

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2012.

Hambleton District Council has attracted much press attention over the last few weeks as a result of restructuring of senior staff and the reorganisation of shared service arrangements with Richmondshire District Council. Everything has been done with resident's best interest in mind. I believe Hambleton council tax payers would want their money spent in Hambleton on Hambleton issues and not elsewhere.

The press has described us as a "Cash strapped Council". This is totally untrue. Our accounts are available for all to see on the website. We do not borrow a penny. There are not many businesses with a turnover of our size that does not have an overdraft. Again, we have set the third lowest Council tax of the 201 shire councils in the country. The restructuring of the senior management team is financed from savings made in April when 3 senior managers took early retirement. Reshaping of services will be met from existing budgets. Hambleton District Council is financially sound.

The announcement that we will be allocating £100k in an initiative to get young people into work is a way for us to return to the tax payer savings we have made from our continued efforts to drive down costs. Not only will this bring around 60 young people into work, at present there are approximately 250 young people aged between 18 and 24 years old registered as unemployed in Hambleton, it will also help boost the local economy. The money will be available to all businesses in Hambleton but in particular to the small businessman who needs encouragement to take on extra staff whilst these difficult economic conditions exist. This package is aimed only at Hambleton residents. In addition to this, further announcements will shortly be made for other schemes which will be returning savings to the residents.

Far from being "cash strapped" Hambleton District Council is an example of how a modern and successful local authority can help a community during problematical times.

This statement was written on 19/06/12