

Meeting:	Executive
Meeting date:	9 September 2026
Report of:	Dave Atkinson, Director of Environmental and Regulatory Services
Portfolio of:	Councillor Ravilious, Executive Member for Transport

Review of CYC community car park and on-street parking charges in response to petitions

Subject of Report

1. This report invites the Executive to review the recommendations from the independent review of community car parking and on-street charges focusing on Bishopthorpe Road, East Parade (Heworth), Micklegate, and The Groves. It includes the feedback from the Place Scrutiny Committee and recommends some changes for Executive's approval.
2. The review was commissioned following petitions submitted by traders and residents in the four areas listed above, under the Traffic Management Act 2004 Right to challenge parking policies. The petitions were submitted in response to changes to car parking charges implemented in 2025. The findings from the review were presented to the Place Scrutiny Committee in June 2026.
3. The report recommends some changes to the cost of the Minster Badge (for all residents) and some parking charges reductions for residents in the locations reviewed (with a Minster Badge). It also notes the intention to develop a parking strategy for York as identified in the Local Transport Strategy and its Implementation Plan and proposes the introduction of an informal consultation process for significant parking charges changes and the publication of a revised annual parking report to provide additional information on parking revenue and how it is spent.

Benefits and Challenges

4. The objectives set out in the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) are bold and ambitious. The LTS encourages everyone to consider how they currently travel in and around the city to deliver the overall vision to reduce the distances driven by 20%, at a time when the number of trips will increase as the city grows.
5. The vision set out in the LTS is supported by ten strategic objectives:
 - i. Support an inclusive, accessible, affordable city;
 - ii. Support delivery of the Climate Change Strategy;
 - iii. Support delivery of the Economic Development Strategy;
 - iv. Improve health and wellbeing through healthy place shaping;
 - v. Enhance safety and personal security;
 - vi. Improve the local environment by reducing air pollution and noise;
 - vii. Enhance the reliability of the transport system;
 - viii. Protect the city's heritage and enhance public spaces;
 - ix. Accommodate the envisaged growth of the city in the most sustainable way; and
 - x. Future-proof our city.
6. As noted by the Place Scrutiny Committee, one of the main challenges when setting parking charges, is to balance the need to reduce car travel to deliver the objectives listed above, whilst also meeting accessibility needs and supporting the delivery of the Economic Strategy. The independent review's Executive Summary (Annex C), also highlights this challenge, noting that *"there are no easy solutions that satisfy the needs of all users"*.
7. The LTS aims to balance these priorities by providing incentives to use sustainable transport and by discouraging driving where possible. The LTS therefore focuses on improving accessibility, walking, wheeling and cycling facilities, and public transport facilities and service provision. It also includes some measures to reduce car dependency, noting the challenge of managing *"parking*

to provide access for shops and business, while discouraging car use for journeys which could be made by sustainable modes”.

8. As noted in the independent review’s Executive Summary (Annex C), the decision to increase parking charges in 2025 *“sits within a wider policy framework that seeks to bring forward rapid decarbonisation; provide improved and more equitable transport options; and promote a thriving, inclusive economy. Collectively, the city’s strategies position parking management (including charges) as one lever among many to manage scarce road space; reduce congestion and emissions; and support city-centre vitality. (...) In this context, increases in parking charges are a demand-management tool to help achieve wider polity outcomes, helping to reduce congestion and emissions, help fund and encourage the use of sustainable transport, and helping create a city centre that remains accessible and economically resilient during the transition to net zero”.*
9. The impacts of the changes to parking prices as reported by stakeholders in the four areas where petitions were submitted are described in detail in the independent review reports (Annexes C1 to C4). Headline findings are summarised in the Executive Report (Annex C), which notes that many businesses reported fewer customers and lower spend and linked these changes to the increased parking charges. When asked how the increase in charges has impacted their parking habits, residents and visitors most frequently cited *“using car parks less frequently”, “parking in different locations”, “changing where they travel to”, and “parking for shorter amounts of time”.*
10. It is important to note that some of the challenges identified by residents and traders in the Arup review are also, at least partially, a result of wider national and international policies and changes, that bear no relation to local transport policy. These wider issues have led to a significant dent in consumer confidence, leading to reduced spend in high streets across the country.
11. The recommendations included in this report aim to strike a balance between competing objectives by offering reduced parking charges for residents in community areas, supporting access to local shops, whilst continuing to use parking charges alongside other levers to achieve the objectives set out in the LTS.

Policy Basis for Decision

12. The **Local Transport Strategy (LTS)** was adopted by the Executive in July 2024. By changing how we move around the city, it aims to ensure that we all benefit from a healthier, more sustainable and better-connected city. By reducing vehicle traffic, the LTS aims to make York an even better place to live, attracting investment, employment and visitors, and helping residents live longer, happier, healthier lives.
13. The LTS quantifies this ambition through transport targets, requiring a 20% reduction in miles driven by 2030, increasing the use of public transport by 50% and doubling the amount of active travel by 2030
14. Recognising this, the Executive made several recommendations to Full Council in February 2025 for the Budget to change car parking and on-street parking charges, to reflect the public consultation on both the budget and the LTS. These recommendations were informed by extensive evidence on the role of parking charges as one of the tools to reduce traffic congestion and encourage the switch to more sustainable modes of transport.
15. In its Executive Summary (Annex C), the independent review identifies that *“increases in parking charges are a demand-management tool to help achieve wider polity outcomes, helping to reduce congestion and emissions, help fund and encourage the use of sustainable transport, and helping create a city centre that remains accessible and economically resilient during the transition to net zero.”*
16. In 2022, residents and businesses were consulted on 10-year strategies designed to guide city development and future decisions. **The 10-year strategies** were adopted by the Council in December 2022 and are focused on economy, the environment (climate change), and health and wellbeing. City partners drew on the ambitions set in the 10-year strategies to co-design a vision for the city: *“by 2032, York will be a vibrant, prosperous, welcoming and sustainable city, where everyone can share and take pride in its success”*.
17. Increased parking charges were introduced as an intervention to support an increase in use of public transport and active travel and a reduction in car journeys to reduce congestion, in line with the following strategies:

a) **Climate Change Strategy 2022-2023** which set an ambition for the city to be net zero carbon by 2030. Later, in 2024, that ambition was updated to include establishing the conditions to be climate resilient by 2030. This includes the following objectives for the transport sector:

- i. Fewer people travel by private motor vehicle, reducing congestion and improving air quality;
- ii. People feel safe and supported to increase walking and wheeling, particularly for shorter journeys across the city;
- iii. The use of public transport increases and our bus fleet is entirely electric;
- iv. Those vehicles that remain on our roads are electric, with sufficient charging infrastructure across the city to meet the needs of residents;
- v. Deliveries across the city are conducted by low and zero emission vehicles – facilitated by freight hubs and consolidation centres, reducing traffic on our roads.; and

b) The **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032**, which sets an ambition for All York residents (young, old and future residents) to enjoy happier, healthier, longer lives, proud of their city and living in homes that meet their needs, able to actively participate in their communities, with access to the right support at the right time.

18. However, the **Economic Strategy 2022-2032** sets an objective to focus on helping small and micro businesses to thrive. This is made more difficult within the national and international context, which has resulted in a significant dent in consumer confidence, leading to challenging high street economic conditions.

19. Since June 2025, consumer confidence has been significantly impacted by **a combination of inflation, geopolitical conflicts, and fiscal policies**. While confidence saw a slight uptick in early summer 2025, it deteriorated in the latter half of 2025 and into 2026, leading to reduced discretionary spending. Consumer confidence has a significant impact on hospitality, retail and tourism sectors, which typically do best when consumer confidence is high.

20. Monthly business intelligence meetings with local business representatives confirmed that the issues described below have affected York's local economy at the same time as the increases in parking charges. Disaggregating the impact of increased parking charges is therefore very difficult given the changing overall economic picture.
21. Global changes: The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development¹ reports rising trade barriers, specifically US tariff increases, have been a major driver of global economic uncertainty, increasing costs for goods which has reduced confidence. In addition, since 2022 with the conflict in Ukraine and, more recently, conflict in the Middle East, have caused volatility in oil and gas prices, leading to widespread consumer concern regarding inflation, fuel costs, and potential for slowed economic growth.
- a) National changes: National Insurance and Living Wage Changes (UK): Increased Employer National Insurance contributions and National Living Wage changes following the 2025 Budget raised business costs, leading to fears of reduced hiring and impacting consumer confidence regarding job security. While the Bank of England maintained rates at 4.25% in June 2025 to manage inflation, high borrowing costs for a prolonged period, paired with falling employment in certain sectors, have contributed to a "bottleneck" in confidence.
 - b) Consumer habits: The Deloitte Consumer Confidence Tracker² reports that the cost of living—particularly in food and essential services— caused consumers to shift towards a change in spending habits such as using discounts and choosing cheaper brands, with a rise in "trading down" to cope with higher costs. By late 2025 and early 2026, discretionary spending on items such as prepared foods, and big-ticket items fell as consumers felt less well-off, despite improvements in some areas like personal finance security. Survey data from early 2026 shows a majority of consumers, particularly in the UK, feel pessimistic about the broader economy, with many planning to reduce discretionary spend in the first quarter of 2026.

¹ [Global economic outlook shifts as trade policy uncertainty weakens growth](#)

² [The Deloitte Consumer Tracker | Deloitte UK](#)

Financial Strategy Implications

22. The financial impact of the recommendation to change the cost of the Minster Badge and reduce parking charges for residents with a Minster Badge in community parking areas has been assessed as follows:
 - a) Minster Badge: the reduction in income from the lower cost of a badge is assumed to be in the region of £22k based on current holders. This will be offset from an anticipated increase in sales as a result of the reduced price. We are not able to estimate whether the change will result in additional parking transactions or transfers from full charge to discounted prices. This impact is assumed to be broadly neutral.
 - b) Increased Minster Badge discount in community areas: the impact on parking income is difficult to estimate as there is limited data available on car park and on street parking usage levels and Minster Badge use for these areas. The negative impact on revenue is estimated at £7,000/year. It may lead to additional transactions that would offset this value.
23. The recommendation that resources be allocated to develop the parking strategy, as described in the LTS and its Implementation Plan, has financial implications for the Council. The parking strategy forms part of a 'Kerbside strategy' that looks at all uses of the highway. It will be funded from transport budgets as part of the wider work on the Movement and Place framework and through funding from the Combined Authority (high level cost estimate £80 to £150k depending on study scope and data requirements).
24. The recommendation for additional non-statutory consultation where significant parking charges increases are proposed will have a negative financial impact on the Council as additional resources will be required to undertake the consultation and analyse the results. The additional consultation undertaken before a decision is made may reduce the risk of a petition requesting a review under the Traffic Management Act 2004 once the decision is made, but a petition could still be submitted, resulting in additional review costs. The additional consultation costs will be absorbed by the transport service.

25. The revised format for the annual parking account will require additional staff time to prepare the report. This may however result in some efficiency gains when answering queries and data requests about the parking account as more data will be publicly available on the Council's website. The additional costs will be absorbed by the transport service.

Recommendation and reasons

26. Executive is recommended to:

- a) Note the continued focus on LTS objectives to encourage a shift away from the private car and reduce mileage driven in the city by improving alternatives modes of transport and using parking charges as a lever to influence travel behaviour, whilst continuing to offer free unlimited parking for Blue Badge holders;
- b) Approve the following changes to parking charges:
 - i. Changes to the Minster Badge, from the current charge of £45 for two years, to an annual charge of £15; and
 - ii. Increased discount for Minster Badge holders parking in community parking areas (as listed below) from the current 30% discount to 50% discount;
- c) Note the commitment to develop a parking strategy as set out in the LTS and its Implementation Plan. This will be done as part of the wider work on the Movement and Place Plan, (also including a kerbside strategy). The parking strategy will consider how parking should be managed near places of worship as well as other important destinations;
- d) Approve the introduction of an informal consultation stage before a decision is made on significant increases to Council parking charges (defined as increases above the rate of increase for City of York Council standard fees and charges);
- e) Support the publication of the annual parking account report in a revised format, to provide more detail on parking revenue and how it is reinvested into transport and environmental improvements.

Reason: To acknowledge the feedback and recommendations received through the independent review and continue to balance competing priorities to deliver the LTS's objectives.

Background

27. This report invites the Executive to review the recommendations from the independent review of car parking and on-street charges (see Annexes C and C1 to C4). The review was commissioned following petitions submitted by traders and residents in four areas of York, under the Traffic Management Act 2004 Right to challenge parking policies.
28. The petitions were submitted in June and July 2025 following the implementation of new parking charges in April 2025, following decisions made by the Executive in January 2025 and Full Council in February 2025. The charges were then reviewed through an Executive Member for Transport urgent decision in April 2025 and an Executive decision in June 2025.
29. Petitions received by the Council were as follows:
 - a) Bishopthorpe Road Traders wrote to the Executive Member referencing an 8,000-signature petition;
 - b) Micklegate Traders raised concerns and submitted a petition about changes in parking prices. There were over 375 signatories;
 - c) Traders and residents at The Groves challenged parking charges and submitted a petition with a request for a complete TRO review. There were over 745 signatories; and
 - d) A petition from Heworth for East Parade car park was received with 409 signatories.
30. The petitions requested a review of parking charges under the Traffic Management Act 2004, using the "Right to challenge parking policies". The statutory guidance on using petition schemes to provide a right to review parking policies can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-challenge-parking-policies>

The independent review

31. The Council commissioned independent consultants Arup to conduct the review, in line with the requirements set out in the statutory guidance.
32. The consultation element of the review took place over seven weeks from December 2025 to March 2026. A targeted consultation initially launched for three areas: Bishopthorpe Road, Micklegate and The Groves, as these areas had submitted formal Right to Challenge petitions. The review was expanded to include Heworth in January 2026 to respond to the petition submitted by the local community concerning East Parade car park.
33. The independent review's consultation focused on car park and on-street parking prices in these locations and the impact of these charges. Although some options were mentioned in consultation responses, the consultation did not specifically include questions on wider transport interventions included in the LTS.
34. It is noted that the petition submitted for The Groves requested a review under TMA for "*unfair parking charge increase and unfair TROs*". This review has considered the changes made in 2025 which prompted the petitions. These changes were related to charges rather than any other aspects of the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). The review has therefore focused on parking charges, including on-street parking in the Groves. Any further review of specific issues with existing restrictions in The Groves, including the Resident Parking scheme, would be addressed either through the Council's annual review of parking restrictions (for small changes) or through the parking strategy work (see options and recommendations in this report) for more significant changes.
35. Parking spaces which are privately managed, including by the Council, for example through lease agreements, were not included in the independent review and are not considered in this report.
36. The data collected for the review presents significant limitations:
 - a) It only covers the petitioned areas;
 - b) It doesn't fully explore wider reasons for transport choices or the impact of increased parking charges on people who already travel by more sustainable transport modes (such as cyclists or frequent bus users);

- c) The surveys conducted used simple online and face to face questionnaires. There was no consideration of sampling, respondents were mostly self-selected, questionnaire testing was limited, and there was no statistical analysis undertaken (for example considering statistical significance).
- 37. As a result, the review should not be considered as a city-wide car parking review and should instead be recognised as a limited exercise to present the feedback received from businesses and mainly car-borne visitors for the four areas.
- 38. The findings from the review are included in Annexes C and C1 to C4. This was presented to the Place Scrutiny Committee in June 2026.
- 39. The Committee recommended that the Executive should consider all the recommendations within the independent review's executive summary (Annex C), noting that the recommendations do not take into consideration the Council's available powers, relationship with the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (and different transport duties), the capacity for delivery, nor the operability of the recommendations.

Parking charges and usage

- 40. Following the changes approved by the Executive Member for Transport and the Executive in April and June 2025 and the revised charges approved as part of the 2026/27 budget decision (<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s186995/Item%2010%20-%20Financial%20Strategy%202026-27%20to%202030-31%20-%20Annex%203a-3t.pdf> see page 26), parking charges for car parks managed by the Council and on-street parking broadly fall within the following categories:

- a) **Central short stay car parks** – including Bootham Row, Castle, Coppergate Centre (closes at 7pm), and Esplanade car parks, are the car parks closest to the city centre and the footstreets area. These car parks are in high demand from a wide range of users including residents, visitors and commuters and spaces are limited. Tariffs are therefore set to discourage long term stays and ensure a good level of turnover to better support access to the city centre's services and shops.

For this reason, these car parks offer a set tariff for up to 5 hours of parking (currently £19.20 Sunday to Thursday and

£22.10 on Fridays, Saturdays and during event periods), with users having to pay for additional hours individually after that.

Evening parking charges apply (currently £4 Sunday to Thursday and £4.80 on Fridays, Saturdays and during event periods).

Minster Badge holders benefit from a general 30% discount and a set £2 charge for evening parking in these locations.

The same charges apply to on-street parking in central areas (Carmelite Street, Lord Mayors Walk, North Street, Piccadilly, Skeldergate, Tanner's Moat, Toft Green, Walmgate) where stays are limited to 2 hours in the morning and 3 hours after 2pm.

- b) **Central long stay car parks** – including Foss Bank, Marygate, Monk Bar, Nunnery Lane, St George's Field, and Union Terrace car parks. These car parks also serve the city centre but are located a bit further away from the footstreets. They also see relatively high levels of demand from residents, visitors and commuters (including rail commuters for Marygate and Nunnery Lane).

These car parks are charged at the same hourly rate as the Central car parks but also provide for longer stays with a whole day tariff available (currently £23.20 for a day Sunday to Thursday and £25 on Fridays, Saturdays and during event periods).

Evening charges also apply. Minster Badge holders benefit from a general 30% discount and a set £2 charge for evening parking in these locations.

Union Terrace and St George's car parks also provide parking facilities for coaches (current charges are set at £27.80 for a day ticket).

- c) **Community/suburban car parks** – including Bishopthorpe Road, Rowntree Park, and East Parade (Heworth). These car parks serve local shopping, services, and leisure areas but are also close enough to the city centre to attract users, including commuters, who are willing to park less centrally and walk longer distances to the city centre. To discourage this and ensure that the parking facilities are available to

serve the local shops and services, stays in these car parks are time limited.

Stays are currently charged at £3/hour. There is no weekend of event surcharge and parking is free of charge after 6pm (after 4.30pm for Rowntree Park). Minster Badge holders benefit from a general 30% discount.

The same charges apply to on-street parking on Micklegate, Priory Street, and Lawrence Street during the day. An evening charge applies, and stays are limited to 2 hours in the morning and 3 hours after 2pm.

- d) **ResPark areas** – York's residents' priority parking scheme (ResPark) restricts parking within designated areas, known as 'ResPark zones', to those who are eligible to apply for a permit. The scheme gives priority parking within a zone to residents, their visitors, property owners and local businesses. Residents and businesses must purchase permits to be able to park on-street within the zone. In some cases, ResPark zones include a few parking spaces which can be used free of charge without a permit but only for a limited amount of time, for example to enable customers to access a local business.

In some cases, like in The Groves, some on-street parking bays are shared between resident parking permit holders and time limited paid for parking to enable access to local shops and services. In central areas, these stays are limited to one hour and charged at £5 Sunday to Thursday and £5.50 on Fridays, Saturdays, and during events. In outer areas, the same one-hour limit applies and parking costs £3 (further information is available here:

<https://www.york.gov.uk/OnStreetParking#osp>).

- e) **Unregulated/free parking** – Parking is usually free on the remainder of York's streets although restrictions may apply such as single or double yellow lines. The car parks listed above are the only ones which are managed by the Council as a Highway Authority. Park and Ride sites are managed separately, in agreement with the operator for the bus services, and other areas which are owned by the Council are managed under private agreements (such as leases or similar agreements, for example with Morrison's in Acomb).

41. It is important to note that CYC has no or very limited influence over parking management and charges in many areas which are privately managed. Arup's Executive Summary (Annex C Section 5.1) notes that much of the feedback on lack of fairness and consistency *"was highlighting the disparity between Council managed car parks and large 'out-of-town' retail parks with free parking such as Monks Cross. CYC have very limited influence over these locations"*.
42. In terms of car parking use, the table below presents the number of parking transactions recorded at Council managed car parks over the last three financial years. The significant increases in parking charges were introduced in April 2025 and revised in June 2025 for some of the car parks.

Transactions at CYC car parks		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	% change 24/25 to 25/26
City centre car parks	Short stay car parks	522,216	482,556	-8.5%	-8.5%
	Long stay car parks	688,529	691,096	-12.0%	-12.0%
Community/suburban car parks		77,181	83,932	57,300	-31.7%
On-street parking (pay to park)		188,594	153,121	97,607	-36.3%
Total number of transactions per year		1,476,520	1,410,705	1,204,867	-14.6%

43. The transaction data shows that Council car parking and on-street parking use decreased in 2025/26 when compared to the previous year across all types of parking. A decrease in transaction was also observed between 2023/24 and 2024/25 in city centre central car parks and for on-street parking. Transactions at community car parks had increased in that period.
44. It is difficult to interpret this data in detail without further evidence to understand the reasons behind these changes. As noted elsewhere in this report, a wide range of factors can influence travel and transport behaviours, including car parking prices, the availability of alternative modes of transport, their affordability and convenience, car parking availability (including alternatives to CYC

car parks), road works on specific corridors, as well as wider economic factors.

Local economic data

45. Working with the Business Improvement District (York BID), spend and transaction data from Beauclair is published monthly (mainly covering the city centre) and is available via York BID³ and the Council's Movement and Place data⁴. It shows that overall footfall and spend has generally been lower than that recorded in previous years in 2025 and 2026. The trend for average transaction value and average revenue per customer is less clear but it is important to note that these values are not adjusted for inflation.
46. The Council also publishes monthly footfall data, sourced from BT Active, in the monthly Movement and Place data⁵. The BT Active data covers the four petitioned areas of Bishopthorpe Road, The Groves, Micklegate and Heworth, and the city centre.
47. Through 2025 footfall declined slightly in the city centre area, in line with national trends. Footfall at Bishopthorpe Road has been falling throughout the period of data collection, since October 2024, a number of months before the introduction of increased parking charges. The lowest levels of footfall were recorded in January and February 2026, but footfall recovered slightly in March, April, and May 2026. Footfall data for Micklegate, The Groves, and the City Centre shows similar trends. Footfall in Heworth is lower in February and April 2026, but higher in January, March and May 2026.

Sustainable travel interventions and trends

48. To support the delivery of the LTS, the Council has invested in a range of transport and highway projects including bus improvements and improved sustainable travel routes, including:
 - a) £16.5m investment in highways maintenance, including cycle routes and lanes⁶;

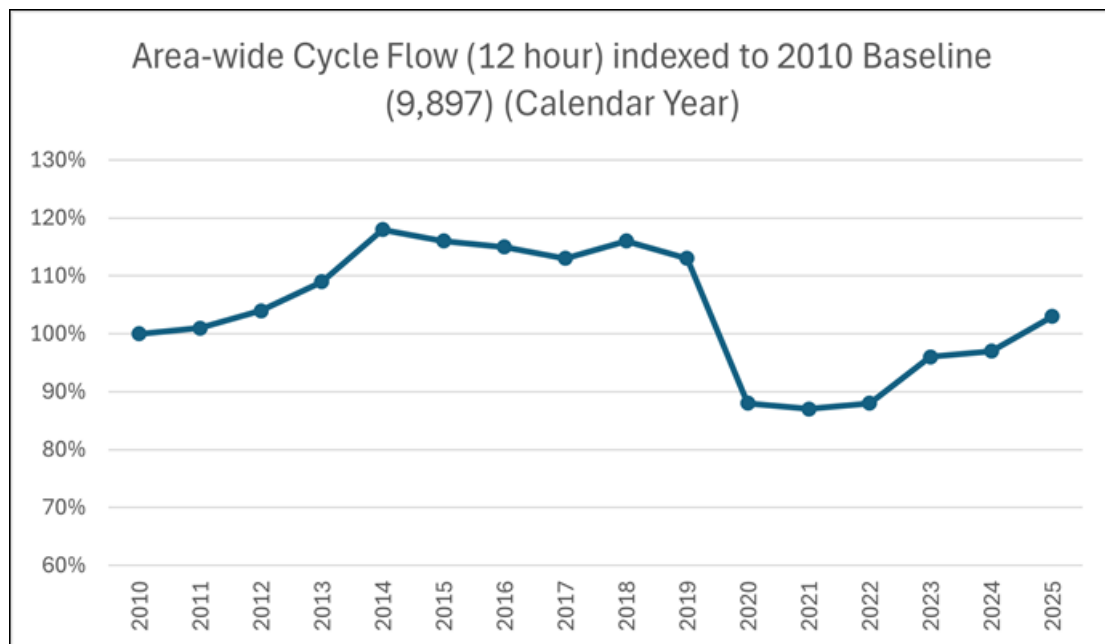
³ www.theyorkbid.com/york-economic-data-hub/

⁴ [City Centre Movement and Place Pack – From Q2 2025/26 - Dataset - York Open Data](#)

⁵ [City Centre Movement and Place Pack – From Q2 2025/26 - Dataset - York Open Data](#)

⁶ <https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1862/highways-maintenance-plan-dedicates-16-5m-across-york>

- b) York Station improvements, including bus facilities and active travel routes⁷;
 - c) Development of the Rougier Route scheme, aiming to improve bus travel times and reliability⁸;
 - d) Extended hours, overnight parking, and improved links to transport routes with Park and Ride sites⁹;
 - e) Young people £1 bus fares¹⁰.
49. The Council Plan performance framework includes several supporting indicators showing how transport choices are changing. As summarised below, these indicators show increases in journeys undertaken on Park & Ride and local bus services and increasing levels of cycling and walking.

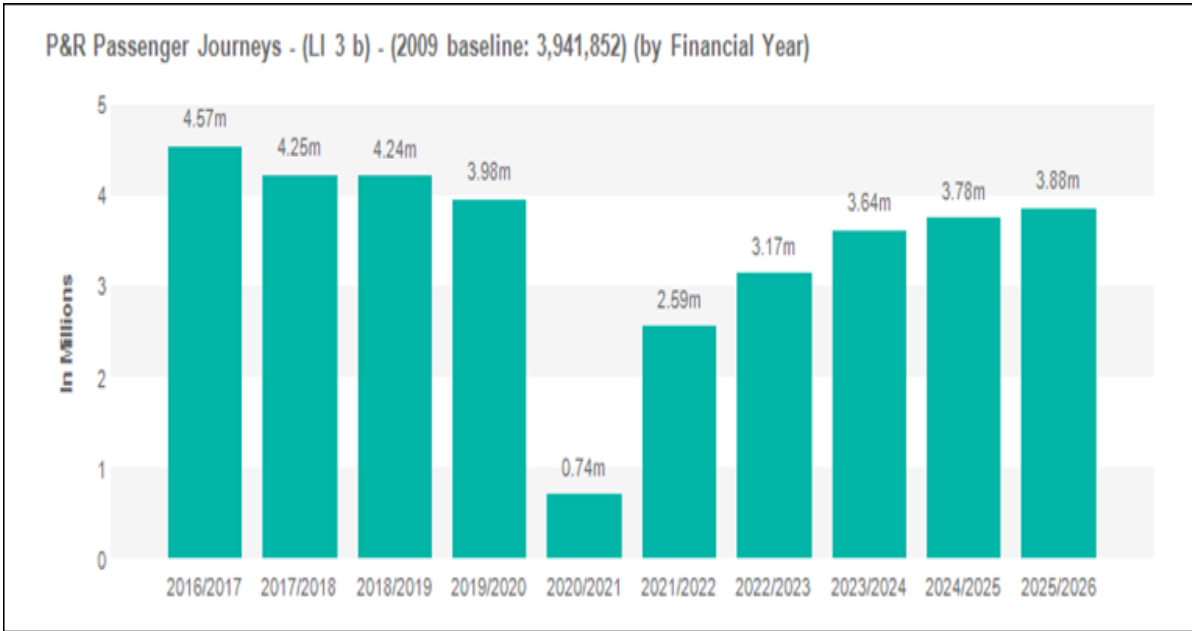
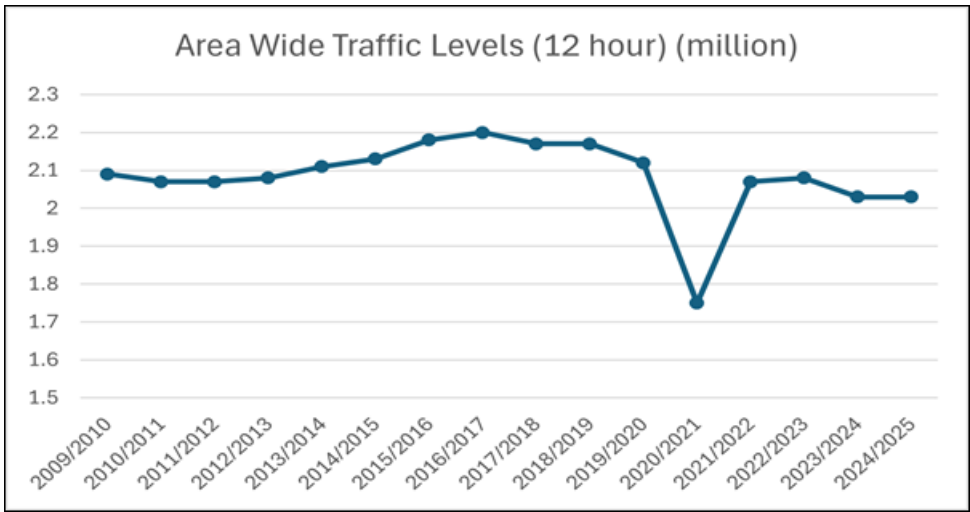
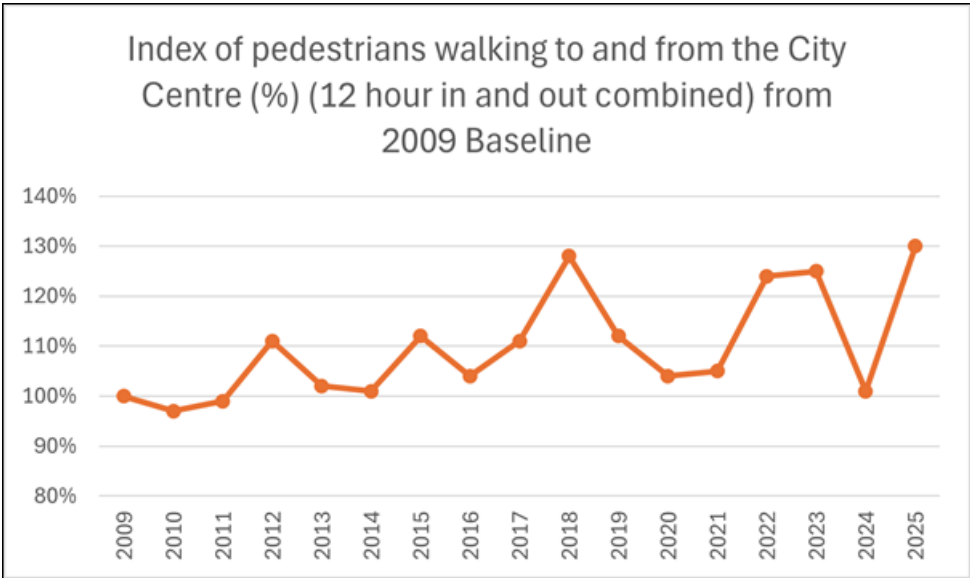


⁷ <https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1832/progress-continues-on-project-to-transform-york-station-area>

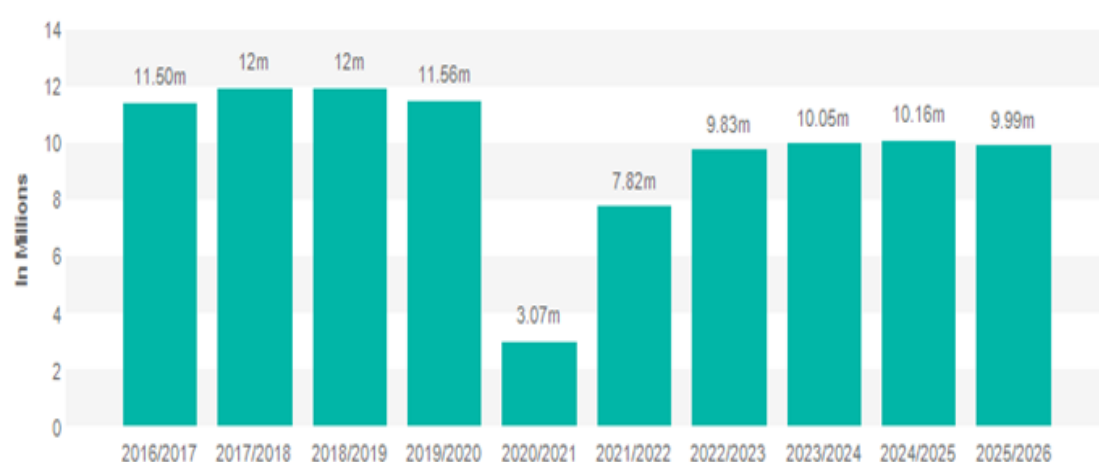
⁸ <https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1806/rougier-route-consultation-launches-a-better-way-through-york>

⁹ <https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1768/major-improvements-for-york-s-park-and-ride> and <https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1706/earlier-starts-later-finishes-for-york-s-park-ride>

¹⁰ <https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1704/young-people-s-bus-fares-reach-million-ticket-milestone>



Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (excluding P&R) (LI 3 a) - (2009 baseline: 10,832,614) (by Financial Year)



Indicator	Previous Years Data	Latest Years Data	DoT 3 Year	DoT 1 Year	Frequency	Data Next Available
P&R Passenger Journeys	3.78m (2024/25)	3.88m (2025/26)	↑	↑	Quarterly	2026/27 data available in June 2027
Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (excluding P&R)	10.05m (2023/24)	10.16m (2024/25)	↑	↑	Quarterly	2025/26 data available in June 2026
Area Wide Traffic Levels (07:00 -19:00) (Excluding A64) from 2009/10 baseline (2.09m)	2.03m (2023/24)	2.03m (2024/25)	→	→	Annual	2025/26 data available in July 2026
Area-Wide Cycle Flow(12 hour) indexed to 2010 Baseline (9,897) (Calendar Year)	97% (2024)	103% (2025)	→	↑	Annual	2026 data available in February 2027
Index of pedestrians walking to and from the City Centre (12 hour in and out combined) from 2009 Baseline (37,278)	101% (2024)	130% (2025)	→	↑	Annual	2026 data available in February 2027
% of customers arriving at York Station by sustainable modes of transport (cycling, walking, taxi or bus - excluding cars, Lift, Motorcycle, Train)	78.7% (2024)	60.8% (2025)	→	↓	Annual	2026 data available in February 2027
Passenger journeys on local bus services per head of population - (DfT measure BUS01f)	70.6 (2023/24)	71.4 (2024/25)	→	↑	Annual	2025/26 data available in February 2027
York Station Usage Estimates (Office of Rail and Road Station Usage Report - Table 1410) (LI 4c)	9.2m (2023/24)	10.5m (2024/25)	↑	↑	Annual	2025/26 data available in February 2027
% of tenants who say car parking is not a problem in their neighbourhood	32% (2024/25)	36% (2025/26)	→	↑	Annual	2026/27 data available in February 2027
% of tenants who say car parking is a major problem in their neighbourhood	35% (2024/25)	32% (2025/26)	→	↓	Annual	2026/27 data available in February 2027
% of tenants who say car parking is a minor problem in their neighbourhood	34% (2024/25)	33% (2025/26)	→	↓	Annual	2026/27 data available in February 2027

The DoT (Direction of Travel) 3 years is calculated on the latest three data points whether they are annual or quarterly.
All historic data is available via the Open Data Platform

Consultation Analysis

50. The review undertaken by Arup included both online and in-person engagement on the impact of the changes to parking charges on Bishopthorpe Road, and Micklegate, in The Groves, and in Heworth. In total, there were 1,016 responses to the consultation across the four study areas, 107 from businesses and 909 from residents and/or visitors.
51. The headline findings from this consultation are presented in the review's executive summary (Annex C). More detailed feedback can be found in the area specific reports prepared for each of the four areas (Annexes C1 to C4). Annex E provides the questionnaire used by Arup for the review.
52. Annex B summarises additional responses and suggestions submitted to the Council by traders and/or residents outside of the independent review.
53. Feedback from businesses generally linked the increases in parking charges to a downturn in footfall and spend. Some businesses also reported that the changes had a negative impact on their ability to park near their business and receive deliveries.
54. Feedback from residents and visitors generally linked the increased parking charges to changes in behaviours including: less frequent use of the car parks, parking in different locations, changing where they travel to, and parking for shorter amounts of time.
55. Both businesses and residents/visitors suggested that the Council should provide cheaper car parking, improve public transport, and improve walking and cycling infrastructure.
56. The findings and recommendations from the independent review, including the feedback gathered through the consultation process, were presented to the Place Scrutiny Committee in June 2026.
57. Additionally, three registered speakers made representations at the Place Scrutiny Committee meeting, noting that the increased parking charges had led to a reduction in footfall and time spent on Bishopthorpe Road and asking for a low cost first hour rate to support local shopping areas, more moderate increases in car parking charges over time, and more measures to provide and promote sustainable forms of travel across the city.

58. The Committee recommended that the Executive should consider all the recommendations included in the independent review's executive summary (Annex C).
59. Previous consultations of relevance to this decision include:
- a) Local Transport Strategy Consultation:
<https://www.york.gov.uk/big-conversation-2/big-transport-conversation>
 - b) CYC Budget Consultation:
<https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/budget-consultation>

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

60. As requested by the Place Scrutiny Committee, this section considers each of the recommendations included in the Arup Executive Summary. The recommendations are listed in a different order from the review's Executive Summary for ease of presentation against the options and next steps recommended in this report.

Adjusting parking charges – recommendations and options

61. The independent review recommends exploring the potential for targeted charging measures that support local trade, and provides examples of such measures, including providing a limited period of free parking, first hour pricing adjustments, or more granular charging within the first hour.
62. The review also recommends monitoring and refining existing resident and permit-holder mitigation measures, alongside time specific parking flexibilities, to ensure they continue to incentivise the right behaviours, reflect localised impacts and minimise unintended consequences.
63. The review proposes interventions which are targeted towards residents under this recommendation. Proposing a review of the Minster Badge scheme to make it more attractive for residents, potentially targeting specific times (evening parking) and locations (community car parks).
64. The review however also notes that measures which reduce car parking charges, making the use of car parks more attractive, would contradict and work against the LTS, potentially encouraging car use, adding to traffic congestion, and

discouraging public transport use, walking and cycling. As noted by the review, *“decisions on parking charges sit within wider trade-offs about how the city manages movement, place and access in line with its prevailing policy”*.

65. **It is therefore recommended that the Council continues to focus on its LTS objectives to improving alternatives to the car (public transport, walking, cycling), using parking charges as a lever to influence travel behaviour, whilst continuing to offer free unlimited parking for Blue Badge holders.**
66. **Based on the feedback received and the independent review’s recommendations, the following changes to the Minster Badge scheme are however recommended, offering targeted support for residents and for community parking areas outside the city centre:**
 - a) Reduce the cost of a Minster Badge from £45 for two years currently, to £15 per year. The cost is per vehicle, as the badge is digital and vehicle specific and the new price will apply to new badge applications only once the change is implemented. No refunds will be offered to residents who still have a valid badge purchased for 2 years at the cost of £45;
 - b) Increase the discount provided to Minster Badge holders parking in community areas from 30% currently to 50%, resulting in the cost of parking being reduced from £3/hour to £1.50/hour for residents with a Minster Badge. Once implemented, the reduced rate will be available in community car parks (Bishopthorpe Road, Rowntree Park, and East Parade car parks) and for on-street parking in community areas (including Lawrence Street, Micklegate, Priory Street, Clifton, Garden Street, Huntington Road, Lowther Street, Marygate, Park Grove, Penley's Grove Street, The Crescent, The Mount, Townend Street and Union Terrace Street).
67. This option is likely to result in an increase in take-up for the Minster Badge as it will be possible for York residents to purchase the permit annually and at a lower cost. The level of discount offered with the Minster badge will not change for city centre car parks, only for community car parking areas (as listed above). For reference, current parking charges are shown here <https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s186995/Item%2010%20-%20Financial%20Strategy%202026-27%20to%202030-31%20-%20Annex%203a-3t.pdf> (see page 26), and the detail of on street

charges is available here:

<https://www.york.gov.uk/OnStreetParking#osp>.

68. This is likely to result in an uptake in car parking usage by residents, especially in the locations where the discount offered will increase. This is in turn likely to increase car use and car mileage to these locations although the overall impact on car use and vehicle mileage in the city should be limited as the new discount will only apply to a limited number of locations and will only be available to York residents who have purchased a Minster Badge.
69. If approved, these changes will not be implemented immediately as changes to charges need to be publicised in advance and changes to the Minster Badge scheme and parking charges information will also need to be implemented by Council suppliers (parking management software, Pay by Phone supplier, etc). Information provided on signs and on the Council's website will also need to be amended. Where residents have bought a two-year Minster Badge at £45, this will remain valid and they will be able to apply for a one-year badge at £15 when their current badge expires. No refunds will be provided for residents who have bought a £45 badge and would want to swap to a one year £15 badge once the change is enacted.

Developing a parking strategy – recommendations and options

70. The first recommendation from the independent review's Executive Summary focuses on applying charges fairly and consistently across locations and user groups. The report recognises that this feedback was not necessarily about Council managed car parks but also included privately managed car parks and retail areas on which the Council has very limited influence.
71. When considering the pricing structure described above and the extent of the Council's influence on car parking availability and pricing, it can be concluded that charges are currently applied fairly and consistently across locations under the Council's control and across user groups.
72. The current pricing structure takes account of the level of demand and supply, with stays in smaller car parks close to the city centre charged at higher rates. The pricing structure also aims to support wider transport objectives set out in the LTS, by discouraging car use where possible, whilst enabling access to local shops and services for those who need to use a car.

73. As noted by Scrutiny Committee, the adopted LTS includes the following relevant policies:
- a) Policy 7.5 *“Develop a parking strategy to cover all Council managed parking within 400m of the city centre, which assesses parking needs and sets parking charges designed to make it more attractive to use Park and Ride or the bus, or to walk, wheel or cycle. Set Council managed parking supply to satisfy requirements for essential journeys to the city centre, and take steps to enhance the quality of that parking provision”;*
 - b) Policy 7.7 *“Review the parking stock in private ownership within 400m of the city centre, and engage with stakeholders to develop their policies which encourage patterns of use consistent with the aims of Policy idea 7.5, as well as the wider aims of the transport strategy”.*
74. This is supported by Package 7 of the LTS Implementation Plan which states *“Parking strategy: We will develop a consistent and equitable strategy for parking across the city, which balances the needs to provide access and to reduce levels of car use. Initially we will focus on a 2km radius from the city centre. Within that area, we will review parking capacity on and off street, within the Council’s ownership and managed by the private sector, the demand for that parking and the charges for that parking. We will then specify the parking provision, which is needed, and the charges which should be levied to ensure that demand does not exceed capacity, and that parking charges reflect and match the cost of travel by other means – particularly park and ride or bus for the city centre. In doing so we will take inspiration from strategies developed for other locations such as the kerbside strategy being used in Lambeth in London. We will review residents’ parking policies, reviewing pricing and the way we implement residents’ parking to make it more streamlined”.*
75. Work has not yet started on the parking strategy, but it is anticipated that the strategy will be developed within or alongside the Movement and Place Plan and its wider framework aimed at *“reallocating road space, reducing through-traffic, and balancing travel corridors with public community spaces”.* **Work on the parking strategy as described in the LTS and its Implementation Plan will be progressed as part of or alongside the Movement and Place Plan work.**

76. The development and implementation of the parking strategy will also provide opportunities to consider the following recommendations from the independent review:

- a) Review recommendation: *“Avoid digital exclusion by consolidating and enhancing the existing policy approach, which has already been strengthened through the retention of non-digital payment options”.*

Following a budget decision made by Council in March 2022 to save on the cash collection contract by removing the option for customers to pay cash for parking, the Executive Member for Transport approved cashless parking solutions (phone and app) to be rolled out for on-street parking and at most car parks with machines to be removed in February 2024. Cash payment was retained at Bootham Row and Castle car parks, for those who cannot use the app or do not have access to a phone or a card. The decision and associated information are available here:

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7052>.

The Council will continue with this approach which retains limited cash payment options but also enables customers to pay for parking at all locations, without having access to a smartphone, by calling the Pay by Phone service. This approach will be reviewed through the development of the parking strategy to address digital exclusion concerns.

- b) Review recommendation: *“Address displacement and permit/non-permit imbalance to minimise the risk that any future changes to parking charges shift additional pressure onto residential streets or disproportionately affect particular neighbourhoods”.*

This recommendation from the independent review focuses on the issues of parking displacement and additional pressure on surrounding areas reported by businesses and residents, following the increase in parking charges. The recommendation aims to minimise the risk that any future changes to parking charges shift additional pressure onto residential streets or disproportionately affect particular neighbourhoods.

Officers would generally consider displacement risks before making changes to parking charges or parking restrictions

and make recommendations to introduce additional restrictions or refresh existing ones where required. The impacts of changes are also monitored after implementation, with additional measures and enforcement being considered where required. These are generally subject to consultation (including a statutory Traffic Regulation Order process).

The parking strategy will consider a range of options to manage parking and support the LTS objectives. Displacement risks will be considered as part of the strategy development.

- c) Review recommendation: *“Support access to religious services following a set of core principles around consistency, fairness and avoiding unintended displacement”*.

The parking strategy will consider how parking should be managed near places of worship as well as other important destinations.

- d) Review recommendation: *“Monitor and iterate the recommendations identified through this report using proportionate and deliverable monitoring approaches to track outcomes such as turnover, displacement and accessibility impacts”*.

Car parking data collection is currently limited, relying on transaction data rather than more detailed information on number of vehicles, arrival and departures times, purpose of visits, etc.

The Council has also secured funding from the Combined Authority to upgrade or introduce parking counters at main car parks which will support improved data collection and monitoring to inform future policies. It is anticipated that additional data will be collected and analysed for the parking strategy development work.

Impact assessment, consultation, and communication—recommendations and options

- 77. **Impact assessment** - The independent review's Executive Summary recommends that the Council should *“continue to embed accessibility and equity considerations into tariff decisions”*.

78. The Council is committed to embed accessibility and equity considerations into decisions. The Council Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2025-28 commits all service areas to conduct human rights and equity impact analysis as an integral part of decision-making process. An Equality Impact Assessment was published to enable the Executive to fully consider the impacts of the parking charges changes in June 2025 and assessments are also conducted to support wider Council policy and budget decisions.
79. Future decisions on parking charges will be subject to the same requirement for human rights and equity impact analysis to be presented to support the decision makers. No change is therefore recommended as this is already in place.
80. **Blue Badge scheme** - It is important to note that the council has consistently adopted a policy of free unlimited parking for Blue Badge holders. Under the national scheme, badge holders can park without charge or time limit in otherwise restricted on-street parking environments (including ResPark areas) and can park on yellow lines for up to three hours, unless a loading ban is in place, but off-street car parks managed by Councils and third parties are not covered by the scheme.
81. This means that for off-street car parks, it is up to the car park owner to decide whether Blue Badge holders can park free of charge and for how long. Some local authorities charge Blue Badge holders for parking in their car parks, but Blue Badge holders can park free of charge without a time limit in City of York Council car parks.
82. The Arup review also reported some feedback requesting some improvements to the Blue Badge scheme. The Blue Badge scheme is a national scheme, and the Department for Transport sets the eligibility criteria for a Blue Badge and the national concessions available to badge holders under the scheme. Local authorities are responsible for the day-to-day administration and enforcement of the scheme. The Council can therefore not make changes to the scheme but can report this feedback to the Department for Transport for consideration at the national level.
83. **Consultation** - This recommendation from the independent review is based on feedback from businesses and residents who expressed their concerns that no consultation was undertaken before the changes to parking charges were implemented. The independent review recommends that the Council be *“transparent*

about the evidence base and decision criteria, monitoring and publishing key impacts (e.g. footfall, dwell time, displacement and equality impacts), and clearly demonstrating how feedback has informed proposals”.

84. The principle of using parking cost as a lever to encourage a switch to more sustainable modes of transport was included in the LTS consultation. The wider Council budget consultation also considered increasing parking charges. There was however no specific consultation events or surveys undertaken for the specific changes made to parking charges for the areas under consideration in this report in 2025/26.
85. It is important to note that there is no legal requirement for the Council to consult on changes to existing parking charges (under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Sections 35C and 46A and the Local Authorities’ Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 Part V).
86. Based on the feedback received, it is however **recommended that the Council commits to change the current process to undertake a non-statutory consultation exercise where significant changes to parking charges are being considered.** This is defined as increases above the rate of increase for City of York Council standard fees and charges. This will require additional staff and financial resources to run the consultation, gather, and analyse the feedback received and will increase the lead time required to make significant changes to parking charges. It will however provide valuable information and feedback to better understand and assess the impacts of proposed changes and inform decision making.
87. The independent review also makes recommendation on monitoring impacts and publishing data. Where data is available and directly relevant and related to parking, this will be included in the revised annual parking account report (see below). Available economic data is already published on the Council’s Open Data platform.
88. **Communication** – The independent review makes several recommendations related to improving communication on parking policy and wider transport policy and strategy:
 - a) *“Demonstrate a fair deal for communities by strengthening transparency and communication around how any retained*

or increased parking revenue is reinvested into transport and environmental improvements”;

- b) *“Be more proactive around communicating the clear long-term transport vision that sets out the intended direction for the city in line with the various key policy documents including the existing LTS, the outcomes sought, and how different policies connect to that vision”;*
- c) *“Be transparent about the “why” and the “what next” – explain the problems being addressed, what evidence is being used, and what success will look like”;*
- d) *“Set out a visible investment plan for sustainable alternatives, including what will be delivered, when, where, and who benefits”;* and
- e) *“Develop a stakeholder buy-in and engagement approach”.*

- 89. Under Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, local authorities are legally required to maintain a ring-fenced account for income and expenditure relating to on-street parking and enforcement and to report on this account.
- 90. City of York Council publishes high level information, showing revenue collected, expenditure, and the re-investment of any surpluses, in its annual parking report (available here: <https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/parking-report>). These reports do not provide the level of detail required to meet the review’s recommendations.
- 91. **It is therefore recommended that the format of the annual parking account report be reviewed against industry guidance and best practice to develop an updated report template which will provide more detailed information on parking and enforcement revenue and how it is reinvested.**
- 92. The Council already works closely with key stakeholders, along with interest and partnership groups set up to consider specific aspects of transport such as the Enhanced Partnership Bus Forum, the Combined Authority Active Travel Forum, the York Access Forum, etc.
- 93. No change is therefore proposed in response to these recommendations, which are clearly linked to the LTS and its Implementation Plan and how changes brought forward through these are communicated.

Transport strategy and wider issues - recommendations and options

94. The independent review recommends further improvements to sustainable transport and integrated ticketing and journey planning across modes of transport.
95. These recommendations are important in the context of the LTS and its Implementation Plan. They also link to the Mayoral Combined Authority's Transport Strategy and the Combined Authority's powers on public transport and ticketing.
96. No options are considered in this report however as these wider issues are addressed in the LTS where they fall within the Council's remit and will be addressed by the Combined Authority's Transport Plan where relevant.
97. Finally, the independent review recommends that the Council should *"advocate for wider fairness levers outside parking charges by clarifying the Council's role as an enabler and partner, for example by providing evidence, coordination and formal representations to national government, while supporting local trader and business groups to lead and shape lobbying and campaigning activity on issues such as business rates and high-street viability (e.g. "Save Our High Street" style campaigns)"*.
98. The Council already acts as an enabler and partner to prepare and present formal representations to national government and the Mayoral Combined Authority where possible. It is however important to recognise that, as for the decision made on parking charges, many of these regional or national level decisions are the result of challenging compromises aiming to find a balance between competing priorities.

Organisational Impact and Implications

99. The following implications have been identified.
 - **Financial** – The Council's budget planning assumes revenues around £11.2m from off street and on-street car parking charges. The proposals in this report potentially reduce revenues by circa £18k, however it is possible that changes in behaviour results in additional revenues. No change to the budget is therefore proposed at this stage. There will be additional costs incurred in delivering the changes with regards advertising, signage and ICT

development but these will be contained within parking expenditure budgets.

- **Human Resources (HR)** – No HR implications identified.
- **Legal** – The review of car parking charges set out in this report has been undertaken in accordance with the statutory guidance issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004. The Council has the power to vary charges for off-street and on-street parking under sections 35 and 46A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. In accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 the Council is required to publish a notice of variation setting out the changes in a local newspaper for 21 days. The notice of variation is also required to be placed in prominent positions in the car parks and may be placed along roads in which the parking places are situated until the new charges come into force.
- **Procurement** – No direct procurement implications identified. If the work on the parking strategy requires external support, the relevant procurement rules and processes will be followed.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – Limited mixed impacts identified. Positive through more affordable access by car to community areas but negative impact due to the potential for a small increase in car use/mileage.
- **Environment and Climate action** – Potential for limited negative impact on vehicle emissions due to the reduction in parking charges proposed for community parking areas. This impact should be limited, however, due to the small number of areas/parking spaces in scope.
- **Affordability** – Potential for limited positive impact on affordability of parking for residents parking in community parking areas.
- **Equalities and Human Rights** – Low mixed (positive and negative) impacts have been identified through the HREA process (Annex A) for the following rights and groups: right to private and family life, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, carers, and low-income groups.

The assessment concludes that reduced parking pricing for residents with a Minster Badge in selected community areas will support those who want or need to access these areas by car.

Current parking charges will remain for those without a Minster Badge, with the potential for some negative impacts.

Parking prices are used as a lever to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport to achieve the objectives of the Local Transport Strategy and Climate Change Strategy. In this context the current charges serve the legitimate aims of reducing traffic congestion and air pollution and encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport, making travel by bus, cycling and walking and public spaces more attractive for everyone.

Blue Badge holders continue to benefit from free unlimited parking in off-street car parks and in on-street bays.

- **Data Protection and Privacy** – No impacts identified, no Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) required as the recommendations included in this report have no impact on personal data processing.
- **Communications** – This is a high profile issue for communities and local media and, as such, will require significant communications support. In particular around the recommended changes to the Minster badge and discount levels in community parking areas, if approved. Communication support will also be required in advance of any significant price changes, to run and publicise the informal consultation, and for the development of a parking strategy (as part of the wider Movement and Place framework).
- **Economy** – Where parking charges are reduced (if approved), this could result in higher footfall and dwell times in those locations. These impacts will be limited as the changes only target a few areas and many other factors influence shopping behaviour and economic performance.

Risks and Mitigations

100. Key risks identified include:

- a) Where parking charges are reduced, this could result in a lower level of shift to sustainable modes of transport and delay achieving the objectives of the LTS and Climate Change Strategy. As the changes are relatively modest and targeted, this impact is likely to be modest and could be

offset by other changes to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport;

- b) Recommendations from the parking strategy, once developed and approved, may lead to further parking restrictions and increases in/changes to parking charges;
- c) The introduction of an informal consultation for significant parking charges will delay the process and require additional resources but may reduce the risk of challenge under TMA.

Wards Impacted

101. The four areas included in the independent review are located in Heworth, Guildhall and Micklegate wards, but all wards are impacted as residents from all wards can purchase a Minster Badge and use the car parks and streets included in the review.

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Background papers

Traffic Management Act 2004 Right to challenge parking policies statutory guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-challenge-parking-policies>

22 April 2025 Executive Member for Transport decision on Urgent Review of Parking charges:
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7406>

3 June 2025 Executive decision on Review of Parking Charges:
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7440>

16 June 2026 Place Scrutiny Committee, including “Car parking charges review” at Item 5:
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1122&MId=15737>

Revised parking charges approved as part of the 2026/27 budget decision
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s186995/Item%2010%20-%20Financial%20Strategy%202026-27%20to%202030-31%20-%20Annex%203a-3t.pdf>

Annexes

- Annex A: Human Rights and Equality Assessment (HREA)
- Annex B: Resident and Traders proposals to mitigate increased Car park charging
- Annex C: Arup Independent Review - Executive Summary
- Annex C1: Arup Independent Review - Micklegate Survey Findings
- Annex C2: Arup Independent Review – Bishopthorpe Road Survey Findings
- Annex C3: Arup Independent Review – Heworth Survey Findings
- Annex C4: Arup Independent Review – The Groves Survey Findings

- Annex D: Overview of Council Car Parking and Highways and Transport services income and expenditure
- Annex E: Arup Independent Review – Questionnaire