

Report of the Deputy Leader

Since my last report to Full Council, it remains my honour to Deputise for the Leader when called upon to do so. She leads from the front with an energy and purpose that has a positive impact on progress for our city. She sets the bar high for us all and we are happy to rise to the challenge for the benefit of our residents, organisations, and businesses in York.

Over August, I deputised for the Leader during her two weeks of well-earned annual leave. Unfortunately, during this time the nation suffered rioting organised by far-right groups. While these disturbances came close to the borders of our region, I am happy to record that decency prevailed and York remained peaceful.

I should like to put on record my thanks to the Office of the Prime Minister, CYC council officers and partner organisations who all worked tirelessly during that worrying time to keep our residents safe. We were ready, we planned for the worst but fortunately our hopes for the best were realised.

I should also like to thank all the residents of York who turned out in large numbers to show support for our Muslim and migrant communities at a time when they felt greatly under threat. The gatherings at the Mosque, in particular, were joyful occasions. The far right attempted to spread fear amongst our communities, but instead they spread solidarity.

On Yorkshire Day it was my pleasure to welcome Future of Roads Minister Lilian Greenwood MP to York. We showed her some of the great work being undertaken by our highways team in Fishergate ward, as well as the superb work they completed to enable greater flood resistant access to Millenium Bridge. The CYC team created a great impression on the Minister, cementing York's reputation in Government as an ambitious place that can be trusted to deliver.

Alongside the Leader we continue to work tirelessly to bring forward York Central in a way that maximises benefit to residents. Conversations are not always plain sailing, but I can put on record my thanks to all the partners who are working so hard to deliver this project for York. Their commitment to genuinely affordable housing, decent jobs and sustainability is to be commended. We will continue to give this project the leadership it needed, so that when residents look down on the site from Severus Hill they see it as brimming with opportunity for themselves and future generations.

In my role as Deputy Leader I also represent, along with the Leader, the City of York on York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority. Since winning outright the City of York Council elections in May 2023 your Labour representatives on the Combined Authority were able to secure a fair share of millions from the Brownfield Housing Fund to help build genuinely affordable housing in York. Since the election of a Labour Mayor, this Fund has been boosted by £4m of Mayoral funding to continue to deliver the social housing our residents so desperately need.

With further millions being directed towards transport, skills, retail, natural capital, net zero and business innovation we can all see the benefit that united and focussed politicians, working in partnership with our colleagues in North Yorkshire and in Government, bring to the whole region. In my role of Deputy Mayor of York and North Yorkshire, I continue to work with regional and national organisations to secure the best future we can for residents of York and the whole region.

As I have stated on previous occasions, the Deputy Leader Report remains an anachronism left over from the old coalition of Liberal Democrats and Greens. Should the constitutional changes proposed on tonight's agenda be accepted, this will be the last time such a report is delivered to Full Council. I know it will be sorely missed by many Members but please be assured that, along with my brilliant colleagues in the Labour Group, we will continue to deliver day in, day out, for the people of York.

Cllr Kilbane
Deputy Leader