

## **Cllr Mike Ross**

### **Leader – Hull City council priorities 2025-26**

#### **Community plan and wider engagement**

I am pleased with the progress so far on the development of the community plan. The plan itself was devised after significant engagement with a wide range of residents and organisations across a wide range of sectors. In the summer a large event was held, involving representatives from a large range of organisations across the city to look at the progress made so far against the plan.

The event, and the community plan itself, are a signal of the intent of wide range of bodies across the city to work together. This commitment to the city is encouraging and can help get the outcomes we need to see in the city.

I am now keen to see this approach further embedded in the city and more done to reach out into communities within the city. It is incredibly important to all residents in Hull feel part of the city and can contribute to the life of the place.

#### **HEYCA skills portfolio**

As a member of the Combined Authority, I have been allocated the skills portfolio. The skills agenda is incredibly important across the region, but especially in the city, so I am keen to get very much engaged with it.

In this role I am intending to engage with both the skills providers in the region, to understand the challenges they face and the business community, to get behind the scale of the problem at their end. Likewise, I am keen to hear from those who are in education and training to

I am eager to hear from members about where they believe there needs to be a focus in this area of work.

#### **Business growth and promoting the region**

There has been considerable concern around the state of the economy in the region. We have seen recent announcements around closures at the likes of Vivergo or downsizing at Ineos. This was covered at the most recent full council meeting and saw cross party agreement around the need for these matters to be addressed. While clearly the economic state of the nation is a national issue that the government needs to lead on, there is a role for the council to play in the local picture.

To address the concerns on a wider regional picture, I will be working alongside other local authority leaders in the region to ensure that we see the investment come to our area.

## **Cost of living**

There is still considerable concern around cost-of-living issues for residents in our region. As a council we continue to do all we can to support residents who are struggling. This has seen partnerships with voluntary and community organisations across Hull, which will allow them to help more residents with the cost of living during the colder months. The funding, through the Cost-of-Living Community Grants, aims to support households who are finding it difficult to manage such as energy and food, and who may need help with managing debt.

It is also expected that there will be a range of 'Warm Spaces' again this winter, where social activities will take place with the additional benefit of helping to bring communities together. This work is in line with the Community Plan ambition for a healthier and fairer Hull, and it's good that these grants will be spread out across the city, both in terms of locations but also the specific groups of people being targeted for help.