

**Report of the Deputy Leader of the Council**

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It continues to be a great honour to support the Leader of the Council as she works tirelessly with residents and all city stakeholders to make York a better place for everyone.

She does so having inherited a financial situation that is stretched beyond limits. The crumbling infrastructure, both physical and social, that we see all around us is a direct result of the austerity imposed by the Liberal Democrat and Conservative Parties for over a decade.

We calculate that these political choices have resulted in our revenue budget being £50m - £60m short of where it should be. That is year on year £60m worth of value that cannot be delivered to the people of York, while we scrimp and scrape to maintain basic services.

These decisions highlight the role successive Governments have played in shrinking local government and the services councils are able to provide, and which leave us where we are today.

These difficulties have been compounded by local Liberal Democrat, Green and Conservative administrations pretending everything was alright, using reserves, one-off and emergency funds to plug the gaps.

York Labour will always be straight about the challenges we face. We have been brutally honest about the financial position that we have inherited, and we are committed to finding solutions while protecting our most vulnerable residents. Despite the rain coming down, we are working hard to fix the roof.

We welcome thoughts and ideas from all political parties and stakeholders that help us deal with the existential issues facing councils up and down the land. We will be an open and outward looking authority.

To this end we have continued to engage proactively with organisations across the city, and they have welcomed this new approach. In partnership with them we are developing a range of opportunities to enhance the life chances of our residents.

We will take advantage of the opportunities that York & North Yorkshire devolution and York Central will bring, especially for our economically disadvantaged residents.

Finally, since taking office, it has been a pleasure to work with and get to know so many dedicated and hard-working officers. We have, in the City of York Council staff, fabulous and talented people who are dedicated to providing great public service. They do so in very difficult circumstances, often with very little thanks. So, I should like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our staff because what they do keeps the whole city going.

Councillor Kilbane  
Deputy Leader  
13 September 2023