

New Council takes shape

Elections took place last month which saw the 90 new councillors elected to North Yorkshire County Council, representing 89 new wards/divisions.

The new councillors will serve one year as the final councillors for NYCC and then serve a four-year term as the first councillors for the new unitary North Yorkshire Council. Elections will then be held every four years, so the next elections will be in May 2027, then 2031 and 2035.

The results saw a big loss in seats for the Conservatives, who will continue to control the council but with a much reduced majority. Based on the new wards, the Conservatives lost 21 seats, winning 47 out of the 90. The full results were:

Conservatives	47 seats (down 21)
Independents	13 seats (down 2)
Labour	12 seats (up 8)
LibDems	12 seats (up 9)
Green	5 seats (up 5)
Liberal	1 seat (up 1)

The LibDems picked up a large number of seats in Harrogate and Knaresborough, whereas Labour picked up seats in Selby, Scarborough and Whitby. Labour missed out

on two seats in Skipton; one by only 20 votes and the other after they finished in a tie and had to draw lots.

We welcome the results and we believe that a more politically balanced council will enhance scrutiny and accountability. A much larger opposition means we will have more opportunities to make sure our key aims for LGR are delivered upon by the politicians and senior leaders.



The new NYCC Executive (pictured above) is made up of 10 councillors from the Conservative group. The Leader remains Councillor Carl Les, with whom we have always had a good working relationship with.

We are disappointed that there are so few women councillors going into the new Council. Only 25% of councillors are women and there are only 2 women on the Executive out of 10 places.

LGR: Your questions answered

Nearly 14,000 staff from across all the councils attended the most recent LGR webinar which was presented by Richard Flinton, NYCC Chief Executive.

UNISON officers from all the branches also attended so we were able to see the questions being asked. It was great to see so many questions, and we noted that there were some common themes, and also some concerns that staff felt only 'easy' questions were answered. We have raised these concerns already with management and asked them to look at a better way to make sure the most commonly asked questions are answered. In the meantime, we have picked out some of the common issues here.

Q. Is this a takeover by NYCC?

We don't think it is, but we share the concerns of members that it might be starting to feel that way. We have been assured by senior management that it is not, and that they support our view that we need to be 'safe and legal' on day one, but also that we should be looking to take the best of what already exists regardless of which council it comes from.

Q. How long does TUPE protect our terms and

conditions?

The TUPE legislation means that your terms and conditions are, technically, protected forever. The protection does not expire. What the law actually says is that your terms and conditions cannot be changed as a result of the transfer without either your agreement or a collective agreement with UNISON. The confusion sometimes arises because terms and conditions can be changed post-transfer if the reason is not related to the transfer (i.e. to cut costs, adapt to changes in the needs of the service, etc).

Q. Will the NYCC Increment Policy apply to everyone?

We covered the NYCC Increment Policy and our concerns in the last newsletter. We are currently negotiating with NYCC to change the policy for NYCC staff. Hopefully we will be successful and be able to negotiate a better, fairer policy. However, whatever the outcome of our negotiations staff who transfer from the district and borough councils will have the choice whether to move over to NYCC terms and conditions. If this policy does not change we will probably advise our members not to move onto NYCC terms.

Recruit a friend and win!

The joint UNISON branches have agreed to offer one 'recruit a friend' promotion across North Yorkshire. LGR means it has never been more important that as many colleagues as possible are in UNISON. It's not just the individual protection of being in a trade union, but we need to make sure our collective voice is representative of the whole workforce across all our councils, because that makes our voice the strongest and most legitimate voice to fight for the best possible pay, terms and conditions.

For every new member you recruit we will send you a £20 shopping voucher and enter your name into a prize draw with a £100 monthly prize. In addition, we will enter all names into an end-of-year prize draw with prizes of £500, £250 and £100. Full details on page 3.

If you recruit a new member please EITHER let your own branch secretary know (contact details on page 4) or email the North Yorkshire branch at unison@northyorks.gov.uk.



Joint North Yorkshire branches



£500, £250, £125 prize draw

£20 shopping voucher

£100 monthly prize draw

The joint North Yorkshire local government branches have come together to run a 'recruit a friend' campaign to encourage as many colleagues as possible to join UNISON before the councils merge in April 2023.

For every new member you recruit we will send you a £20 shopping voucher and add your name to the prize draws. Each month there will be a prize draw for £100 for those recruiters that month, and at the end of the year everyone will enter the big draw with prizes of £500, £250 and £125.

Your colleagues can join online now: **join.unison.org.uk**

To enter, all you need to do is encourage your colleagues to join UNISON. Just email the North Yorkshire branch office to let us know who you have recruited, we will check that they have joined and send you your voucher and enter your name into the prize draws.

If you need application forms where you work please contact us or your local rep.

Cost of living crisis

We know that all our members are feeling the effect of the cost of living crisis at the moment. Price rises are now affecting everyone, not just those on low incomes or pensioners or those in receipt of social security.

With the so-called energy 'price cap' set to rise to nearly £3,000 a year from the autumn, 12 million households are expected to be drawn into official 'fuel poverty'. An average family with two children has already seen the cost of the goods and services they need each month increase by a massive £400 per month.

Nationally, UNISON is continuing to lobby the government and employer organisations to do more. We know that our local council employers are limited in what they can do without additional government funding but we are pleased to announce that North Yorkshire County Council has joined Scarborough and Harrogate Borough Councils in agreeing to pay the voluntary 'real Living Wage' for this year, which is currently £9.90



an hour. Staff at NYCC on Grades A, B and C (spinal points 1, 2 and 3) will see an immediate increase in their wage which will be back dated to 1 April 2022.

This is very welcome, but we know that it only helps some of our members, so our efforts are now also focussed on pay negotiations for the 2022 pay award and on holding the government to account. It is also more important than ever that we secure an attractive package of pay, terms and conditions for the new North Yorkshire Council.

Which branch?

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