**NYC COUNCILLOR’S REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2023**

**A66 Upgrade and Scotch Corner**

There was great disappointment when the go ahead for the duelling of the A66 was not signed off in November by the government minister. This was I understand because part of the file was incomplete, but everything is now in order for go ahead to be signed on 7th March 2024.

The funding is still in place and work is due to commence on the section between Stephen Bank and Carkin Moor in September next year. Good news indeed with hopefully no more delays.

This however still leaves the question of Scotch Corner roundabout. I have been promised that National Highways are agreeable to a meeting in January between local representatives, myself being one, planners from Richmond and others from NYC Highways. Scotch Corner is to be the item at the top of the agenda. We need to know NH’s intentions. I have been told 3 different versions of this in the last 9 months. The latest one is to make the roundabout into 3 lanes with a slip road onto the south bound road from Middleton Tyas and a slip road for the north bound carriageway when coming from the west.

**Mayoral Election**

An election will take place on 2nd May 2024 to elect the first ever Mayor of North Yorkshire and the City of York. It has taken years of work to get to this stage which I see as a very positive move forwards from the region’s position. The Mayor will have a budget set by the government estimated at £300M over the next 30 years. This money will be used to promote growth and jobs for the region. It will not be used to subsidise council services.

There are many very successful Mayors around the country of both political persuasions but none more so than Ben Houchen on Teesside. He has been able to attract the Treasury to Darlington, and countless other great projects. He has been enormously successful in attracting investors, private backers and banks to invest in projects on Teesside and this is what the job of the Mayor is all about. Whoever is elected here will not be another representative of the council, will not be involved in housing or education etc. etc.

The one thing the new Mayor will take over is the position of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. This has not been possible in some areas for example Teesside because it covers more than one county.

**Boundary Commission**

The new council has 90 members representing 89 divisions. It is in my opinion working well but one of the stipulations when it was set up was that the boundary commission would come in to do an overall review before the next council elections in 2027.

The Commission’s remit looks specifically at:

1. Number of councillors.
2. Division arrangements.
3. Parliamentary process.
4. Implementation.

The Statutory Requirements which the Commission must demonstrate in their recommendations are:

1. Electoral Equality.
2. Community Identities and Interests.
3. Effective and Convenient Local Government.

Do give feedback and recommendations to them as they go through their processes. I will keep you informed as the commission goes through various stages.

There will be a consultation on the draft proposals between 4th March 2025 and 12th May 2025. The publication of the final proposals will be on 26th August 2025.

**Anti Littering Signs**

I have had positive feedback from a number of people regarding the ‘Littering is a Criminal Offence’ signs which I am trialling in my division. The idea is that Highways move them around every 8 weeks or so. If you have an area which you feel may benefit from their presence, please let me know. I have been contacted already on this asking if one or more could be put on Hang Bank which is a real litter disgrace off Barton Interchange as you head north on Deer Street.

They are not a perfect solution to our litter problem, but they do act as a deterrent.

Finally, may I extend my very best wishes for the festive season and wish you a happy and healthy 2024.