

Deputy Leader's report:

National Budget

1. The Chancellor's Budget contained a number of announcements relevant to local government.

The announcement of additional funding for adult social care is particularly important. My colleague Councillor Runciman has been highlighting the significant pressures that the health and care system faces. I know that concerns have been raised about the recent news of £50m in health cuts announced by Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group, for example.

2. Additional funding is therefore welcome, but further scrutiny is needed to determine how far this money can go to meet the pressures facing local government and in the system. In addition, Councillors will have noted the Chancellor's U-turn on National Insurance increases for the self-employed; this measure was intended to part-fund the adult social care announcement, so we will be watching closely to see how this gap is filled. I know officers will be examining the figures to understand the full implications for York before bringing forward a proposal for the Executive to consider.

York Central

3. We have made further progress with the joint administration's plans for the York Central site. We are continuing to work with our partners Network Rail, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the National Railway Museum to define the approach to development. The recent focus has been on establishing formal partnership arrangements and developing a robust development proposition.
4. There is a recruitment process underway for a Chair of the York Central Partnership, which will help us to make further progress. The Leader and I are also meeting with the Dean of York, Independent Chair of the York Central Community Forum, to discuss next steps for the project. Further public consultation on the master plan and access options will take place with the community over the summer.

One Planet York

5. We continue to work towards making the Council and our City more environmentally-friendly. We want to boost recycling rates, promote sustainable travel, and make York the Greenest City in the North. Work to become a greener Council is an essential part of that process – especially because greater pressure on services means that we should already be thinking about how we can work more sustainably.
6. I am pleased that Executive recently approved the final framework for One Planet Council, which sets out our ambition to put sustainability and resilience at the heart of our decision-making processes. The framework sets out a number of areas for action, including:
 - Reducing the Council’s carbon footprint
 - Embedding ‘One Planet’ opportunities into ongoing projects and policies
 - Strengthening communication and collaboration between different service areas on issues relating to sustainability.
7. We are also piloting a ‘Better Decision-Making’ tool to help embed One Planet principles into Executive reports, as well as improving how we engage with staff to improve awareness and encourage people to bring forward their ideas about sustainability.

Haxby Library

8. I am delighted that a £500,000 investment into a new library service in Haxby has been approved as part of the budget process. The old library closed in summer of last year after a structural survey found that the building was likely to collapse. An interim solution has been found through council officers working with Explore to relocate the children’s library offer to Oaken Grove Community Centre.
9. The £500,000 investment now allows further welcome discussions to take place between the Council, Explore, and Trustees of the Haxby Memorial Hall towards a permanent solution.

Devolution

10. York hosted a meeting of Yorkshire Council Leaders at the beginning of March chaired by Cllr Carr. We had constructive discussions about how

we can work collaboratively across the region. Our goal remains to find a deal that meets priorities for York, such as increased investment and sustainable growth. Devolution presents a number of opportunities for York but it is right to continue to work to find the right arrangements to best reflect our city's interests. We agreed the following statement:

“Most Yorkshire Local Government Leaders, including those from North Lincolnshire, met in York today. They unanimously agreed that there is great benefit in the Yorkshire brand, which could be further capitalised on for the good of our people. Leaders agreed that they could and should continue to collaborate, ensure that they meet regularly as a Yorkshire Leaders Board, and that discussions should take place with the Government to explore all of the possible options for local decision making. They agreed that Yorkshire should have a strong voice in the Brexit negotiations. Leaders will engage with business, MPs and partners to make sure that our voice is heard on a clear set of priorities.”

11. York will host further meetings and I look forward to continuing discussions about devolution and regional cooperation.

Human Rights City launch

12. In December last year, I was very pleased to receive on behalf of the city an award recognising York as a 'City of Sanctuary'. I am now looking forward to attending the Lord Mayor's declaration of York as the UK's first Human Rights City.
13. The York Human Rights City Network has done excellent work to promote a culture of human rights, for example through training workshops and public events.
14. If members have any questions on the content of this report or would like further information on other issues then please email me on: cldr.kaspden@york.gov.uk

Cllr Keith Aspden

Deputy Leader of City of York Council