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# Welcome to our Annual Report

We had an extremely exciting year in Craven in 2014-15 thanks to the arrival of the Tour de France in our beautiful district.

This was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the very best of our communities and countryside and we were determined to make the most of it.

The Tour was a wonderful event and brought thousands of people to the district; its legacy lives on and we look forward to welcoming the Tour de Yorkshire in 2016, with the finish of the first stage in Settle.

We also started work to transform Skipton Town Hall into a sustainable and vibrant community venue. The Town Hall is a great asset to Craven and our ultimate aim is to make the building financially self-sustaining.

Alongside this, we have also developed exciting plans for Craven Museum and Gallery, with work progressing to make it a state-of-the-art facility, attracting more visitors to the district. We prepared a successful Heritage Lottery Foundation bid and received £90,000 from the Arts Council.

This year the council has been instrumental in helping to deliver Superfast Broadband to our communities across the district; we have also helped a number of companies to access funds to pay for the service, boosting our local economy.

Working together with the Canal and River Trust, we have secured grant funding of £450,000 to improve the towpath between Skipton and Bradley, and working with the Environment Agency we secured £1.2million to enable construction of the Skipton Flood Alleviation Scheme to go ahead.

Supporting communities is at the heart of what we do and our Community Champions Awards are going from strength to strength, while many local groups have been helped by our grant awards.

We continue to successfully manage budget cuts by finding significant savings and generating additional income. This is crucial due to reductions in Government grants – local government faces tough challenges over the next few years but we are well placed to meet those challenges.



Paul Shevlin
Chief Executive



Councillor
Richard Foster
Leader

This Annual Report gives you a snapshot of what we provide to our communities for just £2.93 a week per resident.





# Highlights of the year:

# April

### • Skipton Triathlon

Aireville Park played host to 700 triathletes who took part in the largest pool-based triathlon in the north of England.

### Save Our Skatepark

A group of local young riders launched a fundraising campaign to raise £100,000 of funding for the rebuild of the Skatepark in Aireville Park, Skipton – with support from Craven District Council, Craven Youth Council and Friends of Aireville Park.

### • Get on your bike

Craven District Council launched a series of free recreational ride guides for the Craven area.

### Town Hall gets ready to shine

Work began to repair and decorate the majority of the windows of Skipton Town Hall.

### • First World War remembered

The 'Craven and the First World War' project received an £87,000 Heritage Lottery Grant to mark one hundred years since the outbreak of the First World War.



# May

### Big Night Out' in Skipton

Skipton held its first 'Big Night Out' featuring performers, musicians and puppets, following the success of towns and cities across the UK in celebrating 'Museums at Night' weekends in a big way.

### • Tour de France excitement builds

A Tour de France themed exhibition was unveiled at Belle Vue Square in Skipton and Craven District Council and North Yorkshire County Council deployed a team of road cleaners to ensure the route would be in immaculate condition. School children were invited to design flags.

### Election time

Local council elections and European Parliamentary Elections took place on May 22, 2014.







## July

### Tour de France zooms through Craven!

Skipton staged Le Grand Debaaaart on July 5 and 6 - a weekend of festivities for all the family as the Tour de France came to town. Communities across Craven celebrated the event. 2.3m people watched the two Yorkshire stages of the Grand Depart.

### Boost for retailers

Craven District Council and Vantage 360 teamed up to launch the Online Retail Business Growth Programme.

- Superfast Broadband spreads
   High-speed fibre broadband became
   available in Horton in Ribblesdale.
- Digging up the past
   Craven Museum & Gallery celebrated the Festival of Archaeology with two free special events.

## September

Albion Place scoops top award
 Albion Place in Skipton was recognised as the best property development in Yorkshire over the previous 12 months, taking the top prize at Insider's Yorkshire Property Industry Awards.

### Make it Count

Craven District Council launched its budget consultation.

### • Local Plan feedback

Residents, businesses, local groups and other agencies were asked for feedback on the latest draft of the Local Plan.

## August

## Beware of dodgy barbecues

Craven District Council and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) released advice to make the August bank holiday a sizzling and safe success.

## New Monitoring Officer appointed

The Council appointed a new monitoring officer and corporate legal advisor.

### Community projects receive cash

Craven District Council awarded funding to five community groups to help them deliver projects designed to benefit local residents - Hellifield Parish Council for its play area, Gargrave Parish Council to clean its war memorial, Skipton Music, Settle Stories and the Fallfest event in Glusburn.

### Skipton parkrun celebrates 1st birthday

Skipton parkrun celebrated its first birthday. No less than 1,232 people had taken part in at least one of the free, weekly 5k timed runs in Aireville Park. Together, they had run 4,081 times and clocked up a total distance of 20,405 kilometres.







Save Skipton Skatepark Campaign (SSSC). With this donation, the campaign for a new



## December

 Tour de France auction raises nearly £2,000

Craven District Council's auction of Tour de France memorabilia attracted nearly 100 bids and raised nearly £2,000 in pledges for the Chairman of the Council's charity, Lupus UK.

 Major building work starts at Skipton Town Hall

Craven Museum & Gallery and the main hall in Skipton Town Hall closed for major refurbishment to take place.

 Excellent planning application performance

Planning applications performance at Craven District Council surpassed national performance targets and national averages.

 Longest serving employees honoured Staff members who had been working at Craven District Council for 20 years or more received a special thank you.





# February

### Craven announces a further Council Tax freeze

Craven District Council confirmed a freeze on its Council Tax at £152.21 (band D) for a fifth successive year.

### Craven District Council recognised as a good employer

Craven District Council successfully retained the Investors in People Standard and a workplace staff survey revealed that the Council is a 'good' place to work.

### Canal path triumph

A £450,000 grant to upgrade the canal towpath near Skipton was welcomed by Craven District Council, the Canal & River Trust, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

## March

### Craven Museum & Gallery looks to the future

Craven Museum & Gallery is set to become an indispensable community focal point, with a new £90,000 grant from the Arts Council and plans for a £2 million project.

### Apprentice match-making

The council hosted an Apprenticeships Job Fair.

### • Bin collection changes

Craven District Council began a consultation with residents in Ingleton and Cowling, the first to be affected by a new Bin Collection Point Policy.

### Craven raises flag for Commonwealth

Children from five Skipton primary schools raised the flag for the Commonwealth as part of a nationwide event.





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# Our Council Priorities: How we measure up

The Council's vision is for Craven to be a prosperous place with strong, vibrant and diverse communities.

To help us achieve this we have set ourselves four priorities:

- Enterprising Craven
- Working with Communities
- Greener Craven
- Financial Resilience

# **Working With Communities**

2014/15 was a fantastic year for our communities and we were proud to be able to help celebrate Craven with the magnificent Tour de France.

As the world's greatest cycling race passed through Skipton and up through the Dales we hosted Le Grand Debaaaart – an official Tour de France Spectator Hub with a weekend of festivities for all the family.

Big screens, live music, BMX stunts, bike simulators and movie screenings kept the huge crowds entertained as 20,000 people poured into Skipton.

We also launched a number of cycling events to capitalise on the excitement of the Tour - over 700 cyclists came to Skipton to take part in the inaugural Le Petit Depart cycling sportive, there were free Sky Rides and a series of free recreational ride guides were produced for the Craven area.

The Tour wasn't the only success in terms of our work with communities – the Community Champions Awards went from strength to strength, highlighting some wonderful examples of voluntary work that goes on within our communities.

We worked with Craven Youth Council as they launched a bid for a new skatepark in Aireville Park, with a £100,000 fundraising campaign which ultimately proved to be successful.

During 2014/15, 17 groups were awarded Community Grants totalling £16,000. Projects to receive funding ranged from local junior sports clubs to local festival and community defibrillator projects. On average CDC grant funding made up 5.3% of the total costs for each project.

This means that each £1 of grant funding awarded by Craven District Council was matched by £18.84 of funding from other sources bringing in additional funding of £301,440 to support community projects in Craven.



# **Enterprising Craven**

Phase 1 of the **Superfast North Yorkshire** project was completed, improving the quality of broadband provision to 23,000 premises across the district. Over 200 businesses from across Craven received support from specialist advisors through the Superfast Business Support Programme. Three cabinets in Carleton-in-Craven, Skipton North and Middletown were enabled to provide access to superfast broadband to a further 1,151 premises. The council funded this work (£91,875) from its New Homes Bonus receipts. The Superfast Connected Craven scheme allowed businesses to claim vouchers worth £3,000 towards superfast broadband.

Working with the Canal and River Trust, the council secured grant funding of £450,000 from the Department of Transport to improve the towpath between Skipton to Bradley.

Working with the Environment Agency, the council secured the gap funding (£1.2million) needed to enable construction of the **Skipton Flood Alleviation Scheme** to happen. The scheme, costing £13.8million, will reduce the risk of flooding to more than 500 homes and businesses in the town.

We helped 124 businesses to improve their performance through schemes funded by the council such as the Online Retail Growth programme, Craven Full Circle programme and the Airedale and Snaygill Business Collaboration Network. Action Plans were developed for Ingleton and Crosshills – a package of co-ordinated projects designed to improve the trading environment.

The council led on the development of the business growth priority for the new **Yorkshire Dales LEADER programme**, which will provide £2.23 million of investment for the Yorkshire Dales, including the whole of Craven District.

We increased the number of people using the services provided by the **Tourist Information Centre** in **Settle**, by 2.6% (from 25,815 users in 2013/14 to 27,624 users). The amount of income generated from sales increased by 20% compared to the 2013/14 financial year. During 2014, the value of earnings from visitor expenditure for the district rose by 4.4% compared to 2013 - £304million compared to £291 million in 2013. The number of visitor days increased by 1.4% from 6.9million in 2013 to 7million in 2014.

The council helped groups to secure funding of £140,391 from the Arts Council – these included established events such as Grassington Festival and Skipton International Puppet Festival and new events such as the Rock Camp for Girls. It is estimated that the creative sector together with the events and festivals contribute approximately £20million annually to the local economy through direct sales and increased overnight stays.



# Greener Craven

We have committed to reducing carbon emissions both within Craven District Council and throughout the Craven district as a whole.

This year we carried out a major project to replace the ancient, inefficient boiler in Skipton Town Hall, improving the energy efficiency of the building.

We encouraged residents to take part in the "Big Tidy Up", providing litter pickers, bags and waste collection to any local groups that wanted to get involved.

We gave recycling a boost, running a competition asking primary schoolchildren to create posters. The winning picture was displayed on a recycling collection vehicle, helping to promote the importance of recycling.

Household recycling levels achieved in Craven were 42.1 per cent. The commercial recycling customer base increased from 177 to 365.





## **Financial Resilience**

During 2014/15 the council further developed its long term and medium term financial planning to enable indicative budgets for 2016/17 and 2017/18 as well as the detailed budget for 2015/16.

The council continued with its work on projects within the income and savings plan and by 31 March 2015 had delivered £299k. Whilst there is still a substantial amount of work to do to ensure that the council can still finance the services it provides to the residents and business of the Craven area there are currently projects to the value of £334k identified for delivery by 2019/20.

The council has embraced the Government's transparency agenda initiative and publishes the required data on its website.

During 2014/15 the council began its ambitious project to restore Skipton Town Hall as a sustainable and vibrant community venue. Restoration work started to enable parts of the building to be leased to other organisations and business. By the end of March the council was finalising its bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to assist with the next phase of the project.





# Services we provide

Think Craven District Council is all about the bins? Think again...

# Craven Pool and Fitness Centre

- No of visitors to the facility: 220,000 visits
- Turnover: £1.2m
- No of children receiving swimming lessons: 1,000
- Clubs operating from the facility include: Skipton Swim Club

Craven Energy
Skipton Karate Kids
Skipton Aikido
Skipton Running Club

- 2,550 hours of exercise classes from spinning to body pump to Zumba
- No. of GP referrals per year: 400 (risen from 80 in the past three years)
- Running cost: In the run up to its 10th anniversary since opening in 2003, Craven Pool managed to cut its running costs by 48% saving an average of £2.4m
- This was the pool's second year running operating at an operational profit.

## **Customer Services**

Customer Services consist of a Customer Liaison Officer, a Verification Officer, and nine Customer Advisors who take it in turns to work on the telephones and in reception.

Between the week commencing April 7, 2014 and March 31, 2015, the team dealt with 31,402 visitors in reception.

Between September 2014 and March 2015, a total of 35,257 calls came in to the Customer Services queue and of these, 30,078 were handled. A total of 2,353 calls came into the Waste queue and of these, 2,132 were handled.

A member of the team also responds to the Contact Us/Customer Services emails on a daily basis, and two members of staff respond to the Tell Us Once cases that arise from the Registrars' Death appointments. Numbers vary but we usually receive at least two per day.





# Craven Museum and Gallery

### **Exhibitions held:**

- Smart Gallery (3 Feb to 26 May 2014) 16,879 visitors
- Yorkshire Gold (26 March to 14 July 2014)
- Bikes, Legs, Action (13 June to 20 Sep 2014) 22,392 visitors

Total number of visitors to the museum 1 April 2014 – 13 October 2014 (closed from 13 October 2014 until 30 April 2015: 48,573 visitors

# Family fun days:

- Skipton's Big Night Out
- Festival of British Archaeology
- Make it Wednesday
- The Big Draw
- Shakespeare Week
- Craven Remembers event at Skipton Library





# Other community events

Gallery tour

# External funding received 2014/15: £180,350

- Heritage Lottery Fund 'Craven and the First World War' project £87,000
- Arts Council England Museum Resilience fund 'Museum: Indispensable' £90,200
- Museum Development Yorkshire 'Shelf Life', £800 to improve storage at museum
- Museum Development Yorkshire 'Focus Craven', £2350 to fund two Curatorial Interns

# The Shakespeare First Folio on permanent display

The Shakespeare First Folio is thought of as the most important book in English literature containing the collected plays of the world's greatest playwright. Without it, 18 of Shakespeare's plays would not be known today including Macbeth and As You Like It. Skipton's First Folio is one of only four that are currently on permanent display in the world.



# **Planning**

We dealt with a total of 643 planning applications in 2014-15 and exceeded national targets in all areas.

	Performance	Target	
Majors	<b>91%</b> (30 out of 33)	60% National Target	This is the number of applications determined within the 13 or 16 week target, or within an extended timescale that has been agreed with the applicant.
Minors	<b>77%</b> (176 out of 228)	65%	This is the number of applications determined within an 8 week target
Others	<b>91%</b> (349 out of 382)	80%	This is the number of applications determined within an 8 week target

## Revenues and Benefits

Council Tax collection rates for 2014/15 - 98.70%

Business Rates collection rates for 2014/15 – 98.6%

Benefit Fraud Prosecutions – 8 prosecutions as a result of £87,365.80 in overpaid Housing and Council Tax Benefit.

There were a total of 17 sanctions where fraud has been proved, as a result of a total of £110,311.27 of overpaid Housing and Council Tax Benefit. Alongside recovering Housing Benefit overpayments and a month's work on the New Homes Bonus, this has boosted the Benefits and Revenue income.

2013 brought in many changes – Council Tax Support, benefit cap and social sector room restrictions which continued to have a big impact on the service and many Craven residents in 2014. It is anticipated that further welfare reforms will continue in 2015/16.

# **Housing Options**

The Housing Options Service provides the council's statutory services in relation to homelessness and housing advice. The number of households accessing the service has remained high with 333 approaching in 2014/15. The majority of approaches relate to issues around relationship and family breakdown (26%) and issues regarding rented accommodation (20%). As anticipated there has been an increase in the numbers approaching due to welfare reform, although this has not been to the level initially predicted, as many of the effects have been mitigated by additional financial support provided by central government.





# Craven Community Safety Partnership

Safer Craven works to protect vulnerable people, improve quality of life in the district, and reduce crime.

There were a number of priority areas in 2014-15 including domestic abuse, children and young people, safer roads, targeting crime hotspots, developing stronger families, rural and cross-border crime, and house burglary.

Financial support for community safety has significantly reduced in recent years. In Craven we will continue to help fund projects with the aim of investing in evidence-based initiatives at a community level which can achieve positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

In Craven, due to the low crime levels, there will still be a need to maintain the safe communities we have.





### Crematorium

The Council is responsible for the upkeep and running of Skipton Crematorium, located on Carleton Road, and the on-site multi denominational chapel with seating for up to 60 people. The council is also responsible for Waltonwrays Cemetery and Ingleton Cemetery, and maintains the closed churchyards at St Andrew's Church in Kildwick and St Mary's Church in Ingleton.

There are three full-time, two part-time and one monthly retained member of staff.

Skipton Crematorium carried out 1,040 cremations in 2014-15, the second highest number on record. The cremation fee was £595, 200th lowest out of 271 in the country. Waltonwrays carried out 16 burials and Ingleton carried out six.

Skipton Crematorium can now offer a wider music choice as well as secure webcasts of funeral proceedings.

Craven District Council has installed a new music system that allows funeral directors to order service music online. The potential to record webcasts for funerals has also been introduced to give relatives who are unable to attend the funeral the opportunity to watch the service on their PC via a secure network. A DVD of the service can also be provided on request.



## **Environmental Health**

- We undertook more than 285 plus 311 back log food safety inspections and investigated complaints about food and food premises.
- There were no outbreaks of food borne disease in Craven last year.
- More than 47 risk assessments were carried out on private water supplies which serve more than 22% of the population of Craven along with routine sampling. 48% of these samples contained unacceptable levels of bacteria.
- We issued 62 new personal licences authorising people to sell alcohol, 292
   Temporary Event Notices involving the sale of alcohol and maintained licences and records for nearly 300 hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, their operators and drivers.
- We supported all the larger festivals held in Craven this year.
- We maintained stores of sandbags at many of our rural villages for flood prevention and alleviation.
- We regularly inspect and clear debris from 35 screens to prevent storm/ floodwater flooding people's homes.
- We were consulted on nearly 556 planning applications.

# ...and yes, the bins!

We provide a fortnightly refuse collection for all domestic properties in Craven. In addition, we also provide kerbside collections of paper and cardboard which is collected on alternate weeks to the refuse collection. Glass, cans and plastic bottles are collected every four weeks and garden waste is collected on a fortnightly basis. We also provide a number of local recycling bring sites for residents across the district. These sites accept a wider range of materials including, liquid food and drink cartons (tetra pak type cartons) and textiles.

# Street Cleansing:

- Verge patrols keep 1,717km of grass verges free of litter every year.
- No of kilometers of street cleaned

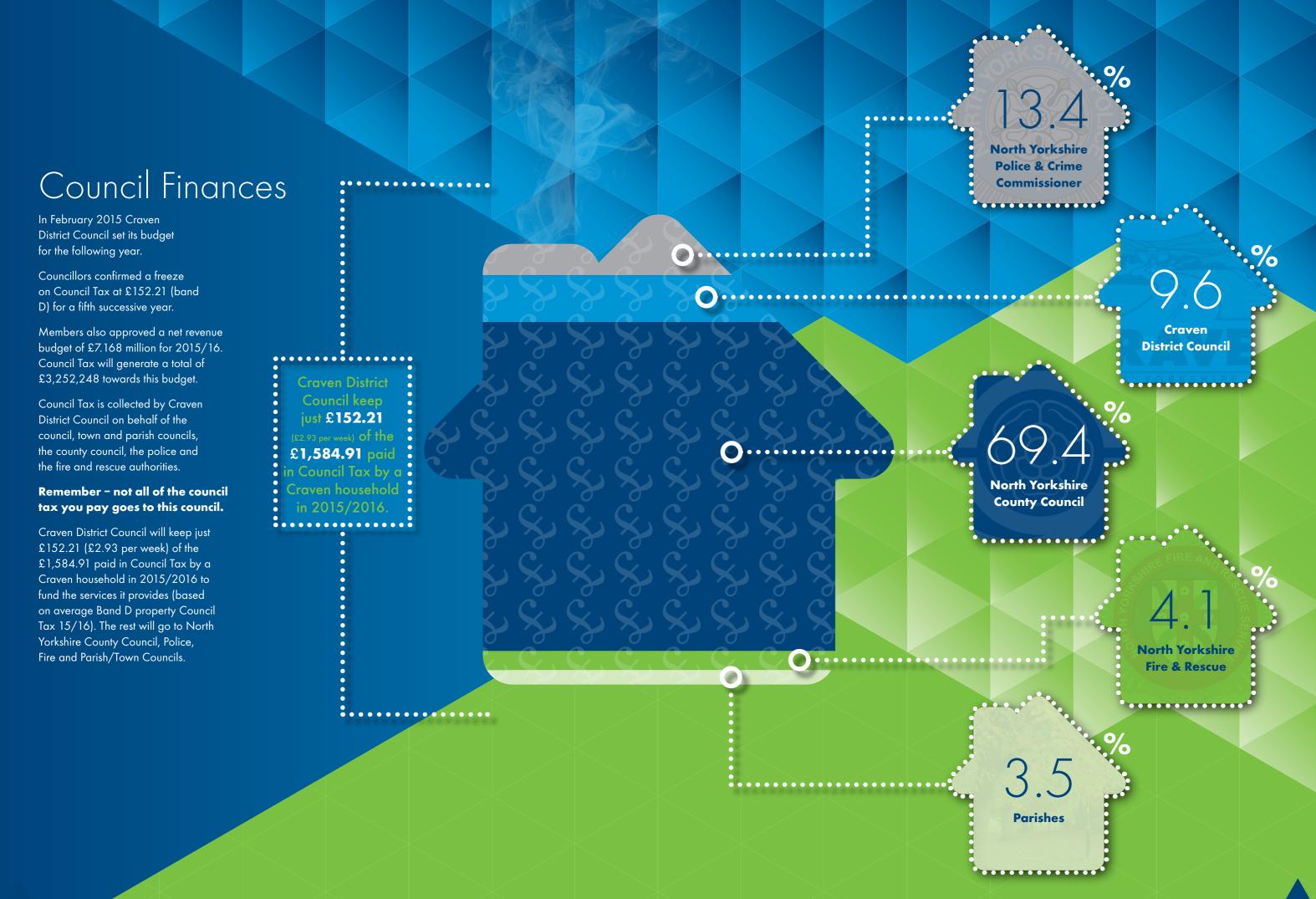
   road channels swept 11,636km.

   Footpaths swept 5,469 km.

On top of this, we empty 317 litter bins and 201 dog bins on varying frequencies dependent on their usage. We have nine Street Cleansing employees that keep all 550 square miles of the district clean.













# Council finances

# The challenge

Government grants, which used to make up a significant proportion of our income, have been cut and continue to be reduced. There is uncertainty about the level of cuts the Council will face going forward and we will be told more by Central Government over the next few months, but we are expecting these cuts to be between 25% to 45% over the next few years up to 2019/20.

This means we will need to save between £497,000 and £754,000 during the four years from 2016/17 to 2019/20. £230,000 to £266,000 of this will need to be saved in our 2016/17 budget.

Despite Government funding cuts we still aim to provide top quality services for the people of Craven.

Some of our services are statutory – we have to provide them.

These include services such as environmental health, planning services, taxi licensing, food premise inspections, cleaning streets and collecting household waste and recycling.

Other services are discretionary – we choose to provide them.







These include Aireville Park in Skipton, Craven Pool and Fitness Centre, and Craven Museum & Gallery.

Some of our services generate significant income for the council which helps to reduce the cost of providing them. These include car parking, planning & building control services, bereavement services, garden waste collections and Craven Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre.

North Yorkshire County Council provides other services which include education, social services, libraries, highways and transport.

# We listen to your views

Every year we hold a budget consultation asking residents questions about their priorities for spending over the next year. The latest budget consultation ended on November 30. The council's next budget will be set in February 2016.

### CRAYEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE COSTS - INCLUDES AUDIT FEES, INSURANCE FEES AND BANK CHARGES	0.50
ASSETS AND PROJECTS - MANAGEMENT & RUNNING COSTS OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND AND BUILDINGS INCLUDING BELLE VUE SQUARE, SKIPTON TOWN HALL, AIREVILLE PARK, AMENITY AREAS, PUBLIC CONVENIENCES AND PRIVATE GARAGES	0.35
SENIOR MANAGEMENT COSTS AND CENTRAL BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES	0.33
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES - INCLUDES MANAGING ELECTIONS AND	0.31
COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS FINANCIAL SERVICES - INCLUDES FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCTION OF OUR STATUTORY ACCOUNTS	0.25
REFUSE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING	0.25
REVENUES & BENEFITS AND CUSTOMER SERVICES	
INFORMATION SERVICES - ENSURING THE ONGOING AVAILABILITY, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF COUNCIL IT SYSTEMS AND TELEPHONY INFRASTRUCTURE	0.22
HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	0.19
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES INCLUDES HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PREMISES LICENSING	0.19
STREET CLEANSING	0.15
PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL	0.14
SERVICES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - INCLUDES SUPPORTING PROJECTS ACROSS THE DISTRICT TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH SUCH AS RURAL BROADBAND PROJECTS	0.14
CRAYEN MUSEUM & GALLERY, ARTS DEVELOPMENT, SUPPORT FOR TOURISM AND SKIPTON & SETTLE TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES	0.13
PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS - INCLUDES WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY GRANTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL ORGANISATIONS	0.12
HUMAN RESOURCES - INCLUDES PERSONNEL SUPPORT, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT COSTS, AND HEALTH AND	0.08
SAFETY CRAYEN SHIMMING POOL AND FITNESS CENTRE, SKIPTON	0.01
BEREAVEMENT SERVICES (GENERATE INCOME)	-0.13
CAR PARKING (GENERATE INCOME)	-0.52
TOTAL COST TO YOU PER MEEK	2.93



# So where exactly does your money go?

This till receipt provides more detail on each area of spending. It shows how your £2.93 a week in Council Tax is actually divided up – figures are based on an average Band D property.

# Performing for you

If you would like to get in touch, please contact Craven District Council at:

1 BELLE VUE SQUARE Broughton Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 1FJ

9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 4.30pm Friday

Telephone: **01756 700600** 

Emergency out of hours contact number: 01653 699 392

Email: contactus@cravendc.gov.uk Website: www.cravendc.gov.uk

