

Agenda

Notice of a meeting held in private

**Community Development
Directorate - Executive Members
and Corporate Director Meetings**

To: Councillor Mark Crane

Date: Tuesday, 17 February 2026

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Microsoft Teams

These meetings are private meetings. The agenda and papers for the meeting have been published for the purposes of openness and transparency. If a member of the public or press wishes to attend these meetings where there are extenuating circumstances, then they can request to do so via Maureen Wilson. Each request will be considered on its own merits.

Business

1. Declarations of Interest

Items for decision by the Executive Member for Open to Business

2. National Visitor Levy Consultation – NYC Response (Pages 3 - 22)

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall
Northallerton

Monday, 9 February 2026

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North Yorkshire Council

Community Development Executive Member

17 February 2026

National Visitor Levy Consultation - NYC Response

Report of the Corporate Director of Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To obtain approval from the Executive Member for Open to Business for the North Yorkshire Council Response to the Visitor Levy Consultation.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides a recommended North Yorkshire Council response to the current Government consultation on the introduction of a visitor levy on overnight stays in England. It also sets out the results of an online survey undertaken with local accommodation providers and visitor economy organisations which has been undertaken by the Council to help inform the response.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Government is currently consulting on proposals to introduce new Mayoral powers enabling Combined Authorities in England to apply a visitor levy on overnight accommodation. The consultation closes on 18 February 2026. Full details of the consultation are available on the Gov.uk website ([Visitor levy in England - GOV.UK](#)).
- 3.2 The visitor economy is a significant sector for North Yorkshire therefore it is an important consultation for the Council to respond to.

4.0 PREPARING A RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION

- 4.1 In preparation for submitting a formal consultation response, North Yorkshire Council proactively sought views from the local visitor economy sector to understand the potential impacts of such a levy within a largely rural and domestic led tourism market.
- 4.2 An online business survey was undertaken between December 2025 and 26 January 2026. A total of 277 responses were received from accommodation providers and visitor facing organisations across the county. The feedback highlighted significant concerns relating to affordability for visitors, administrative and operational burdens for businesses, and impacts on competitiveness should a levy be applied inconsistently across regions.
- 4.3 The findings reflect the diversity of the North Yorkshire visitor economy, including coastal, National Park, rural, and urban destinations. They also highlight particular sensitivities for lower income visitors and for areas with strong reliance on domestic tourism.

4.4 The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, if the powers are granted, would have responsibility for determining whether to introduce a levy. Given the variation in economic context across the region, it is important that the Council's response emphasises the need for local flexibility, robust consultation, clarity over ringfencing of revenue, and alignment with existing strategic frameworks such as the Destination Management Plan and the Local Visitor Economy Partnership.

4.5 The Council's draft response to the consultation is set out at Appendix A to this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

5.1 Details of the consultation undertaken, and an analysis of the responses received is set out in Appendix B to this report.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

6.1 Responding to the consultation supports the Council's strategic objectives by ensuring that national policy proposals reflect the needs of North Yorkshire's economy, communities, and visitor destinations.

6.2 The Council's position seeks to safeguard the viability of the tourism sector, which is a significant contributor to employment, local growth, and rural sustainability. The draft response also aligns with the Council Plan, the Economic Growth Strategy 2024–2029, and the Destination Management Plan 2024–2034 by emphasising the importance of supporting year-round tourism, protecting rural economies, and ensuring that any future levy revenue is reinvested in infrastructure and services that benefit residents, visitors, and businesses.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 The alternative option would have been not to submit a consultation response. This option was discounted as it would have limited the Council's ability to influence the development of a policy that could have significant implications for the local visitor economy. By gathering business feedback and submitting a formal response, the Council has ensured that the specific needs and concerns of North Yorkshire are represented in national decision-making.

8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

8.1 While responding to the consultation itself has no direct operational impacts, the Council's position seeks to minimise any unintended consequences of future implementation on local businesses and public services. The draft consultation response highlights the potential impacts on accommodation providers, tourism organisations, National Park Authorities, and rural and coastal communities.

8.2 Should a visitor levy be introduced in future, there may be implications for several service areas, including economic development, finance, customer services, enforcement, and communications, depending on the administrative model adopted by the Combined Authority.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from submitting the consultation response. Any future financial impacts would depend on whether the Combined Authority chooses to introduce a visitor levy and the mechanism for collecting and distributing revenue.

- 9.2 The Council's draft response emphasises the need for ringfencing revenues to the areas in which they are generated and for joint governance arrangements to ensure funding is used for agreed strategic priorities. Should the levy be introduced, further detailed financial planning would be required to determine administrative processes, resource requirements, and impacts on Council services.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the submission of a consultation response. Any future introduction of a visitor levy would be dependent on national legislation granting powers to Mayoral Combined Authorities.
- 10.2 The Council's response sets out the need for statutory consultation requirements, including publication of proposals, engagement with residents and stakeholders, and clear governance arrangements involving constituent councils. Legal implications would be assessed in detail should the Combined Authority seek to exercise any future powers.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from submitting the consultation response. However, should a visitor levy be introduced in the future, there may be indirect impacts on groups with protected characteristics, particularly those on lower incomes who may be more sensitive to increases in accommodation costs. See Appendix C – Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Form.
- 11.2 The consultation response highlights concerns in coastal and rural areas where many visitors are families seeking affordable holidays. Any future development or implementation of a levy by the Combined Authority would require a full Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) to ensure that policy design and revenue use do not disproportionately disadvantage any protected group.

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no direct climate change implications associated with responding to the consultation. The Council's submission notes, however, that if a visitor levy were to be introduced, revenue could be used to support climate-positive initiatives such as sustainable transport, zero-carbon visitor trails, and enhancing the resilience of natural landscapes. See Appendix D – Climate Change Screening Form.
- 12.2 The Council also highlights that a levy applied only to overnight visitors could unintentionally encourage a shift from overnight stays to day visits, particularly within a predominantly domestic market. Day visits typically generate higher per-capita carbon emissions due to additional car travel without the longer-stay benefits of dispersal or extended economic activity. This potential displacement effect must therefore be carefully considered by the Combined Authority and Government during policy design to ensure that any levy aligns with wider net-zero and sustainable tourism objectives.

13.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are no immediate policy implications arising from the submission of the consultation response. However, the Government's proposals, if implemented, would introduce a new discretionary power for Mayoral Combined Authorities to apply a visitor levy on overnight stays. This would create a new area of policy development for the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and, by extension, for its constituent councils.

13.2 The Council's consultation response sets out several policy considerations that would need to be addressed should the levy proceed, including:

- **Local flexibility** – recognising that the visitor economy varies significantly across the Combined Authority area and that a single approach may not be appropriate for both rural and urban destinations.
- **Governance arrangements** – ensuring that constituent councils have a clear role in decision-making, including the Council's view that a veto should apply where a levy is proposed within a specific local authority area.
- **Ringfencing of revenue** – establishing policy mechanisms to ensure that funds generated by any levy are reinvested in the areas where they are collected, unless they contribute to agreed strategic regional projects.
- **Alignment with existing strategic frameworks** – including the Destination Management Plan, Economic Growth Strategy and Local Visitor Economy Partnership, to ensure that the use of levy revenue supports wider policy goals around sustainable growth, inclusive tourism and rural and coastal resilience.
- **Resident and stakeholder consultation requirements** – confirming the Council's position that any future legislation should mandate a formal and transparent consultation process prior to the introduction of a levy.
- **Environmental considerations** – noting that the design of any levy should avoid unintended displacement towards higher-carbon day visits and support the transition to sustainable tourism.

13.3 If Government proceeds with enabling legislation, further detailed policy development will be required to assess the operational, economic and environmental impacts of any levy proposals considered by the Combined Authority.

14.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Responding to the consultation poses no significant risks to the Council. The risks relate primarily to any future introduction of a visitor levy by the Combined Authority. Key potential risks of introducing a levy identified through business feedback include:

- **Reduced visitor demand** due to increased costs, particularly among domestic visitors who represent the majority of the North Yorkshire market.
- **Competitiveness risks** if neighbouring areas choose not to introduce a levy.
- **Administrative burdens** for both businesses and local authorities depending on the collection model used.
- **Potential business closures or reduced viability**, particularly in rural and coastal locations.

14.2 The Council's draft consultation response seeks to mitigate these risks by calling for local flexibility, ringfenced investment, robust consultation, and appropriate governance arrangements.

15.0 CONCLUSIONS

15.1 The government consultation presents proposals that could have significant implications for the visitor economy in North Yorkshire, particularly in rural and coastal areas that rely heavily on domestic tourism. By undertaking local engagement and submitting a detailed response, the Council will ensure that the concerns and priorities of local businesses, residents, and partners are clearly reflected in consultation around national policy development. The draft response also sets out the Council's position on governance, ringfencing, consultation requirements, and the need for local flexibility should a visitor levy be introduced in future. Approval of the draft consultation response will enable the Council to contribute constructively to the Government's consideration of these proposals.

16.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 Approval of the consultation response is recommended to ensure that North Yorkshire Council:

- clearly articulates the specific needs and sensitivities of the county's diverse visitor economy;
- reflects the views and concerns raised by local accommodation providers and visitor-facing businesses;
- influences the development of national legislation that may directly impact the area;
- supports appropriate governance arrangements and safeguards should new Mayoral powers be introduced; and
- ensures that any future implementation of a visitor levy is aligned with the Council Plan, Destination Management Plan, and wider strategic objectives.

17.0 RECOMMENDATION

17.1 That the Executive Member for Open to Business approves the submission of North Yorkshire Council's consultation response to the Government on the proposed introduction of Mayoral powers to create a visitor levy on overnight stays in England.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Proposed Consultation Response Letter from Councillor Crane

Appendix B – Consultation Responses from the Visitor Economy - Report

Appendix C – Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Form

Appendix D – Initial Climate Change Screening Form

Nic Harne

Corporate Director – Community Development

County Hall

Northallerton

06 February 2026

Report Author – Tony Watson, Head of Economy and Tourism

Presenter of Report – Tony Watson, Head of Economy and Tourism

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions

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Proposed Consultation Response Letter from Councillor Crane

Dear XXXX

North Yorkshire Council response to consultation on a visitor levy in England

Thank you for the opportunity to input views on the design of a new Mayoral power to create visitor levies on overnight stays in England.

As part of our response on this matter, we felt that it was important that we asked for and understood the views of our local businesses. Our online business survey, which closed on 26 January 2026, received 277 responses from North Yorkshire accommodation providers and visitor economy organisations. The responses highlight significant concerns over administrative burdens, potential declines in bookings due to price increases, and risks to competitiveness. I attach an analysis of the business survey responses for your information and full consideration.

Whilst this survey obviously just reflects a proportion of our business community, these findings also align with broader sector feedback that the levy could deter domestic “staycationers,” who form the majority of our North Yorkshire market. Trade bodies reinforce these concerns. UK Hospitality has strongly opposed the proposal, describing it as a ‘shocking U-turn that could impose up to five hundred eighteen million pounds in additional costs on British consumers for domestic holidays, effectively raising the VAT rate to twenty seven percent for holidays in England, one of the highest in Europe.’ This could make domestic breaks more expensive for working people, reduce demand, and have knock on effects for the hospitality sector, including lower occupancy and revenue.

As the Council’s Portfolio Holder for Open to Business, I would strongly urge you to listen carefully to the concerns being raised by businesses, which emphasise that this measure would impose additional financial burdens on our tourism sector. Businesses across the full range from luxury hotels attracting international visitors to budget self-catering and caravan accommodation serving domestic families are already under extreme pressure from rising VAT, business rates, energy costs, and wage increases. A levy would add further strain, regardless of price point or market segment, potentially reducing competitiveness and overnight stays.

Across the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, business sentiment is divided. In York, views appear to be split, reflecting moderate support in an urban context. In rural North Yorkshire, opposition is strong and widespread among accommodation providers, who are particularly concerned about price sensitivity in our domestic led market. This disparity must be addressed through inclusive decision making that safeguards rural economies and does not allow urban priorities to dominate.

The proposed Harrogate Accommodation Business Improvement District introduces additional complexity within our area. An active ballot is currently underway with businesses which, if successful, would impose a separate nightly charge on larger hotels in Harrogate. Combined with a new visitor levy, this could result in double taxation for operators, increasing the risk of price rises, reduced bookings, or business closures.

In many of North Yorkshire’s key visitor destinations, the levy could disproportionately affect vulnerable visitors, including lower income families relying on caravan parks and affordable self-catering. Many of our communities face ongoing deprivation challenges. Higher accommodation costs could further reduce overnight tourism, exacerbate seasonal economic pressures, and undermine efforts to deliver inclusive growth.

For a visitor levy to be fair, effective, and strategically aligned with the realities of North Yorkshire's visitor economy, it must also recognise and support the essential role of National Park Authorities alongside local councils. The statutory landscape management frameworks already in place provide a clear structure for doing so, and any allocation model should reflect the shared responsibility for both conserving the environment and maintaining the visitor facing services on which the region's tourism success relies.

All three of the above examples are very real scenarios in North Yorkshire and highlight the critical importance of a need for local flexibility if a levy is to be imposed. A 'one size fits all' approach would simply not work.

Internationally and domestically, our tourism product is diverse and price sensitive. Inconsistent application of levies across English regions, if North Yorkshire adopts one while others do not, could place us at a competitive disadvantage, diverting visitors to alternative destinations.

Nevertheless, we anticipate the policy is likely to proceed under devolved powers to the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. We are therefore will continue to engage constructively on this topic to mitigate risks and maximise benefits for North Yorkshire should this happen. There are six critical points that North Yorkshire Council therefore wish to make in this regard:

1. Revenues must be ring fenced for investments that drive growth in both the visitor economy and the wider economy, agreed jointly between the Combined Authority and North Yorkshire Council. This includes investing any future levy in areas that underpin facilities and services that the visitor economy relies upon, for example rural transport improvements, public toilets and interpretation, digital connectivity, hospitality skills training, zero carbon trails, and marketing to position North Yorkshire as a sustainable all-season destination. These priorities are fully aligned with our Council Plan, our Economic Growth Strategy 2024 to 2029, and our Destination Management Plan 2024 to 2034, which target increased overnight stays, higher value visitors, visitor dispersal from hotspots, year-round tourism, and net zero operations while protecting rural communities and landscapes.
2. Revenues should be ringfenced to the area in which the revenue is generated and not be spent on other local authority areas, unless delivering on strategic projects that truly benefit the whole region and the areas where they are raised.
3. The York and North Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP), chaired by the mayor and comprising senior leaders from North Yorkshire Council, City of York Council, private sector representatives, and tourism stakeholders, should be viewed as the key vehicle for steering the deployment of visitor economy revenues from any levy. This body brings together tourism experts to coordinate strategic priorities, ensuring spend is evidence based, aligned with the DMP, and integrated with national guidance from Visit England (including its LVEP Programme, which supports robust destination management, growth targets, sustainability, and business support). Such integration would promote best practice, avoid duplication, and maximise impact on the visitor economy components.
4. Residents must form a core part of any statutory consultation. In England's largest county, tourists are often our own residents taking short breaks in the Yorkshire Dales, North York Moors, or on the coast.

They are doubly affected, as both taxpayers' funding infrastructure and as visitors facing higher costs. While some residents may support the levy if revenues are visibly reinvested in local amenities, it is critical that residents are properly consulted before the mayor deploys these powers, and that the way in which the powers are used fully reflects the views of North Yorkshire's residents.

5. If the Treasury grants these powers, legislation must mandate a formal consultation process: publication of a prospectus, wide stakeholder engagement (including rural businesses, National Parks, protected landscapes, parishes, coastal representatives, the LVEP, and crucially residents), publication of response summaries, revisions as needed, and a minimum 18 month notice period. This should be statutory.
6. For the reasons above, we consider that the constituent Councils of the Combined Authority where an overnight levy is going to be imposed should have a veto on whether it is introduced in their local authority area.

Thank you for taking time to read this response. This is a matter that is very important for North Yorkshire, and we would very much welcome the opportunity to have a direct conversation with relevant ministers or civil servants on the points raised above, should the opportunity arise.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Mark Crane
Executive Member for Open to Business
North Yorkshire Council

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Consultation Responses to the Survey on a Potential Visitor Levy in North Yorkshire

Report by Tony Watson, Head of Economy and Tourism

Background

At the most recent Budget, the Chancellor announced the Government's intention to consult on giving Combined Authority Mayors the power to introduce a Visitor Levy on overnight stays. The Mayor of York and North Yorkshire have publicly indicated support for exploring this power and expressed intent to make use of it, subject to consultation and the development of a clear local framework.

In response, North Yorkshire Council's Cabinet instructed *Visit North Yorkshire* to engage directly with businesses and organisations across the visitor economy. The purpose of this engagement was to gather evidence, understand sector views, and ensure that local decision making is informed by the insights and experience of those most directly affected.

Introduction

This report summarises the views of businesses and organisations working in, or closely connected to, the visitor economy in North Yorkshire on the potential introduction of a Visitor Levy on overnight stays.

It presents only the views expressed during the engagement process and does not take a position for or against a levy, nor does it put forward recommendations.

Important note:

This consultation did not survey residents or visitors. All findings represent the perspectives of businesses and those working around tourism.

Who responded

A total of **277 usable responses** were received from businesses and organisations across North Yorkshire. Some respondents did not complete every question; therefore, the number of responses varies between sections.

Responses came from every major part of the visitor economy, with the largest number from accommodation providers, followed by visitor attractions, food and drink businesses, tourism related retail, event organisers, activity providers and community groups.

Respondents were geographically spread across the county, including the coast, national parks, market towns, rural villages and urban centres.

Overall Views on a Visitor Levy

Levels of support and opposition

Among the **270 respondents** who expressed a clear view:

- **71% oppose** the introduction of a Visitor Levy
- **18% support** it
- **11% are neutral**

Importantly, the majority of opponents selected "strongly oppose". This group accounts for around half of all respondents who answered the stance question, and approximately 70% of those who opposed. This reflects an unusually high intensity of feeling for a business sector consultation and is consistent with the tone of many written comments.

Examples of opposing comments:

- “It is hard enough to attract visitors already in the current economic climate.”
- “All it will do is put more costs on an already stressed sector of hospitality.”

Examples of supportive comments:

- “A tourist levy should be one way of returning income to local areas impacted by disproportionate amounts of holiday homes.”
- “I think it could help support tourism infrastructure locally.”

Differences by sector

While opposition to the levy was the dominant view across the visitor economy, the strength and nature of concerns varied between different types of businesses. Accommodation providers, who would be most directly responsible for collecting the levy, expressed the strongest opposition. Many raised concerns about competitiveness, already thin operating margins, and the possibility that even a small additional charge could deter visitors or introduce “booking friction” at the point of sale.

Visitor attractions also tended to oppose the levy, though their concerns were somewhat more mixed. A notable minority within this group indicated conditional support, particularly where revenue would be clearly ringfenced and reinvested into tourism related infrastructure, marketing, or visitor management. These respondents emphasised that, if a levy were to exist, its benefits would need to be visible and locally felt.

Food and drink businesses and tourism related retailers generally echoed the concerns of accommodation providers. Many feared that an overnight levy could reduce visitor footfall, shorten trips, or reduce discretionary spending in shops, cafés and restaurants. These businesses expressed apprehension that they would feel the economic consequences of a levy without directly collecting it.

The events sector was the most divided group. While the sample was small, these respondents included a higher proportion of those who saw potential benefits in levy funded improvements to infrastructure, public realm and destination marketing. However, this support was conditional and should be interpreted cautiously due to the limited number of responses.

Across all parts of the visitor economy, a consistent theme emerged: businesses felt it would be unfair for accommodation providers alone to collect or fund a levy intended to benefit the wider sector. Many argued that tourism is an interconnected ecosystem, and that any mechanism to raise revenue should reflect the full range of businesses that both contribute to and depend on visitor activity.

Key Concerns Raised by Respondents

Businesses were clear and consistent in outlining their concerns about a potential Visitor Levy. The most frequently cited issue was the perceived risk of reduced visitor numbers. Many respondents feared that even a modest additional charge could discourage overnight stays or shorten trips, particularly among price sensitive visitors and families. Several commented that visitors comparing destinations might be inclined to choose areas without a levy, noting sentiments such as: *“Visitors will simply choose cheaper destinations.”*

Another major theme was the administrative burden associated with implementing and managing a levy. Respondents expressed concern about the additional time and cost required to adjust booking systems, update payment processes, and maintain accurate records. This was seen as especially challenging for small businesses with limited administrative capacity. As one respondent noted, *“We already have too much admin work for a small business.”*

Fairness across the visitor economy also emerged as a significant issue. Many businesses argued that a levy applied solely to overnight accommodation would be inequitable, given that day visitors, attractions, hospitality operators, and retailers all benefit from tourism and contribute to demand on local services and infrastructure. This concern was reflected in comments such as: *“It’s an accommodation tax, not a tourist tax.”*

Finally, trust in how any revenue would be used featured strongly in the feedback. A large number of respondents questioned whether funds would genuinely be ringfenced for tourism or spent locally in the areas where they were collected. Scepticism about centralisation or dilution of funds was common, with one respondent summing it up with the view: *“If it goes into a central pot, we will never see it again.”*

Priorities for spending, if a levy was introduced

Despite their concerns about the introduction of a Visitor Levy, respondents were clear and consistent about how any revenue should be used if a levy were implemented. Businesses placed strong emphasis on directing funds toward improvements that would visibly enhance the visitor experience and support the long-term sustainability of tourism across North Yorkshire.

The most frequently identified priority was investment in visitor infrastructure. Respondents highlighted the need for improved public toilets, clearer signage, better parking provision, well-maintained footpaths and accessible transport links. These were seen as essential elements of the visitor offer, and areas where additional investment could make a tangible difference to both visitors and local communities.

A second major priority was marketing and promotion of North Yorkshire, particularly efforts aimed at sustaining year-round visitor demand and strengthening the region’s profile in a competitive national and international tourism market. Many respondents felt that targeted promotional activity would help stabilise the sector and support growth in off-peak periods.

The third key theme was visitor management and sustainability. Businesses recognised the importance of managing peak visitor volumes, protecting natural assets, and ensuring that tourism growth remains environmentally and socially sustainable. Several noted that levy revenues could help address pressures in sensitive locations and support stewardship of landscapes and heritage sites.

Across all these priorities, respondents stressed the importance of levy spending being visible, local and directly beneficial to the visitor experience. Many indicated that confidence in the levy, if introduced, would depend heavily on transparent governance and clear evidence that funds were being reinvested back into the places where they were raised.

Where levy income should be spent

Most respondents agreed that levy income should be:

- **spent in the place where it is raised.**

Businesses emphasised that tourism pressures are highly localised and that confidence in the levy would depend on visible, place-based reinvestment.

“It would be unfair if money raised here ends up funding other areas.”

Views on reasonable levy levels

Respondents were asked to indicate what they considered to be a reasonable level for any potential levy, with the options of £1 per night, £2 per night, or “other”. Among those selecting one of the predefined options, the clear preference was for £1 per night, with a smaller number favouring £2 per night. However, a large proportion of those who selected “other” did so to state that they believed the levy should be set at £0, reflecting their opposition to the principle of a levy rather than a preference for an alternative rate.

A smaller group used the “other” option to express support for a percentage-based model, most commonly suggesting a charge at around 1% of the accommodation cost. Several respondents also emphasised that, if a levy were introduced, it should be simple, low and predictable, and administered in a way that minimises complexity for both businesses and visitors.

Across the comments, a recurring theme was caution about the potential impact of any charge on visitor demand. Even those who supported a low levy warned that introducing additional costs during a challenging economic climate could risk deterring overnight stays or shortening visits.

Engagement with the national Government consultation

Around **43%** of respondents indicated they planned to provide feedback directly to the Government’s national consultation, while **32%** were unsure.

Given the strength of views expressed elsewhere, this level of planned engagement is comparatively low. Comments suggest this may be due to:

- uncertainty about whether individual responses would influence national policy
- an assumption that the national direction may already be set
- a belief that representative bodies or local authorities would respond on behalf of the sector.

This indicates that, although the issue is clearly important to businesses, many do not feel individually empowered or inclined to contribute directly to the national process.

Summary

This consultation demonstrates **substantial concern** among businesses across North Yorkshire’s visitor economy regarding the introduction of a Visitor Levy.

The strongest themes include:

- fears around reduced visitor numbers and competitiveness
- concerns about administrative and financial burden
- perceived unfairness of focusing the levy solely on accommodation
- scepticism about ringfencing and local reinvestment

Where support exists, it is **conditional** and based on:

- low and simple levy levels
- ringfenced, localised spending
- transparent governance
- visible improvements to infrastructure and destination promotion

These findings provide a clear signal that decisions on a potential levy must be taken with careful consideration of the sector’s strong and consistently expressed concerns

Initial equality impact assessment screening form This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
Directorate	Community Development		
Service area	Economy and Tourism		
Proposal being screened	To respond to a National Consultation on Overnight Levy		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Tony Watson – Head of Economy and Tourism		
What are you proposing to do?	To get approval for a response to the National Consultation on Overnight Levy.		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To ensure that NYC's visitor economy is represented in the National Consultation		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No.		
Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? 			
If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your directorate representative for advice if you are in any doubt.			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	
Are from the Armed Forces Community		X	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (for example, disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No. Our proposed response does encourage national government to factor this into any future legislation around the overnight levy.		

<p>Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (for example, partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.</p>	<p>No. This is simply a response to a National Consultation on a proposed new overnight levy.</p>			
<p>Decision (Please tick one option)</p>	<p>EIA not relevant or proportionate:</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Continue to full EIA:</p>	
<p>Reason for decision</p>	<p>This is a response to a consultation, rather than a policy decision. Our proposed response encourages government to mandate EIA's are conducted ahead of any future legislation being brought in. It also encourages Mayors to do the same during any mandated local consultation.</p>			
<p>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</p>	<p>K. Daly</p>			
<p>Date</p>	<p>08.02.26</p>			

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment

The intention of this document is to help the council to gain an initial understanding of the impact of a project or decision on the environment. This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. Dependent on this initial assessment you may need to go on to complete a full Climate Change Impact Assessment. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process.

If you have any additional queries, which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Title of proposal	Submission of North Yorkshire Council's response to the national consultation on proposed Mayoral powers to introduce a visitor levy.
Brief description of proposal	<p>The proposal is for North Yorkshire Council to formally submit a response to the Government's consultation on introducing Mayoral powers to apply a visitor levy on overnight stays.</p> <p>This assessment relates only to the decision to submit the consultation response. No operational, financial, or policy implementation decisions are being taken at this stage. The act of responding has <i>no direct climate impact</i>.</p> <p>However, the Council's response encourages national policymakers to consider potential climate implications carefully when designing any future legislation, including risks of increased day visitor travel and opportunities to support sustainable tourism.-visitor travel and opportunities to support sustainable tourism.</p>
Directorate	Community Development
Service area	Economy and Tourism
Lead officer	Tony Watson
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	N/A

The chart below contains the main environmental factors to consider in your initial assessment – choose the appropriate option from the drop-down list for each one.

Remember to think about the following;

- Travel
- Construction
- Data storage
- Use of buildings
- Change of land use
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse

Environmental factor to consider	For the council	For the county	Overall
Greenhouse gas emissions	No effect on emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

If any of these factors are likely to result in a negative or positive environmental impact then a full climate change impact assessment will be required. It is important that we capture information about both positive and negative impacts to aid the council in calculating its carbon footprint and environmental impact.

Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision	<p>This decision relates solely to submitting North Yorkshire Council’s response to the Government’s consultation on proposed Mayoral powers to introduce a visitor levy. No operational change, policy implementation, procurement, construction, or service redesign is being approved at this stage; therefore there is no direct climate or environmental impact arising from this decision.</p> <p>The Council’s response nonetheless encourages national legislators and the Combined Authority to consider climate implications carefully in any future legislation or implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoiding unintended displacement from overnight stays to higher-carbon day visits; and • using any potential levy revenues (if introduced in future) to support sustainable transport, low-carbon visitor infrastructure, and responsible tourism. <p>Given the absence of immediate impacts and the commitment to consider climate issues in future policy design, a full CCIA is not proportionate at this stage.</p>			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	K.Daly - Assistant Director Place-shaping & Growth			
Date	08/02/2026			

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