

Agenda Item 14 – Motions on Notice

Motions on Notice submitted under Council Procedure Rule B10:

1) Access to Transport for All

To be moved by Councillor Fenton

Council notes:

- That under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, disabled residents are entitled to free bus travel on local buses, but this is usually restricted to journeys made between 9:30am and 11:00pm on weekdays, unless local councils choose to extend the hours.
- That City of York Council currently allows disabled people's bus passes to be used from 9:00am, half an hour earlier than the national minimum, but that many essential appointments, employment opportunities, and educational commitments require travel to take place before this time.
- That Liberal Democrat MP Tom Gordon has led a national campaign calling on the Government to remove time restrictions entirely, to allow disabled people to use their bus passes at any time of day, reflecting the principle that disability does not only occur between 9:00am and 11:00pm.
- That York's Dial & Ride community transport service - used by many older and disabled people - ceased operating at the end of December 2023 and that a cross-party Task & Finish Group made a number of recommendations which were approved by the Economy, Place, Access & Transport Scrutiny Committee in June 2024.

Council believes:

- That the current time limits create unnecessary barriers for disabled residents, particularly for those needing to attend early morning medical appointments, commute to work or education.
- That local flexibility should not mean a postcode lottery, where disabled people in some areas have full access to public transport and others do not.

- That improving access to bus travel for disabled people supports the Council's wider commitments to equality, inclusion, and sustainable transport.
- That the quality of life of many older and disabled people has been adversely impacted by the absence of a replacement Dial & Ride service for the past 22 months, many of whom do not have access to a car and are unable to get to their nearest bus stop.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support Tom Gordon MP's campaign to lift national time restrictions on the use of disabled bus passes.
2. Ask the Group Leaders to write to the Secretary of State for Transport urging the Government to amend the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme to make disabled bus passes valid 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
3. Ask the Executive Member for Transport to explore options for City of York Council to amend the local start time to earlier than 9:00am, and for officers to bring a report to the People Scrutiny Committee within 6 months, outlining cost implications and potential partnerships with local bus operators.
4. Ask the Executive Member for Transport to meet with the Dial & Ride Task & Finish Group members as soon as possible to discuss the progress made with identifying options for a replacement service.

Amendment from Councillor Ravillious

"Under 'Council notes', add one additional bullet point after the fourth:

- That the Executive Member for Transport chaired a Task & Finish group on Bus Accessibility earlier this year, with valuable input from members of the disabled community, and that the outputs from this Task & Finish group are recorded and regularly updated in a bus accessibility tracker, with reports on progress being shared with the Access Forum.

Under 'Council therefore resolves to', at point 2, add the following additional wording after '7 days a week':

'and for the additional cost of this to be reflected in council settlements so other financial support for bus services is not impacted;'

At point 3, after 'Ask' add 'for officers to work with the Access Forum prior', delete 'the Executive Member for Transport to explore options for the City of York Council to amend the local start time to earlier than 9:00am, and for officers', amend 'bring' to 'bringing', insert the word 'appropriate' and delete 'People' before 'scrutiny committee' and insert 'benefits and risks' before 'and potential partnerships'. After 'bus operators' add 'of amending the start time for use of disabled bus passes, prior to making recommendations to the Mayoral Combined Authority, which now holds this specific responsibility;'

At point 4, insert 'Following an update due to be provided at Place Scrutiny this month, to' before 'ask'."

For information, the effect of the amendment on the above motion, with changes highlighted in bold:

Access to Transport for All

Council notes:

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- That City of York Council currently allows disabled people's bus passes to be used from 9:00am, half an hour earlier than the national minimum, but that many essential appointments, employment opportunities, and educational commitments require travel to take place before this time.
- That Liberal Democrat MP Tom Gordon has led a national campaign calling on the Government to remove time restrictions entirely, to allow disabled people to use their bus passes at any time of day, reflecting the principle that disability does not only occur between 9:00am and 11:00pm.
- That York's Dial & Ride community transport service - used by many older and disabled people - ceased operating at the end of December 2023 and that a cross-party Task & Finish Group made a number of recommendations which were approved by the Economy, Place, Access & Transport Scrutiny Committee in June 2024.

- That the Executive Member for Transport chaired a Task & Finish group on Bus Accessibility earlier this year, with valuable input from members of the disabled community, and that the outputs from this Task & Finish group are recorded and regularly updated in a bus accessibility tracker, with reports on progress being shared with the Access Forum.

Council believes:

- That the current time limits create unnecessary barriers for disabled residents, particularly for those needing to attend early morning medical appointments, commute to work or education.
- That local flexibility should not mean a postcode lottery, where disabled people in some areas have full access to public transport and others do not.
- That improving access to bus travel for disabled people supports the Council's wider commitments to equality, inclusion, and sustainable transport.
- That the quality of life of many older and disabled people has been adversely impacted by the absence of a replacement Dial & Ride service for the past 22 months, many of whom do not have access to a car and are unable to get to their nearest bus stop.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support Tom Gordon MP's campaign to lift national time restrictions on the use of disabled bus passes.
2. Ask the Group Leaders to write to the Secretary of State for Transport urging the Government to amend the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme to make disabled bus passes valid 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, **and for the additional cost of this to be reflected in council settlements so other financial support for bus services is not impacted;**
3. Ask for officers to work with the Access Forum prior to bringing a report to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee within 6 months, outlining cost implications, **benefits and risks** and potential partnerships with local bus operators **of amending the start time for use of disabled bus passes, prior to making recommendations to the Mayoral Combined Authority, which now holds this specific responsibility;**
4. **Following an update due to be provided at Place Scrutiny this month, to ask the Executive Member for Transport to meet with**

the Dial & Ride Task & Finish Group members as soon as possible to discuss the progress made with identifying options for a replacement service.

2) Tackling pollution in York's Rivers

To be moved by Councillor Kent

This Council notes:

- that in 2023, storm overflows discharged wastewater, including untreated sewage, into the River Ouse in and around York for a total of 16,357 hours, and into the Foss for 3,254 hours;
- that in England, serious pollution incidents by water companies rose by 60% in 2024, with almost 20% attributable to Yorkshire Water, and overall pollution incidents climbed 29%, resulting in significant water company fines;
- that recent scientific monitoring by the Ecomix project at the University of York shows that rivers and freshwater waterways are becoming increasingly polluted by a toxic mix of thousands of chemicals from agriculture, pharmaceuticals, household cleaning and personal care products and tyre additives, with only 14% of rivers meeting a good level of ecological status;
- that recent sampling for the 'forever' chemical Trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) across 19 locations in Yorkshire over one year detected the chemical in 99.3% of samples. Many locations had levels exceeding the safe concentration proposed for TFA by the Dutch Institute for Public Health;
- that while the EU's revised Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive came into force on 1 January 2025, the UK continues to operate under the outdated 1991 framework, leading to a regulatory gap and lag in pollution control regulation, meaning our waterways and drinking water remain open to contamination from multiple sources.

Council welcomes and supports:

- the AQUA citizen science project at UoY inviting the public to help collect data from York waterways for both chemical and bacterial pollution with the aim to improve Yorkshire's aquatic environments for biodiversity and people;

- the Independent Water Commission review by Sir John Cunliffe and the Labour Government's response marking a pivotal moment for the UK water sector, including the government pledge to halve sewage pollution by 2030;
- The People's Commission recommendations on the water sector;
- the EU Directive's strengthened mandates, not limited to but including:
 - the Polluter-pays principle, energy-neutral operation for wastewater treatment plants and real-time public health monitoring.

This Council resolves to request the Leader to write to the Mayor of York and North Yorkshire and York's MPs to ask them to join the Leader and Executive Member for the Environment in calling on the Government to:

- adopt legislation mirroring the EU's revised Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, to prevent chronic pollution threatening public and environmental health;
- ban the use of recognised dangerous 'forever' chemicals as quickly as possible;
- Urge a national investment programme to modernise sewage and highway drainage infrastructure - including storage, treatment, and overflow controls - with priority given to areas serving York and the Rivers Ouse and Foss;
- Request implementation of local pollution reduction measures, such as installing upstream buffer zones, "first-flush" stormwater capture, and retrofitting sewage systems to reduce raw discharge events, while monitoring improvements through better reporting;
- Support and require the Environment Agency to more effectively monitor, understand and prevent water pollution and respond to incidents quickly;
- Develop a fit-for purpose chemical assessment and management system.

Council further resolves to support AQuA and Ecomix in publicising their local efforts to increase public awareness of the water pollution

challenge, and to share guidance on how residents can take small decisions to positively contribute to reducing pollution of our waterways.

Amendment from Councillor Steward

“Under ‘This Council resolves to’ insert an additional bullet point as follows:

‘Officers will bring a report to the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change setting out practical ideas from officers, partners, and residents for how the Council can directly improve river quality. A follow-up report will then be considered annually to show the progress made against these actions.’”

For information, the effect of the amendment on the above motion, with changes highlighted in bold:

Tackling pollution in York’s Rivers

This Council notes:

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- that recent sampling for the ‘forever’ chemical Trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) across 19 locations in Yorkshire over one year detected the chemical in 99.3% of samples. Many locations had levels exceeding the safe concentration proposed for TFA by the Dutch Institute for Public Health;

- that while the EU's revised Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive came into force on 1 January 2025, the UK continues to operate under the outdated 1991 framework, leading to a regulatory gap and lag in pollution control regulation, meaning our waterways and drinking water remain open to contamination from multiple sources.

Council welcomes and supports:

- the AQUA citizen science project at UoY inviting the public to help collect data from York waterways for both chemical and bacterial pollution with the aim to improve Yorkshire's aquatic environments for biodiversity and people;
- the Independent Water Commission review by Sir John Cunliffe and the Labour Government's response marking a pivotal moment for the UK water sector, including the government pledge to halve sewage pollution by 2030;
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- Support and require the Environment Agency to more effectively monitor, understand and prevent water pollution and respond to incidents quickly;
- Develop a fit-for purpose chemical assessment and management system.
- **Officers will bring a report to the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change setting out practical ideas from officers, partners, and residents for how the Council can directly improve river quality. A follow-up report will then be considered annually to show the progress made against these actions.**

Council further resolves to support AQuA and Ecomix in publicising their local efforts to increase public awareness of the water pollution challenge, and to share guidance on how residents can take small decisions to positively contribute to reducing pollution of our waterways.

3) Enhancing the Benefits of Devolution for York

To be moved by Councillor Baxter

Council notes:

- the establishment of York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority in 2023, marking the long-awaited start of meaningful devolution of funding and powers to our region;
- after years of lagging behind devolution deals in other parts of the country, new funding of over £23m has already been approved for York, including:
 - £4.5m through the *Brownfield Housing Fund* to progress schemes delivering affordable housing, including at Ordnance Lane and Lowfield Green;

- Almost £3m through the *Net Zero Fund* for renewable energy schemes such as those at Alex Lyon House and Honeysuckle House;
- £9.57m to schemes and initiatives, including affordable housing delivered by businesses and other organisations in the city;
- the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Investment Fund, worth £540m over 30 years, was unlocked through devolution, bringing lasting investment certainty to the region.

Council further notes the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, brought forward by the Labour Government, paves the way for the biggest devolution of powers and funding in a generation through the creation of Strategic Authorities;

The Bill sets out a clear, long-term pipeline for regional investment, ending the region-by-region deal-making of the past and unlocking further opportunities for York and North Yorkshire.

Council believes:

- the Government's renewed focus on devolution represents a real shift of power and investment from Westminster that will help rebuild local economies and strengthen communities;
- local leaders know best what their regions need, and that bringing decision-making closer to York will help deliver better, faster outcomes for residents and businesses.

Council resolves to:

- Give its endorsement to greater devolution for York and North Yorkshire in the form of Strategic Authorities;
- Request the Council Leader joins Mayor Skaith and the Leader of North Yorkshire Council in writing to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, backing the Government's plans for greater devolution in England and making the case for expanded powers and investment for our Combined Authority area under future arrangements, such as the ability to raise a tourist levy and to introduce a registration and management scheme for short term holiday lets in constituent parts of the Combined Authority's area;

- Support the Mayor's and Council Leaders' shared ambition to progress to Established Mayoral Strategic Authority status at pace, to unlock further devolved decision making and funding to benefit York; and
- Request an all councillor briefing on Strategic Authorities so Members are fully informed on the opportunities the new authorities will bring.

Amendment from Councillor Hollyer

“Under ‘Council notes’ insert two additional bullet points as follows:

- the concerning lack of progress in the delivery of key transport infrastructure projects across the city such as:
 - The York Outer Ring Road dualling scheme which has been delayed, scaled back and is now at risk due to a lack of funding
 - The long-promised Haxby Station which remains delayed, despite Government support and years of preparatory work under the previous administration.
- the failure to provide a replacement for the Dial & Ride community transport service, leaving many older and disabled residents isolated.

Under ‘Council believes’ insert two additional bullet points as follows:

- that before the Government grants the Combined Authority any new powers or funding it is likely to expect the Mayor to demonstrate real progress in delivering the Transport-related powers he already has;
- that the Mayor should commit to providing the funding needed to allow the phase 1 dualling of the York Outer Ring Road to proceed as originally planned, and to provide funding to support the reinstatement of a Dial & Ride service.

Under ‘Council resolves’ insert one additional bullet point as follows:

- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to Mayor David Skaith urging him to use his existing devolved powers and funding to enable the delivery of the York Outer Ring Road dualling scheme and the establishment of a replacement Dial & Ride service;

For information, the effect of the amendment on the above motion, with changes highlighted in bold:

Enhancing the Benefits of Devolution for York

Council notes:

- the establishment of York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority in 2023, marking the long-awaited start of meaningful devolution of funding and powers to our region;
- after years of lagging behind devolution deals in other parts of the country, new funding of over £23m has already been approved for York, including:
 - £4.5m through the *Brownfield Housing Fund* to progress schemes delivering affordable housing, including at Ordnance Lane and Lowfield Green;
 - Almost £3m through the *Net Zero Fund* for renewable energy schemes such as those at Alex Lyon House and Honeysuckle House;
 - £9.57m to schemes and initiatives, including affordable housing delivered by businesses and other organisations in the city;
- the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Investment Fund, worth £540m over 30 years, was unlocked through devolution, bringing lasting investment certainty to the region.
- **the concerning lack of progress in the delivery of key transport infrastructure projects across the city such as:**
 - **The York Outer Ring Road dualling scheme which has been delayed, scaled back and is now at risk due to a lack of funding**
 - **The long-promised Haxby Station which remains delayed, despite Government support and years of preparatory work under the previous administration.**

- **the failure to provide a replacement for the Dial & Ride community transport service, leaving many older and disabled residents isolated.**

Council further notes the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, brought forward by the Labour Government, paves the way for the biggest devolution of powers and funding in a generation through the creation of Strategic Authorities;

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Council believes:

- the Government's renewed focus on devolution represents a real shift of power and investment from Westminster that will help rebuild local economies and strengthen communities;
- local leaders know best what their regions need, and that bringing decision-making closer to York will help deliver better, faster outcomes for residents and businesses
- **that before the Government grants the Combined Authority any new powers or funding it is likely to expect the Mayor to demonstrate real progress in delivering the Transport-related powers he already has;**
- **that the Mayor should commit to providing the funding needed to allow the phase 1 dualling of the York Outer Ring Road to proceed as originally planned, and to provide funding to support the reinstatement of a Dial & Ride service.**

Council resolves to:

- **Ask the Leader of the Council to write to Mayor David Skaith urging him to use his existing devolved powers and funding to enable the delivery of the York Outer Ring Road dualling scheme and the establishment of a replacement Dial & Ride service;**
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- Support the Mayor's and Council Leaders' shared ambition to progress to Established Mayoral Strategic Authority status at pace, to unlock further devolved decision making and funding to benefit York; and
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