



To the Executive Members of the City of York Council

Subject: Formal Objection to the Proposed Weekly Closure of the York Christmas Market

I am writing to formally express my concerns regarding the proposal to close the York Christmas Market for one day each week. While I understand the Council may be seeking to balance various operational or logistical pressures, this strategy is fundamentally flawed and poses a significant risk to the city's economic health and reputation.

1. Economic Impact and the "Cumulative Burden"

The York retail sector is already navigating a difficult economic climate. Recent increases in car parking charges have already led to a noticeable decline in footfall and trade for local shops. By removing one day of the market per week, the Council is effectively imposing a **14% (1/7th) reduction in trade** during the city's most critical fiscal period. For many local businesses, the Christmas season provides the surplus required to survive the quieter months of Q1; cutting this capacity is a direct threat to their viability.

2. Public Safety and Policing Advice

It is my understanding that this proposal runs contrary to professional police advice. A staggered or intermittent closure does not necessarily simplify the security landscape. In fact, it creates inconsistency in crowd management patterns. Furthermore, if an unfortunate incident were to occur on a day the market was "closed," the national and international media would still report the event as an attack on the **"York Christmas Market."** The reputational damage would be identical, rendering the closure a redundant security measure that offers no actual protection to the city's brand.

3. Accessibility and the Secure Zone

York's city centre is uniquely compact. While its small size is part of its charm, it necessitates a more thoughtful approach to accessibility. The current "secure zone" restrictions significantly hinder those with mobility issues. Rather than reducing market days, the Council should be focused on **increasing the provision of disabled parking** in immediate proximity to the secure zone. Accessibility should be improved to ensure the market remains inclusive, rather than reducing the opportunity for all residents to attend.

4. Operational Inefficiency

Closing the market for one day a week does not remove the infrastructure; the chalets and equipment remain in situ, occupying public space without providing any economic return or festive atmosphere. It creates a "dead zone" in the heart of the city, which is detrimental to the aesthetic and commercial appeal of York.

I urge the Executive to reconsider this proposal and instead work with local businesses and security partners to ensure the market remains open for its full duration, supported by better accessibility and a fair parking strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Pinder
Leader, York High Street Forum