



## **Councillor Mark Crane, Leader of the Council**

### **Report to Council on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

This report covers the period from the Council meeting on 17 December 2019 to date. During this period, I have attended Executive meetings and represented the Council at a number of local and regional meetings which include LGA Environment Economy Housing and Transport Board, DCN Member Board, Yorkshire Leaders Board Exec & Scrutiny Chairs meeting, York and North Yorkshire Devolution Workshop, YNYER LEP Board, Ouse and Derwent IDB, All Parliamentary Party Group London and DCN Conference.

One of the issues which is gaining momentum and linked to the “levelling up” agenda is devolution and Combined Authorities. The Directors of development from North Yorkshire Districts, County and the city of York have been asked to produce possible “asks” to Government which could form part of a devolution deal for the York and North Yorkshire geography. Five ambitions were debated which are Britain’s most desirable location, space and ambition to grow, digitally transformed businesses, a world leading agri- food and bio renewable cluster, England’s first carbon negative region.

The workshop I attended with the Leaders and Chief Executives from York and North Yorkshire covered the process which councils would have to go through should they wish to create a combined authority and elect a Mayor for the Combined Authority of York and North Yorkshire. The indicative timescale for the election of a Mayor is 2022. It has been made quite clear that the amount of money (known as gain share) devolved to an area is much greater if there is an elected Mayor for the Combined Authority.

I have subsequently participated in a conversation with the Leaders and Chief Executives of York and North Yorkshire County and Districts with the Minister for the Northern Powerhouse Jake Berry. It was indicated in the discussion that there is a strong possibility that there could be an Budget announcement could include a statement that the Leeds City region have agreed a devolution deal and that will be very closely followed by an announcement for a Devolution deal for South Yorkshire. The Leaders agreed that a letter should be sent to Minister Jake Berry outlining that the Leaders in York and North Yorkshire were working together on a devolution deal. A meeting with Leaders, Officers, Civil servants and the Minister for the Northern Powerhouse Jake Berry will take place in the next few weeks to progress.

I have recently attended the Annual District Council Network. Topics for the conference included, championing our towns, cities and communities, Housing, building out, building up and building beautiful, achieving zero carbon and an interesting presentation from Professor John Curtice Professor of politics about the voter perspective and political trends. Devolution also featured highly in the conference as did Health and prevention.

**Mark Crane  
Leader of the Council**