

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency
Date	18 March 2025
Present	Councillor Kent
Officers in attendance	Andrew Gillah - Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Quality) Mike Southcombe - Environmental Protection Manager James Gilchrist - Director of Environment, Transport and Planning

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#### **18. Apologies for Absence (10:00am)**

No apologies for absence were received.

#### **19. Declarations of Interest (10:00am)**

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member was asked to declare if he had any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have had in relation to the business on the agenda. None were declared.

#### **20. Minutes (10:00am)**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 19 November 2025 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

#### **21. Public Participation (10:00am)**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## **22. Consultation on a York wide Smoke Control Area (10:01am)**

The Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Quality) and Environmental Protection Manager presented the report and noted that Smoke Control Areas (SCAs) were designated under the Smoke Control Act, and that York had multiple SCAs covering different areas of the city, dating back to the 1960s. Officers reported that proposals to create one whole area for most of York would provide more clarity and would act as a deterrent to burning unapproved materials.

In response to questions from the Executive Members, the Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Quality) and Environmental Protection Manager confirmed that:

- The PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from burning solid fuels was approximately double the PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from transport in York.
- Outside the current Smoke Control Area boundary 0.2% of properties in York burnt solid fuels as a primary heating source, with the vast majority of houses with the ability to burn solid fuels doing so as a secondary heating source. Following proposed changes upgrades to some properties' heating systems may be required.

Resolved:

That the Executive Member approved:

- i. A statutory consultation on the revocation of City of York Council's (CYC's) existing SCAs (made by way of order on or after 13 November 1980) and the making of a new order to designate the whole of CYC's administrative area a SCA.
- ii. To delegate authority to the Director of Transport, Environment and Planning, in consultation with the Director of Governance to make an order to revoke the existing Smoke Control orders made before 13 November 1980 which will be processed in accordance with the statutory procedure for publication and confirmation of an order as set out in Schedule 5 of the Clean Air Act 1993.

Reasons:

- i. This would provide a mechanism to control the burning of the most polluting solid fuels and the appliances they are burnt in.
- ii. This would ensure consistency across CYC's administrative area, and that all future development sites are subject to SCA requirements.
- iii. This would assist in reducing fine particulate PM2.5 levels in York, and would align with national priorities for reducing pollution from domestic solid fuel burning as outlined in the Air Quality Strategy for England.
- iv. This approach is considered proportionate and would demonstrate that CYC is actively taking steps to reduce particulate emissions within its area for the protection of public health.

Cllr Kent, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.07 am].