

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Mayor’s Update and Member Q&A

17 March 2026

Dear members,

General Update

Since our last meeting we have set the Combined Authority and Mayoral General Budgets, delivering over £180m of funding in the next financial year to support jobs, opportunity and growth in York and North Yorkshire. I want to thank the committee for their important role in scrutinising the budget.

Further to our last meeting, steps have been taken to improve transparency in my office. I now publish my register of interests, register of gifts and hospitality, expenses, and a record of my external meetings on a quarterly basis. The staff in my office who act in an advisory capacity also publish their register of interests, register of gifts and hospitality, and a record of their external meetings.

Funding and Investment

We continue to make progress ahead of the Local Growth Fund, an initial proposal to allocate some of the funding is being taken to our next Combined Authority meeting, which will allow for investment to maintain vital combined authority and local authority services that support business.

I have continued to engage with hospitality and tourism organisations on the Overnight Visitor Levy to discuss their concerns and the opportunities. The Government consultation closed in February and we are awaiting the response to this. Our work through the Policy Lab, with York St John University, is producing an analysis of the OVL, which is engaging with key stakeholders.

Moving Forward

The first round of the Movement, Activity and Sport Fund has closed, and allocations will be made in the coming weeks. This has had significant interest from around the region, showing the need for investment into addressing social challenges through movement, activity and sport.

The grant funding element of the Men’s Mental Health Fund has been allocated, supporting projects across the region. We continue to support businesses to engage in our workplace programme, *Shift your focus*, and continue to make progress on delivering the workplace pilot within the Fire and Rescue Service.

The £4m Mayor’s Active Travel Fund is currently taking bids from public bodies and local community groups. £2.4m of this funding is allocated for public bodies,

applications closed earlier this month and will be determined in the coming weeks. The £1m Community Grants element of the fund opened earlier this month, and closes on 10 April.

Highstreets

Applications for the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund Phase 3 have been appraised earlier this month, and a decision panel will convene later this month to decide which proposals will be granted funding. Phase 3 received 55 applications, and the total available for funding of projects is £2.2m.

Transport

The DFT have devolved a consolidated £456.2m Mayoral Transport Fund (MTF), this includes £428.8m capital funding over four years and £27.4m revenue funding over three years. The devolved funding allows for the Mayoral Transport Authority to determine how the funding is allocated. The principles for this funding will be determined at the March Combined Authority meeting, aligning to our previously agreed Strategic Transport Framework and my Mayoral priorities. I am determined that we will improve the way we do things in our region.

We continue to manage the pressures of bus funding, seeking to protect the level of services and fare subsidies that we currently have in York and North Yorkshire.

Housing and Regeneration

Our Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England has been established and a delivery plan agreed. Progress is now being made on setting out strategic sites for unlocking, discussions on public estates and potential for housing development, continued engagement with York and North Yorkshire Housing Partnership to address affordable housing issues and build capacity in the sector to deliver. Our Housing Growth Plan is in draft for consideration by the Combined Authority later this year.

The Brownfield Housing Fund Programme (BHFP) is a £20m fund to support the delivery of new homes on brownfield land across the region. £24.4m has been allocated to 26 housing sites. Collectively, these sites are set to deliver 1,340 new homes (over 50% are affordable). The aim is to have all projects contracted by end of March with delivery over the next couple of years. Most schemes are in contract with many now in delivery.

Business, Trade and Innovation

We held our Growth Summit: 'Ambition 2035'. The event was well-attended and contained many thoughtful contributions from panellists and attendees alike on the potential of our region to deliver meaningful economic growth that benefits local communities.

We launched two new schemes under our Business Innovation Fund, a competitive support programme similar to ‘dragons den’ and a support programme to help more businesses access funding.

Officers are also working at pace to plan a full schedule of events to take place at UKREIFF in May this year, where the Combined Authority will have a dedicated pavilion.

Education, Employment and Training

Our Work and Skills Interchange resource was launched on the 9th Jan. The interchange will offer advice for individuals and businesses, and will help provide the opportunity to build connections for people who are seeking work or are trying to stay in work – especially those who have significant health conditions, those who are economically inactive, or those who face other disadvantages in the labour market such as caring responsibilities.

We have also been given £10m from central government to continue the Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme.

Visits and Engagements

I continued to visit community organisations and stakeholders across the region.

In addition, I have represented our region on the national stage. I attended the Oxford Farming Conference’s Welcome Dinner as a keynote speaker, attended ministerial meetings, and gave evidence to the APPG Rural Business and Rural Powerhouse as they produce their report on devolution in rural communities.

David Skaith
Mayor of York and North Yorkshire