed each year. Almost all of these are due to sickness absence.

Currently at NYCC, an increment is withheld or



withdrawn if an employee has more than 7 days' sickness absence in the previous 12 months. Exceptions are made where, for example, the employee has had less than 21 days absence in the previous 3 years.

We think that this could discriminate against members on the grounds of sex, age, disability (including long-term health conditions) and even race.

We know that our members at the district and borough councils would not voluntarily move on to a contract where they could lose an increment if they have a period of sickness absence. We think the NYCC Increment Policy, if it is applied to the new council will be a barrier to staff wanting to move on to the new terms and conditions, so we are asking NYCC to remove sickness absence from their Increment Policy.

Use your vote: internal UNISON elections

Every two years, as UNISON members we all get the chance to elect representatives to the Local Government Service Group Executive.

This is the body that oversees the work of UNISON in local government, including national negotiations on pay and conditions.

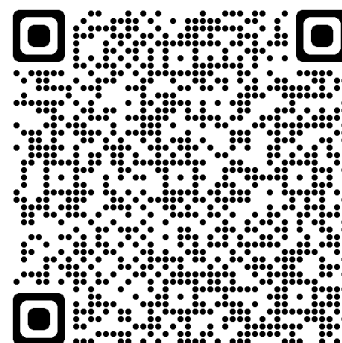
These are important elections and all local government members are encouraged to use their vote.

Ballot papers are being sent out now by post and

email, so please look out for yours and return your vote no later than 25 May.

Only local government members who were fully paid up on 28 January are eligible to vote. If you don't receive your ballot paper by 5 May please call the ballot helpline on 0800 0857 857.

You can find out more by scanning the QR code.



TUPE: a reminder!

Some of our members will be familiar with TUPE, especially those who have been transferred in/out of their employer, such as when services are out-sourced or contracts change hands.

Either way in the coming months we will all become very familiar with TUPE, so we will keep reminding you of the basics and answering any questions.

TUPE is basically a law that protects your terms and conditions. It means that if your job moves from one employer to another, your pay, terms and conditions are protected and cannot be changed as a result of the transfer to your new employer.

In terms of LGR, all staff will transfer to the new council on their current pay, terms and conditions. These cannot be changed as a result of the transfer.

It doesn't matter if you work for a district/borough council or if you work for NYCC; your current pay, terms and conditions will be protected.

The new council will need to have its own set of terms and conditions, and we are currently involved in negotiations about what these will look like. As NYCC is a continuing council it is likely that the new terms and conditions will be similar to the current NYCC terms; but we are trying to level-up and get the best from across the councils into the new terms and conditions.

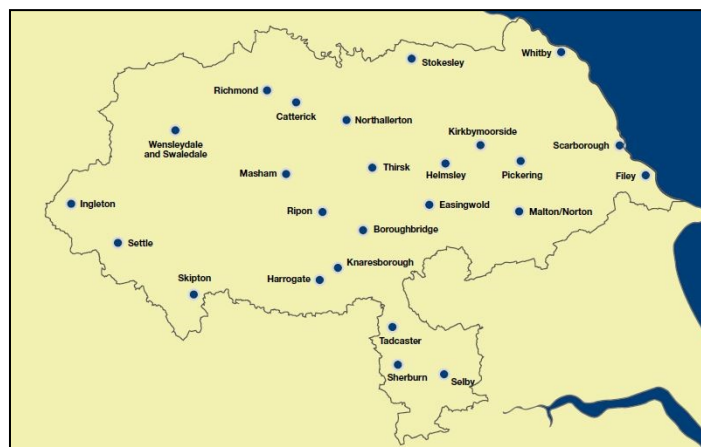
When we transfer to the new council, staff will have the option to remain on the terms and conditions that they bring with them from their current council OR choose to move onto the new terms and conditions. This will be a choice for you and you cannot be forced to switch. As your union we will be able to help and advise you on your options when we reach that point.

The key message for now is that TUPE protects your current pay, terms and conditions. Nothing will change unless you want it to and it has been negotiated through UNISON.

Your UNISON branch....

The joint branch secretaries have agreed that the existing branch structure will remain in place until after the new Council is up and running next year. We feel it is important that you continue to have support from your local branch, local unions reps and branch officers throughout the transition to the new North Yorkshire Council.

Once the new council is up and running, the branches will merge but that is not expected to happen formally until 1 January 2024.



What happens next?

Elections! That is what happens next: on Thursday 5 May voters across North Yorkshire will elect 90 councillors in 89 new wards across the county.

These councillors will serve their first year as the final councillors for the current County Council and will then become councillors for the new North Yorkshire Council.



These local elections are really important, and we are urging our members to use their vote on Thursday 5 May (or now, if you have a postal vote) to elect councillors who will put public service and local government workers first.

The new councillors will be responsible for setting up the new Executive (or Cabinet). The new Executive will set the political direction and priorities for the new North Yorkshire Council, as well as appoint the new Chief Executive.

You can find out more about the local elections in North Yorkshire at:

www.northyorks.gov.uk/new-council-elections

Make sure your voice is heard by using your vote on Thursday 5 May.

Which branch?

Craven District Council

Craven branch
Neil Braham
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Hambleton District Council

North Yorkshire branch
Wendy Nichols, 01609 532317
unison@northyorks.gov.uk

Harrogate Borough Council

Harrogate branch
David Houlgate, 01423 556109
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North Yorkshire County Council

North Yorkshire branch
Wendy Nichols, 01609 532317
unison@northyorks.gov.uk

Richmondshire District Council

North Yorkshire branch
Wendy Nichols, 01609 532317
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Ryedale District Council

Ryedale branch
Serena Williams, 01653 600666
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Scarborough Borough Council

Scarborough branch
Andy Adamson, 01723 232355
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Selby District Council

North Yorkshire branch
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