

People Scrutiny Committee

17 March 2026

Report of: The Director of Housing & Communities

Councillor Lomas –

Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects and Equalities

Councillor Pavlovic –

Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities

2026/27 Ward Funding Allocations

Summary

1. The 2026/27 individual Ward budget allocation is comprised of £250,000 to be allocated across the city, and this report outlines existing and potential models to inform making the split to wards. The Executive will be asked to approve the method of allocation of ward funding, considering the feedback and recommendations from this meeting of People Scrutiny Committee on the proposals.
2. New national deprivation data was released in Autumn 2025, as well as latest population data being available and therefore the models have been updated to reflect these changes.

Background

3. In 2024/25 and 2025/26 the financial allocation per ward was based upon, firstly a base split per ward by the number of councillors (£105k) and then a secondary split in each ward based on deprivation (£145k). The base amount per councillor ensures a minimum amount for each ward, which is then enhanced by analysis of depth of deprivation. It should be noted that there is an inherent skewing of the total amounts, reflecting the number of councillors per ward.
4. In 2024/25 and 2025/26, in order to allocate the £145k based on deprivation, the levels of need in all wards were assessed against the national Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). IMD scores and ranks each area, using seven different dimensions or domains, each of which is based on a basket of indicators. The data combines information from the domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation.

IMD is released at an LSOA (Lower Super Output Area) level, and the resulting overall Ward IMD scores are an area level aggregation of this relative measure of deprivation.

7 Domains of Index of Multiple Deprivation	
Income Deprivation	Crime
Employment Deprivation	Barriers to Housing and Services
Education, Skills & Training Deprivation	Living Environment Deprivation
Health Deprivation & Disability	

5. The 2024/25 and 2025/26 allocations were designed with the intention of using deprivation so that those wards with the highest scores (the more deprived wards) would have the greater funding allocations, noting:
 - National and local data suggests that wards with a higher population, generally, are the more deprived areas. Therefore, if deprivation is used as the main measure of allocation, there does not have to be a further normalisation of the data by population;
 - In 2023/24 an attempt was made to create a ward funding split based solely upon Council Plan indicators and EACH (Equalities & Human Rights, Affordability, Climate and Health) indicators. However as relatively few of the Council Plan indicators are available at ward level, a model which covers all 4 elements of EACH could not be created.

6. Further deprivation information has been released whereby The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD25) measure relative levels of deprivation in 33,755 small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), in England. Key changes for York are that:
 - The city has slightly higher deprivation: The IMD average score for York in 2025 is 11.81. A lower IMD score indicates lower relative deprivation. The score for York in 2019 was 11.73.
 - Slightly more people live in our top 20% deprived communities: In 2025, 6.23% of the population of York live in LSOAs which fall into the most deprived 20% nationally. In 2019 the figure was 4.61%.

7. The Population data used in the IMD 2025 data release was based on mid-year estimates 2022, however there has been further national releases of population data and therefore the models have been updated with the release (mid 2024 estimates - released 7th November).

Changes to levels of funding in existing allocation model (A) based on new deprivation data

8. Levels of deprivation have slightly changed in all communities in York, and this could mean that funding levels slightly change in every ward. There are 4 wards which have had changes of +/- £1k and the reasons for these are detailed below.

9. **Fulford Ward (increase in funding due to deprivation and population):** In between the release of the IMD data for 2019 and 2025, the LSOA E01013365 was split into E01034761 and E01034762 as the population increased, primarily, due to new housing developments. The population increased from 2,933 in 2019 to 3,644 in 2024. The new LSOAs have been scored as more deprived (2025 IMD score: 9.73 and 10.79 respectively).

10. The domains listed below show the changes in scores and national LSOA rankings, with the Crime, Income, Employment and Health domains showing relatively significant change. The data for the underlying indicators that make up the domain scores has not been released which prevents further analysis.

Fulford & Heslington		IMD Score	Income Score (rate)	Employment Score (rate)	Education, Skills and Training Score	Health Deprivation and Disability Score	Crime Score	Barriers to Housing and Services Score	Living Environment Score
	2019	4.77	0.02	0.02	4.31	-1.00	-1.98	23.12	14.89
	2025	10.19	0.16	0.08	5.60	-0.40	-0.22	17.48	13.84
	Average Rank	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Income Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Employment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Education, Skills and Training Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Health Deprivation and Disability Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Crime Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Barriers to Housing and Services Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Living Environment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)
Out of 32,844 LSOAs	2019	29,526	27,857	26,984	27,417	27,727	30,391	12,546	21,905
Out of 33,755 LSOAs	2025	24,658	20,059	22,035	27,657	21,956	19,722	21,133	20,899
Change in Rank (red more deprived)			-7,798	-4,950	240	-5,771	-10,670	8,587	-1,006

11. **Wheldrake Ward (increase in funding due to deprivation):** The population for Wheldrake has remained consistent as it was 4,131 in 2019 and 4,157 in 2024. The domains listed below show the changes in scores and national LSOA rankings, with the major changes being in the Barriers to Housing and Services Domain.

Wheldrake		IMD Score	Income Score (rate)	Employment Score (rate)	Education, Skills and Training Score	Health Deprivation and Disability Score	Crime Score	Barriers to Housing and Services Score	Living Environment Score
	2019	4.16	0.03	0.04	2.31	-0.92	-1.74	13.25	13.22
	2025	6.96	0.06	0.04	1.74	-0.91	-1.73	32.16	17.58
	Average Rank	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Income Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Employment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Education, Skills and Training Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Health Deprivation and Disability Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Crime Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Barriers to Housing and Services Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Living Environment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)
Out of 32,844 LSOAs	2019	30,386	29,747	28,372	30,420	28,042	31,959	21,641	21,224
Out of 33,755 LSOAs	2025	28,286	30,482	31,506	31,904	28,624	32,836	5,269	18,490
Change in Rank (red more deprived)			735	3,134	1,484	581	877	-16,372	-2,734

12. Heworth Without Ward (decrease in funding due to deprivation):

The population for Heworth Without has remained fairly consistent as it was 3,566 in 2019 and 3,800 in 2024. The domains listed below show the changes in scores and national LSOA rankings, with the major changes being across the Health, Education, Housing, Living Environment and Employment Domains.

Heworth Without		IMD Score	Income Score (rate)	Employment Score (rate)	Education, Skills and Training Score	Health Deprivation and Disability Score	Crime Score	Barriers to Housing and Services Score	Living Environment Score
	2019	5.09	0.03	0.03	6.60	-0.56	-1.33	15.77	14.04
	2025	2.99	0.06	0.04	2.52	-0.86	-1.61	16.00	6.84
	Average Rank	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Income Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Employment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Education, Skills and Training Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Health Deprivation and Disability Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Crime Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Barriers to Housing and Services Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Living Environment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)
Out of 32,844 LSOAs	2019	30,632	30,546	28,885	26,860	22,840	32,186	18,146	23,491
Out of 33,755 LSOAs	2025	32,382	30,856	32,100	30,856	27,098	32,759	21,795	26,962
Change in Rank (red more deprived)			310	3,215	3,996	4,258	573	3,649	3,471

13. Dringhouses and Woodthorpe (decrease in funding due to deprivation):

The population for Dringhouses and Woodthorpe has remained fairly consistent as it was 11,566 in 2019 and 11,617 in 2024. The domains listed below show the changes in scores and national LSOA rankings, with the major changes being across the Housing and Living Environment Domains.

Options Analysis 2 - Changing level of base funding on Model A

15. This option analysis shows what the allocations might look like if the overall level of funding remained the same, but that the level of councillor funding was reduced, and subsequently the level of deprivation funding was increased.
16. The following scenarios have been modelled and the outputs of this are at Annex C.

	Deprivation Funding	Councillor Funding	To Allocate: 2026/27	% Deprivation Funding of Total
Model A	£145,000	£105,000	£250,000	58%
Model A (2)	£150,000	£100,000	£250,000	60%
Model A (3)	£162,500	£87,500	£250,000	65%
Model A (4)	£175,000	£75,000	£250,000	70%
Model A (5)	£187,500	£62,500	£250,000	75%
Model A (6)	£200,000	£50,000	£250,000	80%
Model A (7)	£250,000	£0	£250,000	100%

17. The increase in the proportion of the funding to deprivation, means that any wards with greater levels of deprivation will get more funding. As seen in Annex C, as you move through the models the level of funding to deprived communities increase as the proportion of money allocated to deprivation increases. An example for the most ward with most deprivation, Westfield, is shown below:

Ward	Model A	Model A (2)	Model A (3)	Model A (4)	Model A (5)	Model A (6)	Model A (7)
Westfield	£24,509.67	£24,804.58	£25,541.84	£26,279.09	£27,016.35	£27,753.62	£30,702.66

Proposed changes to other arrangements

18. Other proposals that could be considered to enhance the flexibilities around ward funding are described below for discussion:
- **Structured ward funding bid programmes** held on a quarterly basis followed by City Wide Funding releases. This will be aligned within the York Neighbourhood Model so that funding could be directed to identified local priorities between wards. This would enable the Neighbourhood leads (current Community Involvement Officers) to work efficiently, help ward councillors look strategically at need and feed city wide bids from the ward funding activity, potentially releasing ward funds for further opportunities locally. There however would be the ability for ward councillors to opt in or out of funding rounds.
 - **Flexibility to carry forward projects and funding at year end:**
 - a) To continue to allow approved projects not yet started to be carried forward into the new financial year (this has been in place since 2024/25); and
 - b) To allow 20% of the year's budget to be carried over at the end of the financial year so if there is insufficient funding for an application at year end, it can be topped up from the following year.

Consultation

19. People Scrutiny feedback will inform this section of the following Executive report.

Options

20. The scrutiny committee is asked to consider all the options in the report and make recommendations to the Executive.

Analysis

21. The evaluation of each option is outline in the report

Council Plan

22. One City, for All, the Council Plan 2023 – 27 sets out a strong ambition to increase opportunities for everyone living in York to live healthy and fulfilling lives. The ward budgets enable community capacity to be built, reflecting coproduction with residents on the agreement of local priorities and the codesign of local projects, alongside the funding of many local voluntary and community sector organisations, helping to build inclusive, strong and thriving communities. Furthermore, applications to the ward grants must demonstrate how projects will meet the four council plan core commitments of Affordability, Environment, Equalities and Human Rights, and Health Inequalities.
23. At April 2024 Executive it was agreed that ward funding totalling £250,000 is composed of the following elements:
 - allocate a minimum Ward Budget for Members to spend on priorities in their neighbourhood action plans that correspond with those of the council's core commitments;
 - introduce a second element based on need (via deprivation).
 - In addition create a single pot of funding for multiple and/or 'city wide' applications (an additional amount of £100,000).

Implications

24.

- **Financial**
There are no direct financial implications for this report as the £250,000 ward budget will remain the same, however there might be a different allocation across the wards should the Executive choose to agree a different option, to the current option A.
- **Human Resources**
There are no human resources implications from this report.
- **Legal**
There are no legal implications from this report.
- **Crime and Disorder** There are no crime and disorder implications from this report.

- **Equalities and Human Rights**
 - a) The Council recognises, and needs to take into account its Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it in the exercise of a public authority's functions).
 - b) Consideration of deprivation data through the analysis of the IMD will provide information to help inform how equalities and human rights issues are considered by Members and residents through the neighbourhood planning process and responded to through the codesign of social action projects. This will enable equalities, human rights and inclusion issues to be responded to more directly, enabling more equitable and inclusive communities, where the conditions are created for all residents to achieve positive outcomes.
- **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications in this report
- **Property** There are no direct property implications of this report
- **Other** *N/A*

Risk Management

25. Whilst there are no direct risks outlined in this report, it is worth noting that allocations could go up or down for wards as a result of any change in mechanism should the Executive implement any change in approach.

Recommendations

26. The People Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the content of the report, the options presented and consider if they wish to recommend maintaining the existing model A or recommend another model from the options outlined in the report.

Reason: In order to provide feedback before the Executive approves the method of allocation of ward funding.

Contact Details

Authors:

Pauline Stuchfield
Director of Housing &
Communities

Ian Cunningham
Head of Business
Intelligence

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Pauline Stuchfield
Director of Housing & Communities

**Report
Approved**



Date 5 March 2026

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Executive 18th April 2024

<https://modgov.york.gov.uk/documents/s175761/Ward%20Funding%20Executive%20Report%20April%2018.pdf>

Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee 18th March 2024

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s174393/Ward%20Funding%20CSMC%2018%20March.pdf>

Full Council 20th July 2023

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s168967/Report%20of%20Executive%20Member.pdf>

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s168969/Annex%20-%20Ward%20Budgets%202023-27.pdf>

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 published on YorkOpenData

<https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/indices-of-multiple-deprivation>

Annexes

None.

Abbreviations

EACH	Equalities & Human Rights, Affordability, Climate and Health
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
IoD25	English Indices of Multiple Deprivation
K	Thousand
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area