

Leader of the Council, Cllr Claire Douglas

Change and Continuity

Recent months have been a combination of celebration of the continuity of our proud civic history, dating back to the thirteenth century, with Mayor making taking place in May, and the beginning of change. The Right Honourable Cllr Martin Rowley BEM is now confirmed as the 70th Lord Mayor of York and Paul Doughty as Sheriff of York. I would like to welcome them into their roles and wish them all the best for the civic year ahead. They have been tremendously active already and I've enjoyed visiting a number of community and civic events alongside them.

I'd also like to thank Cllr Margaret Wells and Fiona Fitzpatrick for their term as the 69th Lord Mayor and Sheriff of York. They attended over 450 events across and city and represented York and our strong civic traditions to many people of all ages who had never thought they would be deemed important enough to meet our civic party. They truly showed the best of York and will be missed in their roles.

Now I shift to talking of change. Ian Floyd has recently announced his retirement from the post of Chief Operating Officer of the Council, effective as of Easter 2026. Ian has dedicated the last 17 years of his working life to York, including as Head of Paid Service since 2019. He has provided calm, consistent and visionary leadership through periods of uncertainty and change. His commitment to public service, his support for staff, and his passion for the city have made a lasting impact. I thank him sincerely for his dedication and service.

We will now begin the process of recruiting a new lead officer for the Council. Ian will be in post to manage the hand over process to ensure a smooth transition and business continuity for our fantastic city. I will keep you updated as this process progresses.

Our City, Our Community

I have attended and spoken at a range of important community, city, national and international events over the period since our last Full Council meeting in March. These have ranged from volunteering at the much loved Foss Fairy Trail, in my ward Heworth, through to the Great Yorkshire Show, UKREiiF, York Community Fund celebration, speaking at the 'Peace in Europe in 2025' conference hosted by our fantastic twin city Dijon, France and a range of military events. These include: York Armed Forces Covenant Executive and Forum. Victory in Europe, VE Day 80th Anniversary commemoration wreath laying. Wreath laying at Korean War Memorial in Memorial Gardens alongside the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the UK and local military representatives.

Armed Forces Week and Day events in June and early July and the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, RFCA Employers event.

I have also welcomed and progressed meetings with representatives for the Ukrainian Embassy in the UK, the Mayor of Lviv, Ukraine and his office to discuss partnering and a sistership relationship and initiated bringing together of a range of amazing and tremendously dedicated people and organisations from across our city carrying out humanitarian work in Ukraine to form a York Ukraine Support network. This is an evolving and fledgling grouping and I would be more than happy to hear from anyone in the city who is providing humanitarian support or has links to Ukraine and is interested in getting involved with the network.

I would finally like to show my ongoing, continued and unerring support for communities across our city who have experienced the recently reported, totally unacceptable and abhorrent race hate crimes. I am saddened to say that the incidence of race hate crime is on the increase in our City of Sanctuary and of Human Rights. This is totally unacceptable, and I will continue to work with the communities most affected by these crimes and their perpetrators. We must continue to build a city where every man, woman and child is safe, feels safe, is secure and valued. I and I hope you, as residents of communities of all forms across our amazing city, will accept nothing less.

Delivering for our City

I am tremendously proud of the progress being made across York, delivering for our residents through a wide range of initiatives, organisations and projects. This has been driven by the leadership I, my Executive, my local councillors, council officers and partners across the city have shown over the past two years.

The Executive Member elements of this report give more detail but the highlights for me are.

Children's Services receiving Outstanding rating in all areas following the February 2025 inspection, almost 50,000 additional free school lunches and breakfasts provided in York primary schools.

Adoption of the first Local Plan for 70 years and its implementation. The first planning applications being considered under the Local Plan policies. Showing that we are determined that developers will adhere to the Local Plan policies. Pushing them hard to provide the essential infrastructure as well as the good quality, sustainable homes and truly affordable homes we all know our communities so desperately need.

Initiating and driving forward with health and voluntary sector partners our neighbourhood model for services including the 24/7 community mental health hub in Acomb Garth and the Recovery Hub in the city

centre. Both of which Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England visited York recently to find out more about and visit.

I could go on but will leave you to read the rest of this report to find out more. It is very fair to say that due to the focussed, consistent and clear leadership across our city, York is collectively achieving great things. Senior civil servant and government minister interest in our work is high and we are very well placed to take full advantage of these opportunities to improve the lives of our citizens and their communities across our city.

York Central Development Update

The York Central Development is moving forward at pace. Not only has the government confirmed £15m for the National Railway Museum to support their expansion plans but the Comprehensive Spending Review 2025 has also confirmed that the Government Property Agency (GPA) anchor building will also be funded and built. Bringing 2,600 civil service jobs to the York Central site.

At the time of writing notice of the opening of the travel routes through the site including cycle paths, footways, bus lanes and road has been confirmed and will be open once you read this report. Pedestrians, bicycles, buses and other traffic will now use this route permanently. Affected residents, community groups, businesses, and bus companies have been notified. The public realm along the new routes is truly outstanding and a great sign of the quality of the broader development to come. I have been very glad to see the strong level of commitment to community engagement from the developers, Homes England and Network Rail over the past 18 months. This must continue if York Central is to be fully integrated into our city and to deliver the transformational living, leisure and employment opportunities for the citizens of York we all want to see.

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and our membership as one of its two constituent councils continues to go from strength to strength. There has been a huge range of activity in the Combined Authority and from Mayor Skaith. These include the White Rose Partnership between the York and North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire Mayors that was signed in April. I attended the launch event in Selby Abbey to witness the commitment to work collectively across the Yorkshire footprint and with government to deliver on important transport, housing, leisure and tourism and climate and net zero initiatives.

In June I participated in decision making alongside Cllr Kilbane, Mayor Skaith and the North Yorkshire leaders to approve funding for £9million

of transport schemes for York including £4million of investment in the rapidly emerging and transformational York Station Frontage project. We also approved creation of the Mayor's £4million Active Travel Fund. Projects approved at a future date will align with our York Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), Local Travel Strategy and Implementation Plan to deliver a range of active travel schemes across York.

In early July we received the fantastic news from the Department for Transport that Haxby Station and Phase 1 of the dualling of the York Outer Ring Road will be funded in this parliament. Both are hugely important for the economic development of our city and wider region and the delivery of our Transport Strategy.

I thank Mayor Skaith for his ceaseless hard work to fight for funding into our Combined Authority area and to my Combined Authority colleagues for committing other elements of funding and support into our city. It shows the huge value of the Combined Authority to York, supporting our citizens and our development as the economic engine of our region for the here and now and into the future.

Executive Member for Economy and Culture, Cllr Pete Kilbane

York has continued its strong economic start to 2025. The percentage of vacant city centre shops is 6.5% at the end of March 2025 (this equates to 41 shops, 15 less than in March 2024). York has less than half the latest available national average shop vacancy rate which was at 14% in 2023-24

The city centre saw over half a million more visitors in 2024-25 (7.88m) than the previous year (7.33m). These are the highest figures seen since pre-covid. Sales were up 3.7% in April 25 which means people visiting the city centre are spending more money (up 1.3% per person) while the number of transactions in council car parks continues to reduce in line with transport policy.

Vacancy rates in secondary shopping areas have been low and stable for several years. Monks Cross has fluctuated across time but is currently at one of its lowest levels (9%) for over a year. However, there is no room for complacency and the slight increase in vacancy rates in Haxby and Clifton Moor are a reminder to keep our focus and that collectively we all have a responsibility to enable our businesses to thrive.

Overall York's economy continues to outperform national trends and remains an attractive place for businesses to investment. The Labour government confirmed its confidence in our City with the announcement of the relocation of 2,600 civil servant roles out of Whitehall to the York Central Government Hub in the Comprehensive Spending Review. It is great to see York Central becoming a reality and we are excited about the opportunities this brings for everyone living in York.

For our residents this means living in a place of opportunity with a strong economy, high employment and wages above the regional average. This does present challenges, especially entrenched inequality, but we continue to work hard to ensure everyone living in the city benefits from its success and we can all live fulfilling lives.

Amongst many cultural highlights since last Full Council, York Residents have thrilled to theatre that resonated across the globe, swayed to legendary musicians, wowed at unique archaeological finds, celebrated York's emerging talent in the creative industries, and welcomed home a local artist made good on the world stage. We continue to work with our cultural partners across the city to bring exciting events and experiences for our residents, not least the BAFTA qualifying internationally renowned Aesthetica Short Film Festival featuring films written, directed, produced and acted by pupils from seven of our city's secondary schools. Culture in York is thriving under this administration, as we cement our unique UK status as a UNESCO City of Media Arts.

None of this can happen without the collaboration of the many fantastic people, organisations and businesses who are making York such a great place to be. I am sure that all members will take this opportunity place on record our acknowledgement of their fantastic contribution to our city and our heartfelt thanks to all of them.

Executive Member for Education, Children and Young People, Cllr Bob Webb

York Hungry Minds

I am incredibly proud to state that to date our work alongside the brilliant school staff in York schools has resulted in delivering approximately 50,000 additional free school meals going to children across our city.

Through our learning we have developed an approach to use York Hungry Minds to tackle poverty in York schools. We have also set up the partner based, cross-party York Hungry Minds steering group to oversee engagement with schools and expansion of the programme over time.

Research carried out by both University of York and University of Leeds is showing our free school meal programme is having very real, positive benefits for children across York including attendance, lateness, educational outcomes, behaviour and learning.

OFSTED RESULT – OUTSTANDING!!!

In February 2025 City of York Council received a visit from OFSTED for an Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS).

Unfortunately, due to the publishing period, I could not talk about this within the last Full Council report, but I am very glad to do so now.

The council received an OUTSTANDING judgement in all areas, those areas are;

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection
- The experiences and progress of children in care
- The experiences and progress of care leavers

This follows the previous inspection under the old Liberal Democrat run authority in which they were found to REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT in all areas.

This administration is making a real difference to children's lives. In our manifesto we pledged we will be the 'corporate parents' that York children need us to be as we recognised that children who have experienced care have been let down in York over a number of years and this needed to change.

I am really pleased that the Ofsted report highlighted the following;

'Political leaders and the Chief Operating Officer are well informed about the priorities and challenges within children's services and are committed to improving experiences and progress for children and

young people. Executive council leaders evidence challenge and scrutiny and are clear about accountability and where it sits. They have access to accurate and comprehensive performance information, which provides them with a line of sight into frontline practice. They are child focussed and committed to their corporate parenting responsibility.'

Under the previous administration "children did not feel listened to by their corporate parents". That has radically changed under this Labour Administration and now child voice is seen as a strength in York.

York is the only inspected Local Authority to move from Requires Improvement to Outstanding over the past 9 years, and this puts us in the top 7% of authorities nationally. This is a testament to the excellent staff team that has been built here in York and I am so pleased that we have worked together to improve outcomes for children.

Please follow the link to the final OFSTED report here.

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50274368>

Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency, Cllr Jenny Kent

York continues to be ahead of the curve in our actions to build a healthier City, with comfortable homes, affordable energy, cleaner air, greener spaces and reducing our contribution to climate change, whilst building resilience to the changes that are already taking place.

Cleaner Air – all AQ objectives met for the first time

We celebrated Clean Air Day on 19th June in the best way possible – by meeting all health-based air quality objectives at all locations in York for the first time (excepting Covid-19 lockdowns). Monitoring showed reductions in maximum levels of Nitrogen Dioxide pollution improved by 27% in 2024 compared with 2023 which is due to the combined efforts of our whole City. Further electrification of the bus and council fleet vehicles, policies incentivising the uptake of more low emission taxis, with over 40% of taxis licensed by York now Ultra Low Emission (ULEV), anti-idling campaigns encouraging people to turn off their engines when stationary or waiting, and continued uptake of electric vehicles by those York car owners who can, have continued to help improve air quality throughout 2024. It has been especially pleasing to work in genuine partnership with residents and business in Gillygate. We are not complacent, and work to improve air quality continues, including running a public consultation on extending the Smoke Control Area (SCA) to include all of York which has received over 300 responses. Our AQ forecasting & alert platform has had over 13,600 visits, enabling people to make better informed decisions about their activities and use of fossil fuel transport during poor air quality.

Action on Climate Change – ‘A list’ status

York received independent international recognition for City leadership and transparency on climate change action by retaining A list status for the 3rd consecutive year from CDP – (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project) – one of only 112 cities globally to achieve the top grade. The award recognises our carbon reduction team’s hard work on multiple fronts, which includes:

- YorEnergy, the free advice service helping people across York to cut energy bills through insulation and changing to energy efficient renewable heating
- York being awarded £216,000 to fund Solar PV installation at three sites: Yearsley Swimming Pool, Joseph Rowntree School and Acomb Explore Library. This was part of a £700,000 grant to York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (YNYCA) by Great British Energy, with sites selected based on those with

existing feasibility studies, eligibility, ability to deliver by March 2026 and falling within the available funding threshold.

- Work with York Community Energy to expand rooftop solar across schools and looking to increase this across community and public buildings
- Over 60 businesses receiving decarbonisation plans through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund project, identifying over £750tCO₂e savings. The project will now be offering grant funding to implement the identified actions
- Continued work on the business case for a green energy park at Harewood Whin
- Ongoing work on heat zones and accelerating decarbonisation with the LEAD project
- Expanding tree planting across the city, with 80% of planting taking place in areas of high or moderate priority (woodland trust tree equity accounting), involving 16 out of 21 wards and over 100 volunteers.
- Participating in the first York and North Yorkshire Carbon Negative Conference, hosted by the Combined Authority. Showcasing projects being delivered in York and contributing to panel discussions.
- Citywide upgrades to LED street lighting

New Appointments and hard work in Flood Risk and Public Realm

I am pleased to welcome our new Flood Risk Manager, Mark Henderson, who is working on the revised Flood Risk strategy, and has met jointly with myself and Yorkshire Water to drive improvements. Following planning approval for a new pumping station within Germany Beck, Fulford, procurement for the delivery of the pumping station is ongoing, aiming to start construction in 2026.

I am also pleased to welcome Ian Hoult as our Public Realm Operations manager, who has hit the ground running over-seeing: progress with our Neighbourhood caretakers, who will be in place by September, the effective roll out of bags to bins, which will reduce litter and pests on our streets and improve the working environment for our waste crews, and continued work on the Green Waste scheme, which now has over 40,000 subscriptions.

Our 'Buzz About York' sustainable planting has flourished despite last year's long wet Spring, the hard, cold winter, and this year's exceptionally hot drought. It has drawn admiration from residents and visitors and was rolled out to further locations this year. Our very dry spring meant that the York Walls in Bloom project got off to a slow start,

but the dedication of our Bar Walls team, St Nicks, and many volunteers has resulted in a wonderful display. I have never seen so many people stop to take photographs at this spot, and whilst it is a change that has not been welcomed by everyone, the overwhelming response has been positive. This has especially been the case amongst younger people and people who are anxious about the decline in our species. They want to see their City taking action in support of our Pollinator Strategy, and I am very grateful to all those who have enabled the Walls to Bloom and lead the way.

Parks and Pride in Our Communities

I welcome the recent input of the Place Scrutiny committee on the criteria we should use to prioritise work from our Parks Investment Fund, the first major investment in York's green spaces for several years. We are in the process of appointing a project manager and can't wait to get started. We are also in the final process of recruiting our new neighbourhood caretaking team, which should be out and about in our Communities by September.

Our City

I enjoyed taking part in another round of the York Bid rejuvenation days, where I met a York Surveyor's business (Gate and Bar) celebrating their fifth birthday by bringing all employees out to help paint railings by the Minster. The partnership between York Bid, CYC, residents and business is part of what makes York so special – we all want the best for our beautiful City.

I have also been inspired by York secondary school students and trainee PGCE Geographers at a University of York sustainability enrichment day, who came up with thoughtful and ambitious ideas for York, as did the children at Badger Hill and Westfield primary schools as part of their Sustainability projects. It is our job to ensure that their ambition is delivered, and their future is assured.

I want to thank all our public realm, waste, environmental and flood protection, neighbourhood enforcement, carbon reduction and tree staff, who work so hard all year round, for the benefit of all of us.

Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion, Cllr Katie Lomas

Financial Outturn

The outturn for 2024/25 shows more progression in reducing overspends and managing budgets. The final overspend was £1.123m. After using the £576k contingency in the budget this means the budget was balanced by using £547k of earmarked reserves. It is clear that all departments are working hard to prioritise spending and control costs. Pressures remain in both Children's and Adult's services and those departments continue to work to control costs where possible. These services are largely statutory and although we can, and have, exerted some level of cost control the increasing demand, and increasing complexity of services required means that some of the cost pressures are beyond our control.

Financial Inclusion grants and outcomes

In financial year 2024-25 we allocated £150k to fund a number of financial inclusion projects, with outcomes summarised below:

AgeUK – money and benefits service for those over retirement age – 47 people assisted to gain a total of £205,859 annualised income.

Experience Counts 50 plus project – skills and training for over 50s – 16 people supported, 10 found employment and 1 became self employed.

Coterminous CIC Employment and Enterprise Programme – aimed at residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness – 13 people supported, 3 found employment, 2 found training or volunteering, 2 took up 1-1 support.

Refugee Action York – practical support, information and guidance for refugees and asylum seekers – 58 people supported with essential needs, 13 people supported with CV and job applications, 40 people referred to other services, 72 people attended workshops, 30 people attended coffee mornings.

York Community Energy – support for families struggling with energy bills – 54 parents receiving direct support.

Peasholme Charity – financial capability service – 133 people engaged overall, 64 engaged in supported learning services.

Citizens Advice York – financial inclusion for the Gypsy and Traveller community – 247 residents supported.

IT Reuse – refurbished IT equipment via Community Furniture Store – 182 SIM cards supplied, 294 devices supplied.

100% Digital York Partnership – supporting digital inclusion – 6 monthly digital cafes with 175 people attending. Monthly 1-1 sessions at Explore York, 450 SIM cards issued.

Welfare Benefits Unit – Advice Extra project, proactive follow up of queries – 111 people followed up, 13 had in depth follow up.

We have allocated £50k for similar schemes for the current financial year.

Direct financial assistance to residents

The York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) provides grants to those who need them in our city. During the last financial year the grants ranged from £23 to £2,310. The average grant value has increased, mainly due to cost inflation. The demand was high last year and the scheme was over-subscribed with the overspend being met by Household Support Fund (HSF).

The Food and Fuel Voucher scheme has been funded through a combination of Household Support Fund and CYC grant. This allows advice workers across the city to give immediate help to those seeking assistance alongside more long-term financial advice and support.

The Household Support Fund is a direct grant from Government to support those in most need. In the last financial year CYC was awarded just over £2m with £1.3m used for direct payments and the rest being used for a variety of schemes including warm spaces, energy support, discretionary awards and to support our YFAS scheme. The Household Support Fund has been continued for 2025/26 but will be replaced in future financial years.

The Household Support Fund has also been used to fund use of the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) platform. This has enabled us to identify households that may be in need of support and to identify poverty gaps. This platform was used in the Pension Credit campaign and is now being used to identify households that could claim additional benefits or where energy support might be needed.

Our welfare benefits team work with partners across the city to provide advice and support and to signpost residents to the help they need. Our York Talk Money service now provides a permanent pool of resources as well as supporting campaigns during the year to encourage take up.

Major projects

We are making significant changes to governance for major projects, introducing new points of internal oversight and bringing together those officers who work on projects across the organisation into a Programme Management Office. This will help us to track progress in delivery and

spend and identify early on any cost or delivery pressures to enable transparent decision making on these.

The Station Gateway project is progressing well, although there are some very significant cost pressures due to both changes that we have made to the scheme (including changes to meet new statutory guidance) and the huge cost inflation that the entire construction sector has seen. We have also had to manage the unknown elements of the project – such as the stability of the city walls and what lies beneath the surface which, in our city, could never have been predicted until we started the structural work. It is important that we are able to finish this project, and to get the benefit of the improvements that will come with the bus loop, movement of taxi rank and improvements to access around the station itself. To that end we have secured funding from the Mayoral Combined Authority of £3.96m to secure the project and will realign other funding to ensure that we can complete it.

Human Rights and Equalities Board (HREB)

The Human Rights and Equalities Board has launched its first task and finish group to work on children's poverty. This will build on some of the work done by the York Poverty Truth Commission.

The Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York, a key partner in HREB recently hosted a national conference 'Towards a Network of UK Cities Working on Human Rights'. I presented as part of a panel exploring practices and policies and showcasing some of the work done here in York.

In May HREB issued a statement in response to the April Supreme Court Ruling on the Equality Act and the subsequent EHRC interim guidance. HREB acknowledged the complexities of the ruling and guidance but reasserted York's status as a Human Rights City and supported the statement of the Council Leader "Our message to trans people in York is clear: we see you; we hear you; we are here to support you in any way we can."

The Board is now preparing for the annual public meeting in November which will be a chance for organisations across the city to showcase the changes made as a result of their responses to the Human Rights Indicator Report.

Holocaust Memorial Day steering group

The Holocaust Memorial Day steering group is now a formalised outside body of the Council and I have joined the group as Co-Chair alongside a Co-Chair from the community members of the group. Work is now underway to refresh the membership of the group (to ensure good

representation across different stakeholders) and to plan the events for 2026.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

This strategy will go to Executive soon for approval following extensive public consultation and revision following input from CYC scrutiny. In the meantime, the process of consultation has already produced results for residents. In response to consultation feedback from students living in our city, and those representing them, the CYC website now has a dedicated landing page for students gathering all the services they are likely to use together in one place and ensuring they can easily find the services most relevant to them.

Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, Cllr Lucy Steels-Walshaw

Active Residents in York

The latest survey from Sport England showed that over 75% of York residents are among the most active in the population of England. York is the fifth most active local authority. The benefits of exercise to both physical and mental health cannot be underestimated. We are really proud of this achievement as it reflects our priorities of a health generating city for both adults and children. As we continue to prioritise safer active travel this will continue to encourage more people to use sustainable and active travel. We are very keen to continue progress with achieving our goal of the health and wellbeing strategy of increased physical activity. Our health trainers to a fantastic job of supporting anyone in the City to become more active and realise the positive effects that physical activity can have on people's lives.

York Recovery Hub Opens

In April the new York Recovery Hub opened on Wellington Row. The recovery hub is place where people who have experienced issues around addiction can come together for support, community and advice. Having recovery visible in this City creates a new vision and is so important in reducing stigma and building connection and relationships which are vital for a persons sustained recovery journey. This hub opening has been a long journey with objections and assumptions from many in our communities and we are very proud that this is underway, and that people can now seek the community that they wish to be part of. This model emphasises a holistic approach to enhance recovery, the person with addictions needs is addressed but in a supportive and inclusive community.

Adult Social Care Research & Co-production Strategy

In York we have a strong history of ensuring our person-centred support is built upon hearing the voices of those with lived experience through a strong foundation of significant collaboration. This has enabled us to move further than traditional support and work to meet people where support works most effectively for them. The strategy creates a framework across all aspects of adult social care to enable improvements and positive change for people and their loved ones to access services. This new strategy will support us to move forwards with the existing systems, people and groups and ensure co-production is included across all services and developments within them. We are very excited to see this develop across the whole of adult social care.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment

CQC, which is the independent regulator of health and social care in England attended City of York Council on 17th-19th June for their onsite assessment. This assessment was completed under the Health and Care Act 2022 under which they have responsibilities to review how local authorities meet their duties under part 1 of the Care Act 2014. Whilst we do not have the final report or rating yet, CQC have completed interviews with leaders, staff and our many valued partners and voluntary organisations across the city. I wanted to commend the hardworking staff for their impeccable organisation of the week. The dedication to safeguarding people in York shone through to me and a commitment to do our very best for our most vulnerable residents.

Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities, **Cllr Michael Pavlovic**

Housing Delivery Programme

The completion of the first fully Passivhaus Duncombe Barracks development is imminent, and the first homes will be available during the summer with the first keys handed over in August. We are ensuring that the tenants in the social housing will be those who will most benefit from the reduced heating bills and have developed a Local Lettings Initiative for the Duncombe and Burnholme developments which will also be implemented for additional new Passivhaus Developments, prioritising Health and Accessibility needs, especially those suffering from long health conditions, including respiratory diseases, immunosuppression, or limited mobility, with additional priority for those with the most limited mobility.

Our further 100% Affordable Housing Schemes are progressing, the Ordnance Lane procurement has completed, with due diligence now being undertaken and the Willow House Development and Walmgate regeneration scheme design is completing with further consultation with residents having recently taken place and the feedback assessed. An outline Planning Application will be submitted shortly. The regeneration of the Glen Lodge Older persons Scheme is almost completed and the handover of the new flats will (hopefully) take place on 18th July.

The disposals of small sites is shortly to commence and the former Woolnough, and Morrell Houses and the 68 Centre will be offered to Registered Housing Providers for development of 100% Affordable Housing Schemes. The Castle Mills site has a Registered Provider interested in creating another 100% Affordable Housing Scheme and we have secured Homes England funding to create plans for a joint health and housing development at the Askham Bar site.

Building Services and Housing Repairs

Whilst achieving markedly improved performance outcomes, recruitment and retention of skilled staff has been challenging. We have now agreed improved pay scales for heating and electrical engineers. We aim to reduce the reliance on external contractors and deliver a more efficient service in house. We are close to completing an improved customer feedback process for repairs to identify and respond quickly to any problems or poor service.

A notable success was the recent feedback and congratulations from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero for the completion of work officers have undertaken in developing innovative methods of retrofit and energy efficiency measures to marginalised tenants and the least energy efficient houses within the LEAD project. Over 475 private sector

residents have had advice or energy efficiency measures completed as part of the funding. A further £2m has been awarded by Government to continue delivering these initiatives.

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing and Housing Adaptations

An additional 500 eligible HMOs licenses were issued in 24/25. In addition, 16 Civil Penalty Notices were issued with fines totalling £151,000.

The Adaptations team have carried out major adaptations to 318 homes in the private sector via the Disabled Facility Grant and 58 council properties enabling people to remain in their own homes. Three events in local communities gave 150 pairs of slippers to older people, one of the major ways to reduce falls.

Planning

We developed, launched and implemented a Planning Protocol agreed between the council and developers in the West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce to streamline the planning process. Performance of the planning teams has been much improved with 90% of minor applications determined within the set time limit (70% national target), 90% of major applications (60% national). 398 planning enforcement cases were opened and 462 closed and 27 formal interventions and 23 dangerous structures were enforced.

Communities

The work to develop and implement a new Neighbourhood Model of delivering services across our city continues. It moves services closer to where people need them and brings a collaborative multi organisation approach bringing together public and voluntary sectors to deliver a range of benefits. We will be undertaking local consultation events during the summer and a report to scrutiny and Executive over the coming months.

Community Safety

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), not only in the city centre but in multiple areas of the city, arson incidents and County Lines continue to be an unacceptable scourge on York. It has an impact on how safe people feel in their homes and communities and affects business confidence.

Our ASB team have been proactive in working with residents to improve their behaviour when problems occur within a tenancy, and whilst enforcement action can only be taken as a last resort, since January the courts have issued 6 eviction notices, 4 partial premises orders, and an injunction banning one individual from an area of the city following

persistent complaints of ASB. Without residents making us aware of problems we cannot offer support or investigate so we encourage any tenants to raise any concerns with their Housing Management Officer in the first instance or through their local councillor.

The council cannot resolve problems alone and therefore we work closely with North Yorkshire Police, as part of the ASB Hub, which has police officers working alongside our Neighbourhood Enforcement Teams, within the wider Safer York Partnership, and are developing a joint problem solving approach. Through additional Government funding of almost £2m annually and the work of the Deputy Mayor for Police and Fire, Jo Coles, an additional 12 PCs and 9 PCSOs are being recruited and trained to join the York City and Selby Neighbourhood Policing teams – a welcome 37% increase in officer capacity across our policing teams area. Our housing navigators are working alongside the Business Improvement District (BID) rangers and police to reduce the impact of street drinking and particularly with those who are on the streets. The numbers of street homeless has reduced significantly since last year, at an average of 14 per night. Of these, and the numbers fluctuate, a third will be from outside the area and therefore have no local connection to access accommodation, a third already have accommodation. The Housing Navigators are working hard with the long-term street homeless and recently accommodated an individual who had been on the streets for the past four years, previously unwilling to accept support.

Executive Member for Transport, Cllr Kate Ravilious

Active City York

Earlier this month we were delighted to welcome over 600 delegates to the Barbican for Active City York: Active Travel England's annual active travel summit. The event began on a high with Government Local Transport Minister Simon Lightwood backing a coalition of twelve of England's Combined Authority Mayors, including York & North Yorkshire's Mayor, David Skaith, who pledged to develop a national active travel network, with an initial network of 3500 miles of safer routes to schools and high streets. Keynote speakers at the conference included Professor Sir Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, Chris Boardman, National Active Travel Commissioner and Dame Sarah Storey, Active Travel Commissioner for Greater Manchester all of whom emphasised the huge health benefits that enabling active travel can bring.

We were also delighted and honoured to welcome a special guest from one of York's twin cities, Dijon. Anne-Sophie Gamblin, Director of Mobility in Dijon, joined myself, Peter Roderick (Director of Public Health) and Lara Thornton (Transport communications manager) to deliver a plenary session at the conference, exploring why UK cities struggle to achieve continental levels of walking and cycling and what we can do to change this.

Many of our officers from the transport and highways team attended the conference and delivered presentations that highlighted some of the innovative approaches we are taking to deliver affordable, accessible and sustainable travel options, which generated a lot of interest. There was also lots for us to learn from the vast number of inspirational talks and workshops, and we'll be following up on those connections to really boost York's active travel in the coming months and years.

The event was also a wonderful opportunity to show off our fantastic city and I'm really grateful to Friends of York Walls, York Civic Trust, Everybody's Cycling, Wheels for Wellbeing and York Cycle Campaign for the volunteer led walks and rides offered during the conference.

Bus successes

In June we celebrated over 1 million £1 fares being sold to young people since September 2023; a fantastic achievement demonstrating the success of the scheme, delivered using funding from our Bus Service Improvement Plan. The offer, which is ongoing, brings independence and access to education, work and leisure for all of York's under 19-year-olds.

We've also recently committed Bus Service Improvement Plan funding to extend the hours of our Park & Ride bus services at all six of York's Park & Ride sites, and from 20th July buses will start at 05:30 and finish at 22:30, benefiting everyone from shift workers to people enjoying the city's nightlife.

Through May and June we consulted on £4M of improvements to our Park & Ride sites. Over 1200 residents and businesses responded and we were delighted to receive very high levels of support for the proposals which include overnight parking provision.

Meanwhile, our bus stop improvements team have been working really hard, with over 200 improvements now delivered across the city. These include real time information screens, new bus shelters, lighting, seating and accessible kerbs.

Mayoral Combined Authority Transport funding

In June we were delighted to be awarded nearly £7M of Mayoral Local Transport Grant funding, supporting us in delivering the Station Gateway project plus deliver a raft of sustainable travel schemes including York's first School Street schemes, enhancing our speed reduction programme, improving active travel on Clifton Backies, installing secure cycle parking in residential areas and at key destinations, and improving many of our public rights of way.

Accessible City

Our barrier removal programme is now well underway and we're already receiving very positive feedback from people who are now able to access spaces that were previously inaccessible to them. And as well as removing barriers the team have also been installing tactile paving, signage and dropped kerbs where needed, to make these routes accessible to as many people as possible.

Prioritising pedestrians

At my decision session in June I approved a new methodology for evaluating and prioritising pedestrian crossing requests. The new methodology takes into account the potential increase in active travel that a new crossing could bring and will help us to deliver more crossings in the locations where they are most needed.

City Centre Sustainable Travel Corridor

In April I approved the project initiation document for the City Centre Sustainable Travel corridor. Since then we've been carrying out early engagement with many different stakeholders and will soon be launching a full public consultation on the scheme.

Maintaining our historic city

As well as making excellent progress with our £10M highway maintenance programme, the highways teams have also had to cope with the added excitement of dealing with a sinkhole opening up in the road outside the Theatre Royal. The discovery of archaeological remains from the medieval St Leonard's Hospital created much interest but also slowed repairs. The emergency works were handled admirably, with minimal fuss and disruption – huge credit to all involved.

And as soon as the sinkhole was repaired our stonemason's team got to work on repairing Bootham Bar, making sure that our city walls remain strong and can be enjoyed by future generations.

Transport communications

Finally, I'd like to give a big shout out to the transport comms team who have done a truly amazing job in recent months. In addition to coping admirably with multiple media inquiries around parking charges and keeping residents, visitors and businesses informed about Station Gateway road closures, they have also launched a wonderful short film about our transport strategy and had great success with producing short video clips to go alongside some of our stories, with the sinkhole story reaching many thousands of viewers.