

## Notice of a public meeting of

### Decision Session - Combined Executive Member Decision Session

**To:** Councillors Pavlovic, Webb, Douglas, Kent, Kilbane, Lomas, Steels-Walshaw and K Taylor

**Date:** Tuesday, 2 September 2025

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Venue:** West Offices - Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

## AGENDA

### **Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:**

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item\* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00pm on 9 September 2025**.

\*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any items that are called in will be considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5:00pm on 29 August 2025**.

#### **1. Appointing a Chair**

To confirm arrangements for chairing the meeting as follows:

Councillor XXX – All standard agenda items 1-4.  
Councillor XXX – Agenda item 5 – Financial Inclusion/Welfare  
Benefits Outturn 2024/25 and progress 2025/26

Councillor XXX – Agenda item 6 – Public Space Protection Order  
City Centre Consultation

Councillor XXX – Agenda item 7 –Public Space Protection Order  
Union Terrace and Clarence Gardens Consultation

Councillor XXX – Agenda item X – Urgent Business -

## 2. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive and note apologies for absence.

## 3. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members and co-opted members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

(1)Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:

<b>Type of Interest</b>	<b>You Must</b>
<i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i>	<i>Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i> <b>OR</b> <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; speak on the item only if the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>

<p><i>Other Registrable Interests (Affects)</i>  <b>OR</b>  <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)</i></p>	<p><i>Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote unless the matter affects the financial interest or well-being:</i>  <i>(a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and</i>  <i>(b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item only if the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i></p>
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(2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.

(3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

#### **4. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee. Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Friday 29 August 2025.

To register to speak please visit [www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings](http://www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings) to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

## Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at [www.york.gov.uk/webcasts](http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts).

**5. Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits Outturn (Pages 7 - 70)  
2024/25 and progress 2025/26**

This report provides details on the Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits outturn report for 2024/25 and ongoing work in 2025/26.

**6. Public Space Protection Order City Centre (Pages 71 - 78)  
Consultation**

This report presents the option to agree to proceed to public consultations on the potential extension of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle the problems caused by groups of people within the city walls.

**7. Public Space Protection Order Union Terrace and Clarence Gardens Consultation (Pages 79 - 86)**

This report presents to option to agree to proceed to public consultations on the potential extension of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle the problems caused by groups of people within the area bordering Union Terrace, Clarence Street Gardens and the Groves.

**8. Urgent Business**

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

For more information about any of the following please contact the
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Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

## Alternative formats

If you require this document in an alternative language or format (e.g. large print, braille, Audio, BSL or Easy Read) you can:



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এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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<b>Meeting:</b>	Combined Executive Member Decision Session
<b>Meeting date:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> September
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Housing and Communities
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education

## **Decision Report:**

## **Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits Outturn 2024/25**

### **Subject of Report**

1. This report provides the Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion and the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education with the Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits outturn report 2024/25 and ongoing work in 2025/26.
2. The Council has committed to developing a 10-year city-wide anti-poverty strategy in 2025. Our ambition is to fight poverty in York and its impacts now and in the future. Looking to establish the conditions that would make the city of York a healthier, fairer, more affordable, more sustainable and more accessible place, where everyone feels valued, creating more regional opportunities to help today's residents and benefit future generations.
3. The consultation process on the draft strategy is underway. The Strategy links activity against causes of poverty with three strategic objectives, set to different "horizons":
  - i Tackling poverty today;
  - ii Preventing people from falling into poverty;
  - iii Creating long-lasting change.

4. This long-term strategy builds on the continuing activities across the council and City, along with voluntary and community sector partners and others, to support and enable residents in financial difficulties and affected by the ongoing economic environment. This report (Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits Outturn 2024/25) provides an update on this financial inclusion (FI) activity during 2024/25 including:
  - the financial support available to residents dealing with the challenges of the increased cost living in 2024/25;
  - an update on benefits statistics and performance administered by the council including the York Financial Assistance Scheme; and
  - other areas of support for residents which support financial inclusion and stability including:
    - Community, housing, advice, information, signposting and communications.
    - Digital inclusion activities; and
    - Delivery of the financial inclusion grant schemes.

## **Benefits and Challenges**

5. The Cost of Living along with other factors such as Housing costs, availability, and NHS capacity is continuing to have a detrimental effect on residents in the city, impacting on health and well-being; with increasing numbers of residents needing financial support and presenting with vulnerabilities and complex needs. Welfare benefits and broader community support are complicated for people to navigate, and the systems rely on people managing their own claims and having access to digital resources.
6. The challenges facing the local authority and community sector partners also impact the amount, level and range of support they are able to provide. It is more important than ever that we are able to work together to make the best use of all our resources to support residents and build resilient and vibrant communities. This report summarises these impacts and action the council and partners are taking to help support residents in these increasingly challenging times.



## Policy Basis for Decision

7. Financial Inclusion and welfare benefits continue to be key to meeting the aims of the Council Plan for 2023 to 2027, 'One City For All' which sets out the council's priorities and details what steps will be taken over the next 4 years to establish conditions which make the city of York a healthier, fairer, more affordable, more sustainable and more accessible place, where everyone feels valued, creating more regional opportunities to help today's residents and benefit future generations. The four core commitments of the plan are:
  - Equalities and Human Rights - Equality of opportunity
  - Affordability - Tackling the cost-of-living crisis
  - climate - Environment and the climate emergency
  - Health - Health and wellbeing.

## Financial Strategy Implications

8. This report has no direct implications with regards to the council's financial strategy. York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS), the council's social fund saw high demand early in 2024/25 requiring a cap in terms of monthly spend and individual awards for the 2024/25 year through an officer decision taken on 3 July 2024:  
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7156>

## Recommendation and Reasons

9. The Executive Members are asked to:
  - i. Note and comment on the details of this report regarding providing support to residents affected by the impacts of the continuing high cost of living.
  - ii. Delegate any decision-making relating to the Government's expected Crisis and Resilience Fund (details awaited) requirements to the Director of Finance (s151) in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion.  
 Reason: *to ensure councillors, residents and stakeholder groups are aware of the ongoing financial inclusion activity across the city. To ensure the council reacts quickly to any new government*

*scheme that supports residents without delay. The show the use of funding including cost of living support and their impacts.*

## Background

10. The council's core commitments provide a vision of a healthier, fairer, more affordable, more sustainable, and more accessible city where everyone feels valued. They inform the decisions we make, and describe how we then work with partners, residents, businesses and communities to deliver our priorities.
11. In May 2025, there were 2,675 households that were in relative poverty including 1,820 children within the city. Relative income poverty<sup>1</sup> used in these calculations is defined as Households whose income is less than 60% of current median income.
12. In May 2025 8225 households were receiving Council Tax Support or Housing Benefit, these households include 2919 children. 56% are working age households. 44% are pensioner households.
13. Annex A shows a snapshot of demographic data and poverty matrix for York based on the cohort of 8,225 households receiving council tax support and housing benefit in May 2025. This background information helps in understanding the level of the challenge in the city that the council's welfare benefit resource has to support.
14. The needs of residents are broader and more complex than in the past. The ONS 'dimensions of deprivation' used to classify households<sup>2</sup> are indicators based on four selected household characteristics – Education, Employment, Health and Housing in York:
  - a. 32.7% of households are deprived in one dimension,
  - b. 11.1% of households are deprived in two dimensions
  - c. 2.2% of households are deprived in three dimensions
15. The council provides a range of local welfare support to residents through the York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS), Council Tax

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<sup>1</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07096/SN07096.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/population/household-deprivation/hh-deprivation/household-is-deprived-in-one-dimension?lad=E06000014>

Support (CTS) and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). The Household Support Fund (HSF) from Government also provides financial resources to support residents with the pressures they are facing due to the increases in cost-of-living. The council continues to operate a food and fuel voucher scheme open to all residents.

16. Council departments continue to work in close partnership with voluntary and community organisations to co-ordinate, make the best use of the resources and effectively support residents. The council has continued to learn from experiences and those of residents, partners and from areas across the region and wider country.
17. Table 1 below sets out the YFAS, HSF grants and CYC Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme spend provided across the 2024/25 period:

**Table 1. Discretionary support schemes**

<b>Discretionary support schemes</b>	<b>Spend 2024/25</b>	<b>No of awards</b>
YFAS scheme	£231,036	408
HSF 5 & 6 Discretionary Grants Scheme	£162,439	1,114
HSF 5 direct payments working age CTS customers	£507,840	4,545
HSF 6 direct payments working age CTS customers	£398,130	3,426
Food & Fuel Vouchers 24-25	£203,598	3,294
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,503,043</b>	<b>12,787</b>

## **York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS)**

18. The YFAS scheme was established in April 2013, following the transfer of responsibility (and initially funding) from central government. The former national scheme, delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), was part of the Social Fund. YFAS is now fully funded and locally administered by the council and can assist residents to stay or move into the community or with emergencies.
19. The full YFAS statistics are set out at Annex B. The CYC budget for YFAS has remained at the same level in 2024/25 as the previous year. Funding from the Household Support Fund was allocated to support increased demand in 2024/25.

20. In 2024/25 1,030 YFAS applications were received. 187 less applications than 2023/24. This continues the overall trend in decreasing YFAS applications. However, overall support has increased via alternative sources including the Household Support Fund (HSF) and the CYC Food & Fuel Voucher Scheme.
21. The demand for YFAS support to people requesting resettlement packages rose throughout 2024/25. In July 2024 the estimated outturn spend was projected to be 235%. Early action was taken to reduce grants for resettlement to £500, limit the number of claims to 1 a year (from 2) and to cap the monthly YFAS spend to £20,000.
22. Consultations and follow up meetings took place with housing support workers, to explain and discuss the impacts of the limits. The number of overall applications reduced as support worker and residents made applications to other funders for support. However, feedback from some support workers said this had a significant impact on some residents. Resettlement grants have been reviewed again for 25/26 based on the applications and feedback received in 24/25.

## **Household Support Fund (HSF)**

23. The Government first announced the Household Support Fund (HSF) for families in financial need in October 2021 following legacy coronavirus family support funds. The Household Support Fund was introduced to support households in the most need with food, energy, and water bills. It could also be used to support households with essential costs related to these items and with wider essential costs where appropriate. HSF schemes have been one off temporary fixed term schemes each with slightly different criteria but all with the same theme of Food, Energy & Water.
24. The Household Support Fund 5 (HSF5). covered the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024 inclusive. City of York Council received £1.037m of the £421m fund to support its qualifying residents with meeting immediate needs and help for those who are struggling to afford household essentials including energy and water bills, food, and wider essentials.
25. On 2 September 2024 the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced that the Household Support Fund (HSF5) would be

extended for six months, from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 (HASF6) HSF6 provided a further £1,077m in funding.

*Types of support and eligible spend (extract)*

*The Fund is expected to support vulnerable households with energy, food and water costs, and wider essentials, and Authorities should prioritise support which offers immediate impact to those in need. Support can be delivered through cash, vouchers or in kind. There is no prescriptive list which provides a comprehensive definition of eligible spend, but it may include spend on:*

- *Energy and Water.*
- *Food.*
- *Essentials linked to energy, water and food.*
- *Wider essentials.*
- *Advice services.*
- *Preventative Support.*
- *Housing costs.*
- *Administrative Costs and Scheme Evaluation*

26. Following on from previous HSF schemes support was provided through direct payments to residents, discretionary applications and direct grants for advice and support. In terms of direct payments £900K was paid to approximately 4,000 qualifying families in two payments directly into their bank accounts across the year. A full breakdown of all payments is as set out in Table 2 below:
27. Two HSF direct payments were made to working age customers as shown in the table below. One £110 payment directly on to Council Tax accounts, reducing payments for the whole year and one £115 payment in December 24 into customer bank accounts. Over 4500 households received these payments
28. 1,114 people received discretionary HSF grants totalling £162,439. See Annex C for more details.

**Table 2. Household Support Fund 5 & 6**

	HSF 5	HSF 6
Support with Council Tax for working age CTS customers.	£500k	£500k
Discretionary application scheme	£200k	£180k
Food & Fuel Vouchers	200k	£70k
Advice and support to maximise income and promote take-up of unclaimed benefits	0	£80k

Community food support	£40k	£40k
Warm places support		£40k
Administration including support for two Talk money campaigns.	£50k	£60k
York Energy Advice	£10k	£10k
Benefit Take Up LIFT (Para 36)	0	£30
Contingency	£37k	£30k

### **CYC Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme**

29. The York Fuel and Food Voucher scheme was set up in January 2022. The scheme has continued as part of the CYC Household Support Fund. The scheme provides food and fuel vouchers delivered through advice support workers from both CYC and charity /voluntary sector. It is an important element of the scheme that these are provided to York residents affected by poverty and debt alongside the provision of information and advice on benefits and other longer-term support.
30. Applications can only be considered as part of an overall financial capability advice or support assessment, by phone or face to face, including as appropriate benefits checks and other information about reducing out goings, e.g. social tariffs for broadband, energy efficiency measures.
31. If people need assistance with food and do not want a referral/signposting to a support service or this is not appropriate, they are directed to other food support including:
- York Financial Assistance Scheme,
  - York Food Bank or
  - community food support.

More information is available at [www.york.gov.uk/HelpWithFood](http://www.york.gov.uk/HelpWithFood) .

32. Approved voucher applications are sent electronically directly to the resident by text or email. Households can receive a maximum of 3 food vouchers and 3 fuel voucher awards from the scheme during 2024/25.
33. There are 7 external support service partners in the scheme from the charity/voluntary sector, plus CYC teams including Local Area Coordinators, Benefits & Contributions Advisors, and Housing

Management Officers. Over 80 support workers are registered to process applications to award vouchers. Over 3200 vouchers were issued in 2024/25 as set out at Table 3 below. Details of awards are summarised in Annex D.

**Table 3. Food and Fuel vouchers**

	<b>No of vouchers</b>	<b>Cost including admin fee</b>
Food vouchers	1,683	£135,110
Fuel vouchers	1,611	£69,529

### **Benefit Take Up & Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) data platform**

34. Funding from the Household Support Fund has been used to continue the partnership with Policy in Practice to use their Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) platform and Benefits Calculator to support the council's financial inclusion work. LIFT is a web based interactive tool that combines a comprehensive welfare policy analytics engine with local authority administrative data to drive strategic and operational decisions and activity. The tool supports councils through providing interactive dashboards to identify financially struggling residents at street level, design appropriate interventions, and track the effectiveness of these interventions.
35. Since 2024 the income services, and Communities team have launched the following campaigns:
  - Targeted Pension Credit take up campaign in partnership with Age UK York and OCAY:
    - o Households with care packages
    - o Households without care packages
  - Improving visibility of pensioner debts: through bringing in adult social care debts data for a single view of household debts
  - Launch of York Real-time Analysis of Poverty indicators in partnership with University of York and Policy in Practice
  - Place-based targeted campaigns for working aged residents due to migrate onto Universal Credit
36. Following the Government's changes to the Winter Fuel Payment criteria in Autumn 2024, linking it to Pension Credit, using LIFT data

we were able to identify 470 York households who could be missing out on Pension Credit. The Income Services team followed up with 150 households who already had contact with Adult Social Care teams. During October, November & December 2023 the council contacted 320 households by letter providing information and offer of support. In February 25 a further 260 were sent out.

37. Benefits advisers funded via HSF, both within CYC and VCS partners were used to follow up letters sent out and support people to claim eligible benefits.
38. This approach has been successful with more than 231 pensioners claiming £1.7m in Pension Credit and winter fuel payments up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 25.

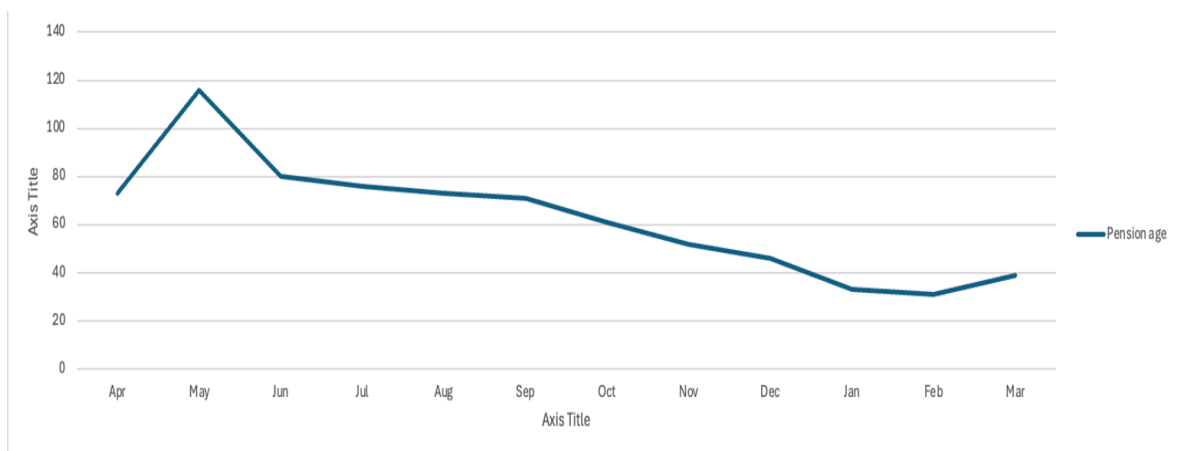
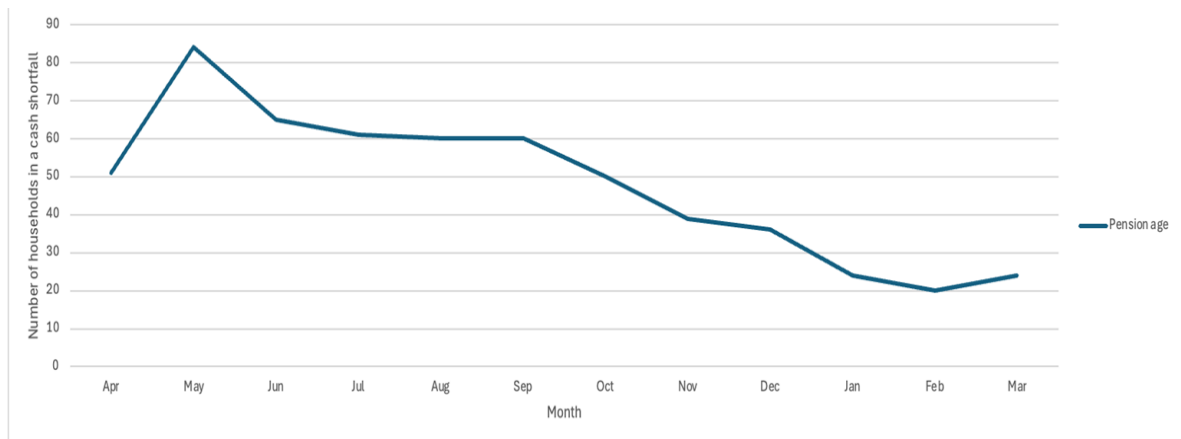
Measures	Totals	Households with care packages	Households without care packages
Number of people claiming PC	<b>246</b>	83	163
Annual PC	<b>£1,402,670</b>	£489,728	£912,942
Backdated PC	<b>£338,866</b>	£72,702	£266,163
Winter Fuel Payments	<b>£49,200</b>	£16,600	£32,600
Total support in first year	<b>£1,790,736</b>	£579,031	£1,211,705
<b>Lifetime amount</b>	<b>£10,638,225</b>	£2,873,707	£7,764,517

39. These income gains have had wider impacts on pensioners in York. Research and evidence show that people receiving additional benefit income shop locally and take part in activities, boosting their local community too.
40. Every £1 spent on LIFT generated an additional £50 of income to pensioners in York the charts below show the overall impact:

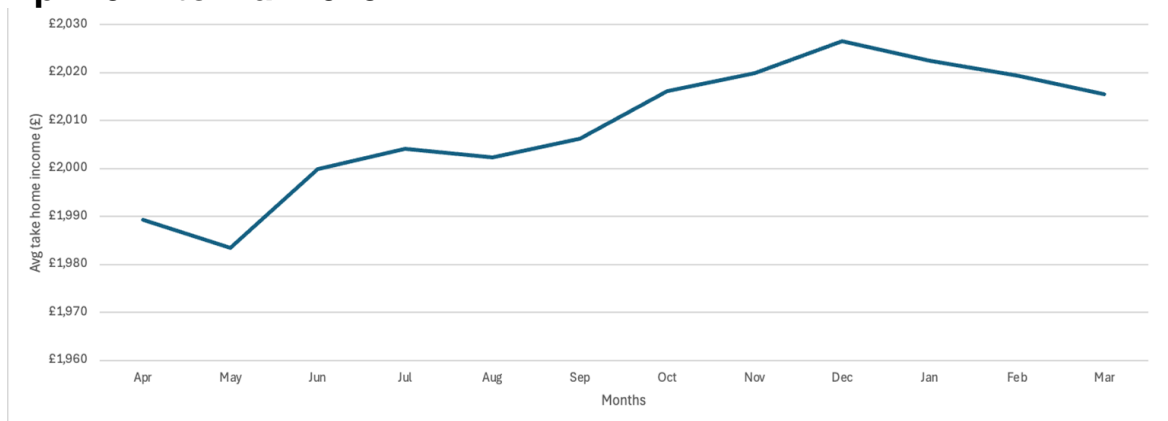


## Change in pensioners with negative budgets between Apr 2024 to Mar 2025

## Change in pensioners living in food poverty between Apr 2024 to Mar 2025



## Change in take home income for pensioners in campaign between Apr 2024 to Mar 2025



41. Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) data shows Pension Credit numbers for York in the table below:

Pension Credit Numbers York

**Pension Credit (PC) – latest data Nov 24**

<b>Elements of PC</b>	<b>Guarantee Credit only</b>	<b>Both Guarantee and Savings Credit</b>	<b>Savings Credit only</b>	<b>Total</b>
Nov 2023	1,232	1,040	507	2,781
Nov 2024	1,317	481	1,037	2,835

42. The council have started to use this joint approach to offer support to working age residents who are identified through LIFT as being in arrears and/or missing out on benefits, such as Council Tax Support, Universal Credit, reduced tariffs for water and energy, and other discretionary support.

**Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)**

43. The council received £163.9k in government funding for DHPs for 2024/25. All the government allocation was spent providing 163 DHP awards. Table 5 below shows the 2024/25 spend and number of applications received (see also Annex B).

**Table 5. Discretionary Housing Payment**

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total DHP Fund available	£164,640	£163,991	£163,991
Amount spent	£175,195	£163,991	£163,991
Percentage	107%	100%	100%
DHP applications received	308	312	386
Number of DHPs awarded	258	195	163

**Council Tax Support (CTS)**

44. The number of CTS awards amongst working age residents has continued to decline as shown in Table 6 below. CTS claims, however, are still comparatively lower than Universal Credit (UC) claims and claims for pensioners has fallen again indicating that not all qualifying residents (Working age & Pension age) are making claims. Support and advice for pension age claimants are now being targeted by using data from the LIFT platform to help residents maximise their benefits.

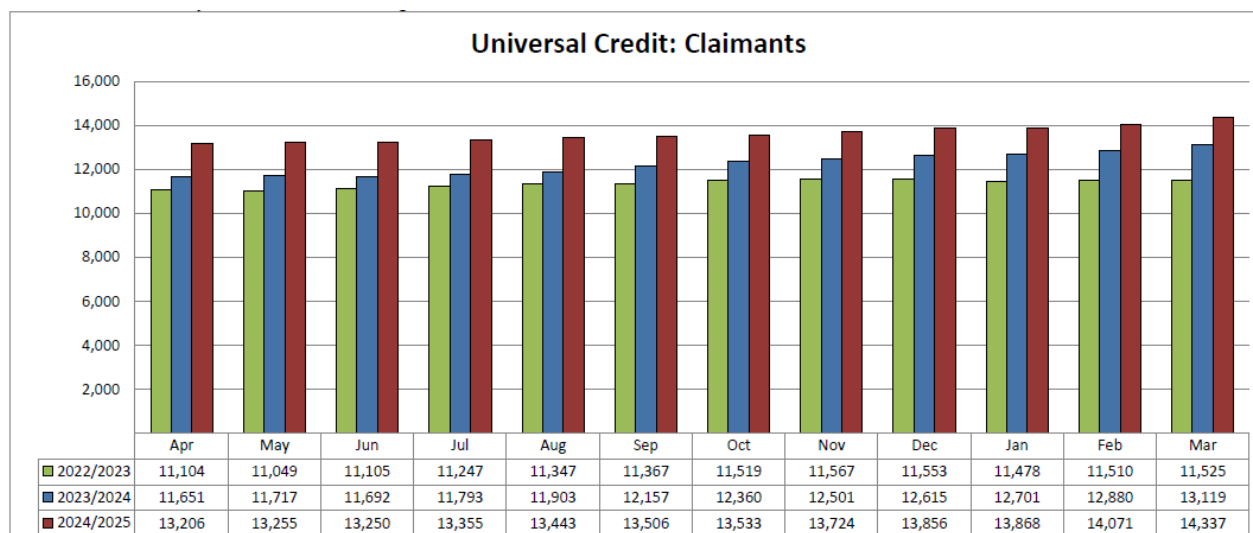
**Table 6. Council Tax Support Caseload**

<b>Council Tax caseload</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Working age</b>	<b>Pensioners</b>	<b>Total</b>
March 2020		4,682	4,034	8,716
March 2021		5,512	3,887	9,399
March 2022		4,685	3,735	8,420
March 2023		4,446	3,572	8,018
March 2024		4,218	3,450	7,668
March 2025		4,183	3,378	7,561

## Universal Credit (UC)

45. Table 7 below sets out the number of residents claiming Universal Credit, both those in work and those who are looking for work or a unable to work due to ill-health or caring responsibilities. The large difference between the numbers reflects the increasing number of residents who are reliant on benefits whilst been in employment.
46. Some people will be better off following the move to UC, whilst others will be worse off. Many people have or are seeking advice and support to make their new claims and transition to their new circumstances.

**Table 7: Total Universal Credit Claimants in York**



## Work of Welfare Benefits Officers

47. The Income Services Team through its Benefits and Contributions officers have provided advice and support to 321 residents and

generated additional welfare benefit gains of £1,569,557.98 in 2024/25.

48. Policy in Practice (PiP) research shows that helping carers with additional income enables them to care for longer, so then delaying or reducing care costs councils may have to pick up. Taking an average care package cost of £30,000 per household, this research suggests that councils can avoid or delay an additional £210,000 in care costs per household.

## **Information, signposting, and communications**

49. It is increasingly important that residents know about what support is available if they are struggling financially and where to get advice and assistance to secure/apply for benefits, grants and other financial support. There have been several changes to the HSF and other discretionary support, as well as national benefit changes and managed migration.
50. Consistent feedback from residents tells us people do not know where to look or go for information, advice and support when they are having financial difficulties. To help with this York Talk Money campaigns have continued to raise awareness and to support people struggling financially. The Advice York partners have worked together across 3 campaigns in 24/25:
- Monday 8 July to Friday 19 July 2024
  - Monday 4 November to Friday 15 November 2024
  - Monday 20 January to 31 January 2024
51. These campaigns include social media, newsletters, events, and signposting to resource. This includes advice and support from partners: Older Citizens Advocacy York, York Energy Advice, Stop Loan Sharks, and Community First Credit Union.
52. The council continues to work with the Independent Food Aid Network to develop the 'Worrying About Money' guide. This has been distributed across the city including libraries, community centres and support services.

## **Early Support Fund**

53. The Early Support Fund is an externally funded small fund available to Local Area Coordinators (LACs), Housing Management Officers and Community teams to support residents who face additional barriers, such as people with long term health needs, families, older people, and single people in private rented accommodation. A key focus is on homelessness and debt prevention, including those in rent and council tax arrears.
54. The Belfry Catalyser Fund awarded £15,000 in July 2023 for this purpose. The Early Support Fund can provide a flexible grant to families identified as needing assistance to improve their overall financial position and reduce inequalities created by or exacerbated by the negative effects of the increased cost of living. This grant is one small part of an overall action plan to secure the longer-term financial security, social inclusion, and wellbeing of residents. In this way it will contribute to creating resilient citizens and communities. Early Support Grants are not emergency grants. Where there is an emergency, applications should be made to York Financial Assistance Scheme.
55. The fund is being run jointly across Local Area Coordinators, Housing and Communities. A new online application process with the web went live in September 2022. This joint approach has worked well and demonstrated collaborative working across departments. Table 9 & 10 below provides details of how the funding has been spent across 2024/25.
56. Continuation of funding has been secured from The Purey Cust Trust who have awarded an initial £1500, with an agreement to provide further funding beyond this initial grant.

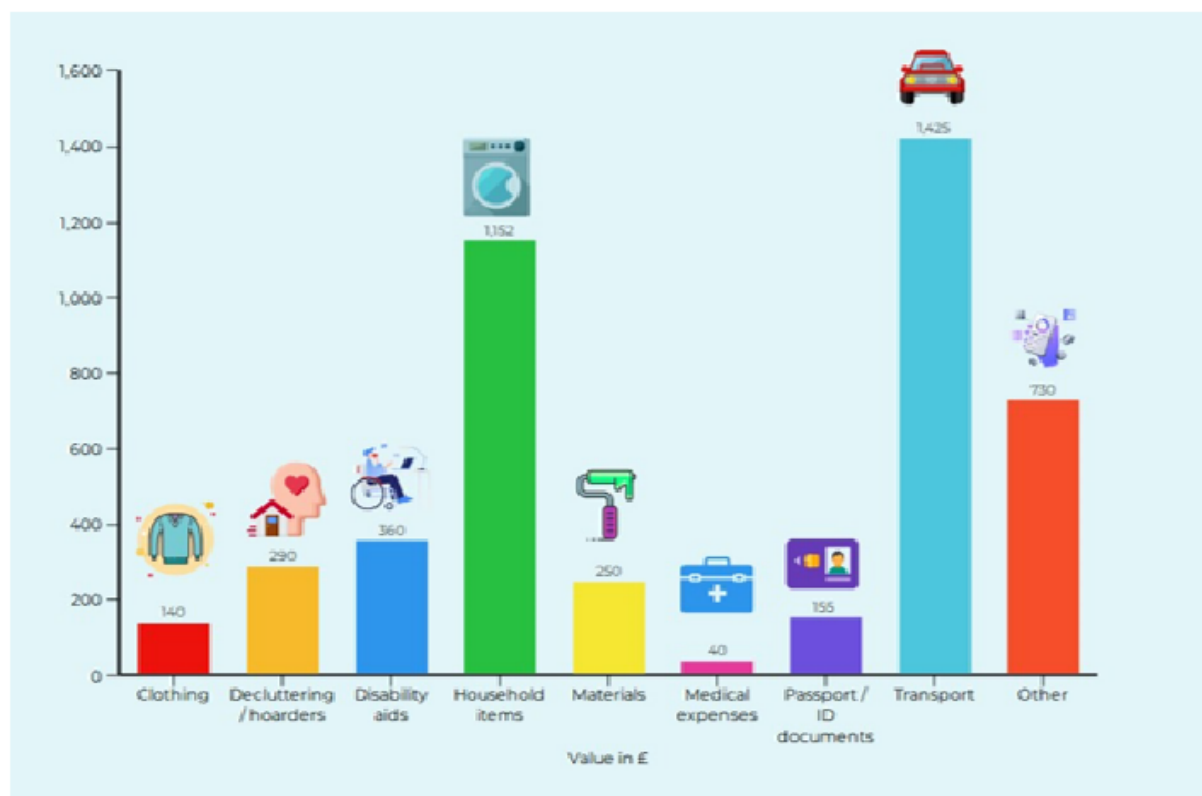
**Table 9 – Details of Early Support Fund applications**

## Apr 2024 to Mar 2025



Table 10 – Types of grants

## Opportunities Fund Apr 2024 to Mar 2025



## Council Tax Debt Project

57. Following on from the report and recommendations in March 2024<sup>3</sup>, a joint application with University of York was submitted to abrdn Financial Fairness Trust <https://www.financialfairness.org.uk/en-gb/> to undertake a project to improve support for people who fall behind on their bills by: (i) rigorously testing the impact of offering debt advice through a randomised control trial, and (ii) co-creating improved collection practices. Unfortunately, this application was not successful.
58. As a result of the work on the bid £10k alternative funding has been secured through University of York to undertake a smaller pilot. The project will test a pre-reminder letter which will offer information, advice and support to a sample of residents in Council Tax arrears, supported by HSF funded advice provision.
59. The council recognises that non-payment/arrears of council tax can indicate residents are facing other issues in their lives for example other debts, and complex health and/or family relationship problems. If the council can get a better understanding of all the issues including council tax debt and offer broader wrap-around support this could provide longer term benefits for residents, prevent further debt, improve wellbeing, reduce administration and lead to more resilient and positive personal and community outcomes.
60. The project will implement the recommendations to help residents affected by debt and address the broader linked issues within communities:
- To set up a multi-agency debt group including community sector partners – to establish support and understanding of all the issues being raised by residents.
  - To potentially establish Debt surgeries at West Offices following issue of Council Tax (CT) reminders – there is little resource for one-to-one support across the city so establishing a surgery with partners may help in dealing with a larger number of residents issues.

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<sup>3</sup> [Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion - Tuesday, 19 March 2024 10.00 am](#)

- To issue text messages to all residents getting CT reminders about continuing to pay something and inviting them to attend a debt surgery, in order to prevent residents getting further into arrears through the recovery process and provide broader advice and support.
- To review the wording on CT reminders and summons and pilot alternative wording to see if there is any beneficial effect. This also responds to and supports recent comments from the Poverty Truth Commission.

### **Community Based Activities**

61. The Communities Team continues to support community hubs across the city. The Good Place Network, brings together those individuals and groups running community hubs, venues and food projects across the city. This network has continued to grow in membership. The Communities Team supports and facilitates meetings and regularly shares information updates on campaigns, resources, funding, good practice and volunteer development opportunities.
62. An example of the work undertaken is attached at Annex E which showcases the Christmas/Winter 2024/25 activities undertaken in partnership. With the help of volunteers, local organisations and businesses, thousands of food parcels, toiletries, toys, books, and games were distributed to vulnerable families and children across York last Winter. Families also attended festive events where they could choose gifts and essentials, and take home bags of food—organised and promoted by Community Officers, often in partnership with the Good Places Network.

### **Food Sufficiency and Holidays Activities and Food (HAF)**

63. The Community Officers and the Holiday Activity & Food (HAF) Programme Coordinator continue to work together to ensure maximum benefit from available resources. They ensure that activity providers and the Good Place Network members have up to date information in order to fulfill their requirement to signpost families to support. Through visits and post programme monitoring they gather feedback from providers and participants on emerging themes and current challenges facing families as well as ensuring quality provision. Community Officers work with ward members to develop and fund free universal access to further develop the holiday activity



offer across the city often linking local food projects up with activity providers to further enhance what is available to families and showcase what is on offer year round. Also directly running activities to add capacity into the system and address identified gaps in provision.

64. In relation to National Benchmarking, York doubled its reach:
- Easter 2024 – National average reach 14.3%; York reach 29.7%
  - Summer 2024 – National average reach 21.5%; York reach 41.4%
  - Christmas 2024 - National average reach 10.7%; York reach 21.6%.

Feedback from Childcare Works was that York's HAF reach is near optimal when comparing it to others in terms of quality and available funding. Nationally the percentage of good/excellent provider scores were 80.03%; York's were 100%.

65. In total, the council distributed £417,624 in direct grants for the HAF 2024/2025 programme. Grants were awarded to 32 organisations offering a wide range of activities across the city including sport, arts and theatre, cooking and healthy living, day trips, and much more. One new and noteworthy partnership is with the National Railway Museum, who offered discounted tickets for families to experience their new Wonderlab exhibition. Not only was it popular with York families, but data following the provision showed that at least one child or young person from every ward accessed this activity. Relationships were also built with the asylum seeker families living and going to school in the City, making sure that integrated activities were available for those children and young people.

66. Despite a tight timeline following the announcement of continued HAF funding, the following Easter programme (within the 2025/26 financial year) attracted many applications. The growth of York's programme has meant that a high-quality and diverse programme can be offered that is also cost-effective. There were 6,250 places offered over Easter 2025, which were spread across the city, with greater emphasis on areas with higher numbers of free school meal eligible. There has been increased involvement from schools, with partnerships forming between activity providers and the schools themselves. For example, United Education has collaborated with Clifton Green Primary School, one of our schools with the highest

proportions of free school meal eligible, to deliver a multi-activity camp at St Peter's School, which offers excellent swimming facilities. Quotes from families:

'As a parent, it's such a relief to have a place that I know I can take my kids over the holidays and know they are not only safe but having a great time. My son made some new friends and said he couldn't wait to go again.'

'There were so many great things over the summer, and my daughter signed up for a lot of different activities! She had always wanted to try gymnastics, but the classes can be expensive. I love that this has given her a chance to try new things out.'

## Digital Inclusion

67. The cost-of-living crisis has continued to highlight the importance of digital inclusion and the inequalities face by those without access to training, equipment and/or connectivity. Without IT equipment and/or internet access the following is now more difficult:

- making new or managing benefits claims for vital support;
- accessing online discounts for essential household costs, fuel, insurance, phones, for example;
- connecting with family and friends;
- accessing education, training, and employment;
- accessing other help and support from organisations who have moved services online;
- children accessing schoolwork and other learning;
- accessing GP services.

68. The Digital Friendly York partnership meets quarterly. In summer 2024 it was agreed by partners to change the partnership name to Digital Friendly York to reflect the views the partnership and recognition that support should be available for those who cannot access services through digital routes.

69. At present no one partner organisation has the single responsibility for or capacity to drive these key priorities for digital inclusion in York forward.

70. Discussions had taken place across the partnership to see if this role could be taken on by one of the partners, however this was not seen

as a viable option. It was agreed by the partnership to explore the viability of establishing a separate independent charitable organisation to develop and promote digital inclusion in the city.

71. A successful application to the University of York Cost of Living Fund has enabled the partnership to engage an adviser to work with DFY to develop proposals for a Community Interest Company. Application to the Charity commission is being submitted.
72. The part time Digital Inclusion Co-ordinator, managed by York Learning has worked with partners to provide community based digital inclusion activities. Funding has been secured via Household Support Fund, to continue this post until May 2026.
72. Other Digital Inclusion Activity by Digital Friendly York Partners
  - IT Reuse (<https://itreuse.org.uk/>) Live Well York Digital Friendly York page provides a centre information point for a range of activities across the city
  - [www.livewellyork.co.uk/information-and-advice/learning-trainingemployment/digital-inclusion-digital-friendly-york/](http://www.livewellyork.co.uk/information-and-advice/learning-trainingemployment/digital-inclusion-digital-friendly-york/)
  - [www.jrht.org.uk/support-for-residents/grow-your-digital-skills](http://www.jrht.org.uk/support-for-residents/grow-your-digital-skills) .
73. The Digital City Team within the council's ICT Service are continuing to engage and work with several broadband infrastructure providers as part of their work programme to retain interest and investment into York's digital connectivity landscape. Full fibre infrastructure now covers approximately 85% of York, compared to 78.9% of premises nationally.
74. Access to Free Wi-Fi and affordable broadband services.  
Public free Wi-Fi is available in libraries, sports centres, sheltered housing schemes, community centres and hubs and council offices. In York City Centre, there is a free Wi-Fi concession in operation for all visitors and residents to use with free Wi-Fi also available on the city's local and regional bus services whose routes include York.

## Financial Inclusion Fund Grants

75. The Financial Inclusion Grant budget of £50,000 was awarded to 7 projects for 2024/25, as set out in table 11 below, to deliver a range of financial inclusion activities by partners across the city.
76. The Financial Inclusion Fund grant scheme 2024/25 supports the administration's key pledges: Affordability; Equalities and Human Rights; and Health Inequalities.
77. Grants were awarded supporting financial inclusion provision to:
- mitigate the hardship impacts felt as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.
  - support for residents claiming eligible benefits including, Universal Credit, pension Credit and Council Tax Support
  - tackle food & fuel poverty
  - help those who are, or at risk of becoming, homeless
  - embed advice services into the community
  - support digital inclusion
  - empower individuals in communities to help themselves and help others longer term
  - provide support and help 'hard to reach' groups and individuals within the community
  - particularly support those with additional health needs and disabilities.
78. Grants were awarded through part or matched funding to support work within these organisations. All the service providers have met their target outcomes of the funding. Most surpassing these. Providing excellent advice and support to residents to improve their financial situation and wellbeing.
79. Over 2300 people have received direct advice and support via the funded services. These households have been supported to claim over £700k in additional income.
80. An overview of the funded work, the services provided, and outcomes is in Annex F.

**Table 11. Financial Inclusion projects funded for 2024/25**

Organisation	Project Title	Award
--------------	---------------	-------

Age UK	Supporting vulnerable people at home	£6,000
CAY / Travellers Trust	Financial Inclusion for the Traveller Community	£5,500
Community Furniture Store	IT Reuse	£6,500
OCAV	Benefits Advocacy: help with applications, assessments and appeals	£7,693
Peasholme Charity	My Money My life	£12,000
RAY	Financial Inclusion for Refugees and Asylum Seekers	£7,000
Welfare Benefits Unit	AdviceExtra: Enhanced Support for Complex Cases	£5,150
Total		£49,843

81. The Financial Inclusion Fund Grants scheme 2025/26 was launched in January 2025 to support the delivery of Financial Inclusion projects with £50k additional one off growth as part of the Council budget.
82. 14 applications from had been received seeking total funding of £226,137.15, far exceeding the £100k budget available. This reflects the very exceptional pressure on both residents and those organisations that provide critical support.
83. Seven bids were successful. Five of those were awarded the full amount sought and two were partially met. All the grants awarded contribute towards and build on continuing areas of work supported by funding from other sources.

**Table 12. Financial Inclusion projects funded for 2025/26**

Organisation	Project Title	Award £
North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre	Housing Matters York	£24,909
Community Furniture Stores /IT Reuse	Bridging the Digital Divide: Expanding IT ReUse to Support More People	£15,500
Citizens Advice York	Financial Inclusion for the Traveller Community	£10,837
Organisation	Project Title	Award £
Community First Community Bank	CFCB Supporting Communities pilot	£5,000

Refugee Action York	Mitigating Financial Hardship for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants	£7,788
York Community Energy CBS Limited	Energy advice & support for “hard to reach” groups	£18,488
Welfare Benefits Unit	AdviceExtra: Enhanced Support, UC Migration Focus and Frontline Upskilling	£17,452
Total		£99,974

## Consultation Analysis

84. This paper sets out the breadth of support delivered to residents in the city across 2024/25 and progress to date in 2025/26. The report sets out the extent of partnership working with our community partners which is now greater than ever. Any initiative has its own decision paper, EIA and sets out the extent of consultation. The purpose of this paper is to summarise all of this work to inform the relevant Executive members and does not require consultation other than the comments of the Implication Officers.

## Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

85. There are no other options to consider in relation to recommendation 10i as the report is for noting
86. In relation to Paragraph 9ii Members can choose to either delegate any decision-making relating to the Government’s new expected Crisis and Resilience Fund as outlined, or ask officers to report back to the Executive Member Decision Session for approval. For expediency it is recommended that the delegation is approved in order for the scheme to be established and available to residents as soon as possible.

## Organisational Impact and Implications

87. The comments of the implications officers are set out below:

- (a) **Financial** – There are no financial implications of this report as it is for noting except in relation to 9ii in relation to the recommended delegation.

- (b) **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no HR implications contained within this report.
- (c) **Equalities and Human rights** – There are no direct implications of this report as the report is for noting, however the work undertaken by the council and partners will have impacted positively on all residents accessing the support and those with intersectional and multi complex needs are likely to have been most affected by the impacts of the pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis.
- (d) **Legal** – Any grants awarded by the council through the various schemes set out in this report are done so in accordance with an agreed governance process via the Financial Inclusion Steering Group and are subject to appropriate arrangements being put in place to cover the terms of the grant.
- (e) **Health and Wellbeing** - The report describes the outcomes of a range of initiatives that were designed to increase income and reduce debt for York's financially excluded residents. The report rightly highlights that these activities directly contribute to the aims and commitments of the council plan, including improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.
- (f) **Procurement** - There are no implications
- (g) **Environment and Climate action** – No climate change implications have been identified
- (h) **Data Protection and Privacy**- The data protection impact assessment (DPIAs) screening questions were reviewed for the recommendations and options in this report and as there is no personal, special categories or criminal offence data being processed to set these out, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA at this time. However, this will be reviewed following the approved recommendations and options from this report and a DPIA completed if required.
- (i) **Communications** - 'This is a vital service to city residents and is one that communications readily support through existing campaigns. We will continue this provision, as well as looking to how we can enhance this service to customers through various media channels. As part of our ongoing communications plan,

we will also employ robust risk management for any areas that may need this.'

- (j) **Economy** - The programmes and projects described in this report make a positive impact on the York economy.
- (k) **Affordability** – All affordability implications are included in the body of the report.

## Risks and Mitigations

88. The key risks are in relation to YFAS, DHP, and other available hardship funds to support residents through what is a protracted cost of living crisis and include:

- Forward planning of ongoing support through future budget processes as well as maximising government support will be key as the expected impacts will exist into the long term.
- Managing the budget to ensure that customers get the same service and support irrespective of when they apply in the financial year.
- The cost-of-living crisis has impacted on the funding of the council and of partners in the voluntary and charity sector, so service resilience across all partners needs to be a key consideration for decision makers in the short and medium term to protect ongoing service delivery.
- Any failure to provide an appropriate service will have a negative impact on the wellbeing of vulnerable people.

89. These risks are managed through constant monitoring and review. The actual figures for UC, YFAS, DHP, Government support schemes and rent arrears are reported to each FISG meeting to allow early intervention. The Government has also announced a replacement 3-year Crisis and Resilience Fund to replace the separate HSF funds. The details are not yet available but should allow for a longer-term plan (3 years). It's worth noting even at this stage the Government have confirmed the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) will be included in the new funding.

## Wards Impacted



90. Residents from all wards have benefitted from the welfare support in this report.

## Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

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<b>Date:</b>	22/08/2024

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## Background papers

Decision Session of the Executive member for Finance & Major Projects-  
13 March 2023 - Financial Inclusion Interim Strategy 2023-25

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=875&MId=13518&Ver=4>

Decision to limit support paid through York financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024:

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7156>

Decision to increase value of food and fuel vouchers – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6887>

Decision to approve the financial inclusion awards for 2024/25 – 2 April 2024

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7103>

## Annexes

Annex A Poverty gap statistics

Annex B YFAS Trends Summary Report 2024/25

Annex C HSF Discretionary Grants Report 2024/25

Annex D Food & Fuel Voucher Scheme Report 2024/25

Annex E Christmas/Winter Activities 2024/25

Annex F Financial Inclusion Fund Grants report 2023/24

## List of Abbreviations

CAY	Citizen's Advice York
CFS	Community Furniture Store
CTS	Council Tax Support
CVS	Council for Voluntary Services
CYC	City of York Council
DD	Direct Debits
DFY	Digitl Friendly York
DI	Digital Inclusion
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payment
DRO	Debt Relief Order
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
FISG	Financial Inclusion Steering Group
HAF	Holiday Activities and food
HB	Housing Benefit

HSF	Household Support Fund
IT	Information Technology
k	Thousand
LAC	Local Area Co
LIFT	Low Income Family Tracker
LWY	Live Well York
PiP	Policy in Practice
UC	Universal Credit
UKSPF	UK Shared Prosperity Fund
YFAS	York Financial Assistance Scheme

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## Annex A: Low Income Family Tracker Data for York

The charts below shows a snapshot of demographic data and poverty matrix for York based on the cohort of 8,225 households receiving council tax support and housing benefit in May 2025.

As LIFT uses data from households in receipt of these benefits only. This will have an impact on our results, as we might expect benefits recipients to be more likely to experience lower standards of living and higher rates of poverty than the whole population.

### Households by ward

- Street level

Based on a snapshot of May 2025 datasets

**8,225**

household(s)

**2,919**

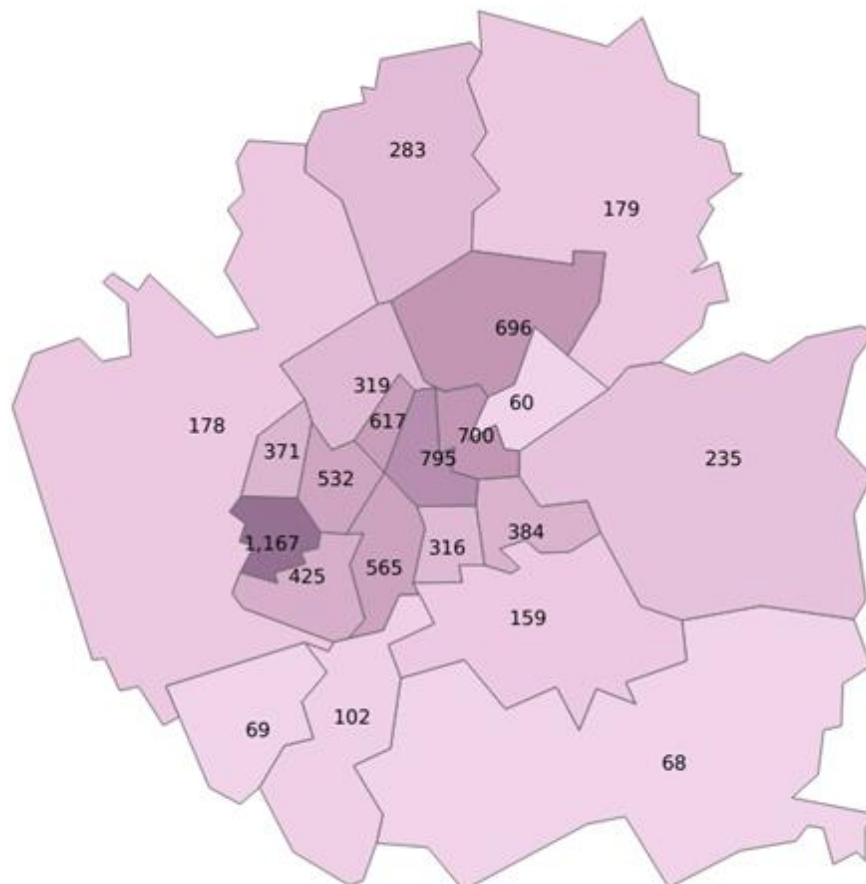
children

**£564,339**

CT/Rent arrears

**£10,936**

DHP award in FY

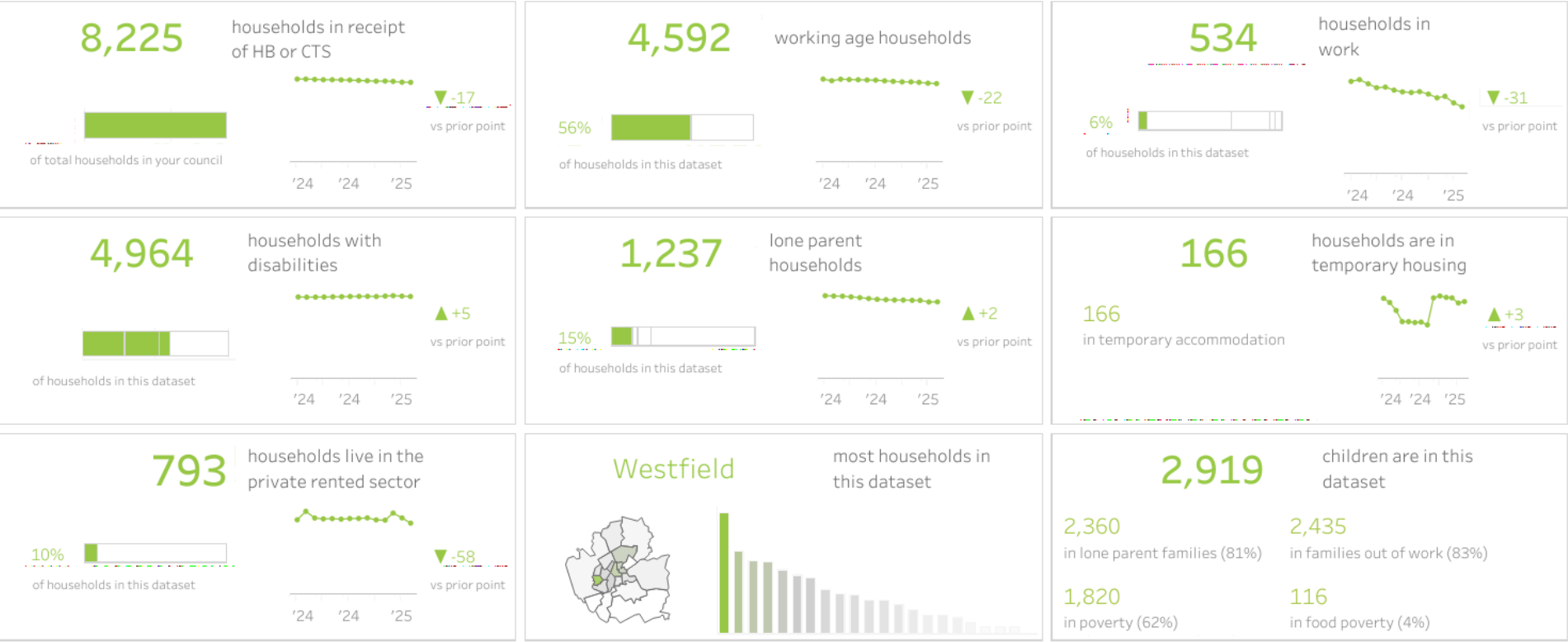


THE RESIDENTS - OVERVIEW

All

// May 2025

Demographic information about low-income residents in the local authority.

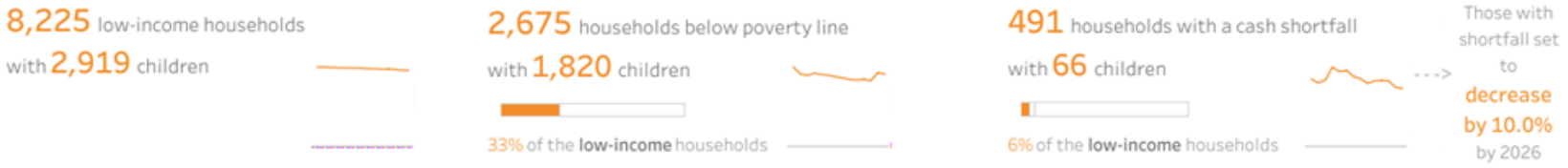


LIFT SUMMARY - ALL WARDS // YORK // MAY 2025

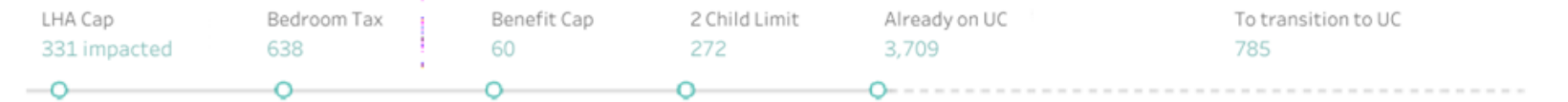
LA: All

Ward filter: All

LOW-INCOME COHORT OVERVIEW



POLICY REFORM TIMELINE



Overall 1,021 impacted by housing reforms. 271 are £30 or more worse-off per week. £38.3 was the average weekly reduction across all households.

62%, or 483 households, are expected to be worse off - by an average of £66 per month. Of these, 0 are already in cash shortfall.

POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT



LIFT SUMMARY - ALL WARDS //YORK// MAY 2024

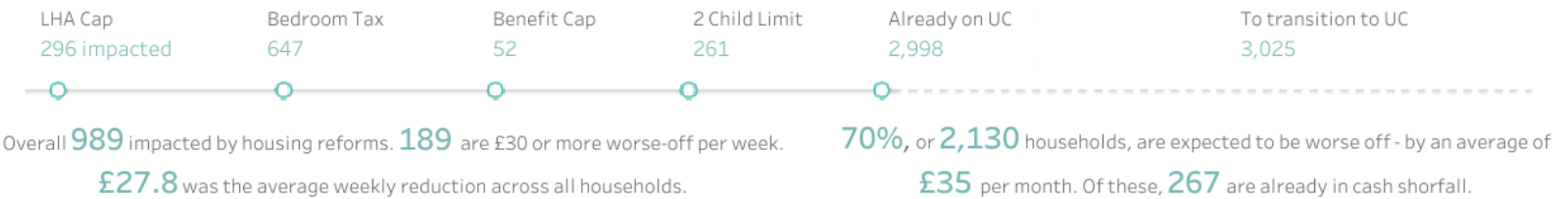
LA: All

Ward filter: All

LOW-INCOME COHORT OVERVIEW



POLICY REFORM TIMELINE



POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT

DISCRETIONARY SUPPORT

9 DHPs awarded

£16.5K total amount awarded

108 not yet awarded a DHP but have a cash shortfall and were impacted by HB reform

MAXIMISING BENEFIT TAKE-UP

250 appear eligible for Pension Credit but aren't in receipt

71 eligible for SDP as part of HB but are not in receipt

22 stopped HB/CTS, but may be eligible to CTS if now on UC

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

11% of working-age in work

1,156 working-age households not in work appear to have lower barriers and could be prioritised for support.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN

1,909 children below poverty line

18 with 3-4 year old eligible for 30 hours free childcare

64 more could gain eligibility by working more hours

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

164 in temporary accommodation

80 households in private rental with a cash shortfall

2 in social rental with a cash shortfall and rent arrears

DEBT RECOVERY

2,354 households

£848.0K total arrears (CT+rent)

426 households in arrears have savings over £1000

8 have a cash shortfall and will be worse off under UC

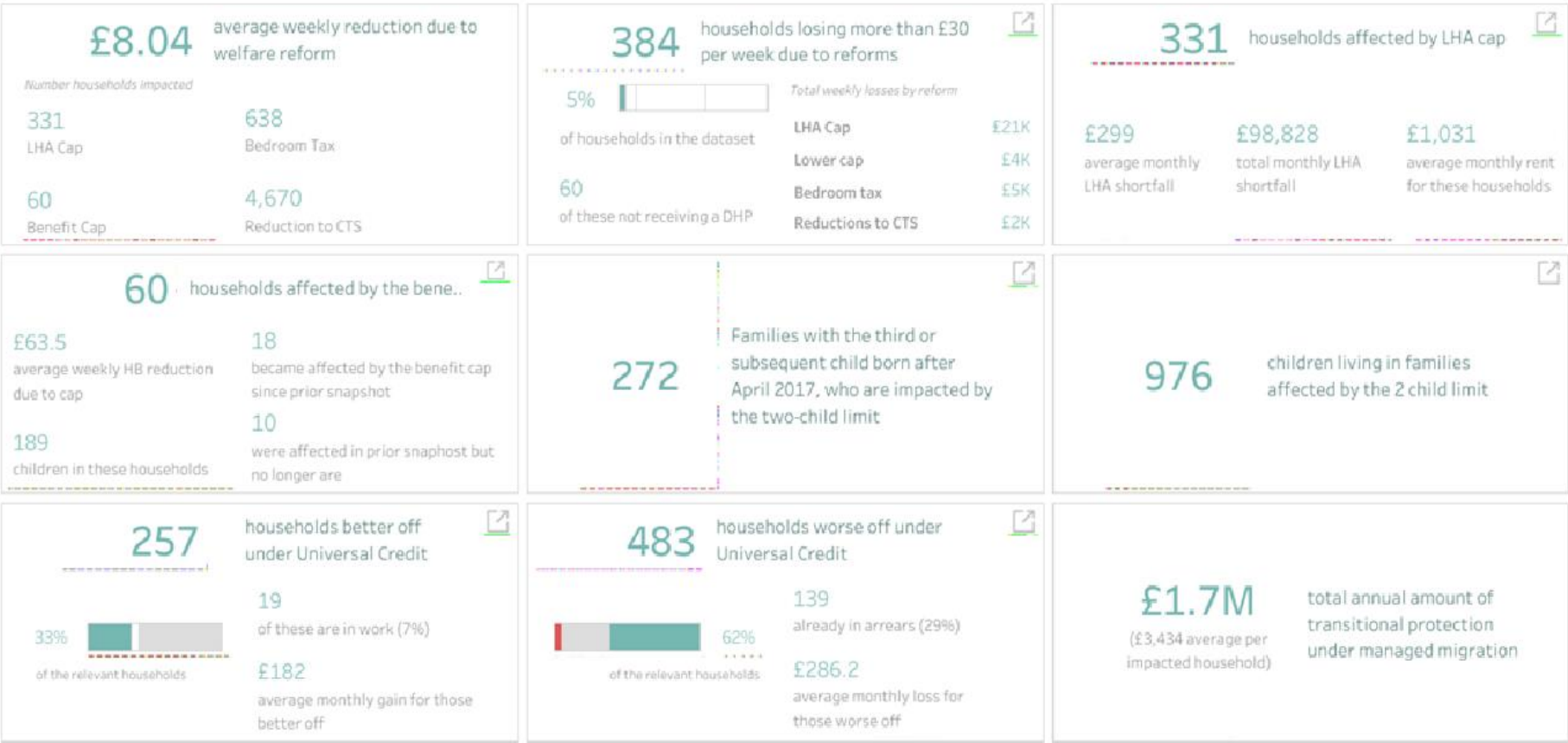


IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM - OVERVIEW

All

// May 2025

Explore the cumulative impact of welfare reform on each low income household in your local authority. Click the icons to go to dashbaords with extra detail.

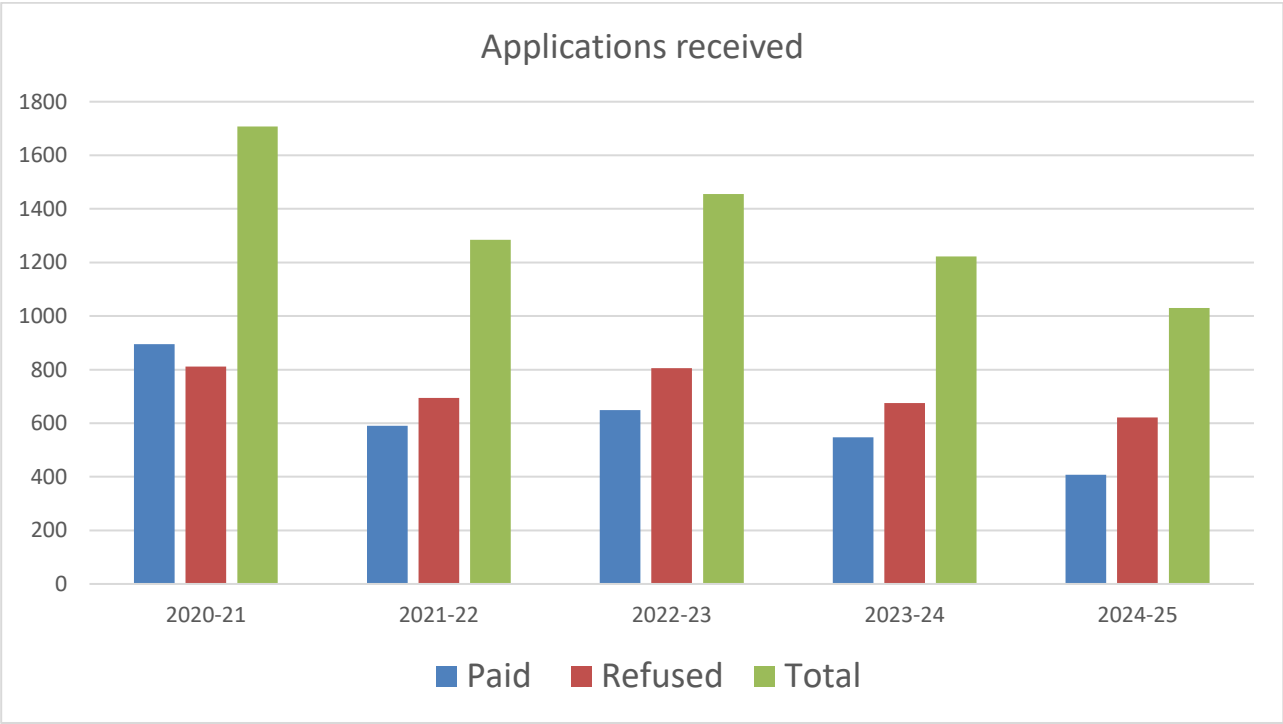


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Discretionary Financial Support Summary Report 2024/25

York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS)

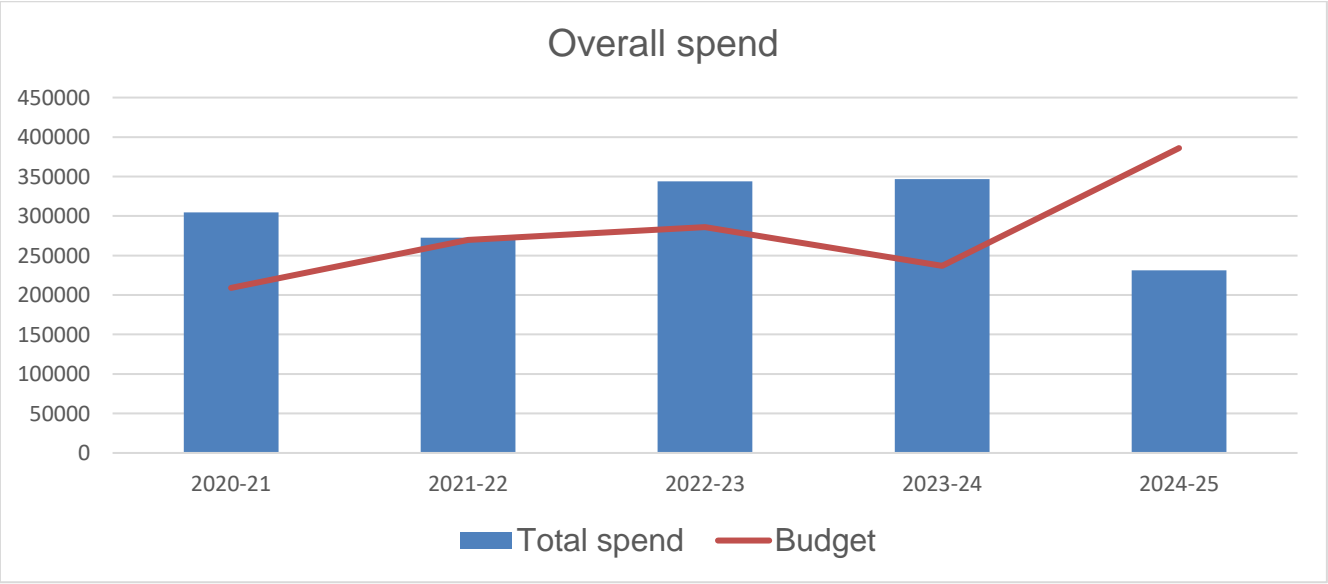
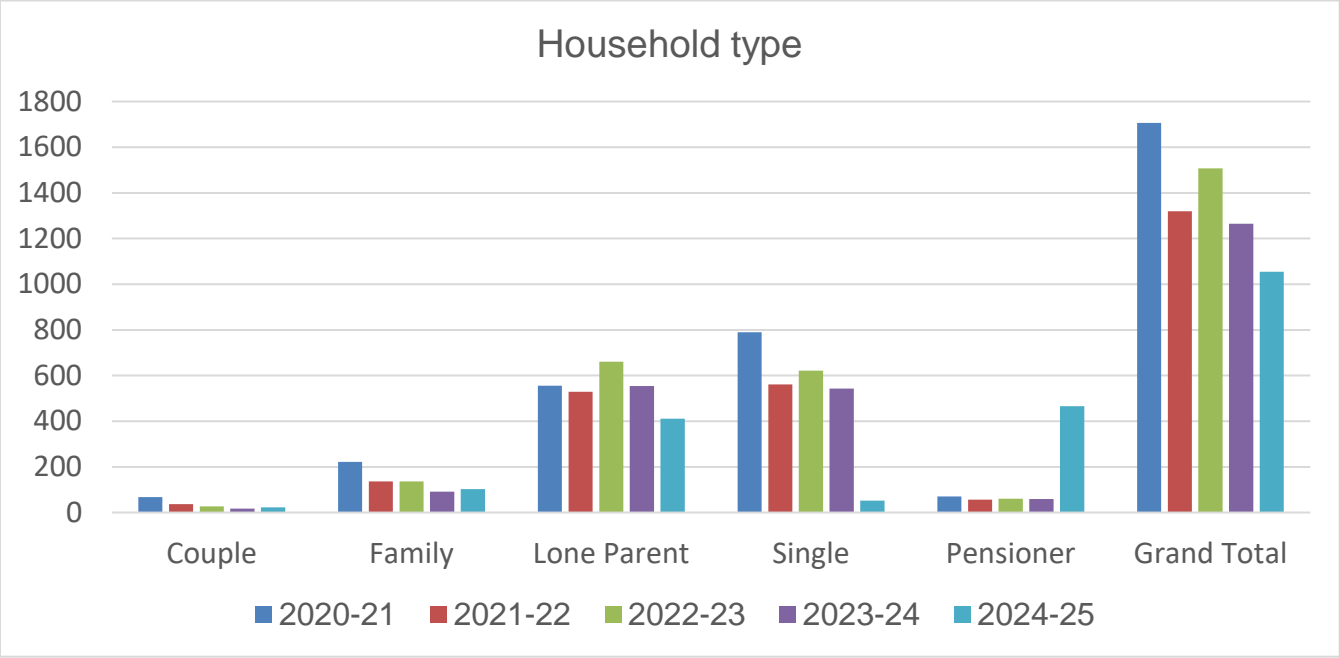
Total number of applications processed during financial year.



Requests for decisions to be reviewed

2024-25	21 reviews.	10 Decision upheld	11 Decision overturned.
2023-24	26 reviews.	18 Decision upheld	8 Decision overturned. *

\*7 applicants provided additional information to support application



## Main reasons given for application

% Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Benefit delay/Universal Credit	0.9	24.6	0.5	0.5	0.2
Debt	1.5	1	1.1	0.9	0.5
Disaster	0.8	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.4
Emergency	11	13.3	9.3	11.2	8.5
Error			0.2	0.2	0.1
Exceptional pressures	29.9	23.2	23.1	25.4	28.1
Expenses	0.9	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.9
Flood	16.9	8.9	0.1	0.0	0.0
Fuel	15.6	13.4	9.8	8.3	5.3
No food		0.2	18.4	16.2	16.7
Other		0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0
Prison	1.8	2.6	0.1	0.5	0.4
Repair	7.8	10.4	4.4	3.7	2.8
Resettlement - homeless	3.9	6	11.3	14.5	14.5
Resettlement - other	6	8.2	6.0	5.4	7.4
Stay in the community	3.9		10.3	6.9	9.5
Travel			0.3	0.3	0.4
Vouchers			4.7	5.1	4.3
Unknown	9.5	9.4	0	0.0	0.0

## Grant amounts awarded

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Average award</b>	£396	£352	£455	£172	£447	£499	£635	£ 566
<b>Lowest award</b>	£20	£23	£20	£10	£15	£20	£23	£30
<b>Highest award</b>	£193	£1,961	£1,961	£2,324	£2,522	£2,419	£2,310	£2,650

## Items awarded

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 Awarded	2023-24 Refused	2024-25 Refused
Bed	66	40	72	58	55	12	3
Bedding	0	6	0	0			
Clothing	17	1	18	15	13	11	53
Cooker	91	19	85	90	120	4	74
Curtains	21	6	13	8	3	12	7
Floor cover	37	33	0	34	22	16	33
Fridge	69	29	46	49	40	6	31
Large fridge	0	7	3	3			
Fuel	46	33	55	59	23	9	95
Fuel – gas capping					12		
Kitchen pk1	73	79	45	73	19	5	4
Kitchen pk3 & pk7	3	3	14	10	3	6	3
Microwave	1	4	0	1		12	5
Removal	2	0	0	4	9	0	
Repair	2	0	5	0	2	2	9
Resettlement packages	145	109	111	101	93	15	32
Sofa /chair	26	9	4	19	16	2	3
Supermarket vouchers	451	122	175	195	111	21	181
Table/ chair	0	0	0	0		0	
Travel cost	13	0	0	7	15	0	11
Wardrobe	25	8	3	16	21	1	
Washer	55	29	37	54	59	4	19
Grand total	1143	537	686	912	636	138	619

## Discretionary Housing Payment

The council received £163.9k in government funding for DHPs for 2024/25 in order to help with housing costs and has additional CYC budget of £27k in reserve. All the government allocation was spent providing 163 DHP awards.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total DHP Fund available	£324,923	£231,377	£163,991	£163,991	£163,991
Amount spent	£298,252	£231,377	£175,195*	£163,991	£163,991
Amount remaining	£26,671	£0	£0	£0	£0
Number of DHPs awarded		222	196	195	163

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**Annex C:****Household Support Fund 5 & 6 Discretionary Grants Scheme**

	<b>HSF 5</b>	<b>HSF 6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Applications received	586	528	1114

<b>Household composition</b>	<b>No of awards HSF 5</b>	<b>No of awards HSF 6</b>	<b>Total £'s</b>
Couple (working age)	3	17	£4,795
Family (couple) +1	6	13	£5,180
Family (couple) +2	10	12	£6,215
Family (couple) +3	7	13	£5,925
Family (couple) 4+	5	8	£4,150
Family (single) +1	57	79	£33,130
Family (single) +2	39	52	£22,985
Family (single) +3	22	17	£10,255
Family (single) 4+	6	7	£3,615
Pensioner	12	21	£9,250
Single (working age)	80	142	£56,939
	247	381	£162,439

<b>Type of award</b>	<b>HSF 5</b>	<b>HSF 6</b>
Food/energy/water	90	147
Essentials linked to energy /water	45	172
Housing costs	12	9
Other essentials	100	70

	<b>HSF 5</b>	<b>HSF 6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Applications refused	139	147	286
- on CTS so received support through direct payment scheme	76	69	145
- had already received a grant through the scheme.	12	18	30
- more information was requested to assess the application, but was not provided	12	30	42
- did not meet the criteria	39	30	69

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## Annex D: CYC Food & Fuel Vouchers Scheme 24-25

### Food & Fuel Vouchers 24-25

No	Cost
<b>3,294</b>	<b>£203,598</b>

Postcode area	%
YO1	4%
YO10	13%
YO19	2%
YO23	6%
YO24	19%
YO26	16%
YO30	14%
YO31	19%
YO32	7%

### Food Vouchers 24-25

No.	Cost	
54	£8,050	Household of six people or more
797	£80,230	Household of two to five people
431	£26,060	Single household person
32	£2,760	IDAS
369	£18,010	Care leavers
<b>1,683</b>	<b>£135,110</b>	<b>Total</b>

Fuel Vouchers 24-25		
No	Cost	
1081	£52,885	Family
514	£14,959	Single person
16	£644	IDAS
30	£1,041	Care leavers
<b>1611</b>	<b>£69,529</b>	<b>Total</b>

### Services assessing and approving applications

	Food	Fuel
City of York Council - Income Services Benefits Advisers - Local Area Coordinators - Housing Management Officers	635	834
Citizens Advice York	574	682
Peasholme Charity	27	15
CAP	20	13
Community Links	17	2
Age UK York	8	20
York Community Energy	1	32

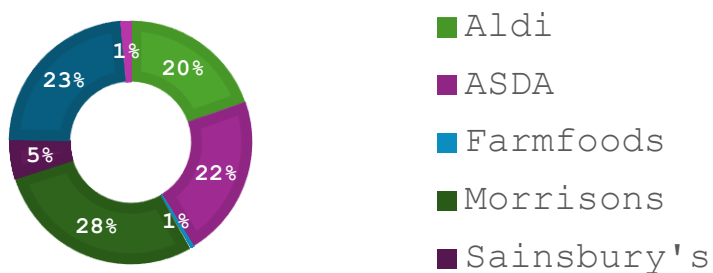
IDAS	32	16
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### Eligibility criteria

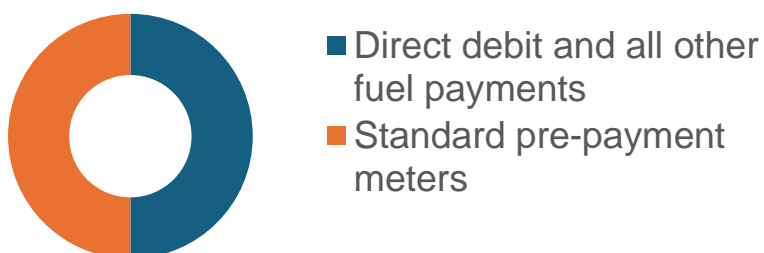
	Food	Fuel
Affected by mental ill-health	122	113
Elderly, frail or confused older people	12	20
Seriously ill or have a severe long term health condition	72	97
Have a physical or sensory impairment or learning disability	51	70
Have difficulty in understanding, speaking or reading English	2	4
Care leavers	2	4
Fleeing domestic abuse	21	25
Pregnant or has recently given birth	17	21
Recently bereaved	10	12
Suffering severe hardship	973	1229

	Food	Fuel
Households have earned income	333	430

### Food Vouchers By Supermarket



### Type of fuel voucher





This report demonstrates the partnership working of community groups, local businesses and the Communities Team during Winter 2024-2025

## What we did



With the help of volunteers, local organisations and businesses, thousands of food parcels, toiletries, toys, books, and games were distributed to vulnerable families and children across York this Winter

Families also attended festive events where they could choose gifts and essentials, and take home bags of food—organised and promoted by Community Officers, often in partnership with the Good Places Network.



## Why we did it

Many families and households in York are affected by increased bills, the cost of living and winter heating costs. Many organisations and individuals would like to share, give and donate to those in need for items such as toys, books and toiletries. The Communities team, through their roles and the Good Places Network, has the ability to co-ordinate partnership working and organise city-wide support



# How we did it - Partnership

Page 54

£15,000 of wholesale food was ordered including rice, pasta, tins of tuna, cartons of fruit juice, tins of fruit and vegetables, long-life UHT milk cartons and more



A £40,000 Good Place, Warm Place grant scheme awarded funding to 20 organisations in York. The funding supported warm, safe community spaces over winter, offering relief from loneliness and high living costs, along with practical help like benefits advice, food shares, foodbanks, and Pay-As-You-Feel food



YorWaste donated 40 large ton-bags of toys from the Yorwaste Re-Use Santa Appeal, filled with toys, books and games



H&A Cosmetics of Poppleton Road Business Park, York contributed 500 children's toothbrush kits, and over a thousand bubble baths and hairbrush kits



Nestle of York donated large biscuit boxes and coffee jars which were distributed to community warm hubs and the Good Places Network.

York Labour Group donated warm clothing, thermal wear, hats and gloves to distribute across community projects.

The Jesus Christ Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS Church) volunteered to pack, unload and sort donated items and food for distribution and also provided storage facilities for a central distribution space all Winter



# Community Partners

Page 55

## SNAPPY Trust

Door 84 Youth and Community Centre

St James the Deacon church

Planet Food

Haxby Foodshare (Haxby Memorial Hall)

Danesgate School Outreach team

York High School Safeguarding team

The Collective Sharehouse

CYC Targeted Intervention team

Acomb Primary School pastoral team

Chapelfields Hub foodshare

Thursdays Teas To Go

LDS Church event

Lindsey Avenue support drop-in

James House (temporary accommodation)

Osballdwick Travellers site

Refugee Action York

St Oswald's Church

Inspire Youth Mobile Youth Club

Lidgett Grove foodbank and community cafe

CYC Youth Justice Team

Tang Hall Community Centre foodshare

York Women's Refuge

York Travellers Trust

St Luke's Church and Luke's Larder

Children and Families Team (Social Workers)

Foxwood Hub foodshare and Christmas party

Local Area Coordinators outreach and drop-ins

Bell Farm Social Hall foodshare

Community Connect

Storage facilities and volunteers were provided by LDS church and St James the Deacon in Woodthorpe

Over a thousand bags of food packed and thousands of toys were sorted with volunteer help

A pop-up toy shop was created at the LDS church for community volunteers, social workers and professionals to shop for individual families, choosing appropriate gifts

Community foodshares were supported with bags of food and were topped up with other essential items

Frontline workers who support York's most vulnerable families were invited to collect food bags, toiletries and toys

The Communities Team supported 15 community Christmas events, sharing bags of food, toys and toiletries

SNAPPY supported suitable provision for SEND families

Toothbrush kits were delivered to Refugee Action York and York Travellers Trust



vegetables e.g. sweetcorn, potatoes, carrots, peas  
 tin of fruit e.g. peaches or pears, fruit mix, pineapple  
 can of ravioli or spaghetti or baked beans or soup  
 tin of protein e.g. tuna, meatballs or sausages  
 jar of cooking sauce e.g. bolognese or curry  
 long-life carton of milk  
 long-life carton of juice  
 ketchup/mayonnaise  
 bags of pasta  
 bags of basmati rice  
 box of teabags  
 biscuits or crackers  
 bottle of squash  
 boxes of cereal  
 herbs and spices  
 bag of sugar  
 cooking oil

## Food bags



## Who we helped

Cooking oil is so expensive I can't afford it. This is brill

Oh these curry jars are great, I can put this in my slow cooker!

Aw that toy lamb is perfect for my six-month old, thank you

**Parents at the Lindsey Avenue drop-in**

**Parent at James House**

On behalf of our school and wider community that we support, we want to extend our gratitude for your generous(ity).... the food bags and toys that we were able to distribute just before Christmas truly was a **lifeline** for some of the families that we support. Those who benefited were incredibly grateful and asked me to pass along their thanks. Multiple families reported that the donation **helped provide stability in a time of need** and a couple of parents actually cried with happiness!

We were also able to use the remaining food bags to re-stock our community cupboard in school which is **regularly accessed by families in need** within our school community.

Thank you once again!

**Feedback from York High School pastoral team**



# 1200

Bags of food distributed to vulnerable families and households

approximately 

# 6000

Individual toys, toiletries, books and gifts for children and young people

# 15

Family-friendly Christmas activity events with food

A big thank you to the two community partners who gave use of their buildings for storage for this operation - St James the Deacon in Woodthorpe and the LDS Church in Acomb

## Thank You!



We received and collected feedback from families, children, young people, parents and guardians, plus partners, professionals and volunteers. We had lots of positive feedback and lots of thank-you's. A big thank-you to everyone mentioned in the report, for those who donated their time and resource, or donated items to the appeal.

We made a real difference and achieved so much by working together

We'll soon be busy planning Winter Support 2025. We also coordinate support year-round

Partner with us or get involved!

## GET IN TOUCH

Communities Team

01904 551832

**[shapingneighbourhoods@york.gov.uk](mailto:shapingneighbourhoods@york.gov.uk)**

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## Annex F: Financial Inclusion Grants 2024/5 Outcome Report – May 25

The Financial Inclusion Grant budget of £50,000 was awarded to 7 projects for 2024/23, as set out in the table below, to deliver a range of financial inclusion activities by partners across the city.

The Financial Inclusion Fund grant scheme 2024/25 supports the administration's key pledges: Affordability; Equalities and Human Rights; and Health Inequalities.

Grants were awarded supporting financial inclusion provision to

- mitigate the hardship impacts felt as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.
- support for residents claiming eligible benefits including, Universal Credit, pension Credit and Council Tax Support
- tackle food & fuel poverty
- help those who are, or at risk of becoming, homeless
- embed advice services into the community
- support digital inclusion
- empower individuals in communities to help themselves and help others longer term
- provide support and help 'hard to reach' groups and individuals within the community
- particularly support those with additional health needs and disabilities.

Grants were awarded through part or matched funding to support work in the following organisations

Organisation	Project Title	Award
Age UK	Supporting vulnerable people at home	£6,000
CAY / Travellers Trust	Financial Inclusion for the Traveller Community	£5,500
Community Furniture Store	IT Reuse	£6,500
OCAY	Benefits Advocacy: help with applications, assessments and appeals	£7,693
Peasholme Charity	My Money My life	£12,000
RAY	Financial Inclusion for Refugees and Asylum Seekers	£7,000
Welfare Benefits Unit	AdviceExtra: Enhanced Support for Complex Cases	£5,150
Total		£49,843

All the service providers have met their target outcomes of the funding. Most surpassing these. Providing excellent advice and support to residents to improve their financial situation and wellbeing.

Over 2300 people have received direct advice and support via the funded services. These households have been supported to claim over £700k in additional income.

Below is an overview of the funded work, the services provided and outcomes.

### **Age UK - Supporting vulnerable people at home**

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Performance Measurement -Per year</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries <u>year to date</u></b>
<i>Improved understanding of the benefits system</i>	No or people receiving advice from the M&B Team	300	1400
<i>Mitigate hardship through supporting people to claim benefits</i>	Amount of additional benefits successfully claimed	£700,000	£633,063.00
<i>Embedding advice services into the community</i>	No of outreach events held in community venues	30	6
<i>Reduced digital exclusion</i>	No of people supported to improve their digital literacy by digital buddies	7	12
<i>Improved support to "hard to reach" individuals, particularly those with health needs and disabilities</i>	No of people supported through home visits	125	251

## Resident Feedback

Comments from lady who had so little money had not been turning on heating and sitting in home wearing coat, hat and gloves. Following home visit advice and support she was awarded HR AA

*“Very big thank you to Zoe and all the team – I am very happy with the outcome. All the work you are doing for all us OAPs is very helpful and much needed.... What a big difference this will make to my daily life.... A lot of pressure has now been taken off me....I was so cold on January 4th that I turned the heating on for the first time and felt an awful lot better. I don’t need to worry about turning the heating on anymore. ...Without your help I wouldn’t be in the position I am in today. Without you I couldn’t have made this claim as I was getting too stressed out. It is difficult talking to people as I am a private person. ...Without your help I wouldn’t be sitting her today feeling much happier....”*

## CAY / Travellers Trust Financial Inclusion for the Traveller Community

66 unique clients have been seen by the project in this period. 659 issues have been presented to the advisor and 398 activities have been undertaken on behalf of these clients.

The issue numbers are for individual clients, so do not represent multiple appointments for the same client i.e. appointments to discuss PIP, UC and CTS would only class as one issue.

49% of clients who consented to their health and disability information being recorded reported having a long-term health condition. 5% disclosed that they were disabled and 46% did not have any health issues or disabilities to report. 81% of the clients identified as female, and 19% identified as male, although this is an improvement on reported sex equality, this is still more disparate than general CAY gender split and needs continuing work. The age range that was recorded was from 15 years old to 79 years old.

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Performance Measurement -Per year</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries <u>year to date</u></b>
<i>Improved understanding of the benefits system</i>	Number of residents receiving advice on welfare benefits issues	40	61

<i>Help people to deal with debt and move towards financial stability</i>	Number of residents receiving advice on debt issues	40	26
	Income gain for clients	£90,000	£63,742

### Community Furniture Store - IT Reuse

Over the reporting period, IT ReUse has undergone significant change, with the appointment of a new Project Lead focused on auditing, streamlining, and improving operations. This has led to several new partnerships and collaborations, significantly increasing donations towards the end of the year. It has also opened promising discussions with local organisations about providing software to better manage IT ReUse and reporting, alongside exploring income generation through e-waste recycling, further supporting our sustainability goals. While the operational focus meant figures were lower than anticipated this year, the groundwork is now in place for a stronger performance next year.

#### IT ReUse

- received 658 devices,
- 224 devices to the public, supporting an average of over 12 people per month.
- 30 volunteers at risk of financial exclusion gained valuable work experience, alongside 19 additional volunteers participating through corporate volunteer days.

A challenge has been the high number of older, difficult-to-repair devices, which will be addressed through improving the quality of donation streams in the coming year.

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Performance Measurement -Per year</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>Actual number of beneficiaries</b>
<i>Increased number of residents with access to the internet</i>	Number of data SIM cards given to residents through scheme.	400	217

<i>Increased number of residents with access to their own IT equipment – either by tablet, smartphone, laptop or desktop</i>	Number of devices sent out through the scheme to York residents each year.	320	224
<i>Increased number of opportunities for people who face financial exclusion in the city to receive training in specific and baseline digital skills<sup><a href="#">11</a></sup></i>	Number of volunteers facing financial exclusion receiving a minimum of 24 hours of work experience in one or more of the following areas:  Computer and Networking Support, Programming and software support, Digital marketing, Microsoft 365	10	30
<i>Increased number of residents being sign posted to benefits services</i>	Digital information packs given to each applicant on devices providing information on the following: Digital skills training resources and courses, information on cyber safety, links to benefits services, contact information of IAG providers	320	239

## **OCAY - Benefits Advocacy: help with applications, assessments and appeals**

Our team of 14 volunteer advocates deliver benefits advocacy to people over the age of 50 in the York area. They provide both practical and emotional support. Our advocates support people to navigate the benefits system and claim money that they are entitled to.

We have Community Outreach at 11 venues in York. Venues we have visited include the St Oswald's Church (Fulford), Red Tower (Walmgate), St Hilda's Church (Tang Hall), St Sampson's Centre, Foxwood Community Centre and the Folk Hall in New Earswick.

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Performance Measurement -Per year</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries <u>year to date</u></b>
<i>Number of clients supported with benefits claims, appeals and tribunals.</i>	Client numbers recorded on our database.	180	250
<i>Longer Term Impact benefits for clients working with OCAY.</i>	Long term impact survey.	60	60

### **Key feedback**

- 85% of participants said they felt long-term practical benefits from the support received
- 95% of participants said OCAY's support has made a huge impact (80%) or big impact on their well-being over the past 6 months
- 80% said they believe they felt long-term benefits emotionally
- 85% said they felt long-term benefits practically
- 65% said they believe that that they felt long-term benefits financially

### **Resident case studies**

**Blue Badge** - Client wanted help to make a Blue Badge application and needed a home visit due to their restricted mobility. They were in a lot of pain when they walked. The volunteer advocate visited the client at home. The client did not know how to use the Internet, so the advocate made an online application for them under their instruction using the information and



evidence that they provided. The client heard quickly that the application was successful, and they were very pleased with the support from OCAY. Obtaining a Blue Badge will help the client to maintain their independence and access local services such as doctors' surgeries.

**Attendance Allowance** - Client came to us for help to apply for Attendance Allowance. They had care needs and were on a low income. They had difficulty walking so the advocate had to visit them at their home. The Attendance Allowance form under their instruction. The advocate gave details on the form of how the client is dependent on the care of a relative. The client had a range of physical health conditions including arthritis. The application for Attendance Allowance was successful and the client was awarded £72.65 per week. They were delighted with the outcome.

### **Peasholme Charity - My Money My life**

The financial capability pathway service, My Money My Life, offers a range of activities that support people from a situation of crisis or near-crisis, through to a place of financial stability.

The 'Financial Capability pathway' includes a range of service options:

- Drop-in support within a variety of community venues
- Benefits Advice
- Crisis interventions
- Referral and support to existing community resource
- Specialist Mental Health FinCap support

The service has worked with 207 clients throughout this reporting period.

#### Drop-in sessions and referrals

- Bell Farm 12 mornings 35 Clients
- Kyra - 15 afternoons 96 Clients
- MIND - 15 afternoons 64 Clients
- Sanderson Court – 4 morning 12 Clients

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Performance Measurement -Per year</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries <u>year to date</u></b>
<i>People will have access to comprehensive financial capability advice and support</i>	No. of people who engage with the service	200	323

<i>service, that aims to resolve crisis situations, incl. threats to housing</i>			
<i>People will have access to financial capability drop-in sessions at agreed locals in York</i>	Drop-in sessions - 3 per month people accessing info via sessions	36 108	46 207
<i>Individuals will have access to supported learning activity that is bespoke to their circumstances</i>	People who take up supported learning activity	207	116
<i>Individuals report feeling more in control of their financial situation</i>	People receiving support self-reporting outcomes tracked throughout the reporting period.	People signed off the service in a planned way Managing welfare benefits Managing utilities Control cost of living Crisis work Accessing and engaging with specialist services	10 18 18 20 12 10

### Resident case study

X, had to retire from work, following a stroke in 2022, since when she has had to rely on state benefits for the first time in her life. She has struggled to pay her mortgage and other household bills. There was a lot of historic debt and referral was made to a debt charity. Peasholme were able to act as an intermediary to help the debt advisor gather all the information they have needed and ensure that X stayed focussed on engaging with the debt advice. She and her partner both have multiple complex physical and mental health needs and are hoarders. Because of their ill health and low

income, they had allowed their house and garden to fall into a very poor state of repair, becoming a fire and trip hazard. Peasholme were able to secure a grant to pay for the council to remove several truckloads of rubbish, since when they have been highly motivated to start taking more of a pride in their home and have even done some decorating themselves.

### **RAY Financial Inclusion for Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

Support refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to access practical support, information and guidance, to relieve hardship, reduce isolation, advance education and improve integration.

Coffee Morning sessions incorporate appointment slot with Citizen's Advice York, and ad appointments with RAY Project Workers and a substantial English language support provision.

E-Visa Clinics have started, allowing expert advice and guidance to be available for those having problems with the migration from plastic Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) cards to digital E-Visas in partnership with Migrant Help. They are scheduled to carry on into the new financial year.

The effect of the reduction in YFAS funding continues to be a key factor; as a result, RAY have developed work with other charities and agencies further to look for solutions especially around the pivotal period where service users move into permanent accommodation.

RAY continue to work in educating asylum seeker service users about the housing system they will face after their decision; as well as regular talks RAY now have explanatory leaflets in a variety of languages and hope to see positive outcomes from this. Changes to the housing teams at City of York Council to provide more specialist support and co-ordination for refugees are welcomed and RAY look forward to working with new partners on this work.

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries <u>year to date</u></b>
People have their essential material needs met: Support offered to avoid homelessness via (and in addition to) referrals for benefits advice, to foodbank, RAY hardship fund, community furniture store, other	60 individuals or families will benefit from referral to have their essential needs met	82

Funds such as Fuel Poverty or School Uniform funds, Digital Inclusion projects, and bikes.		
People have access to practical support, information and guidance: Service Users gain an understanding of support and options available to them via RAY and external information sessions and workshops about budgeting and cost of living, and getting into employment (e.g. CVs, job applications, interviews)	12 individuals will have a CV and will have applied for at least one job	12
Develop improved use of mainstream services and community activities: Referral of adults to mainstream or voluntary services, and arrange workshops, talks, by other local and community organisations	30 people will have been referred to other services 75 people will regularly attend workshops/talks	47 70
Develop improved English Language skills Support people to attend English conversation classes & coffee mornings	Everyone will have accessed some form of ESOL provision 20 people will have attended coffee morning average once a month	62

### **Welfare Benefits Unit - AdviceExtra: Enhanced Support for Complex Cases**

Advice Extra builds on central aspects of the WBU service by offering:

#### **1. Pro-active follow-up**

Local advisers have confirmed that proactive follow-up through the AdviceExtra project prompts extra support for residents. For many advisers/supporters, benefits advice is only part of their role, and their experience and confidence may be limited. WBU involvement supports understanding of the value of a review of their client's situation with

reassurance that WBU can continue to provide advice enabling them to proceed in manageable steps. The follow-up recognises any relevant changes in the resident's situation that require further action or alter the initial advice, identifies error or may helpfully confirm that all appropriate actions have been completed. Follow-up also allows WBU to monitor and feedback on DWP administration and decision-making, effectively highlighting recurrent issues to advisers, identifying 'work arounds' and feeding into local and national social policy action.

## 2. In-depth support

FIS funding allows WBU to work in more depth with advisers, providing mentoring, strengthening skills and knowledge and increasing their confidence to work on complex cases. This increases informed choices and improves outcomes for residents. This has included meeting with clients directly, writing detailed submissions to support clients at tribunal and liaising with our EEA consultant to submit detailed and technical arguments to support a resident's claim for benefit.

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Target no. of beneficiaries as per SLA</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries <u>year to date</u></b>
Proactive follow-up of UC benefit queries and complex queries: Supporting advisers, ensuring accuracy of DWP decision-making, identifying issues, developing good practice, shaping future advice	80 advisers	107 received follow-up contact
In-depth support, including: Detailed support challenging decisions Comparative analysis of benefit options Raising concerns with DWP and other national agencies. Targeted support direct with clients	12 clients	15

## Case studies

### Followed up, further advice given

A client's Universal Credit award had been suspended following a query regarding parental responsibility in a shared-care arrangement. This reassessment left the client facing loss of benefit income due to sharing care of the younger child with the other parent. DWP were requesting court documents that the client had been told it would be illegal to share with

anyone. Our advice provided scope for the client to challenge the decision. Additionally, WBU checked the client's potential entitlement to benefit should the Universal Credit decision be upheld and found the client would have no entitlement to Universal Credit without the child element.

On follow up, the adviser explained the complexity of the relationship between the parents and an increase in the client's work. WBU outlined the factors that DWP should base their decision on and have advised on the ongoing potential to challenge the DWP decision, the impact of the increased earnings on any potential award and offered ongoing support with this.

### **In-depth advice**

A disabled claimant had been left inheritance in a discretionary trust and Universal Credit decided that the client was owner of the capital which were "readily available" to them, leading to an overpayment of £26,859.17. WBU were able to confirm that as the client's access to funds from the trust was at the discretion of the trustees, that the client could not be considered to own the capital held in the trust. This involved reviewing the will which created the trust, researching law and guidance and including this in our further advice. WBU have advised that the decision of the DWP to take account of the trust fund be challenged. There has been no response to the challenge to date and WBU will continue to follow up on the case.

### **In-depth advice**

A disabled client was being supported to appeal a Personal Independence Payment decision. The client had been assessed as having no entitlement which was not changed following a mandatory reconsideration. The enquirer had received the schedule of evidence very close to the appeal date and was concerned that the claim pack was substantially incomplete. We advised on the possible options going forward, with the pros and cons of each option.

Following this, the enquirer brought the bundle into the office for review, and we provided detailed notes to support their submission in advance of the hearing, including how address the fact that the enquirer was recorded as the representative, but they were in fact an advocate. The enquirer was further supported with an in-person discussion about the case.

The client was ultimately successful in their appeal and was given a 10-year award with arrears backdated for 14 months. The enquirer noted the significance of our input in achieving this result.



<b>Meeting:</b>	Combined Executive Member Decision Session
<b>Meeting date:</b>	02/09/2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Housing & Communities
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Executive Member for Housing Planning & Safer Communities

## **Decision Report - Request to consult about extending the current Public Space Protection Order within the city walls.**

### **Subject of the report**

1. This report is to agree to proceed to public consultations on the potential extension of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle the problems caused by groups of people within the city walls. See annex 1 for a map of the area covered.

### **Benefits and Challenges**

2. The unique layout of the city with its compact mix of residential, commercial and licensed premises makes it difficult to avoid conflict between different user groups. This often results in perceptions of the city being a safe place being more negative than the actual crime figures would suggest. A partnership approach between all key stakeholders in the city, including City of York Council and North Yorkshire Police has ensured that where issues arise, they are quickly addressed through a combination of enforcement and education.
3. The city centre faces different issues to lots of other areas across the city, including large number of groups of people, street drinkers, begging, and people loitering, which other residents and visitors can find intimidating. North Yorkshire Police have advised that they would support the consultation around the PSPO and discussions about extending the scope of this order.
4. Prior to the introduction of the PSPO in the city centre, the police were utilising their dispersal powers where incidents of anti-social behaviour

increased following the reopening of the city centre. This power requires the preauthorisation of an order by an Inspector. Therefore it does not enable an immediate reactive response to tackling alcohol related anti-social behaviour. The PSPO enables police officers to seize alcohol where it is associated with anti-social behaviour that is impacting on the quality of life for people in that area. The key requirement is the associated anti-social behaviour and the power does not ban drinking alcohol in open spaces where it is happening responsibly

5. During the course of the first seven months of 2025, there were 573 incidents within the city walls, for a wide variety of reasons including violence, ASB and concern for safety. This demonstrates the large number of people who use the city centre across all days of the week and times of the day.

### **Policy Basis for Decision**

6. The extension of the PSPO in the area, supports the priorities within the Council Plan 2023-27, One City For All:
  - Build Community Pride
  - Make the City Centre Work for Everyone

### **Financial Strategy Implications**

7. The cost of undertaking the consultation exercise can be met within current budgets.

### **Reasons and Recommendations**

8. It is recommended that the Executive Member approve the decision to consult with the public and partners on the extension of the PSPO which would ensure that the Council would have greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour within the city walls including the following possible options the council could consider:
  - A ban on drinking alcohol within the area;
  - The ability to remove large groups of 3 or more people who are causing anti-social behaviour for both sites;
  - Begging, no person shall make any verbal, non-verbal or written request for money, donations or goods, including the placing of hats, clothing or containers so as to cause or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance.



- No return within 24 hours if asked to leave. No person shall, after being requested to leave by an authorised officer due to them behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to any person within the city Centre without reasonable excuse, remain or return to the city Centre within a period of 24 hours.
- Loitering, no person shall loiter, sit or lay on the floor or on temporary structures in or adjacent to doorways or around pay machines (including banks, supermarkets) in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to any person within the city Centre.

### **Background**

9. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 came into force on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and changed the powers available to local authorities and the police to deal with anti-social behaviour in our communities.
10. The Act introduced new powers, including, a Public Spaces Protection Order, which is granted by the Local Authority, but can be enforced by either the Local Authority or the Police. A PSPO will allow the council to stop individuals or groups from carrying out acts of anti-social behaviour.

11. The PSPO serves to protect a public space from persistent or continuing anti-social activity by individuals or groups that is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. Such an order lasts for a period of up to 3 years, with provision for extensions for up to 3 years at a time. The process starts by way of consultation, and after this time, a decision is taken by a Local Authority to grant a PSPO. This power replaces the previous gating orders, designated public place orders (relating to restrictions on alcohol consumption) and dog control orders.
12. Breaching the conditions of a PSPO is a criminal offence with the option open to officers to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or to prosecute the breach in the Magistrates Court. Association of Chief Police Officers guidance indicates that all breaches of PSPO and non-payment of FPN rests with the Local Authority. Failure to pay an FPN within a given period is likely to lead to prosecution for the original offence.

### **Consultation Analysis**

13. North Yorkshire Police and some partner organisations have been consulted about this and support undertaking the wider consultation with residents to establish their views so that the Executive Member can make an informed decision.

### **Options Analysis and Evidential Basis**

14. Options considered were
  - a. To consult on the extension of the PSPO which would ensure that the Council would have greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour in these areas.
  - b. Not to consult on the extension of a PSPO which would restrict the Council's ability to tackle anti-social behaviour in the area
15. Option rejected was
  - a. Not to consult on the extension as this will restrict the options available to challenge ASB in this high profile area of the city.

### **Organisational Implications**

- ***Financial***, *There are no financial implications associated with this decision*

- **Human Resources (HR)**, there are no HR implications
- **Legal**, there are no Legal implications with carrying out consultation with residents about whether they support a PSPO
- **Procurement**, there are no procurement implications
- **Health and Wellbeing**, there are no health and well being implications
- **Environment and Climate action**, there are no environmental or climate action implications
- **Affordability**, there are no affordability implications
- **Equalities and Human Rights**, An EIA will be carried out if there is support for the recommendations from the public consultation once it has been decided what s to be included
- **Data Protection and Privacy** there are no data protection issues with the consultation process
- **Communications**, there are no communication implications
- **Economy**, there are no economic implications

## Risks and Mitigations

There are no risks identified with this decision

## Contact Details

### Author:

**Author's name - Paul Morrison**  
**Title - Community Safety Manager**

Co-Author's Name  
 Title  
 Dept Name  
 Tel No.

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

**Chief Officer's name – Pauline Stuchfield**  
**Title – Director of Housing and Communities**

**Report  
 Approved**



**Date** 20/8/25

**Wards Affected: Guildhall**

**All** ☐

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

None

**Annexes**

Annex 1 – map highlighting proposed area of PSPO

**List of Abbreviations Used in this Report**

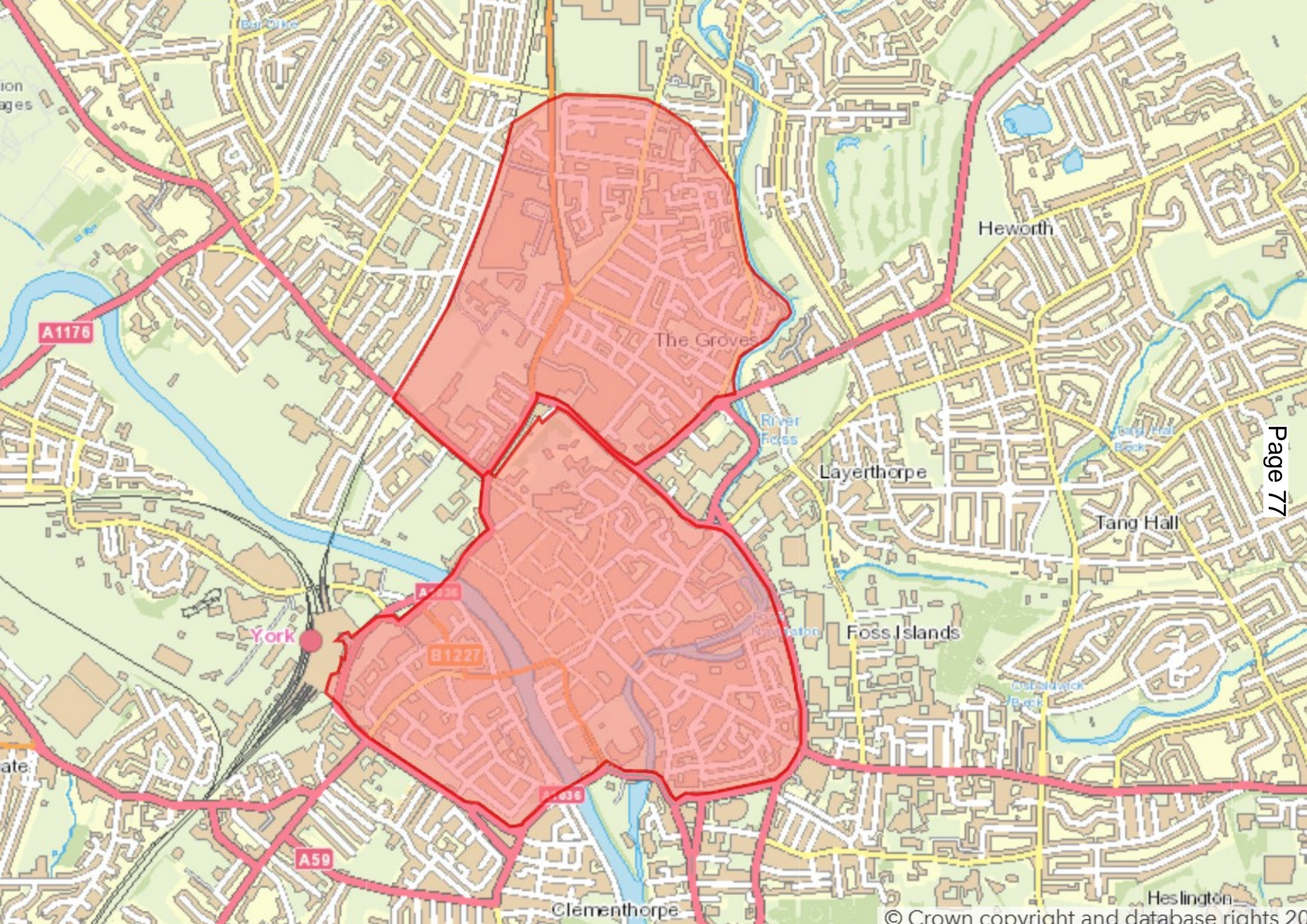
PSPO – Public Space Protection Order

NYP – North Yorkshire Police

FPN – Fixed Penalty Notice

ASB – Anti-social behaviour







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<b>Meeting:</b>	Combined Executive Member Decision Session
<b>Meeting date:</b>	02/09/2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Housing & Communities
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Executive Member for Housing Planning & Safer Communities

**Decision Report - Request to consult about extending the current Public Space Protection Order at Union Terrace, Clarence Street Gardens and the Groves.**

**Subject of the report**

1. This report is to agree to proceed to public consultations on the potential extension of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle the problems caused by groups of people within the area bordering Union Terrace, Clarence Street Gardens and the Groves see annex 1 for the full area.

**Benefits and Challenges**

2. Historically there have been incidents and reports of people street drinking around the car park at Union Terrace and Clarence Street Gardens.
3. Union Terrace car park is one of the principal coach stops for visitors to the city and this means that this area is often the first impression that people have of the city.
4. This led to the council introducing a PSPO in 2022. The area covered included the Groves to minimise the risk of the anti-social behaviour being displaced. The Order has allowed North Yorkshire Police (NYP) to remove alcohol and disperse groups without the need for more formal action to be taken, which NYP have advised is a useful tool to tackle ASB in the area.

5. During the course of the first three months of 2025, there were 27 incidents linked to the Union Terrace area, for a wide variety of reasons including violence, ASB and concern for safety.
6. Healthmatic who operate the Council's Public Toilets have advised that they have had lots of issues within the toilets which are situated in the car park, and have had to close the toilets regularly because of damage.
7. North Yorkshire Police have also issued dispersal orders. These are short term solutions that for a period of 24 or 48 hours allow the police to ask people to leave an area because of anti-social behaviour. They are approved by an Inspector or a more senior officer.

### **Policy Basis for Decision**

8. The extension of the PSPO in the area, supports the priority within the Council Plan 2023-27, One City For All:
  - Build Community Pride
  - Make the City Centre Work for Everyone

### **Financial Strategy Implications**

9. The cost of undertaking the consultation exercise can be met within current budgets.

### **Reasons and Recommendations**

10. It is recommended that the Executive Member approve the decision to consult with the public and partners on the extension of the PSPO which would ensure that the Council would have greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour in these areas, including the following possible options the council could consider:
  - A ban on drinking alcohol within the area;
  - The ability to remove large groups of 3 or more people who are causing anti-social behaviour for the sites.

### **Background**

11. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 came into force on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and changed the powers available to local



authorities and the police to deal with anti-social behaviour in our communities.

12. The Act introduced new powers, including, a Public Spaces Protection Order, which is granted by the Local Authority, but can be enforced by either the Local Authority or the Police. A PSPO will allow the council to stop individuals or groups from carrying out acts of anti-social behaviour.
13. The PSPO serves to protect a public space from persistent or continuing anti-social activity by individuals or groups that is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. Such an order lasts for a period of up to 3 years, with provision for extensions for up to 3 years at a time. The process starts by way of consultation, and after this time, a decision is taken by a Local Authority to grant a PSPO. This power replaces the previous gating orders, designated public place orders (relating to restrictions on alcohol consumption) and dog control orders.
14. Breaching the conditions of a PSPO is a criminal offence with the option open to officers to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or to prosecute the breach in the Magistrates Court. Association of Chief Police Officers guidance indicates that all breaches of PSPO and non-payment of FPN rests with the Local Authority. Failure to pay an FPN within a given period is likely to lead to prosecution for the original offence.

## **Consultation Analysis**

15. North Yorkshire Police and some partner organisations have been consulted about this and support undertaking the wider consultation with residents to establish their views so that the Executive Member can make an informed decision.

## **Options Analysis and Evidential Basis**

16. Options considered were  
To consult on the extension of the PSPO which would ensure that the Council would have greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour in these areas.  
Not to consult on the extension of a PSPO which would restrict the Council's ability to tackle anti-social behaviour in the area

17. Option rejected was

Not to consult on the extension as will restrict the options available to challenge ASB in this area. It also increases the risks associated with visitors to the city who are using the car park.

## Organisational Implications

- **Financial**, *There are no financial implications associated with this decision*
- **Human Resources (HR)**, *there are no HR implications*
- **Legal**, *there are no Legal implications with carrying out consultation with residents about whether they support a PSPO*
- **Procurement**, *there are no procurement implications*
- **Health and Wellbeing**, *there are no health and well being implications*
- **Environment and Climate action**, *there are no environmental or climate action implications*
- **Affordability**, *there are no affordability implications*
- **Equalities and Human Rights**, *An EIA will be carried out if there is support for the recommendations from the public consultation once it has been decided what s to be included*
- **Data Protection and Privacy** *there are no data protection issues with the consultation process*
- **Communications**, *there are no communication implications*
- **Economy**, *there are no economic implications*

## Risks and Mitigations

There are no risks identified with this decision

## Contact Details

### Author:

**Author's name - Paul Morrison**  
**Title - Community Safety Manager**

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

**Chief Officer's name – Pauline Stuchfield**  
**Title – Director of Housing and Communities**

**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 20/08/25

Co-Author's Name  
Title  
Dept Name  
Tel No.

**Wards Affected: Guildhall**

**All**

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**For further information please contact the author of the report**

### Background Papers:

None

### Annexes

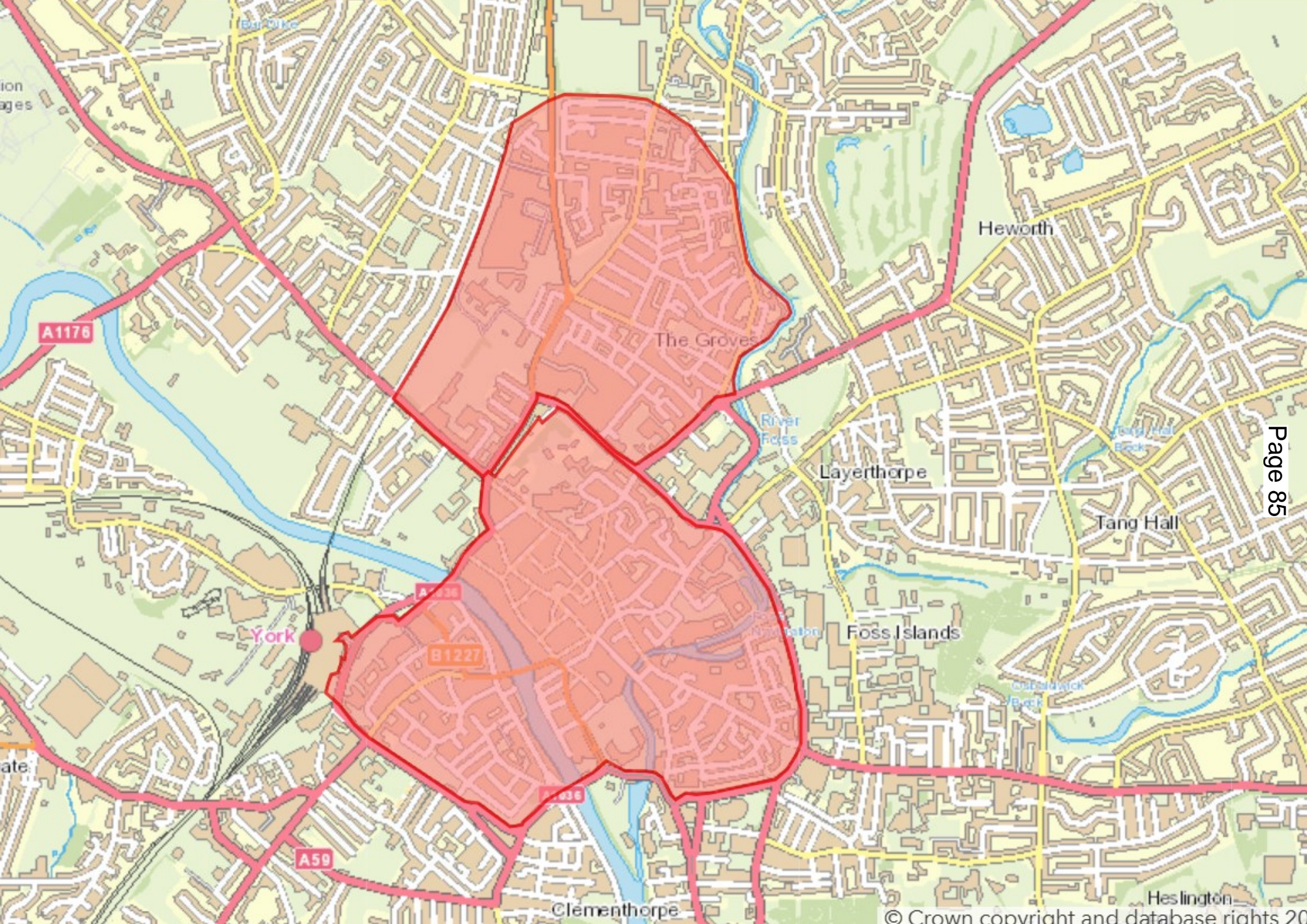
Annex 1 – map highlighting proposed area of PSPO

### List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

PSPO – Public Space Protection Order  
NYP – North Yorkshire Police  
FPN – Fixed Penalty Notice  
ASB – Anti-social behaviour

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