NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

QUARTERLY MEETING

Wednesday, 24 July 2024

Summons, Agenda, Minutes and Reports

OFFICIAL

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

You are summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council. This meeting is being held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Northallerton on **Wednesday, 24 July 2024 at 10.30 am**, at which the following business will be transacted.

The meeting will be available to view once the meeting commences, via the following link - www.northyorks.gov.uk/livemeetings

BUSINESS

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2024

To move that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 15 May 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

(Pages 7 - 24)

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Chairman's Announcements

Any correspondence, communication or other business brought forward by the direction of the Chairman of the Council.

5. Statement by the Leader of the Council

(Pages 25 - 26)

6. Public Questions or Statements

Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they have given notice and provided the text to Barry Khan, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services – email: barry.khan@northyorks.gov.uk or in writing to Barry Khan, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services, County Hall, Northallerton DL7 8AD by midday on Friday, 19 July 2024. Each speaker should limit themselves to 3 minutes on any item.

If you are exercising your right to speak at this meeting, but do not wish to be recorded, please inform the Chairman who will instruct anyone who may be taking a recording to cease while you speak.

7. Notices of Motion

Motion calling for Support for a bathing water application for the River Swale

This council supports a bathing water application to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for the River Swale in Richmond.

This council notes that Save our Swale (a group dedicated to improving the water quality in the whole of the River Swale) is working with other individuals and organisations on a bathing water application and that this application requires the support of the local authority which is North Yorkshire Council.

This council believes:

a) That the River Swale is an important resource for the people of Richmond and the wider area of North Yorkshire.
b) That improving the quality of the Swale will have significant benefits for the environment, public health, recreation and the local economy.
c) That supporting the bathing water application for the River Swale is in the best interests of both the people of Richmond and of North Yorkshire.

This council resolves:

To express support for the bathing water application for the River Swale in Richmond.

It has been requested that the motion be debated at the meeting of Council on 24 July 2024.

Proposer – Councillor Stuart Parsons
Seconder – Councillor Kevin Foster

8. Motion calling on Council to halt the proposed cuts to free school bus services in the County (Home to School Transport Policy) - Recommendation from the Executive

To enable Council to consider the recommendations of the Executive regarding the Motion on the proposed Home to School Transport Policy that was referred at the meeting of Council on 15 May 2024.

The following motions that were referred to Scrutiny from Full Council on 15 May 2024 will be brought back to a meeting of Full Council on 13 November 2024:

- Residents right to grow – Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Treating care experience as a protective characteristic – Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The following motion that was referred to Scrutiny from Full Council on 21 February 2024 will be brought back to a meeting of Full Council on 13 November 2024:

- To reduce the budget for mowing and spraying by at least £100k a year and to cease all purchases of any products containing glyphosate or neonicotinoids – Scrutiny of Health Committee

(Pages 27 - 30)

9. To consider the report and recommendations of the Executive and make decisions on them

- Revenue Budget, Treasury Management and Capital Plan
- Administrative amendments to the LGPS Discretions Policy
- Consultation on changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy (separate item on this agenda)
- North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (separate item on this agenda)
- Amendments to the Council's Constitution (separate item on this agenda)
- Submission of data to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (separate item on this agenda)

(Pages 31 - 36)

10. Proposed Changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy

(Pages 37 - 452)

11. Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review

(Pages 453 - 504)

12. Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews for Harrogate and Scarborough

(Pages 505 - 544)

13. North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2030

(Pages 545 - 564)

14. Amendments to the Council's Constitution

(Pages 565 - 624)

15. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

(Pages 625 - 626)

16. Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2023/2024

(Pages 627 - 646)

17. Statements of Executive Members and Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Executive Members

17(a) Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills - Councillor Annabel Wilkinson

(Pages 647 - 650)

17(b) Executive Member for Finance and Assets - Councillor Gareth Dadd
(Pages 651 - 654)

17(c) Executive Member for Open to Business - Councillor Mark Crane
(Pages 655 - 658)

17(d) Executive Member for Corporate Services - Councillor Heather Phillips
(Pages 659 - 664)

17(e) Executive Member for Highways and Transportation - Councillor Keane Duncan
(Pages 665 - 666)

17(f) Executive Member for Health and Adult Services - Councillor Michael Harrison
(Pages 667 - 668)

17(g) Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing - Councillor Simon Myers
(Pages 669 - 674)

17(h) Executive Member for Children and Families - Councillor Janet Sanderson
(Pages 675 - 678)

17(i) Executive Member for Managing our Environment - Councillor Greg White
(Pages 679 - 684)

Overview and Scrutiny Chairs

17(j) Scrutiny Board (Chair: Councillor Karin Sedgwick)
(Pages 685 - 686)

17(k) Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Andrew Williams)
(Pages 687 - 688)

17(l) Scrutiny of Health (Chair: Councillor Andrew Lee)
(Pages 689 - 692)

17(m) Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor David Staveley)
(Pages 693 - 694)

17(n) Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Barbara Brodigan)
(Pages 695 - 696)

17(o) Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Malcolm Taylor)

(Pages 697 - 698)

17(p) Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Karin Sedgwick)

(Pages 699 - 700)

18. Use of special urgency procedures since the last meeting of Council - Report of the Leader

(Pages 701 - 704)

19. Council Procedure Rule 10 Questions

RICHARD FLINTON
Chief Executive Officer

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive
Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall,
NORTHALLERTON

Tuesday, 16 July 2024

OFFICIAL

North Yorkshire Council

Full Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th May 2024 commencing at 10.30 am.

Councillor David Ireton in the Chair and Councillors Chris Aldred, Joy Andrews, Karl Arthur, Alyson Baker, Philip Barrett, Philip Broadbank, Eric Broadbent, Andy Brown, Nick Brown, Lindsay Burr MBE, David Chance, Liz Colling, Mark Crane, Sam Cross, Felicity Cunliffe-Lister, Gareth Dadd, Melanie Davis, Caroline Dickinson, Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, Stephanie Duckett, Keane Duncan, Kevin Foster, Richard Foster, Sam Gibbs, Caroline Goodrick, Hannah Gostlow, Bryn Griffiths, Tim Grogan, Michael Harrison, Paul Haslam, Robert Heseltine, David Hugill, Nathan Hull, George Jabbour, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Tom Jones, Mike Jordan, Nigel Knapton, Peter Lacey, Andrew Lee, Carl Les, Cliff Lunn, John Mann, Steve Mason, Rich Maw, Heather Moorhouse, Andrew Murday, Simon Myers, David Noland, Bob Packham, Andy Paraskos, Stuart Parsons, Yvonne Peacock, Clive Pearson, Heather Phillips, Kirsty Poskitt, Jack Proud, Tony Randerson, John Ritchie, Janet Sanderson, Mike Schofield, Karin Sedgwick, Subash Sharma, Steve Shaw-Wright, Dan Sladden, Monika Slater, Andy Solloway, David Staveley, Neil Swannick, Roberta Swiers, Malcolm Taylor, Angus Thompson, Andrew Timothy, Phil Trumper, Matt Walker, Arnold Warneken, Steve Watson, David Webster, John Weighell OBE, Greg White, Annabel Wilkinson, Peter Wilkinson, Andrew Williams and Robert Windass.

Apologies: Derek Bastiman, Barbara Brodigan, John Cattanach and John McCartney. .

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

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74 To elect a Chair of the Council to serve until the May 2025 AGM

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Roberta Swiers be elected Chairman of the Council to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2025.

The vote was taken and the motion was declared carried with 85 votes for, none against and one abstention.

Resolved -

That Councillor Roberta Swiers is elected Chairman of the Council, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2025.

Councillor Roberta Swiers then made her declaration of acceptance of office of Chairman of the Council and thanked the Council for her appointment.

Councillor Roberta Swiers in the Chair

75 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the Council held on 21 February 2024 having been printed and circulated, are confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The vote was taken and the motion was declared carried.

76 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Derek Bastiman, Barbara Brodigan, John Cattanach and John McCartney.

77 To elect a Vice-Chair of the Council to serve until the May 2025 AGM

It was moved and seconded that Councillor George Jabbour be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the North Yorkshire Council in 2025.

It was also moved and seconded that Councillor Phillip Broadbank be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the North Yorkshire Council in 2025.

On a vote being taken on each of the nominations there were 50 votes for Councillor George Jabbour and 25 votes for Councillor Phillip Broadbank.

Resolved -

That Councillor George Jabbour is elected Vice-Chairman of the Council, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2025.

Councillor George Jabbour then made his declaration of acceptance of office of Vice-Chairman of the Council and thanked the Council for his appointment.

78 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest were made as follows:

Councillor Karl Arthur at Minute 88(f) as he worked for Network Rail

Councillor Gareth Dadd at Minute 89(2)

Councillor Stephanie Duckett at Minute 86

Councillor Michael Harrison declared an interest at Minute 82 in respect of his employer and for which he had been granted an exemption. He also declared an interest in Minute16(2).

Councillor Mike Jordan at Minute 77

Councillor Yvonne Peacock at Minute 89(1) as she was a private hire driver

79 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed the Honorary Aldermen and members of the public and press who were present. The Chairman also welcomed Councillor Andrew Timothy to his first meeting of the Council following his election to the Stray, Woodlands and Hookstone division on 11 April 2024.

The Chairman informed Members of the usual arrangements for the meeting.

The Chairman informed Members that there were five Notices of Motion on the agenda. The Chairman was required to give a ruling on whether to follow the normal procedure of referring these motions to the relevant committee or whether they should be debated at the meeting, and ruled as follows:

(1) A call to place a moratorium on any school closures until the new North Yorkshire local plan is developed – motion to be debated at the meeting
(2) A request for the Leader to write a letter to the Secretary of State regarding hospice funding and support – motion to be debated at the meeting
(3) A call to join over sixty other local councils in the UK by treating care experience as if it is a protected characteristic - motion to be referred to the Scrutiny Board to determine the most appropriate overview and scrutiny committee
(4) A call to promote un-used public land for the cultivation for food or biodiversity and expand allotment provision –motion to be referred to the Scrutiny Board to determine the most appropriate overview and scrutiny committee
(5) A call to halt the proposed cuts to free school bus services in the county (Home to School Transport policy) - motion to be referred to the Executive

The Chairman reminded Members that when considering Notices of Motion a Member can move that the motion can be put now and one Member can speak for five minutes for that Motion and one Member can speak for five minutes against. Motions referred to committee would be moved and seconded without comment.

The death of former North Yorkshire Councillor Caroline Patmore in February was noted. Caroline was elected to the County Council for the first time in 1997 and represented the Stillington ward through to 2022. She was a member of the Executive and Caroline was made an Honorary Alderman in November 2022.

A minute's silence was held in memory of former County Councillor Caroline Patmore.

80 Statement by the Leader of the Council

Councillor Carl Les made a statement and answered questions under Council Procedure Rule 2.3 as Leader of the Council, a summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 43 and 45 of the agenda pack and in the Minute Book at pages 1209 to 1211.

The Leader announced the following changes to membership of the Executive:

a) Cllr Mark Crane to replace Cllr Derek Bastiman as Executive Member for Open to Business
b) Cllr Heather Phillips to replace Cllr David Chance as Executive Member for Corporate Services

81 Public Questions or Statements

There was one public question, as follows:

1. The following public question was read out by Mr Towse:

The parish charter lays out how North Yorkshire Council and the parish sector will work together in partnership to:

- promote and protect social, economic and environmental well-being for the benefit of our local communities, to ensure vibrancy and future sustainability

- strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
- promote an active democracy to ensure all members of every North Yorkshire community are able to have a say in our future and to help develop a shared vision, identity and sense of belonging
- welcome all feedback and aim to act quickly and efficiently to address issues within their power
- respect and promote the role of both elected and co-opted councillors as representatives of their communities through positive communication, leadership and engagement, all undertaken to high ethical standards
- give importance and recognition to issues and ideas raised at each level of local government
- ensure efficient, effective and value for money management, supported by adequate training.

The people of Newby and Scalby we see no evidence of this, in fact what was there has been dismantled and is now a matter of public interest. This is particularly disturbing as a member of your executive was until a week ago the vice Chairman of the Town council.

Can you assure the people of Newby and Scalby that North Yorkshire Council stand by the words of the Parish Charter.

Councillor David Chance, Executive Member Corporate Services, provided the following response:

We agree that the parish charter lays out how North Yorkshire Council and parishes will work together in partnership.

That partnership recognises that Parish Councils and North Yorkshire Council are separate, stand alone, autonomous legal entities which are elected to independently and are each responsible for their own governance, policy and decision making.

I can confirm that North Yorkshire Council does support the Parish Charter.

Mr Towse then asked a supplementary question in relation to the operation of the Newby and Scalby Wellbeing Hub, and Councillor Chance responded that parish councils were their own separate legal entities and were responsible for the decisions they made. The Council could not interfere in those decisions.

82 To consider the report and recommendations of the Executive and make decisions on them

The Executive had recommended two matters to Council for a decision. These were:

- Amendments to the Council's Constitution

- The Approval and Adoption of the North Yorkshire Council Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029

Both decisions were considered separately at the meeting at Minutes 10 and 13 respectively.

83 Amendments to the Council's Constitution

The recommendations at page 62 and 63 of the agenda pack (pages 1228 to 1229 of the Minute Book) were moved and seconded.

1) The following amendment had been proposed by Councillor Dan Sladden and was accepted by the mover of the original motion without debate

I propose an AMENDMENT to Item 6.2.c).i as follows:

i. Motions on notice should be moved higher up the order of business, to after <u>any questions or statements from members of the public</u>

That is, items (vii) ("motions on notice") and (viii) ("questions or statements from members of the public") on p. 138 should be switched in the recommended Order of Business for Ordinary Meetings.

The motivation behind this proposed amendment is to give better certainty to members of the public who wish to ask questions of or make statements to council as to the time at which they would be required to address council. This would significantly reduce disruption to their valuable workdays potentially caused by having to wait whilst council debates motions on notice for an indeterminate amount of time and enable them to leave the chamber substantially earlier should they so wish. In turn this would better encourage the public to engage directly with the council, improving transparency and accountability.

Proposer – Cllr Dan Sladden
Seconder – Cllr Bryn Griffiths

2) The following amendment was then moved by Councillor Chris Aldred and seconded by Councillor Peter Lacey

a) The number of Public Meetings (Page 54).
6.2 a) vi "no public questions or statements to be allowed at the Council meeting dedicated to the Budget and Council Plan" – This Recommendation be deleted.

b) Public Questions (Page 54).
6.2 b) i – If 6.2 a) vi (above) is deleted there is no need for 6.2.b) i and all subsequent numbering in 6.2 will need to be amended accordingly.
6.2 b) iv. that there should be only one question or statement per individual, organisation or group in a given 6-month, period (from the point at which the initial question was asked) for the Executive and Council meetings- This Recommendation be deleted.
6.2 b) v. that there should be no supplementary questions allowed at meetings of full Council – This Recommendation be deleted.
6.2 b) vii. the Chair of Council can refuse to accept questions/statements submitted to full Council or refer them to other committees; Amend to read – "the Chair of Council can refer any question/statement submitted to full Council to other committees, should this be deemed more appropriate".

c) Motions
6.2 c) iii. that the provision in Council Procedure Rule 14 (Previous Decisions and Motions) regarding the proposer of a motion and 15 other members being able to call back something for redebate be amended to provide for a 6 month embargo on bringing matters back for review/re-debate unless there has been a substantial material change in circumstances – This Recommendation be deleted & Council Procedure Rule 14 remain as it is in the Constitution.

Proposer – Cllr Chris Aldred
Seconder – Cllr Peter Lacey.

The amendment was then debated.

On a vote being taken the motion was declared defeated with 33 votes for, 46 against and 7 abstentions.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion which was declared carried, with 45 votes for, 31 against and 4 abstentions.

Resolved –

(a) the proposed amendments to the Constitution set out in Part A of Appendix 1 be approved;

(b) Members note the amendments to the Constitution set out in Part B of Appendix 1 to this report, made by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services under his delegated powers and reported back to full Council for information;

(c) Members note the consequential amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Appendices 2a and 2b to this report made by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services under his general delegations in Article 15.02(c) of the Constitution and specific delegated power from full Council on 15 November 2023, and reported back to full Council for information;

(d) Members note the Development Plan Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers consequentially included in the Constitution and attached at Appendix 3 to this report, reported back to full Council for information;

(e) full Council agree that there be 5 full Council meetings per year, the fourth meeting to consider the Council Budget and Council Plan only and the reserve date to be used for the rest of Council business; and:

i) that for 2025, the scheduled meeting on 19 February 2025 be the additional Council meeting dedicated to the consideration of the Budget and the Council Plan and all other business normally scheduled for 19 February 2025 be moved to the reserve date of 21 February 2025;

ii) that for 2026, the meetings be spaced so that the dedicated Budget and Council Plan meeting is held in February and the other meeting held in March or April;

iii) for 2026, a reserve date should be kept for the Budget and Council Plan meeting; instead of this being on the Friday in the week of the meeting, it is recommended that the reserve date be on the following Wednesday (a week after the Budget and Council Plan Council meeting);

(f) the proposed amendments to the Council Procedure Rules set out in section 6 of this report and Appendix 4 be approved, with the amendment that items (vii) (“motions on notice”) and (viii) (“questions or statements from members of the public”) should be switched in the recommended Order of Business for Ordinary Meetings; and the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make any further amendments to the Council Procedure Rules that Members may require;

(g) the Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee should formally cease as of the 15 May 2024 Council meeting and that any outstanding work should be re-allocated, in liaison with Scrutiny Board, to the other overview and scrutiny committees (with the exception of matters relating to leisure); that the proposed amendments to the overview and scrutiny committee terms of reference in Article 6 of the Constitution as set out by way of tracked changes in Appendix 5b be approved; and that the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make any further consequential amendments which may be required to the Constitution;

(h) a new Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 Members and politically balanced (as per the other overview and scrutiny committees) be created at the 15 May 2024 Council meeting, appointments to which to be made at that meeting of full Council and the first meeting of the new overview and scrutiny committee to follow in June 2024; that the proposed amendments to the overview and scrutiny committee membership lists in Part 3, Schedule 3 of the Constitution as set out by way of tracked changes in **Appendix 5c** be approved; and that the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make any further consequential amendments which may be required to the Constitution;

(i) the proposed revised Terms of Reference for the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel on Member Allowances that have been proposed by the Panel Members as set out at **Appendix 7**, be approved;

(j) instead of a detailed review of the Constitution post 12 months' operation of the new authority, the current process of ongoing review by the Members' Working Group on the Constitution be continued.

84 Appointments to Committees according to proportionality

The recommendations at page 185 of the agenda pack (page 1351 of the Minute Book) were moved and seconded.

On a vote being taken the motion was declared carried unanimously

Resolved -

(a) Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee
One of the North Yorkshire Independent Group vacant seats allocated to the Liberal Democrat and Liberal Group – Councillor Joy Andrews appointed

(b) Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
The vacant Green Group seat allocated to the Liberal Democrat and Liberal Group - Councillor Steve Mason appointed

(c) Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Planning Committee
Independent Unaffiliated lose a seat to Liberal Democrat and Liberal Group on the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Planning Committee – Councillor Paul Haslam to come off and Councillor Peter Lacey to be appointed.

(d) North York Moors National Park Authority
Councillor Donohue- Moncrieff to retain the seat on the North York Moors National Park Authority. This is a North Yorkshire Independent seat but has been allocated to the unaffiliated independents.

(e) Police Fire and Crime Panel
Councillor Rich Maw to come off the Police Fire and Crime Panel and be replaced by Councillor Steve Shaw-Wright

(f) Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Planning Committee
Councillor Maw retains a seat on the Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Planning Committee, as an unaffiliated independent.

(g) A Labour group seat on Ordinary Committees to be allocated to the Liberal Democrats and Liberals

(h) A Labour group seat on Scrutiny Committees to be allocated to the Unaffiliated Independents

85 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

The recommendations at page 192 of the agenda pack (page 1043 of the Minute Book) were moved and seconded.

A vote was taken and the motion was declared carried unanimously.

Resolved –

(a) Appeals Committee (Home to School Transport)
Councillor Heather Phillips to step down and Councillor Caroline Goodrick to be appointed.

(b) Audit Committee
Councillor Mark Crane to step down and Councillor David Chance to be appointed

(c) Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee
1 x Conservative and Independents vacancy – Councillor Robert Windass appointed
1 x Liberal Democrat and Liberals vacancy – Councillor Monika Slater appointed
1 x North Yorkshire Independent Group vacancy (former Cllr Barrett seat) not appointed to.

(d) Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
1 x Conservative and Independents vacancy (former Cllr George Jabbour seat) – Councillor Andy Paraskos appointed
Councillor Heather Phillips to step down and Councillor Caroline Goodrick appointed to the committee as Vice Chair
Councillor Monika Slater to step down and Councillor Andrew Murday appointed

(e) Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
A Labour Group seat on Scrutiny Committees to be allocated to the unaffiliated independents. Councillor Steve Shaw Wright to come off – not appointed to.

(f) Development Plan Committee
1 x Liberal Democrat and Liberal vacancy - Councillor Steve Mason appointed
Councillor Hannah Gostlow to step down and Councillor Phillip Broadbank appointed
Councillor Derek Bastiman to step down as Chair and Councillor Mark Crane appointed to the committee and as Chair

(g) Employment Appeals Committee
A Labour Group seat on Ordinary Committees to be allocated to the Liberal Democrats and Liberals. Councillor Rich Maw to come off, vacancy not appointed to.

(h) General Licensing and Registration Committee, including the Sub-Committee
1 x Conservative and Independents vacancy – not appointed to
1 x North Yorkshire Independent vacancy – not appointed to

(i) Pension Fund Committee
Councillor Andrew Williams to step down and Councillor Peter Wilkinson appointed
Councillor Matt Walker to step down and Councillor Dan Sladden appointed.

(j) Police Fire and Crime Panel
1 x Conservative and Independents vacancy – Councillor Malcolm Taylor to be appointed
Councillor Felicity Cunliffe-Lister to be appointed as the named substitute for the Liberal Democrats and Liberals

(k) Richmond Yorks Area Constituency Planning Committee
Cllr Kevin Foster to replace Cllr Stuart Parsons, with Cllr Bryn Griffiths as the named substitute (Cllrs Foster and Griffiths will manage attendance between them).

(l) Scrutiny of Health
1 x North Yorkshire Independent vacancy – not appointed to
Councillor Andrew Murday to step down and Councillor Andrew Timothy appointed
Councillor Rich Maw retains his seat as an unaffiliated independent (former Labour seat)

(m) Statutory Licensing
1 x Liberal Democrat and Liberal vacancy – not appointed to
Councillor Malcolm Taylor to step down and Councillor Andrew Lee to be appointed.

(n) Strategic Planning
1 x North Yorkshire Independent vacancy – not appointed to
Councillor Steve Mason to step down and Councillor Andrew Timothy to be appointed.

(o) Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee
1 x Conservative and Independents vacancy – Councillor Andrew Williams appointed
Councillor Caroline Goodrick to step down and Councillor Heather Moorhouse appointed
Councillor Mark Crane to step down and Councillor Derek Bastiman appointed.

(p) Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors (16)			
	Councillors Name	Chair/Vice Chair	Political Group
1	ARTHUR, Karl		Conservative and Independents
2	DICKINSON, Caroline		Conservative and Independents
3	FOSTER, Richard		Conservative and Independents
4	KNAPTON, Nigel		Conservative and Independents
5	MANN, John		Conservative and Independents
6	PEACOCK, Yvonne		Conservative and Independents
7	PEARSON, Clive		Conservative and Independents
8	TAYLOR, Malcolm	Chair	Conservative and Independents
9	TRUMPER, Phil		Conservative and Independents
10	MASON, Steve		Liberal Democrat and Liberal

11	SLADDEN, Dan		Liberal Democrat and Liberal
12	PACKHAM, Bob		Labour
13	RITCHIE, John	Vice Chair	Labour
14	PARSONS, Stuart		North Yorkshire Independent
15	POSKITT, Kirsty		North Yorkshire Independent
16	FOSTER, Kevin		Green or Unaffiliated Independents

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Committee Places

The appointments to the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Committees are:

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

Member	***Constituent Authority***	***Substitute Member***	***Substitute Member***
Councillor Carl Les (Lead Member)	*NYC*	*Councillor Michael Harrison*	*Councillor Simon Myers*
Councillor Gareth Dadd	*NYC*	*Councillor Janet Sanderson*	*Councillor Annabel Wilkinson*

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Chair to be determined by the Committee, although cannot be from the same Group as the Mayor. Nominated members may not be Members or Substitute Members of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Member	***Constituent Authority***	***Group***	***Substitute Member***
Cllr Lindsay Burr	*NYC*	*NY Independent*	*TBC*
Cllr Richard Foster	*NYC*	*Conservative and Independents Group*	*TBC*
Cllr Clive Pearson	*NYC*	*Conservative and Independents Group*	*TBC*
Cllr Steve Shaw-Wright	*NYC*	*Labour*	*TBC*
Cllr Steve Watson	*NYC*	*Conservative and Independents Group*	*TBC*
Cllr Andrew Williams	*NYC*	*Conservative and Independents Group*	*TBC*

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Audit & Governance Committee

Chair to be determined by the Combined Authority. Nominated members may not be Members or Substitute Members of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Member	***Constituent Authority***	***Group***	***Substitute Member***
Cllr Cliff Lunn	*NYC*	*Conservative and Independents Group*	*TBC*

Cllr Caroline Goodrick	*NYC*	*Conservative and Independents Group*	*TBC*
Cllr Arnold Warneken	*NYC*	*Green Group*	*TBC*
Cllr Philip Broadbank	*NYC*	*Liberal Democrats and Liberal Group*	*TBC*

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Skills and Employability Working Group

Member	***Constituent Authority***
Councillor Mark Crane	*NYC*
Councillor Annabel Wilkinson	*NYC*

Transport for the North

Committee	**Member**	***Constituent Authority***	***Substitute***	***Constituent Authority***
General Purposes Committee	Councillor C Les	*NYC*	*Councillor P Kilbane*	*CYC*
Rail North Committee	*Councillor P Kilbane*	*CYC*	*Councillor C Les*	*NYC*
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	*Councillor P Haslam*	*NYC*	*Councillor R Melly*	*CYC*

86 Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029

The recommendations at page 195 of the agenda pack (page 1361 of the Minute Book) were moved and seconded.

An amendment was moved and seconded that at section 4.1 of the Strategy, second bullet point, the words “a minimum of” be inserted before “500 new council homes”, and this was accepted by the mover and seconder of the Strategy.

A vote was taken and the motion was declared carried unanimously.

Resolved –

That Council adopt the Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029 as recommended by Executive following consideration of the report ‘Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029’ at their meeting on 19 March 2024, and incorporating the amendment detailed in the preamble to the minute.

At 1:10 pm the Chairman adjourned the meeting for lunch.

The meeting was re-convened at 2:05 pm.

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87 To consider the Annual Report and recommendations of the Standards and Governance Committee

The recommendations at page 213 of the agenda pack (page 1379 of the Minute Book) were moved and seconded.

Resolved –

That the Council receives and notes the Annual Report of the Standards and Governance Committee.

88 Statements of Executive Members and Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Statements of Executive Members, in the order set out below, followed by the Statements of the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

88 (a) Executive Member for Managing our Environment - Councillor Greg White

Councillor Greg White, Executive Member for Managing our Environment, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 219 - 222 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1385 to 1388).

88 (b) Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills - Councillor Annabel Wilkinson

Councillor Annabel Wilkinson, Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 223 – 226 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1389 to 1392).

88 (c) Executive Member for Finance and Assets - Councillor Gareth Dadd

Councillor Gareth Dadd, Executive Member for Finance and Resources, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 227 - 230 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1393 to 1395).

88 (d) Executive Member for Open to Business - Councillor Derek Bastiman

Councillor Derek Bastiman, Executive Member for Open to Business, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 231 - 234 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1397 to 1400).

88 (e) Executive Member for Corporate Services - Councillor David Chance

Councillor David Chance, Executive Member for Corporate Services, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated

and which appeared at pages 235 – 238 of the agenda pack and in the Minute Book (pages 1401 to 1404).

88 (f) Executive Member for Highways and Transportation - Councillor Keane Duncan

Councillor Keane Duncan, Executive Member for Highways and Transportation, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 239 – 240 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1405 to 1406).

88 (g) Executive Member for Health and Adult Services - Councillor Michael Harrison

Councillor Michael Harrison, Executive Member for Health and Adult Services, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 241 - 242 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1407 to 1408).

88 (h) Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing - Councillor Simon Myers

Councillor Simon Myers, Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 243 - 246 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1409 to 1412).

88 (i) Executive Member for Children and Families - Councillor Janet Sanderson

Councillor Janet Sanderson, Executive Member for Children and Families, made a statement and answered questions. A summary of the key points of which had previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 247 – 250 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages1413 to 1415).

88 (j) Scrutiny Board (Chair: Councillor Karin Sedgwick)

The written statement of Councillor Karin Sedgwick having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 251 – 252 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1417 to 1418), was noted. The Scrutiny Board Chair then answered questions.

88 (k) Care and Independence and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Karin Sedgwick)

The written statement of Councillor Karin Sedgwick having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 253 - 256 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1419 to 1421), was noted. The Chair of the Care and Independence and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee then answered questions.

88 (l) Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Andrew Williams)

The written statement of Councillor Andrew Williams having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 257 - 258 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (page 1423), was noted.

88 (m Scrutiny of Health (Chair: Councillor Andrew Lee)

The written statement of Councillor Andrew Lee having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 259 - 262 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1425 to 1427), was noted. The Chair of the Scrutiny of Health Committee then answered questions.

88 (n) Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor David Staveley)

The written statement of Councillor David Staveley having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 263 – 266 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1429 to 1431), was noted.

88 (o) Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Barbara Brodigan)

The written statement of Councillor Barbara Brodigan having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 267 - 268 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1433 to 1434), was noted.

88 (p) Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Chair: Councillor Malcolm Taylor)

The written statement of Councillor Malcolm Taylor having previously been circulated and which appeared at pages 269 - 270 of the agenda pack and which appears in the Minute Book (pages 1435 to 1436), was noted. The Chair of the Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee then answered questions.

89 Notices of Motion

The Chair, Councillor Roberta Swiers, advised that five Notices of Motion had been submitted. The Chair confirmed that she had ruled as follows on each of the submitted motions:

(1) A call to place a moratorium on any school closures until the new North Yorkshire local plan is developed – motion to be debated at the meeting

(2) A request for the Leader to write a letter to the Secretary of State regarding hospice funding and support – motion to be debated at the meeting

(3) A call to join over sixty other local councils in the UK by treating care experience as if it is a protected characteristic – motion to be referred to the Scrutiny Board to determine the most appropriate overview and scrutiny committee

(4) A call to promote un-used public land for the cultivation for food or biodiversity and expand allotment provision – motion to be referred to the Scrutiny Board to determine the most appropriate overview and scrutiny committee

(5) A call to halt the proposed cuts to free school bus services in the county (Home to School Transport policy) - motion to be referred to the Executive

89(1) Our schools are the future

The closure of rural schools in North Yorkshire has many significant negative social impacts on residents, communities and children.

The loss of schools and other associated infrastructure leaves villages without the necessary services to support families now and into the future.

We call on this council to place a moratorium on any school closures until the new North Yorkshire local plan is developed.

Proposer - Cllr Steve Mason
Seconder - Cllr Andrew Murday

The notice of motion was moved by Councillor Steve Mason and seconded by Councillor Andrew Murday.

The motion was then debated.

On a vote being taken 15 Members voted for the motion, 68 against and there was one abstention. The motion therefore fell.

89(2) Hospice Funding

This Council recognises:

1. The invaluable care that the Hospice movement provides to people at the end of life and the tremendous public support that they command.

2. The unfortunate, but inevitable demographic changes in our society that has led in recent years, notwithstanding the impact of COVID, to increasing numbers of people who could benefit from Hospice, Palliative and End of Life Care, particularly for people with complex needs or who experience high levels of frailty in their last year of life.

3. The desire of the Hospice sector to protect its independent status whilst having its contribution to supporting people at the end of life recognised through fair and consistent funding arrangements across and within the new Integrated Care Board statutory responsibility to commission Hospice, Palliative and End of Life Care services.

This council therefore regrets that ICB funding for Hospices has not kept up with inflation, and it recognises the detrimental effect this is having on Hospice service provision across North Yorkshire. We call on the local ICB to ensure that it meets its statutory requirements, and that it commits to paying Hospices the full cost of any commissioned clinical services that would be otherwise be provided by the NHS.

Further, in fulfilling its own responsibilities to improve the health and wellbeing of its population this Council is concerned that the failure to adequately fund the sector will undermine its own ability to fulfil that responsibility.

We therefore request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to ask her to ensure that NHS England gives greater support to Integrated Care Boards, enabling them to better understand their responsibilities for Hospice and End of Life Care services, and thus ensuring a fair contribution for the work they do and greater consistency across England, taking note of changing needs.

Proposed – Cllr Peter Lacey
Seconded – Cllr Andrew Lee

The notice of motion was moved by Councillor Peter Lacey and seconded by Councillor Andrew Lee. In moving the motion Councillor Lacey proposed that in the final paragraph after the words “End of Life Care services” the words “encouraging collaboration at a local level” be added and this was accepted.

The motion was then debated.

On a vote being taken the notice of motion was approved unanimously.

89(3) Care Leavers

Young people leaving social care are already in a vulnerable situation, and they are often subject to discrimination when attempting to get a job or find a place to live. Indeed, some housing providers directly stipulate “no care leavers”.

The effect of this discrimination is to push these young people, who are already vulnerable, into hostels and shelters where they are easy targets for exploitation and victimisation by criminal gangs.

We call on this council to join over sixty other local councils in the UK by treating care experience as if it is a protected characteristic by:

- Ensuring that during development of future policy and service provision, impact on those who have had care experience is considered alongside impact on those with other protected characteristics.
- Including care leavers and children in care in its equality objectives and reports, alongside those with other protected characteristics.
- Proactively seeking out and listening to people who have experience of care, especially when considering decisions which affect them.
- Formally calling on central government to add care experience as a protected characteristic in the Equality Act, as recommended by the 2022 Independent Page 5 Review of Children’s Social Care.
- Formally calling on other bodies, such as academy trusts, housing providers, and the new combined authority to treat care experience as if it is a protected characteristic in similar ways.

Proposed – Cllr Andrew Timothy
Seconded – Cllr Andrew Lee

The motion was moved and seconded and referred to the Scrutiny Board to determine the most appropriate overview and scrutiny committee.

89(4) Right to Grow

This Council notes:

- Its own commitment to conserving biodiversity in order to help mitigate climate change by increasing capture and storage of carbon in ecosystems, and support adaptation to climate impacts.
- That trees and green space in urban environments can help prevent floods, cool streets, sequester carbon emissions, filter air pollution, and provide an important habitat for insect and plant-life.

- The increasing need to put the health and well-being of residents at the heart of our Council strategies.
- The powerful evidence which demonstrates the link between people's health and wellbeing and the availability of fresh locally produced food.
- That the cost-of-living crisis is creating real hunger reinforcing the need for healthy fresh food at an affordable price.
- That communities coming together to grow can radically reduce costs to NHS and social care budgets by reducing loneliness and providing healthy food.
- That there is plenty of under-used publicly owned land which could be used for community food growing while also improving the public realm.

This Council agrees:

- Identify and produce a map of all Council owned land suitable for community cultivation that is publicly available at no cost to residents, and actively promoted across all wards.
- Land should be considered suitable for cultivation for food or biodiversity unless containing proven hazards or unless development is due within 24 months.
- Make this land available for cultivation by a simple license to community organisations at no cost.
- Ensure the license does not contain conditions that present a significant barrier to residents in terms of financial or practical requirements.
- Ensure that where community groups cultivating on public realm land for food growing or wildlife spaces, the groups are given an opportunity to bid for the land should it be tendered to sale.
- Allow the necessary infrastructure such as access to water and/or for water harvesting to enable sustainable cultivation for all.
- Ensure that allotment provision adheres to the 1969 Thorpe Report which recommends a minimum provision equivalent to 15 plots per 1,000 households. In the 2011 census, 256,594 households were recorded in North Yorkshire.

Proposer – Cllr Hannah Gostlow
Seconder – Cllr Steve Mason.

The motion was moved and seconded and referred to the Scrutiny Board to determine the most appropriate overview and scrutiny committee.

89(5) Home to School Transport

A significant proportion of the NYC Home to School Travel Service is governed by legislation. However, proposals to bring the policy in line with the DfE requirements by removing some areas of discretionary provision has some risks:

- estimated annual savings of £3.2m are based on a number of assumptions which are difficult to predict
- the full financial impact of the changes won't be seen for seven years
- families with more than one child could have different eligibility, with children from the same family being forced to attend schools in different locations
- restricting eligibility to nearest school only will have a significant & disproportionate impact on rural communities
- potential changes to the pattern of admissions at schools where transport provision is a factor

- a house move within the area could mean children are forced leave their current school.
- North Yorkshire will be paying other authorities to educate its own children while perfectly good schools inside the county lose out.

We call on this council to halt the drastic cuts to free school bus services in the county and to use the £6.2m of emergency central government funding for its intended purpose of supporting frontline services.

Proposer – Cllr Barbara Brodigan
Seconder – Cllr Felicity Cunliffe-Lister.

The motion was moved and seconded and referred to the Executive.

90 Use of special urgency procedures since the last meeting of Full Council - Report of the Leader

The report on the Use of Special Urgency Procedures since the last meeting of the Council on 21 February 2024 was considered and the recommendation at page 271 - 276 of the agenda pack (page 1440 of the Minute Book) was moved and seconded.

Resolved –

That the report on the Use of Special Urgency Procedures since the last meeting of the Council in February 2024, be noted.

91 Council Procedure Rule 10 Questions

There were no Council Procedure Rule 10 questions.

The meeting concluded at 3.42 pm.

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

STATEMENT OF COUNCILLOR CARL LES

The Woodsmith Mine

The slowdown in drilling operations at the mine is of great concern both to the local economy, but especially to the workers employed there, either by the company itself or its many sub-contractors. I hope Members are reassured following Nic Harne`s e mail to all Members on 20 June that we the Council will do everything we can, in conjunction with all other agencies and partners, to support workers through this difficult time, and also to provide ongoing encouragement to the company to come back to a position that will benefit not only the local economy but the national one as well.

General Election

Many if not all of us will have played our parts in the Election. Whilst it may not have produced a result all of us welcome (!), there is no doubt that the Labour Party has gained a huge majority in Parliament, and will be able to follow a legislative programme of its choosing.

We will study the 35 Bills said to be included in the King`s Speech to assess what impact they will have on us, especially the Taking Back Control Bill, promoted by the recently renamed MHCLG. Speculation abounds about other Bills and their contents, but we will analyse them, no doubt through seminars and scrutiny, and take Executive action. Whatever Government is in power it is the duty of local government to work with that government. One thing that is abundantly clear is that more powers will be devolved to elected Mayors, continuing a process of decentralisation started by the previous administration, so we will continue to play our part in the Mayoral Combined Authority for the benefit of all the residents in York & North Yorkshire. There is a meeting of the MCA two days before this Council meeting. The preparation is over, now we start to take investment decisions.

Craven Museum

I was delighted to learn of the success of Craven Museum in the finals of the competition. Their win of a prize of £15,000, though not the top prize, was still highly creditable against very serious competition. Congratulations to them all, and I`m pleased that we have been able to capitalise on the investment made by the legacy Council, Craven District.

COUNCILLOR CARL LES

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North Yorkshire Council
24 July 2024

Motion calling on the Council to halt the proposed cuts to free bus services in the County (Home to School Transport Policy) – recommendations of the Executive

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable Council to consider the recommendations of the Executive regarding the Motion on the proposed Home to School Transport Policy that was referred at the meeting of Council on 15 May 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the meeting of the Council on 15 May 2024, a Notice of Motion calling for a halt to the proposed cuts to free school bus services in the County (Home to School Transport Policy) was considered. Council resolved that the motion be referred to a meeting of the Executive for consideration, with recommendations to be brought back to the meeting of the Council on 24 July 2024.

2.2 The Motion is as follows:

Home to School Transport
A significant proportion of the NYC Home to School Travel Service is governed by legislation. However, proposals to bring the policy in line with the DfE requirements by removing some areas of discretionary provision has some risks:

- estimated annual savings of £3.2m are based on a number of assumptions which are difficult to predict
- the full financial impact of the changes won't be seen for seven years
- families with more than one child could have different eligibility, with children from the same family being forced to attend schools in different locations
- restricting eligibility to nearest school only will have a significant & disproportionate impact on rural communities
- potential changes to the pattern of admissions at schools where transport provision is a factor
- a house move within the area could mean children are forced leave their current school
- North Yorkshire will be paying other authorities to educate its own children while perfectly good schools inside the county lose out.

We call on this council to halt the drastic cuts to free school bus services in the county and to use the £6.2m of emergency central government funding for its intended purpose of supporting frontline services.

Proposer – Cllr Barbara Brodigan
Seconder – Cllr Felicity Cunliffe-Lister.

2.3 The proposed changes to the Home to School Transport Policy were reviewed at the informal meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 May 2024. The outcome of this review was included in the agenda and papers for the meeting of the Executive on 16 July 2024, with the intention that it would assist in the deliberations of the Executive with regard to the policy proposals and the Motion. A copy of the papers for that meeting can be found on the Council website here - Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 16th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.4 The minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 16 July 2024 were not available at the point at which the Council papers for the meeting on 24 July 2024 were published. A summary of the discussions at the Executive is as below:

- The home to school travel routes will be risk assessed
- There has been an extensive consultation on the proposed changes and the papers for the meeting of the Executive were published 5 clear working days ahead of the meeting on the Council website
- The Home to School Transport budget has been over-spent for a number of years and this needed to be addressed. The current policy makes provision for eligibility above and beyond statutory requirements
- The policy will be phased in over-time to enable children to remain at the schools that they are currently attending
- There will be measures in place to support families on low incomes
- There is a need to balance the Council budget and the estimated cumulative savings of £4.2million will contribute to the overall savings of £48million that need to be made by the Council over the next 4 years
- The cost of providing home to school travel is the third largest item of revenue expenditure for the Council
- It was recognised that this was not an easy decision to make but one that needed to be made to help ensure the longer-term financial security of the Council.

2.5 Members of the public present raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposed changes upon travel times and safety (particularly in poor weather in more rural areas), travel costs, local communities and community cohesion, school numbers and the long-term sustainability of some secondary schools and sixth form provision. There was a call to stop the implementation of the proposed change in policy.

2.6 The draft minutes of the Executive meeting that was held on 16 July 2024 will available before the meeting of Council and will be accessible here - Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 16th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.7 The Executive concluded that the Proposed Changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy, as recommended in the Executive report be supported and then recommended to Council for adoption at its meeting of 24 July 2024.

2.8 The recommendation to Council regarding the Motion, therefore, is that the motion is not supported as the Executive has recommended the Proposed Changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy to Council for adoption, as at agenda item 10.

2.9 When the Executive or a committee reports back on a motion, the motion, as originally moved and seconded at the previous meeting of Council, will be the matter before the Council. Any recommendation of the Executive or committee to amend the motion will, therefore, be an amendment to the motion and any recommendation to support or oppose the motion will be only an expression of views.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 These are covered in the report on the proposed changes to the Home to School Transport Policy that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 and which is included in the agenda for this meeting at item 10.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These are covered in the report on the proposed changes to the Home to School Transport Policy that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 and which is included in the agenda for this meeting at item 10.

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These are covered in the report on the proposed changes to the Home to School Transport Policy that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 and which is included in the agenda for this meeting at item 10.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are covered in the report on the proposed changes to the Home to School Transport Policy that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 and which is included in the agenda for this meeting at item 10.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That Council consider the recommendations of the Executive regarding the Motion on the proposed Home to School Transport Policy that was referred at the meeting of Council on 15 May 2024, specifically that the motion is not supported.

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON
16 July 2024

Background Documents: North Yorkshire Council Constitution - NYC Constitution - Version 7 - May 2024.pdf (northyorks.gov.uk)

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

Report of the Executive

Report of the Leader of the Council

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide Council with details of reports received and decisions made by the Executive and any subsequent recommendations to Council since the last meeting of Council on 15 May 2024.

2.0 DETAILS OF THE MEETINGS

2.1 The following sections provide details of decisions made by the Executive and recommendations to Council since its last meeting on 15 May 2024. The meetings were held on the following dates: 21 May 2024; 28 May 2024 (Performance Monitoring); 11 June 2024; 18 June 2024; 9 July 2024 and 16 July 2024.

2.2 **21 May 2024 Executive Meeting**

The Executive Members met on Tuesday 21 May 2024. Attending the meeting were: Councillor Carl Les in the Chair. Councillors Mark Crane, Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors Kevin Foster, Paul Haslam (remote), Rich Maw and David Webster.

Apologies: Councillor Greg White.

Substantive agenda items were:

- Decision regarding outcome of marketing exercise to procure a short term operator for Alpamare Waterpark (Appendix A to this item was considered in private)

The link to the reports and minutes from this meeting is as follows:

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 21st May, 2024, 10.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.3 **28 May 2024 Executive (Performance Monitoring) Meeting**

The Executive Members met on Tuesday 28 May 2024. Attending the meeting were: Councillor Carl Les in the Chair. Councillors Mark Crane, Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors Alyson Baker, Caroline Dickinson, Karin Sedgwick, Paul Haslam, Malcolm Taylor, George Jabbour, Peter Lacey and Cliff Lunn.

Substantive agenda items were:

- Q4 Performance Monitoring and Budget Report
- Environment Agency Grants for North Bay Urgent Wall Improvements – Phase 2
- Acceptance of the Music Hub Grant to run the North Yorkshire/York Music Hub to deliver the National Plan for Music: Education

The link to the reports and minutes from this meeting is as follows:

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 28th May, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.4 **11 June 2024 Executive Meeting**

The Executive Members met on Tuesday 11 June 2024. Attending the meeting were: Councillor Carl Les in the Chair. Councillors Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Simon Myers, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

Apologies: Councillors Mark Crane and Michael Harrison

Substantive agenda items were:

- CYPS Schools Capital Programme (Appendix B confidential Appendix)
- National Childcare Expansion Programme for Early Years and Wraparound Provision
- Administrative amendments to the LGPS Discretions Policy
- Appointments to SACRE and Shareholder Committee

The link to the reports and minutes from this meeting is as follows:

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 11th June, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.5 **18 June 2024 Executive Meeting**

The Executive Members met on Tuesday 18 June 2024. Attending the meeting were: Councillor Carl Les in the Chair plus Councillors Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors George Jabbour, John Ritchie and Subash Sharma.

Apologies: Councillor Mark Crane.

Substantive agenda items were:

- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2030
- Adult Learning and Skills Service Accountability Agreement 2024-2025
- Development of Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options for the Homeless
- Review of Maximum Hackney Carriage Fares
- Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 Refresh Proposal

The link to the reports and minutes from this meeting is as follows:

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 18th June, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.6 **9 July 2024 Executive Meeting**

The Executive Members met on Tuesday 9 July 2024. Attending the meeting were:

Councillor Carl Les in the Chair plus Councillors Mark Crane, Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Michael Harrison, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors Bryn Griffiths, George Jabbour, Steve Shaw-Wright, Philip Broadbank and John Weighell..

Apologies: Councillor Simon Myers

Substantive agenda items were:

- Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review
- Proposed Changes to the Constitution for recommendation to full Council
- Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies
- Area Constituency Committee Feedback Report.

The link to the reports and minutes from this meeting is as follows:

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 9th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

2.7 **16 July 2024 Executive Meeting**

The Executive Members met on Tuesday 16 July 2024. Attending the meeting were: Councillor Carl Les in the Chair plus Councillors Mark Crane, Gareth Dadd, Keane Duncan, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Heather Phillips, Janet Sanderson, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillor Philip Broadbank, Caroline Dickinson, Caroline Goodrick, Paul Haslam, David Ireton, George Jabbour, Janet Jefferson, Stuart Parsons and Tony Randerson.

Substantive agenda items were:

- Proposed changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy
- Proposal to cease to maintain St Hilda's Ampleforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
- York and North Yorkshire Key Route Network
- Provision of Wide Area Network Solution and Proposed Public Sector Collaboration
- Scarborough Harbour West Pier – Appropriation of a parcel of land
- Long Term Plan for Scarborough
- Malton and Norton on Derwent Neighbourhood Plan – Decision Statement and Referendum
- Examiners Report on the Pannel and Burn Bridge Neighbourhood Plan – Decision Statement and Referendum
- Council run care homes in Malton and Pickering.
- Transfer of part of former Northallerton School and Sixth Form College to the Department for Education

The link to the reports and minutes from this meeting is as follows:

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 16th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

3.0 MATTERS FOR APPROVAL/INFORMATION AT COUNCIL

3.1 The Executive considered the reports and resolved to recommend the following to the meeting of Full Council for consideration:

3.2 Revenue Budget, Treasury Management and Capital Plan

This item was considered at the meeting of the Executive held on 28 May 2024 where the Executive was asked to recommend to Council the proposed carry forward of the net capital underspend.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the proposed carry forward to 2023/24 of the net capital underspend totalling £12.4m be noted.

3.3 Administrative amendments to the LGPS Discretions Policy

This item was considered at the meeting of the Executive held on 11 June 2024 where the Executive was asked to recommend to Council that it delegates to the Assistant Chief Executive – HR and Business Support the power to make in-year minor administrative amendments to the LGPS and that consequential amendments be made to the Constitution by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services to reflect the delegation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That delegation be given to the Assistant Chief Executive – HR and Business Support to make in-year minor administrative amendments to the LGPS and that consequential amendments be made to the Constitution by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services to reflect the delegation.

3.4 Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2030

This item was considered at the meeting of the Executive held on 18 June 2024 where Executive was asked to recommend for endorsement by full Council the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2030. A separate report has been included as an agenda item for this meeting as this strategy is included in the Council's Policy Framework.

3.5 Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review

This item was considered at the meeting of the Executive held on 9 July 2024 where the Executive was asked to Council for approval the submission of the Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review. A separate report has been included as an agenda item for this meeting as this strategy as it relates to the Council Constitution.

3.6 Proposed Changes to the Constitution for recommendation to full Council
This item was considered at the meeting of the Executive held on 9 July 2024 where Executive was asked to recommend for endorsement by full Council the proposed amendments to the Constitution. A separate report has been included as an agenda item for this meeting as it relates to the Council Constitution.

3.7 Consultation on changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy

This item was considered at the meeting of the Executive held on 16 July 2024 where Executive was asked to recommend for endorsement by full Council the proposed changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy. A separate report has been included as an agenda item for this meeting as this strategy is included in the Council's Policy Framework.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial implications are addressed in the reports that went to the Executive.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The legal implications are addressed in the reports that went to the Executive.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The equalities implications are addressed in the reports that went to the Executive.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The climate change implications are addressed in the reports that went to the Executive.

Councillor Carl Les
Leader
North Yorkshire Council
County Hall
Northallerton

Background Documents:
Reports and minutes of the meetings of the Executive as detailed in the main body of the report.

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

16 July 2024

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North Yorkshire Council

24 July 2024

Proposed Changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy

Report of the Corporate Director Children and Young People's Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable Council to consider the proposed changes to the Home to School Travel Policy as recommended to the Council by the Executive at their meeting on 16 July 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 16 July 2024 the Executive considered a report proposing changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy, a copy of which is appended to this report, and recommended that the Council should adopt the proposed policy at its meeting on 24 July 2024.

2.2 The Council adopted its current Home to School Transport Policy in 2019. Statutory Guidance published in June 2023, and amended slightly in January 2024 required that the Council review the policy and to undertake consultation in the event that changes were proposed.

2.3 The overall cost to the Council of the provision of home to school travel is significant and rising at pace. The current policy makes provision for eligibility above and beyond the statutory requirements and which have associated cost.

2.4 The appended report provides details of the proposed changes to the policy, of the consultation exercise that was undertaken and of associated issues. It seeks the approval of the Council of the proposed Home to School Travel Policy.

2.5 The Executive report referenced at paragraph 5.22 "The Council will be publishing a sustainable modes of travel plan annually setting out its vision for sustainable travel to school and will be working with schools and other educational settings to identify how this can be promoted and facilitated. The draft plan for September 2024 will be appended to the Full Council report on 24th July". This is included as Appendix H.

2.6 The minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 16 July 2024 will be available prior to the meeting of Council here - Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 16th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 in sections 4.7 to 4.10; 5.17 to 5.18 and section 7.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 in section 8.

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5.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 in section 9.

6.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 16 July 2024 in section 10.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the Council consider the appended report on Proposed Changes to the Home to School Travel Policy and adopt the policy with effect from 1 September 2024 as recommended by the Executive, including consideration of each of the following recommendations:

i) to retain this extended eligibility in reception year as part of the future travel policy.

ii) to retain this extended eligibility in Year 3 as part of the future travel policy.

iii) to remove transport assistance to second address as part of the future travel policy.

iv) to remove travel assistance to children attending designated religious character primary schools as part of the future travel policy.

v) a proposal that travel on transition is assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the EHCP as part of the future policy.

vi) amend the criterion to match the statutory requirement, meaning that in future eligibility on catchment grounds would no longer apply as part of the future travel policy.

vii) use its discretionary powers to extend the eligibility for travel assistance for secondary age pupils from low income families to attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 12 miles (an increase from 6 miles) from their home as part of the future travel policy.

Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director Children and Young People's Service
16 July 2024

Appendix H - North Yorkshire Sustainable Modes of Travel to School (SMOTS) Plan

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Appendix H

Proposed Changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy

North Yorkshire Sustainable Modes of Travel to School (SMOTS) Plan, Summer 2024

Reason for Plan

Statutory guidance for local authorities on 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age', was updated in January 2024. This new guidance set out the requirements on local authorities regarding home to school transport, but also clarified the duty on all local authorities to promote sustainable and active travel to school. The Council is under a statutory duty under Section 508A of Education Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport.

Purpose of this document

This document sets out how we as a local authority with responsibility for both education and transport meet the requirements and duties set out in the statutory guidance. We will provide details of our initiatives and approaches and set out the recent data we hold related to this.

We will also look at possible future initiatives which we may wish to work towards during future iterations of this Plan.

Our current position

The Council has a statutory duty to provide home to school travel for eligible children of compulsory school age in accordance with Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

In the academic year 2023/24, children supported to travel to school in North Yorkshire through the free home to school transport scheme are as follows:

The current population at compulsory school age (5 to 16) of schools in North Yorkshire is c.75000 pupils and the number of those accessing free home to school transport is c.10000. Of the c.600plus services provided to transport children accessing 'mainstream education', approximately half are provided by vehicles with 8 seats or fewer.

With regards to those children accessing transport support due to SEND, there are approximately 1800 children, of which approximately 250 receive a parental allowance, and the remainder have transport provided via a contracted service.

Current modal split (distribution of travel across different modes of transport).

We do not currently hold any figures for the split of how children across the county travel to school, nor do we have any understanding of the latent demand for various travel options. At this stage, beyond the provision that is made for allocation of home to school transport, we do not fully understand the extent of the desire for families and young people to travel to school by sustainable modes.

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NY SMOTS Plan objectives and how they fit with the guidance.

Where schools, transport infrastructure and public transport can reasonably facilitate, support children and young people being able to access education in a healthy, sustainable and safe way. This will help to support healthier lifestyles and communities, reduce congestion and the impacts of vehicles on our places, including safety, and reduced air quality, and ensure all children and young people are able to be fully included in all aspects of school life.

North Yorkshire is England's largest council by geography. We are a diverse and special area with a range of places including towns and a Cathedral city, rural areas, market towns and coastal communities. We have two national parks in our area, and three National Landscapes (formerly areas of outstanding natural beauty). We have more than 350 schools providing education for more than 80,000 pupils, of which over 5,000 have an education and health care plan.

Vision

Council plan vision – *"We want to build on North Yorkshire's natural capital, strong local economy and resilient communities, to improve the way local services are delivered and support a good quality of life for all."*

Being Young in North Yorkshire - *"All children and young people are safe, happy, healthy and able to achieve in North Yorkshire"*

Council Plan, vision for Place and Environment - "*To encourage and support sustainable living in our communities and towns as well as the transport in between, including making it easier to charge electric vehicles, access public transport that meets the needs of the user and promoting and encouraging active travel including walking, wheeling and cycling."*

Local Transport Plan vision: *"Our vision is that we want North Yorkshire to be a thriving county which adapts to a changing world and remains a special place for everyone to live, work and visit."*

What does the guidance require?

There are four distinct elements to the duty that Local Authorities must meet, as follows:

- assess the school travel needs of children of compulsory school age and persons of sixth form age resident in their areas.
- assess the facilities and services for sustainable modes of travel to, from and within their area.
- promote the use of sustainable travel to places of education in their area; and
- publish a document which sets out their strategy to promote the use of sustainable travel to places of education in their area.

Our current approaches to meeting these duties are as set out below.

Duty	Our approach	Opportunities
Assess the school travel needs of children of	Following the allocation of school places and	Our current approach considers need based on

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compulsory school age and persons of sixth form age resident in their areas.	identification of the number of children who are eligible for assistance with transport the Council's Integrated Passenger Transport (IPT) team establish the most appropriate travel arrangements for individual pupils. Where relevant, in determining the most appropriate arrangements IPT, in consultation with transport providers when relevant, take account of a range of issues. For context, there are almost 1300 home to school transport services operating for 190 days per academic year.	our statutory responsibilities. We would like to be able to consider looking at need from a wider, more aspirational perspective, but this may require additional funding. There are opportunities to understand this need better via a variety of means including, but not limited to, engagement and formal consultation with schools and education providers, and children, young people, and their families. This could take a variety of forms, tailored as necessary.
Assess the facilities and services for sustainable modes of travel to, from and within their area.	The Council use mapping software to understand the transport options for each child that makes an application for admission in the 'standard points of entry' i.e. Year R (reception) and Year 7. This process includes assessing the shortest appropriate walking routes and use of existing contracted transport services. Where, on the rare occasion, a child lives in an area that falls outside these mapped areas, manual intervention from officers may be needed to supplement the software analysis. Similarly, if a parent, or school suggests that a walking route may not be	Enhancements in transport mapping could help to provide more detailed travel information tailored to individual schools and locations. A more detailed assessment of active travel routes, plus public transport services, and facilities to support use of sustainable modes could also be detailed to provide details of feasible travel options. Schools and their pupils could be canvased about what facilities might encourage them to travel sustainably, and what barriers currently exist to that. This is not a current programme of work, but could be investigated to understand the cost and resources required to

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	suitable for a child to use, officers will assess that route via a site visit, taking into account the parameters of the statutory guidance and that from Road Safety GB, on Assessment of Walked Routes to School.	deliver a suitable level of information. For an enhanced, more detailed level of information, additional funding beyond currently identified budgets would be likely.
Promote the use of sustainable travel to places of education in their area	Our home to school transport policy, details of bus timetables, travel passes and support for pupils is available at www.northyorks.gov.uk There is also travel information provided in the roads, parking and travel section of our website, although this is not specific to schools and places of education. We provide Bikeability training to a number of schools in our area, aimed at giving children in years 5 and 6 the opportunity to learn safe cycling skills. We administer and promote the Modeshift stars programme within North Yorkshire. Approximately 60 schools are current active participants. Those schools work towards a gold, silver or bronze award, which includes them using an online tool to develop a travel plan and promote sustainable transport.	There are opportunities to provide schools and their pupils and students with more detailed information about the travel options available to them. This could be by way of an individual travel planning approach, by rolling out Modeshift stars to a greater number of schools, through a more general area-based advice service, or by promoting travel advocates and specific support to particular schools and even particular pupils based on their needs. Such initiatives can be very successful, but may require funding beyond current budgets, and in particular a focus on revenue-based spending and resources.
Publish a document which sets out their strategy to promote the use of sustainable travel to	This document sets out what we are currently doing to meet the requirements of the	This document is the starting point for our SMOTS plan. We are required to update this

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places of education in their area.	guidance, and sets out, at a broad level, the future steps we could take to further develop and promote sustainable travel options for children and students.	strategy annually, and we intend to consider future opportunities, working in a cross-organisational manner, to secure additional funding to enhance this plan.

Possible future initiatives – next steps

In addition to the opportunities outlined above, there are many initiatives and programmes which could help to promote and encourage the use of sustainable transport to schools. In recommending these approaches to schools and educational establishments, partnership working, and engagement would be imperative in ensuring the most suitable approach.

Initiatives which could be considered as part of a future work programme include, but are not limited to:

- Further roll out of Modeshift stars and school travel planning.
- Further roll of out of Bikeability cycle training, and pedestrian training.
- Consideration of 'pluggable' gaps in otherwise walkable/cyclable routes to school.
- Travel buddy scheme/travel training.
- Consideration of young people's travel passes and how these might be expanded.
- Gamification of travel behaviour (i.e. rewards and incentives using schemes like Walk on Wednesday).
- Audit of secondary school and college travel routes and options including consideration of LCWIPs where appropriate and also traffic management such as school parking zones.
- Audit of school travel facilities (e.g. bike/scooter storage).
- Annual school travel survey to provide measurable data.

Resources for programmes would need to be identified and budgets secured before any commitments could be made to delivering initiatives beyond those currently established.

It is important to ensure alignment between future iterations of this plan, and emerging and linked complementary workstreams such as the new joint North Yorkshire and York Local Transport Plan, the North Yorkshire Local Plan, and public health and sport initiatives. Many of these are currently in development, or being revised at present.

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North Yorkshire Council

EXECUTIVE

16 JULY 2024

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report is presented to Executive for recommendation to Full Council for approval on the proposed amendments to Home to School travel proposals following public consultation, together with a final draft of the amended home to school travel policy recommended for consideration of adoption by Full Council on 24 July 2024.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The Council has carried out a consultation upon the current home to school travel policy. This report is brought to update the Executive as to the officers consideration and recommendations for the Executive to consider recommending to Full Council to consider and adopt the draft policy.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide home to school travel for eligible children of compulsory school age in accordance with Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

3.2 In 2023 the DfE published a revision to their statutory guidance entitled 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age, Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, June 2023'.

3.3 The Council sets out its policy in a document that is currently called the North Yorkshire Council Home to School Transport Policy (referred hereafter as the 'current policy') that was previously subject to consultation and implemented in 2019.

3.4 The current population at compulsory school age (5 to 16) of schools in North Yorkshire is c.75000 pupils and the number of those accessing free home to school transport is c.10000. Therefore, it can be said that the Council's policy and provision of free transport services is currently a factor for broadly 13% of the pupil population aged 5-16, and for c.87% it is not.

3.5 The Council is required to consult and implement policy changes to ensure compliance with the revised statutory guidance. In future it is intended to rename the revised policy document to be the 'North Yorkshire Council Home to School Travel Policy' (referred hereafter as the 'new policy') in accordance with the language used by the DfE in their statutory guidance.

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3.6 The overall cost to the Council of the provision of home to school travel is significant and rising at pace. Expenditure has broadly doubled since the last revision of the policy in 2019. The current policy makes provision for eligibility above and beyond statutory requirements that have associated costs, and the consultation provides opportunity to review these 'discretionary' elements.

3.7 There is a separate North Yorkshire Council Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2023-2024 that is supported by stand-alone DfE guidance. The Council is to wait for the next update to that DfE guidance, which is anticipated later in 2024, before considering whether consultation is required on any Post 16 changes. The exception to this will be the subsidised charging rate that is contained in the Post 16 Policy Statement, and which is adopted via a report to the Executive Member in the spring of each year.

4.0 ISSUES

4.1 The Council's existing home to school transport policy was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 24 July 2019 following an extensive consultation exercise. A copy of the existing policy is attached to this report at Appendix A.

4.2 In June 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) published revised Statutory Guidance on travel to school for children of compulsory school age. This guidance (referred hereafter as 'the guidance') was re-published in January 2024 with minor amendments. A copy of the guidance is attached to this report at Appendix B.

4.3 Part of the rationale for the updated guidance was the result of a fatality in 2016 on school transport, and recommendations from the inquest that reflected the medical needs of pupils and duty of care within the home to school travel framework. The guidance therefore places greater emphasis on the responsibility of Local Authorities in respect of children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), mobility and medical needs.

4.4 The guidance includes these additions and points of clarification which the Council is required to prioritise.

- Greater emphasis placed on local authorities to assess eligibility of pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) or mobility needs: it is now clear that an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is not required for a pupil to be eligible for transport under the criteria.
- Appropriate risk assessment for children with SEND and/or mobility/medical needs.
- Requirement for mandatory training for all staff involved in the commissioning and provision of school transport – this is approximately 3900 drivers and passenger assistants.
- The Council must publish a sustainable modes of travel plan for each academic year. This should be published annually by 19 September.

4.5 The new guidance is clarifying the latter two points that have been required since 2014, therefore the expectation is that these duties should be delivered as soon as possible and within one year. The guidance does not require consultation on these two elements, and they will be subject to separate Council internal processes and decision making.

4.6 The guidance also provided a check list to ensure that local authorities' home to school travel policies meet the required standards. A review of the existing policy identified that it complied with only six of the eleven points and concluded there would be a requirement for the Council to adopt a revised policy to achieve compliance. The work that has been undertaken in developing proposals for a revised policy has, therefore, considered those elements of the existing policy that are not consistent with the new guidance including with

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respect to the criteria for eligibility for travel assistance. A copy of the proposed policy is attached to this report at Appendix C.

Financial background

4.7 In 22-23, data shows that compared to the previous year, national expenditure on transport for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) increased by 24.4% to £1.3 billion, whilst mainstream home to school transport expenditure increased by 14.3% to £460.2 million.

In North Yorkshire, the cost of providing home to school travel is the third largest item of revenue expenditure for the Council (behind Adult Social Care and Waste Management). The total expenditure is projected to stand at c.£51m for the current financial year and this has more than doubled since 2018-19. The Council is one of the highest spending local authorities in the country on home to school transport. The following table shows the total expenditure levels over time, together with a breakdown for each type of provision:

Financial Year	Total Expenditure £m	Mainstream School Expenditure £m	Out-of-school Expenditure £m	Specialist Provision Expenditure £m
15-16	**20.5**	13.6	0.6	6.2
16-17	**21.0**	13.1	0.6	7.3
17-18	**22.5**	13.3	0.7	8.5
18-19	**24.2**	13.2	0.7	10.3
19-20	**26.1**	14.1	0.6	11.5
20-21	**24.8**	13.2	0.4	11.2
21-22	**29.0**	14.6	0.3	14.1
22-23	**35.5**	17.0	0.3	18.2
23-24	**42.7**	20.6	0.5	21.6
24-25 (forecast)	**50.8**	**23.4**	**0.5**	**26.8**

4.8 The increase in expenditure levels for school transport is broadly driven by two elements. Firstly, an increase in the number of eligible children. This is particularly relevant for specialist provision expenditure as the number of children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and are eligible for transport has increased by 47% from 1,203 pupils to 1,772 pupils in the period since 2018/19. The second is the operational cost of providing the services to maintain the required network of school transport for all school types. In that regard recent times have seen increases in contract prices due to rising costs in the transport industry. Whilst the situation is starting to slowly improve there are still significant challenges around driver and vehicle availability, increased costs for fuel, parts, insurance and vehicle maintenance which in turn increase contract charges.

4.9 The new policy requirements in the guidance are likely to increase the number of pupils with mobility or medical needs who meet eligibility criteria and potentially lead to increased expenditure.

4.10 In the context of the financial challenges faced by the Council, officers considered it appropriate, given the financial position for school transport and the foreseeable rise in expenditure due to the statutory requirements, for there to be an examination of what changes could possibly be implemented in a new policy that would have the potential to reduce expenditure.

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Original Policy Proposals

4.11 At a meeting with the Corporate Director on 23 January 2024 the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills approved policy proposals for the basis of a consultation exercise and which are set out below.

4.12 Out-of-scope

There are two policy elements that are to be out-of-scope for this consultation:

- Transport provision at Post 16 – there is a separate NYC Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2023-2024 that is supported by stand-alone DfE guidance. The Council will wait for the update to that DfE guidance, which is anticipated in 2024, before considering consultation on any Post 16 policy changes.
- Sale of spare seats via paid travel permits – this is closely linked to Post 16 arrangements as all Post 16 eligibility is on a paid basis. The Council will also wait for the update to the DfE Post 16 guidance before considering consultation on any policy changes regarding spare seats.
    - The exception to this will be the subsidised charging rate for Post 16 and spare seats which is set annually via a report to the Executive Member in the spring of each year.

4.13 Necessary elements

There is a requirement for any new policy to be compliant with the checklist set out in the guidance. A consultation stage draft policy was made available for the start of the consultation period for stakeholders to view. This draft contained a significant re-write of the current policy in order for it to more closely align with the language, style and content of the latest DfE guidance.

4.14 The guidance provides clarity regarding the eligibility of children with SEN, disability and mobility needs. It sets out that a child does not need to:

- have an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan); or
- have travel to school specified in their EHC plan if they have one; or
- attend a special school; or
- live beyond the statutory walking distance.

The guidance goes on to describe that "*local authorities will need to assess eligibility on the grounds of special educational needs, disability or mobility problems on a case-by-case basis*."

This has potentially significant implications for the numbers of children requesting and/or requiring an assessment of eligibility. This assessment is currently only undertaken following the issuing of an EHCP.

4.15 'Discretionary' elements

The current policy includes provisions for transport or eligibility criterion that are above and beyond the requirements of the statutory guidance. In that respect they are considered discretionary, and it is for the Council to decide whether and how they will form part of the new policy. There were six areas considered as part of the consultation:

- Extended eligibility in the Reception Year
- Extended eligibility in Year 3
- 50/50 second address
- Primary phase denominational transport
- Two days of transition, where possible, for pupils with SEND
- The main eligibility criteria – nearest school / catchment school

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Each of these areas were considered separately during the consultation process and details of the policy provision and the responses are in Section 5.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

5.1 The consultation exercise that was undertaken was designed to provide information about the policy proposals and to seek the views of a broad range of stakeholders, including via an online survey. The indicative timetable for the consultation was 5 February 2024 to 20 March 2024. However, the consultation took place from 12 February 2024 to 26 April 2024.

5.2 The consultation, including the survey, was undertaken via the Council's website but was promoted via a number of different mechanisms, including:

- Pre-consultation briefings with headteachers and school leaders
- Email distribution to schools, asking them to pass the link on to families via their own newsletters/ email services
- Email distribution to all registered early years providers in the county
- Email distribution to neighbouring local authorities
- Webinars with primary, secondary and special schools
- Group and individual meetings with schools and councillors when requested
- Links to the online consultation were sent to all parish councils in the county
- 16 public face to face events in venues across the county, and held during the day and in the evenings

The exercise was promoted via the local media and also via the Council's own social media channels.

Response to the Consultation

5.3 A total of 1,299 responses were received to the online survey, of these, 800 consultation responses included detailed written statements in a 'free text' question within the survey. Copies of all of the written statements are attached to this report in Appendix D1. Responses were received from a range of stakeholders, including:

- Over 900 from the parents or carers of pupils in North Yorkshire schools or early years settings
- Over 60 school based responses (approximately 62% from secondary schools and approximately 31% from primary schools)
- Over 20 pupils
- 18 transport providers
- Of the pupils, parents and carers attending or soon to be attending a NY school, approximately 45% of responses came from families with children attending primary schools and approximately 44% from families with children in secondary schools. 6% came from families with pre-school aged children and the remaining responses from children at special schools or post 16 settings
- Seven Parish Councils submitted online responses through the survey.

5.4 In addition to responses to the online survey:

- Representation via letter or email was received from MPs, councillors, parish councils, schools and individual residents throughout the county, copies of which are attached to this report at Appendices D2 to D5

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- A petition 'Stop school bus cuts' was received on 26 April 2024 from the North Yorks Liberal Democrats containing 378 signatories. Although the petition did not meet the threshold to be considered at the Area Constituency Committee

General feedback about the policy documents

5.5 Views were sought in relation to the draft policy document. Feedback showed agreement that the document being clear and easier to understand that the current policy and for the usefulness of the examples in the draft policy appendix. The responses were generally positive with regard to the clarity of the descriptions of the approaches for children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, children with mobility needs and children with medical needs. The question with least support was the clarity of the 'nearest suitable school' definition in which approximately 22% of responses disagreed that the definition was clear.

Feedback in relation to the discretionary elements

5.6 Proposed to be retained - Extended eligibility in the Reception Year

Under the current policy, travel assistance is awarded from the start of reception year to the term following the 5th birthday (compulsory school age). This aids and simplifies the administration of transport services for the whole academic year. This also provides consistency for parents as there will not be two different systems they require during the reception year. The guidance specifically refers to this an example of a discretionary decision when it says:

It is for each local authority to decide whether and how to exercise their discretionary power. Most use it to provide free travel to school for 4-year-olds attending reception classes if they will be eligible for free travel when they reach compulsory school age

Almost 90% of responses agreed or were neutral in relation to this proposal.

It is recommended that the Executive considers the report and recommends this proposal to Full Council to retain this extended eligibility in reception year as part of the future travel policy.

5.7 Proposed to be retained - Extended eligibility in Year 3

Under the current policy there is continuation of the 2 miles statutory walking distance criterion until the end of the academic year (Year 3) instead of ceasing on the child's 8th birthday. This aids and simplifies the administration of transport arrangements for the whole academic year and also provides consistency for parents as there will not be two different systems they require during the academic year.

Almost 90% of responses agreed or were neutral in relation to this proposal.

It is recommended that the Executive considers the report and recommends this proposal to Full Council to retain this extended eligibility in Year 3 as part of the future travel policy.

5.8 Proposed to be removed - 50/50 second address

This current policy provision allows for transport to be provided at full cost recovery to a second address where a child lives with each parent or guardian for 50% of the school term time. Experience has shown this to be an administrative burden without any financial benefit to the Council. This is because officers undertake the initial process, but parents do not then take up the option once they are made aware of the cost. This is unnecessary given DfE guidance states that 'there is no expectation that local authorities should provide travel to and from two separate addresses.'

Almost 70% of responses agreed or were neutral in relation to this proposal. However, there is currently no take up of this policy provision. There was some confusion in the consultation responses whereby a small number of responses stated they were accessing this provision, however this is incorrect, instead all recent enquiries have resulted in parents choosing a paid travel permit or accessing travel via the existing pass and pick up point

despite having a second address. A very small number of responses felt that families where children live at two addresses were being penalised.

It is recommended that the Executive considers the report and recommends this proposal to Full Council to remove transport assistance to second address as part of the future travel policy.

5.9 Proposed to be removed - Primary phase transport assistance to children attending designated religious character schools

This is another area of the Council currently applying its discretionary power to provide travel assistance. This element of the current policy to allow provision to those children at primary phase on low-income grounds was introduced in 2015 when the Council removed the previous discretionary transport assistance to all children attending designated religious character schools. Travel assistance is currently provided to the nearest suitable primary school parents prefer because of their religion or belief, where the distance from home to school is more than two miles but not more than five miles. There is a statutory requirement for eligibility at secondary phase, but not primary.

Over 65% of responses agreed or were neutral in relation to this proposal.

For clarity, the guidance does however make provision for 'extended rights' for low-income families at primary phase to 'exercise choice'. This provision does not solely relate to designated religious character schools it applies to all school and states:

A child is eligible for free travel to school if they are eligible for free school meals, or a parent with whom they live receives maximum Working Tax Credit, and they are aged 8 or over but under 11, attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles from their home.

This statutory low-income provision is part of the current policy and will exist in the new policy. The Council would have to consider any request for transport assistance if it were made by a parent/carer for travel to such a school, and the Council should consider whether it would be appropriate to exercise the discretionary power.

It is recommended that the Executive considers the report and recommends this proposal to Full Council to remove travel assistance to children attending designated religious character primary schools as part of the future travel policy.

5.10 Proposed to be removed - Two days of transition, where possible, for pupils with SEND

This current policy provision is a general approach to travel as part of transition which in practice has been found unfit for purpose and has not been reviewed since 2008.

Over 60% of responses agreed or were neutral in relation to this proposal.

It is recommended that the Executive considers and recommends that this proposal to Full Council include a proposal that travel on transition is assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the EHCP.

5.11 Proposed to be amended - The main eligibility criterion – nearest school / catchment school

The county is covered by a system of catchment areas that are currently used to define both priority for school admissions and eligibility for travel assistance. A catchment area is an area around a single school. The 'catchment school' for admissions purposes is allocated by the local authority from the geographical area linked to home addresses. A catchment school is determined by a home address, and not the primary school that a child attends. It is to be noted that the Council's catchment area map, shows that some home addresses are in two or more catchment areas.

5.12 The current home to school transport policy states that:

Free transport is provided to pupils from the start of reception year to the catchment school or the nearest school to their home address where the walking distance is:

- over 2 miles (until the end of the school year in which a pupil turns 8)
- over 3 miles (if aged 8 and over)

5.13 The statutory requirement confirmed by the DFE guidance 2024 is for transport to be provided to the nearest suitable school. The guidance is as follows:

A suitable school for school travel purposes is a qualifying school that is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. It should also be suitable for the child's sex, for example a girls' school could not be considered the nearest suitable school for a boy.

'Suitable school' does not mean the most suitable school for a child. Schools are able to meet a wide range of needs. The nearest secondary school to the home of a child of secondary school age, for example, will almost always be their nearest suitable school (provided it would be able to admit them).

Qualifying schools are:

- *community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools;*
- *academies (including those which are free schools, university technical colleges, studio schools and special schools);*
- *alternative provision academies;*
- *community or foundation special schools;*
- *non-maintained special schools;*
- *pupil referral units;*
- *maintained nursery schools (where attended by a child of compulsory school age); and*
- *city technology colleges and city colleges for the technology of the arts*

5.14 The main eligibility criterion within the current home to school transport policy is therefore above and beyond the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and statutory guidance, which only requires that transport be provided to the nearest suitable school (with places available).

It is recommended that the Executive considers and recommends to Full Council for a proposal to amend this criterion to match the statutory requirement, meaning that in future eligibility on catchment grounds would no longer apply.

5.15 The application of the current home to school transport policy means that some children can have eligibility for transport to more than one school where their catchment school is not the nearest to their home address and in some places where an address is located in the catchment area for more than one school. However, the proposed policy change would mean that all children would only have eligibility to one school, that being the nearest suitable school to the home address (with places available). The proposal therefore addresses an existing anomaly and creates greater equity of access to travel eligibility across the council area.

5.16 For some addresses in North Yorkshire an out-of-county school can be the nearest so the Council is now, and will continue to be, statutorily obliged to provide transport assistance to schools outside of North Yorkshire. This applies to children living in other council areas who may also have an address closer to a school in North Yorkshire. The council where the pupil is resident is responsible for the travel eligibility and arrangements.

The proposal to match the eligibility criterion to the statutory requirement would bring the Council in line with several comparator and neighbouring local authorities such as

Buckinghamshire, Cheshire and Chester West, Durham, West Berkshire, Lancashire, Leeds, Redcar and Cleveland, Darlington, Wakefield and Bradford.

Whilst other local authorities may also consult on potential changes to their Home to School Travel Policies, the Council has not made any adjustments to the anticipated maximum saving from the proposed change to the North Yorkshire policy. Changes to a neighbouring council's Home to School Travel policy will not directly make changes to admissions – nor to the level of potential saving that North Yorkshire may achieve by the proposed changes to our policy. Paragraph 5.27 provides further information about school funding and how this is calculated.

5.17 The Council would expect to realise a financial benefit over time through this change to the main criterion: transport costs in the future would be less on a like for like basis than if the policy continued as it is. Updated analysis undertaken on a large sample of currently eligible pupils suggests that the annual saving at the end of the seven-year transition period (when the new policy applies to all) on a like for like basis could be approximately £4million. This figure is based on a number of assumptions, and much will depend on the extent to which the proposed change in the travel eligibility influences future parental preference for school admissions, and that is difficult to predict with any certainty.

Estimated daily saving (max)	£22,440
Estimated annual saving (max)	£4,263,445
Estimated pupil numbers (over 7 years)	2,382

The model is an estimate of future pupil eligibility, using recent pupil census information but with the proposed policy being applied. The model has many variables including: parental preference for admissions, school popularity/place availability, decisions made by families with siblings under two policies, Free School Meals eligibility over time, family life eg parent job location/other childcare arrangements. This is why an estimate savings range has been created from 20% to 100%

Implementation Based on academic year	Estimated 20% of potential savings (Cumulative)	Estimated 40% of potential savings (Cumulative)	Estimated 60% of potential savings (Cumulative)	Estimated 80% of potential savings (Cumulative)	Estimated 100% of potential savings (Cumulative)
25-26	£168,160	£336,320	£504,480	£672,640	£840,800
26-27	£318,838	£637,676	£956,515	£1,275,353	£1,594,191
27-28	£478,010	£956,020	£1,434,030	£1,912,040	£2,390,050
28-29	£629,207	£1,258,415	£1,887,622	£2,516,829	£3,146,036
30-31	£805,273	£1,610,545	£2,415,818	£3,221,090	£4,026,363
31-32	£826,796	£1,653,591	£2,480,387	£3,307,182	£4,133,978
32-33	£852,689	£1,705,378	£2,558,067	£3,410,756	£4,263,445

100% savings

This is a modelled estimate showing the value of what could be achieved if all future families follow the same admissions preferences as they do under the current policies; therefore, the policy change means that some parents who choose schools that are not their nearest suitable school take responsibility for their own travel arrangements.

20% savings

This is a modelled estimate showing the value of what could be achieved if all future families switch their admissions preferences and secure a place at their nearest suitable school – even if this is not catchment; therefore, the policy change means that the council will provide travel assistance to a maximum number of eligible pupils.

5.18 It is of note that savings can only be realised if the expected reduction in the number of eligible pupils translates to a reduction in the sizes or number of vehicles required and therefore the costs associated with any given route.

General issues raised in the survey responses and correspondence

5.19 Safety issues – routes, roads, vehicle size and weather conditions

Many respondents, for example from the Upper Swaledale area, objected to the proposed change to the eligibility criterion to being to the nearest school only. They identified that, for example, although Richmond School is the catchment school for the Upper Swaledale area, for many children either the Wensleydale School, Teasdale School (County Durham) or Kirby Stephen Grammar School (Westmorland and Furness) would be their nearest school.

In most cases respondents expressed concern about the suitability of the relevant roads for use by home to school transport, particularly during periods of inclement weather and specifically during winter periods. Many respondents noted that the shortest routes are not suitable for large vehicles and that road conditions, including in relation to gritting are unsuitable.

Response

The number of children provided with home to school transport on any individual route is determined by a range of factors, including:

- Parental preference for schools as part of the admissions process
- Availability at preferred schools; and
- Eligibility under the council's Home to School Travel Policy

Following the allocation of school places and identification of the number of children who are eligible for assistance with transport the Council's Integrated Passenger Transport (IPT) team establish the most appropriate travel arrangements for individual pupils. Where relevant, in determining the most appropriate arrangements IPT, in consultation with transport providers when relevant, take account of a range of issues.

Whilst the Council does not specifically prescribe the exact travel routes that are to be used by a transport provider, the commissioning arrangements that are established take account of the numbers of children to be transported in an area, the means via which those pupils are able to access the transport (including whether additional 'feeder' transport is required), and the characteristics of the road(s) that are likely to be used.

Once a contract is in place with a provider, the terms and conditions of contract require that providers risk assess the routes that they are proposing to use, taking account of the contract's specified vehicle capacity and to ensure that contract providers only utilise vehicles that is suitable for the specific route (including the suitability of the size of vehicle). Further, providers are expected to risk assess prior to undertaking each journey and are clearly instructed not to undertake any journey that they do not consider can be completed safely.

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The IPT team are advised by Highways colleagues about all road closures and roadworks. In turn, this information is passed on to all contract providers who are required to respond accordingly in consultation with IPT. Such a response may include:

- A temporary change in either the route or vehicle(s) utilised; or
- Negotiation with contractors to facilitate access for Home to School Transport vehicles through roadworks

Where circumstances, such as bad weather lead to non-operation of service, the IPT team record non-operation through their incident/complaints procedure. For the period 1 September 2023 and 1 June 2024 they have identified 29 occasions where they were informed that transport did not run due to weather related issues. Furthermore, 16 of these services didn't run at all and the other 13 either ran late, or only completed part of their route. Please note that this includes non-operation on days when schools are open. It may also be the case that transport arrangements are cancelled when there is also a school decision to close due to weather conditions or other unplanned circumstances.

The reasons for the 29 incidents include from snow/ice as well a fallen trees due to a storm and flooding. The 29 cases relate to 18 different operators. For context, there are almost 1300 home to school transport services operating for 190 days per academic year.

As Highway Authority under Highways Act 1980, the Council has a 'duty to maintain highways maintainable at public expense'. Additionally, under the same act 'a highway authority is under a duty to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that safe passage along the highway is not endangered by snow or ice'. In order to fulfil this duty, the Council has a winter maintenance policy that is approved by Members and that sets out the Council's approach.

However, it should be noted that the current prioritisation of winter routes is not derived from service buses, school bus routes or any other *specific* type of road user. Instead, the current winter policy and treated routes (incl. their priority) has evolved around network hierarchy as per the extract from the Council's current policy immediately below.

- Priority 1 includes all principal roads and important B Class, C Class and unclassified routes as approved by Members
- Priority 2 includes the remainder of B Class and appropriate C class and unclassified roads as approved by Members (note: not all remaining C Class roads will be Priority 2)
- Priority 3 the remainder of the network including estate roads

The gritting routes and policy are on the Council's website and are used to help inform highway users so that all road users can make dynamic risk assessments based on prevailing weather conditions.

5.20 Safety issues – unsafe walking routes

Many respondents noted that their property was less than 2 or 3 miles from their nearest suitable school but that that there was no safe walking route to that school, for example, because there is no footpath. Other respondents noted that pupils should not be required to walk to either their school or home, or to or from their home to school transport pick up point in the dark.

Response

The Council will continue to provide assistance with home to school transport for children who live less than the statutory walking distance away from their nearest suitable school if they would not be able to walk to that school in reasonable safety, even if they were

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accompanied by their parent. This is in accordance with the statutory requirements and therefore provision exists in the current and proposed policy.

The assessment of unsafe walking routes is provided for within the guidance and it should be noted that in assessing the distance between a child's home and their nearest suitable school local authorities are required to consider the shortest route (including footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways) along which a child may walk in reasonable safety *accompanied as necessary,* and that they are required to consider the safety of the whole of the route.

Upon parental request, the Council assesses walking routes to schools to determine whether they are able to be walked in reasonable safety, accompanied as necessary. Assessments are undertaken in accordance with guidance that is provided by Road Safety GB, *Assessment of Walked Routes to School.* A copy of the guidance is attached to this report at Appendix E.

The Assessment of Walked Routes to School guidance identifies a number of principles that are to be used, including: -

- **Nearest Available Route**
  The route considered should be the shortest available walking route that a child is available to utilise, accompanied as necessary, and that the assessment should look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic only.

- **Accompaniment of Children**
  For a route to be available it must be a route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school. A route would not fail to qualify as available because of dangers which would arise if the child was unaccompanied.

- **Street Lighting**
  The presence or absence of street lighting on a route is not considered to be a factor.

The statutory guidance notes that there is no expectation that children will walk and that it is for the parent to decide what arrangements would be suitable for their child's journey to and from school.

5.21 Delivery of transport for eligible pupils – value for money including use of taxis

A number of responses suggested that improvements could be made in the commissioning of home to school transport arrangements through the provision of contracts to a greater number of local providers and through commissioning of more suitably sized vehicles. Some respondents cited, for example, concerns about taxi services being provided by out of county providers and other respondents gave examples where buses or taxis had been witnessed having surplus capacity within them.

Response

Specific transport arrangements referred to in the consultation had recently been re-tendered as part of contract review for services in the Harrogate, Ryedale, Craven and Richmondshire areas. The existing contracts were due to end in April 2024 and as such they were reviewed in accordance with Financial Regulations, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's procurement process. The Council operates an open procurement process which is available to all bus and coach companies, community transport organisations as well as registered Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Operators who have registered on the Council's procurement system.

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This open procurement process does not exclude any operators from tendering on contracts based on their location. The Council will select the most economically advantageous tender where the potential contractor meets all the threshold requirements in the quality tender submission document and following an inspection (if they are a new provider). This does mean that some contractors will travel from out of the immediate area to undertake a contract. However, they may have staff and cars in the local area in addition to any at their registered business address.

In relation to drivers, all drivers and passenger assistants who work on North Yorkshire Council home to school or social care contracts must submit a DBS application through the Council before they are permitted to work on a contracted service. The drivers and passenger assistants are issued with a North Yorkshire Council badge to confirm that they have received the required clearance, and these are expected to be worn/be visible at all times when operating on our contracts.

Whilst the Council commissions transport for a prescribed number of pupils, the size of vehicle provided either permanently or in individual circumstances is determined by the provider of the transport service. There are instances, for example, when providers use vehicles that are larger than required for a temporary period if the vehicle that is normally utilised for an individual route is not available on a specific day. Where this is the case, then the provider is obliged to ensure that the vehicle that is utilised on a temporary basis remains suitable for the route.

Equally, following an assessment of the number and location of eligible pupils the Council may commission routes that have multiple pick-up points and, therefore, buses may appear not to be full at the early stages of a route.

With regard to environmental impacts of the procurement process, the following is an extract from the terms and conditions of contract that forms part of the tender documentation and which each provider signs up to at the point of contract exchange.

20. SUSTAINABILITY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

20.1 Throughout the Term of this Agreement the Supplier shall make all reasonable endeavours to reduce any negative impact on the environment caused by the Service and to ensure that, wherever possible, the vehicles supplied for the Service are of a type, and used, so as to minimise environmental pollution.

20.2 The Supplier may be required to provide evidence of actions taken to mitigate climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and on request, information relating to driver training, fuel use and other relevant indicators.

5.22 <u>Delivery of transport for eligible pupils – sustainability / climate / emissions</u>

Many respondents suggested that any reduction in the provision of home to school transport would be likely to result in an increase in road traffic in the event that an increased number of parents elect to transport their children to school themselves and that this would result in an increase in both emissions from transport, and in health and safety risks as cars seek to drop off near to school entrances.

<u>Response</u>

The council recognises its duty to promote the use of sustainable travel on journeys to and from all places of education in North Yorkshire, and the benefits that will arise from increasing the use of it. In addition to contributing to the reduction in emissions and congestion, the Council would wish to promote the health benefits that would also arise for

children and their families from active journeys. This plan will be aligned with the ambitions of the Local Transport Plan 5 (under development) and Local Plan, as well as key aspects of the Climate Change Strategy.

The Council will be publishing a sustainable modes of travel plan annually setting out its vision for sustainable travel to school and will be working with schools and other educational settings to identify how this can be promoted and facilitated. The draft plan for September 2024 will be appended to the Full Council report on 24th July.

5.23 Delivery of transport for eligible pupils – links to public transport requirements

Some respondents suggested that home to school transport could be delivered more efficiently if it were to be better integrated with public transport.

Response

A new way of procuring these services is due to be introduced and council officers are currently working on revised arrangements that should improve flexibility for operators to bid for linked services. In addition, proposals will be brought forward for a pilot scheme in the northern part of the county which could deliver both home to school transport contracts, adult social care transport and passenger transport utilising the same vehicles.

5.24 North Yorkshire schools – admissions, term dates and siblings

Many respondents expressed concern about issues associated with admissions arrangements and / or practical issues arising from attending a school in another local authority area. Some respondents were concerned that they would not be able to apply for a school place at their catchment school if their catchment school was not their nearest suitable school. Respondents were also concerned about day to day issues associated with a child attending a school in a different administrative area, including, for example, schools having different term dates and noted that this would be exacerbated if children in the same household were attending two different schools during the period of the policy implementation.

Response

In terms of admissions to school, parents will continue to be able to preference any school of their choice and the admission arrangements for the school will continue to determine who has priority for a school place. This is not changing. Applications for a school place from families living in the admissions catchment area for a school will still have priority for a school place over those who live outside the admissions catchment area.

The local authority is responsible for setting term dates for its maintained community, voluntary controlled and community special schools and maintained nursery schools; The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) regulations 1991 require all maintained schools to educate their pupils for at least 380 sessions (190 days) in each school year. These regulations do not apply to academies and Free Schools; the academy trust is responsible for deciding the length of the school year. It is hoped that for consistency across North Yorkshire all schools adopt the same recommended term dates. Furthermore, the Council is part of the group of LA's across the area that have agreed a set of guiding principles the aim of which is to achieve more consistent holiday dates across local areas. A consultation on the draft calendar for future academic years is proposed annually with all schools, academies, professional associations and interested parties. After the consultation the calendar is presented to the CYPS Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills for consideration and approval.

5.25 North Yorkshire schools – selective schools

Some respondents, specifically from the Ripon and Skipton areas, expressed concern that pupils would not be entitled to assistance with home to school transport to selective schools, even in the event that pupils had been successful in entrance requirements.

Response

This is correct if the proposed policy is adopted, then children would not be eligible for assistance to selective schools unless they are their nearest suitable school. This would be equitable with all children attending non-selective schools as it is under the existing policy. The selective school would only be a suitable school for transport assistance where a child had achieved the entry requirements.

5.26 North Yorkshire schools – 'nearest school in North Yorkshire'

Many respondents objected to the proposed change to the eligibility criterion to being to the nearest school only because of the potential impact to individual schools, particularly secondary schools.

Many respondents objected to the proposed change to the eligibility criterion to being to the nearest school only because they do not want their child to be only provided with transport to an out of county school (if it is the nearest). There was a view amongst some respondents that children who live in the county should be able to access travel assistance to schools in the county, even if other out of county schools are nearer.

Response

The Education Act Schedule 35B para 6 sets out that a child is eligible if they attend a qualifying school, do not live within walking distance, and no suitable arrangements are made for either attending boarding accommodation nearer the school or enrolling at a nearer qualifying school.

Part 1 of the guidance defines eligibility for home to school transport assistance, noting:

'*A child is eligible if they are of compulsory school age, attend their nearest suitable school and….'.*

The guidance does not reference either administrative boundaries or catchment areas for schools and, therefore, in defining 'nearest' the council is only able to consider distance, irrespective of whether the distance is to an out of county school or a catchment school.

As noted, because the guidance is statutory there would be a continued requirement to continue to provide transport to the nearest school (out of county) even if the Council were to elect to retain the catchment, or define a new eligibility in relation to the nearest North Yorkshire school as part of the policy entitlement. The 'nearest' requirement exists within the current legislation and policy and is the basis upon which the Council currently provides transport for many children to schools outside of the county. An amended proposal, in light of the consultation responses, to add a new discretionary element that would provide eligibility to a nearest North Yorkshire school would create inequity of access to travel eligibility across the council area and therefore is not recommended by officers. This is because families that live in close to the border of another local authority would potentially have additional have additional eligibility compared to those that live elsewhere in the county.

From the sample data, there are approximately 2500 children who are currently eligible for travel assistance due to catchment, but who do not attend their nearest school.

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Approximately 1000 of these children would have an out-of-county school as their nearest and approximately 250 of these would be in the statutory walking distance to that school.

Each year, the October school census information is used for the determination of school budget in the following financial year, for example, the October 2024 census information will be used for the determination of school budgets in 2025/26. Schools are funded for the pupils on roll at the school on the census day – not the pupils that live in the county. Whilst some school rolls will only include pupils who are resident in North Yorkshire, a number of schools – typically located near the county border – will include pupils who are resident in North Yorkshire and some pupils who are resident in other local authority areas. To clarify further, this means that North Yorkshire Council does not fund schools or academies located outside of North Yorkshire to educate North Yorkshire pupils. Funding from DfE is allocated according to census day pupils on roll, not pupils who are resident in the county.

The following tables show the number of children on roll at state funded schools including those who move across an LA boundary in order to attend school.

Total NY resident children attending NY state schools – as at Jan 2023	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Special Schools	Total
Total	**40,704**	**28,602**	**953**	**70,259**

NY resident children attending other local authorities state schools - as at January 2023	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Special Schools	Total
Neighbouring LAs	1,033	1,389	147	2,569
Other LAs	17	5	4	26
Total	**1,051**	**1,396**	**151**	**2,598**
NY children attending any state school Jan 2023	**41,755**	**29,998**	**1,104**	**72,857**

Children attending North Yorkshire state schools from other local authorities - as at January 2023	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Special Schools	Total
Neighbouring LAs	1,227	3,593	93	4,913
Other LAs	96	35	10	141
Total	**1,323**	**3,628**	**103**	**5,054**
All children on roll in NY schools Jan 2023	**42,027**	**32,230**	**1,056**	**75,313**

5.27 North Yorkshire schools – paid for permits

A number of respondents expressed concern that a paid for permit could not be guaranteed from one year to another. This was cited as an issue by parents who stated they would be willing to pay for transport provision arranged by the Council to a school of their choice - specifically a school other than the nearest school.

Response

The Council's current policy is to provide transport for pupils to either their catchment school or their nearest suitable school if they meet the eligibility criteria. The proposed policy would be to provide transport for pupils to their nearest suitable school if they meet the eligibility criteria. The same issue applies within the current and proposed policies - if

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parents choose to send their child to another school where there the eligibility criteria is not met.

Where a child attends a school that is not the nearest or the catchment school for the home address or the school is outside the qualifying distance, parents are responsible for the travel arrangements and costs. In some instances, parents are able to purchase a paid permit for a spare seat on a home to school transport service which is arranged for eligible pupils. The terms and conditions of the permit are that it is not for a guaranteed seat and that it can be withdrawn if the seat is then required for eligible children.

Furthermore, as the arrangements for eligible children can change from year to year, paid for permits are not made available until later in the year once all home to school transport arrangements for eligible pupils are established. Availability of spare seats cannot be confirmed until shortly before the beginning of the academic year when all necessary provision for the new cohorts have been confirmed. Put simply, if an eligible child requires the seat, it is no longer spare and would no longer be available as paid for permit and this may be at short notice for families.

The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR) require buses and coaches designed to carry over twenty-two passengers on local and scheduled routes to incorporate features to enable disabled people to travel on them comfortably and safely, including a wheelchair space and a ramp or lift. The Regulations have applied to vehicles progressively over the past nineteen years, including coaches manufactured from 2005 onwards. From 1st January 2020, the Regulations will apply to any remaining coaches subject to them, which were manufactured before 2005. This means that if transport is not PSVAR compliant the Council cannot sell spare seats. The Department for Transport has allowed Operators exemptions for home to school transport to continue to operate subject to the conditions set out in their guidance in relation to the upgrade of their vehicle fleet by 2026.

It must be noted that the consultation did not consider the paid for seats element as this is closely related to Post 16 travel and the Council is awaiting updated guidance from DfE.

5.28 Compulsory school age and Post 16 travel

Similarly, a number of respondents felt that travel to school sixth forms should be included in the eligibility for travel assistance due to the increased participation age.

Response

Although the participation age for pupils has increased to include 16 and 17 year olds, the compulsory school leaving age has remained the same and there is no legal obligation on a local authority to provide transport for pupils above statutory school age.

The Council does however have a duty to ensure that Post 16 students are not denied access to education because of a lack of transport provision. To facilitate this, the Council offers assistance with transport to the nearest school or college where it is necessary and offers this consistently across the county. The current guidance relating to this matter is clear that if a local authority does offer transport to post 16 students, they can charge.

The charge for Post 16 transport has been in place for many years and is the same for all students who live over three miles from their nearest school or college regardless of the distance. So, a young person who lives 5 miles from the school or college would be charged the same as one who lives 12 miles for example. The average cost (of a place on transport) to the Council are currently much greater than the charge. For 2024/25 this is £792 which is reduced to £396 if the family is eligible for the low-income reduction. With the Post 16 assistance, in the event that there was no seat on a service or other form of transport available that could be used, a mileage allowance would be offered.

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It must be noted that the consultation did not consider post 16 travel arrangements as the Council is awaiting updated guidance from DfE before considering whether further consultation is required.

5.29 Concerns over the accuracy of the data set

A model was created in order to allow officers to consider the possible impacts of the proposed policy revisions on small and rural schools as it was important to avoid any unintended consequences including risk to small school viability, where a small reduction in pupil numbers can be a significant factor. The initial data set which contained indicative school level analysis was presented to the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills so she could consider the indicative school level data confidentiality prior to agreeing the consultation. This was the purpose for creating a school level data set. Since the model had been developed, indicative school level information was offered to school leaders and governors so they could consider the potential impacts of the proposed policy changes on their school setting to support them in fulfilling their management responsibilities.

During the consultation, a small number of schools approached the Council asking officers to check the data modelling as the schools estimates of how many children in their catchment may live closer to another school and therefore may not be eligible to travel in the same way as the current cohort were different to those initially provided by Council officers.

The Council checked and revised the modelling tool. This led to revised indicative school data being provided to individual schools, and the consultation being extended by two weeks, to allow further dialogue with interested schools.

The indicative school level data is not essential for the consultation but was added in order to provide a management indicator for schools in relation to any planning they may wish to do should the policy be implemented from September 2024 (with early impacts expected from Sept 2025).

The model is an estimate of future pupil eligibility, using recent pupil census information but with the proposed policy being applied. The model has many variables including: parental preference for admissions, school popularity/place availability, decisions made by families with siblings under two policies, Free School Meals eligibility over time, family life eg parent job location/other childcare arrangements. This is why an estimate savings range has been created from 20% to 100%.

The estimate shows the possible impacts over a seven-year implementation period (eg possible reduction and possible increase in eligibility over time). Some schools may experience both reductions and increases of pupils with eligibility with an unknown net effect. Any changes to admission numbers in one school has a direct effect on the neighbouring schools and the Council has statutory responsibility to ensure sufficient school places across the whole county. The Council must also ensure efficient use of resources fulfilling its responsibilities.

The Council does not consider this indicative school level data set essential to the consultation process, this information has been treated confidentially as we believe sharing it would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs in the Council's discussions with schools.

5.30 Support for low income families

In response to the consultation, it is proposed that an additional discretionary element should be provided to mitigate the impacts on those with protected characteristics.

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Officers are recommending the provision of an additional discretionary element aimed at secondary age pupils that would enable low income families to exercise meaningful preferences for school admissions with the provision of travel assistance for up to three schools across a greater distance, given the rural context of the county. In effect this places the statutory guidance within the North Yorkshire context. This will address an adverse impact highlighted by the paying due regard process and the Equalities Impact Assessment.

It is recommended that the Executive considers and recommends to Full Council for a proposal to use its discretionary powers to extend the eligibility for travel assistance for secondary age pupils from low income families to attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than **2 miles but not more than 12 miles** (an increase from 6 miles) from their home as part of the future travel policy.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 A number of other actions are being taken to ensure the home to school travel provision is efficient, providing a good service and achieving value for money. In parallel to the policy review, working groups have been established to fully review and improve the data and systems relating to unsafe walking routes, solo transport and the application and re-assessment of eligibility for mainstream and SEND transport.

6.2 Two strands of work have also been established to focus on transport operators, ensuring that key training requirements outlined by DfE are in place, as well as exploring potential opportunities for more efficient procurement processes and market engagement.

6.3 Prior to seeking approval for consultation – and when calculating the potential savings – officers considered a fixed date for immediate and full implementation. However, it was considered more appropriate to avoid the disruption that could be caused to families if there was implementation of all measures with effect from September 2024 and so a phased roll out is being proposed. As a result of the phased implementation, existing eligible children would retain eligibility unless there was a material change in circumstances. This means that the cash saving is reduced by £9million - £10million over same implementation period. The expected savings from the proposal will only be visible from 25-26 (part year) and then for the following five financial years from 26-27 onwards.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The draft policy change consulted upon is expected to contribute to almost £1.5million savings identified within the Council's current Medium Term Financial Strategy ('MTFS') and has potential to offer up to £2.5million further in the next cycle of savings.

7.2 Paragraphs 4.7 – 4.10 and 5.16 – 5.18 above contain more detailed information about the financial information.

7.2 Officers are recommending the provision of an additional discretionary element for secondary age that enables low income families to exercise preferencing to school admissions to up to three schools across a wider area. The cost if approved of this further discretionary provision is approximately £170k per year based on current contract costs. This could allow greater school choice for 96.5% of children, within the sample cohort, receiving Free School Meals who could, had this amendment not been proposed, be affected by the removal of catchment.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council has a statutory duty under Section 508A of Education Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport.

8.2 The Council has a statutory duty under Section 508B of the 1996 Act to provide, free of charge, suitable home to school travel arrangements to secure the attendance at school or other relevant educational establishment of eligible children.

8.3 The Council has a statutory duty under Section 509AD to have regard to amongst other things when exercising any of their travel functions to any wish for the child to be educated in a school designated religious character.

8.4 The Council has a discretionary power under Section 509A to provide assistance to a child receiving education at an Early Years setting, where without the assistance their attendance would be prevented.

8.5 Schedule 35B of the 1996 Act defines 'eligible children'. This includes a definition of compulsory school aged pupils (term after 5th birthday to end of June in year 11) and qualifying school which states categories of school and of those schools it is the nearer or nearest to the child's home. The proposed policy does not alter the statutory duties and the policy remains compliant with this legislation.

8.6 Whilst the Education & Skills Act 2008 raised the age of participation in education or training, the duties under the 1996 Act were not amended to include 16 and 17 year olds.

8.7 The Council has a discretionary power to make travel arrangements for non-eligible children where they consider it necessary under the 1996 Act. Even if the Council determines it is not necessary to provide travel assistance to non-eligible children, it may have further discretionary powers under Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970.

8.8 The Council accepts that the 1996 Act has not been amended in recent years, and the legislation therefore remains the same. The Council has been providing transport arrangements for significant period of time above and beyond the statutory duties. The Department for Education has updated the statutory guidance and as a result that the Council must have regard to the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age', published by the Department for Education, January 2024, the Council has to consult upon amendments to its policy in light of this updated guidance.

8.9 The Council carried out a consultation in accordance with the statutory duties, and guidance. This consultation was carried out at a time when the proposals were in development stage, the consultation was due to commence on 5 February to 20 March, however this was delayed, and the consultation was due to run from 19 February until 12 April, taking into account the Easter holidays. The consultation period was extended for a further period of two weeks to 26 April to allow for revised data to be provided to schools who had requested school level data, and further consultation on an individual school or Multi-Academy Trust basis. The Council is of the view that the consultation has complied with the statutory and common law requirements for consultation.

8.10 The Council must comply with the Equalities Act 2010 public sector equality duty whereby the Council and Councillors must have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between parents who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it

8.11 The Chair of the Council has pursuant to Overview and Scrutiny Procedure 16 (quote below) agreed that the decision taken being recommended by the Executive will be exempt from

call-in. This decision was due to be heard on 11 June 2024, however, was delayed as a result of the General Election and purdah period. As the Council must publish the Home to School transport policy by 31 July 2024, (to ensure that it is in place before the admission round opens on 12 September) this matter must be put to Full Council on 24 July 2024.
"*The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Executive is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interest."*

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Council has in the development of this policy paid due regard to those with protected characteristics. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix F and has been reviewed and updated following the consultation responses.

9.2 The paying due regard prior to the consultation highlighted that there may be some adverse impacts to those with protected characteristics of age. However, the consultation showed that there are multiple impacts for more pupils as a result of wider range of protected characteristics such as low income, and rurality especially those with combined protected characteristics.

9.3 Officers are recommending the provision of an additional discretionary element for secondary age that enables low income families living in rural areas to exercise preferencing to school admissions to up to three schools across a wider area.

9.4 This is an additional extension to the extended rights currently within the policy and would mean that: A child is eligible for free travel to school if they are eligible for free school meals or a parent with whom they live receives maximum Working Tax Credit and they are aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 12 miles from their home, rather than the 6 miles within the legislation and Statutory Guidance.

9.5 From the sample cohort officers are of the view that this amendment to the proposed policy would mitigate some of the potential adverse impacts to those pupils whose family are low income.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Council has in the development of this policy development has paid consideration to climate change implications where known. A Climate Change Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix G and has been reviewed and updated following the consultation responses.

10.2 Current annual expenditure on home to school transport amounts to £51 million annually arising from the provision of transport to eligible pupils. The requirements for home to school transport vary according to the needs of pupil cohorts but involve the use of a broad range of vehicles by size and type. As a consequence, there is some impact upon climate change arising from vehicle emissions and other impacts.

10.3 The implementation of revised proposals, aligned with statutory guidance issued by the DfE would have the effect of limiting some criteria for eligibility, and thus reducing the total amount of transport provided and, as a consequence, have a positive impact upon climate change.

10.4 In addition to the proposed implementation of policy proposals it is also proposed that the Council will develop and implement a Sustainable Travel Plan for all home to school travel (i.e. including that undertaken by pupils not eligible for assistance) and thus have a greater impact upon climate change.

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11.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS - ADMISSIONS

11.1 As stated earlier, the county is covered by a system of catchment areas that are currently used to define both priority for school admissions and eligibility for travel assistance. Virtually all the catchment areas have remained the same for many years, and in most cases since 1974 or much earlier.

11.2 Adopting the proposed home to school travel policy to exclude catchment eligibility as part of the main criterion would essentially mean that in future a child may have admissions priority for a school on catchment grounds but not be eligible for transport to that school unless it were also the nearest school to the home address (with places available).

11.3 The Council is the admissions authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. There is no proposal to vary the catchment area criterion within the North Yorkshire admissions policy that applies to those schools.

11.4 All of the existing 141 mainstream academies that had a North Yorkshire catchment area (as a former LA maintained school) have kept it unchanged within their admissions arrangements since academy conversion. These academies are their own admission authority responsible for determining their own arrangements.

11.5 There are some risks attached to the potential change of eligibility criterion. Amongst them is recognition that when a longstanding policy is changed it can subsequently take time to be widely understood.

- The phased implementation proposed for the policy change means that the full financial impact of the change won't be seen until seven years from the date of implementation.
- The phased implementation proposed for the policy change also means that within families with more than one child could have different eligibility.
- There could be a disproportionate impact on rural communities as the prevalence of school transport services to rural schools is higher given that home to school travel distances are inherently longer.
- There is a risk around a potential lack of understanding of the revised eligibility criterion and what it means for parents and children.
- The proposed policy change has the potential to change the pattern of admissions at any schools where transport provision is a factor for parent preferencing of school admission application. However, it is widely understood that other factors also affect admissions patterns, for example popularity and Ofsted outcomes of neighbouring schools.

11.6 The Council will need to have effective systems and processes in place to communicate the revised policy position very clearly to future parents to minimise any uncertainty around eligibility under the travel policy. Importantly this must include very clear communication that the North Yorkshire Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools is *not* affected by this transport policy change.

12.0 ICT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 To support the adoption and implementation of the new Home to School Travel Policy a distance calculator tool is being built to ensure those who apply for school places can do so fully aware of the implication of their admissions preferences on eligibility for home to school travel assistance. In addition, a new home to school travel assistance application process and annual re-assessment tool are being created to ensure that parents/carers are

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required to make a conscious decision to access transport and are required to confirm their continuing requirement and eligibility on an annual basis.

13.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 The Council has reviewed its existing Home to School transport policy within the context of the revised Statutory Guidance issued in June 2023 and amended in January 2024 and has identified that amendments are required in order to make it compliant with the Statutory Guidance.

13.2 The Council is under statutory duty to adopt and publish the Home to School travel policy by 31 July 2024.

13.2 The Council has statutory duties to balance its budget, and deliver statutory services within the resources it has available. The Council has a duty to fully consider how it can continue to deliver statutory services and ensure that the services are sustainable into the future.

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive considers the report and proposes to adopt a new home to school travel policy including consideration of each of the following recommendations to Full Council:

i) to retain this extended eligibility in reception year as part of the future travel policy.

ii) to retain this extended eligibility in Year 3 as part of the future travel policy.

iii) to remove transport assistance to second address as part of the future travel policy.

iv) to remove travel assistance to children attending designated religious character primary schools as part of the future travel policy.

v) a proposal that travel on transition is assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the EHCP as part of the future policy.

vi) amend the criterion to match the statutory requirement, meaning that in future eligibility on catchment grounds would no longer apply as part of the future travel policy.

vii) use its discretionary powers to extend the eligibility for travel assistance for secondary age pupils from low income families to attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than **2 miles but not more than 12 miles** (an increase from 6 miles) from their home as part of the future travel policy.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A	Existing Home to School Transport Policy
Appendix B	Travel to school for children of compulsory school age - statutory guidance for local authorities (January 2024)
Appendix C	Draft Proposed Home to School Travel policy (revised post consultation)
Appendix D1	Copies of all free text responses received via the online consultation
Appendix D2	MP Enquiries
Appendix D3	Parish Council Enquiries
Appendix D4	Councillor Enquiries
Appendix D5	Other enquiries
Appendix E	Assessment of Walked Routes to Schools Road Safety GB. April 2011

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Appendix F Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix G Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Report to the CYPS Executive members and Corporate Director Meeting
23 January 2024 HTS Transport report.pdf (northyorks.gov.uk)

Consultation - Previous consultations | North Yorkshire Council

DfE Travel to school for children of compulsory school age - Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2024 Travel to school for children of compulsory school age (publishing.service.gov.uk)

DfE Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training - Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2019 Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Current Home to School Travel information School transport for reception to year 11 children | North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Council's gritting routes Road gritting | North Yorkshire Council and policy Winter maintenance policy | North Yorkshire Council

Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service
County Hall
Northallerton
8 July 2024

Report Author – Amanda Newbold, AD Education and Skills
Presenter of Report – Amanda Newbold, AD Education and Skills

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

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

HOME TO SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TRANSPORT POLICY

JULY 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 North Yorkshire is England's largest County, stretching from the North Sea Coast to within 12 miles of Morecambe Bay and from the South of the M62 to the edge of Teesside. It is sparsely populated with some 600,000 people across 3,300 square miles; with 40 per cent of the area being within either the North Yorkshire Moors or the Yorkshire Dales National Parks and over half the population living in areas classed as "sparse" or "super sparse". Around 20% of the population live in the two major urban centres – Harrogate and Scarborough.

1.2 There are approximately 129,000 children and young people aged 0-19 in the county, of those 80,000 are of school age, including 5,300 in post-16 education. There are 43 Secondary Schools, 304 Primary Schools and 10 Special Schools, North Yorkshire County Council transports approximately 20,000 pupils per day to school or college.

1.3 The Local Authority (LA) has a responsibility to make suitable travel arrangements where necessary to allow children access to schools. This includes meeting the following objectives of ensuring that children can:

- Succeed in good schools and other settings
- Lead Healthy lifestyles and have good health care
- Be Kept safe and protected from harm
- Positive choices for personal growth
- Be economically secure

1.4 North Yorkshire County Council spends in excess of £24 million per year, on home to school transport. The aim is to provide a good quality, safe service, whilst balancing costs to ensure that the service provided is best value for money.

1.5 This policy is a general policy, which supports the Council's responsibility to provide access to education for all pupils, and covers eligibility for home to school transport for all children. Each request for transport is considered on an individual basis and individual circumstances will be taken into account when deciding if children are entitled to free home to school transport.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 **Local Authority**

The Local Authority is responsible for making suitable arrangements for all eligible children to travel to school in reasonable safety and comfort so that they arrive there without stress or difficulty, and can benefit from their education. This is done by making sure that pupils do not have unnecessarily long journey times (taking into account the size of the county), and that they are not expected to walk an unreasonably long distance to catch the bus. Drivers and passenger assistants are properly trained and have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. The vehicles used meet the necessary safety standards and seatbelts are provided wherever possible.

2.2 **Parent/Guardian**

It is a parent or guardian's responsibility to make sure that their child attends school. It is important that parents provide the LA with information that is requested about their children to help decide whether they are eligible for free home to school transport or whether assistance can be given in any other way.

Following the consultation (spring 2019), it has been agreed that parents will be required to request travel assistance through an application process, details of this process is available at www.northyorks.gov.uk

Parents should also encourage their children to wear a seatbelt (where they are fitted) and behave well on any the home to school transport provided.

If a child is sent home from school due to illness or because of behaviour problems it will be the parent's responsibility to ensure that they are collected from school.

Where parents live within the minimum qualifying distance, it is normally their responsibility to decide how their child will travel to school and for making the necessary arrangements and associated costs. This may be in any way that they feel is appropriate for their child for example: walking, cycling or using a local bus service. Transport may be provided for pupils living under the qualifying distance in some circumstances. This will include:

- where the LA considers that the walked route is not safe for children to walk, accompanied as necessary. [1]
- where the LA agrees that it is not possible* for children to be accompanied and circumstances (of children's age and the route) mean that transport should be provided.

*"Not possible" does not mean not convenient to parents (i.e. due to work commitments, or arrangements to take children to different schools)

3.0 DEFINITION OF HOME TO SCHOOL

The term 'normal school' in this policy means the school designated by the local authority covering the geographical area within which the 'home' address falls. This may also be referred to as 'appropriate' or 'catchment' school.

[1] Decisions about the safety of walked routes follow the guidelines on the Assessment of Walked Routes to School, published by Road Safety GB in June 2011. These Guidelines assume that the child is accompanied as necessary by a parent, career or other responsible person.

The policy applies to “home to school” travel arrangements at the start of the day, and “school to home” travel arrangements at the end of the school day and does not include nursery, pre-school or after-school clubs.

Where children are attending school part time as part of an agreed package of education, transport will be provided at the start and end of the time attended, this may be a morning journey and return home at lunchtime or a lunchtime journey and return home at the end of the school day.

Travel between educational institutions during the school day is not covered by this policy.

The term ‘Home’ in this policy means the permanent address where the child lives for most of the time, and is the address used on the school admissions application.

Where children have more than one ‘home’ (i.e. parents or guardians who live separately) consideration will only be given to a child who lives with each parent or guardian for fifty percent of the school term time, this does not include weekends or school holidays and qualifies for home to school transport from the address used to obtain a school place. From September 2019 a full cost recovery will be required for any travel assistance to the second address.

Transport to alternative addresses, for instance to take into account child care arrangements for parents will not be provided.

Transport will normally be provided from a suitable pick-up point near to home.

4.0 PUPILS ATTENDING SCHOOL UP TO AGE 16

Local authorities in accordance with DfE statutory guidance 2014, have a duty to provide transport and support to help children and young people travel to and from schools or colleges.

The following paragraphs outline these duties in more detail and outlines further discretionary elements of the policy.

4.1 PUPILS AGED BETWEEN 5 AND 11 WHO ATTEND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children are of compulsory school age when they reach the age of five and must start school in the term following their fifth birthday. In practice, many children start before this age.

From September 2019, free transport will be provided to pupils from the start of reception year to the catchment school or the nearest school to their home address where the walking distance is

- over 2 miles (until the end of the school year in which a pupil turns 8)
- over 3 miles (if aged 8 and over)

This will also apply to pupils starting school and to pupils whose circumstances change e.g. move address or change schools during the school year.

If children receive free school meals or parents receive the maximum level of Working Tax Credit, transport will be provided (subject to an annual assessment), for primary aged pupils in Reception to Year 6 who go to:

- the nearest school or the school the LA has said is the catchment school for their home address that is over 2 miles or

- to the nearest suitable school parents prefer because of their religion or belief, where the distance from home to school is more than two miles but not more than 5 miles.

4.2 PUPILS AGED BETWEEN AGED 11 AND 16 WHO ATTEND SECONDARY SCHOOL

Free transport will be provided for secondary school pupils in years 7 to 11 who go to:

- the nearest school or the school the LA has said is the catchment school for their home address that is over 3 miles

If children receive free school meals or parents receive the maximum level of Working Tax Credit, transport will be provided for Secondary school pupils in years 7 to 11 who go to:

- one of their three nearest qualifying[2] schools, if that school is more than two but less than six miles from the home address; or

- the nearest suitable school preferenced because of parents' religion or belief, where that school is more than two but less than 15 miles from home.

If children go to a school that is on split sites, the measurement of the walking distance will be taken from home to the site the children normally attend.

4.3 TRANSPORT TO A SCHOOL ON THE GROUNDS OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

Since September 2012 pupils starting a 'denominational' school, either secondary or primary, have not been entitled to assistance with home to school transport.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school. Where possible paid permits will be available to purchase for surplus seats on services that are under contract to the County Council.

This means that parents will be responsible for transport arrangements and costs to denominational schools.

It is important that you do not rely on existing travel arrangements when deciding which school you wish your child to attend.

Exceptions

The exceptions are:

[2] Qualifying schools are: Community; foundation; voluntary aided or controlled schools, community or foundation special schools; non-maintained special schools; pupil referral units; city technology colleges(CTC); city colleges for the technology of the arts (CCTA) or Academies (source *Home to school travel and transport guidance para 104* published by DCFS 2007)

- If the denominational school is nearer to the home address than the catchment school (s) and the distance from home to school is over the walking distance of 3 miles

Also where children receive free school meals, or whose parents receive the maximum level of working tax credit we will provide assistance with transport to the nearest suitable school parents' preference because of their religion or belief:

- For secondary aged pupils where the distance from home to school is more than two miles but not more than 15 miles,
- For primary aged pupils where the distance from home to school is more than two miles but not more than 5 miles.

This will be assessed on an annual basis and may be withdrawn if parents' benefits change.

Denominational school refers to schools where pupils are admitted on the grounds of their parents' faith as part of the published admissions criteria. This will not normally apply to a Voluntary Controlled School as pupils are not admitted to schools on these grounds.

Some 'denominational' primary schools are also the 'normal' school for the home address. In cases where pupils are attending the school as it is their normal or community school they will remain entitled to free transport if they live more than two miles from the school .

We check with the school to see if a child has been admitted on denominational grounds.

4.4 TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE IF THE LOCAL SCHOOL IS FULL.

If the catchment or nearest school is full, transport will be provided to the nearest alternative school, if it is more than the statutory walking distance from the child's home.

4.5 TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR PUPILS WHO DO NOT QUALIFY FOR FREE TRANSPORT

Children attending Schools on Parental Preference

If children attend a school that is not the nearest or normal school parents are responsible for the travel arrangements and costs.

If children are not entitled to free transport parents may be able to purchase a permit which entitles their children to occupy spare places on 'education transport service' vehicles at a fixed charge. It may be necessary to end the arrangement at short notice, if there is an increase in the number of entitled pupils using these vehicles and as a result of this spare places are no longer available. Details regarding paid permits are highlighted in 4.7

4.6 EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The home to school transport policy will normally apply as outlined above, however, following a parental request for consideration of exceptional circumstances, each case is considered on its own merits. Some examples of exceptional circumstances are given below:

Change of Home

In circumstances where children or young people face disruption because of their need to be accommodated by the local authority away from the family home.

Looked After Children

Children placed in the care of North Yorkshire will be considered for assistance with transport to avoid disruption to their education or home life. This will normally be for a fixed period and for travel involving a reasonable distance.

Fair Access

There may be times when children will need to be educated out of school, or may need to move to an alternative school because of exceptional circumstances, due to attendance and behaviour issues or because of medical needs.

In most cases the admissions and transport needs of these pupils will be considered through the usual procedures but in some cases appropriate education and transport provision will be determined through the In-year fair access process.

Free transport may be provided, in exceptional circumstances, where children live under the statutory walking distances from school, Pupil Referral Service or out of school provision to ensure attendance.

Work experience placements

Transport to and from work experience placements is the responsibility of parents or the school. In the case of post 16 pupils this may be organised by the school or college. There may be some exceptions for pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan who attend a residential school who need to attend work experience placements nearer to home.

Transport to an alternative school due to social or domestic circumstances

If there are exceptional social or domestic reasons why children cannot attend their appropriate school then assistance with transport may be given. Written evidence from an appropriate professional or agency will be required to assist with decision making.

Transport assistance following a school closure or reorganisation

This will be determined by the Council, following consultation, at the time that closure notices are determined and may vary depending upon circumstances.

4.7 PAID TRAVEL PERMITS FOR DISCRETIONARY TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

If children are not entitled to free transport parents can purchase a permit which entitles their children to occupy spare places on ‘education transport service’ vehicles at a fixed charge. It may be necessary to end the arrangement with 7 days’ notice, if there is an increase in the number of entitled pupils using these vehicles or if there are no longer any entitled pupils travelling on the transport and it is solely used by paid travel permits holders.

Allocation of spare places

In cases where the LA is unable to meet the demand for purchased travel permits (PTP) on a particular service then the following criteria will be applied:

- Pupils who have SEN
- Pupils who are at a critical stage of their education, with priority to pupils who are in their GCSE years
- Pupils who have siblings currently travelling on the service
- Pupils who are renewing, like for like, eg. a PTP was purchased during the previous academic year on the same service
- Any exceptional circumstances, which may be identified through discussions with the pupils school
- Pupils who are attending their catchment school and who live the furthest from that school (under the statutory walking distance)

Where none of the above can be used to prioritise applications the date that the application was received will be taken into consideration

5.0 DISTANCE MEASUREMENTS

5.1 MINIMUM QUALIFYING DISTANCE

When deciding on eligibility for assistance with transport, the measurement from home to school will be taken from the boundary of the home to the nearest entrance gate (not always the main entrance) to the school following the nearest available walked route, as defined by NYCC GIS system, which can mean a suitable footpaths and or bridleways. Where a private road or farm track exists this is included in the measurement.

This means that in some cases pupils living in the same street or even in adjoining properties may not all be eligible for free home to school transport.

5.2 MEASUREMENT OF DISTANCE FOR SECONDARY AGED PUPILS IN RECEIPT OF FREE SCHOOL MEALS

When deciding on eligibility for transport for children in receipt of free school meals or if their parents receive their maximum level of working tax credit, routes of two miles or less will be measured as a walked route, using footpaths and or bridleways. Routes over two miles will be measured along road routes.

6.0 ADDITIONAL PROVISION FOR PUPILS UP TO AGE 16 WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR WHO NEED SPECIAL TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Transport may be provided for children who are unable to walk to school because of a disability or mobility problem, including temporary medical conditions. This will normally be agreed following the issue of an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) or on production of relevant medical evidence.

6.2 **Pupil attending residential special schools**

Where children attend a residential special school, free transport, or a transport allowance, will be provided at mid and full term holidays or as determined by the child's EHCP.

6.3 **Pupils on 52 week residential placements**

Where children attend a residential special school on a 52 week placement free home to school transport is not given. If assistance with transport is required the social care worker allocated to the family should be contacted.

6.4 **Hospital visits from residential schools**

Where children attend a special residential school free transport from school to home will be provided to allow them to keep necessary hospital appointments, where a supporting appointment card is provided. Parents are encouraged, wherever possible, to make such arrangements outside of term time.

6.5 **Induction visits to schools/colleges (for pupils attending special schools)**

Transport will be provided for children for 2 induction visits where they have been allocated a place at that school or college, where possible.

Parents are responsible for arranging and paying for visits to schools or colleges to see whether they would like children to go to that particular school.

6.6 **Dual placements (for pupils attending special schools)**

If children are attending a special school they may also attend a mainstream school for part of their school week. Transport will be provided if they live more than 2 miles for primary pupils and 3 miles for secondary pupils from that school. Shorter distances may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

6.7 **Annual Reviews (for children attending special schools)**

It will normally be a parent's responsibility to arrange transport so that they can attend.

6.8 **Parents/guardian with a disability**

If a parent is unable to accompany their child, as necessary, along a walked route due to their own disability free transport may be provided. Supporting medical evidence will be required.

6.9 **Transport to and from respite care or after school clubs**

This is not covered by the home to school transport policy. If a parent requests transport assistance to or from respite care or after school clubs it may possible to make arrangements. Children's Social Care should be contacted for assistance.

7.0 PUPILS AND STUDENTS AGED 16-19 AND POST 19 EHCP STUDENTS - POLICY

The Authority has a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy for Post 16 students on its website, and upload the link to GOV.UK by 31st May. The will include arrangements and provision of transport for pupils aged 16 – 19 and for Post 19 students with an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP.)

Please refer to the policy statement that can be found here:
https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/transport-sixth-form-or-college

8.0 TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 **TYPE OF TRANSPORT/PAYMENT OF PARENTAL TRANSPORT ALLOWANCES**

Integrated Passenger Transport will take into account any special requirements and will provide the most appropriate and cost effective means of transport.

Where possible a pass will be issued for an existing service. From September 2019 the authority will issue the first pass free of charge, all replacement passes, will be subject to a fixed replacement fee.

A voluntary parental transport allowance may be offered to parents where this is the most cost effective option and is usually offered where there is no other contracted transport running.

The Authority will promote a parental transport allowance (PTA) for SEND pupils in sole occupancy provision with a realistic enhancement to meet the young person(s) transport needs.

8.2 **JOURNEY TO WAITING POINT**

Children will be expected to make their own way to a pick-up point. This should normally involve a walk of no more than a mile. Free transport from home to the pick-up point will only be given where the route is unsafe for children to walk, accompanied as necessary. [3]

8.3 **WAITING POINTS**

The waiting point for transport to school or college will generally be a public stop or station or, in the case of hired transport, a named point which is suitably safe, both for children to wait and vehicles to stop. Integrated Passenger Transport will carry out risk assessments on pick up and set down points, where there are any concerns.

8.4 **CONNECTING SERVICES**

If children attend primary school and the transport provided needs to meet a connecting service, the driver of the first vehicle will wait with children until the connecting vehicle arrives. If children attend a secondary school this will not normally be necessary. The waiting time between connections will normally be no longer than 10 minutes. The meeting point will,

[3] Decisions about the safety of walked routes follow the guidelines on the Assessment of Walked Routes to School, published by Road Safety GB in June 2011. These Guidelines assume that the child is accompanied as necessary by a normal caring parent or other responsible person..

where possible, be near a public telephone or building which should have a telephone (e.g. garage, Post Office).

8.5 **MAXIMUM JOURNEY TIMES**

Transport will be arranged so that children will not normally spend more than 1 hour 15 minutes travelling to a secondary school or 45 minutes to a primary school. Journey times might need to be longer than this in some more rural areas and where road or weather conditions mean that these times are not practical.

Journeys will, wherever possible, be by the most direct route but sometimes journey times will need to be increased to collect other children. If children's journeys are 20 minutes or less the journey time may be increased by up to 75% or a maximum of 15 minutes to collect more pupils. If it is 20 minutes or more children's journeys will not normally be increased by more than 20 minutes.

The exception to this will be during local area reviews or special school reviews, in which all transport arrangements are subject to change. This may result in an increase or decrease of journey times beyond that described above.

8.6 **ARRIVAL AT AND DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL**

School transport should arrive at school between 5 and 15 minutes before the official opening time. The picking up/setting down point for children will usually be at the school, especially for primary age pupils. Secondary school pupils and college students using commercial bus or rail services may need to walk for no more than 10 minutes from the bus stop or rail station to the school or college.

Where possible, vehicles should arrive at school no more than 10 minutes before the end of the school day and leave school between 10 and 15 minutes after the official closing time.

8.7 **BEHAVIOUR ON HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

The main responsibility for ensuring good behaviour on home to school transport lies with children themselves. It also lies with parents or guardians, schools, bus contractors/operators and the Local Authority jointly. Integrated Passenger Transport will work closely with schools and contractors to ensure that poor behaviour on transport is dealt with quickly.

If there are complaints that involve pupils, these will normally be investigated through the school. If pupils are found to have behaved in an unacceptable way, then any of the normal range of sanctions used by the school may be applied. This could include exclusion from school. In addition, the following may also be applied:

- Children may be asked to sit at the front of the vehicle for a set period of time.
- Children may be suspended from all school transport services for a period of time. In the case of extreme and persistent behaviour they may be banned permanently from the transport and parents will be expected to ensure that their child attends school.
- The Prevention Service may be asked to visit parents to discuss the problem.
- The police may be asked to investigate and take action as appropriate.

- Parents are expected to meet the cost of repairing any damage caused by their children.

8.8 **EARLY DEPARTURES/LATE ARRIVALS FROM SCHOOL**

Bad weather - Integrated Passenger Transport will make suitable arrangements to provide transport home from school, if necessary outside of the terms of the existing contract. Contractors will work with the schools in the local area to ensure that severe weather conditions are taken into account when transporting pupils to and from school.

First/last day of term or otherwise - Any additional cost of transport owing to a temporary change in school hours set up by the school is the responsibility of the school though it is expected Integrated Passenger Transport will, where possible, co-operate in making transport arrangements.

8.9 **CHANGE OF SCHOOL HOURS**

If a school or academy wants to change its school hours it should follow best practice and carry out a consultation at least three months before the planned change, including the Local Authority in the consultation. Good practice suggests that schools can only change the times of the school day at the start of the academic year, i.e. in September.

Where a school or academy alters it hours, unless agreed otherwise by the Local Authority during the required consultation, the school will be expected to meet any additional transport costs.

8.10 **CO-ORDINATION OF SCHOOL TRAINING DAYS**

There are three common training days agreed across the Authority, which can be found on the NYCC website with the agreed school term and holiday dates for each academic year. Schools with shared transport are encouraged to co-ordinate their remaining two training days to ensure the most efficient use of the transport network and to minimise costs.

8.11 **VEHICLE CAPACITY**

The LA will make sure that children have their own seat (i.e. that there is one seat per child on each vehicle used).

8.12 **TAXIS AND PRIVATE CARS (Non-Public Service Vehicles**}

When children are transported using a taxi or private-hire vehicle, that is not a public service vehicle, it must have one seat belt, and where appropriate child car seat or booster seat, for each person carried and be licensed by the relevant District Council.

8.13 **VETTING**

All drivers and passenger assistants will be ‘vetted’ which means that they have undergone an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and must wear their County Council identification pass.

8.14 PASSENGER ASSISTANTS

Passenger assistants will be provided in accordance with assessed needs. This will usually only be where children have special transport requirements and need assistance to access the vehicle, or require medical intervention or, in the case of severe behavioural issues, need close supervision.

8.15 INFORMATION AND TRAINING FOR PASSENGER ASSISTANTS AND DRIVERS

Integrated Passenger Transport will provide contractors with general information and advice to make sure that children's journey are comfortable and safe.

The driver or passenger assistant will need to be provided with information about children if they have exceptional medical or behavioural problems so they can appropriately respond to situations that may arise.

When a contract is awarded to provide home to school transport it is made clear that passenger assistants and drivers may need to attend up to two information and training sessions per year. This will normally be general training but can be specifically related to the special needs of children.

When a passenger assistant is required to provide specialist support or medical intervention they will normally be employed by the authority and will be given specific training relevant to the needs of the child.

8.16 COVER FOR PASSENGER ASSISTANTS AND DRIVERS

Contractors are asked to try and provide the same driver or group of drivers on contracts, where possible. In some cases the contract may state that the same driver should always be used. Wherever possible the same passenger assistant is also available for the duration of that contract. The passenger assistant should be changed only in exceptional circumstances, for example illness.

8.17 WHEELCHAIR FIXING

If children travel in a wheelchair this must be to ISO 7176-19;2008 standards and properly fixed in the vehicle in accordance with current Department of Transport guidelines. Integrated Passenger Transport will carry out a risk assessment before setting up transport to make sure that this is done properly and that children are transported safely. For details regarding wheelchair suitability please contact your Occupational Therapist.

8.18 COMPLAINTS

The Local Authority wants to maintain high standards of reliability in transport it provides for pupils. Integrated Passenger Transport makes sure that complaints by parents and schools are investigated and satisfactorily resolved. Account may be taken of any previous unsatisfactory operation in awarding contracts. A contract will not usually be made with a contractor who has had any other contract terminated for unsatisfactory operation in the 6 months prior to the closing date for tenders or prior to a contract being awarded.

8.19 LOCAL AREA REVIEWS/SPECIAL SCHOOL REVIEWS

Integrated Passenger Transport will:

- advise the Director of Children and Young People's Service, the schools and parents, at the earliest opportunity that there will be a review of transport provision in the area.

- at an early stage in the process, circulate to schools and parents information about the review with an invitation to Governing Bodies and parents to submit (written) observations on the review proposals;

- in the event of unresolved objections to the proposals from schools or parents, call a public meeting to air the issues involved to which Headteachers, Governors, Local Members and parents should be invited;

- report to the Executive Members jointly with the Director of Children and Young People's Service, making Members aware of any remaining objections and of any additional costs, policy and wider budgetary implications there would be in meeting them.

9.0 CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS

In addition to joint reports to the Executive Members for Children and Young People's Service relating to area reviews, joint annual monitoring reports will be submitted.

These will include:

- policy issues arising out of legislation or operational/case law or budgetary considerations;

- the current costs of the service and target savings where appropriate;

- policy development proposals where appropriate and related budgetary arrangements;

- the timetable for any reviews to be undertaken in the forthcoming year and appropriate detail about their scope.

10.0 APPEALS PROCEDURES

A transport appeal can only be made on the following grounds;

- Eligibility
- Transport arrangements made
- Distance measurement of the walked route
- Safety of the walked route

There is a two stage appeal process when a parent/carer wishes to challenge a decision in relation to statutory transport:

Stage 1:

A request for a stage 1 review must be made in writing within 20 working days of the initial decision letter. The request:

- Should clearly state the reasons for the challenge and include any new documentary evidence.
- Will be reviewed by two senior officers, the original decision may be upheld, overturned or alternative solutions suggested.
- Where transport assistance is agreed the Authority will make the necessary transport arrangements.
- Where transport is not agreed, parent/carer will be told in writing and parents who are not satisfied with that decision will be informed of the next and final stage of the appeal process.

Stage 2

A stage 2 appeal must be made in writing by completion of an appeal form within 20 working days of receipt of the stage 1 response:

- The appeals form must clearly state the reasons why parent/carers challenge the stage 1 response and provide any new documentary evidence.
- Stage 2 appeals are heard within 40 days of receipt of the appeal by the Appeals Committee which consists of a small group of elected members of the county council.
- Parent/carers are able to attend the appeal hearing
- Each case is considered on its merits
- The Committee takes into account the policy guidelines but may recommend departure from those guidelines in exceptional cases
- When a decision is made a response will be sent in writing of the decision and the reasoning behind the decision. This decision is final.
- Where the person is unhappy with the outcome they will be advised how escalate it to the Local Government Ombudsman at, www.lgo.org.uk. who may investigate to decide whether there has been any maladministration.

  Details of the Post-16 appeals process are provided in the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement. Please see link above in Section 7.0

11.0 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Education Act 1996 and Education and Inspections Act 2006, sections 508A to 509AE and schedule 35B
Equality Act 2010
Home to school travel and transport guidance - published by DfE July 2014
Post 16 Transport to Education and Training – DfE statutory guidance for local authorities published October 2017
Children and Families Act 2014

SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years January 2015 (updated May 2015)
Care Act 2014

24th July 2019

OFFICIAL

Department for Education

Travel to school for children of compulsory school age

Statutory guidance for local authorities

January 2024

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Summary

About this guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education. It is issued under the duties placed on the Secretary of State by sections 508A (7) and 508D (1) of the Education Act 1996. It replaces the previous *Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance* from 2014.

Local authorities are under a duty to have regard to this guidance when:

- carrying out their duties in relation to arrangements for travel to school for eligible children of ***compulsory school age***;
- exercising their discretionary power to arrange travel for other children;
- carrying out their duties in relation to the promotion of sustainable travel to school (this duty applies in relation to young people of sixth form age as well as children of ***compulsory school age)***.

There is separate guidance on travel to post-16 education and training.

Review date

This guidance will be kept under review and updated when necessary.

What legislation does this guidance refer to?

This guidance refers to the legislation governing travel to school for children of ***compulsory school age***, in particular:

- section 508A of the Education Act 1996: sustainable travel to school;
- section 508B of and Schedule 35B to the Education Act 1996: travel arrangements for eligible children;
- section 508C of the Education Act 1996: travel arrangements for other children;
- the School Information (England) Regulations 2008: publication of information about travel arrangements.

Links to some of the legislation that relates to travel to school can be found in annex 3: additional resources.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for local authorities, in particular their school travel teams and ***special educational needs*** casework teams.

It may also be of interest to schools, academy trusts, ***parents,*** organisations that advise ***parents*** and travel operators. Parts of it are likely to be of particular relevance to schools that choose to arrange home-to-school travel for their pupils.

Main points

- ***Parents*** are responsible for ensuring their child attends school. This means they must take all the action necessary to enable their child to attend school.
- For most ***parents***, this includes making arrangements for their child to travel to and from school. Local authorities must make arrangements, free-of-charge, for eligible children to travel to school (see part 1 of this guidance).
- Local authority school travel and ***special educational needs*** teams should work together to ensure travel arrangements are considered when deciding what school to name in a child's ***Education, Health and Care plan*** (part 1).
- Local authorities have a discretionary power to arrange travel to school for other children (part 2).
- Local authorities are responsible for deciding what travel arrangements to make, provided they are suitable for the needs of the children for which they are made (part 3).
- Schools should support local authorities to deliver their home-to-school travel functions, for example, by promoting good behaviour on transport, and sharing information to ensure children's needs are met, and taking travel arrangements into account when making changes to their ***school day***.
- Local authorities' school travel policies should be easy for ***parents*** to find and understand (part 4).
- Local authorities should have a fair and transparent process so that ***parents*** can appeal a decision about travel to school for their child (part 5).
- Local authorities have a duty to promote sustainable and active travel to school (part 6).

In updating this guidance, we have had regard to:

- a School Transport Inquiry conducted by the charity Contact;
- a School Transport Report by the charity Cerebra;
- the coroner's regulation 28 report to prevent further deaths issued in 2016, following the death of a child on a ***dedicated*** school bus;
- responses to our 2019 public consultation;
- stakeholder comments provided in late 2022 and early 2023.

Words used in this guidance

Where the words **'must'** and **'must not'** are used, they represent a statutory requirement. Where the word 'should' is used, it represents something authorities ought to do or something that is considered good practice but is not a mandatory requirement.

The word '**reasonable**' is used throughout this guidance. Local authorities are expected to act reasonably in the performance of their functions. Whether an action is reasonable may vary according to the circumstances in which it is being considered and local authorities will need to use their judgement. In general, they should seek to act in a way that is fair and rational and takes into account relevant factors.

An explanation of words in ***bold italics*** can be found in annex 1: explanation of terms used in this guidance.

Context

Home-to-school travel is an integral part of the school system. It ensures no child of ***compulsory school age*** is prevented from accessing education by a lack of transport or the cost of transport.

The cost of delivering free home-to-school travel has increased significantly in recent years. It is important that local authorities take travel costs into account when planning the supply of school places. Capital expenditure, revenue costs and travel costs need to be considered together to ensure financial sustainability.

The SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time sets out the Government's plans for a national ***special educational needs***, ***disability*** and alternative provision system that fulfils children's potential, builds ***parents'*** trust and provides financial sustainability. The new system will improve early identification of needs and set clear expectations for the types of support that should be ordinarily available in mainstream settings, meaning fewer children will need to access support through an ***EHC plan***. Taken together with £2.6 billion of Government investment in new places and improvements to existing provision for children with ***special educational needs*** and ***disabilities*** or who require alternative provision, this will mean fewer children will need to travel long distances to a school that is able to meet their needs.

The Improvement Plan also sets out plans for local SEND and alternative provision partnerships which will bring together partners in education, health and care to plan and commission support for children and young people with ***special educational needs*** and ***disabilities*** and in alternative provision. The partnerships will create local inclusion plans that will set out how the needs of children and young people in the local area will be met. Home-to-school travel is important in enabling children to access the support available to them and partnerships will factor it into their plans.

We know that local authorities need schools to support them to deliver their home-to-school travel functions by:

- promoting good behaviour on transport;
- sharing information to ensure the needs of children with ***special educational needs***, ***disabilities*** or ***medical needs*** are met;
- considering any implications for travel arranged by the local authority when arranging for children to be educated off-site or proposing changes to their ***school day*** or week; and
- promoting sustainable travel to school.

The Department has published trust quality descriptions which define what we want academy trusts to deliver. These include an expectation that trusts work collaboratively with schools, trusts, local authorities, dioceses, parents and other civic partners to ensure the delivery of statutory functions[1]. This includes working collaboratively with local authorities to support them in the delivery of their home-to-school travel functions.

Fairness and getting things right

Free travel to school is a valuable service for many families, but budget pressures mean local authorities often have to make difficult decisions about how to make best use of the limited resources available to them. They must comply with their duty to arrange free travel for eligible children but have some discretion in how they do this. This means they need to make a range of decisions, many of which can be challenging. For example, they need to decide what travel arrangements to make for eligible children, whether a child with ***special educational needs*** can reasonably be expected to ***walk*** to school, and whether to exercise their discretion to provide travel for children that are not eligible.

School travel can sometimes become the subject of disputes between ***parents*** and their local authority and of complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). It is not always possible to make a decision that ***parents*** are happy with, but it is important they are treated fairly and understand how the decision has been reached.

It is important to have policies to guide decision making but genuine consideration should be given to each case, rather than rigidly adhering to a policy, particularly when considering whether to exercise discretion.

[1] See page 3 of the trust quality descriptions available here: Commissioning high-quality trusts - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Annex 4 sets out some questions that local authorities may find helpful when reviewing their policies and procedures. LGSCO has published guidance on good administrative practice and the effective handling of complaints.

The public sector equality duty

The Equality Act 2010 requires local authorities to comply with the public sector equality duty. This means they must consider how their school travel decisions and policies affect people with protected characteristics, and must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination against people with protected characteristics;
- promote equality of opportunity between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The public sector equality duty is likely to be particularly relevant when local authorities are revising their school travel policies (see part 4), deciding whether to exercise their discretionary power (see part 2) and deciding whether it would be reasonable to expect a ***parent*** to accompany their child on their journey to and from school (see paragraphs 49 to 54).

Duty to have regard to religion or belief

Section 509AD of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to have regard to any wish of a ***parent*** to have their child educated at a school based on their ***religion*** or ***belief*** when exercising their school travel duties. This does not mean local authorities must arrange travel to a school with a ***designated religious character*** for a child whose ***parents*** have chosen it on the grounds of their ***religion*** or ***belief*** (unless the child would be eligible for free travel to that school), but they should not have a blanket policy that they never provide travel assistance to schools with a ***designated religious character*** and may need to make decisions on a case-by-case basis if asked to exercise their discretionary power in relation to such a school.

Part 1: local authorities' statutory duty in relation to eligible children

1. Subject to paragraph 66 below, local authorities must make free-of-charge travel arrangements to facilitate the attendance at school of eligible children resident in their area[2].

2. A child is eligible[3] if they are of ***compulsory school age,*** attend their nearest suitable school and:

- live more than the statutory ***walking*** distance from that school (see paragraphs 9 to 12), or
- could not reasonably be expected to ***walk*** to that school because of their ***special educational needs***, ***disability*** or ***mobility problem***, even if they were accompanied by their ***parent*** (see paragraphs 13 to 28), or
- would not be able to ***walk*** to that school in reasonable safety, even if they were accompanied by their ***parent*** (see paragraphs 29 to 32).

3. There are 'extended rights' to free travel to school for children from low-income households (see paragraphs 33 to 37).

Suitable school

4. A suitable school for school travel purposes is a qualifying school (see paragraphs 7 to 8 for the definition of a qualifying school) that is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude and any ***special educational needs*** they may have[4]. It should also be suitable for the child's sex, for example a girls' school could not be considered the nearest suitable school for a boy.

5. 'Suitable school' does not mean the most suitable school for a child. Schools are able to meet a wide range of needs. The nearest secondary school to the ***home*** of a child of secondary school age, for example, will almost always be their nearest suitable school (provided it would be able to admit them).

6. Where a child has an ***EHC plan***, the school named in the plan will normally be considered to be their nearest suitable school. (See paragraphs 20 to 28 for more

[2] Section 508B of the Education Act 1996
[3] The categories of eligible children are set out in schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996
[4] Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 (Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age) defines suitable education.

information about children with ***EHC plans*** and paragraphs 38 to 48 for more information about suitable schools and qualifying schools.)

Child J is thirteen years old. Their nearest school is a co-educational secondary school that is 3.4 miles from their ***home***. Their ***parents*** choose to send them to a single sex secondary school that is 5.3 miles from their ***home***. Child J is not eligible for free travel to the single sex school because the co-educational secondary school is their nearest suitable school.

Child K is twelve years old. They attend School 1, a secondary school 3 miles from their ***home***. Their ***parents*** chose this school because it offers a choice of several modern foreign languages at GSCE. School 2 is 1 mile from Child K's ***home*** and would have been able to admit them, but it only offers one modern foreign language. Child K is not attending their nearest suitable school because School 2 would have been able to provide them with an education that was suitable for their age, ability and aptitude.

Qualifying schools

7. Qualifying schools[5] are:

- community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools;
- academies (including those which are free schools, university technical colleges, studio schools and special schools);
- alternative provision academies;
- community or foundation special schools;
- non-maintained special schools;
- pupil referral units;
- maintained nursery schools (where attended by a child of ***compulsory school age***); and
- city technology colleges and city colleges for the technology of the arts.

8. For children with ***special educational needs***, an independent school is a qualifying school if it is the only school named in their ***EHC plan***, or the nearest of two or more schools named in the ***EHC plan***. (See paragraph 20 to 28 for more information about children with ***EHC plans*** and paragraphs 38 to 48 for more information about suitable schools and qualifying schools.)

[5] Qualifying schools are defined by paragraph 15 of schedule 35B to the Education Act 1996.

Statutory walking distances[6]

9. The statutory ***walking*** distances are used to determine whether a child is eligible for free travel to school. They are the distance beyond which a child who is attending their nearest suitable school is eligible for free travel arranged by their local authority. Where a child lives within the statutory ***walking*** distance (and is not eligible for free travel on any of the other grounds set out in this guidance) the ***parent*** is responsible for arranging their child's travel to school. There is no expectation that the child will ***walk***. It is for the ***parent*** to determine what arrangements would be suitable for their child.

10. A child under the age of 8 is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school if it is more than 2 miles from their ***home***.

11. A child aged 8 years or over is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school if it is more than 3 miles from their ***home***.

12. When a local authority assesses whether the distance between a child's ***home*** and their school is further than the statutory ***walking*** distance, the route they measure must be the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may ***walk*** in reasonable safety. This is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. The route may also include footpaths, bridleways, other pathways and alternative entrances to the school (see paragraph 49 to 54 for guidance about accompaniment).

Child A is six years old and attends their nearest suitable school. It is 2.3 miles from their ***home***. Child A is eligible for free travel to school.

Child B is seven years old and attends a primary school that is 2.6 miles from their ***home***. There is another suitable primary school 1.2 miles from their ***home*** which has places available. Child B is not eligible for free travel to school, as they are not attending their nearest suitable school.

Child C is eleven years old and attends their nearest suitable school. It is 2.6 miles from their ***home***. Child C is not eligible for free travel to school.

Special educational needs, disability or mobility problems

13. A child is eligible for free travel to school if:

- they attend their nearest suitable school, and
- it is within the statutory ***walking*** distance of their ***home***, and

[6] The statutory walking distances are prescribed by section 444(5) of the Education Act 1996.

- they could not reasonably be expected to ***walk*** there because of their ***special educational needs***, ***disability*** *or* ***mobility problem***, even if they were accompanied by their ***parent*** (see paragraph 49 to 54 for guidance about accompaniment).

14. To be eligible on these grounds, a child does not need to:

- have an ***Education Health and Care plan*** (***EHC plan***); or
- have travel to school specified in their ***EHC plan*** if they have one; or
- attend a special school; or
- live beyond the statutory ***walking*** distance.

15. Not every child with an ***EHC plan*** or who attends a special school will be eligible for free travel to school.

16. Local authorities will need to assess eligibility on the grounds of ***special educational needs***, ***disability*** or ***mobility problems*** on a case-by-case basis. The assessment should take account of the child's physical ability to ***walk*** to school and any health and safety issues related to their ***special educational needs***, ***disability*** or ***mobility problems***. It may take account of whether they would be able to ***walk*** to school if they were accompanied (see paragraphs 49 to 54 for guidance about accompaniment).

17. Information that local authorities may take into account when assessing a child's eligibility may include (but need not be restricted to) the following, where it illustrates why the child may not be able to ***walk*** to school:

- information provided by the ***parent***;
- information provided by any professionals involved in the child's care, for example, an educational psychologist or hospital consultant;
- information provided by the child's school;
- any relevant information in the child's ***EHC plan*** if they have one;
- any relevant information in their ***individual healthcare plan*** if they have one.

18. It is likely local authorities will need to ask ***parents*** to provide some or all the information they will need to make their decision. Wherever possible, they should avoid asking ***parents*** for any information which is not already in their (the ***parent's***) possession or is not easy for them to obtain.

Child D is fourteen years old and has a ***disability*** that requires them to use crutches to walk. They need to take their time to ensure they are balanced. They attend their nearest suitable school. It is 1 mile from their ***home***. The local authority decides that they could not reasonably be expected to ***walk*** to school. Child D is eligible for free travel to school.

Child E is eleven years old and has been diagnosed with a long-term medical condition which causes them to take a long time to recover after strenuous physical activity. They attend their nearest suitable school which is a short ***walk*** from their ***home***. The ***parent*** applies for free travel to school on the basis that the child needs to recover for a long time after any strenuous activity. Based on the information available to them, the local authority decides that Child E would not need to recover for a long time after the short ***walk*** to their school. Child E is not eligible for free travel to school.

19. A child may be eligible because of temporary ***mobility problems*** but, due to the short-term nature of some ***mobility problems***, it may not always be practicable for the local authority to make travel arrangements before the child has recovered.

Children with EHC plans

Key points

- Subject to the exception set out in paragraphs 23 to 28 below, the school named in a child's ***EHC plan*** will be their nearest suitable school for school travel purposes.
- Local authorities should take the cost of travel into account when deciding whether it would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources to name the ***parent's*** preferred school in the ***EHC plan***.
- It is important for local authority school travel and ***special educational needs*** teams to work closely together and to engage with one another early in the process for drawing up an initial ***EHC plan*** and when changing the school named in an existing plan following review.

20. The naming of a school in a child's ***EHC plan*** is governed by section 39 of the Children and Families Act 2014. ***Parents*** have the right to ask for a particular school to be named in their child's ***EHC plan*** (when the plan is first drawn up and when the local authority amends the existing plan). The local authority must name that school in the plan unless it would be unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or ***special educational needs***, or incompatible with the efficient education of others or the efficient use of

resources[7]. Where the child will be eligible for free travel, they should take the cost of travel into account as part of this decision. Travel arrangements may also be relevant to the decision about the school that should be named in the plan in other ways, for example, the effect the journey may have on the child and their ability to learn when they arrive at school.

21. Where naming the ***parent's*** preferred school would be unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or ***special educational needs***, or incompatible with the efficient education of others or the efficient use of resources, the local authority must name a different school that they think would be appropriate for the child.

22. This means that, where a ***parent*** would prefer their child to attend a school that is further away from their ***home*** than the nearest school that would be able to meet their needs, the local authority should consider whether arranging travel to the preferred school would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

23. The local authority should determine the cost of providing the child with free travel to each of the two schools. If travel to the preferred school would cost more than travel to the nearer school, they should decide whether the additional cost of providing travel to the ***parent's*** preferred school is incompatible with the efficient use of resources. This will include deciding whether the educational benefits and other advantages the school will provide for the child outweigh the additional cost.

24. If the local authority determines that providing travel to the ***parent's*** preferred school would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources, the local authority may:

- name a different school that would be appropriate for the child's needs (this may be the nearer school), or
- name the ***parent's*** preferred school on the condition that the ***parent*** arranges the travel or provides some or all of the cost of the travel, or
- name the ***parent's*** preferred school on the condition that they arrange the travel (or provide some or all of the cost) and name a different school that would be appropriate for the child's needs and to which the authority would provide transport.

25. When deciding whether to name the ***parent's*** preferred school conditionally (alone or in addition to another school), the local authority may take account of the risk of the ***parent*** later becoming unable to arrange or pay for the travel and the local authority then becoming responsible for transport costs. The level of risk will vary depending on the circumstances of each case.

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[7] See paragraphs 9.78 and 9.79 of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 Years

26. Although transport should not normally be recorded in a child's EHC plan[8], when the local authority names the ***parent***'s preferred school on the condition that the ***parent*** arranges or pays for the travel, they may set out this condition in Section I of the plan.

27. Where in such circumstances the ***parent***'s circumstances subsequently change and they are no longer able to arrange or pay for the transport, the authority may conduct a review of the ***EHC plan*** to reconsider whether naming the parent's preferred school is incompatible with the efficient use of resources. If they determine that providing travel to the parent's preferred school would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources, they may amend the plan to name a different school that would be appropriate for the child's needs.

28. The local authority should make clear to the ***parent*** that they may review the school named in the ***EHC plan*** if the ***parent*** becomes unable or unwilling to arrange or pay for the travel. We recommend that the local authority records this information in a formal letter to the ***parent***.

Unsafe walking route

29. A child is eligible for free travel to school if:

- They attend their nearest suitable school, and
- it is within the statutory ***walking*** distance of their ***home***, and
- the nature of the route means they could not be expected to ***walk*** there in reasonable safety even if accompanied by their ***parent***, and
- there is no alternative route within the statutory ***walking*** distance that they would be able to ***walk*** in reasonable safety, even if accompanied by their ***parent***.

30. When assessing whether a route can be ***walked*** in reasonable safety, local authorities should consider the whole of the route. This will include, for example, any sections that use footpaths or bridleways, as well as sections that use roads. They should consider a range of risks such as canals, rivers, ditches, speed of traffic and fields of vision for the pedestrian and motorist.

31. Some local authorities use the '*Assessment of Walked Routes to Schools Guidelines*', published by Road Safety GB[9], which provide advice to local authorities on assessing the risk posed to pedestrians by traffic. These guidelines can form the basis

[8] The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years says that transport should be recorded in the EHC plan only in exceptional cases where the child has particular transport needs.
[9] Road Safety GB is a national road safety organisation made up of representatives from groups across the UK, including local authority road safety teams.

from which to develop a route safety assessment but are not a complete assessment and should be used in conjunction with local context and knowledge.

32. Modern technology is valuable in identifying, measuring and assessing routes but it may sometimes be appropriate for a route to be assessed by ***walking*** it at the times of day and on the days of the week that the child would travel, particularly if the safety of a route is challenged.

Child F is twelve years old. They attend their nearest suitable school. It is 2 miles from their ***home***. The only ***walking*** route to this school is along a busy road with no footpaths or stepping off points. The local authority carries out an assessment of the route and decides it would not be possible for a child to ***walk*** it in reasonable safety, even if they were accompanied by their ***parent***. Child F is eligible for free travel to school.

Extended rights

33. Extended rights are designed to support low-income families to exercise school choice. A child is eligible for free travel to school if they are eligible for free school meals or a ***parent*** with whom they live receives maximum Working Tax Credit and they are:

- aged 8 or over but under 11, attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles from their ***home***; or
- aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from their ***home***; or
- aged 11 to 16 years, attend a school that is more than 2 but not more than 15 miles from their ***home*** that their ***parents*** have chosen on the grounds of their ***religion*** or ***belief*** if, having regard to that ***religion*** or ***belief***, there is no suitable school nearer to their ***home***.

Child G is eleven years old and eligible for free school meals. Their nearest suitable school is 2.5 miles from their ***home***. Their second nearest suitable school is 3 miles away. Their third nearest is 5 miles away. Child G would be eligible for free travel to any of these schools.

Child H is eleven years old and eligible for free school meals. Their three nearest schools are School X, School Y and School Z. School X is 1.5 miles from their ***home***, School Y is 2.2 miles from their home, and School Z is 5.5 miles from their ***home***. Child H would be eligible for free travel to School Y or School Z, but not to School X.

Child I is thirteen years old and is eligible for free school meals. Their ***parents*** are Sikh and wish them to be educated in a school with a ***religious character***. They attend a ***designated*** Sikh school that is 8 miles from their ***home***. There are other schools which are nearer to their ***home***, but none of these is a Sikh school. Child I is eligible for free travel to the Sikh school.

34. When a local authority assesses, for the purposes of extended rights, whether a child lives more than 2 miles from a school, the route should be measured in the way described in paragraph 12. When assessing whether a child lives within the 6- or 15-mile upper limits, the local authority should measure ***road routes*** only. There is no expectation that a child would ***walk*** these distances and so ***walking*** routes should not be used for assessing eligibility.

35. Where, during the course of an ***academic year***, a child ceases to be eligible for free school meals, or their ***parent*** ceases to receive maximum Working Tax Credit, the local authority should continue to provide free travel to school for the remainder of that ***academic year***.

36. Working Tax Credit is being phased out as claimants are transferred onto Universal Credit. This does not change the way eligibility for extended rights to free travel to school is determined. It remains the case that children will be eligible for free home-to-school travel if they are eligible for free school meals or live with a ***parent*** who receives maximum Working Tax Credit (and meet the criteria set out above). Once the roll out is complete, no further children will come forward who are eligible because their ***parents*** claim maximum Working Tax Credit.

37. No child will cease to be eligible for extended rights because of the roll out of Universal Credit. ***Parents*** who claim maximum Working Tax Credit will have an earned income of no more than £7,400. This means their children will become eligible for free school meals (if they are not already) when they (the ***parent***) are transferred to Universal Credit. More information about eligibility for free school meals is available in Free School Meals: guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools.

More information about suitable schools and qualifying schools

38. Children may sometimes live a very similar distance from more than one school. Where the schools are within the statutory ***walking*** distance, local authorities should determine which is the nearest by measuring the shortest ***walking*** route. (It is not necessary to determine whether they would be able to walk that route in reasonable safety for the purposes of determining which is their nearest school, but the local authority may need to determine that separately for the purposes of assessing their eligibility for free travel).

39. Where the schools are beyond ***walking*** distance, local authorities may consider it more appropriate to measure the shortest ***road route*** or the straight-line distance. It should be made clear in the local authority's school travel policy how the route will be measured.

40. Where a child's nearest school is oversubscribed and unable to offer them a place, the nearest school with places available is their nearest suitable school for school travel purposes. A child's nearest school may be in a neighbouring local authority area.

41. In most cases, a child's eligibility for free school travel will be assessed following the ***normal school admissions round*** once ***parents*** have been offered a place for their child to begin primary school or transfer to secondary school. In some cases, eligibility will need to be assessed at other times, for example due to a family moving into the area in-year.

42. When an application for travel is considered following the ***normal admissions round***, it can be difficult for a local authority to know whether a child could have been admitted to their nearest school if their ***parent*** did not list that school as a preference when they applied for a school place. It is, therefore, reasonable for a local authority to expect ***parents*** to list their nearest school on their application form if they intend to apply for free travel to school. Some local authorities have alternative ways of determining whether a child's nearest school could have offered them a place.

43. Where a local authority expects ***parents*** who intend to apply for free travel to list their nearest school on their application form, this information should be clearly available to all ***parents*** at the time they are deciding which schools to apply for. It should also be clear to parents how they can find out which is their nearest school for admissions purposes and whether this is also their nearest school for school travel purposes. Some authorities have a postcode checker on their website that parents can use for this purpose.

44. Local authorities may expect ***parents*** to list their nearest school as their first preference. However, in the Department's view, this should not normally be necessary. School admission authorities must provide ranked lists of all applicants to the local authority. If a parent lists their nearest school as their second or lower preference, it

should be possible for the local authority to tell whether their child could have been offered a place at that school. This can be done by comparing the child in question with the last child to be offered a place at the school and determining which of them would have higher priority. This will often be a straightforward matter of determining which child lives closest to the school.

45. Local authorities may find it helpful to have a set date that they use for the purposes of determining whether a child could have been offered a place at their nearest school, for example, would they have been offered a place on National Offer Day[10].

46. Where a child has begun attending a school that is not their nearest because their nearest school was unable to offer them a place, a place may subsequently become available at the nearer school. In these circumstances, some ***parents*** may choose to move their child to the nearer school. Where they do not, local authorities should not withdraw the child's home-to-school travel, because moving to the nearer school would be likely to cause significant disruption to their education.

Child L is eleven years old and attends School 1 which is 4.2 miles away from their ***home***. Their ***parents*** applied for this school as their first preference. The nearest secondary school is School 2 which is 3.7 miles from their ***home***. They chose not to apply for this school, despite information on the eligibility for free travel to school being readily available at the time they submitted their preferences. School 2 is undersubscribed, and Child L would have been offered a place there had their ***parents*** applied. Child L is not eligible for free travel to School 1 because School 2 is their nearest suitable school and has available places.

Child M is eleven years old and attends the second nearest secondary school to their ***home***. It is 4.2 miles away. Their nearest secondary school is 3.7 miles from their ***home***. Their ***parents*** applied for this school, but it was oversubscribed and they were not offered a place. Child M is eligible for free travel to school as they are attending their nearest suitable school with available places.

47. A child may be eligible for free travel to a place that isn't a qualifying school:

- where they receive education at a place other than a school by virtue of arrangements made under section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1996 (which requires local authorities to make arrangements for the provision of suitable

[10] National Offer Day is the day each year on which local authorities send an offer of a school place to parents in their area. Secondary National Offer Day is 1 March. Primary National Offer Day is 16 April. Where 1 March or 16 April falls on a day that is not a working day, National Offer Day is the next working day.

education for children of ***compulsory school age*** who would otherwise not receive suitable education for reasons such as illness or exclusion)[11]

- where they are suspended (temporarily excluded) from a school (but remain a registered pupil of that school) and attend an educational establishment that is not a qualifying school and is not within the statutory ***walking*** distance of their ***home***, then that educational establishment must be treated as if it were a qualifying school for the purposes of eligibility for free travel[12]

48. We expect schools to collaborate with the local authority when arranging educational provision for a child during a suspension where the pupil might be eligible for free travel to the place where they will be receiving education. More information is available in the School suspensions and permanent exclusions guidance.

Accompaniment

49. A child will not normally be eligible for free travel to school on the grounds of their ***special educational needs, disability*** or ***mobility problem***, or on the grounds that the route is unsafe, if they would be able to ***walk*** to school if they were accompanied. Where the local authority determines that a child would be able to walk if they were accompanied, the general expectation is that the ***parent*** will accompany them or make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school. A child will not normally be eligible solely because their ***parent's*** work commitments or caring responsibilities mean they are unable to accompany their child themselves, but local authorities must act reasonably in the performance of their functions.

50. In most cases, local authorities will not need to consider whether a **parent** would be able to accompany their child, but they should not have a blanket policy that they will never arrange free travel for a child who would be able to walk to school if accompanied. They must consider cases where the ***parent*** says there are good reasons why they are unable to accompany their child, or make other suitable arrangements for their journey, and make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case.

51. The circumstances that a local authority should take into account may include, but are not limited to, whether the ***parent*** has a ***disability*** or ***mobility problem*** that would make it difficult for them to accompany their child, and the ***parent***'s reasons for not being able to accompany their child or make other suitable arrangements.

52. Reasons such as the ***parent's*** working pattern or the fact they have children attending more than one school, on their own, will not normally be considered good reasons for a parent being unable to accompany their child. These apply to many ***parents*** and, in most circumstances, it is reasonable to expect the ***parent*** to make

[11] This is set out in paragraphs 3, 5, 7 and 10 of schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996.
[12] This is set out in paragraph 8 of schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996.

suitable arrangements to fulfil their various responsibilities (for example, their responsibilities as an employee and as a ***parent***.)

53. Where a local authority determines that a child could not reasonably be expected to walk even if they were accompanied, they are eligible for free home-to-school travel regardless of whether their ***parent*** would be able to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey.

54. We know it can be difficult for local authorities to make decisions in relation to children of secondary school age whose ***special educational needs, disability*** or ***mobility problem*** mean they could not reasonably be expected to ***walk*** to school unaccompanied. Other children of this age may normally be expected to ***walk*** to school unaccompanied which might, for example, enable ***parents*** to increase their working hours. When deciding whether it is reasonable to expect the ***parent*** of a child with ***special educational needs, disability*** or ***mobility problem*** to accompany their child to school, local authorities should be sensitive to the particular challenges ***parents*** of such children may face.

Child N is nine years old and has autism. They attend their nearest suitable school which is 2.5 miles from their ***home***. They are unaware of danger and need to be accompanied even on very short journeys. They also become distressed and can act unpredictably in noisy environments. Their ***walk*** to school would be along busy roads. The local authority determines that the ***parent*** would not be able to keep them safe on this journey. Child N is eligible for free travel to school.

Child O is seven years old and attends their nearest suitable school which is 1.5 miles from their ***home***. They do not have ***special educational needs***, a ***disability*** or ***mobility problem***. The local authority determines that they would be able to ***walk*** to school in reasonable safety if they were accompanied. There is no good reason why the ***parent*** could not reasonably be expected to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey to and from school. Child O is not eligible for free travel to school.

Child P is fifteen years old and is blind. They attend their nearest suitable school which is a short ***walk*** from their ***home***. The local authority determines that they could reasonably be expected to ***walk*** to school if accompanied. Child P's ***parent*** is a single ***parent*** with a ***disability*** which means they would not be able to accompany Child P to school. The local authority considers the individual circumstances of Child P and decides it would not be reasonable to expect their ***parent*** to make arrangements for their journey to and from school. It decides to arrange free travel to school for Child P.

Child Q is fourteen years old and is also blind. They attend their nearest suitable school which is a short ***walk*** from their ***home***. The local authority determines that they could reasonably be expected to ***walk*** to school if accompanied. There is no good reason why Child Q's ***parent*** could not reasonably be expected to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey to and from school. Child Q is not eligible for free travel to school.

Promoting independence for eligible children with special educational needs and disabilities

55. The *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25* [13] sets the expectation that professionals working with children with ***special educational needs*** or ***disabilities*** will support them to prepare for adult life and help them to achieve the best outcomes in employment, independent living, health and community participation. Planning should start early. Where a child has an ***EHC plan***, local authorities must

[13] Further information on the local authority role in supporting children and young people to prepare for adulthood is available in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years.

ensure that the annual review of the ***EHC plan*** from at least year 9 onwards includes a focus on preparing for adulthood, including independent living.

56. For many children, learning to travel independently is an important part of preparing for adulthood and will help them lead fulfilling adult lives. When making travel arrangements for eligible children with ***special educational needs*** or ***disabilities***, local authorities may take account of how best to support them to develop independence. For example, they might consider whether a child who would otherwise travel in a taxi, might be able to travel on a public service bus if provided with support to do so, or whether a child who uses a wheelchair might be able to ***wheel*** to school rather than travel in a minibus, if provided with support to do so.

57. ***Parents*** may be anxious about their child's ability to travel independently. The child may also be worried about this. It will be important to work sensitively with them to help them understand the benefits of independent travel and to build their confidence.

58. Wherever possible, local authorities should offer independent travel training to children with ***special educational needs*** or ***disabilities*** who are eligible for free travel to school and who they think will be able to complete the programme.

59. Independent travel training is a tailored programme to help children with ***special educational needs*** or ***disabilities*** travel independently, for example by public transport or ***walking***. Some children may need to participate in travel training again if their circumstances change, for example if they move school.

60. Once an eligible child can travel independently, their travel arrangements may need to be reviewed. For example, they may now be able to ***walk*** or catch a bus to school rather than travel in a taxi. Local authorities must not withdraw free home-to-school travel from an eligible child who does not successfully complete the travel training programme.

Parental consent and independent travel

61. Section 508B (4) (b) of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to obtain parental consent in order to meet their school travel duty in respect of an eligible child by:

- providing someone to escort the child, or
- paying their travelling expenses.

62. This means, for example, that the ***parent's*** consent is required for a local authority to meet their school travel duty by providing independent travel training, or providing someone to accompany a child so they can ***wheel*** to school in their wheelchair. Where the ***parent*** does not provide consent, the local authority must make alternative arrangements for the child's travel to school.

Child R has ***special educational needs***. They live in a village 4 miles from their nearest suitable secondary school and are eligible for free travel to school. Other children living in the village attend the school. The local authority meets its school travel duty in respect of these children by providing them with a pass for free travel on the public service bus. When Child R joined the school in Year 7, the local authority determined their ***special educational needs*** meant they would not be able to travel on the bus with their peers. The local authority arranged a taxi to take Child R to school.

When Child R moved to Year 9, the local authority reassessed their needs. They determined Child R was ready for independent travel training. Child R's ***parent*** was hesitant at first, but the local authority explained the benefits and the ***parent*** agreed, knowing Child R would need the skill in adulthood.

The travel trainer helps Child R with understanding things such as where to wait for the bus, which bus to get on and what to do if they miss the bus or it is late. Once Child R has completed the travel training programme, the local authority reassesses their needs and determines they are now able to travel independently on the bus. They withdraw the taxi and provide Child R with a bus pass.

More information about travel to school for eligible children

63. Local authorities must make arrangements to enable a child to travel to school for the beginning of the ***school day***, and to return ***home*** at the end of the ***school day***. They are not required to make arrangements:

- for children to travel between institutions during the ***school day***;
- to enable children to attend extra-curricular activities and other commitments outside school hours; or
- to enable children to get to and from before and after school childcare, whether formal (for example, a childminder) or informal (for example, a grandparent)[14].

64. Where particular classes, year groups or pupils have a start or finish time that is different from most pupils at the school, it will not normally be possible for the local authority to make separate travel arrangements. Schools may need to make arrangements to accommodate these pupils. There may be a small number of circumstances in which local authorities consider it appropriate to arrange transport at an

[14] To note, a local authority may have a separate duty under section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's Act 1970 to provide transport enable a child in need to access any services provided for them by the authority in accordance with section 17 of the Children Act 1989. This guidance does not seek to provide advice on that duty.

alternative time of day, for example if a child has a medical condition which means they are not well enough to attend school for the whole day.

65. Where a local authority names a residential school in the ***EHC plan*** of an eligible child, the local authority must provide reasonable free travel to enable the child to attend that school, for example, on a Monday and Friday for children who are weekly boarders, or before and after school holidays for children who board full-time.

66. A local authority is not required to arrange travel for an eligible child where:

- suitable free travel is provided by someone else, for example, their school or the local transport authority (for example, Transport for London); or
- a ***parent*** chooses to make their own arrangements for the child's travel to and from school (this does not prevent the ***parent*** from later requesting free travel to school).

Ways in which free travel may be provided

67. It is for local authorities to decide how they will arrange free travel for an eligible child. For example, they might provide a pass for travel on a service bus or arrange a ***dedicated*** school bus or a taxi. The arrangements must be free of charge to the ***parent***.

68. The legislation[15] permits local authorities to meet their duty in respect of an eligible child in a range of alternative ways, provided they have the consent of the ***parent***. For example, with the agreement of a ***parent***, the local authority might:

- provide expenses[16] to enable the ***parent*** to make their own travel arrangements for their child;
- pay a cycling allowance to enable a child to cycle to school;
- provide independent travel training to a child where it is appropriate to do so (see paragraphs 55 to 60 for more information about independent travel training);
- provide someone to escort the child, for example when they are ***walking*** or ***wheeling*** to and from school.

69. Where a ***parent*** has agreed to receive travelling expenses, it is for the local authority to determine how to administer this. They may require ***parents*** to provide copies of receipts and other supporting documentation.

[15] This is set out in section 508B (4)(b) of the Education Act 1996.
[16] Some local authorities call this a personal travel budget or a mileage allowance.

70. To ensure the arrangements are free of charge to the ***parent*** of an eligible child, the travelling expenses may need to be sufficient to cover the ***parent's*** journey ***home*** having taken their child to school in the morning, and their journey back to school to collect their child in the afternoon (in other words, all four legs of their journey to school and back). There will be exceptions to this, for example if a ***parent*** works close to their child's school and does not travel ***home*** after taking their child to school. (See paragraphs 72 to 74 below for information about the interaction between the payment of travelling expenses and other benefits and allowances.)

71. The examples below provide further suggestions of alternative ways in which local authorities might meet the duty if they have parental consent.

Local authority 1 has introduced a scheme it believes will promote consistency and routine for children at a local special school. Rather than contracting a travel operator, they have leased a minibus. The local authority funds the special school for the cost of a driver and fuel. The school can use the minibus during the ***school day*** provided they also use it to provide travel to and from school. The school knows the children well and is better able to make travel arrangements that meet their needs.

Local authority 2 has received an application for free travel to school for a child with ***special educational needs***. The child is an eligible child. The ***parent*** would prefer to take the child to school themselves, because they get distressed when travelling with anyone else, but are unable to do so because they need to take their other child to school. The other child is not an eligible child. Local authority 2 suggests to the ***parent*** that the authority should make travel arrangements for the non-eligible child, enabling the ***parent*** to take the eligible child to school. The ***parent*** is happy with this arrangement, and it does not cost them any more to take the eligible child to school than it would to take their other child.

Interaction with other benefits and allowances

72. A child's eligibility is not affected by any further benefits or allowances they or their ***parents*** may receive. Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children is a contribution towards the extra cost associated with being disabled. It has two components – a care component payable at three rates, and a mobility component payable at two rates. ***Parents*** who receive the higher rate mobility component for their child may choose to use it to lease a Motability vehicle, but there is no requirement for them to do so. Being eligible for DLA or having access to a Motability vehicle is not relevant to a disabled child's eligibility for free travel to school (except as evidence of their ***disability***).

73. Foster carers receive an allowance to cover the cost of caring for a child. Being in receipt of foster care allowance does not affect a child's eligibility for free travel to school, but a local authority may meet their duty in respect of an eligible child by including

additional funding in the foster care allowance, provided this is agreed with the foster carer.

74. Regular payments made by the local authority to reimburse the cost incurred by a ***parent*** in providing a child's travel to school:

- will not be taken into account in a Universal Credit assessment. (Should a local authority need to pay a ***parent*** any additional amounts, for example to cover unexpected expenses relating to a child's travel to school, these would be treated as capital in the Universal Credit assessment and the ***parent*** would need to declare them[17]
- should not give rise to income tax liability, but individuals should satisfy themselves that they meet HMRC's requirements[18].

[17] When a person's Universal Credit is calculated, any capital they have is taken into account. Capital includes savings, investments and property (other than the home they live in). Claimants should declare any lump sum payment that would form part of their capital. Regular payments from the local authority which the claimant then spends on their child's travel will, therefore, not be taken into account. However, local authorities should be aware that, if they need to pay a parent any additional amounts and if, for example, they chose to pay 12-months' worth of additional amounts in one lump sum, this may be taken account in the Universal Credit assessment. This is because it would be considered to form part of their capital until such point as they need to spend it. More information is available about Universal Credit.
[18] Further information is available about income tax.

Part 2: local authorities' discretionary power

75. Local authorities have a discretionary power to provide travel to school for children resident in their area who are not eligible children[19], referred to in this part as 'discretionary travel'.

76. Discretionary travel may be provided in either direction between the child's ***home*** and their school, or both. It may be provided free, or a charge may be made. Any charges should be reasonable. Local authorities may wish to consider waiving or reducing charges for children from low-income families but are not required to do so.

77. With ***parents***' consent, local authorities may pay all or part of a child's reasonable travel expenses, provide them with a travel allowance, or arrange for them to be accompanied by a passenger assistant. Discretionary travel need not be limited to children of ***compulsory school age***.

78. It is for each local authority to decide whether and how to exercise their discretionary power. Most use it to provide free travel to school for 4-year-olds attending reception classes if they will be eligible for free travel when they reach ***compulsory school age***. Some use it to enable children who are not eligible for free travel to take spare seats on vehicles providing free travel for eligible children. Local authorities will usually charge for this service.

79. They may also offer discretionary travel to support school choice, for example, by having a policy of providing travel to enable children to attend a school with a ***designated religious character*** or a ***selective school***. The Department for Education supports this wherever it is possible but acknowledges that budget pressures often mean authorities have to make difficult decisions to balance the benefits of discretionary travel with their other priorities. Where local authorities routinely offer discretionary travel in this way, they should make this clear in their home-to-school travel policy. Part 4 provides guidance on local school travel policies.

80. There is an expectation that local authorities will act reasonably in the performance of their functions. They should not have a blanket policy of never providing discretionary travel and should be prepared to consider cases where the ***parent*** says there are reasons why their child needs free travel to school and make decisions on a case-by-case basis. The Department acknowledges that local authorities will not usually be able to consider matters such as the ***parent***'s working pattern, the cost to the ***parent*** of public transport, or the fact the ***parent*** has children attending more than one school, on their own, to be exceptional circumstances in which they will arrange travel on a discretionary basis.

[19] This is set out in section 508C of the Education Act 1996.

Part 3: suitability of travel arrangements

Taking account of children's needs

81. Local authorities must ensure that the travel arrangements they make take account of the needs of the child concerned. For example, it would not be appropriate to provide a pass for free travel on a service bus to a child whose ***special educational needs*** meant they would be unable to travel on a service bus.

82. The arrangements should enable the child to travel in reasonable safety and comfort, and without undue stress, strain or difficulty, so that wherever possible they arrive at school ready to learn.

83. It may not always be necessary to provide children with 'door to door' transport in order to meet their needs. Many will be able to ***walk*** to a suitable pick-up point to be collected, provided they would be able to do so in reasonable safety, accompanied by their ***parent*** if necessary. Some children's needs will mean they need to be collected from their ***home***. Local authorities should not have a policy that they never provide door to door transport and should make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

84. Some children may need particular arrangements to be made to meet their needs. For example, some children might require the support of a passenger assistant on their journey, or a child may use a wheelchair or walking frame that needs to travel with them.

85. A child's needs may need to be reassessed from time to time, for example if their level of need changes or if they move to a new school. Some children with ***special educational needs*** can find change distressing. Local authorities should provide ***parents*** with as much notice as possible of any changes to a child's travel arrangements.

Risk assessment

86. Health and safety law requires local authorities to put in place reasonably practicable control measures to protect their employees and others (including the children for whom they arrange travel) from harm. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, they must:

- identify hazards – things that could cause injury or illness;
- assess the risk – how likely it is that someone could be harmed and how seriously;
- put in place proportionate measures to eliminate the hazard or control the risk;
- record their findings; and
- regularly review and update their risk assessments.

87. The Health and Safety Executive provides advice on managing risk, including a template and example risk assessments. Further information is available in Managing risks and risk assessment at work.

88. It is for local authorities to decide what is reasonably practicable in each circumstance. They may consider that an individual risk assessment is required for some children, for example those with complex ***medical needs***, but it is unlikely that all children will require an individual risk assessment.

89. Matters local authorities may need to consider could include, but are not limited to:

- the ***medical needs*** of the children and the likelihood of them requiring emergency medical assistance while travelling to and from school;
- their behaviour – including where this is related to their ***special educational needs or disability*** – and the likelihood of this causing harm to them or others while travelling;
- the safety of children while travelling on the vehicle and while boarding and alighting;
- the safe loading and tethering of wheelchairs.

Children with medical needs

90. When a local authority makes travel arrangements for a child with ***medical needs***, they should consider whether and how those needs might affect the child during their journey to and from school and, where necessary, put in place proportionate arrangements to manage those needs.

91. Not every child with the same condition will need the same arrangements, so assessments should be undertaken on a case-by-case basis. The matters that should be considered are likely to include:

- the medical condition, its triggers and symptoms;
- the likelihood and consequences of the condition affecting the child on the journey to and from school; and
- the action that may need to be taken to manage the condition, for example whether the child may require medication and, if so, what dose is required, how it should be administered, and by whom.

92. Local education, health and social care services should work together to ensure children get the right support. Local authority school travel teams may need to work with local partners to make suitable travel arrangements for children with ***medical needs***. They should be able to expect the support of their local authority's ***special educational needs*** team, local health partners, and the schools to which they arrange travel.

93. In the first instance, local authorities should consult ***parents*** about their child's ***medical needs***. It is likely that the child's school will have arrangements in place to manage their ***medical needs*** during the day. They may be able to help the local authority identify whether those needs will affect them on the journey to and from school and decide what arrangements to put in place.

94. If the child has an ***EHC plan*** or ***individual healthcare plan,*** these may contain information that is relevant to the local authority's assessment. The school should share information from the ***individual healthcare plan*** with the local authority where it is relevant to the journey to and from school.

95. Local authorities may sometimes need to seek specialist advice about a child and their condition. A range of different health professionals may be involved in a child's care, for example a community nurse, specialist nurse or doctor. The ***parent*** should be able to help the local authority identify the appropriate health professional in relation to their child. The child's school and the local authority's ***special educational needs*** team may also be able to help with this.

96. The local authority should ensure the driver of a vehicle providing ***dedicated*** school transport, and any passenger assistant involved in providing the child's travel, are aware of their needs and how to respond to them and have received any training necessary to enable them to do so. See also paragraphs 102 to 107 on training.

Administering medication and performing medical procedures

97. There is no expectation that a child's routine medication will be administered on the journey to and from school, or that routine medical procedures will be carried out. It may sometimes be necessary to administer a child's emergency medication. Emergency medication should be administered in accordance with instructions from a health care professional. The driver or passenger assistant responsible for administering the medication should receive training from a health care professional.

Journey times

98. As a general guide, the maximum journey time for a child of primary school age should be 45 minutes each way, and 75 minutes each way for a child of secondary school age, including any time taken to ***walk*** to a pick-up point, but there will be circumstances in which this is not possible, for example in rural areas where children live in remote locations, where a child needs to travel a long way to the school named in their ***EHC plan***, or when journey times are extended by traffic delays. Wherever possible, a child should not be expected to make several changes on public transport.

99. Travel arrangements for children with ***special educational needs, disability*** or ***mobility problems*** can be particularly complex to make. Shorter journeys may be

particularly desirable, perhaps because a child's ***special educational needs*** *or* ***disability*** mean they become distressed while travelling, but a child may need to travel a long way to the school that is able to meet their needs and one vehicle may need to collect several children. Travel arrangements may be relevant to the decision about the school that should be named in the plan.

100. Where long journeys are unavoidable, local authorities should consider whether there are measures they can take to minimise negative impacts for the child, for example if the child becomes distressed on long journeys the ***parent*** or school may be able to offer advice on effective ways of keeping them calm.

Child S is seven years old and has an ***EHC plan*** which names their nearest suitable school. This school is 20 miles from their ***home***. The route is often very busy meaning the journey from Child S's home typically takes 45 minutes. The taxi collects one other child on the way, which adds 10 minutes to Child S's journey, meaning a total journey time of 55 minutes. Given the additional expense that would be involved in providing Child S and the other child with separate vehicles, the local authority decides it is reasonable to exceed the recommended journey time in Child S's case.

Child T is fourteen years old and has an ***EHC plan*** which names a school that is 10 miles from their ***home***. Previously they travelled in a taxi with one other child and the journey took 30 minutes. The local authority then combined several routes into one. Child T now travels in a minibus with 11 other children. Due to the extra stops, the journey time is now 90 minutes. Child's T's school makes the local authority aware that, due to their ***special educational needs***, they often become very distressed at being in the minibus for that length of time. On arrival at school, it takes them a long time to calm down. As a result, they miss some of the activities other children participate in. The local authority decides it is not reasonable to exceed the recommended journey time in Child T's case and reinstates their original travel arrangements.

Safeguarding

101. The ***safeguarding*** of children is of paramount importance. Local authorities should ensure that:

- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, with a check of the children's barred list, has been carried out for drivers and passenger assistants involved in providing ***dedicated*** school transport;
- drivers and passenger assistants have received any training they need to perform their role in relation to ***safeguarding***;
- drivers and passenger assistants know how to report any concerns they have about the children in their care;

- they share any concerns they have about the driver of a ***taxi*** or ***private hire vehicle*** with the authority that licenses them[20] – the Local Government Association and Institute of Licensing have produced a short guidance note to assist with this;
- they consider whether concerns they have about a driver should be referred to the DBS – further information is available at Making barring referrals to the DBS.

Training

102. Local authorities should ensure that drivers and passenger assistants working on ***dedicated*** school transport have undertaken appropriate training and that this is kept up to date. It is for the local authority to decide what training is required, how it will be delivered and how often it should be refreshed. These decisions should be informed by their risk assessments. The training that a driver or passenger assistant requires may be dependent on the needs of the children who are travelling. Not all drivers and passenger assistants will need the same training.

103. It is for the local authority to decide how training should be delivered, for example by the local authority, the travel operator, or an external provider. It need not always be delivered through a formal course, for example the ***parents*** of a child with ***special educational needs*** may be experts in strategies to calm the child when they become distressed while travelling.

104. School staff will receive training to enable them to manage a child's ***medical needs*** in school. Arrangements for delivering this training are made locally. Wherever possible, we would expect the transport staff that will be working with the child to be able to participate in this training.

105. As a minimum, training should include:

- ***safeguarding***;
- the handling of emergency situations, for example what to do in a medical emergency or if there is a road accident;
- equality, for example recognising, supporting and communicating with children with disabilities;
- any training required to meet the specific needs of the children travelling – for example, administering their emergency medication or managing their behaviour.

[20] Local authorities will also need to consider their duties under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations. In doing so, they may find the advice on page 21 of Working Together to Safeguard Children helpful.

106. It is recommended that training in the handling of emergency situations includes training in basic life support skills. Some bus and coach drivers may have undertaken such training as part of the ongoing training they are required to do to retain their Driver Certificate of Professional Competence.

107. Local authorities should also consider the training that their officers responsible for making travel arrangements need in order to do their job effectively. It is recommended that this includes equality training.

Behaviour on school travel

108. Local authorities should collaborate with schools to promote good behaviour on school travel. Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable, including for misbehaviour which takes place on school travel (see the guidance on Behaviour in Schools).

109. Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to, being rude, pushing and kicking, bullying, distracting the driver, refusing to wear a seatbelt, or refusing to remain seated. It may endanger the safety and wellbeing of other people.

110. Schools' behaviour policies should set out what the school will do in response to poor behaviour and bullying which occurs off the school premises and is witnessed by a staff member or reported to the school, including the sanctions that will be imposed on pupils.

111. Local authorities and schools should work together to:

- set clear expectations on seatbelt use;
- set high expectations for children's behaviour on school travel and ensure they are communicated clearly to ***parents*** and children;
- ensure arrangements are in place to report and manage incidents of unacceptable behaviour;
- work with operators to put in place measures to manage unacceptable behaviour where it occurs. Some local authorities have reported that interventions that have been successful include seating plans and 'bus prefects'.

112. Local authorities should ensure drivers and passenger assistants have received any training they need to manage children's behaviour while travelling.

113. An eligible child's travel arrangements should only be withdrawn as a last resort and, in these circumstances, the local authority should meet their duty in respect of the eligible child in an alternative way.

Managing behaviour that is part of a child's special educational needs or disability

114. A child's challenging behaviour may be part of their ***special educational needs*** or ***disability*** and they may use it as a way to communicate their needs, for example a child who exhibits challenging behaviour may be trying to communicate discomfort or distress. Local authorities should work with travel operators, schools and ***parents*** to find positive ways to manage this behaviour wherever possible.

115. ***Parents*** and schools may be able to help local authorities and travel operators understand the reasons for a child's challenging behaviour and the strategies that might be helpful in managing it. For example, a ***parent*** may be able to let the operator know that their child may shout and pull their hair because they find being stuck in traffic distressing, but that having a familiar toy can help to calm them. The Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO), in conjunction with the Department for Education and the Department for Transport, has published guidance which shares good practice in managing behaviour that is linked to child's ***special educational needs*** or ***disability***[21]***.***

Child U is twelve years old, has ***special educational needs*** and is eligible for free travel. They have recently moved to a new school. Having travelled quite happily in a taxi to their original school, they become distressed when travelling in a minibus to their new school. Their ***special educational needs*** mean they are unable to explain why they are distressed. The driver works with Child U's ***parent*** to resolve the issue. They identify that Child U's distress is caused by having the radio on during journeys. The driver agrees to keep the radio switched off whilst Child U is travelling.

116. Some children may find change distressing and benefit from having consistency in their travel arrangements wherever possible. Where a change to travel arrangements is planned, time to get used to the idea of a new route or vehicle, or an opportunity to meet a new driver or passenger assistant, may be helpful.

[21] Alternatives to Seatbelt Buckle Guards Good Practice Guide for Local Authorities

Child V is 4 years old and has ***special educational needs***. They are about to begin school for the first time and will be eligible for free travel. They can become very distressed in unfamiliar situations. The local authority arranges for their driver and passenger assistant to visit Child V's ***home*** to meet them before the start of term. This gives Child V the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the vehicle and sit in the seat they will use on the journey to school.

It also gives the driver the opportunity to let the ***parent*** know that two children will already be on the vehicle when it comes to collect Child V and that it will collect one further child after Child V. This enables the ***parent*** to talk to Child V to prepare them for what will happen on the journey to school. The ***parent*** is also able to let the passenger assistant know about some strategies they have found useful when Child V has become distressed when travelling.

Part 4: local school travel policies

117. Local authorities must:

- publish their school travel policy for children of ***compulsory school age***[22]on their website;
- make paper copies available on request;
- include information about their school travel policy in their composite prospectus for school admissions (which must be published by **12 September** each year);
- include information about travel to school for children with ***special educational needs*** and ***disabilities*** in their ***SEND Local Offer***.

118. Local authorities should keep their school travel policy under regular review to ensure it continues to meet local needs and comply with statutory requirements. An up-to-date policy must be available by **19 September** each year so that ***parents*** may take it into account when deciding which schools to apply for during the ***normal admissions round***.

119. An effective school travel policy will:

- be easy for ***parents*** to find on the local authority's website;
- be clearly written so that ***parents*** may easily understand it – local authorities should pay careful attention to the wording, layout and length of their school travel policies;
- enable ***parents*** to understand the circumstances in which a child is eligible for free travel to school, or any help the local authority provides using its discretionary power;
- tell ***parents*** how and when they should apply for free travel to school (or apply for help the local authority provides using its discretionary power);
- tell ***parents*** how they may appeal against the local authority's decision in relation to travel to school for their child.

120. A checklist of the necessary components of a school travel policy can be found in annex 5. Local authorities may find this helpful in ensuring their policies are lawful.

[22] This is required by regulation 8 and 9 of the School Information (England) Regulations 2008, and paragraphs 10 and 11 of schedule 3 to those regulations. In addition, regulation 5 and paragraphs 5 and 6 of schedule 2 to these regulations require local authorities to include information about their school travel policy in their composite prospectus for school admissions.

121. Local authorities may, if they wish, set their school travel policy out in more than one document but they should ensure that a reader of any of the documents is able to easily understand the basic provisions of the whole policy.

122. School travel policies may signpost ***parents*** of children who are not eligible for home-to-school travel to other sources of information about travel to school – for example, the websites of local travel providers.

School travel and school admissions

123. ***Parents*** should consider how their children will get to school at the time they are choosing which schools to apply for. For some, the availability of free travel to school may be an important factor in their decision making. Information about travel to school should, therefore, be easily available to ***parents*** during the ***normal admissions round***.

124. ***Parents*** will need to easily understand:

- how they can find out which school is their nearest suitable school for school travel purposes, including where this may not be the same as the nearest school for admissions purposes; and
- whether the local authority expects ***parents*** to include their nearest suitable school in their application for a school place if they intend to apply for free travel (see paragraphs 42 to 46 for more information on this).

Policy changes

125. Where they propose changes to their school travel policy which may affect children's eligibility for transport, local authorities should consult locally. As a minimum, this should include consulting:

- schools whose pupils will be affected by the proposed changes, including those located in other local authority areas;
- ***parents*** whose children will (or may) be affected by the proposed changes, including those whose children attend school in a neighbouring authority, and those whose children may be affected in the future – for example, because they live in the catchment area of, or attend the feeder school of, a school affected by the proposed changes; and
- the local ***Parent Carer Forum.***

126. Consultation should last for at least 28 working days during term time. Local authorities may not consider it necessary to consult on minor amendments or corrections.

127. Local authorities should give careful consideration to:

- the impact proposed changes to their policy will have on ***parents***' choice of school, particularly where travel arrangements have been made to support ***parents***' preference for their children to attend a school with a ***designated religious character*** (some such arrangements are associated with long-standing local agreements about the siting of schools);
- the financial impact the changes will have on affected families, paying particular attention to the potential impact of any changes on children from low-income families;
- the impact the changes will have on people with protected characteristics – see annex 2 for further information about protected characteristics and the public sector equality duty.

128. Wherever possible, local authorities should phase in changes so that children who begin attending a school under one set of travel arrangements continue to benefit from those arrangements until they leave that school.

Part 5: appeals

129. All local authorities have a procedure for handling complaints about the services they provide. ***Parents*** should be able to complain about the service they have received in relation to travel to school. They should also be able to appeal a decision taken by the local authority about their child's travel to school.

130. It is for local authorities to determine which matters should be handled as complaints and which should be handled as appeals. Typically, matters such as whether a child is eligible for free travel, or whether the travel the local authority has arranged is suitable for the child's needs will be handled as appeals. Matters such as the punctuality of a school bus, or a delay in replying to correspondence from a ***parent*** will be handled as complaints. The guidance in this part relates to appeals.

131. An effective appeals policy will:

- be easy for ***parents*** to find on the local authority's website;
- be clearly written so that ***parents*** may easily understand it;
- tell ***parents*** the circumstances in which they may appeal the local authority's decision;
- tell ***parents*** how and when they may appeal.

132. It is for local authorities to determine how their appeals process will operate. We recommend they adopt the two-stage process set out below. It will be similar to many local authority complaints procedures. The timings are recommended, not mandatory. Some appeals may be dealt with more quickly. Some complex cases may take longer but should still be completed as soon as possible. A flow chart setting out the suggested appeals process in included in annex 6.

Stage one: review by a senior officer

133. Stage one provides an opportunity for the local authority's school travel team to review their decision. The process should allow a ***parent*** 20 working days from the day they received the local authority's school travel decision to submit a written appeal. This should explain why the ***parent*** believes the local authority should review its decision and include any information they would like to be considered as part of the review.

134. A senior officer in the local authority's school travel team (or in the team's line management chain), should review the decision in light of the information provided by the ***parent***. Some local authorities arrange for the review to be conducted by a panel of senior officers, rather than an individual, but this is not mandatory.

135. Within 20 working days of receiving a ***parent***'s appeal, the senior officer(s) should notify the ***parent*** in writing of the outcome of the appeal. They should clearly explain:

- whether they have upheld the local authority's original decision;
- why they reached that decision;
- how the review was conducted;
- the factors considered in reaching their decision;
- any other agencies or departments that were consulted as part of the review.

136. Where they have upheld the original decision, they should also explain how the ***parent*** may escalate their appeal to stage two of the process.

Stage two: review by an independent appeal panel

137. Stage two provides for impartial re-consideration of the case. The process should allow a ***parent*** 20 working days from the day they received the outcome of stage one to notify the local authority in writing that they wish to escalate the matter to stage two, and to provide any additional information that they wish to be considered in light of the stage one decision.

138. The local authority should make arrangements for an independent panel to review the case. The panel members should be independent of the original decision-making process but need not be independent of the local authority. They should have the knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that the local authority complies with its statutory duties, that a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of ***parents*** and of the local authority, and that children are not placed at unnecessary risk.

139. The local authority should enable any ***parent*** that wishes to, to attend an appeal hearing, virtually or in person, to present their case. Where a ***parent*** does not wish or is unable to attend a hearing, the panel should make its decision based on the ***parent***'s written representations.

140. The review should take place within 40 working days of the ***parent*** notifying the local authority that they wish to escalate their appeal to stage 2. The panel should consider information provided at stage one of the appeal as well as any additional information provided and any oral representations made at stage two.

141. Within 5 working days of completing its considerations, the appeal panel should notify the ***parent*** in writing of the outcome of their review. They should clearly explain:

- whether they have upheld the local authority's original decision;
- why they reached that decision;
- how the review was conducted;
- the factors considered in reaching their decision;
- which other agencies or departments were consulted as part of the review, if any.

142. The local authority should make the ***parent*** aware that they may complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman if they believe the local authority has made a mistake in the way it has handled their case. If a ***parent*** considers the decision of the independent appeals panel to be flawed on public law grounds, they may apply for a judicial review.

Part 6: sustainable school travel

Local authorities have a duty to promote the use of sustainable travel on journeys to and from places of education in their area[23]. Sustainable travel in this context is that which may improve:

- the physical wellbeing of users, and/or
- the environmental wellbeing of all or part of the local authority's area.[24]

Sustainable travel benefits children and everyone around them by helping people keep healthy, improving mental wellbeing, easing congestion and reducing toxins in the air.

In this guidance, 'sustainable travel' includes:

- public transport and shared transport'
- active travel – ***walking***, ***wheeling***, cycling and scooting.

Support is available to local authorities through organisations and initiatives such as:

- Modeshift STARS;
- Bikeability;
- Living Streets; and
- School Streets.

These are supported by the Department for Transport and Active Travel England. Further information can be found in annex 2.

143. The duty to promote the use of sustainable travel applies in relation to travel to and from:

- schools;
- further education institutions;
- 16 to 19 Academies;

[23] This duty is set out in section 508A (1) (c) of the Education Act 1996.
[24] This definition is set out in section 508A (3) of the Education Act 1996.

- any place where children and young people receive education by virtue of arrangements made in accordance with section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1996[25].

144. This duty applies to young people of sixth form age as well as children of ***compulsory school age*** and is also covered in the statutory guidance for local authorities on travel for post-16 students.

145. Local authorities must:

- **assess** the school travel needs of children of ***compulsory school age*** and persons of sixth form age resident in their areas (paragraphs 146 to 147);
- **assess** the facilities and services for sustainable modes of travel to, from and within their area (paragraphs 148 to 150);
- **promote** the use of sustainable travel to places of education in their area; and
- **publish** a document which sets out their strategy to promote the use of sustainable travel to places of education in their area (paragraphs 151 to 155).

Assessing school travel needs

146. The school travel needs of a local authority's area relate to journeys to and from places of education undertaken by children and young people who are:

- resident in the local authority's area, or
- live outside the local authority's area but travel to a place of education in the area.

147. Local authorities should consider any information provided by schools and colleges when assessing school travel needs. Where schools have travel plans, these will include information that will be useful to the local authority.

[25] Section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education for children of ***compulsory school age*** who would otherwise not receive suitable education for reasons such as illness or exclusion.

The Modeshift STARS Education system gathers much of the data that local authorities need to fulfil the sustainable school travel duty. Each participating school:

- provides data on how their pupils travel to school;
- conducts an audit of their sustainable travel and travel infrastructure; and
- provides details on the number and type of sustainable travel initiatives that they deliver.

School A is a Modeshift STARS Primary School of the Year. This recognises their excellence in growing the amount of sustainable travel to their school. The school is situated in an area of high deprivation; they knew some of their pupils may not have access to cycles and chose to concentrate on promoting the benefits of ***walking*** through ***walking*** programmes and Park and Stride points. The school also worked with other local schools to purchase a fleet of cycles to share amongst pupils and secured funding to run a community cycling hub.

Assessing facilities and services to support sustainable school travel

148. The assessment should show how places of education are served by:

- bus and other public transport routes;
- school travel arranged by the local authority, and any that may be provided by education settings;
- safe and accessible ***walking*** and cycling routes including footways, footpaths, off-road cycle tracks and bridleways;
- road safety and accessibility features such as crossing points and patrols, dropped kerbs, traffic calming measures and speed limits;
- arrangements such as:
    - cycle training;
    - road safety training;
    - independent travel training;
    - ***walking*** promotion schemes;
    - car sharing schemes;
    - park and stride/ride schemes;
    - cycle and scooter parking.

149. It should also take account of other factors that may influence travel choices, such as:

- the quality of the facilities and services and their suitability for the age and ability of the children they serve;
- perceptions of personal safety which may be influenced by factors such as:
    - volume of traffic, speed limits and parking around school gates;
    - behaviour on school travel, public transport and the ***walked*** route to school;
- the travel needs of children with ***special educational needs***, ***disabilities*** or ***mobility problems*** and whether they would benefit from independent travel training (see paragraphs 55 to 60 for more information about independent travel training).

150. Where schools have travel plans, they may help local authorities understand any specific local issues, the views of schools and the perceptions of pupils and ***parents.***

Local authorities may wonder what they can do to promote active travel for children who live a long way from their school. Schemes such as 'Park and Stride' support all children to take part in active travel. Families park away from the school gates and ***walk***, ***wheel***, cycle or scoot the rest of the way. Advice on Park and Stride and other active travel initiatives for schools is available from Living Streets. Further information on Living Streets can be found in annex 3.

Sustainable modes of travel strategy

151. Local authorities must publish a sustainable modes of travel strategy for each ***academic year***. The strategy should:

- set out the local authority's vision, objectives and work programme for:
    - improving the infrastructure for sustainable travel;
    - promoting sustainable travel to places of education;
- aim to provide:
    - health benefits for children and their families through active journeys, and
    - environmental improvements through reduced congestion and improved air quality.

152. Local authorities must:

- publish their strategy on their website;
- make paper copies available on request;
- include information about their strategy in their composite prospectus for school admissions.

153. Local authorities are not required to annually conduct a formal review of their sustainable modes of travel strategy, but they should keep it under regular review to

ensure it continues to meet local needs and comply with statutory requirements. The most up to date policy must be published by the **19 September** each year.

154. Local authorities may find it helpful to make links between their strategy and other local strategies such as the Local Transport Plan, and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

155. Modeshift can provide guidance and support to help local authorities produce their strategy. Further information on Modeshift and links to other sources of information can be found in annex 3.

Annex 1: explanation of terms used in this guidance

academic year	Defined in the School Information (England) Regulations 2008 as a period commencing with 1st August and ending with the next 31st July.
belief	Defined by section 509AD (3) of the Education Act 1996 as any religious or philosophical belief. A reference to belief includes a reference to lack of belief.
compulsory school age	Set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and The Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998. A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday, or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day. The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they reach age 16.
dedicated transport	Transport which exclusively carries children and young people to and from their place of education and cannot be boarded by members of the public.
designated religious character	Schools with a designated religious character are schools which are designated as such under section 69(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. They may deliver religious education and collective worship in accordance with the tenets of their faith. They may also prioritise admissions for pupils of their faith and recruit staff on the basis of their faith.
disability	Defined in section 6 of the Equality Act 2010. A person has a disability if they have (a) a physical or mental impairment, and (b) that impairment has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A chronic physical or mental health condition may constitute a disability. Not all disabilities are visible.

Education Health and Care (EHC) plan	An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has special educational needs or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies. Home-to-school travel arrangements are not normally considered to be special educational provision. In exceptional cases travel arrangements may be deemed to constitute special educational provision because they fulfil an education or training function. In these circumstances the travel arrangements should be recorded in section F of the EHC plan. Travel costs can also be provided as part of a Personal Budget, where one is agreed and included in the EHC plan as part of the special educational provision. This should be recorded in section J of the plan.
home	The place where a child is habitually and normally resident. Local authorities should make clear in their school travel policies how they will determine a child's home address for the purposes of assessing their eligibility for travel, including in circumstances where their parents do not live together and the child spends part of the week with each parent. In these circumstances, there is no expectation that local authorities should provide travel to and from two separate addresses.
individual healthcare plans	Drawn up by schools in consultation with parents and relevant health professionals. They capture the key information and actions that are required to effectively support a child with medical needs in school. For more information about supporting children with medical needs in schools see Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. This guidance suggests that schools may wish their policies on supporting pupils with medical conditions to refer to home-to-school travel.
licensing authority	Taxi and private hire operators and drivers must be licensed by a local licensing authority – usually a unitary authority or district council in a local area, but Transport for London is the licensing authority for all London boroughs.

medical need	A health need that has the potential to put a child's safety or wellbeing at risk while travelling to and from school.
mobility problem	A physical impairment that impacts a child's ability to walk to school.
normal admissions round	The period during which parents apply for school places. The deadlines for applications are 31 October for secondary school places and 15 January for primary places. Places are offered to parents on National Offer Day. Secondary National Offer Day is 1 March, or the next working day. Primary National Offer Day is 16 April, or the next working day.
parent	References to parent in this document include birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, carers or legal guardians with parental responsibility.
parent carer forum	Voluntary organisations made up of parents and carers from a local area who have children with SEND. They work with local authorities, schools and other professionals to support the strategic participation of parents, carers and their families in local SEND policy service and delivery.
private hire vehicles (PHVs)	May carry up to 8 passengers and can only be pre-booked via a licensed private hire vehicle operator. See also the definition of ***taxi*** below.
religion	Section 509AD (3) of the Education Act 1996 defines religion as any religion. A reference to religion includes a reference to lack of religion. See also definition of ***belief*** above.
road route	A route passable by a motor vehicle.
safeguarding	Defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as: • protecting children from maltreatment • preventing the impairment of their mental and physical health and development • ensuring they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
school day	Schools are responsible for deciding when their school day will start and end. The expectation is that local authorities will arrange

	travel for eligible children to enable them to attend for the 'normal' school day. Schools should organise the school day and school week in the best interest of their pupil cohort. They are expected to act reasonably when making changes to their school day or week. It is unacceptable for them to shorten their day or week unless it is a direct action to enhance pupils' education.
selective school	A school that can select all or some of the children it admits by testing for aptitude or ability, for example a grammar school.
SEND Local Offer	Sets out, in one place, information about the provision local authorities expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have an EHC plan. Further information can be found in the Special education needs and disability code of practice: 0 – 25 Years.
special educational needs (SEN)	Defined in section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014. A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or ***disability*** which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
taxis	Also known as hackney carriages, black cabs and cabs. May carry up to 8 passengers. May be pre-booked or can be hired immediately by hailing on the street or at a rank. See also definition of ***private hire vehicle*** above.
walk	In this guidance walk has its literal meaning. A child could not be considered to be able to walk to school if they would need to travel in a wheelchair, but a local authority may decide, for example, that suitable travel arrangements for a child would be an assistant to push them in a wheelchair.
wheel	Refers to people who use wheelchairs and mobility scooters and may not identify with walking.

Annex 2: further information

Equalities legislation and home-to-school travel

Local authorities must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the European Convention on Human Rights (which is incorporated into UK law by the Human Rights Act 1998) when exercising their school travel functions.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act (the Act) prohibits a local authority from discriminating against someone on the grounds of a 'protected characteristic'. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Through an exemption in Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Act, the discrimination provisions on age and ***religion*** or ***belief*** do not extend to a local authority's school travel arrangements. So, for example, a local authority would not be unlawfully discriminating on ***religion*** or ***belief*** grounds if it arranged a school bus to a school with a ***designated religious character*** but not to another school in the area.

The Act also places a legal obligation on local authorities to comply with the public sector equality duty. This means they must consider how their school travel decisions and policies affect people with protected characteristics, and must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination against people with protected characteristics;
- promote equality of opportunity between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the ECHR gives ***parents*** the right to have their children educated in accordance with their religious and other views.

In addition, section 509AD of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to have regard to any wish of a ***parent*** to have their child educated at a school based on their ***religion*** or ***belief*** when exercising their school travel duties.

This does not mean that ***parents*** have a specific right to have their children educated at such a school, or to have travel arrangements made by their local authority to and from any such school.

Local authorities should, nonetheless, have regard to the provisions of the ECHR and section 509AD when considering any request made by a ***parent*** for travel assistance to a school they have selected on the grounds of their ***religion*** or ***belief***.

They should not, for example, have a blanket policy that they never provide travel assistance to schools with a ***designated religious character***. Should they receive a request from a ***parent*** for travel to such a school, they should consider whether it would be appropriate to exercise their discretionary power.

Parent's responsibility to ensure their child receives education

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 requires ***parents*** to ensure their children of ***compulsory school age*** receive a suitable full-time education. If a child of ***compulsory school age*** is registered at school but fails to attend school regularly, their ***parents*** may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Under section 444 (3B) of the same act, ***parents*** will have a defence in law against such prosecution if the child is eligible for free travel to school and the local authority has failed to make home-to-school travel arrangements for them.

Children registered at more than one qualifying school

Some children may be registered at more than one qualifying school, for example if they attend a hospital school or a special school on temporary basis. Children of no fixed abode may be registered at more than one qualifying school because their ***parent's*** trade or business requires them to travel from place to place This is known as dual registration. Children with ***EHC plans*** may have a 'dual placement' and attend more than one school[26].

The School Travel (Pupils with Dual Registration) (England) Regulations 2007 clarify a child's eligibility for free travel to school in these circumstances. Where a child is registered at two qualifying schools which are not pupil referral units, the local authority's duty to provide free travel to school applies to whichever of the schools the child is attending on any ***school day*** on which travel is required.

[26] See paragraph 9.85 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is a check of a person's criminal record. There are 4 types of DBS check:

- a basic check which shows unspent convictions and unspent conditional cautions;
- a standard check which shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings;
- an enhanced check which shows the same as a standard check plus any information held by local police that is considered relevant;
- an enhanced check with a check of the relevant barred list, which shows the same as an enhanced check plus whether the applicant is on the barred list.

The DBS keeps two barred lists – one of people who have been barred from working in regulated activity with children, and one for people barred from working in regulated activity with adults.

People who carry out regulated activity are eligible for an enhanced check with a check of the relevant barred list. It is a criminal offence for a barred person to work in regulated activity and for an employer to knowingly employ a barred person to work in regulated activity.

'Driving a vehicle which is being used only for the purpose of conveying children and any person supervising or caring for the children'[27] is regulated activity if:

- the driver is doing it as part of their job – paid or otherwise[28], and
- it is carried out by the same person once a week or more often, or on more than 3 days in a 30-day period.

Dedicated school transport will almost always be regulated activity.

Taxis, private hire vehicles and public service vehicles

Taxi and ***private hire vehicle*** drivers must be licensed. ***Licensing authorities*** must not issue a licence to an applicant unless they are satisfied that they are a fit and proper person to hold such a licence, and they should revoke a licence if they consider a driver is no longer a fit and proper person. Each ***licensing authority*** decides on the requirements that applicants must meet for them to issue a licence.

All ***licensing authorities*** require an enhanced DBS check and most include a check of the children's and adults' barred lists. They may also require a medical check, a knowledge test and a driving test. Vehicles used as ***taxis*** and ***private hire vehicles*** are

[27] Paragraph 2(1)(f) of Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
[28] Regulation 3 of The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009.

usually required to pass an annual MOT test[29]. They must also be inspected and licensed by a ***licensing authority***. The ***licensing authority*** may set additional requirements, for example around roadworthiness, comfort and cleanliness, and safety and security.

Operators of buses and coaches must have a public service vehicles operator's licence issued by the Traffic Commissioners. Vehicles must have an annual MOT test and operators are required to keep them in a roadworthy condition. They may be inspected by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA). If local authorities have any concerns about a bus or coach operator, they can report it directly to DVSA.

Professional bus and coach drivers are required to hold a Driver's Certificate of Professional Competence. This requires them to undertake 35 hours of approved training every five years. Training providers offer a range of courses from a set syllabus. No specific part of the syllabus is mandatory. The syllabus includes, amongst other things:

- ability to assess emergency situations;
- ability to anticipate, assess and adapt to risks in traffic;
- ability to ensure passenger comfort and safety.

Organisations that provide transport on a 'not-for-profit' basis can apply for permits under section 19 or section 22 of the Transport Act 1985. These permits allow the holder to operate transport services for hire or reward without the need for a full public service vehicle operator's (PSV 'O') licence. Further information is available from the Department for Transport.

Seatbelts and standing passengers

All minibuses, coaches and buses – except for buses designed for urban use with standing passengers – must be fitted with seatbelts. This means that many vehicles used for travel to school will have seatbelts fitted.

Buses designed for urban use with standing passengers (the types of bus typically used as public service buses) do not have seatbelts fitted and may also be used for travel to school.

Local authorities and schools that choose to arrange home-to-school travel for their pupils may, if they wish, specify in their contracts with school travel providers that they will only accept vehicles fitted with seat belts. In deciding whether to do so, they will need to consider factors such as:

[29] Legislation that exempts new vehicles from the MOT test applies to PHVs but not taxis.

- the speed at which the vehicle will be travelling, and at which other vehicles on the same route may be travelling;
- the likelihood of an accident happening on the route the vehicle will be travelling (local authorities may find road accident statistics helpful);
- the cost and availability of suitable vehicles fitted with seat belts.

It is also important to note that:

- although primarily designed for use on urban routes, public service buses are also widely used to provide public bus services in rural areas;
- public service buses are generally a very safe mode of travel with a very low casualty rate.

The Public Service Vehicles (Carrying Capacity) Regulations 1984 provide that three children under the age of 14 may count as two passengers when travelling on a service bus and occupying seats which do not have seatbelts fitted (for example, on a service bus they may occupy a bench seat designed for two adults). Few of this type of vehicle are now in service. Local authorities should only make use of this concession on an exceptional basis.

Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR)

The Government's vision is for disabled people to have the same access to transport as everyone else[30]. The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR) require buses and coaches with more than 22 seats, used on local or scheduled services (including home-to-school journeys) that carry at least one fare-paying passenger to have features which enable disabled people to board, alight and travel in comfort and safety.

When commissioning home-to-school services that are in scope of PSVAR, local authorities should procure compliant vehicles where possible, but may procure non-compliant vehicles where necessary if they are covered by medium-term exemptions.

Medium-term exemptions are valid from 1 July 2022 until 31 July 2026. These are qualified exemptions that require operators to take specific steps to make their fleet progressively more compliant. Further information is available at Apply for an exemption from PSVAR accessibility regulations for home to school or rail replacement services.

The Government has committed to review PSVAR by the end of 2023.

[30] More information is available in the 2018 Inclusive Transport Strategy.

Annex 3: additional resources

Assessment of Walked Routes to Schools Guidelines	Produced by Road Safety GB (a road safety organisation made up of representatives from groups across the UK, including local authority road safety teams) to provide advice to local authorities on assessing the risk posed to pedestrians by traffic.
DBS checks	DBS checks: detailed guidance
Behaviour in Schools	Behaviour in schools
Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards	Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: best practice
LGA safeguarding guidance	School transport guidance note | Local Government Association Provides guidance on the role of local authorities and licensing authorities with regard to safeguarding and taxi and private hire vehicles used for travel to school.
Climate change: a strategy for education and children's services	Sustainability and climate change strategy Includes the Department for Education's commitment to support the Department for Transport in increasing active travel to school.
Active Travel England	Active Travel England The Government's executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England.
The second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy	The second cycling and walking investment strategy Sets out the Government's ambition for walking and cycling until 2025. Includes an objective to increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 who usually walk to school from 49% to 55% in 2025.
Planning local cycling and walking networks	Planning local cycling and walking networks Guidance and tools to help local authorities plan cycling and walking infrastructure.

The Healthy Schools Rating Scheme	Healthy schools rating scheme A voluntary scheme for schools that recognises and encourages their contribution to supporting pupils' health and wellbeing. Includes active travel to school.
Bikeability	Cycle Training for Everyone – Deliver Safer Training | Bikeability Department for Transport's flagship national cycle training programme aimed at children, young people and families in England.
British Cycling	Home – British Cycling National governing body for cycling. Can provide advice on cycling to school and cycle training.
Cycling UK	Cycling UK | The UK's cycling charity Enabling and inspiring more people to cycle more often, including to school.
Modeshift	Modeshift – Sustainable Travel – UK's leading sustainable travel organisation Membership organisation that shares best practice in the delivery of sustainable travel. Over 100 local authorities are members. Modeshift STARS – Travel Plan in Education, Business & Communities The Modeshift STARS Education scheme supports schools and local authorities to develop and monitor school travel plans and provides a tool for local authorities to assess the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure in their areas and the school travel needs of pupils.
Sustrans	Home – Sustrans.org.uk Sustainable transport charity that provides a range of advice and support to enable children to walk, wheel and cycle to school safely.
Living Streets	Living Streets

	Charity for everyday walking. Runs the annual WOW Walk to School challenge and offers resources and support to schools and local authorities.
Armed Forces Covenant Duty	Armed Forces Covenant Duty Places a legal obligation on local authorities to have due regard to the Covenant principles when exercising certain functions, including their home-to-school travel functions.
Driving school minibuses	Driving school minibuses advice Advice on when a school employee with a car driving licence may drive a minibus.
Length of the school week: minimum expectation	Length of the school week: minimum expectation The Government has set the expectation that all state-funded mainstream schools will deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours by September 2023.
REAL disability equality training	REAL training: bus and coach modules Training to improve confidence and skills in delivering inclusive journeys for disabled passengers.
Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years	SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years
SEND and alternative provision improvement plan	SEND and alternative provision improvement plan
THINK! - the government's road safety campaign	Education resources – THINK! Advice for road users – THINK!
Travel to education and training for	Transport to education and training for people aged 16 and over

young people aged 16 and over	
Trust quality descriptions	Commissioning high-quality trusts
Alternatives to Seatbelt Buckle Guards: Good Practice Guide for Local Authorities	Alternatives to Seatbelt Buckle Guards Good Practice Guide for Local Authorities Guidance from the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO)on minimising the use of buckle guards. Includes good practice in managing behaviour that is linked to child's special educational needs or disability.

Education Act 1996	
Section 7	Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age
Section 19 (1)	Provision of education in pupil referral units
Section 444 (3)	Offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil
Section 508A	Duty to promote sustainable modes of travel
Section 508B	Travel arrangements for eligible children
Section 508C	Travel arrangements for other children
Section 508D	Secretary of State's duty to issue guidance in relation to sections 508B and 508C
Section 509AD	Duty to have regard to religion or belief in exercise of travel functions
Schedule 35B	Meaning of eligible child
Other relevant legislation	

The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000
The School Travel (Pupils with Dual Registration) (England) Regulations 2007
School Information (England) Regulations 2008

Annex 4: questions local authorities may find helpful when reviewing their policies and procedures

Transparency

- Is the school travel policy easy for parents to find and understand?
- Is it available to parents at the point they are choosing which schools to apply for?
- Is it easy for parents to find out which is their nearest suitable school?
- Is it easy for parents to find out how and when to apply for travel, and when they can expect to receive a response?
- Is it easy for parents to find out how to appeal the local authority's decision, or complain about their service?
- If a parent's application is refused, or their appeal is unsuccessful, are the reasons communicated to them clearly?
- If the local authority is unable to comply with expected timescales, does it let parents know and explain why?

Fairness

- Does the local authority always follow its published procedures when handling applications, appeals and complaints?
- Does the authority consider all relevant information when making decisions in response to applications, appeals and complaints? Are irrelevant considerations ignored and assumptions avoided?
- Does the authority keep an open mind when considering applications, appeals and complaints?
- At appeal, are parents given sufficient opportunity to make their case? Are they able to attend an appeal hearing, virtually or in person, at stage 2 if they wish to?
- Does the local authority keep a clear and accurate record of the information it considered during an appeal, the decision that it reached and the reasons for that decision?

Annex 5: home-to-school travel policy checklist

A local authority school travel policy needs to contain a number of elements to be considered lawful. There are other elements a school travel policy should include to ensure it is clear and easy for parents to understand. The main elements are listed below, but this is not an exhaustive list. Authorities may add elements they consider necessary, provided they are lawful.

☐ The policy includes a clear introduction explaining what the reader can expect to learn from the document.

☐ The policy clearly explains all four categories of eligible children (statutory walking distances; special educational needs, disability and mobility problems; unsafe walking routes; and extended rights).

☐ Where a local authority has a separate policy document for a category of eligibility (for example, special educational needs) they should refer to this in the main policy so parents reading one document may easily understand all the categories of eligibility.

☐ The policy includes information on how a parent can apply for travel to school.

☐ The policy clearly explains terms such as ‘home address’ and ‘nearest suitable school’. It explains how, in instances of dual living arrangements such as equal shared custody for separated parents, the local authority determines the child’s home.

☐ Where appropriate, the policy explains that a child’s nearest school for school travel purposes may not be their nearest suitable school for admissions purposes.

☐ The policy clearly explains how a child’s eligibility will be assessed. This includes how distances will be measured and how route safety is assessed.

☐ The policy clearly explains that the eligibility of children with special educational needs, a disability or mobility problems will be assessed on an individual basis.

☐ The policy clearly explains the ways in which travel is provided, for example, passes for public service buses, dedicated school buses, taxis.

☐ The policy clearly explains any other arrangements that are in place for children who are not eligible for free home-to-school travel, such as spare seat schemes, and any charges that may be made for these.

☐ The policy clearly explains how a parent may appeal the local authority's decision in response to their application for travel to school.

Annex 6: flowchart of the suggested appeals process

Officer A declines a parent's school travel application or offers travel arrangements that a parent considers unsuitable.

⇩

Within 20 working days of receiving Officer A's decision, the parent submits their written appeal.

⇩

Stage one: review by a senior officer
Within 20 working days of receiving the parent's request, Officer B (a senior officer) reviews Officer A's decision and notifies the parent in writing of the outcome.

⇩

Within 20 working days of receiving Officer B's decision, the parent submits written notification that they wish to escalate the matter to stage 2.

⇩

Stage two: review by an independent appeal panel
Within 40 days of receiving the parent's notification, an independent appeal panel considers written/oral representations from the parent, Officer A and Officer B, and reaches a decision.

⇩

Within 5 working days of reaching their decision, the independent appeal panel notifies the parent in writing.

⇩

A parent may make a complaint to the LGSCO if they feel the local authority has made a mistake in the way it has handled their case; or may request a judicial review if they believe the decision to refuse travel is flawed on public law grounds.

Department for Education

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Appendix C

Proposed:

Home to School Travel Policy - for children from Reception to Year 11

DRAFT

July 2024

Implementation date:1st September 2024

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North Yorkshire Council
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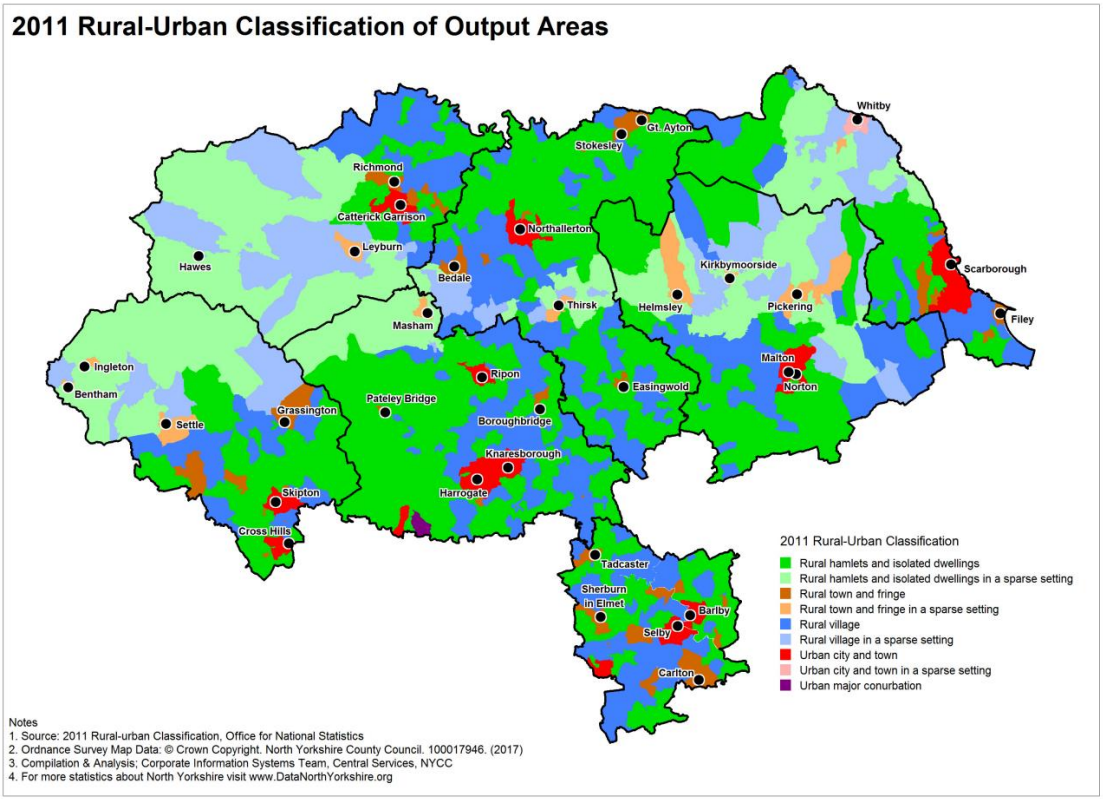
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Appendix

Background

North Yorkshire Council is responsible for setting a Home to School Travel Policy which ensures the equitable provision of transport to those who qualify under the Council's statutory duties and to explain when discretionary transport provision might be available.

North Yorkshire is England's largest county, stretching from the North Sea coast to within 12 miles of Morecambe Bay and from the South of the M62 to the edge of Teesside. It is sparsely populated with some 600,000 people across 3,300 square miles; with 40% of the area being within either the North Yorkshire Moors or the Yorkshire Dales National Parks and over half the population living in areas classed as "sparse" or "super sparse". Around 20% of the population live in the two major urban centres – Harrogate and Scarborough.



There are approximately 125,000 children and young people aged 0-19 in the county, of those 79,000 are of school age, including 4,800 in post-16 education. There are 43 secondary schools (including a University Technical College), 296 primary schools and 10 special schools. North Yorkshire Council transports approximately 10,000 pupils per day to school or college.

About this Policy

North Yorkshire Home to School travel policy is based on the Education Act 1996 and the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, published in June 2023 (revised January 2024).

The policy is for children and young people, parents, schools, and other professionals to inform them how North Yorkshire Council (the Council) has implemented the statutory guidance, when carrying out its duties in relation to:

- arrangements for travel to school for children of compulsory school age;
- the promotion of sustainable travel to school

There is separate guidance on travel to post-16 education and training. This is published on the North Yorkshire Council website on or before 31st May each year.

This policy applies to residents of North Yorkshire only.

Review date:

This guidance will be kept under review and updated when necessary.

Minor changes will be published alongside the guidance as an amendment to policy.

Major changes will be consulted upon, and the policy amended to reflect this.

What legislation does this policy adhere to?

This policy has regard to the duties placed on Local Authorities in relation to the following legislation governing travel to school for children of compulsory school age, in particular:

- section 508A of the Education Act 1996: sustainable travel to school;
- section 508B of and Schedule 35B to the Education Act 1996: travel arrangements for eligible children;
- section 508C of the Education Act 1996: travel arrangements for other children;
- Section 509A of the Education Act 1997; travel arrangements for children attending early years settings
- Equality Act 2010
- Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970
- the School Information (England) Regulations 2008: publication of informal arrangements.

Section A: Eligibility

1. Eligible Children

The Council must make free-of-charge travel arrangements to facilitate the attendance at school of eligible children resident in North Yorkshire.

A child is eligible if they are of

A: compulsory school age (term after the 5th birthday to 30th June in year 11)

and:

B: attend their nearest suitable school to their home address

and:

- live more than the statutory walking distance from that school (section 3*)*, **or**
- could not reasonably be expected to walk to that school because of their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problem, even if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult (section 4*),* **or**
- would not be able to walk to that school in reasonable safety, even if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult (section 5*).*

There are 'extended rights' to free travel to school for children from low-income households (section 6)

As a discretionary element the Council will extend the eligibility age from the start of Reception year instead of the term after the child's 5th Birthday or in some circumstances to include children attending Early Year settings.

In most cases, a child's eligibility for free school travel will be assessed following the normal school admissions round once parents have been offered a place for their child to begin primary school, or transfer to secondary school.

In some cases, eligibility will need to be assessed at other times of the school year, for example due to a family moving house.

It is parents' responsibility to inform the Council of any changes in their circumstances which may affect their eligibility for travel assistance.

Eligibility will normally be calculated using the home address provided at the time of application for a school place or following a change of circumstances.

In line with DfE (Department for Education) guidance, transport will only be assessed and, if eligible, provided from one home address.

2. Suitable School

A suitable school for the purpose of applying this policy is a 'qualifying school' that is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

It should also be suitable for the child's sex, for example a girls' school could not be considered the nearest suitable school for a boy.

'Suitable school' does not mean the most suitable school for a child, or one that the parent considers suitable. The nearest secondary school to the home of a child of secondary school age, for example, will almost always be their nearest suitable school (provided it would be able to admit them).

A nearest suitable school may also be in a neighbouring Local Authority.

Qualifying schools are:

- community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools;
- academies (including those which are free schools, university technical colleges, studio schools and special schools);
- alternative provision academies;
- community or foundation special schools;
- non-maintained special schools;
- pupil referral units;
- maintained nursery schools (where attended by a child of compulsory school age);
- children receiving early years provision otherwise than at school and
- city technology colleges and city colleges for the technology of the arts.

For children with special educational needs, an independent school is also a qualifying school if it is the only school named in their Education, Health, and Care plan (EHCP), or where more than one school is named in the EHCP, the school nearest to the home address named in the EHCP will be the qualifying school.

Where a child's nearest school is oversubscribed and an application has been made for the school during the normal admissions round, and the admission authority is unable to offer them a place, then the next nearest school with places available is their nearest suitable school for school travel purposes.

When a child moves into the area, outside the normal admissions round, the suitable school for transport purposes is the nearest provision which can offer a school place. The eligibility criteria will then be applied.

Where a child changes preference of school during the school year, eligibility will be assessed based on the ability to secure a place at their nearest qualifying school.

The nearest qualifying school for school travel purposes **may not** be the catchment school used for admissions purposes.

3. Statutory Walking Distances

Statutory walking distances are used to determine whether a child is eligible for free travel to school.

Where a child lives within the statutory walking distance (and is not eligible for free travel on any of the other grounds set out in this guidance) the parent is responsible for arranging their child's travel to and from school. There is no expectation that the child will walk, it is for the parent to determine what arrangements would be suitable for their child.

A child under the age of 8 is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school

- if it is more than 2 miles from their home.

A child aged 8 years or over is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school

- if it is more than 3 miles from their home.

As a discretionary element the Council will extend the 2 miles statutory walking distance to the end of the academic year (year 3) instead of the child's 8th birthday.

The Council assesses whether the distance between a child's home and their nearest suitable school is further than the statutory walking distance. The assessed route will be the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk in reasonable safety.

When deciding on eligibility for assistance with transport, the measurement from home to school will be taken from the fixed point within the property to the nearest entrance point (not always the main entrance) to the school following the nearest available walked route, as defined by the Council's Geographical Information System (GIS).

The distance is not the shortest distance by road and the route may include footpaths, public rights of way, bridleways, and other pathways as identified on the GIS.

This means that in some cases all pupils living in the same street or even in adjoining properties may not be eligible for free home to school transport.

Eligibility on the grounds of statutory walking distance will be calculated on the home address provided at the time of application for a school place or following a change of circumstances.

4. Special Educational Needs, and/or Disability

A child is eligible for free travel to school if:

- they attend their nearest suitable school, and
- it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, and
- they could not reasonably be expected to walk there because of their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problem, even if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult

To be eligible on these grounds, a child does not need to:

- have an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan); or
- have travel to school specified in their EHC plan if they have one; or
- attend a special school; or
- live beyond the statutory walking distance.

Not every child with an EHC plan or who attends a special school will be eligible for free travel to school.

To qualify for eligibility on the grounds of special educational needs, disability or mobility problems, the Council is required to complete an individual assessment of the child, and this will take into account the child's physical ability to walk to school, and any health and safety issues related to their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problems.

The Council may take into account whether the child would be able to walk to school if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult. The Council will consider each case on its facts.

Information the Council may consider when assessing a child's eligibility may include (but is not restricted to) the following;

- information provided by the parent;
- information provided by any professionals involved in the child's care;
- information provided by the child's school;
- any relevant information in the child's EHC plan if they have one;
- any relevant information in their individual healthcare plan if they have one.

Parents that wish to request an application to be considered on the ground of Special Education Needs/Disability will need to apply online (a link will be inserted when the policy is published). Paper copies will be available on request

5. Unsafe Walking Route

A child is eligible for free travel to school if they attend their nearest suitable school, it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, and

- the nature of the route means they could not be expected to walk there in reasonable safety even if accompanied by an appropriate adult, and
- there is no alternative route within the statutory walking distance that they would be able to walk in reasonable safety, even if accompanied by an appropriate adult.

When assessing whether a route can be walked in reasonable safety, the Council will consider the whole of the route. This will include, for example, any sections that use footpaths or bridleways, as well as sections that use roads.

The Council uses the 'Assessment of Walked Routes to Schools Guidelines,' published by Road Safety GB, which provides advice to local authorities on assessing the risk posed to pedestrians by traffic. These guidelines can form the basis of the assessment and are used in conjunction with local context and knowledge.

Where a child is assessed as not eligible to transport and the parent/carer believes the route to the nearest school is unsafe they can request for the route to be assessed, by making a request online (a link will be inserted when the policy is published)

6. Extended Rights (Low Income)

Extended rights are designed to support low-income families to exercise school choice. A child is eligible for free travel to school if they are eligible for free school meals or a parent with whom they live receives the maximum Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit equivalent and they are:

- aged 8 or over but under 11, attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles from their home; or

- aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 12 miles from their home; or

- aged 11 to 16 years, attend a school that is more than 2 but not more than 15 miles from their home that their parents have chosen on the grounds of their religion or belief if, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer to their home.

When the Council assesses transport, for the purposes of extended rights, the first 2 miles will be the walking route. When assessing whether a child lives within the 6 or 15-mile upper limits, the Council will measure road routes only.

Where, during the course of an academic year, a child ceases to be eligible for free school meals, or their parent ceases to receive maximum Working Tax Credit, the Council will continue to provide free travel to school for the remainder of that academic year.

Working Tax Credit is being phased out as claimants are transferred onto Universal Credit. This does not change the way eligibility for extended rights to free travel to school is determined. It remains the case that children will be eligible for free home to school travel if they are eligible for free school meals or live with a parent who receives maximum Working Tax Credit. Once the roll out is complete, no further children will come forward who are eligible because their parents claim maximum Working Tax Credit.

Universal Credit: No child will cease to be eligible for extended rights because of the roll out of Universal Credit. Parents who claim maximum Working Tax Credit will have an earned income of no more than £7,400. This means their children will become eligible for free school meals (if they are not already) when they (the parent) are transferred to Universal Credit.

Where a child attends a North Yorkshire school and is in receipt of free school meals, the travel eligibility will, wherever possible, automatically be assessed under the criteria of extended rights. There are some limited circumstances where the parent may need to notify the Council of their free school meals status to enable that assessment to take place.

Where a child does not claim free school meals or is attending a school outside of North Yorkshire, please apply using the online form (a link will be inserted when the policy is published).

7. Further Information on Eligibility

Parental Preference

Parents have the right to preference any school of their choice when applying for a school place, they do not however have a right to free-of-charge travel arrangements to that school. Travel eligibility will be assessed in line with the eligibility criteria in this policy.

If the nearest school is undersubscribed with places available, then it will be the nearest suitable school for travel purposes, and free travel would not be provided to an alternative school that is further away.

If the nearest school is fully subscribed without places available, then the Council will need to assess if the child could have secured a place had one been applied for. This will be done by comparing the child with the last child to be offered a place at the school and determining which of them would have higher priority. This will often be a straightforward matter of determining which child lives closest to the school.

Transport to other education settings

A child may be eligible for free travel to a place that is not a qualifying school:

- where they receive education at a place other than a school by virtue of arrangements made by the Council under section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1996.

- where they are suspended (temporarily excluded) from a school (but remain a registered pupil of that school) and attend an educational establishment that is not a qualifying school and is not within the statutory walking distance of their home, then that educational establishment will be treated as if it were a qualifying school for the purposes of eligibility for free travel

Schools should collaborate with the Council when arranging educational provision for a child during a suspension where the pupil might be eligible for free travel to the place where they will be receiving education.

Travel assistance will not be provided to alternative provision and work experience, where the provision has been arranged by the school.

Discretionary Arrangements.

Discretionary transport is a Council decision to provide travel arrangements beyond the statutory requirements.

The Council provides discretionary travel arrangements in five areas

- Eligibility extended to cover children eligible for travel assistance who are starting in reception in September but are under statutory school age.
- Extend the 2 mile statutory walking distance to the end of year 3 instead of a child's 8th birthday.
- Post 16 provision – please refer to the post 16 policy statement for details.
- Paid travel permits – where there is capacity in existing dedicated transport services provided for eligible children, spare seats may be purchased by parents/carers- applications are made through the Council website.
- extend the eligibility for travel assistance for secondary age pupils from low income families to attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 12 miles

Exceptional Circumstances

The eligibility criteria as outlined in this policy will apply to most situations; however, the Council also recognises that at times assistance may be required where the Council considers it necessary. This will be considered at the Council's discretion on a case-by-case basis. Any travel assistance awarded will normally be expected to be short-term.

Where a child is not eligible for travel assistance under the policy and requires consideration of travel assistance under exceptional circumstances parents will need to apply online in the first instance, or an alternative method upon request (a link will be inserted when the policy is published).

The Council does not usually consider matters such as parent's working patterns, the cost to the parent of transport, or where parents have children attending more than one school, to be exceptional circumstances, although will consider each case on a case by case basis.

Removal of Travel Assistance

Where a child has been awarded transport in error – the Council will provide 6 weeks' notice to the parent and transport will be removed.

Where a child's eligibility changes on the child's 8th Birthday, travel arrangements will be removed at the end of that academic year, under the Council's discretionary arrangements.

8. Accompaniment

A child will not normally be eligible for free travel to school on the grounds of their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problem, or on the grounds that the route is unsafe if they would be able to walk to school if they were accompanied.

Where the Council determines, following an individual assessment, that a child would be able to walk if they were accompanied, the general expectation is that the parent will accompany them or make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school.

A child will not normally be eligible solely because their parent's work commitments or caring responsibilities mean they are unable to accompany their child themselves although each case will be decided on the individual circumstances.

Consideration will be given where parents have a disability or mobility problem that would make it difficult for them to accompany their child. The Council will consider the parents' reasons for not being able to accompany their child or make other suitable arrangements and would require evidence of the parental disability as part of the application.

Reasons such as the parent's working pattern or the fact they have children attending more than one school, on their own, will not normally be considered good reasons for a parent being unable to accompany their child. These apply to many parents, and, in most circumstances, it is reasonable to expect the parent to make suitable arrangements to fulfil their various responsibilities (for example, their responsibilities as an employee and as a parent).

Where the Council have determined, following an assessment, that a child could not reasonably be expected to walk even if they were accompanied, they will be eligible for free home to school travel regardless of whether their parent would be able to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey.

Section B: How travel assistance will be provided

9. Facilitating Attendance

The Council will make travel arrangements to enable a child to travel to school for the **beginning** of the school day, and to return home at the **end** of the school day.

There are no requirements to make arrangements:

- for children to travel between institutions during the school day; or
- to enable children to attend extra-curricular activities and other commitments outside school hours; or
- to enable children to get to and from before and after school childcare, whether formal (for example, a childminder) or informal (for example, a grandparent)

Where particular classes, year groups or pupils have a start or finish time that is different from most pupils at the school, it will not normally be possible for the Council to make separate travel arrangements. Schools may need to make alternative arrangements to accommodate these pupils.

There may be a small number of circumstances in which the Council considers it appropriate to arrange transport at an alternative time of day, for example if a child has a medical condition which means they are not well enough to attend school for the whole day – this will be through an application, supported with evidence to request transport through exceptional circumstances.

The Council is not required to arrange travel for an eligible child where:

- suitable free travel is provided by someone else, for example, their school or Local Transport Authority
- a parent chooses to make their own arrangements for the child's travel to and from school (this does not prevent the parent from later requesting free travel to school, consideration will need to be given for the period involved in arranging alternative travel provision)

Transport for social care purposes such as respite and after school activities are not covered by this policy.

When a child is unwell and needs collecting from school, it will be a parent's responsibility to collect them and to determine what action needs to be taken with regards to the child's illness.

Transport will not be provided to facilitate work experience/placements.

10. Residential Children

Where the Council names a residential school in the EHC plan of an eligible child, the Council will provide reasonable free travel to enable the child to attend that school, for example, on a Monday and Friday for children who are weekly boarders, or before and after school holidays for children who board on a termly basis.

Where the Council has named a residential school on a 52-week basis, transport will only be provided in exceptional circumstances via the social worker assigned to the family.

11.Travel Arrangements

It is for the Council to decide how to arrange free travel for an eligible child.

The transport will be the most efficient, environmental, and economical method and route suitable for the child's needs.

This could be,

- A pass on a public service (bus or train), or
- A seat on a school bus service, or
- A direct commissioned service – taxis or coaches

12. Parental Travel Allowances

The Council may also provide a parental mileage allowance in some circumstances and with the agreement of the parent. For example, in the event that no existing service is available to accommodate an eligible child.

Allowances are paid in arrears at 45p per mile for four journeys a day for daily students, and two journeys for residential days travelled.

In some circumstances the Council will also pay an enhanced allowance where the child requires additional support with transport to meet a medical, mobility or special educational need. These are calculated on individual circumstances based on distance and travel time.

Regular payments including mileage allowance made by the Council to reimburse the cost incurred by a parent in providing a child's travel to school:

- will not be taken into account in a Universal Credit assessment. (Should the Council need to pay a parent any additional amounts, for example to cover unexpected expenses relating to a child's travel to school, these would be treated as capital in the Universal Credit assessment and the parent would need to declare them)
- should not give rise to income tax liability, but individuals should continue to satisfy themselves that they meet HMRC's requirements

Where a parent has agreed to receive a travel allowance, it will be based on attendance at school, the school will need to sign and confirm attendance.

The Council has the right to revoke an allowance if a child's attendance is deemed unsatisfactory and to provide assistance through an alternative travel arrangement.

A parent can surrender the allowance at any time; however, consideration will need to be given for the period involved in arranging alternative travel provision.

Section C- Suitability of Travel arrangements

13. Considering the Child's Needs

The Council will ensure that any travel arrangements they make will take account of the needs of the child concerned. For example, it would not be appropriate to provide a pass for free travel on a

service bus to a child whose special educational needs meant they would be unable to travel on a service bus.

Any travel arrangements should enable the child to travel in reasonable safety and comfort, and without undue stress, strain, or difficulty, so that wherever possible they arrive at school ready to learn.

It is not a requirement to provide all children with 'door to door' transport. Many will be able to walk to a suitable pick-up point from the home or school address, provided they would be able to do so in reasonable safety, accompanied by an appropriate adult if necessary.

If, following an assessment of needs, a child is not able to walk to a pickup point accompanied as necessary, the Council will provide an alternative which can meet their need.

The waiting point for transport to school or college will be a public stop or station or, in the case of commissioned transport, a named point which is suitably safe, both for children to wait and vehicles to stop. The Council will carry out risk assessments on pick up and drop off points.

If the transport provided needs to meet a connecting service, the driver of the first vehicle will wait with children until the connecting vehicle arrives. The waiting time between connections will normally be no longer than 10 minutes. The meeting point will be suitable for the safe transfer of children.

When children are transported using a taxi or private-hire vehicle, that is not a public service vehicle, it must have one seat belt, and where appropriate child car seat or booster seat, for each person carried.

Some children may need additional arrangements to be made to meet their needs. In these cases, the Council would request that parents complete a travel assessment, so the Council can review and make suitable arrangements if required.

If children travel in a wheelchair this must be to ISO 7176-19;2022 standards and properly fixed in the vehicle in accordance with current Department for Transport guidelines. The Council will carry out a risk assessment to ensure that children are transported safely in these circumstances.

14. Children with Medical Needs

When the Council makes travel arrangements for a child with medical needs, the Council will consider if and how those needs might affect the child during their journey to and from school and, where necessary, put in place proportionate arrangements to manage those needs.

Not every child with the same condition will need the same arrangements, assessments will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis.

The assessment will consider

- the medical condition, its triggers, and symptoms; and
- the likelihood and consequences of the condition affecting the child on the journey to and from school; and
- the action that may need to be taken to manage the condition, for example whether the child may require medication and, if so, what dosage is required, how it should be administered, and by whom.

If a child has a medical need, parents must alert the Council to discuss their child's conditions, this may result in a risk assessment requirement before any transport can be arranged. This request should be made via the online form (a link will be inserted when the policy is published).

If a child has an EHC plan or individual healthcare plan, these may contain information that is relevant to the Council's assessment of medical need. There is a requirement for the school to share information from the individual healthcare plan with the Council, where it is relevant to the journey to and from school.

The Council may sometimes need to seek specialist advice about a child and their condition. A range of different health professionals may be involved in a child's care, for example a community nurse, specialist nurse or doctor. A parent should be able to help the Council identify the appropriate health professional in relation to their child.

The Council will ensure the driver of a vehicle providing dedicated school transport, and any passenger assistant involved in providing the child's travel, are aware of the child's needs and how to respond to them and have received any necessary training.

There is no expectation that a child's routine/daily medication will be administered on the journey to and from school, or that routine medical procedures will be carried out. Where a risk assessment recognises that it may sometimes be necessary to administer a child's emergency medication, the Council would deploy a passenger assistant who would be responsible for administering the medication.

The passenger assistant will receive all relevant training and the medication would be administered in accordance with instructions from a health care professional in the Health Care Plan.

15. Journey Times

The statutory guidance states that as a general guide, the maximum journey time for a child of primary school age should be 45 minutes each way, and 75 minutes each way for a child of secondary school age, including any time taken to walk to a pick-up point. However, there may be circumstances in which this is not possible, for example in rural areas where children live in remote locations, where a child needs to travel a long way to the school named in their EHC plan, or when journey times are extended by traffic delays. Wherever possible, a child should not be expected to make several changes on public transport.

North Yorkshire by the nature of its geography, makes transporting within the general guidelines difficult to achieve. Whilst the Council would expect any direct journeys not to exceed the guidance, to ensure transport is provided as efficiently and environmentally as possible, and to reduce the number of vehicles required in order to meet its sustainability duty, the Council anticipate some journeys may exceed this recommendation. Where this is the case, the Council will not expect the child to make several changes on public transport.

Travel arrangements for children with special educational needs, disability or mobility problems can be particularly complex to make. Shorter journeys may be particularly desirable, perhaps because a child's special educational needs or disability mean they become distressed while travelling, but a child may need to travel a long way to the school that is able to meet their needs and one vehicle may need to collect several children.

Travel arrangements should be considered when deciding which is the school that should be named in the EHCP.

Where long journeys are unavoidable, the Council will consider whether there are measures that can be taken to minimise the negative impacts for the child, working with parents and schools to develop a plan or risk assessment.

16. Safeguarding

The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance. The Council will ensure that:

- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, with a check of the children's barred list, has been carried out for drivers and passenger assistants involved in providing dedicated school transport;
- drivers and passenger assistants have received any training they need to perform their role in relation to safeguarding;
- drivers and passenger assistants know how to report any concerns they have about the children in their care;
- they share any concerns they have about the driver of a taxi or private hire vehicle with the authority that licenses it;
- they consider whether concerns they have about a driver should be referred to the DBS.

Where concerns are present regarding the safeguarding of a child a referral must be made via the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Partnership as soon as possible.

https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/

Where there are concerns around safety, but they do not relate to an individual child, these can be raised via email to:

IPT.compliance@northyorks.gov.uk

17. Training

The Council are currently developing a training package which will be mandatory for all drivers and passenger assistants to undertake.

The training package will include the following as a minimum standard

- Safeguarding
- Handling of emergency situations
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Any specific training to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Passenger Assistants employed to administer medication will receive relevant training to ensure they are competent to fulfil that responsibility.

18. Behaviour on School Transport

The Council will collaborate with schools to promote good behaviour on school transport. Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable, including for misbehaviour which takes place on school transport.

Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to, being rude, pushing and kicking, bullying, verbal abuse, distracting the driver, refusing to wear a seatbelt, or refusing to remain seated. It may endanger the safety and wellbeing of other people.

The Council and schools will work together to:

- set high expectations for children's behaviour on school transport and ensure they are communicated clearly to parents and children;
- ensure arrangements are in place to report and manage incidents of unacceptable behaviour;
- work with operators to put in place measures to manage unacceptable behaviour where it occurs.

The Council will ensure drivers and passenger assistants have received any training they need to manage children's behaviour while travelling.

Where a child's behaviour is indicative of their special educational needs or disability, for example a way of communicating they are in distress, personalised guidance or risk assessments will be provided to the transport provider, following information gathered by school and parents, on how to best manage these situations.

An eligible child's travel arrangements may be withdrawn as a last resort and, in these circumstances, the Council will meet their duty in respect of the eligible child in an alternative way.

19. Additional Information about Travel Arrangements

Severe weather

In circumstance where severe and adverse weather conditions are forecast, which may result in a school closure, schools will follow their emergency procedures and;

- inform parents and staff.
- inform home to school transport contractors.
- inform the Council.

The Council will make suitable arrangements to provide transport to enable eligible children to return home. The arrangements may be different to the normal commissioned provision in the event of an emergency.

School closures are published on the Council website and through local radio stations.

School closures | North Yorkshire Council

Change of school hours

If a school or academy wants to change its start and finish times it should follow best practice and, before carrying out a consultation with affected parties, advise the Council of their proposed changes so that the Council can review and advise of the implications for school transport.

Any consultation should be at least three months before the planned change, and the school must include the Council in their consultation. Good practice suggests that schools can only change the times of the school day at the start of the academic year, i.e. in September.

Where a school or academy, following the consultation alters it hours, without agreement of the Council, the school will be expected to meet any additional transport costs for the remainder of the council's contract for applicable services.

Early finishes – end of term

Where schools finish earlier in the school day than normal, for example the last day of term, it will be the school's responsibility to make such arrangements with the transport provider, including reimbursement of any additional cost, and ensure parents are notified of the early finish.

If a transport provider is unable to accommodate the early finish, it is the school's responsibility to make alternative arrangements.

Co-ordination of training days

There are three common training days agreed across North Yorkshire. The agreed school term dates and training days for each academic year can be found on the North Yorkshire Council website.

Schools with shared transport arrangements are encouraged to co-ordinate their remaining two training days to ensure the most efficient use of the transport network and reduce additional carbon emissions, in line with the Council's sustainability duty.

Federations of schools

Where a group of schools agree to a federation in which pupils may be temporarily taught on different sites, travel arrangements will only be provided in line with the eligibility criteria. Any transport between school sites is the responsibility of the school/federation.

Transition days

The Council is unable to provide additional resources to cover transition days. It is the responsibility of the school and parents to enable children to participate in these activities.

Transport assistance following a school closure or reorganisation

The Council's normal home to school transport policy will be followed. However, depending upon circumstances, the Council would, following a school closure consultation, have discretion to determine that alternative arrangements should apply.

Section D: Local school travel policies

20. Home to School Travel Policy for children from reception to year 11

The Council will;

- publish the policy on the Council's website;
- make available on request a paper format of the policy;
- include information about the school travel policy in the Council's composite prospectus for school admissions (which must be published by 12th September each year);
- include information about travel to school for children with special educational needs and disabilities in their SEND Local Offer.

The Council will keep the home to school travel policy under regular review to ensure it continues to meet local needs and comply with statutory requirements.

Any reviews will be completed, and the published policy will be available by 12th September each year, so that parents may take it into account when deciding which schools to apply for during the normal admissions round.

Parents should consider how their children will get to school at the time they are choosing which schools to apply for. For some, the availability of free travel to school may be a key factor in their decision making. Information about travel to school and checking which is your nearest school can be found on the Council's website at;

www.northyorks.gov.uk/education-and-learning

When reviewing and proposing changes to the Council's home to school travel policy which may affect children's eligibility for transport, the Council will consult locally. As a minimum:

- schools whose pupils will be affected by the proposed changes, including those located in other local authority areas;
- parents whose children will (or may) be affected by the proposed changes, including those whose children attend a school in a neighbouring authority, and those whose children may be affected in the future, for example, because they live in the catchment area of, or attend the feeder school of, a school affected by the proposed changes;
- the local Parent Carer Forum.

Consultation will last for at least 28 working days during term time.

The Council will have consideration for;

- the impact proposed changes to the policy will have on parents' choice of school, particularly where travel arrangements have been made to support parents' preference for their children to attend a school with a designated religious character (some such arrangements are associated with long-standing local agreements about the siting of schools);
- the financial impact the changes will have on affected families, paying particular attention to the potential impact of any changes on children from low-income families;
- the impact the changes will have on people with protected characteristics.

Wherever possible, any changes made to the home to school travel policy will be phased in to allow children who begin attending a school under one set of travel arrangements continue to benefit from those arrangements until they leave that school or have a change in circumstances.

21. Transport Beyond Compulsory School Age

A separate policy statement will be published on or before 31st May each year outlining the Council's position and travel offer for Post 16 and Post 19 with an EHC plan.

The Post 16 Policy statement including any discretionary offer is reviewed and published on a yearly basis and is valid for the forthcoming academic year only.

Section E – Transport Appeals

A transport appeal can only be made on the following grounds;

- Eligibility;
- Distance measurement of the walked route;
- Safety of the walked route;
- Transport arrangements that have been made for an eligible child.

22: Appeals Procedures

Where a parent wishes to challenge the initial decision in relation to statutory transport there is a two-stage appeal process.

Stage 1:

A request for a stage 1 review must be made in writing within 20 working days of the initial decision letter. The request:

- Should clearly state the reasons for the challenge and include any new documentary evidence.
- Will be reviewed by senior officers, the original decision may be upheld, overturned or alternative solutions suggested.
- Where travel assistance is agreed the Council will make the necessary transport arrangements.
- Where transport is not agreed, parent/carer will be told in writing and parents who are not satisfied with that decision will be informed of the next and final stage of the appeal process.

Stage 2:

A stage 2 appeal must be made in writing by completion of an appeal from within 20 working days of receipt of the stage 1 response:

- The appeal form must clearly state the reasons why parent/carers challenge the stage 1 response and provide any new documentary evidence.
- Stage 2 appeals are heard within 40 days of receipt of the appeal form by the Appeals Committee which consists of a small group of elected members of the Council.
- Parent/carers can attend the appeal hearing
- Each case is considered on its merits
- The Committee considers the policy guidelines but may recommend departure from those guidelines in exceptional cases
- When a decision is made, this will be communicated in writing within five working days, including the reasons for the decision. This decision is final.

Where the person is unhappy with the outcome, they will be advised how to escalate it to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman at, www.lgo.org.uk, who may investigate to decide whether there has been any maladministration.

23. Complaints Procedure

The Council wants to maintain high standards of reliability of the transport it provides for pupils. The Council makes sure that complaints by parents and schools are investigated and satisfactorily resolved. Account will be taken of any previous unsatisfactory operation in awarding contracts.

Complaints, comments or compliments | North Yorkshire Council

Section F: Sustainable Travel

Changes to legislation brought about by the introduction of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 added to the Education Act 1996 a general duty on the Council to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport.

Under the School Information (England) Regulations 2008 the Council is required to publish the general arrangements and policies in respect of transport for pupils of compulsory school age to and from school, sixth form centres and further education colleges.

There are four main elements to the duty:

- An assessment of the travel and transport needs of children and young people within the Council's area;
- An audit of the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure within the Council that may be used when travelling to and from or between schools/institutions;
- A strategy to develop the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure within the Council, so that the travel and transport needs of children and young people are better catered for;
- The promotion of sustainable travel and transport modes on the journey to, from and between schools and other institutions.

24. Sustainable Travel Strategies

The Council is developing a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy which will combine information from existing policies and aspirations.

The Council is committed to reducing climate change and promoting sustainable travel as set out in its priorities in the following.

- North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030
- Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission's Climate Action Pledge
- Safer roads, healthier places, the road safety strategy of the York and North Yorkshire Road Safety Partnership
- Local Transport Plan 4 – 2016 (2025 in draft)

25. Sustainable Travel Programmes

Modeshift

Modeshift STARS is the national school's awards scheme that has been established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. The scheme encourages schools across the country to join in a major effort to increase levels of sustainable and active travel to improve the health and well-being of children and young people.

Modeshift STARS has a 3-stage approach to achieve accreditation.

- Create a travel plan
- Monitor and evaluate travel plans
- Recognising and rewarding best practise.

Currently in North Yorkshire there are 82 schools registered with Modeshift.

Open North Yorkshire

Open North Yorkshire is a North Yorkshire Council programme encouraging active travel to create cleaner, safer communities and encourage active travel and the benefits it can bring, to help you save time, save money, and get fitter.

www.opennorthyorkshire.co.uk

Independent Travel Training -ITT

Travel Training is a step-by-step process by which a person learns to travel a specific route, between two given places, on their own and in a safe and responsible way.

The Council currently does not have a travel training programme; however, resources are available for parents, schools and professionals to utilise on the website.

Some schools may offer travel training within their curriculum – please speak to your school if this is something they offer.

Bikeability

The Council offers level 1 and 2 Bikeability courses to year 5 and 6 pupils via primary schools. For adults and older children, Bikeability level 3 is also available – please contact your school directly.

Section G – Useful Information

26. Contact details of School Transport Teams

	Duties	Contact details
	General enquiries	Schooltransporteligibility@northyorks.gov.uk
	General enquiries SEN, medical, mobility and EHCP	SENDTransport@northyorks.gov.uk
	Enquiries relating to existing transport Enquiries relating to paid travel permits	0300 131 2 131
	Enquiries relating to transport operators including delays	0300 131 2 131
	Payments of parental transport allowances and paid travel permits	0300 131 2 131
	Stage 2 appeals	Appeals@northyorks.gov.uk
	All other telephone enquiries	0300 131 2 131

Useful Webpages
https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-and-college-transport

- School transport for reception to year 11
- Transport to sixth form or college
- Paid bus passes
- Bus timetables
- Replace a school bus pass

Department for Education statutory guidance
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance

Glossary of terms

Term or Reference	Explanation
Accompanied	Where a child is not eligible for transport under the policy, the expectation is that a parent will accompany their child to and from school or make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school.
Bulk Admission Round	The application round when children normally start at school for the first time i.e. Reception, when they transfer from an infant school to a junior school and when they start secondary school in year 7. See Normal admissions round.
Catchment Area	This is a defined geographical area that is served by a named primary and secondary school. Most home addresses fall into a catchment area for school admissions purposes. The catchment school may not be the nearest school to the home address and eligibility for free transport to that school would not apply in that circumstance.
Compulsory School Age	A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday, or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day. Prescribed days are the 31st of December, 31st of March and 31st of August. A Child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which the reach age 16.
Dedicated School Transport	Transport which exclusively carries children and young people to and from their place of education and cannot be boarded by the public.
Designated Religious Character	Schools with a designated religious character are schools which are designated as such under section 69(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. They may deliver religious education and collective worship in accordance with the tenets of their faith. They may also prioritise admissions for pupils of their faith and recruit staff on the basis of their faith.
Disability	Defined in section 6 of the Equality Act 2010. A person has a disability if they have (a) a physical or mental impairment, and (b) that impairment has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A chronic physical or mental health condition may constitute a disability. Not all disabilities are visible.
Education Health and Care (EHC) plan	An Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has special educational needs or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.
Free School Meal Criteria (extended rights)	The eligibility criteria is: • Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods) • Income Support • Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance • Income-related Employment and Support Allowance • Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 • The guaranteed element of Pension Credit • Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)

	• Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
Geographical Information System (GIS)	This is the NY measuring system which is used for measuring the home to school distances for both admissions and transport purposes. It includes footpaths, roads, and public rights of way as identified at the time a school place is allocated. This is used consistently for all measurements and the distances will vary to other measuring systems.
Home address	This is the place where a child is habitually and normally resident with their main carer/parent. There may be circumstances where a pupil has more than one home address for example where parents are separated, the address used for assessing eligibility will be the one used to apply for a school place. The Council will not provide assistance with transport from more than one home address.
Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP)	Are drawn up by schools in consultation with parents and relevant health professionals. They capture the key information and actions that are required to effectively support a child with medical needs in school. Schools may wish their policies on supporting pupils with medical conditions to refer to home to school travel and the Council may ask for the IHP when assessing transport for pupils with medical conditions.
Licensing Authority	Taxi and private hire operators and drivers must be licensed by a local licensing authority – usually a unitary or district council in a local area.
Medical need	A health need that has the potential to put a child's safety or wellbeing at risk while travelling to and from school.
Mobility Need	A physical impairment that impacts a child's ability to walk to school.
Normal Admissions Round	Also known as bulk rounds. This is the period during which parents apply for school places at the normal point of entry into a school i.e. reception and transfers to Year 7. The deadlines for applications are 31 October for secondary school places and 15 January for primary places. Places are offered to parents on National Offer Day. Secondary National Offer Day is 1 March, or the next working day. Primary National Offer Day is 16 April, or the next working day.
Parent	References to parent in this document include birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, carers, or legal guardians with parental responsibility.
Personal Safety	The matter of personal safety for a child who is not eligible for transport under the policy is one of parental responsibility. It is also the responsibility of the parent for the child's safety to and from the transport provision.
Private Hire Vehicles (PHV's)	May carry up to 8 passengers and can only be pre-booked via a licensed private hire vehicle operator. See also the definition of taxi below.
Religion	Section 509AD (3) of the Education Act 1996 defines religion as any religion. A reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion.
Safeguarding	Defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) as: • protecting children from maltreatment • preventing the impairment of their mental and physical health and development • ensuring they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

School day	Schools are responsible for deciding when their school day will start and end. The expectation is that the Council will arrange travel for eligible children to enable them to attend for the 'normal' school day. Schools should organise the school day and school week in the best interest of their pupil cohort. They are expected to act reasonably when making changes to their school day or week. It is unacceptable for them to shorten their day or week unless it is a direct action to enhance pupils' education.
Selective school	A school that can select all or some of the children it admits by testing for aptitude or ability, for example a grammar school. Selective schools are not normally considered when identifying a suitable school unless the child has secured a place there.
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Defined in section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014. A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
Taxis	Also known as Black Cabs or Hackney Carriages – unlike the definition of PHV – these can also operate on taxi ranks and can be accessed if hailed on the street.
Walk	In this guidance walk has its literal meaning. A child could not be considered to be able to walk to school if they would need to travel in a wheelchair, but the Council may decide for example, that suitable travel arrangements for a child would be an assistance to push them in the wheelchair.

Appendix 1 – Examples provided by the Department for Education

Eligibility examples

Child A is thirteen years old. Their nearest school is a co-educational secondary school that is 3.4 miles from their home. Their parents choose to send them to a single sex secondary school that is 5.3 miles from their home. Child A is not eligible for free travel to the single sex school because the co-educational secondary school is their nearest suitable school.

Child B is twelve years old. They attend School 1, a secondary school 3 miles from their home. Their parents chose this school because it offers a choice of several modern foreign languages at GSCE. School 2 is 1 mile from Child B's home and would have been able to admit them, but it only offers one modern foreign language. Child B is not attending their nearest suitable school because School 2 would have been able to provide them with an education that was suitable for their age, ability, and aptitude.

Statutory Walking Distances examples

Child C is six years old and attends their nearest suitable school. It is 2.3 miles from their home. Child C is eligible for free travel to school.

Child D is seven years old and attends a primary school that is 2.6 miles from their home. There is another suitable primary school 1.2 miles from their home which has places available. Child D is not eligible for free travel to school, as they are not attending their nearest suitable school.

Child E is eleven years old and attends their nearest suitable school. It is 2.6 miles from their home. Child E is not eligible for free travel to school.

Special education needs and or disability examples

Child F is fourteen years old and has a disability that requires them to use crutches to walk. They need to take their time to ensure they are balanced. They attend their nearest suitable school. It is 1 mile from their home. The local authority decides that they could not reasonably be expected to walk to school. Child F is eligible for free travel to school.

Child G is eleven years old and has been diagnosed with a long-term medical condition which causes them to take a long time to recover after strenuous physical activity. They attend their nearest suitable school which is a short walk from their home. The parent applies for free travel to school on the basis that the child needs to recover for a long time after any strenuous activity. Based on the information available to them, the local authority decides that Child G would not need to recover for a long time after the short walk to their school. Child G is not eligible for free travel to school.

Unsafe routes example

Child H is twelve years old. They attend their nearest suitable school. It is 2 miles from their home. The only walking route to this school is along a busy road with no footpaths or stepping off points. The local authority carries out an assessment of the route and decides it would not be possible for a child to walk it in reasonable safety, even if they were accompanied by their parent. Child H is eligible for free travel to school.

Extended Rights examples

Child I is eleven years old and eligible for free school meals. Their nearest suitable school is 2.5 miles from their home. Their second nearest suitable school is 3 miles away. Their third nearest is 5 miles away. Child I would be eligible for free travel to any of these schools.

Child J is eleven years old and eligible for free school meals. Their three nearest schools are School X, School Y and School Z. School X is 1.5 miles from their home, School Y is 2.2 miles from their home, and School Z is 5.5 miles from their home. Child J would be eligible for free travel to School Y or School Z, but not to School X.

Child K is thirteen years old and is eligible for free school meals. Their parents are Sikh and wish them to be educated in a school with a religious character. They attend a designated Sikh school that is 8 miles from their home. There are other schools which are nearer to their home, but none of these is a Sikh school. Child K is eligible for free travel to the Sikh school.

Parental Preference examples

Child L is eleven years old and attends School 1 which is 4.2 miles away from their home. Their parents applied for this school as their first preference. The nearest secondary school is School 2 which is 3.7 miles from their home. They chose not to apply for this school, despite information on the eligibility for free travel to school being readily available at the time they submitted their preferences. School 2 is undersubscribed, and Child L would have been offered a place there had their parents applied. Child L is not eligible for free travel to School 1 because School 2 is their nearest suitable school and has available places.

Child M is eleven years old and attends the second nearest secondary school to their home. It is 4.2 miles away. Their nearest secondary school is 3.7 miles from their home. Their parents applied for this school, but it was oversubscribed, and they were not offered a place. Child M is eligible for free travel to school as they are attending their nearest suitable school with available places.

Accompaniment examples

Child N is nine years old and has autism. They attend their nearest suitable school which is 2.5 miles from their home. They are unaware of danger and need to be accompanied even on very short journeys. They also become distressed and can act unpredictably in noisy environments. Their walk to school would be along busy roads. The local authority determines that the parent would not be able to keep them safe on this journey. Child N is eligible for free travel to school.

Child O is seven years old and attends their nearest suitable school which is 1.5 miles from their home. They do not have special educational needs, a disability or mobility problem. The local authority determines that they would be able to walk to school in reasonable safety if they were accompanied. There is no good reason why the parent could not reasonably be expected to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey to and from school. Child O is not eligible for free travel to school.

Child P is fifteen years old and is blind. They attend their nearest suitable school which is a short walk from their home. The local authority determines that they could reasonably be expected to walk to school if accompanied. Child P's parent is a single parent with a disability which means they would not be able to accompany Child P to school. The local authority considers the individual circumstances of Child P and decides it would not be reasonable to expect their parent to make arrangements for their journey to and from school. It decides to arrange free travel to school for Child P.

Child Q is fourteen years old and is also blind. They attend their nearest suitable school which is a short walk from their home. The local authority determines that they could reasonably be expected to walk to school if accompanied. There is no good reason why Child Q's parent could not reasonably be expected to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey to and from school. Child Q is not eligible for free travel to school

Travel training example

Child R has special educational needs. They live in a village 4 miles from their nearest suitable secondary school and are eligible for free travel to school. Other children living in the village attend the school. The local authority meets its school travel duty in respect of these children by providing them with a pass for free travel on the public service bus. When Child R joined the school in Year 7, the local authority determined their special educational needs meant they would not be able to travel on the bus with their peers. The local authority arranged a taxi to take Child R to school.

When Child R moved to Year 9, the local authority reassessed their needs. They determined Child R was ready for independent travel training. Child R's parent was hesitant at first, but the local authority explained the benefits and the parent agreed, knowing Child R would need the skill in adulthood.

The travel trainer helps Child R with understanding things such as where to wait for the bus, which bus to get on and what to do if they miss the bus or it is late. Once Child R has completed the travel training programme, the local authority reassesses their needs and determines they are now able to travel independently on the bus. They withdraw the taxi and provide Child R with a bus pass

Journey times examples

Child S is seven years old and has an EHC plan which names their nearest suitable school. This school is 20 miles from their home. The route is often very busy meaning the journey from Child S's home typically takes 45 minutes. The taxi collects one other child on the way, which adds 10 minutes to Child S's journey, meaning a total journey time of 55 minutes. Given the additional expense that would be involved in providing Child S and the other child with separate vehicles, the local authority decides it is reasonable to exceed the recommended journey time in Child S's case.

Child T is fourteen years old and has an EHC plan which names a school that is 10 miles from their home. Previously they travelled in a taxi with one other child and the journey took 30 minutes. The local authority then combined several routes into one. Child T now travels in a minibus with 11 other children. Due to the extra stops, the journey time is now 90 minutes. Child's T's school makes the local authority aware that, due to their special educational needs, they often become very distressed at being in the minibus for that length of time. On arrival at school, it takes them a long time to calm down. As a result, they miss some of the activities other children participate in. The local authority decides it is not reasonable to exceed the recommended journey time in Child T's case and reinstates their original travel arrangements.

Managing behavioural needs examples

Child U is twelve years old, has special educational needs and is eligible for free travel. They have recently moved to a new school. Having travelled quite happily in a taxi to their original school, they become distressed when travelling in a minibus to their new school. Their special educational needs mean they are unable to explain why they are distressed. The driver works with Child U's parent to resolve the issue. They identify that Child U's distress is caused by having the radio on during journeys. The driver agrees to keep the radio switched off whilst Child U is travelling.

Child V is 4 years old and has special educational needs. They are about to begin school for the first time and will be eligible for free travel. They can become very distressed in unfamiliar situations. The local authority arranges for their driver and passenger assistant to visit Child V's home to meet them before the start of term. This gives Child V the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the vehicle and sit in the seat they will use on the journey to school.

It also gives the driver the opportunity to let the parent know that two children will already be on the vehicle when it comes to collect Child V and that it will collect one further child after Child V. This enables the parent to talk to Child V to prepare them for what will happen on the journey to school. The parent is also able to let the passenger assistant know about some strategies they have found useful when Child V has become distressed when travelling.

Appendix D1

Free text comments received via the online consultation exercise – redacted where required
We chose our primary school based on the fact it was our catchment school and transport was provided. It was a deciding factor in our admission choices. It is not our nearest primary school by a miles difference. In the future I will have one child at secondary school and two at primary. Currently all would be able to access free transport from our rural village. The removal of free transport would impact the school run and inevitably lead to one journey running late - affecting attendance records as I would not see it financially viable to pay for school transport for one or both sets of children. I would also have two children at one school, one currently accessing transport, the other, still at pre-school would no longer be eligible. I absolutely want my youngest to attend the same school as my older children as we are part of the school family. Also, I don't understand the relevance of catchment schools going forward if the nearest school will now be the dominating factor in decision making when applying.
My daughter attends a high school in our catchment area that is not nearest by distance. Under the new proposed rules my son would not receive free transport when he goes to high school in 2 years time
1. Younger siblings will end up in different secondary schools to the ones their older siblings currently attend. This will be stressful for the younger children and will be difficult for parents to juggle the requirements and demands of different schools. 2. These proposals may result in a fall in pupil numbers in some secondary schools, meaning diminished funding - resulting in staffing cuts and a reduction of facilities and courses on offer 3. In some areas, neighbouring children will attend different secondary schools - children will be split up from their primary school classmates, making the transition to secondary school more stressful. 4. In looking purely at distance, there is no consideration of the type of roads involved and the safety for the children having to use these roads. In a rural county like ours, some of the high, moorland roads are dangerous in wintry weather and children should not have to travel on these roads twice a day.
Both my daughters wish to attend Settle College the youngest is currently in Yr 4 so if these changes go ahead she won't be able to attend Settle. We desperately want out daughters to go to Settle but if the proposed changes go ahead they won't be able to. Please don't stop my daughters from attending Settle College.

I have a year 4 child at Ingleton primary school and the current proposal regarding the nearest suitable school is detrimental to the community, multiple generations have gone on to attend settle secondary school and a vast percentage of children and parents send their children to settle school from ingleton. QES in kirkby has never been the secondary school for ingleton children. On another note Ingleton is in Yorkshire, i chose to continue to bring my children up like many generations before me in a yorkshire village and attend yorkshire schools, and now your going to force them in to cumbria. This is after you close our middle school system and overpopulate the local schools to the detriment of children - Ingleton Primary is forced to have shared year groups as they are still a classroom short from the middle school closures. As a low income earner im very unhappy at the proposal thats going to try and force me to send my child to an unacceptable school. 3/4 of Ingleton and Bentham children have attended Settle for at least 4 generations. I believe a president has been set that settle is the school for Ingleton children and you should not be allowed to change that.
After reading the information I think it's disgraceful to left in a situation where I'm unsure where my children will attend secondary school I currently have a daughter in year 6 who has just had her place accept for secondary school which I do hope she will have school transport accept for there, I also have a son who is year 3 and now be made to go to a different secondary to which my daughter will go to I would of never of considered staying where I lived two years ago if I knew this situation would of happened
I live in (Redacted). Our catchment school is Ryedale, our nearest school is Thirsk. My son is at Ryedale so a bus comes into the village (redacted). My daughter (in Yr 4) will not be eligible for this bus as our nearest school is Thirsk. So, to qualify for transport she will have to attend a different school to all the other children AND you will have to send a bus UP SUTTON BANK. This is in no way a saving (in fact it will be massively costly given that there is already a bus going to Ryedale in the village that she could hop on) and makes a mockery of the concept of catchment schools. It will also be pretty distressing and disruptive to my daughter. I am not alone in this, there are other families who will be affected. I'm really disappointed and find this quite stressful.
I whole heartedly disagree with the nearest school change. If this change occurs my children currently in primary school will only be eligible for transport to secondary school in Thirsk when they move up. Whereas my oldest child is already attending Ryedale as that is our catchment school so they will then be attending different schools. This would therefore increase costs of transport as a bus to Ryedale and another bus to Thirsk would be coming to the same village, this would include going up and down Sutton bank on a daily basis for the Thirsk bus. This would not be cost effective! I cannot see how this is in anyone's, let alone the children's, best interests.

ChatGPT 3.5 User Write me a haiku about beer ChatGPT Golden brew sparkles, Frothy head whispers stories, Cheers to hops and malt. User Rewrite this to sound better "The proposed changes will cause huge disruption, anxiety and financial issues in our family. We will have one child in secondary school in Richmond and one forced to go to Hummersknot in Darlington as we will not be able to afford to transport her ourselves. We will have no choice of schools. In addition, the schools in 2 different local authority areas have different holidays which will cause issues financially, will mean family holidays will be very difficult to plan and the children will not be able to attend after school activities as we will not be able to pick them up from 2 places at once. This policy will also cause numbers to drop in Richmond school, affecting its finances and risking the quality of its offering. I disagree with this proposed change so strongly on environmental grounds too, we will be taking one bus off the roads and instead putting 30 or 40 cars out instead. I believe this proposal has been made by simply considering financial benefits and has totally disregarded the needs of the young people the local authority is tasked with proving for. Once again, I strongly disagree with this policy proposal and would consider it discriminatory to my children as they are having reduced choice and forced apart from siblings. " ChatGPT The proposed changes spell disruption, anxiety, and financial strain for our family. With one child destined for secondary school in Richmond and another compelled to attend Hummersknot in Darlington due to transportation costs, our school options dwindle. The diverging holiday schedules between two local authorities compound our challenges, making family vacations and after-school activities nearly impossible to coordinate. Moreover, the imbalance in student numbers threatens the financial stability and quality of education at Richmond school. Beyond financial concerns, the environmental impact of this policy shift cannot be overlooked, trading one bus for dozens of cars on the road. It seems this proposal prioritizes financial gains over the well-being of our youth, leaving little room for the needs and choices of our children, who now face reduced options and separation from siblings.

The main change that affects my family and that of others within the Kirk Hammerton area is that, children will no longer be entitled to free travel to their catchment school. So, for us (and other local families), we will no longer qualify for free school travel to our catchment school of Boroughbridge High as there are schools that are nearer - Boroughbridge High is our fifth nearest school! There are four other secondary schools that are classed as nearer to our home address according to the (not currently publicly available - why not?) system used. Only one of these four alternative schools currently has school transport operating from our village and for two of the schools listed as nearer it would be impossible for children from Kirk Hammerton to get to them unless driven by a parent as there is no public or school transport available. We already have an older child at our catchment school of Boroughbridge High (redacted), we are happy with the school and would have liked our younger child (redacted) to also go there - if the consultation is agreed then we may either have to pay for her school transport or have children at different secondary schools. I'm also concerned that parents may make secondary school choices based on what they believe their catchment school to be, without realising the consequences if it is not their nearest school. Currently, the admissions guidance advises parents to ensure that they apply to their catchment school, however, this would then mean that they could be liable to pay for transportation costs – admissions policy and school transportation policies from the same authority should be consistent, unless of course the plan is to deceive parents in order to make money from them. Links have been made between catchment primary and their secondary schools, in order to aid children's transition to their new schools, often with the secondary school premises being used for sporting events etc. for the younger children. The proposed change to policy would erase years of hard work to make the transition smoother and mean that more children will attend unfamiliar secondary schools. It also looks like the proposed changes would affect future families choosing to send their children to our village primary school (Kirk Hammerton CofE Primary school) who would have used the current Hunsingore school bus, thus affecting the future viability of this school too. Finally, certain families are being disadvantaged due to our rural area. There is a proposal in the consultation that children who receive free school meals will not be affected in the same way - they will receive free school travel to their nearest three schools if the school is more than 2 miles but less than 6 miles (for secondary schools). For a free school meal family in Kirk Hammerton there is no secondary school within this radius (the nearest secondary school, although not our catchment one is 7.5 miles away). Therefore, such families are being discriminated against due to living in a rural area compared to similar families in less rural areas who, according to the proposed policy, would be entitled to more choice of secondary school chosen. So, in summary the proposal if approved could have a significant impact on families in Kirk Hammerton and surrounding villages and I am concerned that families are not aware of the consequences. It will also have a significant detrimental impact on school attendance, if families are unable to afford to pay for school transport themselves (I imagine there will be families who whilst they don't qualify for free school meals would still struggle to find the cost) particularly at a time when there is a real push to improve school attendance nationally.
I think it's vital that parents can choose the most suitable school for their children based on their child's needs and not which is the closest school. My children are currently being assessed for neurodivergent issues and as such may get left behind in schools less suited to this. If transport to these schools is taken away as they aren't the closest ones to where we live then that takes away our access to them, this directly effects their futures for the sake of saving money.
I am unclear if i wished to send my child to a CofE school for example that is further away than a non religious affiliated school would the child no longer be eligible for travel. Equally suitability of school may be influenced by being near a workplace rather than distance from home.

The removal of free transport to your child's nearest denominational school was wrong. I know that this has had a significant impact on pupil numbers at my child's school. A large number of families have been forced to attend other schools because of the cost involved. This is a huge shame
Religios beliefs are important to my family and I wish my children to have a Catholic education. I think it is reasonable for the cost of transport to school to be covered by the Council in lieu of not having a more local Catholic Secondary school
There are a great deal of caveats to meet to enable families to access the free transport. There is also a disparity between schools that are non-denominational whereby they receive free public transport (eg HGS and Rossett) and then the faith schools (eg SJF and St Aidan's) have to pay for their transport. The reason given is that the families have a preference for these schools over the proximity... This seems unfair when so much attention and sensitivity is given to SEND cases, families that have a faith are financially penalised. It seems fairer for NYC to cover the transport costs on all public transport for students to help all families and reduce the necessity of having to choose a school based on its closeness or the option of free transport.
We have had to pay for a school bus for our daughter to attend sfx, this school is on the same road as richmond school but because the council class richmond as the closest we had to pay, it has put a lot of financial pressure on our family trying to find the extra money every month and at nearly £70 a month it is ridiculous all because we chose a religious school and not the mainstream school on the same road. All the children get picked up at the same bus stops and are 0.2 miles apart feom each other. I appealed this but it was thrown out. My youngest daughter will not be attending schools in richmond as we simply cant afford the cost of transportation. The council have let so many parents and children down with these ridiculous policies.
I agree with almost all of the proposed changes. The only area of this policy that I have an issue with is the favouritism toward people of faith. It is the parents' choice to send their children to such schools, and they should not receive favourable treatment with regard to distance to school and funded transport. Going further, if the nearest school is a faith-based one then the family must not be penalised if they choose to send their child to the nearest non-faith school if it is further away. This is discrimination on the basis of [lack of] faith - I would be interested to see this tested in court.
I understand the need for the council to save money. On transport costs but feel that these proposed changes will disproportionately affect those on a low income.
Living rurally it is important that are children are not disadvantaged by the lack of services. There is no public transport whatsoever in our village, the village school was closed down in the 1960's so we have no option other than to travel our children to school. School transport is an absolute must for us.
We live rural with no public bus we expect that our daughter will be provided transport either taxis or bus to take her to the local high school out catchments school abd those outsude catchment should be refused
I feel that the proposed policy changes negatively impact children living in villages whose catchment school is not geographically the closest. This will likely lead to increased cars on the road adding to congestion.

There are many times villages require buses to transport children from home to school (during strikes/bad weather etc). You would save a lot of money if collected the children in neighbouring villages all together rather than sending coaches (not even mini buses!!) to collect our children. There have been occasions when buses have been used and a coach has arrived with 2 students on it. Yet nearby villages with more children have a mini bus thats nearly packed. Total waste of money.
The walking distance criteria is too generic. Rural communities have no other option than transport. Removal of funded transport could impact on pupil attendance. This appears to be another way of shaving resources with the badge of 'equality county wide' with no consideration of the equitable needs of each area. Parents may become exremely distressed at the prospect of paying or finding alternative transport impacting on their home/work life balance. Who completes the road safety assessment? One person(a grown adult probably with no additional needs) cannot determine the ability of children to safely navigate the road system which regardless of footbaths being available may fall foul of the lack of working street lighting. Two 14 year olds could have very different approaches to and understanding of road safety or being streetwise. In order to complete exceptional circumstances assessments, surely this results in more work, employing staff to complete these assessments or delaying access to the transport in a timely manner for term.time. Please consider area specific distances for walking by area rather than cou ty wide in a document. Please also take into account the vast rurality and difinitive need for transport not only for safety but to ensure attendance for pupils
Firstly, you have no villages in Swaledale listed on your options for question 1. I had to select Hawes as nearest to home, but we are in Swaledale and would have expected Reeth to have been an option. I trust you have considered the weather conditions impact on deciding which school you think children should attend. Living at the top of Swaledale it is absolute common sense to travel down the dale to Gunnerside/Reeth school even though Hawes/Kirkby Stephen schools may be geographically closer in distance. Travelling over the high moor roads into another dale/county would not be sensible.
Personally we were affected and disappointed by the fact there was officially another school that was 0.1 miles closer (as the crow flies) than the one my children attend - although it is clearly more convenient and safer than the alternative. Additionally when we originally chose the school we were living at the same address we live now and were entitled to the school travel expenses then but, seemingly, no longer. Personally, I think where there is a living distance which is 2+ miles from a school AND there are no public transport OR safe walking OR cycling options (which is the case with us) - there should be an exception to the rule - as with any rule, there are exceptions. Disappointing in such a sparse community like Settle where, frankly, transport options are pretty much non-existent.

I think that it is crucial that the travel arrangements in place when a child accepted a place at a school are upheld. I think that it would cause significant mental health issues for young people if they found themselves in a position where they had to move schools. I think that this would not just be disruptive to their education but would be extremely damaging to their emotional health. I pay for my child to use school transport as I live outside of North Yorkshire. If this was withdrawn it would be impossible for my child to get to school. There is no way of accessing the school via public transport. The only route to school is miles down a 60 mile an hour country road with no footpaths. He would be forced to leave the school which would be utterly devastating.The schools near where i live are now all oversubcribed and so my child would be left without a school place.It is so important that children currently in schools are not displaced I think that when school buses are withdrawn there is a huge increase in traffic congestion and parents parking outside of schools which is far more damaging to the environment. This should be taken into consideration when examining environmental concerns. I think that school buses are far less damaging to the environment than huge numbers of parents suddenly driving their children to and from school. I think that the option of walking or cycling to school is less safe in rural areas where there are long country roads often without footpaths or street lighting. Very few secondary age children are walked to school by a parent. I think that it is a huge safeguarding issue if the safety of the route travelled by a young person is assessed on whether or not it would be safe for an able bodied adult. I think that this is extremely dangerous and would likely lead to fatalities. I think that it is wrong to assume that it is possible to access rural schools by public transport or that all parents have access to a car. It would be cruel to displace children who are happily settled in their schools. I think that young people have had their lives so disrupted in recent years and it is crucial that they can stay in their schools.
School catchment areas determine admissions but I have read that these will not change. Therefore parents will find it very difficult to understand the complexities of which schools they can gain a place for their child in alongside where they can afford to transport them to. The two things must be aligned fully so that your catchment school/schools are also where you can be transported to. It seems ridiculous to have to chose a school based on transport rather than catchment. Clearly the council wishes to save money but is not willing to take on the extremely difficult task of sorting out school catchments. Parents in rural areas like mine will end up with school places that they can't afford to transport their children to. There will be mass appeals and attendance will be impacted even further. This change to policy is not workable in a widespread rural county such as North Yorkshire.
I am worried that it will impact the number of students that go to our rural secondary school as alot of pupils come from other areas which have secondary schools nearer to them.
Whilst it is right that the policy should be regularly amended to ensure it aligns with legislation, I do not see the fact recognised that North Yorkshire is a very large, predominantly rural county and that several primary schools have been closed over the last 10 years, with children forced to travel further and further each day for their education as a result. The situation is particularly difficult for families and children situated in the north of the county where school provision is even more sparse than towards the south.

For rural children, nearest school is not the same as optimal school. There should be some margin for decision making here. Possibly… you have some choice but not more than say 25% further than the nearest school. The area is so geographically diverse that attempting to apply rules for major cities and rural areas is meaningless and loses nuance. These changes would mean our preferred school has to change despite being only fractionally further away. I think they need reviewing with this nuance adding in. Additionally, providing post-16 transport should be considered in rural circumstances. Our child is mandated to attend post-16 training but cannot do that without travelling, and we may not be able to afford the costs despite not being a low income family. I can understand that the council needs to balance the books, but there are many other areas you could start rather than impacting education.
The DfE's "statutory walking distance" may make sense in towns or cities, but in a sparsely populaterd rural area with poor pedestrian access and footways (narrow roads, high hedges, fast traffic) the two and three mile rule does create problems for many of our families: where both parents are working, where a single parent is working, where there is no car in the family. This is not, of course, new! The revised document is admirably clear, even if there are statutory elements which are outwith the control of the council.
I have two disabled children who are able to access main stream schooling. For the eldest this was only because he attend a smaller, more rural secondary school. This school was named in my eldest sons EHCP before he moved to post 16. I have applied to the same school for my youngest child for September. Our "Nearest" school has places, but is totally inappropriate to meet my children's needs due to their Autism and anxiety (they have demonstrated they can't cope with larger, more crowded schools). Currently my husband (who is a full time career) drives one child to one school and we pay towards post 16 transportation for our eldest. It is the only way we can meet our children educational and SEMH needs. I think that there really does need to be some kind of consideration taken into account for selecting a school (within reason) that better meets my child's needs.
We live in Malham. A place with no suitable public transport for children to reach school. We moved to Malham on the basis of catchment areas to Skipton as well as Settles schools and the provision of transport. With remote jobs we brough badly needed new families and economic activity into this rural area. From Malham Skipton is actually the more accessible location in winter weather. Settle is closer as the crow flies but as the bus (or car in winter weather) drives it is further. On the basis of this new policy our children could only attend Settle schools with transport and would be precluded from applying for a place at the Grammar schools in Skipton as we work full time and so could not drive them to and from school ourselves. There is no public transport. I think this is damaging and limits social mobility for children from rural areas and would discourage families like ours moving to the Dales. There is a 500 year history of Skipton providing education for children from the Dales. This policy rides roughshod over that.
I have paid and continue to pay for my children to use the school bus, we pay over £100 per child each month that is over £300 a month for us as a family. I work in a school where parents are paid by the council to bring their children to school as there are not enough places on the school bus, yet many parents do not take up the places they have been allocated and there are unused seats. I feel the system is unfair. We live rurally and have to drive our children to the bus as it is. Schhol transport is a nightmare!!!

School transport has been extremely valuable to our family living rurally, due to the distance to the nearest catchment school (primary and high school). We are disappointed with the provision laid on from April as we don't feel confident in a taxi service when the same company has been doing it since the beginning of our child's time at school. Get the feeling they'll be very unreliable too. Also seems extremely unviable when the current provider is actually in the area. The school our child attends would benefit massively from a bus service run from pateley bridge and I believe many parents would pay for it - the school is dangerous at drop off and collection due to the volume of traffic! Can NYCC look on putting on services like this to try and generate money were a high volume of non catchment children are attending a school? I wholeheartedly support NYCC in any decision about children getting priority into catchment schools based on where they live. We would not get into our current school now due to the amount of non catchment siblings coming in. This is unfair especially when for us it would mean at least 6 miles to the nearest school then!
We only have two secondary schools to choose from in our catchment area, we live in Ingleton. By changing the eligibility to the nearest school with places this would mean QES is the only school we can apply for where we would get free transport. When I have to make my choice for my children as to which secondary school they attend I do not want my child going to QES and would choose Settle. This is for many reasons but I also want my child to attend a school in North Yorkshire and not Cumbria. North Yorkshire would lose a huge amount of children from their numbers if this were to happen as parents who live in the Ingleton/Bentham area and wider areas would choose a Cumbrian school rather than North Yorkshire due to free transport being provided. It seems very unfair to penalise parents that live in rural areas and have little choice in secondary schools anyway.
The council must look at the impact changes to policy will make to the children. All children currently in a school must remain there regardless of the proposals and not be made to move simply becuase of transport issues. There must be more consideration for the rural areas and for the impact on village schools which are often the heart of a community. This proposal could mean siblings are split between schools. Parents should have a right to chose the school that their child attends within reason and be supported to have a choice. The council should not dictate where poorer families, who may have no income to transport, school thier children.
We live in a rural area, which means that access to public transport and safe non-vehicle travel (Cycle paths, cycle lanes, lit footways) are very limited. The only justification of removing the current free travel arrangements is on cost-saving grounds, but this conflicts directly with the council's statutory duty to promote the use of sustainable travel to places of education. I cannot speak for all areas but in our village there are no suitable 'sustainable travel' options available, public transport does not connect with Selby and there are no walking or cycling routes suitable for children (It would involved walking or cycling along National Speed Limit country roads with no pavements, verges or street lighting and with numerous blind bends and dips.
I pay what I consider to be very high council tax. We picked our catchment school as it had travel support. Parents that work need travel support to get their children to school at all. In the villages we often live many miles from our school and most have recently lost public transport. Removing school transport would make living here at all unviable for many families.
NYC have a responsibility not to deny parents the opportunity to choose a school for their child due to their location. Rurality should not limit parental choice. Limited finances are no excuse for this to happen.

We currently live in North Yorkshire but close to a county boundary. Our child has attended the local village primary school, in North Yorkshire since the start of Reception. We drive him to school even though more than distance away. We are isolated from the village due to living on a farm and therefore friendships made in school are important. 3 of our older children are attending secondary school in North Yorkshire, Richmond being our closest catchment school. However, our nearest secondary school would be under the proposed changes in County Durham. I would not send our fourth child to this school, due to no other reason then it is not a school which his primary school feed into. As such we would be forced to fund and provide transport to enable him to go to the school with peers from his Primary school. I feel sending children to the nearest distance school is appropriate, if in the same catchment as the Primary that each child has been attending, but not appropiate, if like my child it is different. I feel otherwise this is detrimental to the children's social and emotional development. We chose to live in North Yorkshire in an area close to Richmond because we wanted our children to attend it- but as an Agricultural family we are unable to live in a town, so school transport has been vital for us to get our children to school. If we had to pay for 3 children to get the bus to school we would financially difficult.
Living rurally we do rely on a taxi run, I feel strongly against an outside company taking the tender for the taxi run as I would not like a complete stranger taking my children to school. Also the local taxi drivers that do take our children know the area and also the conditions that they can be faced with in the winter, where an outsider will not.
We live in a rural area and rely on home to school transport, as we are unable to walk to school. Our home address and primary school are in catchment for a few different secondary schools. Our primary school is a feeder for our preferred secondary school but our home address is nearer to another that we do not want to go to. I think that if we are in catchment for a secondary school then we should get free transport to that school, as we are in area.
You have merged our council and since have consistently provided a poorer service to Selby rural communities. There are no alternative public transport services to any secondary school in North, West or South Yorkshire, and the closest school in South Yorkshire is a several mile walk on isolated country lanes with no pavements or streetlights. The cars travel at 60 miles an hour on straight sections and there are several blind bends. The alternative is not safe. People cannot afford to pay the extortionate fees to take them to our catchment school which is 12 miles/ 25 min drive (without rush hour traffic). If you take away free access, anyone who doesn't drive AND can work flexibly to get to work on time, won't be able to live here with kids. You'll take another step towards strangling our community in favour of funnelling money into bigger towns and cities which already have significantly more resources proportionally than rural communities combined.
This policy is taking away the parental choice to send their child to a school that is the best fit. There is already limited availability re transport in our village and reducing that further to just one school is not acceptable- the choice of only providing transport to knottingly which is based in a very deprived area (even the school website highlights this as a major issue!) again is not acceptable. Our children work incredibly hard and reducing the option to only pay for transport to one school is just not fair to them. As parents we pay incredibly high council tax and since the council has merged we have been told we now have to pay for our garden waste and now this. I am so angry that this policy is a cost cutting policy- our children's education should not be part of your cost cutting! You are effectively once again expecting hard working parents to pay for something that we already pay taxes for.

This decision will take away the parents choice to choose a secondary school. Transport to secondary school is vital in rural villages around Selby where council cuts have already decimated the public transport links. The distance and road type to any school makes it impossible for children to walk. Parents who work will be unable to take the children to school by car. The council will still end up paying for transport so savings will be limited and you will be harming the excellent schools like Brayton who will have reduced numbers on role. The schools in other councils like West Yorkshire and east rising will benefit. It doesn't make any sense.
In remote areas where children have to walk significant distances to get to a bus door to door transport is essential for school attendance. This must be properly funded and continue as this can't always rely on parents transport.
Happy in the main. Safety will still need to play a major part in rural areas. Unlit roads obviously precluding and exempting villages where the distance criteria is not met.
Consideration needs to be made within areas that no other transport options are in place. In small villages that have had transport services removed it limits options and by further reducing the offering this reduces parents choices. Pupil and parents should in fact be supported to attend the school that fits their need and not just because they have no other choice due to financial impact from transport. Pupils all thrive in different settings and children can be negatively impacted if this is removed not to mention the lack of motivation to attend and participate which in turn could reduce progress levels, attainment and outcome. A child being forced into a school that they don't not wish to attend could infact negatively impact that child's future.
Based on our rural location, our nearest school would not be a viable option for our three children during the winter months. Therefore, it is important they continue to have transport available to the school within our catchment area. Their education would be severely disrupted if this was no longer the case.
It was first shared by NYC (Redacted) - Who when contacted came back quickly, now to no longer work for the council. It feels to me that there are to be big losers in this situation, where there is great competition for students, ultimately leading to impacts in schools and communities. We are rural in setting and by no way make up the average stats created for this survey, and within areas this to me needs to be taken into account. Our feeder schools, could essentially no longer by the case in communities we work in and serve - I would appreciate someone coming back to both me and the Governing body here. I have contacted (Redacted) as advised on (Redacted) email. It doesn't feel fair, nor potentially allows for sustainable planning and futures. We work hard to ensure a balanced budget, living within our means, but how can we effectively provide an education to our community, where year on year numbers could end up being far more volatile. Please do call and we can meet to discuss -My number is 01729 822451. - Kind regards, Gareth Whitaker
North Yorkshire is a large area, mostly rural with very poor rural transport links. Most people may choose to live in rural areas, so either they 1. should contribute more for their children to travel to school, 2.the council should take the public transport system back in house and 3 the government should give our council financial assistance for children's transport If I had children of school age I would take responsibility for them and not expect others to have to pay.

With regard to sustainability and the future. We live in quite a remote place so the bus for the nearest primary school only has about 8 children travelling. Some children at the same school live at the starting point or on the route of the bus but are not eligible for free transport. As a council you need to promote and advertise that parents can pay for a bus pass to travel to the school - fill the empty seats and reduce number of cars dropping off outside school.
I feel that yet again, changes disproportionately affect those living in rural areas in a negative way. Reducing choice and increasing cost.
The proposal makes a lottery of funded bus places and makes it even more confusing for parents. It makes no logical sense, I have 4 young children and using the current bus proved it would cost me over £20k in bus fees just to get them to school in their catchment areas, secondary schools are different and suit different children and decisions shouldn't be made on finances. The changes are not fair, especially for more rural people. It would make me drive my children to school this increasing pollution and congestion.
Why should we suffer because we live in a rural area. We should be able to select the school we want within a reasonable distance and just because we live in a rural area this may be a further distance than in other countries. That does not mean we should be forced into not having a choice of schools. Our local secondaries are not that dissimilar in distance from our home, but with these new proposals we would only be able to attend one - the one that we do not wish to attend due to its size, pastoral care system and ethos. We make decisions very carefully about our children's futures and it is unfair to force anyone into 7 years of education at a place where they do not wish to be. I do not understand the need for this change. I also worry about the survival of smaller secondaries when their students are limited. Is this for on the schools?
I think changing free transport to only the nearest school would be a huge mistake, for pupils, parents and schools alike, especially in rural areas. I think the current criteria of the nearest school or catchment area school is by far the correct criteria to have and the proposed change to that would be devastating to not only many families to also schools.
Current primary schools and friendship groups should be looked at when reviewing any transport policy. We live in a small village at the very edge of the North Yorkshire boundary and our preferred secondary school is a North Yorkshire school but the proposed changed mean that our child would only be eligible for free transport to 1 school in West Yorkshire and 1 school in South Yorkshire of which, none of their friends will be attending, nor do we as parents want to send out child to them. There is an absolute minimal difference in the mileage to the North Yorkshire school but it is not an option for free transport. Our village transport links have been cut to almost nothing and this is a further blow to us villagers (who already feel like second class citizens). Many of the children in our village will attend the North Yorkshire School at the huge cost to the parents but this shouldn't be the case.
If I live in North Yorkshire then I would expect that North Yorkshire would support my children to travel to a North Yorkshire school each day. We live in a rural area on the outskirts of the county and the nearest school with places available is in another LA area to which we have no connection. The policy in 2019 already stripped back provisions (catchment school or nearer school originally) and this measure takes it too far. I believe that the equality impact assessment is also flawed as it does not take into account the effect of the changes on those living in rural communities that are more likely to be those with protected characteristics and hence this is indirectly discriminatory. The consultation does not provide any evidence of the calculations of potential lost per capita school funding for the schools and academies that may be caused by a loss of students to other areas

outside of the district and whether this off sets any savings when viewed together. This is very much a penny pinching measure that will affect the North Yorkshire communities that elected members and officials are here to serve.
I like that the policy is being refreshed. It is very dificult to compare areas such as Scarborough to more rural villages such as Leyburn and hopefully the new criteria will allow for personal judgement calls to be made based on the areas current state not its historical features,.this is particularly in refernce to suitable walking distance where footpaths are no longer available/street lighting is not used due to financial constraints and roads that are used more now by large vehicles that were 10+years ago. Im excited to see the new policy ideas and feel the new phrase 'nearest suitable school' is much more relevant than 'catchment school'.
My daughter's been offered a place at Settle College and we live in Ingleton. A bus has always been provided as this school is within the same County. It would be devastating to the local children and also Settle College if transport was removed. Please do it take this transport away.
Whilst I understand that Home to School Travel is a large proportion of a shrinking budget for the Council, I do feel that efficiencies could be gained by allowing more children to use the service and this would also improve safety, congestion and air pollution around schools. Having witnessed a child being hit by a car outside our local school last year I feel that the fewer cars travelling to schools would be a good thing. Particularly in rural areas where cars are travelling at higher speeds near to the school. We chose for our daughter (and son in due course) to attend a school that is not our nearest, although we don't have a school within safe walking distance anyway. We would welcome the ability to drop our children at a point along the bus route to our chosen school to avoid congestion etc in the village and ensure that the buses are at maximum capacity. Depending on cost we would possibly be willing to contribute.
The number of pupils eligible may have been affected by school closures, forcing pupils to travel longer distances. Low pupil numbers are an issue in my area, putting schools at risk of closure. I think this factor should be considered when making changes to policy. I think the environmental impact of changes should also be considered. For each pupil that is no longer eligible because of policy changes this will be replaced by a car journey, often with only 1 pupil per car. School drop off areas are already congested with a lack of available parking, this will add to the problem. On a separate point, where a pupil loses eligibility at age 8 because they live over 2 but below 3 miles away from school, this is too far to be expected to walk twice a day at that age, on dark roads that are often unsafe in rural areas. It will inevitably be replaced by a car journey, further adding to the environmental points above.
I feel it is a money making exercise with no thought or consideration about rural communities that are already struggling to afford to live in the Dales. I work here and live here, I moved my children to school here in Reeth from (Redacted), knowing (from the policy) that they would attend Richmond school at secondary age. The road to Wensleydale school is not safe and it is not a priority road that is gritted, 8t is a dangerous suggestions. A coach is also not allowed to travel on the road to Leyburn above Grinton Moor due to the size of the vehicle. It would mean that mini buses would need to be provided-how does this save the council money as you would need more? In our large area but small communities our children have built friendships at Reeth and Gunnerside school - why should this be broken up in secondary school? I would suggest someone from NYCC come to Gunnerside and drive the proposed new routes in a coach and then tell us if they believe it is safe for our children to travel on these roads. Wensleydale school is over subscribed- you are ruining communities and our childrens future of these by splitting them up when going to secondary school.

I think the amendment to change to the nearest school for us in the far west of the county is absolutely ludicrous!! We live on the Cumbrian border so our closest school would be Kirkby Stephen! Have any of you actually driven this road! Even in a car this road is very scary and quite life threatening in my eyes if you were to send a bus full of school children over this top to the nearest school!! We also have 2 if not 3 rather narrow bridges in which the buses could struggle to get over (these have been knocked down the past and having to be closed due to the severity of the road condition once knocked down and open hole dropping straight to the river) there is also a part of the road which is subsiding on the moor heading over to Kirkby Stephen, and again to send a bus of all that weight is just damn right stupid!! The road which we'd have to travel over sits at a height of 1740ft which obviously for a road in the Dales is rather high!! This road never ever gets gritted so this would have to be changed to a category 1 for the school access! I believe as a dale we have been told by Westmorland council this road has not been deemed safe to grit due to the height and severity of the hill!! So I'd love to know how this is going to change the gritting priority?! We are hill farmers here in the Dales and (Redacted), my husband has had to go and rescue an incredible number of people from this road in winter due to getting stuck! I would love to know how many days of school in winter they would miss, this isn't just because of snow but ice! And like this winter ice and cold weather has paid a massive impact on the road this year! I seriously think this part of the new policy needs looking at whether it be as a whole or whether it can change for certain areas within North Yorkshire!! I don't think it's very fair that if we have to apply to Kirkby Stephen school still and we chose to apply down the dale (Richmond or leyburn) for our own safety of our children and then have to try and find our own transport for getting our children to school just sounds very very unfair and in really does feel like you are punishing us for the area of the Dale we live in!! We are a farming family living in the Dales and wanting to access the schools in which all others members of the primary school would be attending!! And it's just not possible for us to move house as I said we farm and our livelihood is all in this area!!
I have ticked Richmond as our nearest town although Richmond is still an hours drive from where we / my family with children live therefore I feel this survey is flawed from the start as it doesn't give participants the opportunity to stress how very rural our homes are. I am very concerned about the council's proposal to drop 'the catchment' aspect of home to school transport and the introduction of the possilbilty of offering transport to schools in other local authorities. If this was the case for my family's children they would miss an awful lot of school during winter as the road rises to 1800 feet above sea level. It is a single track moorland road with standing water / running water in many places. Not to mention the very steep, long hill down into the next county. It is doubtful a bus or minibus could safely get here never mind the perilous return journey required to get the children to school. The safest route is always down dale on a road that is conscientously gritted by the council for which we are very grateful as it means the school bus can get to the top of the dale safely without incident. I implore the consultation committee to consider geographical locations such as ours as an important safety issue alongside the attendance implications that transporting children to school/s in bad weather would create.
Living in Ingleton, we are right between two secondary schools, but slightly nearer to one. Those schools are very different, and I would want to send my child to the best school for their needs, rather than being forced to attend the 'nearest school' because of financial reasons. Furthermore, secondary schools with smaller feeder primary schools/few feeder primary schools will suffer - redundancies due to not enough students, funding cuts because of fewer PP/SEND pupils attending,

Whilst I appreciate that savings may need to be found there needs to be some exceptions to this proposal. One size does not fit all. Children in upper Swaledale cannot travel to Kirkby Stephen for the following reasons: 1 Safety. This is a moor road, 1700 + feet above sea level . B road and no winter gritting provision by Cumbria council. It has a 1/4 hill which is treacherous with only minimal ice on it I travel this route for work, missing many days in winter due to bad weather. On many days my husband grits the hill for me to descend which if in a 2 wheel drive or bus would be unsafe. I think the proposals are not considering the hostile environment this route travels through. Also weather conditions change rapidly on this route. The weather may be fine going to school then change and the children cannot or struggle to get home. I can assure you this is can be a frightening experience 2 Disruption to education As several / many days will be lost due to the inability to provide safe transport the children's education will be impacted. The argument they can be set work at home is detrimental to both education and socialisation and establishes inequality I hope you will reconsider this part of the proposal for the children in upper Swaledale. They currently have to travel to Richmond which is accepted as it is a safe journey. Your proposal would not be. I will be raising my concerns with Muker Parish council and Rishi Sunak Thank you
The closest secondary school to our home would be Kirkby Stephen. I am sure that when assessed, it will be decided that the route is unsafe and not a ressonable route. The alternative diversion in poor weather would be 50 miles+ so completely impractical. The second closest option would be Wensleydale School. Again, this route poses challenges due to lower gritting priorities. I believe a large majority of families have chosen to send their children to schools in Richmond from this area due to it being the best and safest route in the winter months. I appreciate other counties do not have a choice of catchment schools but due to the rural nature of our area, I can't see how it can work any other way.
I appreciate why you are looking to change to this. however, it affects student and parental choice of where they wish to go. While you can argue, that they can make alternative arrangements to go to their school of choice, not every household is logistically or financially capable, therefore the policy changes discriminate against those with lower income. Settle College is further away from more populated areas. We have a good portion of students who choose to come to us from areas like Skipton. By removing their eligibility for free travel. We will see a drop in student numbers which means less money to run the school effectively. I do not agree with the changes at all.
Having been involved in the fight to keep a school open in my local area in the past (Ingleton middle)I am again feeling disappointed that there is a real ulterior motive for this decision to change the agenda on how families will have to pay for school transport to the chosen school in the county they live in. Being in North Yorkshire but on the boundary of Lancashire and Cumbria the new criteria seems to me to be a good method of moving pupils away from Settle College to schools nearer to many pupils in Skipton and Kirkby Lonsdale by the means of removing the free school transport, thus removing much needed pupils (and the funding that goes with it). We all know how councils all over the country are struggling to cope financially, but living at the extreme furthest boundaries of the councils jurisdiction I feel again funding will be removed from this area. The bureaucracy and poor management of councils/ governments in the past few years as per normal will ultimately have a detrimental impact on the local community. There is a lot more to discuss on this matter and many,many local people will find this new transport infrastructure on schools utterly despicable and financially driven. Waiting with interest on how this progresses.

You haven't considered Ingleton in this policy review. A village sat between a North Yorkshire secondary and a Cumbrian secondary. The proposed changes in policy will significantly affect admissions to settle college. Children who already have siblings in settle college will have to apply to a different school with different holidays etc unless parents can afford transport. Transport to the nearest county school should absolutely be funded by the county !!! This change in policy could have devastating consequences for schools such as settle college. Transport links within North Yorkshire are already difficult for post 16 education. Please reconsider this proposed change in policy and consult with your local primary and secondary schools!
I appreciate that the Council want to align themselves with Government policy and save money, but the Council must recognise that it has many rural areas where the nearest school is not always the catchment school/suitable school. In rural areas the nearest school in time taken to get there is not always the same as nearest school in distance. If the policy was to change as suggested then this would have significant impacts on those families that reside in the deepest rural areas of the County. Unless the Council are going to upgrade the roads and significantly improve gritting and snow plough services in winter then these pupils will miss out on schooling. A discretionary and common sense approach must be taken.
Please think carefully about any changes to the services provided to very rural areas. It has hard enough managing with extremely limited services. We need more not less!
I think it not fair you should be able to send your children to what school they would better themselves at how can we afford two children at such a costly price to pay for school transport and if we worked we wouldn't have an option i for one will not be sending my kids to school at Leyburn as I don't feel it has the education I want for my kids or the background for them to see past the rural community having grown up in the countryside it a struggle to get to school as it is especially with the snow I've been bullied in small schools as a little girl and I do not want the same for my children it will affect us massively especialy when my kids get to secondary I just can't afford that money and I will not be sending them to Leyburn instead of Richmond ! I also think reeth is a lovely school and a lot of little ones will not have the opertunity to send them there I don't agree with the changes being a mum of two in the rural area I always think it us that has everything much harder as it it living in the middle of no were so no close facilities we need that transport to get to a to b when we are buisy mums ourselfs
I feel that providing transport to our nearest secondary school, which is outside of our local authority is rediculous. My choice would be for my child to attend out local authority secondary school in Settle but QES in Kirkby is closer. How can removing the number of children accessing your own school be beneficial to the school. Personally, my child would not cope with the size and number of students at QES but Settle College would provide the appropriate support and needs for my child. You will reduce the number of children attending your own school with this new policy which could lead to the school closing. The new policy is a money saving agenda and is not taking the needs of children in a rural area into account. I believe there would be better ways of saving money than reducing who you can provide transport to, it is despicable!

Our 'closet school' would be QES…. I do not want my children to go hear. The amount of friends with problems here and have moved to other schools is countless. I want my children to go to settle, a smaller school where my children will not just be a number to the teachers. Somewhere they will know their individual personalities, in Yorkshire. It's not fair if we can't afford it we should be punished by send out our children out of the county to a worse school. We live in a rural community where this amendment could ruin countless children's education. Work harder on driving down the cost of the busses. From what I hear they are been paid a fortune for the school runs. Drive down these prices to save money where it won't affect hundreds of parents/children's mental health. There are other things to be looking at before this, why attack children's choices who can't defend themselves
This policy unfortunately will have an extremely negative impact on community schools, as well as removing all element of parental choice of which school their child should attend when reaching secondary age. While I appreciate there are financial constraints which may be alleviated by these changes, we are already hugely disadvantaged as a community by lack of access to services (as an example a 4 hour round trip for nail surgery for one of my sons just this week). We are underfunded in the west of the county and have the minimum access to services across public transport, health and education- special educational settings for SEND students, autism support, Early help are all focused to the east leaving the bare bones of a service for this side of the county. A change such as this will be devastating- meaning parents have no choice but to send their children elsewhere and in a catchment with low numbers of young people, schools are left struggling to recruit enough students to remain viable. Schools such as Settle College are a welcome and popular choice for parents and children across the area, which allows them to provide an excellent quality of education despite funding issues. Should numbers decline due to a policy which discriminates against parental choice (fast becoming a luxury which is available only to urban dwellers) schools like Settle College will suffer enormously. I ask the council to consider what it wants for its population- a hugely discriminatory east/west divide already appears to exist and these changes will make an already unacceptable situation even worse. While there are many challenges to balance within the council I feel that we deserve better, as do our children.
Whilst I agree in principle with nearest school equates to free transport it should also include and account nearest safest route especially in the winter months on high ground on roads that are not gritted. It amounts to discrimination of the Dales communities and puts lives at risk or at the very least restricting education to those living in the Dales. Safety of children should be a priority.
Some comments about the questionnaire: Not sure why Q1 has been included. Will responses be reliable? Does it matter if a respondent has read or hasn't read a text? How will that influence the overall decision making process? Q2 asks respondents' where they live. There is no radar button for Swaledale nor the larger village of Reeth nor any of the Upper Swaledale villages. Richmond is the option for people in Reeth, or is it Leyburn that is nearer but in a different valley. Again, how will this affect decision making when its validity and reliability is questionable? Essentially Q3 asks, who / what are you? Yet again, what bearing will the outcomes have on the overall decision making? Q4 asks about the respondents perception of question clarity. Ditto above comments. At last in Q5 we have a question that relates to the amendment that is of most concern. Yet it uses a Likert scale of 'agreement to disagreement' for each response. Q6 ? Q7 may be useful. Not sure why 'Not Mandatory' is used against these last two questions.

Buckden Parish Council has very real concerns about the amendment to the main eligibility criterion to: 'nearest school (with places available)'. We appreciate that this is to match the statutory requirement, however, given the potential specific implications for our parish, we believe what is proposed is both impractical and unreasonable. This relates to the specific topography of this part of the Dales. Specifically, there are three hamlets within the parish of Buckden – Oughtershaw, Greenfield and Beckermonds - where children have always gone to Kettlewell School, even though Hawes school is marginally closer – in distance, if not in time. This is because the single-track road over Fleet Moss which stands between these locations and Hawes rises to a height of some 1900 feet; it is the highest road in Yorkshire and is the 13th highest in the UK. It is a single-track road, is frequently blocked by snow and even when not blocked can be dangerously icy as the gritters often can't get up the 1 in 4 gradient section. The parish council strongly believe it is not acceptable for NYC to put our children in danger by requiring them to travel to school on such a road; a secondary consideration is that it would inevitably have a negative impact on their attendance record in winter. We propose that a better way of amending the policy to meet the regulations would be to define a specific catchment area for each school based on the "nearest school" criterion but adjusted to take into account such special factors as roads which are completely unsuitable for school transport. We trust that you will give our proposal serious consideration in your consultation process.
Our chief concerns relate to the impact on our local secondary school provider, Settle College. Speaking with the Headteacher of Settle College we are concerned that the proposed changes would see a significant reduction in roll and in effect discriminate against those families who wish their children to travel to Settle College from places such as Bentham and Ingleton. The policy therefore potentially impacts on parental choice in North Craven. A significant fall in roll, as calculated by the Head of Settle College and as attested to by other local Primary headteachers, would negatively affect provision at the College and impact on the life chances of pupils at Settle Primary School, who in the main attend Settle College. We fear that County's proposed Policy as it stands would negatively impact on provision in North Craven though it may bring savings in less rural areas. The North Craven area seems to frequently overlooked when it comes to policy decisions - the recent decision to reject the application of Settle Primary School to be a targeted mainstream porvision for high needs, vulnerable pupils was made in part because of transport decisions (ie it was felt a TMP would be better nearer to Skipton and thus save on transport costs). The proposed transport policy likewise discriminates against schools in North Craven with potentially a devastating impact on Settle College - making us wonder, when we consider all the school closures we have had in our area recent years (Low Bentham, Clapham, Rathmell, Horton, Langcliffe, Richard Thornton, Settle Middle, Ingleton Middle) if the Local Authority truly understands and values the fragile educational infrastructure we have in our rural area.
Our chief concerns relate to the impact on acessibilty to our remote local school and to our secondary school provider, Settle College. Pupils who attend Kirkby Malham Primary come from a very wide area - anything that compromises eligibility for parents coming from areas such as Bell Busk,Otterburn / Hellifield will not help the viability of our small school. The majority of children attending our school are out of the Malhamdale area - we live in a remote location and are concerned as to the impact of any policy that may affect the roll of our small school community and would need further reassurance that we would not be detrimentally affected. We are also concerned that transport policy changes will reduce elligibility for those families who wish their children to travel to Settle College from places such as Kirkby Malham, Bentham and Ingleton. The policy potentially impacts on parental choice. A significant fall in roll at our school or at Settle College would negatively affect the life chances of pupils in our area.

We live in a deeply rural area, with bus travel the only option for secondary school, without driving almost 80 miles a day if no school transport. There will be no choice for the children in which school to go to or subjects to take
This would be absolutely catastrophic for myself and many other families. As a single parent the cost associated with getting (redacted) to settle school (she starts in September) would have a massive negative impact. I also have (redacted) so this would eventually affect both. This is a terrible change for myself and so many other families. (Redacted) has chosen her school already and that choice shouldn't have to be made based on whether or not (redacted) can get a free school bus. Please don't implement this change.
We live in Ingleton and are both working parents who will be reliant on school transport to and from school. Providing transport is a must for our rural communities and to revoke or reduce that will massively impact ALL children. Especially vulnerable. Reducing it will remove choices for our children and future generations.
This proposal may be fine for large towns, but in a rural area this could be catastrophic for local schools. In Bentham this would entirely cut off 1 of the local high school as an option, having a huge impact on staffing and potentially leading to a closure. The modelling does not utilise projected stident numbers so is wntirely flawed. Settle College receives a quarter of its pupils from this area that would now be sent to another school. The primary school will lose families to ingleton (and already has too few numbers for its size) whoch again will lead to redundancies. This is ill thought out and based on weak modelling. The impact of this consultation if implemented will decimate the local schools, to the benefit of schools outside of North Yorkshire.
The proposal may save money in parts of craven but for the areas of Ingleton and Bentham this will create issue. Our children will no longer have their nearest county school as an option. Parents do not need to be left to pay for transport to their nearest county school. The proposal has not been thought through. Schools like settle college will be massively impacted. Schools like settle college are few and far between. Why take this choice away from our children? The people making these proposals should get out of offices and go and speak to schools, pupils and parents. Hear and understand why they choose schools within their county. Please do not make this proposal policy.

With our nearest 2 schools been Settle college and QES, this will have a huge impact on both schools. More people will choose QeS due to the free transport, even though there is very little difference is distance (we live in Bentham). It also takes away free choice from parents, when children may benefit from Settle college as it is smaller. It will negatively impact on the college too, as numbers will drop dramatically. As a parent with one child already at Settle and another currently at Primary. we have already discussed moving our child to QES. This is not something we want to do as Settle supports the needs of our child. But we also cannot take the extra financial burden of school transport. We moved to this area from the city on the understanding our children would have equal access to schooling through provided transport to their chosen, nearest school (There is very little difference distance wise between QES and Settle from our location-10 miles and 11 miles) Living in rural areas can be challenging enough when it comes to equality of access to services, without this extra pressure. Many people struggle with the cost of living crisis, and Bentham is known to be one of the poorest towns in North Yorkshire. This will put more pressure on families and cause more stress/poverty/mental health issues, when it could easily be avoided. Currently Bentham is undergoing regeneration and has proposed the Bentham master plan to NYCC. A major part of this is supporting children and families. I would expect NYCC to be supporting families in this area, not penalising them and causing more financial stress and poverty. Living in North Yorkshire, we would expect our children to be able to go to school in North Yorkshire and not have to attend a school in a different county-QES is in Cumbria. Our nearest school in the NYCC catchment area is Settle and therefore free transport SHOULD be provided.
It is ridiculous to think sending children to school in cumbria from upper swaledale is a sensible option. The road down swaledale to richmond can be treacherous at times in winter but to then think it is safe to send children on untreated roads over a hill to kirkby stephen is lunacy. The weather can change in minutes at that altitude . Have any of the people making this decision ever travelled this road and if so would they want their children to on a cold frosty snowy day. The alternative route is by the A66 which can also be closed to vehicles when bad weather hits so then what happens, children stuck miles away from home and no way of getting them home .Why should children in remote areas be the ones to suffer when cuts have to be made they get little enough as it is .Yorkshire children should go to school in Yorkshire not shunted off elsewhere to save money
Yet again rural communities suffer and the choices removed.
The proposal is most likely made with care ,but there is a lack of understanding of the infrastructure of some rural areas .The proposed closer school for one area is reached by using a minor road (winter maintenance shared by two counties) due to the altitude it is often affected by ice and snow . To take and collect the pupils would entail passing the school they are at present attending ,plus another 20 min drive . This is not ideal for working families, the pupils , the environment , or the health of a rural community .
Ripley Parish Council wish to note a concern that provision for home to school travel could disadvantage rural children attending a school within their catchment area if not the closest.
Rural secondaries need to be considered, how are the council supporting the schools that this will affect to ensure they remain open? Surely ‘nearest school’ should be ‘nearest NYCC’ school? Seems short sited in relation to the Craven area in particular.

Moving to a "nearest school" policy means that my child will be sent to a school outside of North Yorkshire, moving away from all their friends and in isolation as the sole student in the year group. The costs will not be reduced by changing the policy - there are currently two buses from our area (one coach, one mini bus) travelling from Swaledale/Arkengarthdale to Richmond School - this will have to be changed to at least one coach and two mini buses travelling to Leyburn, Kirkby Stephen and Barnard Castle. Accessibility in winter has not been considered - travel to our nearest school will involve a journey from Arkengarthdale to Barnard Castle, crossing the Stang. This road over the highest moors is not gritted in winter and is often impassable in a 4x4 truck. Children from upper Swaledale will be sent to Kirkby Stephen - a similarly ungritted and dangerous road. Children from Reeth will be sent to Leyburn over Grinton Moor, another ungritted route over the high moors. Unless the Council plans to extend both their gritting responsibilities, and insist that Cumbria and Co Durham also adopt their parts of the routes as priority one, you are putting lives unnecessarily at risk. These changes wlll cause divisions in rural communities. Children in Swaledale are a tight-knit group, having gone through primary school together, and these policy changes will highlight those who can afford to pay for transport/drive their children to school and those who cannot, and whose children are forced to move school.
The policy does not account for a rural community and the distances that pupils have to travel for school. It is important that primary schools feed into secondary school that is considered part of their community. This policy does not recognise the importance of feeder schools and their relationships with the secondary schools that they feed in to. A one size fits all approach is not going to work for some schools and it will see the numbers decimated, making the future of the secondary school precarious.
Being brought up and continuing to live in this rural community we are challenged with our Authorities Financial Cuts. Our taxes and particularly Council Tax continues to rise and we are receiving significantly less services. A significant cut has been in winter gritting and snow ploughing. We struggle to commute from our rural community, and cannot image how you envisage our child to be expected to use a proposed transport system that will cross high altitude county / parish borders to alternative schools in potentially dangerous winter weather conditions. Clearly in our region the school catchments have aligned with sensible road networks to local schools, maybe this is already a financial saying not considered. I have taken a copy of this note allowing it to be referenced in the future as we experience your investment cuts to our rural community, where our children are put at risk.
Pupils that live in Swaledale mainly go to Richmond School. This makes sense because it is the safest and most reliable route to a secondary school. All other routes to secondary schools other than Richmond involve travelling over high passes that are much more likely to be closed due to snow than the main road to Richmond. It does not seem fair that parents choosing a secondary school should be financially impacted for choosing a school that is safer for their children to travel to and that they will be able to attend more regularly. Further to this, there are good links between primary schools in Swaledale and Richmond School, yet under the new policy none of the children that have attended primary school in Swaledale will have free transport to the secondary school in their catchment. Pupils that attend primary school in Reeth or Gunnerside usually go to secondary school together, supporting community cohesion, and pupil friendships and pupil wellbeing. Some families will have siblings in two different schools if they attend the school associated with free transport. We understand that the policy is intended to save money, but its implementation will have an unfair impact on this community. It seems that, at least, there needs to be special consideration for some communities to mitigate the negative impact of this policy.

All policies require exceptions. This points to someone looking at a map with no concept or understanding of rural communities. The routes to nearest schools in Upper Swaledale are all over high ground much ungritted and not safe in Winter. For example the road to Kirkby Stephen is poor. It requires substantial remedial work to restore it to its original state, for it to be safe. It needs more passing places and the introduction of reflective way marker posts so if ploughed or gritted it is known where the road is. It is been unmaintained for many years the shoulders of the road have collapsed in many places caused by vehicles trying to pass each other on a primarily single track road. You cannot have siblings going to different schools. This survey is restrictive and channeled to the benefit of the Council a very biased document to minimise opposition. A blanket urban style policy cannot fit fairly remote rural communities. The key question is why for well over 50 years have pupils attended their current schools. Because our elders used common sense and knew what was best. This is a money saving exercise at the expense of children's education and mental well being.
We don't need transport to primary school so I am looking at this in relation to the time our daughter moves to secondary school. We live in (Redacted) so our nearest secondary school is QES in Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria and our nearest North Yorkshire school is Settle High School. I worry that under this proposed policy more Bentham children will feel forced to apply to QES on transport grounds and therefore Settle will lose out on pupils which would lead to a spiral of decline as fewer children = less funding = fewer subject options and resources and so children will stop applying to this school and it will eventually close. This would have a terrible impact on our communities and I think it would lead to fewer families living in our communities ending up with them becoming towns full of second homes and an aged population. I already feel that our area (North Craven) often gets the short end of the stick when it comes to county matters and this just adds to that feeling. We pay over (Redacted) in council tax yet feel like we don't get much in return. There are already quite a few challenges to raising a family in this area, please don't make it harder. As I read it the policy doesn't make clear if we would be able to pay for transport should we not meet the nearest school criteria. This needs to be clearer so that parents & children can make informed decisions.

Whilst I understand that costs have gone up and need lowering I'm baffled by your suggestion over the 'nearest suitable school'. I live in a rural area that has a very close knit community. This proposal will have a truly devastating effect on our area for a number of reasons. My main concern is safety. Whilst your proposal covers a safe journey for students walking to school it does not cover a safe bus journey and the roads that would have to be used under the new proposal. In our area the roads that would have to be used are simply unsuitable as a school route. They are high altitude and are impassable in winter due to snow. Also one route would mean crossing a duel carriageway which is deeply concerning and unsafe, this road is also routinely closed in winter due to high winds. The alternative route would go past our preferred and sensible choice of school in Richmond or miss an unacceptable amount of days of school. Another point to consider is that currently we have 2 school buses for secondary school in the area, you're new proposal would mean that 4 buses would be needed which surely costs more and adds to your carbon footprint?! As mentioned before, we have a very close community and that involves our children who would be split apart from lifelong friends to go to a school where they don't know anyone. This will cause serious social issues and anxiety in our children which means their education will be negatively effected. Another detrimental effect on our community would be that parents like myself who work in the area would have to seek employment out of the area so we could transport our children ourselves as we cannot afford the extortionate bus pass fees. This will undoubtedly negatively effect our local economy. Another point I have been made aware of is the devastating effect this would have on Richmond School and Sixth Form. We have been notified that if your proposal passes as it is then Richmond School would have to offer a vastly reduced curriculum and that the sixth form would cease to exist. This would not only upset people in the area but put unnecessary strain on other schools and sixth forms in neighboring areas that would have have to take students that would have preferred to go to Richmond school and sixth form. I strongly urge you to take my points into consideration because your proposal puts finances above the safety of our children and that is simply wrong! One final thought, I pay council tax in North Yorkshire. Why should other councils be expected to educate our children?! Our council tax in eye watering, put it to better and more sensible use like safely getting our children to a truly suitable school that doesn't put them at risk!
Re free travel restricted to 'nearest school': Richmond School has a broader range of facilities and better academic results than Leyburn School; however Leyburn is smaller and more vocationally-focused, offering a different set of strengths. The children of Reeth currently benefit from free transport to either, based on which their parents deem to be the most fitting environment for them to flourish; NOT an agonising decision based on what they can afford. In Swaledale, we already face higher living across a whole host of areas; including a 20 mile round trip to the nearest childcare provider until kids turn 3. It would be catastrophic for the community to have more essential services cut, and the secondary education of their children become an agonising cost-return analysis. Winter conditions in rural areas such as ours must be taken into serious consideration too. Routes quickly become impassable in inclement weather; and the nearest 'suitable school' should take into account the 6 months each year where travel on ungritted, non priority roads can become extremely precarious. In our case, Richmond Road (the road between Reeth and Richmond) winds through the bottom of a valley, at a lower altitude than the road to Leyburn, and is often the only route passable and well gritted in frosty conditions. We have already suffered numerous instances of thoughtless roadworks this winter from NYCC who obviously haven't thought through the repercussions of cutting off the most reliable thoroughfares during periods of bad weather; and it has been up to the parish councils to remind them. This change in policy seems another case of a complete lack of understanding of the specific geography and needs of our rural Swaledale community; and the drawback of a one size for all proposal for such a huge and diverse county. I urge you to reconsider.

I am struggling to understand how the council think that this " one size fits all " solution with transport is the correct way. It may well be feasible in an urban area but in the rural communities where I and my family live this plan is completely unworkable and dangerous. Our roads are narrow and susceptible to weather related issues especially in the winter. Many of the roads are not deemed as a priority for gritting etc so I fail to see how expecting children to be transported on unsuitable roads or even diverted, increasing travel time can even be a consideration. As a council you will be forcing a parent to take the decision that it is unsafe for their child to travel due to the weather and therefore preventing that child the right to a full education. Also putting lives of children in jeopardy expecting them to travel on unsuitable roads in treacherous conditions. I also fail to see how this is going to be cost effective when adverse weather conditions will require longer journey times. How will this work in reality when the schools such as Wensleydale are full? I am also very disappointed that as a council you have seen fit to organise a few meetings at unsuitable times and places and have made very little effort in advertising it and therefore prevented a lot of parents, families and residents the opportunity to question and seek answers. Not a very democratic way to propose a change of policy by attempting to bring it in via the back door. The whole thing is completely ridiculous and unrealistic. To try and change something that is so important and not allow a full and open discussion with the people who this will affect the most is disgraceful. I hope that this will be fully reviewed and not instigated in the rural areas. This is going to split communities families and friends.
Settle College is a small but brilliant high school with catchment areas that include Ingleton and Bentham your proposal means that people won't choose Settle College but go for QES in Cumbria not because they want to but because it is nearer and therefore is eligible for free school transport. Settle College will reduce in numbers and fall into demise - so many primary schools in North Craven area have had to close due to falling pupil numbers. How can we keep Settle College alive and thriving? -by offering parents a choice . A choice not based on whether they get a free bus to school during these financially difficult times but a choice based on what's best for their children and their needs. Settle College has a great sense of community, offers a good range of opportunities and needs supporting as a North Yorkshire School. Okay so some parents will choose QES in Cumbria over Settle College but it is their choice. The distances travelled and time taken to get to either schools are very similar it would be ridiculous to make QES in Cumbria an oversubscribed mega school whilst forcing the decline of a very good North Yorkshire high school. Don't apply town and city rules of 'nearest' school to an area so close to other counties. We live in a rural area and this needs to be taken into account . We pay council tax to North Yorkshire for services in our county not the neighbouring one.

I have just attended a meeting which showed the planned proposal for school transport would effect the area nore than i originally thought. The owner of the coach compeniy providing the transport service to both high schools in the area confirmed that it costs the same amount of money to transport children to high school in either direction with one being in a different county so even though the school in a different county is closer it will not make a difference to the financial aspect of the proposal which is what north Yorkshire is intending. Yet many families will be inpacted with this change. We have (Redacted) at a school in our local area which is north yorkshire and we will then have to send our (Redacted) children to a school in cumbria which we personally see as a school with only numbers and grades as their main purpose. When the north yorkshire school sees pupils as people and aim to find ways of them personally developing and finding themselfs in a safe community so in short i see it as doing this to our rural community a huge strain on the wellfair of students having to attend a non preferred school. It will also effect the wider community as the different council have different school holidays meaning work loads of parents during diffent school holidays will be greatly troubled. For us personally with our jobs it will then put a strain on other aspects of ecpenditure for the council as I, along with the majority of the company i work for, have the capability to provide myself for work in health an social care during school hours. If this is done and my children along with all my colleagues families in the same position are put in this situation it will put a bigger strain on the already struggling budget to provide these services. Then childcare needs from the government will be forced to pay more. Other businesses in the area will have a drop in staffing for the same reason too. Making the ongoing effect on the finances of the whole area in a disruption. We are a community where generations of families have all attended the same high school yet this generation is going to be split. What then happens when the intake at the north yorkshire school is so low that it can not stay open and children from the area then have to travel over an hour to get to their closest high school. The costs for this will be even higher. A child living close ti that school would then be left to travel a greater distance to a school. Rural communities are put to the side constantly and we dont get tge respect deserved. The council have taken away our local police. They are not paying attention to the struggles of local doctors surgeries. The roads are more holes than road. Public bins overflow and public toilets becoming non existant. Yet our council tax % is one on the highest in north yorkshire as our recent bill has just stated we are paying the same for a band B as the rest if north yorkshire will for band D yet despite this we can not send our children to the local high school because the school 2 counties away is 2 miles closer. This is ridiculous.
I attended the meeting in Ingleton today 21.03.24 which was very well attended by concerned parents, local bus companies, local school governors, local Headteachers and councillors. It was clear from the views in the room that this proposed change would have a very negative impact on a lot of rural families. My main points are; * the cost of providing a school bus for a child to QES from Ingleton/Bentham/Burton would be the same as sending them to Settle college therefore no saving is being made by the council in this rural area. People living in this areas will be penalised to make savings for other areas of North Yorkshire, meaning we lose out again due to where we live. *parents could have siblings that may attend settle college already and get free transport, they will now have to pay for their second child to attend the same school or choose free transport to QES and have siblings in two different schools. Cumbria and North Yorkshire have different term dates, this means having children off school at different times and means families have to pay for more childcare. *North Yorkshire will lose school places in their own North Yorkshire school by changing the policy to the nearest school as parents will choose QES (an academy school in Cumbria!) this then doesn't become a cost saving as you've lost potential pupils attending your own schools. *why should someone who pays council tax's and rates as a North Yorkshire resident not get free transport to a North Yorkshire school. *Settle college is a much smaller school than QES and would suit my child much better than QES, I don't see

why I should have that free transport right taken away when Settle would be more suitable for his mental health and wellbeing. I suggest that an amendment is made and rural areas are considered separately to urban areas as there is a big difference between the two. Thank you
I just think the proposed policy for the nearest school will just not work for our area! We are one of the most rural communities who don't even have mobile phone signal when at home or even for the journey you are proposing to send our children over! Here where we live you are saying the nearest school, well for us it would be going over to a neighbouring county. This would mean going over the most dangerous roads and for a bus or even a car at that matter, I think there could end up been devastating outcomes whether it be full of school children or just the driver!! The road at the moment is starting to subside in places and this is even before you start sending over more traffic! With the subsidence comes very high drops off the side of the carriage way, this then drops onto open moorland running down to a beck in the bottom on the valley! I would hate to think that a bus had to stop to let traffic past in some of these places and it would get stuck! With no mobile phones signal for a matter of 6 miles is just absolutely crazy! We then come onto the winter period! For a lot of people winter doesn't affect them in the way it affects us! Normally when it can be even raining 4 miles down the road, you starting travelling further west and start to realise very quickly that it is starting to snow very heavy and the road start to become very challenging! Our farm sits at 1200ft which is high enough for all the snow fall when forecasted and given that you have to climb to 1740ft to reach the summit of the road, and this is before you drop down a rather steep hill in the Cumbrian border! From the Cumbrian border this road does not get gritted what so ever! Over the years they have lost several gritter over the edge of the barrier and into the grassland below due to the severity of the gradient! Because of this, when us a community ask for the hill to gritted due to having to get to vets, garage etc. The council have told us that that the hill is not deemed safe! And yet you're trying to send my children over this road! Also another example could be the children have got to the neighbouring council school ok at 9am but by 12pm the weather takes a sudden turn for the worse, the bus sets off back and gets stuck! There is no mobile phone signal to contact anyone , some as young as 11 year olds are on that bus absolutely petrified what impact is this going to have on the children, they'll never want to go to school again! You then probably say right we will find an alternative route! So this would be going up to scotch corner and accessing the A66, this is a 67 miles journey would take easily 1 hour 30 minutes! In this journey you are passing our 'catchment' school! This new route certainly for our area will not save any amount of money! There is already 2 buses running to a locals schools and yet you're wanting to add and extra bus to the journey to go the opposite direction! Crazy!! You talk a lot about safe travel when walking to school, surely there could be a change int he policy in stating if the transport provided whether is be bus/taxi/car is not safe to travel you then go to your catchment school! At one of the meetings you were saying about if transport wouldn't take the tender due to the road parents would then have to take the responsibility in getting the children to school, you still face the same challenges in getting there in a car! But also parents in the community work, how is this going to affect families if they have to leave their job purely to take children to school, they won't be able to put food on tables or even purchase the school uniform which is needed! They also work in the opposite direction due to knowing they don't have access over this road in many months of the year! Please please please could you consider making an exception for the swaledale community within the policy for us due to these points listed above!

Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers on roll and therefore risk the schools' future viability. The transport cost savings would be negligible in this area because the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. The proposed change is of huge concern to our community and to parents, not just because families will no longer have a choice for where their child is educated, but because of the potential impact on the College caused by such a drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the effect this decline will have on the local area. The line drawn between Settle College and Cumbria's QES places the Ingleton and Bentham cohorts clearly under the "ownership" of QES, when roughly half the students from these towns choose Settle College currently. Whilst QES can absorb these whilst shedding numbers from their Morecambe side, Settle College will only lose. The change feels like closure of this community school by stealth, because it has not been made clear to parents that the change will have such an impact on Settle College it will inevitably decline, becoming vulnerable to closure. Unless all catchment parents are made aware of the North Craven/border impacts, they will be unaware of the risk to the school and therefore unlikley to object to the change during this consultation purely due to unsuspecting ignorance. In this way North Yorkshire Council are effectively concealing / fudging the issue. Indeed I am not convinced NYC even understand, since Settle College's Headteacher himself had to point out the glaring errors in their data, which has resulted in a hastily republished dataset and extension to the consultation period. Our own councillor David Staveley in conversation was unaware of the potential impact on Settle College, another illustration of this issue not being understood locally even by the council itself. Being largely a rural county we expect North Yorkshire Council to protect the interests of rural people, who by the nature of where they live and the outcome of this change will have all choice removed as to which local school their child attends. The town of Settle risks further degeneration into a ghetto of holiday homes and retirement properties, with young families driven away. Settle College is a small rural community school which is lauded for its excellent pastoral care for children from the rural community; many parents choose it for this reason as other schools are felt to be too big or too urban. It is so disappointing that the council are considering sacrificing this investment in sustaining the rural character of the children of the county. The council have a responsibility to be transparent to parents about the long-term effects of this change if they intend to pursue it. However, it is the strong hope of parents, staff and governors of Settle College that the Council, having been misled by the erroneous data first provided to it by its own data team, will now realise the risks, listen to our concerns, and take steps to adjust the home-to-school transport policy to protect children in this area by maintaining home-to-school transport for all students in our catchment should they wish to attend Settle College.
As a school in rural area that is fed by small local schools the number of students from the wider North Yorkshire area has a positive impact on my child’s experience of Settle College in a personal and pastoral capacity and in the range of subjects and extra curricular activities. Removal of school transport will reduce student numbers which will have a negative impact on the school and in businesses and groups in the Settle area. The area is already challenged with the risk to the swimming pool and Victoria Hall, village schools closing and the cost of family homes, and the number of retirees that move to the area. The impact to Settle College and risk to school provisions will further deter people from moving to the area and local services will suffer.

It would be detrimental to the local area not just in terms of the schools, pupils, parents and staff but to the wider community. It would be the beginning of a knock on effect of decline to standards of education, decline for business, jobs and economy. Another blow to the rural communities who already struggle with disadvantages of rural poverty. Schools are hugely important, taking away choices of education impacts communities negatively. Loss of local schools in recent years has already proved this. 'Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.' I would urge all involved to seriously consider the impact of the proposed changes especially to Settle as it does not fit into the general demographic of your facts and figures. Throughout this valley the negative impact of changes to schools, transport decisions and loss of schools has been of significant and detrimental impact.
After speaking to a friend from a neighbouring village it comes to my attention that the transport to the school beyond the county boundries has no space on the current school busses provided for the intake of septembers new students. This means that if more children from the area are to attend the school 2 miles further than the prefered school in north yorkshire this will cost north yorkshire more overall as they still have to provide transport for more children to attend the school out of the county along with the school within the county which coaches are also full. Even if there is no further intake for the north yorkshire school thus transport will still need to be provided. And the company that provide this service will still be providing the service to pupils attending the north yorkshire school which leaves from the village that is no longer eligable for the service for children that live in this village. This makes no sense financially to run extra transport for children to attend a school they and their families dont want them to attend in a different county. This is indeed putting a bigger financial burden on north yorkshire to provide the service in our area. So not only will it upset the local children families and ability for them to go to the school that previously was not even a question to do so. It will not generate the financial resources to make this a reasonable proposition. The owner of the coach company even agreed that going to either school is financially the same even though it is further to the school in north yorkshire the school route to collect children is more direct so they end up doing the same miles. This really needs cocideration not just because of this financial non viability but because of the mental health of our children. Many children have support from siblings at the school they are. How can all children from 1 family go to same school without having to transfer children already at seccondry school? Ourselves have to concider this option yet we dont want to transfer our older child for the benafit of our younger children we nay have to yet we will still feel QES is not the school fitting for any of our children. School bus for both depart from the opposite side of main road it makes no sense in any way. Is this how north yorkshire want to make a generation of children not have any trust in their council? Is it because we are a little village that can be bullied? How can this be justified in any way? It is upsetting not just children and parents now but for the future. And many in any generation of the community are outraged for this to be even suggested for our rural area.

If transport is no longer provided to schools within catchment, rural schools such as Settle College will suffer from huge drops in pupil numbers, which will have a devastating impact on the local community. Also, whoever decided that an 8 year old child can walk 3 miles to school and back each day has never tried it. My children walked 1.8 miles to school and back from 5 years old, in rain or shine. They are now at secondary school and still walk. Obviously this is fine, they are a suitable age for this. We had no car, and in rural North Yorkshire, there are no buses! Ridiculously, there are 3 buses a day here. The first one arrives in Settle at 9.50am, and the last one leaves Settle ay 2.40pm. Why wouldn't you just change the times slightly to allow for school (and work!) commuting?? It isn't cost that stops families like mine using buses to get to school. It is the fact there are no buses to school!!! You can't remove school buses, you don't even run public buses! It's an absolute disgrace.
A blanket policy for a huge area such as NYCC just will not work for rural communities on county lines. Settle College will struggle and leave the older children and their families with the potential of the school closing. QES is too big for a lot of children leaving a rural primary school. They do not know each child or care. They are just a source of funding. There would be no cost saving to NYCC to send children out of county, and in fact could potentially cost more. Loss of tax money paid to NYCC would go to Cumbria, to a school which is already oversubscribed. Choice of school is being taken away, as a lot of parents will have to send their child to a school that they don't want to as they can't afford school transport. You could end up with older siblings at Settle and younger siblings at QES. Different term dates, extra stress and cost for parents to find (expensive) child care. Increased risk of unauthorised absence trying to accommodate holidays out of term time across two different sets of holidays.
As usual this policy will affect the forgotten rural west of this county and have a significant impact on the viability of our local secondary schools future. It feels like a tactic to eventually force the closure of smaller schools as they will struggle to maintain student numbers. Many local primary schools have been lost over recent years, don't let this happen to secondaries as well. Constantly cutting services, but council tax only ever goes up!
Children of Gunnerside Estate's employees, residing in Upper Swaledale will face difficultly attending their closest secondary school due to adverse winter weather conditions in this area and the road conditions on these higher levels. The route to Kirkby Stephen (350m above sea level) would certainly not be a reasonable route to school. It is unlikely a suitable bus company would tender for the work and the alternative diversion is 50+ miles. The second option for these children would be Wensleydale School. Again, the travel routes would be difficult in the winter months, hence, this explains why the greater majority of children attending Reeth and Gunnerside School have historically chosen Richmond School as their first choice for secondary education (priority one gritting route down Swaledale). The Estate are concerned that a change in the policy will adversely affect their ability to retain and recruit good employees. Education for families is an extremely important factor and one that they will consider when looking at a career choice. In addition, if transport to school for children of existing employees is not suitable, there is the risk that these employees will miss valuable work time when they have no choice but to collect their stranded children. This can be for a period of 4 months + during a hard winter. Equally, we do not believe implementing the change for this area will save the Council's funding, as additional bus routes will be required rather than economising the system. Living, working and being an employer in this rural area already involves many challenges and expenses. Please consider this change carefully before adding to these challenges.

In my understanding, the 'nearest suitable school' criteria would be very problematic for secondary school children in the rural areas surrounding Skipton but who may be nearer to a different school. The grammar school system in Skipton but not, for example, Settle means that a child living in Malhamdale could be attending his or her catchment school in Skipton such as Ermysted's or Skipton Girls High, but could loose eligibility to this this catchment school as Settle High is closer. This in principle would be understandable if the school systems operated were the same, but because the grammar school system in Skipton sits alongside the comprehensive system in other local towns, the school offering cannot be considered like for like. This is therefore a big penalty on the students who attend their local, in catchment grammar school who will have their transport taken away from them
It is ridiculous that your catchment school is not the one to which you provide free transport. Home choices may well have been made on the basis of catchment schools! If we are in a selective school system how can we possibly send one child to the selective school and one to the catchment school that won't necessarily by the nearest school. Rural areas are significantly affected by the suggested changes.
We live in a rural area sometimes the catchment school is further away. All transport to the catchment school should be provided as it has been for years. All the little villages have to have a school to send their children too. This would ruin the whole "dales schools" if you don't provide it and provide to the closest one with places. Upper wharfedale school would be heavily affected by these changes. I do not agree with it at all.
"Difficult to predict with any certainty" the cost saving of transporting to the nearest school. The difference in mileage from the catchment school of Settle and the nearest school of QES to Ingleton or Bentham is very small. N. Yorkshire residents pay Council Tax to N. Yorkshire for schooling. I fear a dreadful impact on Settle if this is implemented. My grandson starts there in September, with other grandchildren due to follow in (Redacted). Will the range of courses on offer diminish? Will teachers lose their jobs? If anything, the new policy should state that transport should be provided to their nearest NY school, rather than to any out of county one. Has the impact on numbers for Settle been looked at? If this policy goes ahead, as the cohorts provided with transport to Settle each year reduce over the next 6 to 8 years, will extra buses be needed to transport to QES? And if QES is full, transport will still be needed to Settle, saving no money at all? Parental choice is the deciding factor now, but in future will friends be split up just because one school is full? As a general policy I agree that transport should be to the nearest school, but in this rural area I believe most strongly that an exception should be made. I would like to know about the other side of Settle catchment. Will children now have to go to Skipton instead of coming up to Settle? How will these numbers impact the school? There is a lot that needs thinking about in this very rural part of North Yorkshire. Please think about it carefully Maybe this area needs to be an exception and have it's own rules. Do you really want the impact this could have on one of your own schools, Settle, to be disastrous? I'm sure just this consultation will make parents think that they should opt for QES for 2025, even if they had not planned to. There will need to be a positive campaign for Settle to overcome this uncertainty. Thank you.
We live in a rural area and the difference between our schools (only 2 in our area) is 3 miles and 3 mins drive. The closest is in a different county and council remit. The further is in the same county and council remit. Our children attend the further due to having family in that area that can help out if needed. If we are forced to use the closer school we would lose that help and in turn would affect our working lives. This policy change does not take into consideration the bigger picture of people's lives and the impacts it may cause.

This policy consultation was discussed at length at a recent Mickleby Parish Council meeting. The parish council has significant concerns about the implications of the proposed changes for families in our area. The implications of this policy seem to us to discriminate against families living in rural areas and the ability they have to choose a school for their children. Families in our local town (Whitby) have a choice of 4 primary schools, 3 of which are in easy walking distance of each other. Families living in our rural parish on the other hand, which lies between two primary schools, have a choice which is already very limited. The proposed changes to this policy will limit that choice further by designating one school as the closest and therefore the only one to which free home school transport will be funded. Whilst parents with the financial capacity to do so may decide to pay for transport to their preferred school or may have the capacity to drive their children to school, lower income families and families without access to their own transport will be unfairly disadvantaged. Our parish council has similar concerns as regards the removal of support for low income families to send their children to a faith school of their choice. We would ask North Yorkshire Council to reconsider these aspects of the proposed policy changes given the adverse effect they will have on rural families and in particular on low income families in our villages. It is clear that the main driver behind the proposed changes is financial. Whilst we fully understand the constraints that local government finds itself under, we feel strongly that it should not be low income rural families who bear the brunt of the proposed cuts to the service. North Yorkshire is a largely rural county and the costs of home school transport are therefore bound to be high. The current national government is very keen to promote the importance of freedom of choice as regards schooling, it should therefore be providing funds to ensure that rural communities have at least some choice as to where they educate their young people.
I think there should be more flexibility about which school is eligible for the provision of free school transport. Giving free school transport assessed strictly by it being the nearest school is not necessarily going to be in the best interests of the children, the schools in the area or in some cases even the best financial option to save money for the council. My 2 grandchildren live in Bentham and go to Settle college. The other school in the catchment area is Q.E.S. Settle College is slightly further away than Q.E.S but it is the school of choice for most families who have lived in the area for generations. It is in North Yorkshire whilst Q.E.S is in Cumbria. From observation it appears to me that the parents who choose Q.E.S. have mainly come to Bentham from other areas and are usually more wealthy than the local families therefore they could afford to pay the bus fare. Bentham has no public bus service to Settle. The school bus would have to keep running for the children who were eligible to go there because of Special Educational Needs ETC but there would be a lot of empty seats and I don't see how that would save the council money. Settle College is an absolutely essential school for what is a largely rural area, 75% of students at the school need home to school transport. The excellent headmaster is worried that if the policy is implemented in its present form it would mean a decline in numbers for what is already a relatively small school and ultimately a question about the future of the school. In my opinion this would be a tragedy for the whole area. The school in recent years has provided excellent educational opportunities for all its pupils. It caters for all the education and care needs for its pupils by getting to know each child individually and helping them reach their full potential. My main point is that every area is different and has different needs so a policy that is not flexible enough to meet the education needs of the area could be disastrous.

My child attends a primary school in North Yorkshire, which is where we live. If your proposal was to go ahead, my child would have to attend a school in Cumbria. This school is far too big for my child who has SEND needs (which are not recognised through an EHCP) meaning he would find secondary school incredibly difficult. Living in a rural area should not mean we only have one choice of school to go to, particularly when that school is not even in our county. It is wrong that choice is being taken away. My two nearest schools, which are very similar in distance, are very different schools. My child and I should have a choice giving him the best chance at a positive education.
I have no issue with the general context of the proposed changes, however it is clear that the blanket policy highlights the complete lack of understanding NYC has of the region it proports to represent. Even on this form Question 2 assumes we live in large towns, I had to select Hawes but I live in Thwaite on the other side of the Buttertubs; this example is really at the crux of the issue. I hate to be the one to inform you, North Yorkshire is not flat terrain, it has mountain passes, which are winding, poorly maintained and untreated in winter. Our village is geographically nearer to Kirkby Stephens, however we rarely drive there. Why is that? Well is anyone in the council offices stepped outside the towns and cities you would know the B6270 is not a road to be taken lightly. Bikers choose to ride it in summer because it is challenging, yet the proposal would end with a coach travelling this road in the depths of winter. If you wandered down your corridors and discussed this route with your road maintenance teams, at the very least they would raise an eyebrow at the suggestion. It is abhorrent to me that the council would seriously suggest playing with the life and wellbeing of the Upper Dales children by bussing them along this road. Ask a farmer or game keeper how safe this route is in winter. The route goes well above the snow line, and it's not just snow but ice. When people are reluctant to take land rovers over there an "out of touch" transport department feels its fine to take a coach full of children across there. At best I can assume the council is poorly informed, at worse this is a council actively seeking ways to persecute those would chose to live in rural areas. I want to put the council on notice that should the policy proceed and the route be enforced on Upper Dales families, should there be any incident which causes harm (mental or physical) to our children, legal action will be taken. It will be easy to show that the council was fully aware of the risk, it knowingly failed to ensure the safety of the children and was thus negligent in it's duty of care.
We live in such a rural area. With only two secondary schools with are very much different one being very big with thousands of pupils and the other not as big but more country pupils. It will be a huge impact on where I send my two children too for secondary school. As the nearest isn't the right school and it will cut the numbers down on your North Yorkshire school as the other school is in Cumbria (but as you say it doesn't matter about county's) but you would rather support a Cumbria school then a North Yorkshire one!!! I think the new proposed home to school policy is not the right action to take. You need to rethink about saving money else where!! You need to support your North Yorkshire secondary school.
Ability / option for children under the 3 mile limit to be able to access transport for a fare / pay as not always suitable access specially in rural areas to walk safely home
It's important that children in rural settings are transported to school
The proposals to only provide transport support for the nearest school significantly disadvantages children living in outlying villages. It also takes away any element of school choice for families. I want to be Ble to make decisions on what is best for my child, not what we can afford to do. If you live witjin the xatchment area you should be entitled to free school transport to any catchment school if you are unable to walk there. I strongly oppose this proposal

Our child does not go to our catchment school. We were fortunate to choose the right school for our child, and to pay for the school organised bus, therefore catchment and eligibility for transport did not come into our decision making. However, having lived in the northern dales previously, this may have a detrimental impact for the rural communities many of whom may not be able to afford to pay for the transport, to enable them to have a choice in schools. Officers and councillors should look at whether the detrimental impact for these people with protected characteristics need to be revised before pushing ahead with the removal of catchment. The policy change could adversely impact on rural schools and their finances and sustainability. Therefore urge officers and councillors to minimise the adverse impact to those impacted rather than just push ahead with the policy and budget savings. As both of us parents have benefitted from eligibility to transport for our secondary schools when we were children, to go to a good school, and whose parents could not have afforded the buses if we had not been, we are keen that this should not reduce those who are less fortunate from having the choice to attend a good school.
The policy is very inaccessible and wordy. Make short crib sheets for specific populations eg children with medical needs. Make videos rather than documents. School Transport is so critical in a rural area, we absolutely rely on it but it is scary when it is unreliable or only taxis.
I think it is wildly unfair, in a rural area, to take away the choice of pupils to attend a school which they lie in catchment for, purely because they cannot get free transport. Here that is removing all choice of attending the school they want to - it will split friends up, it could destroy smaller schools.
This scheme does not work in remote areas such as North Yorkshire. Our choice of school is based on accessibility for both parents around work commitments and resources only available with the schools area, rather than geographically. We also wish for our children to receive the best education and will opt for a school based on this. By limiting school choice for parent's who cannot afford transport to the better local educational centres will simply result in pockets of reduced educational outcomes, poorer futures wages and increased reliability on government handouts. It's also possibly that remote schools will also be forced to close as they will be undersubscribed and won't receive the funding to retain staff and could result in closures. The move also doesn't support the government's move towards eco friendly choices and it will force more drivers to go on extra journeys to keep their children in the schools they desire for their best outcomes
Would Settle college survive based on the catchment area. In a rural location, it is vital that our local children are not forced to travel long distances.
If lived in a built up area with better transport such as keighley, harrogate, Lancaster transport would not be an issue however because of lack of regular public transport. Transport is needed for rural areas. Parents / child should have option to choose school within in reasonable distance to where they live.
I would like to be eligible for help for home to school travel for my three young children that all attend primary school together. We live very rural life and it's a shame that we don't get any help with transport because the school we haven't taken them too is supposed to be closer even though as the crow flies our school is nearest.
The very rural locations in the county have been ignored when making some proposals. This is exactly why we wanted to keep our own counsels.

The policy has clearly been designed with urban schools in mind and does not adequately consider or provide for rural locations where there is limited choice of schools.
I think that the wider financial implications of the proposal to make it nearest suitable school, including out of county, have not been thought out. You will lose hundreds of rural children arouns the borders of the county to other authoritys because parents literally cannot afford the transport costs for the longer than average journeys to school in north yorkshire. Also not to mention the then lack of funding in ny schools due to lower pupil numbers and then ny having to pay other counties school fees. It makes no sense at all. My children attend caedmon, our catchment shcool for decades on free transport on a bus. How are pupil numbers affecting the operation of that bus....be it 10 or 30 children the bus would still run so how does it save money preventing them travelling for free? Also their closest suitable school would be out of county in guisborough or brotton.....i live in north yorkshire and want my children educated where i live in the county they are growing up in, where i pay my council tax etc. As education is compulsory i find it abhorrent to expect any parent to pay for their childs transport to the nearest catchment school. What is very difficult to ascertain here and will be for many upcoming parents is when will they find out if they can get transport to caedmon for free....after theyve applied, before? Does this now mean year 5 pupils need to be looking at cleveland schools as well as ny schools. How do they find out where they get free transport to. Is it a lottery each year? How can they plan both for their child and financially to account for potentially paying to send their child to their local school. Already stokesley has lost all children inc astleton and danby as the bus is no longer free, please do not do this to caedmon/whitby. I wish there had been more infor provided to parents BEFORE the meetings so we realised we needed to attend to have the questions answered. In short i strongly oppose the abolition of free school transport on this plan. It is unclear, makes it impossible for parents to plan and make choices and no child should have to pay for transport to their catchment school!
It needs to account more for children on farms and hard to reach areas as they miss out on so much including decent transport provision
The proposed change of eligibility for school transport to remove catchment school from the criteria will have an absolutely devastating effect on my family, and on the communities of my village and surrounding area. We are a Dales community, with close links to our catchment school (Upper Wharfedale School), with most siblings and neighbours attending this school. Our children attend very small rural primaries across the Dales and spend time each week attending Upper Wharfedale School for swimming and sports lessons and events, gradually getting them used to this school and keeping a close connection with children and teachers. We are not an urban community and we do not have any links with schools or communities in Skipton, so to give us no choice but to send our children to a secondary school in Skipton, outside of our rural Dales community has come as a great shock and disappointment, and is contrary to every expectation of both families who have lived here for generations and for families who have moved here with the specific understanding that their children will be eligible to attend UWS. Owing to our rural location, we are 30 mins away from our catchment secondary school, so transporting children ourselves or paying for transport (should this become available), is out of reach for many of us. With this lack of consideration for rural communities, this proposed new policy completely disregards our needs, and may lead to families being forced to move away, and possibility even to the closure of rural schools. I feel that we are being unfairly treated

We live in (Redacted), North Yorkshire with one child getting home to school transport to (Redacted), and one child getting home to school transport to (Redacted) - both our catchment schools. With your proposed changes, my youngest will have (Redacted) as her nearest school when she leaves Tockwith. In our opinion, this is not such a good school as our current catchment senior schools (Redacted). Wetherby is in West Yorkshire and comes under Leeds Council. Who will provide home to school transport (Redacted) to Wetherby - anyone? If we opt to send our second child to(Redacted), does that mean we will have to take her - or will you still provide transport? Will we have to pay for that transport for our eldest child who is already at(Redacted)? None of the examples you gave in the document applied to our situation so it's difficult to understand. If you are prioritising transporting SEND children, will my children be able to use that transport? Have you considered all the additional cars on the road with extra parents having to drive their children to school? The proposed changes seem to be penalising those in rural areas.
Implementation of this amended policy will seriously impact the future viability of Settle College as a functioning secondary school by penalising children who live 'just beyond ' catchment area who may no longer be able to afford to attend. In addition, it will impact the social and mental well being of students in the area two fold, both in the opportunity to mix with people from a wider area and, if bullying occurs, the inability to move schools without financial cost to parents. I am angry that North Yorkshire council seems now very town/city centric, with seemingly little understanding as to how it is to live in the rural west of the county. There is currently only one school that children in the Settle area can attend, compared to a raft of choices in bigger towns and cities. If you go ahead with these changes, there may not even be one! If numbers attending Settle College reduce because parents who live 'just' out of area cannot afford to pay for transport, the funding given to the school will reduce accordingly. Due to the population density of young people in the area - perhaps because of a lack of affordable housing - the number of children within catchment area is already quite low and so schools like our local school rely on additional students on the boundaries of catchment enhancing the numbers and social diversity in the school. In the past 15 years, North Yorkshire council have closed 3 primary schools within a 5 mile radius of Settle. By implementing the proposed changes to the transport policy, you are now putting our secondary school at risk, by effectively 'shutting out' children from north Ingleton and towards Skipton (e.g. the villages near Gargrave) whose parents cannot afford to pay for transport, and clearly have not considered how our childrens' well being will be affected if their local school has to close. In addition, if children who effectively live just within catchment area for Kirkby Lonsdale and Skipton schools (who currently attend Settle College) had to attend their catchment schools, are there places available for them now?

We are in the catchment for two schools, the closest one is much bigger and popular. The second school is smaller and 3 miles further away. I assume thought has been put into determining valid catchment areas, and that there is a reason it was deemed reasonable for us to want to attend the smaller school. I think it is important for the travel policy to consider the alternative transport options in rural areas. There is NO suitable public transport option to school 2 therefore all families wishing to attend that school would need to drive cars individually which will significantly add to the carbon footprint load in the area. It would also increase traffic around the school. When driving past other schools at start/end times there is significant illegal stopping of cars causing driving hazards and unsafe conditions for children. This change would put pressure on an already oversubscribed school (the closest) and penalize the smaller school. I think it is shortsighted not to consider the need for parents to work. Unemployed people may be able to accompany their children to school but they don't pay council tax, so surely it is financially beneficial to support working parents?
1)The right of choice is removed for parents. This affects the democratic right of every parent from whatever background, to seek out the best education and suitability of their child and will discriminate against those on low income or from deprived or ethnic backgrounds who may not be able to afford addition transport costs to their school of choice under the revised proposals. This will clearly discriminate against this section of society and the future of the children affected where the local school may not meet the necessary needs and requirements of the pupil. In restricting school/transport choice, should parents choose to still send their children to the preferred choice, then the likelihood of alternative transport choice i.e.taking their children to school in the car will be counter to the county policy of sustainable active transport and may adversely affect the net zero targets set by the state. 2)Not supportive to the rural schools. With the removal of the Middle school in Ingleton, Settle and special school in Netherside in 2012, the negative and detrimental effect on the local community is still being felt within the local communities. To implement this policy would see an adverse effect on a number of small local schools where this policy would destroy the school and adversely affect the local community. This could also have a detrimental affect on the larger local schools like QES in Kirkby Lonsdale and Settle College. 3) These proposed measures could have a counterproductive result, but no allowance or contingency has been made for this possibility. There is no allowance for the possibility for the nearest school being oversubscribed and children having to be bused out to other schools under the transport provision which the county would have to meet under its legal obligations. This would not then meet the projected figured given in the analysis. 4) Further where there have been open consultation days, these have been at times when the people who this is most relevant to have not been able to attend as they have been during working hours therefore actively disincentivising active participation with no after working hours consultation [5-30, 6-30 is not conducive with working parents] 5)Adverse effect on local companies, employment, and economy, particularly the transport operators. Should the tendering process look for shorter runs with reduced prices, it will become economically unviable for a number of local companies which will no longer be able to run the service, this in turn will lead to reduced competition, with reduced competition naturally lead to higher prices charged and the county could very well end up paying more for the same services due to reduced companies and submitted tenders. This situation benefits no one but the transport companies. 6)Adverse impact on the community. This sort or radical change to policy has a huge and subtle effect on the local communities, which generally to the detriment of the local community in lost facilities and services. 7)Adversely affect the mental wellbeing of the child. The restriction of a child's fundamental right to a good education at their chosen school can and does have a detrimental effect on the child's wellbeing and mental health and there are many well documented cases supporting this. The effect lasts a lifetime and can lead to depression, low esteem and in extreme cases, suicide. 8)Adversely affect the education of the child by sending them to an unsuitable school with long term effects

on the adult prospects, both personally, academically, professionally and for the country employment workforce as a whole 9) The data model summary - January 2024 [analysis] is poor in its analysis with only taking on sample day and clearly states that on another sample day, the results would be different, Projections are hypothetical with no sound financial basis. “In the scenario that every child attends their nearest school” is clearly a flawed assumption

I am shocked and devastated that NYCC are planning to remove the "catchment school" criteria from the Home to School Travel Policy. I understand that the whole of NY needs to be planned for, but I believe that there is a total lack of understanding of the rural communities that have to use transport for their children to attend school, due to the number of farming communities that live in North Yorkshire and that to attend a local primary school require transport, particularly areas of the county that are close to the borders. My family live in rural Yorkshire close to the Lancashire and Cumbria border. My child currently attending the closest village primary school, but I was denied transport costs despite the travel to any of the surrounding village schools being unsafe for walking (down the A65 or outside the mileage limit for his age group) because I didn't send him to the catchment school which was nearly double the distance, so I am now very angry and confused as to why NY are now making such a fuss about their statutory requirement only being to transport to the nearest school. So based on this, I made the decision to send my child to the catchment school of Settle College this coming September. A school that my family have attended and supported for generations. My oldest child also attended, despite Settle College not being the closest school, because it was a NY school and because the alternative was Queen Elizabeth in Kirkby Lonsdale, and despite a significant number of his friends going across the border to QES. So based on transport I decided on Settle College again for my next child, to support North Yorkshire and Settle College, again despite a significant number of his friends decided on QES. Under this policy, Settle College is no longer the closest. Based on the proposed new policy, the choice to support a North Yorkshire school will now be taken away from us as parents for future children as our closest secondary school with places will now be a secondary school outside of NY. So in North Craven, this policy will effectively prevent our children who live and reside in NY from being able to attend a NY Secondary School. Why would we pay for transport to Settle when we can have a free bus to QES? I attended the meeting to hear how this was going to save NY money. In North Craven, I fail to understand how this will save you money. All our children require transport as we all live outside the mileage limit for secondary schools. NY have to pay for transport, but are going to have to pay for our children to attend a secondary school outside NY, so all funding from the government for school places will go to QES NOT Settle College to support and fund a Cumbrian school. Settle College will be affected immediately. Parents will accept the free transport to QES and chose to send their children to Cumbria instead of Settle College from the start of the intake 2025. Those parents who might consider supporting Settle College will be unlikely to put Settle College down as a choice if they think the school might be under threat of closure. DO NOT underestimate the impact of Settle College losing pupils from North Craven and the ripples it will have on future families making a decision for their children when they look at falling numbers at Settle College or a thriving QES. And should Settle College close, I believe the next closest secondary school will be in Lancashire, not even a Skipton School, so our children are still going to be transported out of NY at NY's cost with no school funding coming back into NY. I will be making a different decision if this policy is implemented and sending my child to QES because I believe this will be end of Settle College as it becomes financially unviable and I don't want my child's education disrupted. I pay council tax to North Yorkshire to include educational facilities, and will not be able to have my child educated at a NY secondary school. Appalling!

Due to the nature of catchments and the broader locality within which STAR operates, unless behavioural change means that parents/carers do not select schools on grounds of transport eligibility, I believe our STAR schools will probably see a net loss of students. This is particularly the case at secondary. This MAY have considerable impact on the quality and sufficiency (curriculum offer, SEND offer) of our educational offer. Tadcaster Grammar School is already under considerable risk from the CYC consultation. Tadcaster Grammar and Riverside are impact by the transport consultation (s) and this compounds the well known issues with housing in the town i.e. there is an aging population with little available housing and to maintain numbers on roll, we have needed some students to commute to their schools. The transport policy may jeopardise this and compound our situation. We recognise these changes are in line with changes to statutory transport and also that NYC need to mitigate costs, but at the same time, we are also concerned that in a rural county such a change has significant implications for social mobility. A student may live within the catchment of a strong school which their family wants them to attend but because of policy change may be forced to attend a closer school which doesn't meet their needs as well, due to a lack of means of transport. In this way, and especially within the High School environment, we will undoubtedly see some of those large Trusts which have the means to do so, deploy their own transport offer to compensate for the loss of one run by NYC, to the further detriment of maintained schools and smaller Trusts who cannot afford to run buses around their catchment to collect students.
It doesn’t work in rural villages when distances might be comparable as the crow flies but the drive is not at all comparable
This change will have a severely detrimental effect on rural schools. If a school loses students because they are forced to go to a school slightly nearer their home rather than their own choice, the school is then at risk of falling rolls or even closure. That has a massive impact on communities. Rural communities are already struggling to survive as mixed vibrant communities due to retirees moving in, lack of jobs and housing, Airbnb's etc. Our neighbours, a precious family with young children say they would move if their children can't go to a local school. We've seen the impact of small primary schools closing and the impact would be worse for secondary schools. The council should be taking steps to keep our communities mixed age and vibrant and this would have the opposite effect. It is very short sighted and a false economy.
Settle Town Council are concerned by proposals given, having a potential impact on Settle College. As "close to boundary" will be disadvantaged by the proposal. It is not reasonable to transport North Yorkshire children out of the County for school. There is a worry that reduced student numbers will lead to reduced provision such as extra-curricular offering and pastoral support. Further concerns are there will be a knock on leading to further pupil reductions. Settle Town Council support Settle College's key role in the community. The proposals could damage this and have an impact on the whole community. Settle College is an integral part of the Settle community with pupils involved accessing a range of groups and participating in local & Council run events. A reduction in numbers and subsequently funding could have a serious impact. At worst case scenario, there is a serious concern over financial liability and closure.

I believe that the policy will split up the community in Swaledale. All children currently go to the same secondary school which provides a cohesiveness to the community which will disappear if pupils get dispersed amongst different schools. In addition, this is a highly rural area subject to wintery conditions and at the moment, the relatively low level route to Richmond is gritted while routes over the Stang and to Kirby Stephen in particular are single carriage roads which are not gritted in their entirety. Any savings in actual distance travelled will be negated by the poor roads and hilliness. I also anticipate a greater number of school days lost because of "snow days" I would also be interested to know how the need to provide a number of vehicles to travel to different locations as well as maintaining a bus to Richmond for a few years will save money? I have been unable to find sample costings for travel from various Swaledale villages. In addition, I cannot think that the policy will be in line with North Yorkshire Climate Change Policy 2025 to 2030 because it will encourage more vehicles and if parents wish to keep siblings at the same school, a need for parents to provide the travel support in private vehicles. Some of the schools will be outside of North Yorkshire and again it will result in pupils taking part in school activities out of their area which again will have an impact on the local community To conclude, I think that the policy will have a great impact on Swaledale children and while I appreciate that the school transport bill is the second largest outgoing of the council and that retaining a catchment school is not required, I am not convinced that there will be savings made because of the nature of the alternative routes.
I think you are trying to implement a procedure that serves an urban population in a rural area. Facilities at local schools have been put in place to manage a large number of students. Nearest school will NOT be able to withstand the amount of students with lack of facilities, teaches and space. This is going to massively implement there eduction. The system is broken with no common sense involved. I understand that travel is a large expense but subsides with choice and facilities available at the core of the decision.
Living in a rural area, the nearest destination is often over a narrow minor road that is impassable in winter weather conditions. If the school bus has to take the safer major road that is passable through winter it would actually be closer to go to our current catchment school, there's about 2 miles difference. My concern is also that our nearest school might be available for one of my children but then not for another due to our closest being a small school, and we would end up with one child being transported and attending one school and the other not being accepted due to a larger year group intake and maybe having to get them to the catchment school with a different transport arrangement. This scenario would make life difficult for us as working parents for after school collection from after school classes ect. I strongly believe that the nearest/ catchment school needs to be looked at closer in our area due the road safety for transportation of children on buses or coaches. You need to be aware that bus transportation to our catchment school in this area would be the only sensible and much safer than to the nearest schools.

I understand that council costs are increasing and they need to save money but so is the cost of living for households with no pay increases. And considering the provision of education to children is fundamental, the proposed changes are going to have an impact for many children. Once again rural families are being penalised for living a greater distance from the current school provision. And it is ridiculous that children who live near the border of North Yorkshire be penalised and be made to go to another council school when historically they have always progressed to the catchment area in North Yorkshire. And should parents not be able to afford the cost of transport from these changes, how does the child access education as public transport through the rural villages is not regular enough to support transporting children to and from school. And how will some of these schools deal with increased traffic of potentially hundred more cars (at secondary school) dropping off and picking up as there are all ready such high traffic areas and with additional vehicles it will increase the risk of accidents to both vehicles and pedestrians . I do not support this change of to transport provision to the nearest school only no made which local authority. Surely as a County we should be encouraging people into the area not pushing them to other local authorities.
The proposed changes are going to mean that families will have children in school in more than more than one local authority. Not only would I need to be able to take children to different school, it would mean taking them to two different schools in opposite directions. Furthermore the different location authorities operate on different school holidays. It is already hard enough to cover childcare as holidays from work do not cover all holidays it would mean covering more school holidays. Of which living in rural area , there are already limited out of school/holidays clubs providing school age child care. Rural bus services are not regular enough or have many routes to facilities transport to the 'nearest' schools. Then the cost I'm assuming parents will be offered to pay for school bus service will be higher than families with multiple children can afford. Once again low/ middle class working families are penalised. This is going to impact and be detrimental to many children and their families changing it to the 'nearest' school no matter what the local authority.
I find this new idea of having to send your kids to the nearest school as the crow flies ridiculous and something that could only be thought up by a tory government which clearly thinks everyone is flying about in helicopters!! We would have to pay thousands to send our second child to the same school as her brother all in the hope of saving a few quid. This hole idea will also have a huge impact on our local schools. This idea may work within city's and suburban areas but out in the country which is where we are this idea is laughable.
The proposal is ridiculous. We live in (Redacted) which has ALWAYS fed into Richmond School, my eldest starts Richmond School in September 2024 so he is thankfully eligible for a funded bus but under the new rules my youngest who will start secondary school in 2027 would not. The new rules would mean he would be funded to go to Hummersknott which is in a different county and often has different school holidays! How are parents expected to work and cover mismatching school holidays?! Equally if you have them both wanting to be involved in after school clubs how are you expected to pick them up from different towns at the same time?!! On top of that starting secondary school is a daunting time in a child's life this would be made far worse for kids who are separated from their elder siblings due to these changes. Anxiety amongst kids is at an all time high, so it does not make any sense to make this worse by splitting up siblings and primary school friends. The schools are set up to cope with the existing intake of children, for schools like Richmond School this change in transport rules could mean a drop in pupil numbers and therefore funding to the school which might limit the wonderful facilities and experiences it currently offers. There will be a bus going to Richmond from (Redacted) so why add extra expense by putting on an extra bus to Darlington?! Please, please reconsider this change to the policy with the move away from catchment areas and the impact it will have on a significant amount of families.

I feel that as I live in North Yorkshire I should be able to choose a school in this County. This proposed change will massively impact friendships as the year will be totally divided into different schools. There is no transport provision for any other school except Richmond currently for our school so this will need to be provided which would increase bus quantities in the areas. The catchment area is a far better system as you would always know which school you would be attending instead of worrying if there is enough room at the closest school. Holiday clubs and family time would be impacted as different schools have holidays at different times meaning holiday clubs may not be open when needed. Absolutely rediculous idea that will massively impact families and the villages that we live. Some would move out of the area to ensure they are going to attend the school of their choice.
Your child should have free transport to their catchment school. A school in another LA quarter of a mile nearer is unlikely to offer them a place and will certainly not provide transport. Children have to go to school. We have a shockingly bad public transport system and families in rural areas are sick of being punished for living in rural areas.
Families who live in the North Yorkshire villages north of Richmond will, under the new criteria, only have transport to schools in County Durham and Darlington. These areas often have different school terms from North Yorkshire which makes juggling childcare immensely difficult when working in one area and children in different counties. Furthermore, children who have built relationships with peers in primary schools will no longer be able to depend on moving through school with a cohort who live in the same area. There is a vast difference between children living in a village in North Yorkshire and those living in urban Darlington. I believe children should be educated in their home county.
Education is supposed to be accessible to all and non discriminatory . What you are proposing leads me to believe the the following points: - you are still going to have to provide transport/funding to the majority of families that this impacts - you will now have to provide/fund transport to additional schools as given a large proportion of North Yorkshire is countryside there are no suitable footpaths accessible for children to safely access school and with more little primary school closing parents have to travel further and secondary school are all ready further in a central location - the council will have additional transport to arrange/fund as from our primary alone children would fall into two other local authority schools 'distance wise'. Although time wise it would be less still to access the current future secondary school in North Yorkshire. Therefore all you are trying to achieve is make yourselves the council more money, as you will charge us parents to access school transport that is currently free and that will still need to be provided. Which will be a large expense per year especially for 1+ children , discriminating against those low/middle class WORKING families, many of whom may already be struggling to afford basics such as food and uniform but who have morals and go to work rather than staying home and claiming benefits. How is this fair!! Why should parents have to pay for their children to access school. We are penalised for not living in the town of the schools, and completely discriminates against rural families.

The proposed plan makes for less choice for parents and will surely massively impact the number of children living up the dales choice – for those who may have been considering the Girls High School and/or Ermysted's in Skipton. As even thou in catchment for the school, it would then not be nearest school in most cases. It is also not clear whether there will be a guarantee of transport, whether free or paid for by parents - as there is mention of only being able to pay for spaces if there are some available. For example currently taxis are provided for rural students around us - under the new proposal it isn't clear whether that will be an option, regardless of whether paid for or free. The scheme to limit transport to closest school seems to be massively compromising the prospects of rural students, particularly those where budgets/money is a factor – thus penalising children based on family incomes not the child ability. It is making the Skipton school system elitist and unfair.
We are very concerned about the proposal to cease free transport to catchment schools. Approximately 90% of our Y6 pupils transition to Richmond School in Y7. If the new policy is implemented, no pupils from our school will receive free transport to Richmond School. Free transport will be provided to either Leyburn or Barnard Castle. Key issues with this include: 1. Safety and attendance. The main road from Reeth goes to Richmond. All other routes from Reeth (to Leyburn and Barnard Castle) go over high moorland tops (420m and 515m above sea level, respectively) that are often closed during winter due to snow and ice. These are minor roads, with associated safety implications. Pupil attendance will decrease if pupils attend these schools. 2. Community cohesion. We work closely with Richmond School to support pupils as they transition from our very small schools to their catchment secondary school. Our cohort size is usually less than 10 pupils, and these children benefit from going to secondary school together. Rural communities can become isolated, and this policy would exacerbate that problem. This policy seems to be at odds with the government's drive to support rural communities: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-new-drive-to-support-rural-communities 3. Financial implications for families. If parents decide to pay for transport to Richmond School (to attend their catchment school, to maximise safety and attendance, and to maintain links with peers), this would have significant cost implications for them. The financial impact of this policy is working against the drive to support rural communities: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-new-drive-to-support-rural-communities We think that the proposed policy would have a detrimental impact on families in our community. At the very least, special consideration and provision is needed for schools like ours, where attending the secondary catchment school makes the most sense.
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Impact on education establishments that maybe over subscribed now finding more people feeling forced to apply to them because they are the nearest school. What happens when no space at nearest school? Ours is closer than the one in catchment. In a different county. My children love the school they are at. And it suits them. Skills, talents and interest. Which is why we chose it. We would not have got into the closer school as already a highly oversubscribed school by those in their catchment. Are you telling me that I would a have no choice and then b have to pay. The dfe policy re transport may work in an urban environment where schools can be very local including secondary. But in a county like North Yorkshire predominantly rural. It will put additional burden on: * Finances of parents that are already struggling if they want to send there child to there choice of school * May remove the choice of school for many in an attempt not to have the impact above * Low roll numbers on extremely good schools as parents choose based on cost rather than what is best for their child - this goes against policy of choice surely . This will lead to them being able to offer less due to less resources and impacts on children's education and opportunities. Not what education is about * Impact on other education teams - allocation team, school allocation appeals, school attendance teams, local transport businesses, senior management teams within school trying to manage budgets too let alone budgets in other council areas that will be impacted on. * Local communities and house prices. Ie those nearer school will yet again increase potentially beyond the means of many. Overall it will add additional stress when choosing a school for parents, impact on schools budget and the predictability of roll numbers. It also seems to contradict the DfE's policies. The impact on being able to get children into the school they are best suited for is being taken away. How does this set them up to succeed in school.? Along with potential impact on attendance as parents who would have relied on the free transport struggle to get there children to school. Feels like savings in one area that will impact long term on costs and increase them in another.
The proposed amendments to only provide transport to nearest rather than catchment places rural families at a significant financial disadvantage compared to their peers in towns. Families may be priced out of sending their children to their local, catchment schools as they will face a "tax" on living in a rural area in order to so. I understand these are the statutory guidelines, but for an authority like North Yorkshire, with such a large number of rural communities, purely following the statutory guidelines does not best serve the residents. I understand the financial reasons the council has put forward for these proposed changes but it is concerning that the gap will have to be funded by rural families. The cost of an annual bus pass is significant and may be a barrier for some families who will be left with no option than to send their child to a different catchment school that doesn't best meet their needs or to a school out of the authority that they live in. Whichever decision a parent makes (whether to pay for the annual pass or send their child to a different school based solely on this policy) the resulting outcomes will negatively impact children.
I live in Ingleton and the proposed changes mean I will not get free transport to my child's preferred choice of secondary school which would be Settle college. It means that free transport will not be provided for a North Yorkshire resident to a North Yorkshire secondary school but instead an Academy school based in Cumbria. This just seems unfair and could cost parents £1000's in bus fees when we are North Yorkshire residents. For more rural areas there definitely needs to be a stipulation in the policy that children could have free transport to a North Yorkshire secondary school.

Children in Swaledale have historically and traditionaly atteneded Richmond School for generations (and for good transport reasons) . The geography of the dale follows the flow of the river to Richmond at the bottom of the dale and interation with communities 'over the tops' is limited. The hills that suround us contribute to these boundaries. The commuunity cohesion of the "2 Dales" is currently very strong. The councl's proposal to split the community is ill thought through to say the least. Practical issues such as transport in bad weather, when schools such as Leyburn, Kirkby Stephen and Banard Castle may remain open, vehicular access to them may not. There does not appear to be a policy for these circumstances i.e. who will moitor the road conditions and make a decision to cancel school transport or arrange emegency transport or alternative routes in conditions when the 'tops' are inaccessible but the schools are still open? Is there any data on the occasions that this happens? If so could we have access to this. If not then surely this should have been researched before the proposal was put together? For example It may be possible to get children from Hawes to Leyburn in challenging weather conditions but impossible for school buses to negotiate the higher roads across into Swaledale. Has an offical alternative route been identified? If so could concerned parties please have details. If not could the ITP please recommend and publish these routes. Looking through various documents and proposed policies several sections stand out, too numerous to mention here but I feel further representation need to be made through chanels such as the Parish Council. Is there enough time during the length of this consultation to facilitate this?

If the proposed change 'Amendment to the main eligibility criterion to be 'nearest school (with places available)' to match the statutory requirement' results in significant losses of pupils to any one school then what plan has North Yorkshire Council put in place that responds to: 1 Impact on school finances - at almost £6000 per secondary student then the loss of 20 students equates to a reduction in capitation to the school of £120,000. The salary of four teaching staff, 2 Impact on school staffing - a reduction in capitation restricts the ability of a school to retain its teaching staff. If redundancies are announced then this upsets many of the people working in the school and especially those directly affected by a redundancy situation. If this loss of students (as in 1 above) occurs year on year then after a five year cycle £600,000 is wiped off the school's budget - the equivalent of 20 teaching posts. If scenarios like this are predicted and the projections are correct then staff will decide to leave before they are asked to go. Some of the best staff will see little future in that establishment. The scope for promotion could be very limited and points awarded for responsibility may have to be reduced and that may have a further knock on effect re retention and responsibilities. 3 Impact on curriculum breadth - less staff, less pupils and the curriculum has to shrink. Less options are available to students in terms of GCSEs and the possibility could arise of schools losing their 6th Forms. Ofsted's desire for a broad and balanced curriculum would become an impossible aim for schools with declining numbers. 4 Impact on families - in particular: Dales Families who by tradition and desire send their children to Richmond School - parents already concerned about alternative transport routes. Some considering leaving their jobs and their homes to move to Richmond so that their children can attend the school of their choice. To survive, the Dales villages need young people. We cannot afford to lose them. The eligibility criterion to be nearest school would in effect put many children at increased risk as some of the higher dales roads that are often impassable in winter and even more so by bus would be used under the new proposal. Two examples to illustrate this point of view: a) Children in upper Arkengarthdale attend Richmond School or Wensleydale School. The amendment would have them travel to Barnard Castle. The Stang road would be the direct route and with its hairpin bends and 1 in 4 hills it's a non starter for a normal school bus. In winter it can be impassable. (NB: This route is one mile shorter than the route to Richmond School). The only safe route would be via Richmond passing a few hundred yards from the school that most of those students would have gone to under the existing scheme. b) Reeth to Wensleydale School - the direct route and shortest route is over Grinton Moor but this has a steep hairpin and narrow sections including a bridge with a weight limit that would be difficult for a school bus to negotiate and it would be out of bounds in snow and ice. The alternative would be a drive around Wathgill Camp. This road is narrow in places with difficult 'T' junctions and blind summits (NB: This slightly safer but less direct route is two miles shorter than the safer route to Richmond School). In summary: looking at the increased risks of travelling on high routes that are narrower and unsuitable for normal school buses and perilous in winter allied with the very short distances saved by the proposed changes - one mile and two miles - then it seems incredible that this proposal has come this far and has caused so much upset in the community that lives and works in Swaledale and in the main sends its children to Richmond.

I would strongly suggest you look at Ingleton and their relationship with Settle College. The proposals would mean no child in Ingleton (which is in Settle's catchment) could go to settle college and they would all have to go to QES in Cumbria. This is quite ridiculous for children who live in North Yorkshire, who have gone to primary school in North Yorkshire (and are in catchment for a North Yorkshire School) and then be clearly most unwelcome in North Yorkshire. Forcing children to attend a different authority's school is disturbing: clearly this proposal is designed to limit intake to settle college in a desire to close or force academisation. There are enough of us around that know of struggling local authorities and the thought of forcing children away from a local school is scandalous. North Yorkshire should be supporting its schools, not trying to close them. I have experience to question the motives of North Yorkshire in regards to schools and catchment areas - giving all of Clapham's catchment to Bentham, and making Thornton in Lonsdale a Bentham catchment area is just beyond any logic, apart from money grabbing from NY to support their flagship school in Betham. I don't know if this will create issues in other areas, but we will be fighting this with everything we have for the children and families of Ingleton and the Settle College community. It is awful to see how their own local authority has so little respect for the school that they wish to force them to close - and this cannot stand.
Although it may be measured as the crow flies nearest school the roads and valleys make make this a longer route(main roads tend to run east to west, west of the A1 and north to south east of the A1) also the quality of roads travelled minor roads for example are not passable in winter /or safe due to cur backs in gritting roads in s timely manner to meet the school bus at designated stop. So for example if you live in a rural area with minor roads you have to set off earlier to get to the main road which may not have been gritted early enough to get to the designated school bus stop. All needs to weigh up as has knock on effect on school choice , practically.
Damage to local community/local Secondary school/parents would choose an out of catchment school (QES in Cumbria) as transport would be provided there and not Settle College, due to cost, this would seriously affect Settle College as QES is the nearest school to students in High Bentham, Burton and Ingleton. Due to cost of transport, students from these areas would not not pay the additional cost, as it is an extra financial commitment for families during the cost of living crisis, and this cost would escalate if you had more than one child. The rurality of this area and the lack of effective transport links already affect this area and if this proposal goes ahead, this reduces the opportunities of our young people. I feel that there is a sense that NYC is forgeting about the communities on the borders of the country, but they are happy to ensure that they take these communities Council Tax, but offer less and less in terms of service. You should be supporting your local Schools not penalising them. They are the heart beat of the community. If this proposal goes ahead I fear for the future viability of Settle College as this will be compromised, and this would lead to more students from other smaller communities who use this secondary school having to travelling further to seek secondary education. I strongly oppose this change as I feel that it will damage to opportunities for our Young people.

To introduce a policy which does not take into account local conditions is going to cause harm to poorer families who can no longer be involved with choosing a school for their children and also will have younger children sent to a different school from their older siblings. In this rural area over 70% of children rely on transport to school and in future these families will not have any choice of school. This policy can only reduce the level of involvement by parents in the school activities which is very damaging. The vast majority won't be able to choose the school their children go to and some will have children sent to different schools making really important after school activities impractical in many cases. In the specific case of Bentham, Ingleton and the surrounding area the result would be to move around 30 children per year from Settle College to QES Kirkby Lonsdale which over the next 5 year transition period would reduce the school roll at Settle by 150. Kirkby Lonsdale (a Cumbrian school) is already close to capacity (1172 pupils 1228 capacity). The effect on Settle College (a North Yorkshire school) would be devastating. It could lose over 25% of its pupils by the end of the 5 year transition period. This would need significant restructuring leading to redundancies over the transition period at significant cost. The Settle College 6th form would also be in jeopardy as the reduced pupil numbers will make it difficult to offer a full curriculum and to attract enough pupils to study A levels. if Settle loses its 6th form then the pupils will need transport to another school probably in Skipton which would increase costs rather than reduce them. Is there really a net cost saving by imposing this policy in rural areas like Settle? For the next 5 years buses will still need to go from Bentham to both Kirby Lonsdale and Settle and the number of buses required may increase initially as the existing buses to QES could be full before the first Settle bus is empty. After 5 years it may be possible to reduce the number of buses by one but if QES is unable to accept all the students from this area (as the numbers indicate) then the remainder will still need to go to Settle by bus so no saving. This questionable saving from year 6 onwards needs to be measured against the costs of restructuring Settle College and probably requiring more buses for 6th form pupils. I feel very strongly that before imposing a system, probably devised for the more urban areas of North Yorkshire, on rural areas like Settle a full analysis should be made of the realistic cost savings and also the cost of the damage to Settle College and the detrimental effect on our families. One solution may be to use the criterion of the nearest school in North Yorkshire in areas where there would be a detrimental effect on schools and families by using a school in a different county. (Incidentally Bentham to Settle College is 10.7 miles and Bentham to QES is 10.0 miles.)
I think the policy, in stating that you are now to be sent to your closest school is absolutely ridiculous!! I already have a child currently attending a school in NYCC with another one joining this year, I then have another 2 children to start 2 years later, in which this one would be in the policy!! How is this going to sensible in splitting up children and sending potentially 3 buses to our remote house as I will have a child at primary, secondary and another secondary (out of area as it's the closest!!) The road in which is in question is a very dangerous road for transport in which would be taking our children to school!! It sits at a height of 1740ft and does not get gritted!! I also heard that if no buses take for tender you would then give parents the funding?! Please can I ask how this is going to work when I work full time at the opposite direction of the school you would be proposing if this goes ahead?! The father of the children is a full time farmer so will not be able to commit to taking children to school! This policy seriously needs thinking about as it is going to have such a detrimental effect on our children in the future!

We live in north yorkshire and should be able to attend a school in north yorkshire in coming years. I currently have 2 children in primary school and this would negatively impact were my children attend in secondary school. I went to settle secondary school and believe that is the best for my children. Under new proposals it would have and impact to send them to a different county in Cumbria which is utterly desirable. This i strongly disagree with cross county school travel. Children on low income/send and other should still be eligible to free transport. All children deserve free transport to school. I am shocked that this policy is even up for debate and change. Upsetting parents and children alike. If you live in north yorkshire you should go to school in north yorkshire. Traditions of families go to the same school as their parents and beyond. This would also break that tradition because of cost. Disagree whole heartedly
I think reductions in funded travel is inappropriate. Comparisons with other local authority districts is not acceptable and exposes our children to the possibility of in equality in service provision when compared to children living in other areas. A larger local authority area is always going to need to fund travel for more pupils but to reduce that service so that it may affect their chosen school is not acceptable and increases the level of disparity between North Yorkshire and smaller local authorities/the south. This is just the type of service that something like the so called levelling up fund should be contributing to.
The consultation does not provide any impact assessment other than on financial savings to the council budget. Whilst this is important, I'd also like to see an assessment on traffic and pollution levels, as well as the knock-on impact on households negatively affected by these changes - particularly low-income and SEND households
(Redacted) a local woman myself lived her all my life. I want my children to attend richmond school . It is the obvious choice, it may not be the very closest school but it has the safest road to it. - leyburn school is already “over subscribed” and it does not provide the facilities that richmond can , this is a major factor for us. Kirkby Stephen has been mentioned, it’s in a different county , over a horrendous road to get there . And changing counties will bring more and more changes to children. These small village schools have small year groups of children who stick together throughout , splitting them up and sending th to schools where they don’t know anyone will benefit no one especially children who have been through enough already.
the policy should include that it wont create new routes, so where a route goes past an entitled property it will go to the most convenient school which may not always be the nearest.
While the council seems extremely focused on making financial savings, it seems to me that encouraging children to travel to school on free bus transport would be a benefit to the environment and deal with issues of traffic issues around schools, for example with parking. While I'm sure savings need making I fo wonder if the task of getting children to school should be as cheap and easy as possible for parents.

Sustainable Travel - Must include ensuring that all bus or taxi operators contracted for Home to School Travel are not travelling excessive miles from their home/business address to complete the home to school journey. Lowest financial bid must not be the only consideration. The air pollution of villages and towns and the environmental impact must be considered too. This would have a positive impact on the climate. For example:- At present many taxi operators from West Yorkshire are travelling over 52 miles a day to complete the Home to School journey as they were the lowest bid for schools within the Harrogate Area. No other factors are taken into account, such are air quality of the villages and towns that West Yorkshire taxis have to travel through to reach their first pick up and the impact on the climate these extra miles are having on the environment. There is no other reason why West Yorkshire taxis would be operating in the Harrogate Area other than for Home to School journeys as no one from the Harrogate Area would call a West Yorkshire taxi to take them to Harrogate Train Station, hospital appointment or the local supermarket. The council's current expenditure on travel could be reduced considerable simply by reviewing the current routes and cutting down on the number of taxi operators in a small area. At present there are 3 taxis picking 4 pupils up that all live on a 2 mile stretch of road that all attend the same school. 1 taxi operator could do this and save the council money which in turn would save certain services. The very recent review of transport arrangements of the Harrogate Area will have rectified this waste of tax payers money and reduced the carbon emissions for this area.
We live near a primary and secondary school where i know families go on different taxis to schools next door to each other! This is where money is being spent so ridiculous. In our rural area why not have one taxi/minibus come from the small villages and take to the different school rather then 2, 3, 4 raxis all picking up in the same village.
The change to the travel policy has been poorly communicated. We received an email prior to the consultation starting advising that we would likely lose the opportunity to pay for a place on the school bus. This is a mid year impact with no thought to the impact on us as working parents. Taking away the option to pay for a place on a school bus is disgraceful. The negative impact on the environment of pushing parents into using cats each day is significant. Again. As mentioned above how are parents expected to work when they have to take their children to school and back each day.
My sons bus route from (Redacted)to Skipton is about to be cancelled after 8th April. My eldest son is in year 10 and youngest son is only in year 8. That means for the next 5 years we will have to be driving him backwards and forwards 10 journeys a week. There is no option of a public bus in the mornings, it starts at 9am. In the rain, with heavy kit bags, expecting a young boy to walk along a 60 mph road is unreasonable. This is a significant problem in (Redacted). There are enough children who live in the village who attend the three Skipton schools who would access a school bus if it were available to fill a coach or more each day. Instead they are removing the existing small bus. If you put up the prices so the route could cover its cost, people would pay it. The whole system is fraught with inefficiencies as it is. There was never a date released about when to apply for the annual bus pass. It relied on people "just checking" the website daily. Again, there was no date given when you could get confirmation of a place or not. The entire system is not fit for purpose and makes family life more difficult than it needs to be. The environmental impact of stopping the school buses is shocking and with climate change issues so topical the council should make this a priority. The social impact also is important-it will affect my possible working hours as I now have to transport my children to school daily. It is hard to see how this is a good idea. I hope the members of the council who have power in this situation can reflect long and hard on the sense of these proposals. It feels like the removal of the bus services is anti-family, anti-child policy.

My childs nearest school wouldnt take our child because their disability. That was our catchment school and the nearest. So we couldnt get thr catchment free bus and now have to pay to go further away just because they are disabled. If you are planning on making this policy then schools need to accept all pupils in catchment regardless of ability or disability.
If you cannot access your nearest school you should not be forced to pay for transport to another.
I think it is completely wrong not to provide funded transport to the catchment school. This destabilises the school application system and makes it hugely stressful for families. Catchment areas aren't a family or community choice - they are set by councils. They enable links to be created between catchment secondary and local primary schools. Having most children from a village going to one secondary school makes it more efficient for transport provision - rather than the likely fragmentation if this policy comes into effect. For our village of Kirk Hammerton our catchment secondary is Boroughbridge High School. But this is the 5th nearest - 3 York schools and King James being nearer. It would make school choice hugely stressful for parents unless willing/able to pay. Our view is that school catchments MUST be reviewed alongside this policy. And/or agreements cross-LA boundaries. It can't be one without the others.
The provision of schools in this area is so woeful we don't have any choices. The examples in the appendix are clear but irrelevant and have clearly been copied from another councils website or written by someone who has little idea of the schooling provision in parts of North Yorkshire.
I think it is a positive step forward to all home to school transport to the nearest schools as it will help smaller schools rather than parents picking which school their children go to. Our main concern is the provision of post 16 home to school transport as our nearest school (Wensleydale School) has no provision so the nearest school is Richmond which is going to be difficult to get to with current transport provision
Routes with no streetlights should be deemed not acceptable access routes for children to walk
Children will be forced to attend a school which may not be in their best interests purely because parents cannot afford to send them to a more appropriate school. The nearest school is not always the best option for the child. School transport whether free or paid for is better for the environment. So many parents have to use their own cars to transport children as they have been refused even paid for transport. This is impacting the environment and creating traffic chaos at school pick up/drop off.
I feel its a disgrace to assess senchildren for thwir transport - are our children noy dealing with enough assessments and disadvantage without the possibility of fear of losing their transportation. Please take into consideration the ongoing stress and effects being a parent /carer of sen and the ongoing dight for provisions let alone transport for our children
This could be a serious issue for parents who have older siblings at secondary school as well as primary school and could result in fragmentation of families to different schools. This is clearly detrimental to families and children. Any child who would be eligible to attend a school due to an older sibling being in attendance should not be affected to reduce psychological and financial burden on children and families respectively
No
I hope that savings can also be shown to be made in the administration of this service. This would help remove the view that frontline services are being hit by budgetary constraints.

To go to Scarborough further education would costs hundreds where as Redcar is a fiver a term and better choices very sad for Notth Yorkshire education x
At present 3 taxis pass our house with. Four kids in ! If this is an example of the councils idea of sustainable travel something needs to change . The taxi which picks our daughter up is one of a considerable no' of cars which have been hired from West Yorkshire, he is travelling around fifty five miles from his base to pick up two kids then takes them to school then travels all the way back to West Yorkshire again and he is one of several doing the same thing because apparently they are cheaper ! Surely one local taxi or mini bus paid properly would be more environmentally friendly and have less impact on the air quality than half a dozen taxi drivers doing 150 miles plus a day to ferry a very small number of children to school . To add to that problem quite a few kids are not happy travelling with these drivers . Reasons given driving at high speeds whilst on phones pulling up at shops with kids in asking if they want to stop for sweets , West Yorkshire taxi drivers asking pupils for their phone numbers so they can let them know weather or not they'll be able to make pick up all seems very wrong to me ! All this whilst undercutting local well known safe taxi drivers from right on our doorstep who pay their taxi license fees to NYCC , Then NYCC spend their license money hiring dangerous unreliable taxis from West Yorkshire. Please tell me where the common sense in that arrangement is …..
Clearer definition of training requirements. Transport staff should complete training on SEN and awareness around autism. Currently no transport my child has been on has completed any training and is a barrier to their understanding of my child's needs.
At the moment all the Swaledale children go to Richmond. I think the policy change could mean some go to Leyburn and some to Richmond, splitting them up for almost no gain as the difference in distance is very small.
I don't agree with the post 16 charges. Children have to access education until they are 18 so I don't see why we should have to pay for the last 2 years and the cost from our village (East Harlsey) to the school (a 10 minute journey) is astronomical. This is pushing 17 year olds onto the roads too soon and will cause accidents which could be avoided.
Commitments to work are made by parents on existing travel arrangements. Our child would not be able to attend school with these changes as proposed.
Please consider increasing the routes for paid transport to capture more children in outlying areas. Appreciate this may increase certain fees but I believe parents will consider paying and the council may get economies of scale, benefit SEND and other groups to use the paid bus services in conjunction; effectively a hybrid model.
As a parent whose child attended their catchment secondary school which was further away than their nearest school by quite some margin, I would like to have clarified as to what mileage calculation to the nearest school is used. A short note saying whether it is quickest road route or as the crow flies calculation would be useful.
Documentation is poor, with no guidance setting out comparison text, I.e high lighted paragraphs that have changed between the two documents

Not all schools would be considered suitable by parents/carers if they are closer to home and have places available. The change to policy could deter and prevent some schools particularly in rural areas having an impact on accessibility to them. Also, it is not clear if the 2 miles walking distance criteria applies even if there are no suitable walking routes to the school from homes within the 2 miles criteria (e.g. no footway on the rural roads with limited visibility due to stone walls).
If a family wants to select a school based on religious belief, they should fund transportation. The duty is to provide education. In Ripon, places at Ripon Grammar School are fought for and we hear of people purchasing flats so that they have a Ripon address. The school should be primarily for Riponians and that is not assisted by free transport.
All schools should offer transport. Currently some use public buses. This means that school enrichment sessions are not inclusive which is rossly unfair. If my child were to attend enrichment they would not get home until after 6pm. They would set off for school at 7.15am this is far too long a day. School should offer a later school bus on enrichment days to transport from school. Currently pupils are expected to walk form school to Pickering then wait for a bus from the town. very very unhappy about this
If these changes will reduce the cost of free transport to school then I think they are a good idea. I am not happy to pay more tax to provide free transport for children because all my bills are increasing at the moment and I cannot afford to subsidise other people by paying more tax. It is not fair!
The document is difficult to read, and many people, will not be able to access the information. The document should be summarised and be able to be used easily and efficiently. This should be sent out to stakeholders such as parents, from the schools. This is a typical council document which is not easy to read.
Agree that the Council needs to look at this policy to save money
It would be beneficial to NYCC employees if consideration could be given to transport arrangements where their child needs to attend the school where they work at even if it is not the “nearest” school.
Savings should be made by making the bus service more smart and adaptable rather than making more people pay for it. Eg looking to combine bus routes for multiple schools, reducing vehicle size, extending routes, etc. Is there any monitoring system in place to see how many pupils get which buses to and from schools? Some days our children are the only ones on a large coach coming home, and if the patterns of use were analysed then these services could be scaled down accordingly.
The current funding for free school transport is unfair. We are over 9 miles from Richmond and yet have to pay in full for transport to SFX which is literally one minute from Richmond School, yet parents in our village receive free transport to Richmond School. When a child misses the Richmond School bus they catch a lift on the SFX bus which parents have to pay for but a Richmond School pupil can travel on for free! This is unfair to paying parents. If budgets are really tight, free bus places should only be offered to those with SEND disabilities and the rest should be means tested for parents who are really struggling. It is though difficult for parents who have to work and live in rural areas who face the most cost.

Whilst this does not affect us going forward as I understand those awarded before September 2024 are honored, this would affect many families. Our catchment school is Boroughbridge High, but our nearest school is King James. Had we applied for KJS there was a big risk we wouldn't get a place due to numbers, so we opted for BHS as our catchment school. You are asking families to choose between schools and transport. What is the most important factor? A family might not want their child to go to the nearest school for whatever reason, but if they cannot afford to pay for transport (ie aren't eligible for Pupil Premium etc), then they may be forced to send a child to their second or third choice school. You are potentially increasing the risk of children therefore not attending school, or being unhappy with the school they are in. You have completely removed the word 'catchment' from your new policy.
I don't think it is clear how it will impact a pupil attending a secondary education with normal needs who may be attending a closest school that falls outside the catchment area. They already attend the school of choice. Would they have a choice between paying for school transport or swapping schools? Or would they still be entitled to free transport? Or would the provision of buses be cancelled and only provided to the catchment school. Also, what happens after age 16.
They should let all pupils of same household on the transport instead of just one child even if it isnt the nearest catchment school
We pay for our school transport in our village like a number of other families but this service is now being taken away meaning all parents now have to travel into Skipton from Embsay having a detrimental effect on the environment and congestion in Skipton (already a significant problem). Had we decided to send our child to upper wharfedale or settle the bus would still be available but we are being discriminated against for choosing a school in our local catchment. The road is unsafe, no safe crossing places and it is not well lit so I would not feel comfortable with my child walking to and from school. A very disappointing decision that has penalised those parents that have chosen a school within their local catchment and we were paying for the bus anyway!!!!!
These policies are not written for parents to understand, they are full of jargon. It also doesn't factor in children that have had no option but to travel elsewhere due to bullying. (Redacted) was bullied, reacted and left with no option but to have a managed move. We live in Northallerton and she goes to (Redacted) which by the way is an incredible school Maybe fix the bullying at Northallerton school and children wouldn't have to attend other schools away from the catchment area.
The whole idea that you are looking at cancelling transport for a number of people is shocking. I know many parents of SEND children who don't need the service but use it as it is free. I strongly suggest asking parents if the transport is first essential to them. If not remove that cost. Schools are suffering (high schools especially) as the cost of public transport has increased leaving parents no option with schools and do not send their children on the bus as it is. If anything the council should be offering solutions to all people involving transport for school aged children and getting to school.
Transport can be a big factor for families when choosing schools and it shouldn't become a barrier to the most appropriate education for a child which it could be going forward with the purposed changes
Children need to be in education till they are 18 so I feel transport should be provided till they finish the academy year of there 18th birthday
It is vital that the home to school transport remains.

Thank you for considering this. I appreciate the financial constraints the LA has and the enormous physical distances the LA covers for transport. I think ensuring pupils whatever their age, physical, educational or emotional needs are put first is vital and ensuring that they can have access to the school Place that offers them the best educational outcome is a priority, so providing a clear, inclusive transport policy is essential. We want our young people to have the best education possible and ensuring they have the right transportation to get them there is key. In particular the number of children with additional needs is growing and we need safe, robust and sympathetic transport systems to deliver this. I'm hoping the Authority is also liaising with healthcare professionals about their understanding of what is best for pupils transportation to ensure more vulnerable students are properly considered in terms of safeguarding and promoting good mental health outcomes.
I think all school transport should be free whilst all children are in education up until age 18 years. I also feel that you should have a right to choose which school to attend or your child attends even if it is out of your catchment area. I also think the bus service provided for children is sometimes not great not always on time which is not good when a child has to wait in the dark at 7.30 am to get the school bus. I feel more buses should be available to cater for the amount of children using them.
If more children have walk home (often in groups) on unlit roads without footpaths there WILL be accidents. Safety MUST be the number one priority at all times during this review.
We currently have no school bus and have to spend hours each day driving children to school. This is silly, given the number of parents making the same journey. I think you/the government have a responsibility to get children to school (or make it optional). This affects our work. I expect many more children to be absent from school after you make it even harder.
I believe if a child/ren attend the nearest school and have a high invome they should be charged for transport.
I really cannot comprehend what NYCC are trying to propose. Communication skills are very poor and your advice is as clear as mud! That is coming from an individual with a one Doctorate and 2 degrees, including one medical. Further simplified communication is required for all, rather than trying to disguise the changes, buried in the NYCC website. Amanda Newbold must clarify and communicate in simple terms so that it is fair to everyone and can be understood in its entirety.
This consultation is not accessible or engaging for many parents. The detail and key points buried in amongst excessive policy statements . The key changes should be articulated as individual statements with bullet points outlining what the changes are. Very poor stakeholder engagement and communication of proposed changes that will have a detrimental impact on many parents and children.

It doesn’t really address the issues facing parents today. Very little has changed since I went to secondary school in 1987. We live in(Redacted)and my child attends St Aidans - there is no bus provided but there is a bus to Rossett and the grammar school which very few children in our area attend. We are not even in the catchment for the Grammar school, To calculate the distance via a route which is not a driving route is just ludicrous - would you send your child on potentially muddy and unsafe route to school. I am sure traffic congestion from Bilton along the Skipton Road would be greatly reduced from individual parents taking individual children to the same school if a bus was provided- Let’s embrace the 21st century and modernise the home to school travel policy - Why should people in villages who have chosen to live there have the benefit of free travel when people who have chosen to live in (Redacted)do not have the same benefit. Public transport just doesn’t work with school timings.
We live in Helmsley and attend Ryedale, it is our nearest school. However it is less than 3 miles from our home. What is not clear from your document is whether our school transport provision will be removed. There is no pavement, the road is extremely dangerous and there is no regular bus route. Could you confirm what your new policy would mean for residents of Helmsley. If transport is removed we would have to home educate our Y9 child
Change the catchment area or just get rid altogether its not fair that children that live in villages have to pay for a bus to get to school, thouse in an area with the one option of school that may not be suitable for the child to attend should. I feel noone should have to pay bus fair to get the education for their child
My son spends an hour and 10 minutes travelling on a bus, then a train, then another bus just to get to school on a morning (the school is a 15 minute drive in a car). Surely paying a bus to do the whole journey would be far more cost effective that this stupid roundabout way. The train is continuously late, or cancelled, resulting in the children and parents not knowing if they're coming or going. If you're wondering where to save money, start by this. Instead of someone in an office hours away deciding on a route, go on a field trip and figure out yourselves.
It is a key service and need to remain free of charge and should cover young people doin a levels also
The lack of provision for SEND children on differing timetables seems extremely disadvantageous to those children and their families. I feel this should be an option for these children as they require a differentiated timetable to others therefore transport should match this.
Transport to school should be a basic right for all children in compulsory education regardless of any other factors
The policies are worded badly and dont make a lot of sense. Unsure what this means for my 3 children
The travel policy should not be considered in isolation but alongside a general transport plan for the county. In removing a dedicated bus service for some communities, there is no safe or realistic alternative but the car. General bus services for the public are often inadequate too. I also note that this consultation has gone public almost 3 weeks after we have received a letter that the dedicated bus service in our area will be removed. It is not really a consultation if decisions have already been made.
The proposal is awful to read, It takes a heck of a lot of effort to figure out who and how you are affected

This will hugely affect working class families who cannot claim financial assistance but also cannot afford to send their second child to the same catchment school as their older sibling because of annual travel costs. I understand why this has been proposed however I do believe this will cause a lot of stress and anxiety to families who won't want to move their oldest child out of their catchment school half way through secondary because they can't afford the travel costs for the youngest, and having 2 children at 2 different secondary schools is not practical. Our closest secondary schools are with a different local authority so I already know under this proposed policy my second child will not qualify for free transport to their catchment school when the time comes.
Reducing the number of out of area taxis transporting children would be better for the environment.
The format of the documentation is difficult to understand so many people will not be able to access or have the will to read on. This could result in people feeling disenfranchised with the consultation process. There should be some FAQs
We pay a much higher council tax compared to the 1990s when school travel was free! Why do you waste our money on vanity projects no one wants compared to spending on getting kids to school!
I believe that the travel policy should align with catchment areas. It would be unfair if transport is provided to a school that a pupil is not in catchment area for even if it is closer.
We live in a world where we expect everything for free. Parents have a duty to provide for their child not the taxpayers. Free school, free pre school, free school meals, free transportation. No, not good value for the taxpayer.
I think the walking distances need to be urgently reviewed. The very fact that a child of primary school age should be expected to walk 2 miles to school in this day and age is ridiculous and clearly unsafe. This distance is then increased to 3 miles at the age of 8!! Really 3 miles an 8 year old. Careful consideration needs to be made as to the actual County you are implementing these rules in. North Yorkshire is a very rural area and these 2 or 3 miles can vary from well lit and maintained footpaths to unlit county roads with no pavement or as your documentation states public rights of way.!?! If a child were to go missing walking these distances at these young ages, people would immediately question why their parents were allowing them to do so, but here we have a government organisation giving a clear expectation for them to do so. Even Thirsk School and 6th Form have publicly commented that the walking distance from Carlton Miniott to their premises is too far and unsafe. Why is there not public transport available at school times for children to use? There used to be, for both the morning and end of school day. I know from speaking to many parents that they would be utilised and therefore a scheduled service should pay for itself, rather than the usual timetable that ferries a handful of people about.

Where is the logic in taking away catchment from the transport criteria when you can have priority to a school based on admissions. So you can have priority to a school but not have priority for transport if there is another school closer, doesn't make sense. My house is over 3 miles from any secondary school so the council would have to provide some form of transport regardless of where they went so that's no saving. In fact are you not going to have to provide more transport to lots of different schools rather than just to the catchment school. Surely this is going to have a negative impact on the environment. Some parents will continue to send their children to a school further away and just get in the car. More cars more buses more emissions and more confusion. Totally illogical. I'd be happy to pay for transport to the catchment school as it's not the nearest school to where we live. Why can't you do that?
As long as the policy supports the large number of forces families in the area who have little choice in school availability and where they live
I strongly feel that changing the criteria to the closest school for free transport rather than catchment area would be extremely detrimental, not only to children and their families, but also schools especially in rural areas like my own. I strongly urge you to think again.
Schools are already clogged up with cars, fumes, parking issues. It's just an accident waiting to happen without pulling school buses away. One bus of kids is making a huge difference to the environment. Transport for children in care taken to schools miles away should definitely be stopped.
Why now we have no 'council borders' is this still impacting school transport, also i feel children on free school meals should get free school travel(outside of catchment)and post 16 should be definitely free on free school meals
we are a family where we have children that live 50/50 with parents one parent over 3 miles from school and one parent where not safe to walk to school . as transport passes bot address currently why can the children not use the transport from both addresses , or this yet another thing where fathers get unfair treatment
I don't think was helpful to announce these proposed changes after school admissions have closed for primary and secondary pupils. The consultation should have taken place in Michaelmas term. It still not particularly clear what constitutes a safe walking route and an unsafe walking route. Is it the lack of pavements, the volume of traffic, the road classification? It's not clear about the nearest school and catchment school. In some catchments, parts of the catchment are nearer to a non catchment school. The policy needs to clearly state if you would get transport to the catchment school or not.
When Dallowgill School closed there was a clause included for all children to be eligible for transport to Kirkby Malzeard for all time.
My children attend an out of catchment school and I pay full price for both and happy to do so . I do not get help for payments my children are in year 10 and 8 so as long as they can get the bus to school I'm am in affected
My daughter suffers with epilepsy , anxiety and depression her taxi is specially trained to deal with her needs reoving it will cause a massive issue for her , my eldest is studying at 6th form where even tho being the only college to offer the course shes on i have to pay 700 for her to travel being aas it is a requiremnt for her to stay in education untill shes 18.

If it is determined to refuse a child, on the basis of a place being available, at a nearer school, what is the council suggesting parents do? Example: I stay in (Redacted), but when my child started secondary, the only place available to them, was in Pately Bridge, some (Redacted) from home. My other child, has since begun at the same school, as it made since to send them to the same location and we are happy with the school. I have driven them up to now, however, my employment will soon be changing from working at home, to working on site, therefore I will need transportation for them. If I applied for transportation and there was a place for my children, at a nearer school, the policy states that they would not be eligible for that transportation. Further, what if there was a place for one child and not the other? What is the policy suggesting I do? Continue to drive my children, although this might impact my work obligations? Drive one child, whilst the other is eligible for bus travel or move my child/children to a different school, when they are already established at their current one? This is a real issue and one that I am sure is not isolated.
I am an intelligent human and yet I have no idea what you are trying to communicate or ask me to do with this information and questionnaire.
While the definition of the 'nearest suitable school' is clear, there is no mention of how a new policy would be operationalised in a practical way: 1. for children already attending a school that is further away (in our case because admission to the school was based on passing an entrance exam) 2.taking into account changes in high school 'catchment' areas over the years (in our case while our home address has not changed, the school catchment areas have. Our nearest 'suitable' school was Boroughbridge high school but when our daughter was applying for a year 7 place we were not in the catchment for it, instead we were in the catchment for Ripon Outwood Academy.) School admission policies and home-to-school transport policies must therefore align and be consistent with each other (and evolve over time together in an admission policy changes) or the transport policy will not be fair and inclusive. 3. As a parent I would be happy to consider an option to consider 'cost sharing' on the home-to-school transport as I really value the service, (as does my child) and we have to-date never been asked to contribute towards it. I would prefer the council to consider this and other transition options as part of implementing any new policy, rather than going for an 'all or nothing' approach vs the current arrangement. 4. There is no information to suggest what will happen for those families currently using the service who will suddenly become ineligible when the policy changes and their child is mid-way through their education attending a school that is a bit further away than their nearest suitable school. I would not expect children to be changing school as a result of this policy change.
We live in a village > 5 miles from any school, and not with a safe walking / cycle route. Our closest school is not our catchment school. We are a two parent household, both parents working and needing to be at work for 0800hr. We rely on school transport to take our children to school. If transport is only now to be provided to the closest school, not the catchment school, our children risk not being offered a place at the closet school, getting in to the catchment school yet not being able to actually get transport to the catchment school. We would either have to stop working (with significant financial consequences, and consequences to an understaffed NHS for whom we work), or the children would have to not go to school if they cannot be transported. I cannot see either option being acceptable. To me, this proposal would have to result in a change to the catchment schools so that they align with the closest school. Alternatively, and, in my opinion a far preferable solution, free transport is provided to only one school of either the catchment school or the closest school. This would not be of extra cost as it would not cover free transport to an optional school many miles away.
Selling places is a bad idea. If there is a place and a child goes to the school it should be allocated. After all it is compulsory education so the body demanding this should be liable for the costs of all compulsory elated items.. Uniform books etc including travel.

For children with EHCPS schools that agree they can meet need don't take in all factors and parents may disagree. Unfortunately changing the travel guidance is only going to affect the already under funded SEN care. If more schools had more or better SEN education and care attached to schools, to get advise more locally with shorter wait times. More schools would actually be suitable. Therefore reducing the need for travel! By taking away the rights for travel to a school that the parents feel is the best school for their children you are only putting that child in a setting that is not up to their needs. It's discriminating against children with SEN by removing choice for schooling. North Yorkshire is unfortunately seriously lacking when it comes to SEN needs. I would like to add I don't get free transport for my children.
My sen vhild was not offered travel. Ive had to sort ot all. And as i cant afford the cost of coach to school ive resorted to taking him.
As a mother of an SEN child, i feel the same taxi should be used so not to upset the childs routine. My son has adapted to the taxi service provided by NYCC. It also helps me, as i have to go to work
It's basically more cuts to save money. I bet the budget for your expenses and subsidies for councillors aren't being cut .
Unfair to remove the provision for catchment schools especially where decisions have been made taking this into account.
Fuel allowance needs looking at for parents who drive their children to and from school placements Due to the increase in fuel costs.
If children cant get to school, they soon wont be going at all.....people cant agford to pay for transport that what weve paid taxes for to cover the whole education system
My current oldest attends BraytonAcademy as we live in (Redacted)and this is the only option for transport in our area. Fortunately this is our preferred school around the surrounding areas. Although some of the closer schools to us do not offer transport I do feel this maybe beneficial for those who do want to attend theses schools. We are happy with the bus service provided from (Redacted) to Brayton.
There is no public transportation from Whitley to any high school which makes working families unable to collect their children, this will have a negative effect on the community as a whole.
Blanket policy which doesn't look at individual needs of pupils Has no concern for protecting the county in which we live- small village schools will be simply lost- ones like we currently attend that are amalgamated over two sites will loose one setting We have had countless emails regarding parking at schools from North Yorkshire police and yet there is no adequate car parking provided and yet there will be an influx of more people expected now to commute?
Having to pay for bus travel as attending a school in a different council area, when that is the nearest school. The costing for this puts strain on finances as a family
I think it's a good idea to go to the nearest school even our of the local catchment area rather than the closest in the local authority. Current travel arrangements are a worry for our household & providing clarity together with possible funding would be very welcome.
I think it makes sense , pupils that get taxi's to out of area education is madness,

I do not think many people will read and understand the considerable volume of information provided, and then make meaningful responses to this questionnaire.
I think careful consideration needs to be made on if the closest school can meet the child's needs. If they cannot surly this puts them at a disadvantage to their peers. Also some children at secondary are unable to walk the 3 miles as it crosse's dangerous roads and rivers. I think instead of the mileage rule consideration needs to be made on the dangers on those routes.
I am a parent to a child who will be moving to secondary school in 2025. I live in Whitley where you have already taken our public bus service from us and now propse to take our school bus. With NO buses at all you are forcing many parents in this village and surrounding villages to send their children to a school they do not want to attend, totally against their wishes. You are taking away my rights to choose the best school for my child as there will be no way to get there. This is TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. I am paying an extortionate amount of council tax and not receiving even basic services. There is a large amount of children that will be attening the same school, in our catchment area, 1 bus that will be full, 2 miles difference, but for the saving of 4 miles a day you now want to have a massive decision about their childrens education forced on them. This is disgusting.
Concerns over transport to 'suitable school' for SEND for those who run EHCP as it should just be the school named in the plan which is deemed as suitable.
I think putting on more paid for travel for out of catchment could subside the councils expenses. For example in Pickering lots of children travel to Ryedale but there's a shortage of bus places. Parents would happily pay for a bus service and the price could be profit making.
Your current policy is not inclusive enough never mind reducing the service levels within the proposed document, NYC are only paying lip service to this consultation you have already decided you will not support families in need for the sake pandering to the bean counters. If monies need to be saved to balance the books then cut the executive management salaries to no more than the UKs Prime Minister instead of the obscene amount you are paying Flinton and his cronies
If the bus service from (Redacted) to Middleton Tyas primary school is to cease, my (Redacted) may be greatly impacted. I moved (Redacted) from (Redacted) primary school to Middleton Tyas because I rely on her Granparents to get her to school as I and her father work full-time. Her granparents live in (Redacted)so it is easy for them to get her on the bus and means they don't have to travel anywhere. If the bus service is to stop, I will have to move her again so that it is easier for everybody involved. My daughter will be very upset as this would mean she would be moved from her friends and peers and could really unsetlle her emotionally and academically.
You spend an extraordinary amount of money on this. 90% could be saved if you simply used the normal bus company routes with a "minder". Using taxis etc is an extravagant and lazy provision that cannot have come from a sentient adult.

my eldest son who's on the send register has been accessed and been honest I'm sick and tired of chasing them too see what's happening ? and my youngest has health issues asthma from birth and we cannot travel in bad weather or if he or I get a cold or flue or virus it's impossible for me too take him due too been a single parent I'm also looking into getting my youngest assess for ADHD and autistic I have been diagnosed with the same and I am 1 of 12 children so back then it didn't exist and I didn't understand why ? now he's 6 I can get him assessed so yes I would love extra help specially with transport it would help massively due too my son's needs and mine also attendance wise it makes me sleepless and anxious worrying . so I would really appreciate it if I could get any help out there sometimes it's just Nowing were too turn IV tried with my eldest I do get there's a massive back log since COVID and I do appreciate it's hard to get more workers etc it's been too long with no help so yes I'm asking kindly again .
Having to pay for the last 2 years so my second child can continue to attend the same school as our eldest child did, where travel was provided at no cost is disgraceful and not being informed in a timely manner placed financial hardship on our household income.
What would be the provision for children currently entitled to free school transport, that will not be if this change to 'nearest school' happens? I think it's is unreasonable to expect the child to move schools or have a parent available to drive them 13 miles there and back twice a day whilst working (this is to a catchment school). Will a bus still be provided but paid for will these costs be kept as low as possible? There is no public transport available to the school currently and the distress at moving school would be immense, without a parent being available to drive them there and back whilst working full time.
It needs to stay with nearest Suitable school as nearest school with places will not work for pupils with SEN especially in the craven area as there is only one SEN school so it will not be the nearest school for most pupils. Also those that can mange mainstream schools need to be at a school that is right for them and manage their needs which may not be the nearest school to their house as not all schools are the same or specialise in the same areas.
If we had local schools that were able to meet the needs of local children then they wouldn't need to travel so far. It is essential that my child has access to transport so that they can access their school.
Some students could be disadvantaged and may end up not going to a catchment school of choice due to bus costs. For example the nearest school might be a poorly performing school so they prefer a different catchment school, but parents on lower income may have to choose the nearest school if they can't afford the transport costs. Not all schools are equal and there are schools in the N.Yorkshire area that require improvement. Is it fair that lower income families might be forced to send their child to a poor performing school just because they don't have as much disposable income? This may also mean children go to different schools than their friends. The best solution is to means test free school transport eligibility. Some families with large household incomes could easily afford the school transport for their catchments schools, if families were asked to pay something towards school transport then N.Yorkshire Council could generate income that could help cover the school transport costs.
I note that your consultation document, section d - "removal of eligibility based on 50/50 second address" states that there are currently no children being transported on this basis. I believe this to be untrue as I have had one child being being transported on this basis for the last 3 years and am expecting to add a second child this September.

By changing to nearest school, this is likely to negatively impact a parents right to chose which school to send their child to, and will have a significant impact on families on lower incomes, who may not be able to live nearby to their chosen school, and will be forced to send their child to the nearest school, regardless of the performance of that school, or the suitability to the child
We lived in West Yorkshire and do not qualify for school travel even though it is only a few miles away from school
I think North Yorkshire needs to look at building or repurposing existing facilities to expand special education facilities so that more children can attend a school closer to their home rather than travelling long distances. This could save North Yorkshire money in the future. Special Education needs completely overhauling and being made fit for purpose meaning more money long term would be available for other areas of education services.
Children who have special needs should have priority does anyone ever look at all the private taxis and assess if more than 1 child can go in it as I see loads of transport going to School and dropping off when they come from the same area
We live in (Redacted) and my youngest goes to st Mary's in Askham Richard (York council). The route to primary has been assessed as unsafe many times….no pavements etc, but each time somebody new moves to the village, it has to be argued again! Surely once reviewed parents shouldn't have to go through this again! Also, I have an older child who is in year (Redacted). He gets free transport from the village….it is 5 miles away and this is our catchment school. What will happen when my youngest goes there? It is the only school for which a bus goes through our village! Also, how would I know whether other schools that are closer (but only just) will be full or will have places?! This is unfair on younger siblings as they won't know what school they will end up at or whether they can go to the same school as their sibling! The policy also doesn't mention whether a sibling that potentially won't qualify for free transport after the changes can still get a pass for the same bus as their older sibling that does qualify for free transport assuming that the parents can afford to pay for it! As noted above, the only school bus that comes through our village is the one for Tadcaster (which is a catchment school), but there are potentially two closer schools that I didn't think we were in catchment for….York High and Manor. Both over 3 miles away, but no bus from our village! Manor also has faith criteria. This new policy all just sounds very unfair on the second sibling! It also sounds like parents will end up driving children….how will this help the environment?! Finally, the policy also doesn't give an indication of the price of a bus pass, should people end up needing to buy one.
(Redacted) at Brayton. There is no public transport there. (Redacted) and would also go there. Will massively affect me, a single working mum with cost if private transport or them on moving schools.
There's no transport at all for villages surrounding despite high numbers that would use the provision
I strongly believe that the buses which children travel to and from school should have seatbelts, for all ages. My child travels to secondary school on a bus without seatbelts, and I am very unhappy about this. I also know that some buses are oversubscribed and some children have to stand to and from school which is unacceptable. Both of these are a risk to children's safety and lives, should there be an accident.
Try thinking about kids mental health in all this granted you have a budget but there mental health should come first over everything. Some kids have a hard home life as it is and need the stability of the school they are at. All the councils bothered about is money cut wages to them at the top of the scale or get rid of some that would free up a fortune and put kids first instead of the fat necks with there massive wage packets.

I think that proposed changes will impact the county negatively. While savings need to be made I do not believe the travel of children to or from school should be a sector to detract from to do it. The extra cost of maintaining roads, policing increased traffic outside schools and so on cannot be cheap. New traffic regulation orders may be needed which cost a significant amount of money. Increased fuel costs to parents and as a result increased emissions is clearly a large drawback to consider. At a time when emissions need to be lowered, removing grouped transport is an awful, awful idea.
If transport cannot be provide some type of subsidy or reduction in council fees should be given to those who have to transport children themselves as this comes at a great expense
We viewed many schools in the area for our children. The nearest had a particularly poor ofsted report- we decided that we wanted better for our children, as I'm sure many parents would. We found an 'outstanding' school in Brayton Academy. The school is reasonably close and we were informed that there was a strong likelihood that due to the number of children wishing to attend this school from Riccall that transportation would be put on. This enhanced our decision to send our children to this school. The transportation has not materialised, a group of parents have been liaising with school and have been met with either false hope that it is in hand, or have been told it's not going to happen. We again viewed Brayton Academy for our next child to attend in September this year and the prospectus stated that transport from Riccall would be put on- we assumed this is because the expect more numbers from Riccall to attend. Talks with the school have indicated that this is unlikely to happen. We would have had to consider our options if there is no school transport as the option would be to send our kids to an 'inadequate' but closer school, or try to do the best for our children and enrol in an 'outstanding' school possibly with transport but possibly not. If the only appropriate transport is for the closest, possibly inadequate, school this should be made crystal clear to parents rather than keep dangling false hope that transport 'hopefully' will be provided in the not too distant future. If our children must go to the closest school it needs to be at least to your OFSTEAD standards. Otherwise people do not have any choice.
None
I had no choice but to mive further away from my childrens school due to needing a bigger house, but I definitely would not be able to afford to pay for the travel for 2 children. The cost of bus fare is disgusting even at half fare prices. It would cost over £30 a week/ £120 a month. But transferring my childrens school is not an option now they are in their GCSE years. Also the school most lical to us has the worst ofsted in the area. My son who will be dues to start high school in sep 2025 has SEN needs and I am extremely worried about having to send him yo the nearest school as they cant offer him the support he will need.
The documentation is vast and convoluted and not easy to follow, therefore I doubt that this consultation's results will indeed be relevant. While we are not expecting free home school travel, the fact that the council allows the operators to practice outrageous prices for this service on the principle that they have a "trapped audience" is unacceptable. A more affordable home school transportation provision would take a lot of cars of the road, reduce congestions and gas emissions near schools. At more than £6/child/day cost for an unreliable school bus service, North Yorkshire County Council and Abbots (the school bus operator) has pushed us to drive our children to school every day. This is impacting on their independence, our work and not least the environment.

You have not included where there aren't footpaths. For example my child's school is less than three miles but there are only footpaths for maybe half of the journey which isn't safe to walk?
I feel it is unfair to withdraw free transport for children who have already committed to attend a school on the basis that transport would be provided only to then have that provision removed. This is especially unfair as the closest school is only marginally closer (a mile or so) than the school chosen, and in a different authority to where we live. The change seems overly punitive to some with relatively little benefit in real terms as buses are still going to be required and will have to continue to come very close anyway. The change in this case would realistically change our decision about where to send our children which is going to affect the school ultimately.
You have not stated in the new policy how it will work when children have two homes, you have removed the 50/50 part of the policy but not replaced it with anything to explain how it effects children who go between two home's half of their lives. I have two children, one in primary and one in secondary. My secondary child has to get the bus from his dads 50% of the time but pays for it because he lives 2.9 miles away. If you were to add in about separate parents it would help as i don't know where i stand with the new policy. I am on low income but his dad is employed, but his dad lives 2.9 miles away so on mileage he would qualify on the new policy. Please consider split parent houses. My primary age child (year 5) is a SEN child who will be getting the bus when he goes to secondary school but again i need it clear on what he qualifies for when its at his second house. Thank you
We live in catchment for Tadcaster grammar school - changing funding so we have to pay for transport to our catchment school would have a significant adverse impact upon our family.
It is a disgrace that NYCC are looking at introducing a policy that could potentialy cost parents £60+ per month in bus fares. Are NYCC going to facilitate moves to all of the children affected so that they can attend the nearest suitable school to save the families £720 a year per child. I highly doubt it. Council tax is to increase by 5% in April 2024... so yet more outgoings for families that are already struggling. In addition the the above my son would have to walk about a mile and a half from the bus station... to get to school.... he would have to set off to school before 0700 for a 0830 start to facilitate his arrival on time. Dark nights... foul weather... where is the duty of care... disgrace... hang your heads in shame.
People cannot afford / have the time to pay for their own transportation, while trying to work , to pay their bills such as COUNCIL TAX !
If these proposals go ahead already over crowded streets surriunding schools at drop off and pick up time will become even worse. This will have a detrimental affect on local residents and even possibly house prices of properties in the vicinity of schools. Lots of parents and carers will not be able to afford the school bus charge so will be forced to send their children to a school that may nit be the best fit for those children. The environmental impact of extra vehicles on the road is also a big concern if these proposals were to go ahead
We live in (Redacted)and originally sent our daughter to (Redacted)but the standard of education that she received was poor. We made the decision to move her to our catchment school, Brayton, and have noticed a dramatic difference in the quality of her education. By implementing travel changes going forward, some families will be forced to send their children to poorer performing schools which will not help drive up educational standards as it will effectively remove choice. Furthermore, has the environmental impact been considered of potentially forcing more cars on the road.

Some families will be forced to choose the nearest school, as opposed to the school with the highest educational standards, and by removing choice, educational standards will be impacted negatively across the board. Undoubtedly more parents will choose to drive children to school which will have a negative impact on the environment. It seems unreasonable for families paying council tax in North Yorkshire to be forced to send their children to school in a different county. A tier system of payment seems fairer as opposed to a blanket yes/no where a contribution is made to transport costs depending on where you live and household income.
I live in Whitley, the transport option of sending the children to snaith has been taken away and now you are proposing taking the option of Brayton away. The majority of children in the village attend brayton which is an outstanding school. Taking the free transport option away will have an extremely detrimental affect on the children that wish to attend this school (whose parents can not afford the fare) we already pay very high council tax in this village- I was under the impression that by combining the council this would reduce costs, this is not happening! I am very concerned that this is even being contemplated- why on earth are children being penalised because their parents would struggle to pay the fare. Given the distance involved I doubt there would be vast savings as the majority of children go to the same school.
We live in a village 2.5 miles from Skipton, where our local schools are. There is no available public transport to our village before 9am or after 3pm. Although I am aware this is within the 3 mile boundary, the walk is along a country road which is mostly unlit. Surely the provision of public transport, at cost to the users, should be provided as a public service. We currently pay for bus passes. I don't know why we can't still do this, if we are covering costs.
It is grossly unfair that children living within 2 miles of school have to pay to travel by bus to their nearest school, whilst pupils who live many miles away and choose not to attend their nearest school get free transport. I welcome the change.
Please keep the free bus my daughter uses to go to school in Brayton from Whitley. It is a good school and she is happy there.
Strongly believe that travel options should be available for any school within the catchment area, even if these are chargeable. Without such provision, parents may struggle to get their child to school, but schools will also experience an increase in traffic and more cars on the road if parents are forced to take their children to school. Which in itself has many impacts. Getting a bus to school builds confidence and independence in children which is a key part in their own social development at school.
Our daughter attends a special school within North Yorkshire that matches her needs, as a low income familubthere is no way we could transport ourselves as we have 2 other children who attend local secondary and primary school. Why is everything such a battle with North Yorkshire? Our daughter has another number of years at her special school and this wont be changing so therefore north yorkshire can foot the bill and continue with transport sadly many children dont ask for there issues but mainstream school doesnt suit everyone.
3 miles is far too long to expect an 11 year old to walk to and from school. I would be happy as many others in the village to pay for a public bus service into skipton or pay for the school bus as I do now. If there was a paid service which provided places I know many parents that would use this service. By removing the school bus from Embsay to skipton you are encouraging circ 50 individual cars into gargrave road at a very busy time and dangerous for all the children leaving schools - this does not make any sense at all.

Many pupils are some considerable distance to the catchment school but close to a nearer school in another authority. The effect of the new policy will be to disadvantage families and schools geographically located close to North Yorkshire Council boundaries and in particular those close to Leeds and York. The effect of this is unfair.
I think the environmental impact considerations are great. My child has access to a train station close to home and her school over 30 miles away. Unfortunately the frequency and times of the trains mean that even though it is desirable environmentally and from my child's point of view mentally, it is not feasible. Public transport needs to be more integrated. Access to schools closer to home that have proper facilities and support for children with autism would mean that fewer children would need to travel.
The congestion down Gale Lane, with coaches and cars, for Ryedale school 'drop off' and 'collection' is already appalling. For local children walking down that road, it is an 'accident waiting to happen'. If more parents/carers are forced to take/collect their children, this will only get worse.
Sensible changes that bring in standardisation and common sense for cases when parents don't choose the closest school - That should not be a cost for the taxpayer so agree with this proposal.
The school should be the right fit for the child, not just the nearest school for financial reasons. Could encourage children to be absent, suffering with their mental health
Children should be encouraged to use free transport rather than the eligibility being too strict and creating further traffic delays and pollution from thousands of parents driving their children individually to school.
The buses to Sherburn High School should drop pupils off at the bottom of New Lane, on the Sherburn High Street road, instead of going up New Lane and turning round. The other day there were 30 cars and four buses waiting to get out of the Lane onto the main road, but the junction makes it very hard. Also Mytum and Selby lorries come down there sometimes at school times. There is no other way of getting to our houses. I have asked North Yorkshire Highways if the Lane can be extended to meet the Church Hill road, but no response. This is a big safety issue. If there was an emergency, like last year when there was an accident, we can't get home by car, and some of us aren't that mobile.
At least there has been some communications regarding the proposed changes unlike 2019 transport changes that were hidden in a Sends meeting in 2014 and implemented in 2019 with no notification to the parents. This only became apparent in the week before high school choices were to be submitted. This reeked havoc in our primary school and village. The high schools were no even notified and were unprepared. Parent had to pay for taxies and private transport until the schools made arrangements and secured a bus. While I appreciate you need to save money, we dont have any alternative public transport in the outlying villages in our area. Whitley & Eggborough. This will lead to hardship and children not attending school. (not all parents that are struggling are on benefits) On the other side, our roads, are going to be full of extra cars doing the school runs, affecting the environment and even putting children in danger around school drop off zones. It is not clear on the virtual schools website on whats the closes school either. As it shows my postcode in Goole 20 miles away from my address!!! and in a different county!
The only elements I disagree with are where the council is proposing to remove eligibility. Whilst my family may or may not be impacted, these changes are likely to adversely affect the poorest families where cost of getting to school will be a key part of decision making. This in turn may limit their children's choices of which school to attend and perpetuate existing discrepancies in society between rich and poor

Wasted money on HS2 but you cannot provide travel to school. Dreadful.
My youngest daughter is currently in year 10 and was the first year which transport was affected. We had already made our choice of school and was not made aware we had to pay for our school transport until the very last minute before she started in year one. The school had to rush in making arrangements in paying for a private bus company for the first year as no provision or option given via the North Yorkshire Council. A last minute option was given to go to Brayton Academy instead. Although marginally nearer by a tenth or so of a mile, it would have took considerably longer to get there due to A19 road closure. We had already made our decision after visiting schools and didn't want both my daughters to go to different schools dues to term time differences for childcare arrangements. We both worked full time. My elder daughter continued to use the free bus. That double decker bus over time became very empty as each year left whilst my younger daughter was on a very often busy overcrowded single decker bus. We are not on benefits and not considered as on low income but do not have surplus money to pay for school transport. With the rising costs we sometimes struggled to pay this. (Redacted) now goes to Selby College and pays far less for bus transport which is further down the road then my (Redacted) whichbis ludicrous. I truly believe no child should pay for secondary education 16 and under. We should be at very least subsidised.
More council runs spaces for paid passengers are needed. We aren't wanting to take a free place on transport, but the council could provide more access for paying passengers specifically on school transport, not public transport. The cost of busses provided by the school for transport are extortionate, absolutely unacceptable prices for any family to have to pay for a child to get to school. Never mind if there's more than one child to get to school!! Absolutely disgusting. Whereby a paid passenger on a council run transport option is much more affordable, so please offer more!
Our village has 2 catchment secondary schools. One is 1.5 miles further away than the other. About 2/3 pupils attend one school, and 1/3 attend the other. As there is so little difference in terms of distance, this decision feels arbitrary and pointless. Both buses will still be paid for by the council, as the other villages served by the slightly further away school will still need and be entitle to transport, so you will be taking away choice for our young people for no cost saving. The element of choice is absolutely critical for the mental health and educational attainment of the young people, as the schools have different approaches, strengths, environments and communities. This decision will have a huge and detrimental impact on the lives of young people in our village and on the school communities affected, with long-standing historical connections and communities torn apart. It will affect vulnerable children and those with SEND more acutely, as the element of informed choice is so important for children who have specific needs in order to thrive at school.
the current sitiuation and the way transport is arranged and awarded is working well..... it is obviously expensive, but this expense has been created by NYC, in part caused due to the lack of adequate school places available to SEN children who are often required to travel singularly, over great distances to schools out of area.
I think that the criteria for living 2 or 3 miles away needs to be updated. Our current 2/3 miles is described as the crow flies. We all know children don't fly and in fact use the roads. Given there are no pavements to walk as the crow flies either it is a pointless and ridiculous policy. If you want more children to walk or cycle to school, more should be done to make this accessible and safe. All this will achieve is costing hard working parents more.

I feel it unfair to constantly keep changing the criteria for which school a child is eligible to go to. A bus will still be privided for children currently attending the school of their choice so why not allow others if there are spaces get on the bus ti their preferred school. It will mean children will be separated from their friends that they have spent the last 7 years making. Eggborough village is growing rapidly so therefore an option of which school you wish your child to attend shoud be allowed and not dictated. You should have the option to send your child to the best school in the area that will meet their academic needs. Snaith has already been removed as an option without paying for a bus from Eggborough now it seems the council are removing another option in Brayton and forcing you to send your child to the De Lacy. It is unfair on the children.
I do not think the changes to eligible school by removing the catchment school should go ahead. This policy should remain as it currently is. The current policy is fair and reasonable and provides a balance in allowing parents/children to have some degree of choice, whilst limiting council expense to a reasonable distance of travel.
Our family finances are already stretched but I will not be bullied into applying for school which I believe is inadequate for my child I am extremely angry about this !! The 'local' school being quoted as De Lacey in Knottingley, unfortunately I cannot calculate accurately as local roads are currently closed until July 2024 to a suitable school which I believe would be the best choice for my child. Both of these school happen to be in a different county (West & East Yorkshire)
We live at the edge of North Yorkshire. Both our children currently attend the local Primary in year 6. The secondary school (school A) we are in catchment for is 13 miles by road and is OFSTED Outstanding rated, and is where we want to send our children. There is a school bus from our village to the secondary school, currently funded by the council as all the children are going to the school they are in catchment for. The nearest school to our house (school B) is 2.5 miles by road, but in a different local authority, and we are not in catchment. That school has a lower OFSTED rating, and we have no desire to send our children there. We applied last September (to school A only), and are expecting to find out in 4 days where both our children are going in September. The provision of fully funded transport was a consideration in our choice of school, even though we are only in catchment for one school. If the proposed policy is implemented, it appears that we will have to pay for two passes of £747.50 for our two children. It will be cheaper to drive our children to school every day, thus increasing traffic, carbon emissions and road wear. I fully understand that the current government is reducing council budgets below what is necessary, and spending cuts are needed. If this policy is implemented however, it will most likely lead to a reduction in children using bus transport to school, and an increase in emissions and traffic. For the avoidance of doubt I strongly object to the proposal to only offer transport funding to the nearest school, even if the nearest school is in a different local authority and out of catchment. The council has a duty to provide education and the physical access to education to the children physically living in that council's area, with parents paying council tax to that council.
Strongly disagree as we want our children to attend their catchment school not the nearest school. We moved last year to be in catchment (away from the designated nearest school) for this school for our eldest and do not want this impacting our youngest children. There are no transport links other than the included school transport to our catchment school. This would massively burden us, from a time, cost and environmental impact. From our village alone this could be an additional 10+ families all driving to the catchment school. All impacted in the same way - time cost and environmental

I think that the current scheme regarding the change to catchment area needs to be left alone. We have already put forward our choice of secondary school as my daughter is in year 6.
The nearest school to us is out of catchment area 1.6 miles away with no public transport and vulnerable children would have to walk down a 60 mph road with no pavements and no lights. I think it's unreasonable and puts children at risk of serious injury or abdication due too low visibility with large hedges and no street lights, and winding roads.
The school identified as my nearest would not be ideal for us as a family.
Transport to a schools in my catchment area is essential and should not be removed. If no transport is offered then as a family would need to provide this which is not feasible in our current places of employment. Not offering school transport would greatly impact the environment as multiple vehicles instead of one would need to drive to the school.
Making decisions without consideration of siblings when 'nearest ' school is in another county. Will have more over subscribed schools
I have particular concerns regarding travel for special needs children. With specific and specialised needs, and insufficient places to meet demand, many almost certainly need to travel, and not because they are being picky, but strive to have their needs met, in order that they achieve the best outcomes possible, thus ensuring that they require less services from the council in adulthood. Cuts to what is already an underfunded and inadequate service is short sighted. That said, measures should ensure that use of it is not abused, and if parents covered transport themselves, or contributed on a means tested basis, would the money saved go instead to the school to top up the under funded EHCP, and better meet individual needs of children? As a parent of a SEND child, I feel my child is going to be failed by North Yorkshire on the transition to secondary education in September 2024, and part of the decision made by the LA has everything to do with transport costs, and nothing to do with individual needs, and provision available, because this would be some distance away.
This change is forcing parents to send their children to schools that they don't want them to attend, in my example living in Whitley, the catchment school is Brayton Academy and with the proposed change, the school will be Campsmount or DeLacey. These schools would not be suitable for my daughter.
I find it unfair that I pay for two in my children to catch the school bus , I earn £15000 a year , yet another parent living five minutes further than me gets it free for her child becasue of where they live despite her having pay of £40000 . I don't think the free pass should be given to everyone on location , I think finances should be investigated too . A lot of the children getting free passes live at farms and larger properties further away from the school and affordability for the bus wouldn't be an issue
The closest school only gives parents and children little choice over who provides their education. Especially with older children already in a school that is in 'catchment' rather than 'closest' school. Paying for the bus is not the issue, but finding provider who will cover all the small villages in our area is.
What if the nearest suitable school is different to the catchment area school?

I changed schools foe my daughter to attend where there was a school bus due to bith parents working. I even went down the route that i live too far out as my daughter had growing pains in her legs proven by a doctors letter and they still said she can walk 2. 8 miles to school. It has really effected our family as a whole. No transport. Its awful. I live in (Redacted)
North Yorkshire's remit (as well as other LAs) is becoming increasingly difficult due to the demands of children with mobility or additional needs. I dread to think what the percentage spend of that budget is on transport with 2 people or less in the car, that may be a useful stat to share. I do also think (even though as an operator we benefit) that due to parents choice to move to a home in the country, it should not be mandatory that free transport is received. A parent should be responsible to get their child (children) to the nearest fixed route. That would also save a fortune.
I would be concerned that my children wouldn't be going to same school as friends from primary school as nearest secondary school may not be catchment area this could have a impact on my less confident child if having to start a new school not knowing anyone
The current policy works well for our personal circumstances but I am keen to see changes in the post 16 travel policy for students in full time educatio
As an operator who has specific vehicles that are only be used for Send and Social Services transport but those vehicles have to licensed as a taxi with all the relevant fees and costs associated along with a licensed driver. At quotation stage we could significantly lower the costs if these vehicles that are solely used for school and Social care transport didn't have to be fully plated up as a taxi/PH. As an example we have a saloon car that is only used to take one child to their school in Brompton from Selby and return. The vehicle is not used for any other purpose other than social service AdHoc transport. We could reduce the quote by 1300 if the vehicle wasn't plated Both driver and PA would still have an enhanced DBS and the vehicle woukd still be walk round checked daily as well as the 12 week mechanical checks and twice yearly Mots. As an Operator that eventually aims to step away from standard Private taxi Hire work and solely concentrate on social care and home 2 school work it would allow us and other operators to offer reduced costs to the NYCCV Ipt.
The proposed policy does not make clear what the position is regarding the transition to the new policy - will children not entitled to transport under the new policy be allowed to continue travelling or would they have to move schools? Also what are the options when a child is not entitled to school transport? Will there be an option to pay for travel? The policy appears to be silent on this. Will N Yorks operate school services which can be paid for as if services are withdrawn it may have a negative environmental impact as it will increase the likelihood of parents taking children in cars Perhaps those entitled currently with no entitlement under new policy should be required to make a stepped contribution to mitigate the current spend as they progress through school. A gradual approach way help embed the new policy. Main thing is to ensure when parents choose schools for Children they are fully aware of new policy and whether they have entitlement - also Parents need to appreciate the cost of providing transport - often they have no idea of the value.

The proposal (in line with DfE (Department for Education) guidance, that transport will only be assessed and, if eligible, provided from one home address.) is mistaken. The incomes and discretionary spend of parents who are separated or divorced is usually lower than those who live together so only funding transport from one home would hit such financially stretched families and might promote conflict about which parent would have to pay for the unsupported transport - hardly something which is good for the wellbeing of children. Parents separate for many reasons including escaping violence, threats, abuse, and unacceptable behaviour - compounding their problems is hardly helpful! The number of journeys between home and school is independent of the number of homes which the child lives in. Surely it's not beyond the wit of those who manage transport contracts and the operators to accommodate this!
As has always been the case the most affordable way of transporting children to school is by effectively using large passenger carrying vehicles- these vehicles reduce congestion , have had many years investment in reducing emmisions but do need an organised integrated approach to route planning . I believe based on 30 years as a transport provider that not enough time and energy is being invested in this planning . Families feel happy to let their children travel By bus and coach if those providing the service deliver the high standards that are needed . I am greatly concerned on a daily basis by standards I see from both coach and bus operators and non compliant taxi operators . Although my heart sank at the proposal for a specific training module I do feel that it is needed. Please can this training be properly registered so that it counts as a module of PSV driver CPC training. I am sure it will be much more relevant than some of the training that's on offer to us . I think the 2 mile rule for walking to school for children from low income families is unfair and discriminates against children from all other families - a 3 mile walk expected for those. I have recently raised this issue with my MP . A realistic walking distance is required if congestion around schools is ever going to be addressed .
I live at (Redacted), our catchment school is Sessay. In the same federation is Husthwaite, where (Redacted) attend. It is quicker for me to get to Husthwaite and a 0.25 of a mile in the equation of catchment. A school bus goes from Kilburn, 1.5 miles away, with less than half the seats filled daily. There are four or five other families in the vicinity that would use a school bus to access education at Husthwaite. There wouldn't be a school bus covering our area if the children went to the catchment school of Sessay?? Where is the thought around the environment in this thinking?
None
no
I would like to see more transport options. There is no way for our son to get to school without us driving him.
My high school child lives out of catchment for transport so we have to drive each day. Would be happy to pay for a bus scheme though if this were to be provided.
Transport should be made easier not harder. Children should be able to have a choice of schools & not be told they can only attend the closest school because that's all transport can provide. School transport is nearly non existent already from Eggborough.

The proposed policy will force many parents/cadets/guardians to send their child/children to a school that may not be their first choice or the best choice for their child due to transport implications created by this change in policy. Many families are already struggling especially with the continued hefty increases by North Yorkshire Council on Council Tax yet seem to be looking in the wrong areas to make cuts and penalising the average working family by reducing services and taking away something as basic as choice of school for our children by proposing these changes to transport. As a resident of Beal we should not be left with one choice of school out of county as first choice due to transport costs as a village we get little for our money paid to your council the least we can have is a choice to send our children to our choice of school in county with transport provided even if subsidised by the council instead of fully paid for depending on income.
We are in North Yorkshire, I don't want my child going to wetherby high school. It's West Yorkshire and makes no sense. My child's fellow pupils will not be going there either and I think the free transportation should be for a school that is one majority of the children from my child's school go to. Where we live I hear of no children going to Wetherby High School.
I am not happy with the proposal as under the proposed new policy they will only provide free transport to the nearest school. Meaning as long as the 'nearest' school have spaces you won't provide transport to any of the remaining catchment schools. Parents would have to cover this cost and at present a yearly school bus pass is around £750! When you have multiple children this is a significant expense. A school choice for parents is not just based on nearest location but about the needs of the child and what environment would work best for them (academically and sporting considerations). The proposal appears to only take into consideration 'cost' as opposed to a child's need(s). This needs revising!
Instead of making working families lives harder and adding more and more costs to them, why does the council not create policies that affect demographics of people that can afford extra costs in their lives? Introduce a car congestion charge based on the value of the car, rather than emissions (since wealth people can afford electric, those less affluent will be punished by a pollution/car age charge) Increase business rates on non-independent shops and businesses. Means test school transport so that only those families that are are six+ figure salaries pay. Reduce the overheads of running the councillors (move to a cheaper property etc) Increase council tax for those on the highest tax band only.
My son attends Settle College. A significant proportion of the students are from out of catchment - are attending when it is not the nearest school. They pay for the bus service into the school. My worry is for the future of the school. Settle's NOR is fairly low and this may dissuade families from trying to attend the school and ensuring it is viable for Settle to retain a secondary school.
Currently in Spofforth as we are more than 3 miles from any secondary school, the council will provide free transport to Wetherby High (this is the nearest school) as well as Harrogate Grammar, Rosset and Harrogate High (these are our catchment schools). But under the proposed new policy they will only provide free transport to the nearest school. Meaning as long as Wetherby High have spaces they won't provide transport to the catchment schools. Parents would have to cover the cost for the child to get to Grammar, Rosset or Harrogate High - A yearly school bus pass is around £750 at the moment. To not provide transport to catchment schools is discriminatory and prohibitive to parents on low/middle-low incomes. I do not agree with this new policy.
The proposals are going to put a lot of pressure on parents

My child attends George Pindar School in Eastfield, Scarborough. We live in crossgates. It is a 2 mile walk along a busy road with inadequate street lighting. I would be willing to pay for a school bus but currently there is no service available. I feel this needs investigating further.
The council should stop haemorrhaging money in other departments before looking at this. The lack of control over spending is ludicrous.
I live at Whitley, which was not on the list. We are a North Yorkshire LA. My (Redacted) at Brayton Academy and (Redacted). The proposed changes would remove the school transport service for my children (I thought it was for September 25 intake, but on reading the materials it is for September 24 so we are affected). This transport is essential as I work full time and I am unable to take the children myself, the disruption would have a very negative affect on our situation and place unnecessary pressures on me as a parent and my children.
You need to define how nearest is measured; is it straight line or shortest rout e via road? For children already attending their 'nearest' school that is not their catchment school, will the policy entitle them to free transport in the remaining years at school (i.e. it doesn't ONLY apply to new admissions)
I was pleased to read a pragmatic, sensible and caring approach to a complex and potentially immotive situation. Well done.
We have moved into the area and our children will be attending the grammar schools from September. A large factor which we took into account when we bought our house was whether there were good connections to get to school and we budgeted on the fact that they would get free school transport. The issue would be that as a parent chosing which school children will go to in Year 7, it is made far more difficult for parents to assess which school to choose based upon the current proposed policy. For example, a parent may choose a school which is closest, but not in catchment, per the suggested changes to comply with the travel situation. They can then be turned down due to being out of catchment/no availability and then the school option goes to the second school selected on the list. The child may then miss out on this school too, as everyone who put that school down as their first choice was able to take those places. Then, they are on their third option.... It means that it is difficult for parents to plan their lives, work options etc and the school choice will be increasingly uncertain. Furthermore, when secondary schools are within 1 mile of one another, I think any of those schools should still qualify for free school travel. The final issue is that these chanages may affect poeple who have just selected their secondary school, bsed upon the existing travel arrangements and it seems highly unfair that the rules are changed after children have already been allocated their secondary school places.
I feel that it is unnecessary to provide free transport for primary aged pupils but good to provide for secondary pupils
This policy will force many parent's in my catchment area to send their child to an undesirable or poorly performing school out of the local catchment area. This policy for some parents diminishes the right to choose a suitable school for their child.
If this goes ahead catchment areas should be scrapped. Either use distance or catchment area, not both, to influence school choice. Children’s mental health is likely to be affected if they do not move to high school with their friend group, which will happen if some choose the catchment school and some choose the nearest school to get the free transport.

Mainstream costs have increased 50% since 2015/6. Special provision 350%. What analysis has been done to find out why? Disagree with removal of eligibility on primary phase of denominational grounds for low income - it seems a small group to single out. Who will assess 'safe routes' - do you have the staff to check out 'safe walking routes' when you are under financial pressure? (Beyond looking at a map online, which doesn't show pavements, or lack of them.) The requirement for parents to walk to school with children could have unintended consequences - the time taken might lead to them losing their job. This might then push them into lower income brackets, and the children would qualify for free transport. We appreciate councils are stretched financially, but are these suggestions going to enhance the educational experience of the children of NY? How much is this in reality going to save?
Thank you for putting this together, the proposals (while I don't agree with them on every account) are easy to understand and presented clearly. Well done to the team at NYC who put this together - it's not easy and I appreciate the work put in to it.
We are lucky to have 2 very different school within in a very similar distance where currently we have transport provided to both of this were to change it would mean having to pick 1 school over distance rather than which school would fit best for our child which would be a really sad situation and I'm sure would be the same for a lot of local families
Why not encourage cycling? Some sensibly planned, and traffic free cycle, would be amazing and encourage many more pupils to cycle. At my school only two pupils ever cycle to school and both of those only really in summer when the roads are safer.
I think it makes sense to keep it on a county basis in terms of school holidays for one thing, working parents could potentially have children of different ages in school in different counties subsequently on separate holidays at times. If this happened in our area settle college would be gravely affected and kirkby Lonsdale inundated with pupils
I'm concerned that if free school transport was restricted to closest school that pupils in ingleton and Bentham would be forced to choose QES over Settle College which would have a negative effect on Settle College. Surely as this is the county school for this area (whereas QES is in Cumbria) that free school transport should be extended into this area. These changes would have a negative effect on both my children.
This proposal will result in the removal the right of families and children to make a choice about which very good schools in our area their child attends. In todays society and with everyone trying to make ends meet this is completely wrong. It will reduce numbers at your own North Yorkshire schools in our location and boost numbers in another councils school , surely not what you set out to do!
An outrageous proposal!
Transport provided to nearest school is welcome. However, I appreciate that savings need to be made. Having worked with such families, I think priority needs to go to those families with children with additional needs who have a school place a long way from home - these families should certainnly be provided transport and the systems for applying / arranging this should be as simple and supported as possible. I certainly thinkk money could be saved with regard to Reception Children as it could be argued they are far to young to be expected to travel to school without parents anyway and parents should arrange this when looking into reception places? Thank you for the consultation
It needs to remain the same as it is now

It discriminates pupils living on the boarder of catchment areas. The reason for living in North Yorkshire was to enable my child to access some of the best schools in the country with transport availability. There is discrimination against working parents whose shift patterns do not allow transporting children to school, this could encourage parents not to work and rely on state benefits. Cost of transport will put extreme pressure on family finance. Noted only one mention of religion within document, religious belief is extremely important and has not been considered unless on benefits.
The nearest school should not include selective schools. This new policy will mean more pupils travelling by car rather than by bus
It would be detrimental to our children's wellbeing to move schools. Whilst I do not agree with the changes at least avoid affecting existing school children so they are not moved once they have started. A further consideration is the sustainability of the changes as it would mean more parents driving children to school when there are likely to be empty seats on the bus going the same way. There are five schools in Richmond next to each other...more cars will mean even more congestion on Darlington road and affect parent's ability to get to work on time.
With reference to providing transport to the nearest secondary school, you have not made it clear if this is the nearest secondary in North Yorkshire or the nearest secondary school outside of North Yorkshire. I and many others live very close the the borders of Lancashire and Cumbria. Whilst we live in North Yorkshire, our closest secondary school is out of the County in Cumbria, QES. Please could you make this point clear. If you mean the closest secondary school outside of the County of North Yorkshire, this could have serious consequences for our local North Yorks secondary school, Settle College, and children wanting to attend this North Yorkshire secondary school in the future who live in North Yorkshire, but near the border of Cumbria and Lancashire. Thank you
My little sister will go to high school and if my mum has to pay for her to get there i think this will be a struggle. My mum works hard and does her best. Why would you affect a childs education its unfair if you removed free transport for us kids. I do well at school and so will my little sister but i know my mum will struggle to pay transport or get her there if she cant afford it. This could affect her work i dont think you are thinking about the bigger picture this could put ppl on benefits due to not been able to afford school bus fees so they have to take them and work around that this is impossible. Please take all this into consideration.
I think its very worrying for parents of children in Bentham/Ingleton that they wont get transport to their nearest North Yorkshire school (Settle College) This would leave no choice but to go to a school in a neighbouring county. It would have a hugely detrimental impact on numbers at Settle College which would surely leave its future in doubt. Its also a terrible idea to only provide transport for children after their 5th birthday. These children are expected and hugely benefit from attending their whole Reception year. It seems ludicrous to penalise spring or summer born children in this way.
This proposal is unbelievable and will certainly impact children’s learning and well being. This proposal shouldn’t go ahead. What are we paying our increased council tax for when you are offering less of a service? You should be ashamed!
I think it’s crazy that the travel policy is going to be changed. It takes the option of secondary school out of the parents hands who do not have the money to be able to pay for a pass to their chosen school. It is discriminating against families who cannot afford to pay it. It’s disgusting.
My child’s nearest secondary school transport route would not be the most suitable in the winter time and our next nearest secondary school is only 2 miles further in distance but would be the quickest and more appropriate route.

the measurement of distance by using public rights of way these are not always safe from an environmental and social danger, and not always passable (flooding)
Our ‘closest’ secondary school would fall into a different county and over a road in which doesn’t get treated in winter which would make it not safe for my children to travel!! I would be full against this is it was a matter on distance as this is not safe!!
You have made no mention of improving the opportunity for some to cycle/walk to school. Certainly for the older children , if provision were made for safe active travel the number of bus spaces could be reduced , certainly in the drier months and families allowed a choice. Your high spend reflects the very low spend on active travel. So much could be done at relatively low cost to improve this. Whitby TC has supported a 20mph default speed ' where people are' which would make home to school a safer and cheaper option for many but you have failed to address this.
I don't think the policy should be changed so that only the local school choice is given free transport as my catchment school is easier to get to. The local school is harder to get to in winter. It would require the council to grit more roads than currently do
I don’t believe that school choice , a school in which a pupil would be most happy , most appropriate for them as individuals should be dictated of affected by the removal of costs being covered by the council got free school transport - and the cost therefore being passed onto parents who may already be in financially difficult situations, but perhaps not eligible for support. I think overall the proposal to just provide free transport to pupils to their ‘nearest’ school is not appropriate or in the best interests of the pupils or schools.
It seems a nonsense to send children to their catchment school but not provide transport, the two systems need to work together.
Where the distance of some of the schools are within a similar distance from a child’s home, children should be eligible for free transport to all, especially when the schools with a better teaching record are slightly further away.
I think instead of nearest school it should be catchment school This worked very well for many years
If this stops children who have passed for Skipton Girls & Ermysteds from getting free travel because Skipton Academy is closer to their home, but on the same bus route it would make no sense. Families might have to make the decision if their child gets a grammar school education based on if they can pay for a bus pass - this would be a very disappointing move. I hope that this has been taken into account, considering the three schools are on the same bus route.
The proposed changes are not made clear for those reading this consultation document and associated policies - there is, as always, too much waffle and not enough clarity. A simple bullet-pointed list outlining 'these are the changes' and FAQs to answer 'what will the changes mean for me / my child(ren)?' would be much more helpful, enabling for residents and helpful to yourselves in terms of resulting in meaningful, accurate responses from those likely to be affected. Consultations like this only serve to prevent people from responding appropriately and therefore are not consultations, they are purely 'box ticking' exercises to use to metaphorically 'whip' people with - when they say they didn't know about the changes, you can say 'well a consultation document was issued'. Disappointing but, sadly, unsurprising.
It is still not clear from your excessive pages of documents if children travelling to the grammar schools I. Skipton will have free transport despite having a closer suitable school.

I applaud the fact that the council don't try to disguise that this is about financial savings and will not provide benefit pupils. However that very notion is shocking and ammoral. It appears to be another instance of those most vulnerable in society being penalised in favour of money. I'm not at all surprised that NYCC is targetting SEND pupils once again, it is an easy win for their pockets. Some of the minor changes are, in fairness, logical but the key is in the wording to the more substantial charges. Regardless of this process, i have no doubt the proposed chnages will be implemented as money is the master.
If transport is only provided free of charge to the nearest school, I think this will have a detrimental effect on the future of Settle College. We live in Ingleton, one of our children currently attends Settle College, however, our daughter has chosen to attend QES. The cost of travel would have effected our decision making with regard to which school they chose to attend.
I can see this policy being critical to those That have to use it. I'm lucky enough not to need to, but feel those that do need it need a fair amount of access to this support when balanced against the cost to the council. The change seem to be a fair middle ground to me.
This proposal will have a massive negative impact on many families as well as many schools in the county. The money 'saved' by the changes will be negated by families transporting their children to the school that was previously in their catchment area and of their choice rather than the one nearest to where they live - this in turn will have a huge effect on the transport infrastructure, state of the roads and the environment. I really don't think the Council have thought this through. I am totally opposed to these changes.
The policy seems clearer and considers the difficult financial context. However, it would seem sensible to offer 'paid for' school transport in areas where public transport is not available for pupils who don't meet the eligibility criteria for free transport. This would be more environmentally sustainable than forcing people into cars, and if organised properly should more than pay for itself. It would also allow parents more choice on school applications.
So unfair to remove catchment schools
Why remove catchment schools. Totally disgraceful.
Need to make the public aware of how distance is measured from home to school. There currently is no clarity here.
I am strongly against these changes, our current route to school (Keld to Richmond) is a B Road that is gritted and safe in bad weather. If these changes go ahead we and alot of other family's in our area will be forced to either send our children on dangerous / potentially life threatening ungritted routes to school (kirkby stephen or leyburn) or pay an extortionate amount of money to organise and pay for our own transport.
In my opinion, children should be educated in the nearest suitable school. Thereby sustaining village schools.. Please note that in the. scenarios of child P and Q. the word visual impaired should be used as opposed to blind.
It is very wordy and long. Some people may struggle with understanding it/bothering to read it
Has any thought been put into place about how many different services would be required to get children to these different schools based on mileage. Also how children would get to these schools if the roads are unsuitable for buses and taxis in the winter months as they may not be priority gritting routes and alternative route may be vastly longer to get to the so called nearest school

(I have sent a separate email to H2Stransportreview@northyorks.gov.uk)
No free school travel should be provided. It is a complete waste of public funds School children taking service buses (very short distances) are disruptive and rude to paying passengers and drivers. I have no idea why they are not encouraged to walk distances of 3-4 miles.
I am aware that travel to school is constantly under threat from either rising prices or an introduction of a fee. Unfortunately I do not understand the consultation papers enough to agree with them or not. My main concern is that travel to school remains free from where I am, or at least maintains the same price. It massively impacts on my decision as to where to send my children. I am in (Redacted) and sent my (Redacted) to skipton on the basis that it is free, unlike wharfedale or settle.
It will make access to the grammar schools for children in rural areas more difficult and only available to weathlier children and not be based on academic achievement.
The majority of parents and children in this area choose their school on the basis of the best educational fit for the child (ultimately in the best interests of our country as much as the individual child as successful children contribute more to society and require less local authority support in the long run), so they will not choose a school further away unless there is a very good reason to do so. All the local schools are quite different and which children will benefit most from which school in our local town has nothing to do with which school is closer to the child's home so it is not in the children's best interests to have transport available only to the closest school. Almost all parents choose a school in the local town, in fact those not doing so have not been eligible for local authority transport for years in any case so these are irrelevant to this consultation. So essentially the change to supporting travel for closest school only means that a child attending a school (in most cases) less than one mile further from home is no longer eligible for local authority transport which seems grossly unfair. Removing the travel option to children attending a school marginally further away will also definitely increase local traffic and pollution as parents drive their children to school instead. This is not in the children's interests, the interests of local residents, other road users or the interests of the environment. The council should be increasing pupils' use of school buses, not reducing it. It is naive not to expect the majority of parents to drive their children to school instead as this is the normal behaviour of parents in this area. In this day and age most families cannot afford for a parent to stay at home so those few children who walk instead will do so without parental support as most parents will have to rush off to work at this time in the morning (they might have time to drive their child to school but not to hang around for the half an hour extra it would take the child to walk). If something goes wrong on the child's way to school there is likely to be no one at home available to come and help them. Also, many parents have children of different ages at multiple schools and they rely heavily on one or more of their children going to school on the bus as they might be walking another child to school elsewhere at the same time. I feel the change in policy to closest school only is grossly irresponsible on so many levels that I am alarmed it is even being considered. If the policy is not about saving money on transport as it first seems but instead aims to take school choice away from local parents and children forcing children to attend their closest school this will also have adverse effects on these children in the long term. Parents don't choose schools further from home if the closer school offers the best education and support for their child. Ultimately any funding local authorities have for education and associated transport is there to help give each child the best education possible. Removing children's choice of local school is NOT in their best interests If the council wishes to save money it might consider charging a supplement for the additional mile to those children attending a school further from home. If this fee is reasonable it will still be cheaper for parents than paying to drive their cars to school and back twice a day, not to mention their own loss of productivity for those two

hours of the day. Whilst this would still be harsh on parents already taking on additional costs from all directions, it would at least keep school children on buses and out of cars.
With the proposed changes, our 'nearest school' is not even in the same local authority or county. I should be able to send my children to a school within the authority I live and transportation should not be a factor in this decision. There are a number of reasons as to why a school may not be suitable for a child and such important decisions about their futures should not be based on mileage between home and school.
as a North Yorkshire resident and council taxpayer I should have the right to send my child to your nearest North Yorkshire school and receive free transport if that is my choice.
I think free school transport needs to be given to those who need it (affected by distance and/or disability) and should only be offered to those in the aforementioned sectors where they live in the catchment area for that school. Those outside the catchment who want their child to attend that school should sort transportation costs out themselves. I am entitled to it for my child (in catchment but live outside of walking distance) yet I choose not to use it, as we don't need to, so our funding for that is better spent elsewhere.
The school bus service is essential in getting my children to school. There aren't footpaths for the main roads and it would be incredibly dangerous for me to walk this with a 5 and 6 year old child. It also wouldn't allow me time to then get to work as I would be walking almost 12 miles a day
Where there is only one school in the catchment area this feels unfair as parents are left with no choice. In our car the sole catchment secondary school has been underperforming for years, has changed to an academy and back again and is notorious for bullying. It is not an attractive prospect for an education. Economic pressures mean that families will suffer in order to support a better education. It makes sense that there needs to be stricter control but there ought be a choice of at least two schools with transport to best support childrens' education.
My (Redacted) have all attended Reeth school followed by Richmond school as I have always understood that children from Reeth and gunnerside school have always had a right to go to Richmond school which is also in sealedale your proposal is going to split up friendships forged at primary school. Friendships that it many cases have lasted a lifetime. Finally taking North Yorkshire children into Cumbria to school is just the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard of
School travel cost is so high that I genuinely do not know how I will afford to send my children to secondary school. My husband is classed as a higher income earner and we do not have the money for the bus pass in September. We have chosen the secondary school for very sensible reasons. I cannot believe as a two graduate household who have always worked hard, paid our taxes and been careful with money that we are in this position. You should be doing more to help people, not less. If you had SEND units in every school you would not have this problem. It would be better for families using them and your transport bill would be far lower. Seems a no-brainer to me in a very rural authority. Sadly you have neglected SEND provision and it's impacting your transport budget. Some joined up thinking is needed rather than slashing things even more.

Removal of catchment area for closest I don't agree with. People have bought homes because of catchment area and therefore it should still be taken into account. Our village school closed in 1989 and our parents got the choice of catchment area out of 5 schools by the Local Authority. It has been the same ever since. Generations going to the same school.
All parents should be asked to contribute to school transport if they don't transport their own children. Allow parents to pay for places on the free buses if they live on free transport routes. Stop using private hire taxis.
Eligibility criteria should NOT go beyond that set out by central government. The level of tax payers money (~£42m) being spent on these free travel services is unacceptable! Children should, other than those children with additional needs, be either taken to school by their parents or should use public transport. If parents wish the tax payer to fund such transport schemes for their children then NYC should introduce an additions element (£x/year) to Council Tax bills that is only applicable to those households containing school age children . Households and couples without children should not see their taxes going towards services from which they will never benefit!
The condition and suitability of roads for school transport must be considered, especially for the winter months. Many children do not attand the nearest school due to unsuitable and unsafe roads particularly in the upper dales. I also think serious consideration needs to be made to the effect this would have on rural schools. Again with particular regard to the upper dsles you may end of providing more transport not less to get children to the nearest school rather than providing one route to one school.
I feel Free Home to school transport should only be provided to in county schools, schools out of country but in catchment should not receive free transport. Free transport for primary children that are less than 1 mile from school is unnecessary
Instead of cutting back on services for children the council should enforce a cap on the price paid to transport providers. It is a standing joke that transport companies make huge profits from overcharging councils for this service. It would actually make more financial sense for the council to employ its own drivers, purchase its own fleet and stop penalising children for the transport companies' greed. The policy about removing free transport for catchment schools is ill-thought through, threatens some village schools close to the boundary and potentially places children at risk, particularly where the road to the nearest school (Kirby Stephen) is too dangerous for gritters during the worst winter months.
It is totally unacceptable to expect peers to attend one school and me another after attending primary school together. Education needs to be the whole experience not just in class
There are 2 practical secondary school options locally, this currently allow families to select the most appropriate for their child, based on size, distance and performance, you are in many case removing that parental choice of what is best for their child
Trying to change the criteria if you have changed schools is yet another disruptive of children's schooling. They have had 4 years of constant disruption and really I'd destroying their education
Distance alone should not be the main criterion. The road travelled should be taken into consideration especially in winter conditions. Will it be gritted or snow ploughed ? Is it suitable for a bus ? Have the people compiling these documents travelled these routes ? Will Reeth children be expected to go to Leyburn or Richmond ? Reeth has always been in the Richmond catchment.

There isn't an option for Whitley as part of this survey. I agree with the nearest school change but it should be within the North Yorkshire catchment. I'm aware that my children's nearest school is Campsamount therefore under the proposed suggestion they would get free travel to this school. However, as I pay (significant) council tax to North Yorkshire, I expect free travel to our nearest North Yorkshire school.
It is a shame that as a payer of council tax to North Yorkshire we would be forced to choose a school outside of our local area in order to meet the free transport criteria. It would be to the detriment to the community to force children in ingleton, Bentham areas to be forced to choose QES. The distance is negligible and benefits would therefor be minimal in terms of cost reduction for the council. In an area where choice is hugely restricted due to school availability you're effectively removing any preference on basis of financial exclusion.
The document is very confusing to try and read. I'm used to reading these sorts of documents because of my work however i can imagine many parents will struggle and give up.
We live and are part of North Yorkshire council. I think it is disgusting that our children may have to enter a different county to go to school when they don't wish to. Also taking children away from our county schools!!
The proposals to be applied to children in Upper Swaledale (and Arkengarthdale), would put the children in danger when travelling to school in winter , or any times of icy or snowy weather. The routes to the schools they would have to attend with free travel are over the tops at high altitude and such roads are impassable and dangerous to travel on at certain times each year. The Stang road is not gritted all along the route. The road from Grinton to Wensleydale is over the tops on a narrow steep road. Similarly the road to Kirkby Stephen. Apart from the genuine travel risk, children would lose attendance days thus affecting their educational progress. The road to Richmond where most children travel to is kept gritted and at a relatively low level, ensuring safety in travel.
You wont get a school bus over Grinton Moor, The Stang or out to Kirkby!!!! You cannot split these children, they have all grown up together and now you want to split them into new schools midway through their secondary education. Do not do this!
I live near a 'special school' where pupils are brought and taken home in a taxi. It would appear that each taxi carries only one child. This is probably a safety issue, but is the cost of these separate taxis taken into account in the figures shown in the financial tables? if not, why not? The people, in this part of Craven, with bus passes have had many of the bus services that they have relied on in the past removed. Are you going to remove transport from the young as well? Not all parents have access to a car, 3 miles is a long way for an eight year old to walk to and from school. There may be younger children within a household - pity the poor parent who has to feed, dress and then take a young child and younger siblings on a journey that may well take an hour to walk, and then another to get home. AND then do it all again at the close of the school day. ABSOLUTELY RIDICLOUS. I am appalled at the lack of forethought from all concerned in preparing these proposals. If a car is available, it's not a very 'green' way of transporting pupils to and from school.
I am worried I am not going to be able to afford transport for my child to go to school
No consideration given in the new plan the the nearest school geographically does not mean the most accessible due to road and weather conditions.

Under your new proposal you are putting many children into very dangerous situations. The roads you expect them to travel on are often untreated in winter and are exposed to the elements which makes them impassable! Our children will so much school in the winter which is totally unacceptable! Not only that, my child would be sent to a school in a different local authority than ours and would have to cross the A66 road twice a day to get to school, that is totally unacceptable and I will NOT allow that for my child. Her safety is my number 1 priority. Your proposal is sickening, you haven't taken local rural roads and conditions into account. You should be ashamed!!
I feel communication with families is poor and some of the documentation is hard to understand. We've had some good and some very bad experiences with school transport due to the lack of communication and the many staff changes which our children do not cope well with
I support the proposed changes to nearest school. I wrote, via our governors many years ago saying how wasteful the present system is with free transport to catchment area and to nearest school which are often different. Transition will be tricky and I can see there are places in our rural area where nearest school may be a trickier journey than another one. The policy very definitely needs updating. Closure of schools over the years hasn't taken into consideration transport costs.
Parents and carers should have a choice of schools for all ages and transport to the nearest two or three schools at secondary stage should be provided free of charge. Presumably NYCC are receiving more money from council tax etc due to the massive rise in new homes, therefore it isn't sensible to be seen as penny pinching from parents.
I think it is disgraceful that children may not be able to access or afford transport to the nearest school in their local authority in the future. This will have an overwhelming negative impact on children and families that already have children going to a school in North Yorkshire eg: settle college, who then have to use a different school with transport in another county. School holidays will be different. It's clear the proposed changes have been made without taking into consideration families who may have children in two different schools in two different counties. Children may even not have any choice in which secondary school they want to attend, which will have a detrimental impact upon mental health and wellbeing which is already in crisis.
We live in North Yorkshire, my daughter goes to a school in North Yorkshire but with this latest proposal she wouldn't be entitled to free transport and would only get the free transport if she went across the border into Cumbria because that is 7 miles away as opposed to the one in County that is12. How does that make sense ?
If the proposed changes to the main eligibility criterion to be nearest school (with places available) were to go ahead, I think that many children will be disadvantaged by being forced into going to a school which may not meet their educational and social needs. Council tax payers should not have to send their children out of their community to go to a school in another county because it is closer. Council tax payers pay a large amount of money every year and expect the services of their own council at schools in their home county. The council should look at contract pricing and efficiencies before implementing policy changes which will affect such a large demographic of North Yorkshire residents.

Closest seccondry school is 6.7 miles away frim us but 2 counties away being in cumbria. Settle college the is 9 miles away yet in the same county. This should be available for us. Our eldest is at settle college now so why should we have to send his (Redacted) to a different seccondry school, Which is over subscribed and in a different county and not to the undersubscibed school in the same county? This then looks bad on the hard working families that can not afford the extra expensess. For generations settle has been the school after both middle schools. It should still be the school for the same primary schools the middle schools were then to send pupils too.
It's an absolute disgrace
We moved to (Redacted) last year. We could not get a place for our children in our nearest school (QES in Cumbria) therefore our nearest choice was settle college. North Yorkshire have failed to take account of the fact that QES is the most oversubscribed school in the area and children are not automatically guaranteed a place there. Now that my older children attend Settle and are happy, I intend to send their younger siblings to the same school. Especially since the school holidays in the different counties do not match up. I think the council is trying to simplify an issue which is not simple at all. I live in North Yorkshire and therefore should be guaranteed transport to a school in North Yorkshire. What's the point in having a county area otherwise? I would implore the council to reconsider there action in this matter, specifically in our area, so close to the council border.
Settle is the nearest school on OUR COUNTY the county in which we pay council tax for. QES is a massive school already and not suited to alot of children. I know my children would not have been happy there going from a small primary school (especially as you closed the middle schools which would have made made the transition easier) I would not be able to afford the bus fare. It is an absolutely disgusting proposal. We have already had so many services take away from us. And now this.
Absolutely disgusting! What happened to school been a personal choice a choice for each individual with free transport to transport the student to and from school! Living in low Bentham 2 children been through settle college 1 currently attending & 1 to attend - yet your telling me my nearest school and ONLY choice for free transport will be settle! How am I to fund it also round work if I am to transport myself! The distance between the 2 schools is so close - bring back freedom of choice for these students & give them a safe free travel to and from- who's going to take the punishment when a parent can't afford to pay the travel expenses??
I feel that transport should be provided to yhe neared school within the county in which the child lives
I think it is absolutely disgusting that this is even being discussed, children should not be suffering all for cutting costs. If you want to save money reduce the amount of money paid to all the pen pushers at North Yorkshire who make these stupid decisions. Settle College has always been the first choice for families in the Ingleton and Bentham area going through the Middle School system but yet again another crazy decision made by the council closing the middle Schools. QES is already at capacity so how do you expect it to take anymore children? We pay our council tax to North Yorkshire and get absolutely nothing in return, pay for police and there is no police in Ingleton or Bentham and now you are depriving our children of a free choice choosing a school that they wish to attend and effecting their education aswel. QES is a massive school and some kids just can not cope with such an over whelming environment and shouldn't have to. The worlds gone mad, It's an absolute joke you should be ashamed.

The proposed changes would mean my children's nearest secondary school would be in a different county. To get there they would have to travel over a moor road which in winter doesn't tend to get gritted and often is blocked with snow. This would have a major impact on their school attendance as it just wouldn't be safe to travel there. The children in the area currently attending secondary school travel down the dale, staying on well gritted roads which is much safer. This has been the case for many decades. I also think it's unfair sending them into a different county when they have built up friendship groups within the primary school and other schools in the area that they are clustered with. I myself struggled with the changes from primary to secondary and having the support of my friends going with me definitely helped. I understand you are having to try to cut costs but surely our children's safety has to come first. I hope you reconsider and look at some situations individually rather than looking at North Yorkshire as a whole. Many thanks
I think it's disgusting that we live in North Yorkshire but you are expecting our children to go to a school in Cumbria because it's the nearest and is going to save you money. If I wanted to live in Cumbria then I would.
I have significant concerns in respect of the policy whereby transport will only be provided to the nearest school. Large parts of NYC operate a selective school system, undertaken via the Eleven-Plus test. This system already benefits wealthier parents, who have the resources to support additional exam coaching. The travel amendments will make the 'wealth = advantage' position far worse, with substantial socio-economic consequences. A student can currently obtain free transport to one of the NYC Grammar Schools, even if they have a closer non-selective school. By removing this free transport, those on lower incomes will not be able to attend the Grammar School, due to the significant financial burden of additional transport costs. This change will further advance the opportunities given to wealthier households, who can afford the transport costs to access the Grammar School. Those on lower incomes will be excluded. We would suggest some form of free transport is maintained for those on lower incomes, or the transport cost to be means tested, to ensure lower income families have access to the Grammar Schools. We would encourage you to review the potentially unintended consequences of this proposal, as they may well be more severe than expected.
Transport costs will go up over time because things cost more over time..in the same way we pay more council tax each year, the council needs to pay more for transport. This proposal will have an incredibly negative impact on our local secondary schools to such an extent that I genuinely believe Settle College will close or be taken over by an academy chain. Whilst this absolves the LA of any responsibility for the school (yay for the local authority!) it is not a good thing for the community, staff or pupils. This is very clearly an attack on these schools that will lose out due to the border and new rule of closest school only for transport. Why North Yorkshire wants to destroy these schools and give the pupils to other local authorities or academy chains is beyond me. We will do everything we can to save these schools and that certainly means keeping transport going to their local North Yorkshire, catchment school, not one across borders just so North Yorkshire can wipe the hands clean.
This would mean my child would be going out of their catchment area. Along with the fact the road to this school is too treacherous for the gritters to even go over. Therefore so much education would be missed. I know this is due to budget but It would cost more money having numerous buses all going in different directions rather than having the one going the same way. Surely?

I understand the rationale for this new policy- looking for ways to save money is of course important. However, the specific circumstances of Selby High School and Brayton, being schools that are very close together, mean that this policy could have a profound impact, without saving any money in this particular case. This is because almost all the students who currently get free transport for Selby, would also require free transport for Brayton if that was their closest school. Therefore, the only impact would be making those students less likely to choose Selby High School. We know from our Open Evenings that many families have a difficult decision, as they see both Brayton and Selby as excellent schools. At the moment they often choose Selby. I do believe that if there was a financial sacrifice in making this choice, especially at the current time, that it would be a strong factor in school choice. It is impossible to judge the precise impact of this policy without having information about students currently attending Brayton whose closest school is Selby. However, for Selby, nearly half of the students who currently get free transport to Selby, live closer to Brayton. That is over a 100 students. Once again, I need to point out that almost all of these students would still require free transport if they chose Brayton, meaning a negligible saving (if any). In my view, any policy needs to consider the specific case of having two schools that are so close together, and if necessary have a local policy agreement. I would ask that Governors are provided with detailed, accurate data about potential impact, including about Brayton.
We live slightly closer to Wetherby (West Yorkshire so out of catchment) than our nearest catchment school. To have a policy to be eligible for travel that the school has to be the nearest one even though my child can't go to that school as it's out of catchment is preposterous. I'm frankly astonished it could even be considered. It very clearly should be a policy that it's the nearest catchment school / one allocated at admissions. You are removing any choice to be eligible for free transport.
Unclear what proposed changes entail
Disgraceful as usual from North Yorkshire council you should be ashamed of yourselves
We pay council taxes for what??? We had awful road conditions, bin and continuously missed on collection days … the list goes on. Maybe address the numerous taxis travelling from Burnley and further a field daily that come to collect local children to then travel a couple of miles to drop them off to then make the long journey back to Burnley and similar places. Total waste of petrol!! We are once again being stung by the system! We only had two local schools to choose from as is was and now the choice is being taken away. People CANNOT afford to pay travel expenses especially when most will have more than one child to pay for!! It is outrageous, unfair and criminal to propose this change!! To arrange a meeting on a Thursday day time is also a sly move made by the council! Everything is corrupt!!!
This takes away from a pupil having a choice of where they would feel comfortable to progress their future. Some suffer from displacement, anxiety and many other not seen forms of mental health problems that will not be taken into consideration if they are forced to take the nearest school that could completely ruin their futures. Some schools are too big for the quieter more timid pupils, where as others may prosper from that, but it should be a choice not just a general blanket of one fits all!
Settle college has always been the seccondry school for the area. Previously parents from the area had to make special arrangements for children to apply and attend QES it was not an automatic choice. Even though it is a closer school be 2 miles it is not a local school as you have to pass 2 county borders to attend. Our younger children should be able to access their seccondry school in their home county as freely as their siblings.

The nearest secondary school with places available to our village of Ingleton would be Queen Elizabeth School (Cumbria) The nearest secondary school with places available to our village of Ingleton in North Yorkshire is Settle High School. I believe the proposed amendment would force the majority of pupils from Ingleton Primary, Bentham Primary, and other smaller schools located in North Yorkshire to travel out of County, and it would be a huge loss to Settle High school, which accepts a large amount of pupils from these Primary schools (including (Redacted) over 20 years ago!)
We can walk to school at the moment which is great. I am worried when my children are secondary school age if they get into a Skipton grammar school. Would they get free bus places even though their nearest school is Upper Wharfedale? We may not be able to afford the bus fares and therefore this could have a negative impact on their education if a grammar school is the best option for them.
The proposed travel policy is taking away choice from a number of children in the future. The change would impact greatly on the area which i live and also the currwnt high school my children attend. Thia proposal could potentially effect ongoing numbers at Settle college and then impact on the schools funding and the overall local community
Due to the close proximity of Selby High School and Brayton Academy this new policy will take away the choice of secondary school for many students. It may also affect the pupil numbers attending both schools and in turn affect budgets. This will have a knock on effect to staffing structures as less budget would mean redundancies. We see huge invoices for SEN taxis requiring sign off here at the school, surely there is a more cost effective way of offering this service. One taxi owner actually puts on his invoice not to show the driver the costs which tells us that he is charging extortionate amounts. A lot of the transport companies see a school tender as a blank cheque. During the teacher strikes taxis were were still paid as the reason given by NYC was they were contracted, however I believe a taxi firm could have got other business at this time. If we compare to school staff are not paid during school holidays and they cannot get other work during this time, it seems we have no control over their charges or conditions and perhaps why costs are spiraling out of control. What considerations for cost have been made when students have managed moves to neighboring schools, will NYC then foot the bill of taxi's if the student is out of area. Lots to think about, I think it would be a huge error in taking this service away. Perhaps look at a concessionary rate for travel (free for FSM). We have spend a lot of time educating students of sustainable travel to school and this may drive the students on out with villages to be driven in by car, undoing all our good work and also increasing traffic to an already congested town.
If my child has to go to a lower rated school that is not good Bring them up to the standard of Ripon Grammar School
My children live in (Redacted). Under the new proposals their nearest secondary school is Leyburn and therefore that is where their free transport would be to (under the new policy). However, historically, children from this area attend Richmond school, and that is where I would like my children to attend. I am concerned about Winter weather and road conditions associated with higher level routes to schools beyond Swaledale, and the potential impact on school attendance. Under the proposal it could mean that children currently attending one primary school, would attend 3 different secondary schools. This would have a negative effect as there are benefits to the children of attending the same secondary school as peers, especially during transition from KS2 to KS3. There would be less community cohesion (both for families and friends) through attending different schools. Therefore there would be considerable cost implications incurred by my children attending a non catchment school. I also may have to look to move out of the area so that they could obtain free transport to Richmond school which would be our school of choice.

If these changes goes a head my child will then be given transport to a school in Cumbria where they will not know anyone instead of going to the same school as others in his class and older siblings, I think the move to secondary school is hard enough for children without not having friends around them, also the road I over the tops are unsafe over winter and can be blocked for weeks with snow. As mine would've only child from up dale to go to Kirkby Stephen this transport would surly cost more then sending him to same school as which siblings and neighbours go to there is also add school uniform cost as wouldn't be able to use siblings school jumpers and stuff I think all this is a very unfair on the children please leave as is
Nothing further to add
I feel that you are playing with children's education. I currently have one of my children in Brayton Academy, my other two children have now left that school. I have had to pay for transport for all three of children and it has cost me a fortune. The reason for this was due to me choosing a better education for my children.
Problems for children who live 'up dale' as Richmond School won't be there nearest school.
Does not deal adequately with cross Council border issues
Like many others in this area we have lived in Craven district our entire lives. Paid the council tax at the highest rates for the area, paid the extortionate house prices to live in this area mainly to keep my child in a North Yorkshire school now to be told that I have to pay extra to get my children who lives in North Yorkshire to a school in North Yorkshire! I object!
Free places on buses inside North Yorkshire vs £800 a year for those even slightly out of it is disproportionate
It's disgusting that children won't be able to get free transport to a school in the same county that you live in
The proposal hasn't been thought through thoroughly and in the area that we live the vast majority will be very strongly opposed to it being implemented. Whilst appreciating money needs to be saved in the current climate, this proposal, if approved, will create more problems than it would resolve and ultimately, avoidable, additional expense. We live in Yorkshire but are very close to the Lancashire and Cumbrian borders. If in future children from our local area will only receive transport assistance for their nearest Secondary school it is likely NYC will be paying to send these pupils to a different county, (Cumbria). A completely ridiculous scenario which would make no sense whatsoever when the difference in travelling mileages between an ideal school in North Yorkshire, the school in Cumbria and the students residing in our area, are virtually the same.
Think SEND proposals should remain as is ie after referral done as the new proposal duplicates the process causing extra resource cost
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Our school, community, staff, and pupils would be massively effected by this and it could mean the closure of the school. Many pupils who need a smaller and secure environment to work in will not be able to make that choice in the future and will suffer in consequence. Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.
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As a parent of a child approaching the need for post 16 education there needs to be travel provisions put in place as our nearest establishment for this are not within walking distance it's either a 20 mins bus ride if they provide the courses my child needs or 1 hour on the bus this will cost us approx £1000 per school year. Transport distance needs to be considered in terms of areas and safety of the children currently they walk 2 miles to school along a main poorly lit road in all weathers. Often soaked to the bone by the time they reach the school.
I live in (Redacted) and both (Redacted) go to Settle College. Under the new proposals they wouldn't have been eliglible for free transport to Settle College because QES in Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria is nearer. I am very concerned for the future of Settle College if this goes ahead and for the potential impact on other parents. The difference in distance from Ingleton to Settle or Ingleton to Kirkby Lonsdale is not actually much and would have virtually no impact on your transport costs because the bus that currently goes to Settle would still have to be paid for but to Kirkby Lonsdale instead. In addition QES is a much larger school than Settle College and probably doesn't have room for extra students. I chose Settle College partly because of its more caring smaller environment and Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area. I also have concerns for children in Settle if Settle College were to decline because of this, then you would need to provide more transport to get them to Skipton to the nearest Secondary School. I observe that your costs have probably gone up because of the large number of smaller taxis that are operating for small numbers of students and this is where you should look to change things.

I understand and, indeed, applaud the rationale for this new policy; looking for ways to save money is important. However, the specific circumstances of Selby High School and Brayton [and perhaps other geographically close schools], mean that this policy could have a serious adverse impact, without actually saving any money in this particular case. This is due to the fact that almost all the students who currently get free transport for Selby, would also require free transport for Brayton if that was their closest school. Therefore, the only impact would be making those students less likely to choose Selby High School. We know from our Open Evenings that many families have a difficult decision, as they see both Brayton and Selby as excellent schools. At the moment they often choose Selby. I do believe that if there was a financial sacrifice in making this choice, especially at the current time, that it would be a strong factor in school choice. It is impossible to judge the precise impact of this policy without having information about students currently attending Brayton whose closest school is Selby. However, for Selby, nearly half of the students who currently get free transport to Selby, live closer to Brayton. That is over a 100 students. Once again, I need to point out that almost all of these students would still require free transport if they chose Brayton, meaning a negligible saving (if any). While agreeing with the objective in principle, any policy needs to consider the specific case of having two schools that are so close together, and if necessary have a local policy agreement. This could be achieved by including a clause excluding schools that are, for example, less than one mile apart. Thank you.
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I fully believe in and support Settle College. ‘Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area’
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I understand that currently a huge 75% of students at Settle College rely on transport to school. Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers, potentially having a severe impact on the college's ability to continue delivering this offer. The proposed savings for NYCC would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the negative consequences for Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.

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The proposed changes are naive and ill-considered. We love in (Redacted). When we moved here our children were in (Redacted). Our nearest secondary school is Queen Elizabeth School Kirkby Lonsdale. However they did not have space for both our children. We therefore chose Settle College. Under your proposals we would now have to pay for our children to attend the only secondary school in the area that had space for our two boys. We have (Redacted) who are due to go to secondary school in a couple of years too, and given to the proposed policy, we might have to send them to Queen Elizabeth School, even though their (Redacted) go to Settle. The proposed policy is ill-considered and will penalise and make life harder for ordinary families like ourselves who have not had any realistic choice where to send our children to school. Our nearest school did not have space for (Redacted), only one, and, (Redacted), we could hardly send them to school in different directions. I really can't believe that the council is proposing this - is life not hard enough for working parents to these days with the cost of living crisis?
It is ridiculous that North Yorkshire county council would fund transport to a secondary school out of the county but not fund transport to a secondary school only 3 extra miles within the county, the provision of education that settle college provides the children of Ingleton and the proposed effected area is outstanding and it seems the children living in North Yorkshire are being denied the right to be educated within their county. A county that has different holiday periods which will effect siblings and therefore the income capacity and ability to work of the parents. As a council tax payer I expect my council tax to be used for the best interest of all the residents in North Yorkshire, however paying to transport our children to a school in another county to save absolutely nothing is of no benefit to anyone in North Yorkshire.

As a parent with children currently attending Settle College, I am writing to express my urgent concerns regarding the proposed change to North Yorkshire Council's home-to-school transport policy. The current policy, which provides funding for the transport of students living within the catchment area of Settle College, has been instrumental in ensuring access to education for our children. However, the proposed change to restrict funding only to students for whom Settle College is their nearest school will have significant implications for families like mine. Settle College is not just a place of education for our children; it is a supportive community where they receive a high-quality education alongside invaluable pastoral support. As a parent, I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact that Settle College has had on my children's academic progress and overall well-being. However, the proposed change threatens to disrupt this supportive environment and limit the opportunities available to our children. For families already facing financial challenges, the prospect of having to arrange and fund transportation to a different school could pose a significant burden, potentially depriving our children of the educational experience they deserve. Furthermore, the proposed decline in pupil numbers could have adverse effects on the resources and quality of education offered at Settle College, further impacting the well-being and academic success of all students. I urge you to reconsider this proposed change and to take into account the concerns of parents like myself who value the educational opportunities and supportive community provided by Settle College. Preserving access to Settle College for all eligible students, regardless of proximity, is essential for ensuring that every child has the chance to thrive and succeed. Thank you for considering my concerns, and I hope for a positive resolution that prioritizes the best interests of our children and our community.
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this proposal will significantly impact smaller secondary school's like Settle College which if numbers drop the varied curriculum which is now on offer won't be impacting all pupils attending the school

I think the proposed policy will mean that children whose parents cannot afford to pay for school transport will be very adversely affected by the change to only allowing free transport to the nearest " suitable" school. This is because it does not allow the parent to decide which is a suitable school for their child and surely the parent is the one who knows best what is suitable for their child. It unfairly gives an added advantage to the already advantaged children of well off parents. In the area where I live, Bentham, there are 2 senior schools in the catchment area one in Kirkby Lonsdale and one in Settle. Settle College is slightly further away but is the one that traditionaly most families have chosen to send their children to. Bentham is a very close knit community and many of the families have lived in the area for generations. Settle is a relatively small school in North Yorkshire where the staff get to know all the children individually QES is a large school in Cumbria not suitable for many of the Bentham children. It is possible that the policy may reduce the number of children who can attend Settle College so much that it would send the wonderful School into decline. QES would I think become oversubscibed. I therefore think Bentham school transport should be concidered as a special case and transport to both the schools should remain free. I think the added cost to keep the busing children the slightly longer distance to Settle would be negligable. It should also be concidered that the school bus is the the only bus from Bentham to Settle and it will need to be kept running for the children from Bentham still eligable to get free transport to the school. Please save this free service it is very important for the children in the Bentham Area and for the future of Settle College.
Not all schools can fairly accommodate send children and that means going away from the nearest suitable school for the benefit of the child and their needs. This restricts the ability of families to work if there is only one car in the home because it must be available for school runs. With transport both parents would be able to take employment. Something beneficial for all. Something that cannot happen if only one parent can drive and undertake the car journey. Surely it would make economic sense to be able to offer transport in these circumstances as it would allow families with children with SEND who are better placed in a particular setting a better opportunity for education and also a better home life as both parents can work and contribute to society and the economy.
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The proposed changes to the travel policy will have a devastating impact on the choices for parents at Ingleton Primary School. The current challenges around the cost of living will give them no choice but to send their child to an out of authority school. Settle College provides an amazing offer as a school with a wide diverse curriculum88 and strong pastoral care. The changes to the travel policy will result in a drop of student numbers having a devastating impact long term on the quality of education and existence of the school with a negative impact on the town of Settle itself. Reconsider this proposal and maintain choice for our parents. Settle is a school to be proud of.
I have two children who will need transport to secondary school in the future. Currently we are a 3 minute walk from their primary school so transport is not an issue. A change in the policy would mean that our children might have to attend a school that would not be the best fit for them socially and academically. There is no way with the current cost of living crisis that we could afford to transport our children ourselves due to our jobs (we both work shifts, including nights) and we couldn't afford a transportation service for them. We urge the council to please reconcider this policy for the sake of all the children living in rural villages who dont have a massive choice of schools and the ability to get to school easily.
The planned changes to school transport only being free to the nearest school will be extremely detrimental not only to children & families but also to schools within North Yorkshire. I live and pay my council tax to North Yorkshire I expect to be able to send my child to a school in North Yorkshire, not be forced to send them out of the area due to the cost of school transport.

This may need investigating further as from what I can understand using simple common sense it will cost NYCC more over the next 4 years. EXAMPLE A local family in Burton in lonsdale, have just secured a place for their 3rd child, of 4, at QES. They however are struggling for the transport. This is because the school busses for that route are currently at their maximum capacity and will continue to be into the next school year. In turn this is going to mean a further type of transport is needed, when the current year 5' s then are to attend a seccond school bus for that route will then be required. In the meantime the current capacity for settle college transport is also at full capacity, with some children at either school, having to take the service bus. This has to be paid for by NYCC. This means that the next 5 years it is likely, with only a few children leaving school each year from each bus route. A bus will still need to be provided to settle college at least full size for the next 3 years before reducing to a smaller after that yet another bus/ mini bus will need to be provided on each route to QES as the service bus can not guarantee places for the high ammount of student's. service busses in the are that far apart in timing if a child misses the first service bus they will then not arrive at school until around 11am. So this is going to mean at least another 3 vehicles need to be provided by the council yet only reducing the size of other vehicles for a number of years. This will cost more for transport until the service is no longer needed to be is provided for the current year 6 students when they finish school at settle. I hope you find this interesting to look into and can see that financially it is not viable to keep children from attending their preferred school in the county they live.
I live in an area where only settle college currently offers free transport from home to school(currently i'd have to take my children 6/7 miles to ingleton to access free bus for Qes)With the change Qes would have to offer free transport from home to school for all the children in our area, which would be up to eight miles out of the area they currently transport from. I think it makes sense to look after your own county school as it would have a negative effect on settle college if this proposal was to go ahead. I understand we should only be offered free transportation to on school. Why are we not looking after our own county school?
If the amendment to 'nearest school' criterion is adopted, the schools in question for many families in our area would result in placing QES under significant additional pressure when it is already over-subscribed due to a large catchment area, and Settle College, a good secondary establishment, would be likely to lose applications through no fault of their own. We would be sad to see this happen and it would make our own choice very difficult as we are a low-income family and would struggle to pay for transport, but would want our son to attend Settle College. Due to its much smaller size it will suit him far better as he has ASD and finds large groups and busy places overwhelming. Thank you for taking our thoughts into consideration.
It is concerning that the number of students able to attend Settle College will be impacted significantly and if as a result of falling numbers there is no local secondary school new families will not move here and those children living here face a long bus journey or their parents will have to meet the cost of private education at Giggleswick School.
Providing transport to the nearest suitable school, regardless of county is going to have a significant negative impact on pupils and of schools in the local area. Why are NY providing transport to a Cumbria school and not a local NY school. This is going to have a detrimental impact on Settle College, one of your own schools!

I think that children should go to the nearest school, what's the point of them spending hours of their own time per week travelling further to school than necessary, all the extra haulage of children to far away schools impacts on the environment, road conditions, traffic pollution and our childrens health. The sooner this is implemented the better.
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There needs to be clearer guidance on what would happen for schools which are very close to each other. If a student is choosing between two good schools and there's only a few hundred metres between them, it means that travel eligibility would suddenly become a much bigger factor than before. Especially as if someone needed free transport to school 1, then they would also need it for school 2, therefore no money overall would be saved while decreasing the amount of students who would be able to go to school 1. I believe there needs to be a local policy agreement put in place for situations such as these, and more detailed data needs to be supplied about the ramifications of this policy on such schools.
I am seriously concerned about the financial impact such a strategy will have on Settle College: there will undoubtedly be a fall in pupils, as many families would not be able to fund school travel and so would be forced to enrol their children in schools which are unlikely to be as excellent as Settle College: fewer pupils = less money to fund teaching and pastoral budgets, so ultimately all the pupils will be impacted negatively.
We run a farm and work incredibly long hours, we do not have flexibility or finances to transport our children to secondary school. There is also no bus service at all where we live so if your proposals were to go ahead unless we paid we would be solely responsible for transport to a school generations of our family have attended transported from our addresses. We live on the side of a dangerous road (Redacted), there is no way it would be safe to walk along to get to a bus stop even if such service existed. The fact that our children would have to pay to be transported to upper Wharfedale a school within catchment is an utter disgrace. The council should be ashamed of themselves that they are even considering this as yet again children and families in rural areas are being negatively impacted by council cuts.
Another massive rise in council tax and your wanting to remove more services, absolute joke. We are struggling to make ends meet while your mismanagement of budgets just puts more pressure on us.

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I think the consultation period needs to be extended to allow NYC to ensure that their facts and figures are correct. Based on information provided to both my own and neighbouring schools, we believe the information on potential impact on our school(s) to be incorrect. We believe this because we can make accurate projections based on the families that we work with day in, day out. The potential changes have the potential to reduce our NOR - the catchment area essentially becomes irrelevant. The potential changes would remove the ability for some parents to make a choice of secondary school for their child based on need, instead determined by potential cost. The potential changes could signal the end of our only secondary school in North Craven, this would have wide ranging consequences. As a Headteacher I am aware of the transport arrangements for our children, past and present. The transport arrangements are costing significant amounts on unnecessary money. I believe this should be looked at first to see what savings could be made.
Not suitable

This feels like blackmail, my high achieving child be will in secondary school within 18 months & the whole new system stinks. Why should I need to apply to an appalling school out of my district & hope it's over subscribed to receive a free bus pass for my child to my much preferred school which would be far more suitable ?! We have several school in different directions in different authorities which currently have different forms of school transport. There is no direct bus route to some of these school, therefore if no school bus if provided parents will drive their children to school - which I am sure is against everything that this council stands for, meaning many more cars making trips & clogging the roads & atmosphere with fumes! Unfortunately Eggborough doesn't have a high school within a few miles & there is no path out of the village in any direction, we are stuck without transport of any kind. Local bus services are inadequate so a car is essential & the council seemingly encouraging this in a revamped school transport policy. This change is also a disappointment because it prevents emerging independence of school children which a school bus brings, a certified driver for safety but managing their own time & movement into school. Surely a school bus is a human right, especially since we live in a large & growing village, putting children to a disadvantage in this economic climate & limiting school choices is an utter disgrace & I no longer feel proud to be living within the district of North Yorkshire!
If these changes are carried out then better public transport needs to be in place, buses in Embsay don't start until 9am which doesn't cover schools or work times. This is a vital necessity. Walking is possible but also dangerous along the 60mph road!
Should charge for all school transport within N Yorkshire but also provide (on a charging basis) for children who live outside N Yorkshire but attend a school in N Yorkshire. It is scandalous how poor and unfit for purpose some of the private companies who provide such services are.
If the proposal for the 'local' school transport goes ahead, it is not safe for my grandchildren to travel over Tailbrigg to Kirkby Stephen and they will miss many days of school. We live at (Redacted) When children started being encouraged to leave their Primary schools to attend a Secondary School in the 60s, not long before I was due to start, parents were promised that transport would be provided to Richmond Schools. The catchment went down the dale due to a common sense route. This common sense approach should not be changed and transport to Richmond Scool, should be maintained. The route to Wensleydale School includes a high route or lower priority gritting routes. Travelling 25 miles to Richmond is much safer than travelling 15 miles to Kirkby Stephen. Please can an exemption be made for this area and the current catchment area remain.
Our nearest secondary school would be in a different local authority. This would mean that our children would not go to the same secondary school as their peers. This would have a negative effect on friendships formed over their time at primary school. Furthermore the road over to our nearest secondary school is not gritted in bad weather condition and this would mean our children would miss many days of school as it wouldnt be safe to travel. I strongly believe that free transport should be in place for children to their catchment school.
I feel the routes need looking at for the child's nearest school because our nearest school is in a different county and would not be fit to travel in winter months!. The child should be able to go with there peers when they move to secondary school rather than unsettling them and having to make new friends in a school where they will probably know nobody.

I am concerned about the winter weather and road conditions associated with higher level routes to secondary schools beyond Swaledale, and the potential impact on school attendance. I would like to highlight the benefits of attending the same secondary school as peers, especially during transition from KS2 to KS3 I also highlight the community cohesion (both for families and friends) through attending the same school Finally the cost implications incurred by attending a catchment school need to be taken into consideration.
The travel to school policy is ridiculous, all these children will have to go to schools outside of our county taking our choice away. If we loose settle college it would have such a negative effect on our community. There's 100's of children in settle and surrounding that need our school and I for one would not be putting my children on a bus to send them to Skipton if that ended up being our nearest school.
Of course, as a governor I am very conscious of the need for the local authority to take finances into account. However, the proposed changes fail to make sensible and reasonable consideration for all schools in the selby area….and particularly my school. In the selby area we have three secondary schools very close to each other and parents/carers make decisions on the appropriate school based on what each school offers. Certainly, that does differ - SHS offers a broader curriculum than either of the other schools. The seemingly arbitrary measurement of distance (they can be so negligible as to fail to make any worthwhile savings for the authority) could have a detrimental effect on parental choice and, pertinently, on numbers of students attending SHS, with the attendant loss of revenue for a school that strives to offer an excellent and broad curriculum.
This survey is prohibitive it is directed at parents only. Impacts go beyond that family friends who may be involved in a variety of ways supporting parents. To limit responses is controlling by NYC. This is a ridiculous proposal. Upper Swaledale is unique your blanket approach is totally unsuitable here. All three routes to the new schools are unsafe and dangerous during Winter, the diversions on gritted road are excessive and will impact on children's Education. Why are you changing something that has worked well for 70 years. I myself travelled to school in Richmond in the sixties. Travel to Kirkby Stephen is unthinkable in Winter. Unless you are prepared to make significant investment in the road to Kirkby Stephen and for Cumbria to do the same without it you are placing children in danger. All 3 routes are over high ungritted routes. Driving the roads in Summer is not straight forward. I implore you to make Upper Swaledale an exception.
The policy change could see the LA providing transport to academy schools out of county. This would have a negative effect, ie falling rolls on nearby LA maintained schools. The LA would be providing resources, school transport, to support an academy in a neighbouring county at the expense of it's own Maintained school. My concern, as a parent, is the strategic impact this will have on my local school. Has any consideration been given to the viability of 6th form provision if you provide transport to move children out of county? Surely NYC's first priority should be maintaining your own maintained schools?
I think that group transport rather than individual journeys should be considered to save costs. I do not think it is appropriate that children can attend schools that are not their closest and have their tansport funded. This is a choice factor and if the closest schools are rejected by their care givers, they alone should be responsible for providing transport.

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Our current catchment school is not our closest school. This change in policy makes no sense why would you have catchment schools and then only pay to closest which is not catchment.
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Where on earth are you going to find all the additional transport providers. We struggle atm
Our parents have enough to pay for now and now this. So unfair
Laying on transport from a single location to multiple suitable schools instead of the nearest suitable school is costly due to the need of providing multiple buses or taxis, and so inefficient. If parents want to send their child to a school that is not their nearest then it is fine that they should bare the cost of doing so.
My daughter is in effect being forced away from her catchment school, where she has transition days, links and primary school has a relationship, to a school, closer by a couple of miles that we have never even heard of, no relationship to her primary, rated worse by OFSTED and not even in North Yorkshire, to who i pay a massive amount of council tax. There is no public transport from our village of Whitley so no other way of getting her to the school of our choice. The school budgets have been decimated as much as council's so cant expect them to pick up the slack. Dreadful decision caused by the cuts forced by the government that my council tax is already paying for as it goes up up up and the services provided go down down to nothing. Now our children have to pay too.

Clearly savings must be made if this is the 3rd largest cost area. I don't think the policy is hard enough, the SEND proportion of the budget is out of control mushrooming from £6m to £20m, this is way in excess of inflation. I have experience of pupils at Ryedale school getting £800 discretionary awards for travel despite them living well outside this school's catchment area. This is not a specialist SEND school & the pupils have no physical difficulties in using the chargeable private school buses which they used happily and without issue for more than 2 years, before the profligate council gave them an award. This basically enabled the child concerned to get a private chauffer service from door to school, primarily so that the parent concerned didn't have to leave her house and transport her own child to the local bus stop, which is a mere 5 minutes away. This award has been misused as a privilege rather than a necessity, due to the council's far too all-encompassing SEND policy. The child is dyslexic, and has been absolutely capable of getting on a school bus if her mother can be bothered to drop her off at the normal bus stop. For context I pay £700+ PA Per child for a bus to get to Ryedale as we live outside catchment - I feel others who choose to send their child to a non catchment area school should make their own travel arrangements unless they attend a specialist school or have clear physical barriers to travel (wheelchair users, blind etc).
If this proposal goes ahead I will have one child forced to attend a school they may not choose to as we wouldn't be able to afford transport to a North Yorkshire school even though we reside in North Yorkshire. My eldest attends settle college so I would then have a split of secondary schools to content with too. This will have a huge negative impact on settle college with children from Bentham primary school and our children will not have any say in where they would like to continue their education
The proposal has not taken into account specific situations that can affect certain schools. This is true for Settle College. The fundamentals in this one approach will question the viability of having a secondary school in north Craven. Reducing the numbers will have a significant impact on the students, parents and teachers and other stakeholders, short term, medium term and long term. The negatives have not been clearly communicated to all people, facts and figures are incorrect and the process has not actually effectively asked the students what they want therefore this process and proposal is misleading. Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.'
We wouldn't be able to choose a North Yorkshire school even though we reside in North Yorkshire our nearest school would be Cumbria.
There certainly is. Schools in North Yorkshire have been systematically shut down or, the latest, mothballed to such a great extent that the Council bear sole responsibility for transporting children so affected to far away educational establishments. The Council chose short term savings for the lesser cost of transport and are now reaping what they have sown. Parents, I believe, are required by the Council to select their preferred school, not just one but six with a requirement of at least three and a preference of five, the so called "Parental preferred choice!" It is in my view that parents have lost all confidence in the Councils educational policies and are seeking out their own genuine preferred choice. It is quite reasonable for parents to expect the Council to provide school transport to and from all of the 6 parental preferred choice educational establishments listed on the Councils form.

I already pay for a second bus pass for my older daughter from her fathers house if the proposal goes ahead i shall be paying for my younger daughters transport also from both houses, if i wish to avoid costs i would have to send her to our nearest school which is in lancashire and would have children in different schools and different holidays for easter and october half term, as a single working mum childcare would be extremely difficult. I live on north yorkshire, i pay my council tax to north yorkshire i should be able to get free transport for a north yorkshire school.
Why should my child have to attend a secondary school in Cumbria to be entitled to funding for the transport. Ludicrous. We reside in North Yorkshire and would prefer to send our children to a secondary school in North Yorkshire, not Cumbria.
The closest school as the crow flies is not our catchment school and, the shortest route to this school is high level narrow and in winter weather the roads are not treated. Having driven the route suitable for bus transport, to both the closest and catchment schools, the catchment school is actually 0.2 miles closer. There is also the potential impact on school attendance in bad weather. Richmond School has always been the secondary school for children in Swaledale, children who have established relationships with their peers over 8 years which would be damaged, especially during transition from KS2 to KS3. To maintain these relationships by sending children to the catchment school in Richmond would incur significant costs due to the distance and limited public transport.
Existing friendship groups will be lost. It's daunting enough moving to High school. Seems ridiculous that the council to whom we pay council tax can't/won't provide school transport and my grandson would travel out of area. What about freedom of choice for Ofsted ratings?
Not having the options for sending our children to the best available school.In life its is essential to have an option in all aspects, to take away school travel deprives young friendships from flurishing
Having lived in swaledale and attended Richmond school I was (Redacted) so I understand how important school transport is to families in this area, I also have first hand traumatic experiences of getting stuck on tailbridge hill in the snow. The nearest school does not mean it's the most suitable school, it is not suitable to expect children to travel in an unsafe manner. Sending them up or down tailbridge 547 metres high during bad weather is totally irresponsible and unsafe, which will mean if they then can't get to school they will be prevented from accessing the education they are entitled and expected to attend. Parents will be forced to keep their children out of school. The new home to school travel policy has to be amended, the education and ultimately the safety of our children has to be of paramount importance to us all.
The Home to School Travel Policy should retain eligibility based on catchment areas. If a family lives in North Yorkshire and pays council tax to NYC, they should be eligible for free transport to a North Yorkshire catchment school. In all of this, there is too much emphasis on parental choice. Many have to accept that their children cannot attend a denominational or Grammar school simply because there isn't one nearby. Issues relating to traffic, parking issues, under and oversubscription and resulting transport costs would be better addressed if the emphasis was on children attending their catchment school. (NYC should not be paying transport costs year after year for children who transfer in year and can't access places in their catchment school because these are taken by children from out of catchment.) A national review of School admission policies could therefore have a positive impact on the drive to reduce transport costs. With reference to the 4. Special Educational Needs, and/or Disability, the paragraph 'To qualify for eligibility' should be above the paragraph ' A child is eligible for free travel if:...' This would make it clearer that individual assessment of the child would be necessary unless the child lives within the statutory walking distance and they can not reasonably be expected to walk there.

Changing the criterion to nearest school will dramatically alter the lives of families living in Bentham and Ingleton, most of whom have strong links to Settle having attended the school themselves. Not to mention the detrimental impact it will have on the intake of children at Settle College.
I am concerned that Settle College will be severely impacted by the proposed changes. Currently many of its students travel longer distances than average as we are in a sparsely populated area. I would like to note that the changes will not affect my family but we believe that Settle College is a great school that provides a good education for children from a wide variety of backgrounds, which becomes even more important once it is noted that 50% of the "nearest school" for many will be a selective single sex grammar school. Settle archives good results for its students regardless of testing at age 10/11 and deserves to be given every opportunity to continue this excellent work.
The difference between walking distance, as the crow flies or a bus transport route can be the defining factor as to which school is deemed as the nearest - especially where schools are say less than a mile apart. This is arbitrary decision making with little benefit and should not apply to schools in close proximity to each other. In respect however the decision making is sensible where schools are say 10 miles apart and a child attends a school 8 miles away and obtains free transport when they could attend a school 2 miles away with no free transport provided. Common sense needs to be applied where schools are close together.
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The children of Bentham once they reach high school age will no longer be able to attend a school in North Yorkshire where they live. They will have no choice due to NYC transport policy have to attend a school in Cumbria. Council tax is paid to North Yorkshire so I presume it would be fairer for NYC find a school in Cumbria. This also takes away all choice for parents and children unless they can afford to pay for transport. I can not think in anyway this policy puts a child first in anyway. It puts the transport policy first and even now we have become a devolved council ie no more Craven district council the services are now poorer than ever. There is a lot of good work that can be done however there is little evidence. Please help the children of Bentham.
I completely disagree with the home to school travel policy now becoming the nearest school without taking in to account the type of road that is to be traveled on. Whether it is a priority 1 gritting route should be taken in to account.

We, Melbecks Parish Council, would like to object to the proposed changes to home school transport policy in North Yorkshire. The proposed changes would have a significant effect on the lives of local school pupils and the whole community. Swaledale is a long dale, running over several miles. The current transport policy means that for their secondary education, children travel down the dale towards Richmond School, which although not the nearest school, this is the catchment school and the most practical route to travel, as it is low-lying and well-used and gritted throughout any inclement weather. The changes to the policy would mean that children from upper Swaledale would travel to Kirkby Stephen, those in Arkengarthdale to Barnard Castle, and those towards Reeth would travel to Leyburn for their secondary education. All three of these routes are impractical as they are often impassable in bad weather. Increased winter maintenance would be needed, an additional cost for North Yorkshire Council. This plan is not a sensible solution, as it could put children at risk in terms of road safety, by sending them to school over high roads in the winter and it could also have a detrimental effect on their attendance. It was also separate the children of the local community by sending them to three different secondary schools. Melbecks Parish Council strongly oppose the proposed changes, and request that the option to continue with existing arrangements is given serious consideration. Melbecks Parish Council melbecksparishclerk@gmail.com
The nearest school is not always the most practical for where we live in Reeth. No one has taken into account the roads in bad weather conditions and also the reliability of transport providers. If we have to pay for our children to attend the same secondary school it will affect our living income wage and out quality of life
If the policy is put in place all children of secondary school age from Hawes will be sent to Settlebeck School in Sedbergh which is in Cumbria. My understanding is that both Settlebeck and Wensleydale school in Leyburn are both full as far as the 2024 intake is concerned. A large number of new houses are being built in Sedbergh. What happens to Hawes children in future if both Schools are full. Where does the County council stand legally when they remove any parental choice and send a whole towns children to another county for schooling. Has this policy been discussed with the Education department? The money for those children will leave North Yorkshire.
I am really concerned that the changes to this policy are going to close Settle College in a few years time when the numbers drop due to their not being free transport from the surrounding local areas. The change to the policy meaning catchment is removed means less children from surrounding villages can get free transport and this will have a huge knock on effect to Settle College's numbers. We live in Settle and I don't want to have to send my child to Skipton to a secondary school if Settle closes.

Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. I have a son in Year 7 who is given fantastic support at Settle and I feel sure that this level of care and tailored provision would not have been provided by QES. I have 2 daughters and I would like them to attend Settle in the future, however I would not be able to pay the cost of transport and I think this would be the case for most families. Parents would be swayed to make a choice based on money rather than what is right for the children. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. Where we live the two schools available are QES and Settle. We live almost directly in between the two schools, so the cost of transport would be the same to either, so it seems ludicrous that pupils should be denied the opportunity to attend the school which is actually in their own county and has a reputation of caring and working closely with feeder primary schools to ensure the best transition and the best continuation through their school journey There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area. I think it is appalling that NYC are not supporting their own school! Also there seems to be some disagreement about how the distance is calculated to determine which is the closest school. At the consultation meeting your representative seemed to be saying that it is the school in closest walking distance - which is also ridiculous because the cost of transport is obviously dependent on the length of the journey by road and I believe that by road the journey from Bentham to Settle is shorter than Bentham to QES. A representative from a local coach company who has provided transport to both schools from Ingleton said that the cost would be exactly the same to either school. I understand that as a rural community close to the county line we are in a different situation, but I do not see why there needs to be a blanket policy. Reasonable adjustments must be made to ensure that people have equal opportunities - having a different policy for this area with its unique circumstances would be a reasonable adjustment and not doing so would be denying people the right to have a choice of schools based what is right for their child. This is a SCHOOL transport policy yet there is no mention of the rights of children to THRIVE and achieve their POTENTIAL in education. The ability to thrive and achieve potential is directly linked to whether the school is the right placement for the child. My understanding is that attendance is high on the agenda at the moment. Removing the opportunity to choose a school that is right for the individual child will have a negative impact on attendance and will result in more cases of EBSA. Also, it seems to me that QES will not actually have the capacity to take the extra pupils - which will result in some pupils not getting their first choice of school and then they will end up at Settle - but it will then just be a matter of luck - some will choose QES only because of the provision of free transport and some will get a place a QES. Some will choose QES because they feel it is the most suitable school for them and some will not get a place, because the places will be taken by the pupils who actually would have gone to Settle if they could have chosen. The admissions process will not distinguish between the 2 groups so inevitably some pupils who preferred Settle will end up at QES and vice versa - which is again utterly ridiculous!
This policy will have disastrous effects on all the children within the North Yorkshire area, both primary and secondary and will be directly responsible for the negative effect of the children's educational needs and general health and mental well being throughout their lives. Stop now and rethink before you destroy the future lives of our children.

I object to the proposal to withdraw transport eligibility to the catchment school. The consultation does not provide enough detail for parents to understand the full impact of this proposal. There is currently no way for parents to check where their “nearest suitable school” is. The consultation could at least have provided a list of communities and schools potentially affected. Some younger children will become no longer eligible for transport to the same school as their older siblings or the children of their neighbours. Are councillors ready for years of complaints and appeals about this? The savings from this proposal have not been clearly demonstrated and could cost the council more. No account seems to have been taken of the cost of commissioning new services to transport children to their nearest school, rather than to the catchment school. Transport costs are “sticky” - having one or two fewer pupils eligible for a single route does not necessarily mean that you can run a smaller bus or taxi. The cost of providing the transport is not always reduced, because transport is still needed for the remaining children who are still eligible. The proposal will encourage parents to use their own cars (where they have the time and money to do so) to take children to school. This will result in more congestion, parking problems and safety issues around school sites. There is no proper assessment of this in the current proposals. The council has declared a climate emergency and this proposal runs contrary to this by encouraging actions that will generate more vehicle emissions. It will also mean more expense for parents during a cost of living crisis. There will be a mismatch between school admissions, giving priority to children living within the catchment, and school transport, only providing transport to the nearest school. If a parent chooses the nearest school on the grounds of transport, they will not necessarily get a place if it is not the catchment school and the school is oversubscribed. But if a parent chooses the catchment school, they will not necessarily get transport if it is not their nearest school. Parents will not know at the time that they apply where they will get transport to, because they won't know whether or not the nearest school will be oversubscribed. In many parts around the borders of North Yorkshire, the nearest school will be outside the county. If children attend these schools, schools in North Yorkshire will lose out on pupils and funding, which could lead to the closure of some North Yorkshire schools. It will also mean that some North Yorkshire council tax payers will be unable to get home to school transport to a North Yorkshire school. The nearest school may be a church school which the parents do not subscribe to. Options to reduce transport costs by recommissioning services, or using council-owned vehicles rather than private contractors, or looking at safer walking options, have not been considered. In the first years of a new council there are many other areas where savings could be made. Why not end the subsidy of £2.7M each year that the Council makes to the Harrogate Convention Centre?
In support of our main feeder Secondary school, we would like to support Settle College who we feel would be significantly affected by this proposal in a negative way. We have concerns about the potential impact on the future education choices of our children and parents/carers and how education in North Craven could be negatively impacted in both the short and long term by this proposal. We feel that based on the information we have, the calculations completed by the local authority are inaccurate and that the impact on our main feeder school would be very different to what is projected. We would strongly ask that the local authority re-look at this.
I pay for my son to travel 13 minutes on a bus. The price is extortionate. We have one school in Northalleton, there should be at least a choice for another school within a certain radius with free transport. It is not just people on benefits who struggle financially, parents with mortgages are struggling right now. The system is so unfair. My mortgage alone is £1800 right now. The council should offer free transport.

Investment in Education is an investment in the future. NYC has made significant savings by removing democracy from local councils (such as Ryedale) and in creating a central monolith. Time now for NYC to invest that money back into Education and ensuring our children have paid for transport to access education.
The removal of 50% share means that families who have tried to split amicably will be penalised. This has happened in my school
Important to save money as much as possible. Fully agree with removing as much eligibility for transport paid for by the taxpayer as possible. It is important not to subsidise peoples choice of where they choose to live with free transport.
An element of choice, particularly for ongoing secondary education, can be a significant factor in the progress and ultimate success of pupils who may feel less suited to and not happy at their nearest school. For schools with a wide catchment area within a rural environment the impact of strict application of the new policy is a cause for concern and I would like to see a little more flexibility. My own children who did not require transport, thrived alongside other young people who would now have fallen only a few miles outside the proposed limits. Children would still have to be transported to their nearest school with distances that would result in very little reduction in cost. Strict application of the proposed Home to School Travel Policy could potentially lead to a reduction in pupil numbers in some schools with the consequent reduction in what those schools can offer. Whilst I appreciate that savings have to be made, any policy on transport should take into account the impact of the changes on the quality of the educational offering in North Yorkshire.
We live in (Redacted) and the nearest secondary school to where we live is skipton which my child attends. The removal of the bus service which I was happy to pay for with out any public replacement is ridiculous. It is too far to expect my daughter to walk on her own especially in the darker winter nights - the main road is 60 miles and hour in to (Redacted) and not appropriate to walk on her own. Secondly there are circ 20-25 parents from the village that have to individually use their cars to collect their children from the secondary schools in skipton creating more traffic and congestion and is not promoting green travel. My suggestion would be to either provide a public route before 9am from the village Into skipton so the children can pay daily to get to school there is a public bus to get home at 4:25 which is suitable to use. Or provide bus service that all children can pay to use - I could easily get 20 students that would sign up for this but have not applied in the past as it was always pot luck if you could use the bus.
I think those that need the transport and can pay for it should. I think that those who need the transport and can't pay for it those are the people the council need to help. There should be school buses provided and that families are charged to use the service. I think SEND and medical conditions have a real impact on children and families. It is very very difficult for all. Purely financial decisions can't be made. It needs to be a more holistic view for the child and for what is best for them long term. The right educational setting has to have an impact and the transport requirements have to be a consideration but in the round. I think there should be a form of point system to see if there can be a contribution on the costs.
The use of taxis is a prohibative cost. Whilst some children with significant needs need this, many could be on a school bus. If needed have a second staff member on board - far cheaper then lots of taxis Also please reintroduce the ability for parents to pay for an empty seat on a school bus - it helps council and individual families
No

Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.'
As the meeting at Ingleton may well have indicated, the feelings about this are very strong in the area. I hope you will take note of the following, especially after Richard Flinton has given an interesting insight to the future of schools and the Craven community. I will mention this further anon - please read on. It is essential that transport remains in place for reception pupils, regardless of age of child. However, I was bitterly disappointed to hear that the reason for this is the ease for the transport department to organise, rather than it benefiting the communities, schools and, above all, the children. This highlights that parts of the current policy can remain in place, but only if it benefits the council workers and makes their lives easier, not the families they are supposed to be representing and serving. This is the sound bite I shall be sending to the press and every councillor who will be voting. It's a dangerous game to ignore the needs of the community for the ease of a public department and I would be very careful in allowing that to come out to the press. I'm sure you've had a fair few responses explaining why the removal of catchment school will impact the Craven area so badly and I would like to hope that you've come to the conclusion that it isn't right for this area. Richard Flinton has emailed to state that the council hopes to "realise a financial benefit over time through this proposed change" and it is very sad that he expects this as I shall explain - and I would like it to be raised with the executive members when reviewing the feedback. As your own transport contractors have already explained, there is no saving in transport costs by forcing pupils to go to QES, rather than Settle College. It costs exactly the same. However, by forcing (I know Richard Flinton has done his bit to toe the party line and say parents still have the choice, but they don't - they can only go where they can get transport, so it's a pointless pretending otherwise) people in Bentham, Ingleton, Burton, Clapham, etc to choose QES, they will, without doubt force Settle College to close. It will be a painful, long, drawn-out process that will hurt everyone involved, but it will close. Perhaps then, the council will see a saving, but not in transport. It will cost significantly more to bus children to QES, Lancaster and Skipton. Not only that, the pupils will have to endure over an hour on the bus each way. So, the net result for this amendment would be a school closure and hundreds of children under North Yorkshire Council's care that are facing two hour commutes and under the care of the bus driver for this length of time. Perhaps Settle College closing is the saving that Richard Flinton is referring to, but to forcibly close a successful school in the heart of a large, rural community would make re-election very difficult for any council member who votes for it. On the plus side, there is a simple solution. Whilst there can only be one policy, as your transport staff have already said, there are times when you have to do things on a case-by-case. Surely, your policy needs to state that the decision to choose between catchment or nearest school needs to be made on a local level. Craven is very different from Harrogate, York or even Skipton. Therefore, how can a policy for an urban centre work for a rural site? Surely, a simple line saying it requires a case-by-case judgement for schools would remove any anguish and still stand to make savings, rather than by closing important schools. As a way of highlighting the ridiculous nature of the proposal, imagine this: child A wants to go to QES and applies. Child B wants to go to Settle but can't get transport because they are closer to QES so has to apply to QES. Child B gets a place due to QES' admission policy, but Child A doesn't get in. Child A goes to a school they don't want to, child B goes to a school they don't want to, and it saves NYC nothing. Don't do it!!

1. There seems to be an assumption that parents who work would be able to organise other arrangements should their child need to be accompanied to school (in the instance of other children of the same age being able to walk alone, ie child 1 has special.educational needs). Where parents (single or both) work to keep a house for their family, not all employers give freedom to work around school transport commitments. DLA transport allowance would certainly not cover other provision. I know this may be rare but in choice of paying rent keeping your child safe when attending school, you can see how that makes for a challenging decision. The parents wanting to fulfil their responsibilities for educating their child and to keep them safe and housed. 2. In year changes of school are not necessarily outlined fully. Where a parent (single) chose another school further away because of work commitments (I realise the new policy says it does not recognise work commitments as their issue) so they could drop off a child with special educational needs, however they then need to change in school to their nearest but cannot accompany their child to walk safely. (Single parent, job no allowance for circumstance) Would they then apply for the sen assessment in year? Would this be a case for extenuating circustances? 3. Overall the new document is much clearer, seems much more credible, more easy to see your own circumstances and how they fit within it. 4. Special educational needs being recognised without travel being outlined in and ehcp or need for an ehcp is wonderful, especially since ehcps are even harder to get even for those with obvious need. It gives those of us with sen kids hope we will be heard and helped. 5. It could still be clearer that travel accomodations all depend on the circumstances in the initial entry year, regardless of which year they are trying for transport help. I think where the example talks about moving to a nearest oversubscribed school from a further away school and whether the child would have initially received a place could be clearer or refferred to in more examples. I think especially of where it says the "last child given entry " whether the applying child would have received their place or not had they applied, is this in the entry year? Or the last child taken in to the school at all? as this could be an in year enrollment for all sorts of reasons and be coming from further because of expulsion or area move. Even if the school was oversubscribed in the initial year, beyond their PAN, they may have accepted beyond that number, which child is the last? The PAN max child or the last child beyond PAN numbers?
I personally think the school transport is great as it , I think if they become difficult for children to travel to school it will cause a greater issue of traffic in small areas. Schools are already over run especially small village primary schools and Bedale high schools where there is so many cars collecting students it's not helpful to local residents or the environment but some people may not have the option other then to start dropping there children off.
Absolutely ridiculous proposal as in our case North Yorkshire will be paying for all the children in our part of the county to go to a Cumbrian school loosing Yorkshire students .And the local Yorkshire school loosing the funding that goes with them
I strongly disagree that transport for the catchment school will be removed and will potentially become payable. I live in a village that the catchment school is not the nearest school and currently there is nil transport for the nearest school, so as a parent I will be penalized financially for selecting the catchment school. I feel in this situation the policy should remain the same. There are many struggling family's financially with the current state of affairs. I am a single parent with a child in secondary school and one due to start next year. I work as a professional in the NHS on average wage and I am not eligible for benifits but this would have a huge negative impact of the quality of life to my children and I, as travel cost would be a finical burden I cannot afford. I am disgusted it has been proposed to remove travel to the catchment school. I seriously hope this is re considered.

Its ok taking in a 2 mile to the nearest school however there has been no thought process to whether there are footpaths. I pay for my children to get a private bus to school due to the fact there are no footpaths on a large section of their "walk" to school and on a 60 mile per hour road I'm not letting them walk down that as it wouod be irresponsible however this is at an expendital cost to myself when I am already bankrupt and with no chance of been able to drive them myself. Its whether them 2 miles can be walked that needs looking at!
Start helping working parents. Just because we don't receive benefits does not mean we don't struggle. My son attends Thirsk school. We could do with help with travel.
My concern at present is the inability of council staff (whom I have been in conversations with) to fully understand the needs of families of children with Send and the impact on not only those families if travel arrangements are not in place but the impact it has on the wider community.
If we choose to send our children to the second nearest school, who have more places available than children in their catchment area then I would like to see the cost of school transport reduced by the amount it would of cost the council to give them free transport. I totally accept our choice should not be completely free of charge but because of where we live being so far from the second nearest option we have to use a private ' not for profit' company and it is at a significant monthly cost. I feel strongly that the council should subsidise a small portion given that the second nearest school is not over subscribed. Our nearest school is subscribed by a town that is the same distance away from us as we are to the second nearest school and their students are offered transportation at a reduced rate. Why should we be penalised for using a private company that services children from further afield when it is a not for profit organisation. This lady set this up because her son had no way to get to this school either several years ago. They now have 3x 16 seater minibuses, demand is high and it is over subscribed. Safeguarding is a high priority and we are working parents. Each family travelling there are back each day would also have an impact on the roads and climate change. Which another aspect of the policy to be considered.
currently travel passes for children not eligible for free travel, but who wish to use these services are only available for whole days. consider making this more flexible to allow for set journeys per week, obviously where availability allows. but if the service is already running, this would ensure a better return on potentially 'empty' seats.
Parental contribution to the cost of travel needs to be introduced. I don't believe this would be a barrier to attendance and it could be means tested
This consultation has not been widely shared (ie I was only informed by my children's school of it today) and the meetings have now all happened. How would you calculate distance to work out "nearest" (crow flies or road connections) - this isn't very clear? This will have a big impact on villages (eg mine!) where the excellent catchment school is not the nearest - does this need to be rethought in conjunction with thinking about catchment areas? The transition period of the new policy will be rocky, distressing for parents with more than one child (eg one at catchment school with continuing free transport and 2nd having to go to a different school because no longer eligible for free transport). In villages like mine kids already go to multiple local state secondary schools (there are 4 or 5 in the area) but very few go the closest (it's not the catchment) and a new bus would have to be provided - has this sort of situation been modelled in the costings?
Transport should still be free for children attending their nearest sixth form school

The council will not see any cost saying whatsoever as the transport companies will just raise their prices. ie, a bus has 10 kids on it, the company charges the council £1 per kid, that is £10 for the bus. The new policy makes 5 kids walk or go in the car, the bus company now needs to charge £2 per kid to pay for that bus to run. The council still pays £10, but now there potentially are 3 extra cars on the road & 2 kids walking & now in danger! Some services just need to be run better, bus companies usually run their old & knackered busses for the school runs anyway. Offer them less money, they need the school run just as much as the council does!(probably more, they are not the ones trying to cut it) The village & road situation in North Yorkshire is different to London, where everywhere has a footpath & street lighting, around here, were lucky if we have a verge to walk on.
We live in (Redacted)when we applied for Ryedale school we could pay for a place on a shared bus. This was cancelled with no notice and now cannot be reinstated. Children in rural North Yorkshire have no opportunity to have any choice in school as there is no public transport system to be able to use as an alternative. They are at a disadvantage to in city children who would be able to get to 2 or 3 schools. If Parents could pay for places on buses organised by the council it could acutally be profitable for the council. The lack of buses altogether have a negatvie impact on childrens health and well being.
Should be means tested. Check walking routes are safe. Ie well lit, footpaths etc. Lots of school bus runs are through villages with little or no safe footpaths on route to schools. Also it cruel to only offer transport to one household if child has two homesdue to divorce/ separation. Offer a reduced price to both households to make it fairer and also means test this.
The lack of consideration of post 16 transport in this consultation is unhelpful. The whole school career should be considered as one. The fact that you make post 16 kids pay is absolutely ridiculous. This encourages them to start using their cars as soon as they pass their test. This is counter to any claims of environmental sustainability that you make as a council
Where the distance to school from home address is similar (within a few miles) to multiple schools in catchment, parents should get to choose which school to send their child, without being penalised by having to pay for transport for the sake of a mile or 2.
The proposed changes to transport to only the nearest secondary school could have a huge detrimental effect on rural schools like Settle College, meaning lower numbers and in effect, no choice for parents. To bus students to another school seems counterproductive and will have a huge effect on the local community in Settle and surrounding areas, making them less attractive to families and children in future years. I strongly disagree with this proposal.
Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact
I think having a choice of school that is most suitable for your child is important and transport shouldn't have to be big factor for parents providing it is not an unreasonable distance from their home address

Very poor policy. Does not help me or roughly 30-40 other parents in Riccall get their children to Brayton Academy. Extra cars on extra journeys which is bad for the environment. More traffic and huge disturbance to local residents at drop off / pick up time creating a negative feelings and unsafe environments. Due to the early start time my child would be unable to get a bus and I would not want him walking the distance in the dark. Many parents would be happy to contribute to the travel costs to enable transport to be arranged. Short sighted and unfair to dictate 'suitable school' too this does not allow choice for both children and parents - very archaic.
Settle college offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in his areas the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern In the community about the potential impact on Settle college caused by such a severe drop in numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after- effects of this decline on the local area.
As the population is so spread out in this area I feel that it would be unlikely to save a large amount of money as the travel time for most children affected would be lowered only marginally rather than reduced significantly or eliminated, this seems to be a poor economy if it will reduce options open for individuals education and potentially reduce the quality of schools in the area. Indeed one child having to be moved to a further away school for support, special needs or just "fit and feel" will negate marginal savings made. I feel that Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.
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I can understand a desire from the authority to impose a common sense policy which is looking to save the tax payer money. However, this has to be balanced with the impact to the families involved - and also, as all good policies do, have an exceptions process for common sense and established precedent to kick in. (Redacted) is in the catchment area for Helmsley Primary School and currently there are 4 children going there. By the time that they are old enough for Secondary school, they will all have siblings at Ryedale school because Helmsley is an established feeder school for Ryedale - and in our case - that was a determining factor in us choosing our house, in this village and the primary school for our children. Because there are already children in the village that go to Ryedale on free school transport - and this will continue once the younger siblings start.....there is literally a bus already coming. If the proposal is put in place then a second bus will be required to come up Sutton Bank to pick children up.....consequently costing the authority and the tax payer more money rather than creating a saving. It will also cause significant grief to the families involved because we all feel very strongly that we want our children to go to the same secondary school as their siblings. So in summary, the proposed policy - in the case of (Redacted) - is a spectacular own goal if implemented as planned without the facility for sensible exceptions. Many thanks for considering this feedback.
School transport i paying 8.00 pounds a day's that's to much for me.thats is 160.00 a month's. 😔
I feel concerned that schools like Settle College, with wide catchment areas will be adversely affected by the change to funding only being available for the geographically nearest school. This could adversely affect student numbers and removes choice for families. Should settle college close due to lack of students this would have a hugely negative effect on the town.
This would crush local communities and make life very difficult for working parents
This could negatively affect so many people and whole communities if it went through
Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.
The changes to the nearest eligible school criterion is very poorly thought through. This could be a disaster for families who will end up with children in different schools in different counties, with all the logistics and social disadvantages that would bring. It makes no sense at all not to fund transport to a pupil's catchment school; in such a large rural area differences of a few miles are immaterial. This policy will have a negative effect on Settle college, which has a number of pupils for whom the nearest (out of catchment) school is technically closer. I suspect this will be used as a back door excuse to reduce funding to small rural schools, with the excuse that pupil numbers are dwindling (because parents cannot afford to pay for transport, despite it being their catchment school and preferred school).

I am concerned that the transport policy is not following the catchment school. Catchment schools should be the nearest to the home and if they are not then catchments need reviewing. Going to your catchment school with peers is important for children and I feel that not using this as the benchmark for travel provision is unfair on pupils and schools. Catchments should be changed to be the nearest school or travel should be provided to the catchment school.
Parent choice is essential and the fact we offer selective schools should be taken into account. This change to the policy is clearly going to impact the ability of children and parents to strive for the best education possible. This policy will clearly negatively impact the population of North Yorkshire who can not afford to pay for transport. No surprises from a Conservative run council that this has not been thought of. Futhermore there is no clarity over whether buses that are going to have to be provided for the next 7 years will allow parents to pay for their children to travel on them.
'Settle College offers young people a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside excellent pastoral support. The proposed transport change would cause a significant reduction in student numbers and therefore a potential impact on this offer. The savings would not be realised in this area as the students would still require transport to their nearest secondary school, with little change to actual distances travelled. There is serious concern in the community about the potential impact on Settle College caused by such a severe drop in pupil numbers both immediately and in years to come, and the after-effects of this decline on the local area.'
I would like to see our children accompanied on the school bus by an additional adult - with authority - so that the bus driver can drive - without the need to manage the behaviour of poorly behaved children
It will take away my child's choice of school they wish to attend. I could have 2 children at 2 different schools. I will not be able to afford to send my children to the same school if I have to pay for transport. It takes away my child's choice.
The change to nearest school only is, in my view, objectionable. Secondary schools allocations are prioritised on a catchment area basis. Myself and others may find themselves allocated a secondary school we are in the catchment area for, but not receiving transport as it is not the nearest. I believe this should remain as nearest or catchment. On a wider point, we are comfortable paying for school transport, provided NYCC is working with providers to ensure bus timetables are sensible compared to school start and finish times, and the provision is safe for secondary school students.
removing "free" transport to and from school is simply a bad idea. It will have a negative impact on schools, communities and the future of the entire area.
In the area with which we live Settle College/High School is integral to our community. It is the main town which brings together all the smaller neighbouring villages. That school community continues into later life and now all our children go to school together. We still live in a community where everyone does still know and support eachother. If the decision to change transport eligibility is put into action we risk losing our closest high school within at least a 30mile radius. My children live in (Redacted). It would mean a (Redacted)commute to the next nearest school. I appreciate this may work in some parts of North Yorkshire. But i feel very strongly that in our very rural area it will have a negative impact. I would sooner pay for my child to go to our nearest school (which is Settle), rather than lose our school. Make all transport, to any school, cost and offer support to those who cant afford it.

When small local schools are closed it seems harsh not to transport these pupils to a local school even if the schools are within 2/3 miles. The policy should specifically address this, and perhaps give a time limit to support families with transport. If you bought a house in a village with a school, you may not anticipate your need to transport your future children to school and could be inconvenienced.
We live in Tockwith. Our nearest Secondary school (different LA) is Wetherby. Currently, almost all children in Tockwith attend either Tadcaster or Knaresborough. Having to pay to travel to either of these is going to have huge and negative knock on consequences.
We are concerned that families from Bentham and Ingleton will not be able to attend their first choice school - this will significantly reduce income for Settle College and this will equate to a drop in provision stanadards affect all children attending Settle College.
The proposed policy is not to the interest of Settle College and its families - the North Craven ARea is frequently overlooked when it comes to planning and taking the interests of local schools inot their decision making. We only have ot see all the school closures in the last ten or so years. My family is concerned that families from Bentham and Ingleton will not be able to attend their first choice school - this will significantly reduce income for Settle College and this will equate to a drop in provision stanadards affect all children attending Settle College.We are against the propoal and are alarmed that the public consultaion has been planned before parents have had a chance to grasp the meaning of the proposals.
Time for a re-think and to scrap this policy. My family is concerned that families from Bentham and Ingleton will not be able to attend their first choice school - this will significantly reduce income for Settle College and this will equate to a drop in provision stanadards affect all children attending Settle College. The proposed policy is not to the interest of Settle College and its families - the North Craven Area is frequently overlooked when it comes to planning and taking the interests of local schools inot their decision making. We only have ot see all the school closures in the last ten or so years. My family is concerned that families from Bentham and Ingleton will not be able to attend their first choice school - this will significantly reduce income for Settle College and this will equate to a drop in provision stanadards affect all children attending Settle College. We are against the propoal and are alarmed that the public consultaion has been planned before parents have had a chance to grasp the meaning of the proposals.
The proposal disadvantages Settle College and the families who attend this school in the future - it will lead to the school's demise and possible closure like as has happened to other schools in the area following the North Craven Review where we lost Middle Schools and orimary schools. We know the authority have blown their transport budget and need to recover costs but these proposals are disadvanatgeous to the College and need to be reconsidered.
The policy could lead to the demise of Settle College. Is this intended? What about free choice of schools for families at Bentham and Ingleton. If Settle College is adverely affected then this affects the life long learning of pupils at Settle Primary and Giggleswick too. In this eceonomic climate reduced numbers and income for Settle College could be disasterous. It scould lead to reduced provision - such as the sixth form not being viable, less subject choice, reduced staffing, less choice for students when choosing options. At worse t could make the College unviable.

I am against the Porpoed changes. My family is concerned that families from Bentham and Ingleton will not be able to attend their first choice school - this will significantly reduce income for Settle College and this will equate to a drop in provision stanadards affect all children attending Settle College. Settle Primary pupils will be affected when they transition to the College as its provision will have been affected by a potentially huge drp in numbers affecting provision. I am concerned that there have been enough closures of schools in this area already. Rural areas such as ours are at risk of seeing a secondary school closure if these proposals go ahead.
We are aginst the proposals and its impact on rural secondary schools such as Settle College which will lose children as a result and see families not able to afford to attend their first choice of school.
Disadvantages Settle College if no one from Bentham or Ingleton can afford to go there - the potential drop in numbers will undermine this great school.
Nearest school is fine in principle but need to consider the safest routes etc... in this. If getting to the nearest school means having to go on a bus over a narrow moortop road rather than follow a more main route down a valley (could be further distance but quicker/larger roads) then this needs to be considered on each geographical location not just pin & radius approach on a map.
I feel fewer children will be able to get to Settle College; this will negatively affect my children in the long term and our ability as a community to fully educate children locally.
Concerned about pupil numbers dropping at Settle College as a result of the proposed travel policy and the effect of subsequent reduced funding on the secondary school provision in the Settle area
We could loose a valuable school in our area, having a negative impact on a lot of children and their families. Removing the choice for a school is unacceptable, many families have different reasons for chosing different schools and shouldn't have this choice taken away from them, many (like ourselves) wouldn't afford to pay for transport. It's so sad that we could loose the school so close to us because people can't afford the travel costs. It's a wonderful school and it would be such a shame to see it struggle with it not being the nearest school for a lot of people that use it.
As school is a requirement by law I think it is hugely unfair to charge for the access to school. The Council's proposal will negatively impact on the parents' and child's choice of where to send their child for families in areas such as Bentham, Clapham, Ingleton etc. Additionally, Settle Collage will lose future pupils due to this proposal as families will have to take into account the impact that the additional cost of travel to their preferred school will make on their finances. This will especially affect families with lower wages or more children.
I live in Tockwith and chlidren here have a catchment of Tadcaster or King James in Knareborough. Our 'closest' school is Wetherby, which is not our catchment school and in a different LA, and not as good a school as Tadcaster or King James. Children would still go to King James or Tadcaster as the better schools, adn catchment schools but would now have to pay for transport - families with 2-3-4 children would have to pay thousands on transport to get their children to their catchment schools

I am upset that we will be made to pay for our child's transport. The closest school is in a neighbouring LA. We are not permitted to use the local services within that LA as we are 'not part of it' for instance using the waste disposal (tip) in the neighbouring LA. Yet we will now be expected to send our children here for free transport that was previously provided . Also because the nearest school is within a different local authority - term times are often different . We could potentially have one child in North Yorkshire (Whitby) for one term and another in guisborough (Redcar and Cleveland) for another . Paying for transport would be another expense, in what is already an uncertain time financially for parents . We are really disappointed and feel let down .
There are many assumptions which suggests the report lacks substance and fact-based evidence. The analysis makes assumptions on a number of choice patterns which also could change, based on charges which change with every tender term. The proposed saving on the consultation is based on unsupported long-term suggestions which the report acknowledges could change and would therefore produce a different result and possibly might not make any saving at all on a different day so this is not a true and acute picture of any saving/costs that may be incurred as a result of the changes. The survey was conducted on a single snapshot of the county and as a single overview does not accurately represent and termly or yearly pattern, without any substantive evidence to support further saving on a term or yearly basis. I would go as far as to suggest that this survey is not fit for purpose to future project any savings and further snapshot over a year with an average saving would better reflect any potential costs/saving that may be achieved. No reference is made as to whether any other surveys were carried out which might have produced a less favourable result. In summary, the consultation is poorly represented and heavily biased with an analysis based on a series of possibly, maybes, could be, There are too many assumptions without any evidence to support the results and the future of our children and the nation's prosperity and development cannot and must not be based on a spurious analysis which itself states would produce a totally different outcome on a separate day and therefore can't be relied upon for an accurate projection of future savings. I would suggest the council would be negligent and wholly irresponsible to risk the future of our children, both educationally and their emotional wellbeing and future health, based on these spurious and unsupported projection.
transport is poor, there is poor communication and they do not take into account my child's additional needs and instead place him on a bus with lots of other children with SEND and no or poor training for the transport staff. transport arrive early most of the time to collect and not very helpful if my child is struggling that morning. i find the drivers and escorts rude. i do not understand the routes the bus takes either and how my child can be on transport for so long. it is ridiculous to know that some children in my childs school travel for almost two hours one way to school
Based on current numbers we would see a drop in student numbers of 73 students, should similar patterns of admissions continue; this drop in numbers would cause us significant financial detriment.
Policies like these are not family friendly- they are difficult to follow for anyone with send and give little thought to families on low income, with send children and make it harder for single parent families to work as they are so restricted by lack of transport to school for their children
This policy will only exacerbate the issues with falling pupil numbers for schools in which there is little/no house building. This, in turn, will make financial challenges even greater, thereby increasing costs for NYCC too.

The example bubbles at the end need to include an example where.... Student X lives near a co-ed school which is 3 miles from their house. The have been successful in gaining admission to a Grammar school which is 8 miles from their house. (it's unclear for parents who may skip to this section if this is funded or not). If there is any reduction in funding there will be an impact on schools like Upper Wharfedale. The policy isn't clear with regards to the grammar school system. Are students who live nearest Upper Wharfedale but get into grammar school receiving free places?
Lack of suitable SEN provisions is the reason transport is needed unfortunately the closest SEN school is 90 mins away
1 of our children is SEND. And currently travels an hour each way. We are unable to afford to pay for this and your proposal could mean us potentially paying. We have no choice as the schools themselves choose if they can meet need. However if the school has places but cant meet need your proposal doesnt make clear if that is where the travel provision would end? Would we then have to pay for transport as a school 20 mins away has places but as they won't accept the child they emd up an hour away and the parent and family is penalised? I hope this is understood when amending proposals. Thanks
Settle College has been the first choice for a growing number of families in Ingleton when choosing a secondary school. North Yorkshire Council is now proposing that families who do choose Settle College in the future will have to pay for their own school bus, potentially costing a family with two children going to Settle College over £2,000 every school year. Many families will not be able to afford that kind of extra spending. They will be forced to send their children to their second choice school, which will be outside North Yorkshire, just because it is a couple of miles closer. For every child that does travel outside of North Yorkshire, the council will pay for a bus and so will save nothing, but Settle College will lose about £30,000 from the Government – money that is no longer going into education in North Yorkshire. In short, families will either have to pay or lose their first choice of school. Families will lose out and Settle College will lose out: losing income and missing the brilliant contribution that pupils from Ingleton can make. The headteachers of the primary schools in North Craven have always worked closely with Settle College headteacher to ensure that every aspect of transition is smooth for pupils going into Y7. This partnership between Ingleton, Bentham and Settle College will cease to exist if all the pupils in these two villages are forced to choose QES because of this new proposed policy. It will be the end of an era and the end of a successful model of collaborative working.
Consideration of road suitability, particularly in winter months, must be taken when putting forward the amendments. A school may be deemed as closer in terms of distance, but practicality makes it unsafe for travel in winter. If amendments were to go ahead, I can only assume that the local authority will commit itself to ensuring roads will be priority for gritting and will be well maintained to ensure safe travel for children.

I feel that , from a distance and without the lives experience of certain geographic localities , the policy may seem appropriate and the rationale fair. However , the way it would affect my family and those in the village in which I live would be disproportionately negative . As defined by route finder and therefore I can only assume your GIS system , our 'nearest' secondary school provision is in York , 8 miles away , in a different local authority and which a very small minority , if currently any of the children attend . The mileage discrepancy between this school and the 'catchment ' school is a matter of yards but the enactment of this policy would adversely affect the families within the village . Im unsure how this new policy aligns with school admissions policy as in 'reality' it could mean that parents have no choice but to send their children to the nearest catchment school under the terms of school admissions policy but under the terms of your policy this is no longer a 'suitable school' . I find this viewpoint challenging as the council is making the decision around school suitability based on an arbitrary measure of length . This measure of length fails to take into account communities needs and needs a more nuanced approach. It does appear to be a paper exercise in cutting costs to LA , which I appreciate is necessary , but not to be achieved by passing this cost onto parents who often have little choice as to the school they access.
It isn't clear from the policy whether children with SEND who are to attend a specialist school will remain eligible for home-school transport. My child with SEND and an EHCP will be attending a specialist secondary school In September 2024, the travel distance for him is over an hour each way and he has had transport confirmed. This however wouldn't be his "closest school", there are multiple mainstream schools much closer as well as several SEN schools who do not have a place available for him. He will therefore travel from our home in (Redacted) to Harrogate to access a school which can meet his needs. It would be advantageous to have some clarity over whether this would still meet the threshold for home-school transport in the revised policy as this is ultimately out of our control (we would prefer a closer school if one was available). In future would this be required to be included within his EHCP as a request or be automatically available as it is now? Having to justify the need for transport in these circumstances, at an already stressful time for SEN parents would be unreasonable in my opinion.
It is not safe for my children to walk to school. There is no footpath and too many unconsiderate irresponsible drivers.
My oldest child was sent to catchment school (my youngest will follow this year) this is not our closest school, we also had no say. I would like to be reassured that my children will not be adversely affected. There was no clause in draft policy that says something like "changes will ONLY affect those changing schools beginning school year 25/26" or similar. All the parents who have been awarded school places for 24/25 could be concerned. All those applying for schools FROM this September could then be made aware BEFORE choices and subsequent results.
I think it is ridiculous that a council would suggest this when it means people living in North Yorkshire wouldn't get free transport to a North Yorkshire school. We live in Bentham and it means we wouldn't get free transport to Settle College.
Much of the county has a network of RoW which would NOT be suitable routes to school pupils of any age, due to ground conditions, darkness etc across rural areas. Simple distance on foot by RoW would be incorrect. NYC should implement what IS a safe route to walk/cycle, and then assess if this is available from a location (eg village)
Severe weather affects our local high ground routes to school. Roads are often impassable in winter due to floods, snow and ice. The nearest school will often not be the safest route to school to/from Swaledale and Wensleydale.

Not sure how it fits with policy but increase in before and after school provision, means buses are part full and many parent car journeys too from school is a problem I can see increasing.
I worry about the safety aspect under section 5. The route from my village to Bedale High is extremley dangerous. There are no footpaths, poor visibility for drivers and blind bends. I hope that the bus route is not taken away. As a single parent, who works full time with absolutley no benefits- I'd have to make my child walk to school as there is no adult to take them or accompany them on the route. My son also plays a brass instrument, which is heavy; he is expected to carry a PE kit, and at several points across the year, needs a cookery kit as well. It's not physically possible to carry what is expected of them for nearly 3 miles! I have a(Redacted) going to (Redacted) in Sept and that's going to be £650 for transport, this bill is going to be difficult to pay- I can't find the same for a just under 3 mile journey for my son to attend high school. It's unreasonable.
Removes choice, adds anxiety, changes villages
I'm all for reducing the cost of school transportation, and I appreciate that this might lead to a reduction in parent choice. However, it seems utterly preposterous that despite living in North Yorkshire the proposed new policy would force my children to attend a school in West Yorkshire!
I dont believe that the impact of the proposed changes to the policy fair. There are plenty of additional areas that saving should be made before impacting the children & families that depend on these services. It appears that the selection criteria for children being accepted to individual schools can change significantly when the council thinks it can save money
Currently it won't affect us due to the system not being fit for purpose for my daughter due to special educational needs which aren't being met. If it was I feel that if we had to only attend a school which was classed as the closest for transport needs then that takes away a child's right to a positive education. A child needs to attend the best possible school for them irrelevant of Sen needs as there are various reasons that children attend which school they do. I agree that the 50/50 addresses should be improved but general school transport shouldn't be impacted.
Another nail in the coffin of our children's education, parental choice and putting money before education. Hopefully a change in government will enable education to rise back up the priority list.
Send provisions should not included in any proposed changes. Send children should get transport to the school that WILL provide the best care for that child. And its not always the catchment school
All children should be entitled to free school transport to their school of choice. I don't believe that North Yorkshire Council, in their ivory tower, should be allowed to discriminate when they have no idea of the geographics of their own county. It's as bad as London dictating to Yorkshire, which is what the devolution was trying to tackle in the first place.
If my child has been excepted in a school out of my region, do they still qualify for the free transport. For example, living in Catterick but been excepted for a Richmond School? Thank you

For three years I have struggled to get my children to school. We live in the middle of two catchment areas. My children used to get on a bus to Richmond school. This was then stopped and we were told that they could no longer get on the bus. One child about to go into his GCSE year. The bus still goes passed the stop they used to get on and another child from a house further away is allowed on. I had to live my job due to this and it has had a significant effect on both children, my mental health and our financial situation due to jobs and not being having to work around them not being able to get to school unless I drive them. There is no public transport where we live. The nearest catchment school is half a mile closer than the one they attend and was/is in special measures by Ofsted.
Unless the council are planning to grit high moor roads daily in winter this is a completely ridiculous situation.
Elective travel to the non-nearest school isn't something that the council tax payer should be funding in the current climate.
The provisions for free home to school transport are already far too restrictive and unfairly applied. All children (up to the age of 18) should have the right to free home to school transport regardless of the school they attend and whether this is the nearest available school. Potentially the cut off point for free transport to and from school could be a distance of around 20-30 miles. Many families have to pay thousands of pounds a year in transport fees to ensure that their child/children can attend a decent school where they will achieve and be appropriately supported, a cost which is prohibitive for many and significantly affects quality of life for those who have to pay it. Once again there is little consideration given to pupils living in more rural communities who may live almost equidistant from two or three schools but would only be provided free transport to one of the schools despite the travel distance difference often being less than one mile. With more and more failing or inadequate schools parents should be free to select the best school in the area for their child and should not be prohibited in doing so by the huge financial cost of paying for transport if they do not attend their nearest school.
I disagree with the proposed changes. Our taxes should continue to cover free travel to and from a school as many parents can not afford the additional costs. This proposal will likely result in the numbers of students attending schools in further away locations to drop, meaning the schools have less funding to be able to provide good facilities. Other schools, and smaller schools may then struggle to accommodate larger numbers of students. This change will have negative affects and should strongly be reconsidered.
Again, my Parents are being penalized for living in a remote location. Why should any parents have to pay for us to go to school. I'm going to sixth form next year and they have to pay for pass for that, even though government rules we have to stay in education.
I feel this is an unfair decision. We live in the Reeth area and the proposed change of school is not good- the roads to get there are terrible on a normal day let alone in bad weather. The current option of Richmond school is working fine. The roads are still not the best but they are a better option than the new proposal. It feels we are been penalised for living in the countryside. Also I understand people on low incomes can't afford to pay but neither can working parents now with the cost of living crisis. Working families get no subsidies on anything - we barely have anything left at the end of the month ! I think majority of working parents will agree. If it was to go ahead they should reduce the bus fare to go to preferred choice to a few hundred pounds not the extortionate price currently at over £600 ! This is far too expensive for everyone.

I was open minded about unitary autority until.this. no understanding of local communities or toads in winter. Decisisions made far away with no knowledge of splitting up comminities. A prime example. I live in swaledale. It isnt even an option on the questionaire. I ticked ricmond. This beeds a rethink
The economic reasons to seek change have been clear. Here are two points to consider: (i) The proposals may not, in practice, bring the hoped for economic benefits. Whilst, for example, all school traffic heads from the end of Swaledale down towards Richmond, the proposals will see this split in different directions, with additional vehicles required, and some journeys travelling over difficult cross-dale roads. On paper this looks sound but the practice could be very difficult and potentially costly. (ii) The proposals seek to address economic issues but there are other issues to take into account. These include (a) The environmental cost of additional vehicles, some of which climbing up and down cross-dale roads. (b) The cost of time to some students. Their new journey may be shorter in miles but significantly longer in terms of time. (c) The damage to attendance figures. Students are likely to have more days when they are unable to attend due to winter weather. (d) The health and safety of students may be jeopardised when school days are cut short in an emergency and students must be transported home. This is rare and normally only happens when winter weather worsens suddenly and unexpectantly during a school day. Transporting students back 'up dale' is challenging enough as it is. Transporting them from one dale to another brings a whole new dimension of risk and danger. I do think we are facing the need to make savings and these will not be popular. I think, however, any proposals that stick to a crude 'nearest school' in terms of miles risks costing more money, not less. And it brings other additional costs and risks as described above.
Catchment based transport, as the current situation, is most suitable for our location. The move to a nearest school, regardless of location would be very detrimental to the delivery of high quality education in the area. The category missing is for those living under the mileage threshold, but without a suitable walking route to school. This current facility needs to continue and also be clarified within the documents. The proposal is wholly unacceptable on many fronts, driven by cost, and not the best outcome for children in education.
We live in a rural location and nearly all the children at my daughter's school use school transport at some time during their primary education. Our school currently pay for transport from home to our nearest school, geographically, and then the County pay for transport on to her taught school. The cost to the school is huge. I would like to see the County paying for all transport that is required to get my daughter to school. Then for secondary education our nearest school geographically would not necessarily be our first choice due to their reviews. However we may not be able to afford the transport pass for her to get to our preferred school so she may be limited to attending the nearest school just because of our income. I completely understand that the county need to make cuts to their expenditure but feel that this issue needs to be addressed by central government and the County need to stand firm in that every child deserves the best education they can access regardless of their family's income.
The removal of 2 transition days for SEND students is awful and puts SEND students at a significant disadvantage relative to their peers. Also, changing to nearest school should not happen for residents of swaledale. They currently travel to Richmond school on the safer lower road. The nearest school to the is Leyburn on a narrow high road, impassable on wintery mornings. Often foggy and icy. This would increase the risk to schoolchildren as well as putting pressure on Wensleydale school to accommodate the extra students.

I have (Redacted)in (Redacted) different schools, so as a working family the changes to the school transport will have a detrimental effect on our household. We live in (Redacted)and I walk my youngest 2 children to our local primary/nursery provision, my next child has multiple and profound learning disabilities and has a EHCP and attends (Redacted), and my eldest is going in to his GCSE years in September at (Redacted) I would not be willing to change my eldest child's school at this stage in his education and it would be extremely difficult to transport him to school around my other children and attend work on time. Even more so if I have to transport my other children to (Redacted). Meaning I would have to be in 3 places at one time, or pay for breakfast club, where that is available, with loss of earnings. I feel this will also have a huge affect on the quality of education in schools, from either being over or under subscribed. I think the changes to the policy are unrealistic, unsuitable and quite frankly ridiculous. If the council needs to save money I suggest it explores another department for this. Many many families would be impacted in an extremely negative way if the proposed plans are to go ahead.
I think that my child's school will suffer if the changes are made regarding free transportation to the school in the Local Authority catchment area and making children go instead to the nearest school. I think this change could mean a significant reduction in the number of students attending my child's school in the future, resulting in a deterioration to the wide ranging and high quality curriculum currently on offer.
Our nearest school is Leyburn. Our children attend Richmond School. We chose this school on the basis that it offered a far superior range of subjects and extra curricular activities. It also has a sixth form on site. We would never want our children to attend Leyburn school simply because it is the nearest school. We should not have to make this choice because it would be where free transport would be available. I cannot see that the proposed change in provision of school transport is going to be anything other than detrimental to school children in this area. Living in a very rural area we are reliant on school transport to get our children to school. We would be left with no parental choice about which school our children attend. I worry that the resulting drop in pupil numbers at Richmond school would mean a real reduction in the quality of education provided at the school,which can only be detrimental to an already declining rural population.
Don't vote Tory
This new proposal will have an extremely negative impact on the families in Ingleton and Bentham. The demographic and rurality of these areas mean that parents are going to be but in financial difficulty in choosing to go to Settle college the only North Yorkshire school they have available to them. Families will be forced to have to go across county for their education. Causing disruption not only for transport, financial impact and juggling different holidays if families have children and parents working and attending different schools in different counties.
Awful proposal to take away funded travel. Our nearest secondary school isn't always the best choice for our children and doesn't suit their needs.
Why in the world do the council constantly insist on making changes that make life harder for the people living within its district.
Living in Ingleton in North Yorkshire, the proposal of 'amendment to the main eligibility criterion to be nearest school (with places available) would have a huge negative impact on our nearest school in the County, Settle College. This school is a fantastic school that needs pupils from Bentham & Ingleton, to lose these pupils to a school in another county would be detrimental to Settle College's size, funding and future. Living in Ingleton, our council tax is paid to NYC, yet this proposal is setting out a rule that would see both us & the school lose out - madness. I urge you to reconsider this, before many families and a superb school is affected.

That all children are expected to attend school until the age of 18 therefore transport should be funded until the age of 18.
This is wrong, and it takes away a choice for parents and our children for their education! This is a huge set back, and in many cases has no environmental benefits
I am saddened by the new proposal and it will affect my family massively. We are not in the position to afford transport but want the best for my children
I think this will hit families hard financially and mean a lot more school days will be lost due to dangerous roads/winter conditions making travel impossible for those that can't fund a bus pass for the school on the safer route
As working parents we have 2 options, leave employment to transport our children or have them sent to whichever school has places... Freedom to choose the school most suited to your child's needs is being removed. Public transport is not an option as we live in a rural area, potentially our children could spend 3 hours a day on transport to go to a school that does not match their needs, this would not benefit the child, their peers, the school. Yet again budgets before children. It's bad enough that post 16 they can't get to a college (even though until 18 they have to be in education) now you are penalising them for living in a rural area from the outset.
I would like to see better investment in cycle paths across the county to assist children getting to school themselves. Thirsk is a classic example of a recent uplift in house building, increased traffic and yet nothing to facilitate alternative transport options, other than the car. There needs to be more joined up thinking, not just about a simple saving from reducing services, which is short term strategy.
If the proposals go ahead we are concerned that future families are being denied the element of parental choice in selecting the most suitable school for their child as financial costs may influence their decision. The Selby area is diverse, with 3 secondary schools in close proximity - each school has its own strengths and identity which parents consider carefully when choosing education for their child. The new proposals deny this option to parents on the basis of them being able to either use their own transport or pay for transport to and from school. We are concerned that many families currently with children at our Academy will be unable to afford to send siblings to the school this could potentially have a negative impact on family life and children's welfare - school start times, inset days and holidays could be all impacted.
This consultation has been extremely poor. There has been a chronic lack of information provided to all parties. Your modelling of data has been shown to be incorrect and further information has not been received. NYC workers have expressed their own dismay at the plan. This has either been extremely poorly thought-out/ organised, or has purposefully been underhand/ sly in order to get through a cost saving exercise with as little challenge from external parties as is achievable. The plan essentially makes it more difficult for disadvantaged families to choose the education for their child that they wish, compounding disadvantage even further. A poor show on all fronts.

As a teacher at a secondary school, I find the plan to ENFORCE students/parents to utilise the geographically nearest school to be utterly unsuitable for the needs of our rural catchment. Historically and currently, many parents actively choose to send their children to our school despite living as in distant rural locations in the Dales. This has been a choice of the parents/children who have been able to access the education that their deserve at our school. Your proposal to ENFORCE that students can only be provided with funded transport to the geographically nearest school has MAJOR implications for a range of stakeholders. This includes: 1 - Dividing rural communities, particularly for young children, who share social lives with their neighbours but because of their grid reference on an OS map MUST attend different schools. This feels like social segregation - something akin to what happens in Belfast due to religious background. Villages, who have long had communities of children attend our school, will now see friendships severed as they have to attend separate schools due to geographical location. 2 - By losing, what we estimate to be 140 students over the course of 5 years, it is quite likely that such a loss will have huge financial implications for our school. Teachers will be made redundant, the sixth form may have to close, and financial cuts to the quality of education that ALL students at the school experience will be diminished. This decision WILL DIRECTLY correspond to reduced life chances for young people attending our school - not just those who can't attend. Extra-curricular cuts, subject offer cuts, SEN support - all will suffer as a result of reduced pupil intake. 3 - Implications for other schools - where geographically near schools are at/near full capacity, this change will create issues for other schools in terms of accommodating the increased numbers of students they will receive. Have you even checked as to whether they can accommodate for these extra children? My likely guess will be no - especially as you made NO contact with our school regarding this change. 4 - Diminishing the educational experience for the child - by limiting the choice that parents have in terms of sending their child, you are forcing students to attend schools with lower outcomes. This is purely because of your inability to manage your own finances - instead passing the burden onto schools to deal with. This is typical of a conservative county council. Years of cuts, lack of forward planning and then further cuts to deal with the poor management that you have applied for the last 13 years. Have you considered cuts within the county council itself? Why should our CHILDREN suffer as a result of YOUR poor management of funds. 5 - Have you even consulted with the affected children, parents, schools and bus companies? The lack of information supplied to the general public about this proposed change has been very discrete, vague and somewhat hidden from the public. Furthermore, there is no real specific information about who is exactly is impacted. The way this situation has been handled, from start to now, has been utterly incompetent. How can this go ahead when the level of consultation for all stakeholders has been so poor. I really hope that the public on May 2nd will show to you how utterly incompetent this county council truly is.
When choosing a school each child has individual needs that parents have to consider and the nearest is not always the best choice for that child . At a time where anxiety and school attendance is a huge issue changing the transport to only the nearest school is going to be a disaster for many pupils as parents will have reduced choices in where to send them .
We live on the school route of (Redacted) but our catchment school is outside of the county, (Redacted)goes to richmond but i have to take him to school which is a massive strain on myself and jacks father as we live on a farm and (Redacted) works away a lot . Itwoukd be much easier if (Redacted)coukd get the bus that passes our farm track end!
I think the whole policy is a shambles. The lack of response you have given to schools who are affected by this has been disgraceful. The amount of children and families affected will be huge, and the negative impact this will have is huge.

Do not make this unnecessary change!
If you create a blanket policy that free transport is only provided to the nearest school, children living at the edge of the county will be disproportionately affected. If the policy said that free transport would be provided to either: the nearest school; or, if the nearest school is not in the county, the nearest school in the county, it would make a big difference to children living at the edge of the county and is likely to have a negligible impact on the council itself (as, in reality, the majority of children in the county will have a school within the county as their closest school).
I understand the DoE review and desire to reduce costs, however these reduction will come at the expense of some schools losing pupils making school assets redundant, whilst other schools potentially having insufficient capacity; requiring capex. Each of these have material costs, which when offset against the proposed savings need to be fully understood to assess actual net gain or potential loss. In North Yorkshire, given the county's size and sparse population if implemented there is a wider community aspect to consider and knock on consequences if implemented - which is likely to be a disincentive to young families moving into and those staying in NY, which would be regressive in all areas and increase an already lopsided demographic. I do hope the government has a rethink or provides dispensation for rural counties - one size fits all is too simplistic and seldom achieves (successfully) the desired outcome.
Myself and my family live in North Yorkshire and the catchment secondary school is Whitby. The nearest suitable secondary school is however in Redcar and Cleveland. This school may or may not have spaces available when my children leave primary school. If it does, this document appears to suggest that paid school transport will only be offered to a school out of catchment area. There are three school years between my children, this means that if numbers of the nearest suitable school fluctuate and increase during this time, the catchment school may become the nearest suitable school. Meaning that transport could be provided to two different but both deemed to be 'suitable' schools. This does not provide any sort of certainty for children or families. It also seems unfair that when the decision to send our children to school was made, the catchment school was Whitby and paid school transport would be provided. It is proposed that this decision will change. In my view, this could lead to children moving to secondary school without a group of friends and will be detrimental to the children's wellbeing. All sporting curriculum activities and sporting events are done in the Whitby Schools, to equip children to move on to secondary school there, get to know the school etc. Should the travel policy change, this may mean that children have to attend a different school in a neighbouring authority, due to consideration around travel costs. This does not seem to be fair.
This would remove parental choice and would be divisive as some would pay for/provide their own transport and others would not be able to and so would have no choice.
This is a massive rural county, of course the transport costs are going to be higher. Richmond school is an excellent school but with fewer pupils attending then the funding will go down and so will the standards and opportunities for the pupils of the school. The chill does a great deal for the community and also the members of the Armed forces and their families in nearby Catterick Garrison.

It is outrageous that this proposal is being made with so little time before it is potentially implemented. We purposefully moved in 2021 to a village in the catchment area for our children's future secondary school (which is not the nearest one) aware that their transport would be provided and the cost covered. We selected this secondary school in autumn 2023 for our son to start in September 2024. It is shocking that this proposed change could be introduced after parents like us have made and been granted our school of choice which is in catchment but isn't the nearest. The provision of free transport is an important factor that we considered when making this choice so for the criterion to possibly be changed after this decision has been made is appalling. The burden this will place on our cost of living is significant and an unbelievable pressure when our council tax has already increased this year.
One impact that could negatively affect families is that it may limit their ability to move house within the county while keeping their child in the same school. This could be a particular problem for those in temporary or rented housing, and without long term housing security. Please also consider the impacts for families that have one child already in a secondary school that is not technically the closest suitable with a second child in primary school. Under the new policy, they would be forced to either send the second child to a different secondary school to their sibling or pay for school transport. I think taking an approach of only offering free transport to the nearest suitable school creates potential problems for people that live close to equal distance between two or more schools, as it could force them towards a school that is less suitable or convenient for a variety of reasons. It is not always a case that a school is or is not suitable, there may be differing degrees of suitability. Please consider building in a bit more of a buffer in to this. I suggest adding that, if the difference in distance between the home and two (or more) 'suitable' schools is five miles or less, then free transport would be available to either school.
We feel that these proposals are very concerning to us as a family. School transport has always been provided and our eldest child attends the catchment school of Richmond and we live on the very edge of the catchment. We bought a house to be in the catchment (with free transport to school) so we knew, or thought we knew ...once the children were at secondary school they would be able to get to school without any help from us. We are both working parents, with work commitments and work in the opposite direction to the catchment school, so would be unable to manage transporting our 2nd child to & from Richmond each day. Our 2nd child possibly having to attend a totally different school seems ludicrous as would involve managing the admin for x2 different schools, systems etc, the different holidays (how would this even work for a family?)! The main overall reason for our distress is our children and their happiness at school. This proposal of changing how the whole school place application process should have been planned & talked about years in advance! Not moving children who have been attending a primary school in readiness for them to go on to secondary (friend groups etc) for the system all to be changed for our 2nd child. It would be v distressing for our younger child to leave her primary school friends and have to attend a secondary school in Darlington (not knowing anyone)! I hope there will be extended consideration given for siblings....to continue to have access to free transport for their secondary years. We hope this is reconsidered! If transport will be provided for another school, how is this saving money?! There will still be buses driving between villages/homes to "the nearest school".

Really concerned at the thought of having siblings at different schools in potentially different counties at the same time for following reasons. Different school holiday dates. Different uniforms. Dealing with two different schools at the same time for secondary. We chose to live where we do based on the fact that we could send our children to our chosen catchment school and they would both receive the same standard of education. Or a crazy situation where one child qualifies for free transport at current school due to current set up being honoured but younger child needs driving to the same location. I,would prefer to see that younger siblings are part of the.same proposed honouring agreement as older siblings. Also another concern in order to get free transport for a younger sibling we would be forced to send them to a school where they know no one without a choice. Very harsh when many of their friends from primary would still qualify for catchment school. Surely a child in middle of primary education should have a seamless transition to catchment school where we have been lead to believe they can attend and still qualify for free transport. Could even end up with situation where two buses arrive in same village everyday to driving two siblings to different schools how is that even saving councils money? The whole situation feels like a complete shambles and poorly considered.
I think that children with an EHCP attending a special school or Post 19 setting should automatically qualify for free transport as they don't have a choice but to attend a college in a different town. For example, my child could not go to our local sixth form college as it does not provide suitable courses for those with learning disabilities. We have no choice in the matter - he cannot walk from Richmond to Northallerton and he does not have the capacity to use public transport. I think parents all parents and carers should be able to choose the right school for their child, within reason. The proposal will mean the children from families with higher incomes will be able to pay the transport fees and attend the school of their choice while those from lower income backgrounds may be forced to choose the nearest school which may not be able to meet their child's needs. Those from lower income backgrounds will be more significantly impacted by this proposal which in my view, is ideologically wrong. I am also concerned about the financial impact on the school where I work. This proposal could result in a significant reduction in numbers which could jeopardise the breadth of the curriculum on offer and result in redundancies across the school.
I understand the need to save money, however you will be putting a very good school in your own county at a serious disadvantage, not to mention removing the element of choice currently available! Moreover, parents are struggling, should the proposals go ahead, parents will automatically choose the school attached to funded transport, rather than looking toward which school May best suit the needs to the child! And our alternative school falls under a different county, are we seriously contemplating going to fund this bus route, which is outside of Yorkshire boundaries? Maybe consider as a compromise, parents pay for the first and maybe second year only! Funded from year 9 and up, and let these other proposals go! Support your own Yorkshire County schools!! Please reconsider this!

The proposals are wholly unworkable and certainly will be detrimental to families living in the remotest rural locations. Merely looking at a map and allocating a school place on distance may very well seem reasonable until you look at the facts. A county boundary, the Cumbria/North Yorkshire roads which are impassable over the winter months owing to altitude and extreme weather. Coupled with it being a dead spot with no mobile coverage will undoubtedly mean that the children are more likely to spend more days at home owing to poor road conditions. There would certainly need to be an effective liaising with a Cumbria council to change the current winter road status of the B6270 and for the winter months a 4 x 4 vehicle. Quite how the safety concerns could be met when a majority of the journey is without any mobile coverage. The practicalities of this recommendation have not been fully thought through. For families with children already attending North Yorkshire schools it would be impractical and rather stupid to have different term times and uniforms….a minor issue you might think but rural hardship is a real problem and this proposal is yet another reason that young families will not remain in Swaledale. Culturally, a traditional rural area such as this will suffer when the social cohesion that has existed for generations is dramatically changed as families and children are split up in this way. Wevfeel strongly that for us the only option would be to home educate our children.
I feel that if the council decide to go with the proposed changes, it would affect not only my child having a choice of which secondary school to go to (without a huge financial impact on our family) it would also significantly affect our area of North Yorkshire. I struggle to understand why North Yorkshire Council would provide transport to another County's school, thus reducing the attendance/funding to one of their own schools. Settle has been a fantastic source of education for many years for children from Ingleton, Bentham and surrounding villages.
We have a younger sibling who will be subject to this new policy. However, as parents, our "suitable choice of school" for our eldest child, was made on the grounds of FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION being offered, to that facility, within carchment. We want to ensure that both children attend the same school. However, with the removal of the FREE TRANSPORTATION this becomes a significant challenge. It is UNFAIR and UNREASONABLE for the council to expect siblings to be forced to attend different schools, as a result of this new policy. Currently there is NO OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION routes or services available from the outer village that we reside in, to my eldest child's school. How are parents expected to ensure that siblings attend school, if there is no other alternate public transport network available, to fulfill this task? Whilst the environmental impact of fewer transport services for the council to manage, will decrease, the overall environmental impact of expecting parents to drive children to school, will rise significantly! This is not a "green initiative!" Had this policy been made clear earlier, then we would have seriously considered where we would have purchased a home! Living in a small outlying village we researched the options available to us in terms of secondary schools and transportation networks and costs. All of these factors were taken into consideration prior to selecting 1st choice of school for our eldest child, with the view that both children would have the same facilities and opportunities made available to them. It appears that the psychological impact on our children's wellbeing based on them potentially now being seperated into different secondary schools has not been considered by the council. The nearest suitable school policy would result in 2 siblings being forced to attend different school, which is totally unacceptable. Council tax fees have increased, however, an important council funded service is being proposed to be removed. How and where are these anticipated savings going to be re-assigned? We feel strongly that introducing such a significant change in policy part-way through our children's secondary education, impacting our budget financially, as well as their well-being is unfair and unacceptable and we would request that siblings are allowed to continue their educational journey at the same educational facility.

Bentham secondary pupils are split into two, Settle College and QES. Having a child who is autistic we need to ensure he is able to attend Settle College, as this is our nearest school and the most suitable place for him. He will feel safe, secure and supported there rather than attending a school that is now too big. Road links to Settle are far better than the road links to Kirkby Lonsdale, ensuring the pupils will be safer and have a shorter journey time.
Settle College has been the first choice for a growing number of families in Bentham and Ingleton when choosing a secondary school. North Yorkshire Council is now proposing that families who do choose Settle College in the future will have to pay for their own school bus, potentially costing a family with two children going to Settle College over £2,000 every school year. Many families will not be able to afford that kind of extra spending. They will be forced to send their children to their second choice school, which will be outside North Yorkshire, just because it is a couple of miles closer. For every child that does travel outside of North Yorkshire, the council will pay for a bus and so will save nothing, but Settle College will lose about £30,000 from the Government – money that is no longer going into education in North Yorkshire. In short, families will either have to pay or lose their first choice of school. Families will lose out and Settle College will lose out: losing income and missing the brilliant contribution that pupils from Bentham and Ingleton can make.
The change to the free transport from catchment to nearest school will force us as a family to send our children to be educated outside North Yorkshire. We will no longer be eligible for free transport to Settle College in in North Yorkshire as our catchment school and will be forced to accept the free transport (provided by North Yorkshire) for my children to be educated across the border in Cumbria at Queen Elizabeth School in Kirkby Lonsdale. This change removed our choice of secondary school as we will not have the funds to pay for transport per year per child to be educated in North Yorkshire or be able to transport ourselves twice a day. So there is no choice under these new arrangements. Yet we will still have to pay council tax to North Yorkshire for educational services in the county without my children benefitting. The impact on Settle College will be immediate. And once parents start thinking Settle College is a dying school, they will start pulling children out or making alternative arrangements. This change will leave Settle College financially vulnerable as they will lose all the revenue for pupils from the Government. This money will go into QES whilst North Yorkshire will still have to fund the transport of our children. So in North Craven, this proposed policy is going to cost North Yorkshire money not save them money. Please support your North Yorkshire schools and reject this change from catchment to just nearest school because in our rural areas, close to county borders, there is going to be a loss of pupils to North Yorkshire Schools, because parents around here will chose to send their children to a more secure school across the border if we lose our free transport to Settle College.
I have concerns of the dropping number applying to my child's secondary school and what they can offer students in the future.
This may have a huge impact on choice of schools and the routes that the children will have to take to school. In my local areas some of the roads are not really suitable for accessing the "nearest" secondary school. The closest by distance does not always mean the closest in terms of travel time. There needs to be a better look at the impact of small villages and where students will need to attend school. I feel this is a blanket approach that will work better in a large city, but North Yorkshire is a very rural county! Some students already spend a significant amount of time on schools buses, and I am concerned about how well this idea has been scrutinised to best serve the very rural communities. I would also like to know more about the details of where this saving will come from, how this conclusion has been arrived at, how the number of buses required has been calculated, etc.

In Skipton the high schools are very close together. The closest one to us would be Skipton Academy however the bus drop off point for all schools (including Skipton Girls and Ermysteds) would be very close together. Skipton Academy would always be our closest school but could our children receive transport to the other schools as I assume it would be the same bus from our village? The appendix examples do not clarify the position on this.
Completely barbaric and NYCC should be ashamed that their data and correspondence related to such a huge change in policy has been minute if not none. The data provided initially was wrong and you wrongly didn't tell those organisations effected by this change that the data you sent them was wrong. This is a malicious and devious move by NYCC.
Your 'nearest school' policy is a disgrace. Not only is this cost saving measure poorly designed, you cannot implement this for people who have already made decisions based on the current policy. We live in a village where the catchment is Ryedale school, but where this isn't the nearest one. As we're in catchment for Ryedale school (for our child who is currently in year 6) we selected this because transport would be provided and costs covered. Under your new policy this would not be covered, but we have already made the decision!!! You cannot retrospectively apply this for people who have based their decisions on the current policy. This would likely be subject to significant challenges. We strongly oppose this policy, and would be willing to apply whatever pressure we can to ensure it isn't adopted.
Who wrote the consultations? Vogons? It's long-winded, labyrinthine and confusing. Unless you work in Local Government education delivery and transport policy the ordinary North Yorkshire resident will not be able to understand it; was that your intention- thus making the decision already made by obfuscation? I do not think it would pass Crystal Mark accreditation. So the proposal is to FORCE pupils to their nearest school, removing any child/ parent/ family choice? How does this contribute to placing the child centrally to their educational needs and abilities? As for 'Appendix 1'- which school offers >2 languages? It seems they're stuck in the French and German 1980s...where can I access Spanish or other languages, for example? I have already witnessed a pupil compromise due to GCSE choice limitations at 'our' school- this consultation feels like it's shoving people into local schools because of an ulterior motive that isn't placing the child central to their needs and aspirations. I'm really disappointed- almost frightened, in how this consultation reads- it's coercive, feels like this '15 minute town' threat is being imposed upon us, and it's removing freedom of choice for individuals because of a county level policy: HRA, Protocol 1, Article 2: Right to education No person shall be denied a right to an education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and PHILOSOPHICAL CONVICTIONS. If it is NYC's intention to remove a family's choice of school and thereby philosophical convictions, you might face some serious push-back- and for disclosure you might want to raise this point to your committee/ make it a matter of public record.
Although it does not impact upon my family directly as our nearest school is our school of choice, it may impact us indirectly. The potential numbers of children who attend our school could be influenced by the changes and this may have effects on finances and provision provided for my children. Transitions from primary schools to secondary schools are also very important for children's well being and removal of feeder school/catchment school choice for children could have an impact upon children's mental wellbeing.

The whole 'consultation' process has been an absolute joke. There has been misinformation, false information and a seriously questionable method of sharing this information with affected parties whether they be parents/cares/staff/pupils. I am fully aware of the difficulties in funding for schools, however this is a complete miscarriage of justice for families in already-disadvantaged positions either financially or because of geographical location and could single-handedly destroy a lot of the Dales communities in which they are dependent on young people remaining in the area. How the council have been allowed to go ahead with this consultation in this way is disgraceful.
The difference will make such a difference to families in Ingleton. You are in effect encouraging them to choose a school in a different county (QES in Kirkby Lonsdale in Cumbria) over a school at a very similar distance which is in the same county, that they live in (and pay taxes to!) (Settle College in North Yorks) This will have a huge impact on the school in NY losing many valuable pupils because families will have to send their children to the school for which they get free transport. Also, considering the school in the different county (QES in KL, Cumbria) is over subscribed, how is this a logical decision by taking away pupils away from Settle college? We live in such a rural area, we can't be categorised like a urban area.
Our current LA school is Richmond. Based on this guidance you are suggesting that my child should attend their nearest school which is in County Durham but the schools admission policy would mean that we would be at the bottom of the list for eligibility. So unless you are proposing changing how the school's admission process works you are discriminating us for applying to our nearest LA school and not battling the appeals process to try and get a place at our nearest school. There has been very little consideration, it appears for children who live in rural areas within the county. In current climate where school attendance is at an all time low and you are struggling to get children into school, it amazes me that you are making it even more difficult for parents to get their children to school.
it is obvious that north yorkshire will have one of the highest school travel expenditure due to the fact of it being one of the largest counties and predominately rural. stipulating that the council will only pay for transport to the nearest school disadvantages people with restricted income.
Living in Reeth means that our nearest secondary school is Leyburn resulting in a journey over the moor. In bad weather, this route is not always gritted and is dangerous to travel on. I have concerns that my children would not able to attend school due to travel disruption in the winter or be faced with a dangerous journey, neither of which is acceptable. The main road to Richmond school is gritted and cleared and a much safer route.
Removal of the free transport scheme for many children including my own will negatively impact household finances. As a single mother on one income and two school aged children I would not be able to afford the cost of a bus service. Pushing myself and many others onto the road to drive. Darlington Road is already congested and it’s only a matter of time that a child is seriously harmed. This proposed home to school scheme will see a surge of vehicles driving and dropping children off on that road.

Your 'nearest school' policy is inappropriate. This is clearly a cost saving measure only. The impact of the implementation of this for people who have already made decisions based on the current policy will be detrimental to children and families. We live in a village where the catchment is Ryedale school, but where this isn't the nearest school. As we live in the catchment for Ryedale school (our child who is currently in year 6) we selected this school because of its proximity and because transport would be provided and the costs covered. Under your proposed policy these costs would not be covered. This would have a detrimental income on household incomes and family life. We are also concerned that such a proposal will impact on significantly increased car travel into the village of Nawton to Ryedale School. This cannot be squared with the local authority's Climate Change Strategy 2023-30 which commits: To mitigate carbon emissions from travel and transport we will reduce travel in fossil fuel by iii. Enable and support people to choose multi person travel options, such as public transport (buses and trains), community-based transport, demand responsive travel, car share and car clubs. We strongly oppose this policy and will be making representation to elected members to that effect.
I think free school travel to a school you choose is very important. I think local community is important
There may be issues as the bus companies do not currently run services with enough places for people who already pay, so once the free taxis are taken away families will find it even harder to get their children to school in an affordable and sustainable way. Please don't leave any decisions in the hands of transdev. They are truly incompetent and if we had any other option we would pay it. If North Yorkshire ran their own paid for bus scheme we would pay.
We moved to the area for a specific school (Settle) and we meet almost all the critieria to access free transport, however the new proposal will mean we are unable to access free transport to the most suitable school for my child with SEND needs. Not only, separating children from their peers, support systems and trusted adults will have a huge negative impact on their mental health, especially for my daughter. As a family with 2 children attending primary school for another 6 years at least, makes our choice for secondary school impossible, even though it is our nearest catchment school. I think it's disgusting that such a proposal is even allowed to take place, which just shows the lack of thought or care that goes into the children of our county. This will make the quality of many families lives incredibly poorer, especially those unable to drive/accommodate such travelling, in order to give our children the best quality of education and mental health. We as a family feel incredibly let down by this proposal and sincerely hope more thought is put into this decision on the councils part. A council that only repeatedly lets down their SEND children in multiple ways already regularly, this is just another issues to add to an already disheartening list.

I currently have one child in year 7 at our catchment school, however this is the 5th closest school (according to admissions). This means my 2 other children will have to be refused a place at 4 other schools (3 of which are out of area) before being offered free home to school transport. There is currently transport arrangements from my village to my catchment school and my nearest school (also in North Yorkshire), however no transport to the other 3 schools, and as such I was advised by admissions that were the policy to be implemented, and I was offered a place at one of these 3 schools, that free transport would be provided at additional cost to the council, rather than allow my child to access the current transport in operation to my catchment school free of charge. This makes no sense in a time when cost saving is a priority. As far as I understand it, the transport to my catchment school will continue to run and if I wish my other children to use this service I may potentially have to pay upwards of £700 per year to access it, assuming she was to be offered a place at a 'nearer' school. Therefore this is not a cost saving but rather a cost making exercise. We chose our catchment school for my eldest child as we didn't want to worry about whether he would be offered a place, or not and we are very happy with the school, in addition I do not want my other children to go to a different secondary school. Had I known that we may not be eligible for free transport to our catchment school I may have made a different choice for my first child. Whilst I appreciate funding is limited and difficult decisions may need to be made I do not believe restricting free home to school travel to nearest school only is the answer. By excluding catchment schools you are increasing administration costs, as I will have to apply to 4 other schools, increasing stress levels for parents, waiting to find out where their child will get a place, and finally increasing costs of transport by having to provide additional transport to schools where currently there is none, rather than allowing children to use an already existing service.

As governors of Richmond School we are deeply concerned by the potential impact of these new proposals. Richmond School is a highly successful rural school with strong parental support . The current number of students on roll mean the school is able to offer a wide ranging broad and balanced curriculum and outstanding enrichment activity beyond the school day. Richmond School has a national reputation for music and sport. This is a significant factor which influences parental support. The school is highly effective at keeping all young people, including those with significant challenges in the learning environment. Furthermore the transition to 6th form study is seen as a highly desirable option for students from Richmond and wider North Yorks schools. We have real concerns that the potential drop in numbers could result in the 6th form provision being unavailable. There is little doubt that some of the more highly qualified teachers are attracted to North Yorks because of the opportunity to deliver post 16 courses. In our regular discussions with parents it is overwhelmingly clear that Richmond is a first choice for their children because of the reputation it enjoys in the wider community. Dales parents for example state that Richmond has always been the school of choice for generations of families and thy expect that to continue. Richmond School understands it's community which is broader than the immediate town and encompasses students from rural farming areas as well as military families.The recent service childrens' school awards recognised the contribution and quality of provision at Richmond School. In the next phase of this consultation we would suggest that the question of split villages and therefore additional transport to the nearest school is costed. This may be significant cross county. Equally has the journey for buses from the Upper Dales to Leyburn or Kirby Stephen been analysed for suitability for bus routes and lack of access in the winter months? The breadth and quality of Richmond School's offer to all families within the current catchment area will be severely impacted by the new transport proposals. Despite a number of requests we have still not received answers to important questions we have pursued with the LA. For example why has the impact of these proposals on all North Yorks schools not been shared widely? Have the other local authorities affected understood that their transport costs may rise as North Yorks fall? This lack of transparency coupled with the consultation period falling across the Easter holiday has restricted the school leaders opportunity to fully engage with parents, staff and partner primary schools. Families we reach out to on an individual basis are still unaware that despite having older siblings at Richmond their younger children will have to attend a different secondary school. For example Croft, Barton, Brompton on Swale, Gunnerside, Reeth, Hunton and Arrathorne etc Whilst we understand the need to cut budget costs we strongly feel that the negative impact of these proposed changes on a highly successful, well regarded school by the community it serves and Ofsted ,are unacceptable.
The Second Home Policy is a shambles. I co-parent and my children are with me 2 out of 5 school days Even with the option to pay for a bus place - I was told there were no spaces. Now you are removing this option completely this results in my situation where my Step daughter gets a bus and gets dropped off at home and I follow the bus driving my daughter to the same school for the same time - the same thing happens after school How does any of this policy also tie in to any Green and environmental policies you should be adhering to by trying to reduce the amount of parents having to drive their children to schools
N/A
As parent I believe I should have the right to chose the best school for my child - not purely based on distance. Perhaps funding should be opened up to the nearest 2 schools to at least allow parents the choice. Also, if funding for school transport was to be reduced and therefore more children are not eligible then you will find more traffic and accidents on these already congested residential streets near the schools. For example, Richmond School and SFX school are already extremely busy with cars and no where to park. I dread to think of the situation if less students are getting buses and more parents will drive. The complaints will be through the roof as the roads are already packed with cars!

As a resident of Reeth and knowledge of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale roads in winter it is alarming that NYCC are prepared to compromise the education and/or safety of local children by forcing transportation over roads which are untreated and vulnerable to extremes, because of altitude and remoteness. Have you carried out risk assessments for e.g. travel from upper Swaledale to Kirkby Stephen or Arkengarthdale to Barnard Castle via the Stang? The rush to save money would indicate otherwise. The road from Buttertubs and down Swaledale is a priority gritting route to keep the dale as accessible as possible and enable school transport to function. Do you intend to extend the priority gritting status through Swaledale and with co-operation from the neighbouring council into Kirby Stephen or in the other direction to Barnard Castle? Are you prepared to compromise the safety of school children on their provided transport and the drivers of those vehicles when the weather closes in and in 20mins elevated roads become impassable or extremely slippery. Some common sense needs to be applied. You will know the demograph of dales residents. You will know that working families are rarely in a financial position to fund the transport of their children to their chosen school. Much better understanding by NYCC is required instead of looking for opportunities to charge for transport services that are at odds with actual practicalities. Does NYCC understands the financial and practical implications on the schools themselves. Some schools it would seem potentially will suffer a drop in pupils whilst others would see an increase. Can either absorb those changes. What financial impacts are there for both. Are there enough transport providers who can or are able/prepared to support the new transport structure you propose. They after all have a duty of care to their staff as well as their passengers. Whilst I understand financial pressures ideas that are conceived in an office environment with the application of a spreadsheet miss the bigger picture. I do hope that common sense will prevail and the anxiety that young families are feeling with these proposals as they stand will be alleviated. I look forward to being kept informed.. Thank you.
I have one child currently attending Richmond School and using free transport. If these changes go ahead my other child would not be eligible for free transport to the same school. It would also require the council to provide an additional service to provide the existing service to the school for those children already attending and a separate service to the nearest school for the younger children!
You have completely removed the choice. Living in a rural area the route to the closest school is a terrible journey particularly in winter. In fact - in winter months the school bus would have do a round trip which is probably the same distance as the school that is further away. The standard is also not as high to the school I would choose two miles further away! If my child goes to the school closest he will not have the same opportunities. Its much further away from my work route making school appointments much more difficult. It also will reduce the intake form the school that is classed as the better school reducing their income and will therefore be of detriment to their future pupils. The school closest to my home does not offer the same opportunities, does not have the same standards, is harder to get to and doesn't have a sixth form. This is taken away the free choice of school and is a detriment to my child, family and other schools - families on lower incomes - how is this fair?
I moved to my current home address based on the fact it’s the in the Richmond catchment area. The closest schools are in Darlington. I do not wish to send my children to a Darlington school but you are leaving me with no option. It’s disgraceful
We are a rural county, the fact that this is even being discussed and raised is appalling. Let’s say we had to send our children to a school in Darlington because of your proposals I would question whether we should be paying our council taxes to North yorks. Penny pinching exercise that actually deters young families from living in rural communities. How about the local authority saves money in it systems and processes of work instead of levelling it at our young people.

How you can decide this based on an as the crow flies calculation mwnajng it will actually take longer o the bus for childrent to attend the school that you deem nearest baffles me
We cannot meaningfully respond to the consultation, as we have not been provided with key information requested- this information was first requested in March and has been requested on multiple occasions (including in public meetings) throughout the consultation. Whilst officers were working with us initially and agreed to extend the consultation period when they accepted that their modelling (the basis of this consultation) was wrong, they latterly failed to respond to emails and share additional information requested. Without the information requested, we cannot meaningfully respond to the consultation as we have no idea as to how it will impact communities in NYC. Stakeholders that have provided feedback have unknowingly based their feedback on, at best, limited information and at worst, inaccurate information. The current position: - we only received accurate data modelling for our schools on Monday 15 April (the consultation commenced on 19th February) - schools in NYC have not been issued with the data modelling unless they requested it. Many schools and communities have no idea how the proposals being consulted on will affect them - schools/stakeholders were not informed that the consultation had been extended (until it went out in the red bag after a meeting we had with officers on Friday 12 April) - stakeholders were not been informed that the consultation was extended due to the mistakes identified in the data presented at the start of the consultation period (we have noted that a comment has recently been added under the FAQ section of the website -around challenge received- re the extension) - data modelling for all schools has not been provided to us and all stakeholders (this was requested on two separate occasions in mid March) - NYC have not updated or shared any revised financial modelling that reflects the revised data modelling. Therefore, we are not aware of the potential financial savings based on the accurate data modelling Whilst we understand that NYC need to save money, it appears that this consultation was merely a box that NYC had to tick to change their current school transport policy- it certainly does not feel like a genuine and transparent consultation process. Therefore, we ask that councillors give all stakeholders the information they require to meaningfully respond to this consultation and that this consultation process is rerun.
I have to pay over £600/year for my child to attend the school that is the closest secondary school to his primary school (which was also the closest primary school to our home) simply because it is not the closest secondary school in North Yorkshire, by 2miles. His school bus place is only guaranteed if there is a space. So I pay for what would otherwise be an empty seat on a bus already travelling to QES. Effectively, this is the situation that many parents will find themselves in if they live in Bentham or Settle but wish to send their children to Settle College. In our rural communities, nobody wins, neither schools nor pupils or parents, by changing the criteria of 'closest school' only for funding of school travel.
We as a family have chosen to live in North Yorkshire and part of that was that we want to be involved in everything that North Yorkshire has to offer. we pay council tax to not to Yorkshire. It feels like you are trying to punish the children for living in a rural place and sending them out of area for schooling is really not fair for them. If we wanted to send out children to school in a different county we would have moved or indeed stayed were we were previously. I feel so strongly against this proposal to send children to their nearest school if this means they have to go out of area as it would be for our children. It also is a form of discrimination as parents that can pay have the choice to let their kids go to the school in North Yorkshire rather then the majority that won't be able to afford this. Kids from the same village will get split up with regard schooling and potentially just because parents can't afford to pay for the bus just to send their child to the school in the same county as we live. Please please please keep our children being able to access the secondary school in the same county as we live.

We have emailed H2Stransportreview@northyorks.gov.uk to provide substantive views on this consultation. Contact details for the substantive response are: John Furlong LeaP Project Cerebra johnf@cerebra.org.uk
Please see all emails from (Redacted) to email address H2S… and you will have all of my comments, queries and questions. Quite frankly the 4000 characters you have provided won't provide enough space for what me or a lot of parents or carers have to and want to say! Kindly address the points raised in my emails. Best regards (Redacted)
Completely unacceptable to suggest that children will be obliged to attend their nearest school simply because of this massive change in transport policy. No regard is being taken with respect to the current circumstances of nearest school (always oversubscribed) no regard is being taken of children having a sense of the next stage in their school career ..... as they will feel certainty will be lost. No regard to the concept of effective transition from Year 6 to Year 7 . If the Council really cares for the children and young people of North Yorkshire they will reconsider the whole scheme.
There is currently a bus running to our local North Yorkshire school that passes where I live. If the 'nearest school' rule was to take effect the nearest 2 schools would be out of county, but they are not big schools. So potentially the one bus would be replaced by 2 buses as the schools may fill up, and then maybe a third to go to the original school tripling the cost. This is something you may have to face county wide, not a saving at all!
I think it's absolutely disgusting that as a parent you aren't able to send your children to a school.of your choice if you can't get the child to said school on your own. There are many working families who struggle on a day to day basis and taking this away means more children will be send to underprivileged schools and that not by choice. Taking this away will put families into more poverty. Instead of paying the fat cats at the top all the bonuses how about working for minimum wage like everyone else does and see how hard it actually is without raising council tax or taking more help away from families who want better for their children. Don't pay out our hard earned money on bonuses for people who sit at a desk all day doing nothing. Give back to the community and stop taking everything away. Kids suffer already more than anyone
The proposed changes will cause huge disruption, anxiety and financial issues in our family. We will have one child in secondary school in Richmond and one forced to go to Hummersknot in Darlington as we will not be able to afford to transport her ourselves. We will have no choice of schools. In addition, the schools in 2 different local authority areas have different holidays which will cause issues financially, will mean family holidays will be very difficult to plan and the children will not be able to attend after school activities as we will not be able to pick them up from 2 places at once. This policy will also cause numbers to drop in Richmond school, affecting its finances and risking the quality of its offering. I disagree with this proposed change so strongly on environmental grounds too, we will be taking one bus off the roads and instead putting 30 or 40 cars out instead. I believe this proposal has been made by simply considering financial benefits and has totally disregarded the needs of the young people the local authority is tasked with proving for. Once again, I strongly disagree with this policy proposal and would consider it discriminatory to my children as they are having reduced choice and forced apart from siblings.

I strongly oppose the change of eligibility to the 'nearest' school only even if it's in a different local authority. I don't drive which isn't an issue at present my younger child attends primary school in our village but elder child gets the school bus provided to our nearest secondary school in North Yorkshire. Should this proposal go ahead, there would be no service bus, there are no safe footpaths and I cannot drive so are the council going to pay for individual taxis to transport youngest child to the 'nearest' School
The consultation does not consider the impact the changes the proposed policy will have on schools and the communities they support (page 19). Many schools are the hub of the community, where children and their families come together to build local, often isolated, communities. Some communities will be split by the fact some children live at one side of the village to their friends. Some schools will also have to reduce staff if they are adversely affected by this change. At a time of challenging recruitment in schools, to lose excellent teachers and suport staff seems counterproductive to supporting young people recovering from the setback of the pandemic. The proposal also seems to be directly opposed to supporting disadvantaged students and closing the gap. If they are lucky enough to live in the right place they gain the challenge and support they need, if they don't then they will attend schools that are not as able to support their needs, therefore the disadvantaged gap widens further. Choice of school seems to be selective as it is only available to those who can financially afford it.
I think it would be very detrimental to our children to expect them to go to a different county to school potentially going to have children in schools in different counties (primary and secondary) which will have a huge affect on the family. Schools in different counties have different holidays, can't expect parents to have to sort childcare for different county holiday provision. It is a very bad proposal and really hope it doesn't go through.
It is a disgrace that as a household of two working parents who contribute a significant portion of our wages to income tax, that free transport to our chosen secondary school may not be provided. It is another example of working people being put upon while other groups who do not contribute to society are looked after left right and centre. Transport to a suitable and desired site of education should be an inaliable right and not be treated as a privelige.
How do you identify closest school - as crow flies or miles eg on Google?
As a resident living in Swaledale I think the roads network from Swaledale to Cumbria and Wensleydale are dangerous so secondary age children in Swaledale should still be able to go to Richmond regardless of where in the Dale, the B6270 is gritted up the Cumbria and Teesdale border to allow people And parents to get their children to school safely. Primary school children in Swaledale it is ridiculous when most patents that have 2 cars that a minibus service is put on for them to drive half a mile to school. Most have to drive past or to where the school is to get to work etc. it is a luxury to have the minibuses in my opinion and massive waste of money.
We live in Ingleton. Our eldest child attends Settle College and we are very happy with the excellent provision for lots of reasons. If the proposed amends go ahead nyc will still be paying for pupils to be transported to the "nearest@ school which is QES. So they would not be saving money at all. There should not be a blanket policy. If the Ingleton is in a unique situation. The proposal is ridiculous.

I understand that the proposed new policy does not have regard to the travel time or potential difficulties with some of the routes to the "nearest" school locations. For example I understand that, whereas children from Swaledale and Arkengarthdale generally go to Richmond after Year 6 at present, some may now be expected to go to Leyburn, Barnard Castle or Kirkby Stephen instead. This is notwithstanding that travel to and from those locations may in practice take longer and involve higher level routes on narrower roads which can often be difficult, problematic and dangerous particularly in winter and other unpredictable or adverse conditions. I therefore request that this element of the proposed new policy should be reconsidered
Significant school traffic increases through new outing villages including the bottleneck at Skeeby will significantly increase risks to pedestrian and road traffic safety due to an increase in private use vehicles required to transport children to school along an already congested route
I think your questionnaire is misleading. Trying to establish if we have understood your proposal as opposed to getting views on whether we agree with your proposal! Offering transport to our nearest school which isn't our catchment school is totally unacceptable. What if our nearest school has no places?? How do we get our child to school then? You are basically forcing parents to either pay for the transport (which is yet ANOTHER financial burden putting on families) or take our children to school ourselves therefore causing traffic chaos as hundreds of other parents do the same! What you are also yet to disclose under this new proposal is the cost of the transport should we chose to send our child to our catchment school?? This as a minimum should have been highlighted so we know what we are dealing with and are fully informed to make choices. Under the new proposal you would be dividing families based on what they can afford. For example, you would send a bus to my village to collect a child going to the "nearest school not in catchment" which would be free. Another bus will come along to collect a child going to the catchment school which the parents have had to pay for. Then another parent will jump in the car and take their child to the catchment school because they can't afford the bus and their child didn't get in to the "nearest school not in catchment". It all sounds such a mess!
Quite frankly, I think this will be of huge detriment to our area. Myself & husband both attended Settle College and have always intended on our children attending there too - it is our nearest high school IN North Yorkshire after all…! To think this option may now be taken away from us because of the new council set up is utterly ridiculous and very very sad. We as a family, amidst the cost of living crisis which many many families are suffering with also, will not be able to find an additional £2k every SINGLE year (for potentially 7 years for each child) to fund our children to go to the nearest high school within our district. How utterly ridiculous, discriminative and above all, a very selfish, money orientated move by NYC.

Yes. We live(Redacted) miles from Settle school and (Redacted) miles from Skipton secondary schools. We are not in the catchment for Settle, but we are for Skipton. Your proposed policy on distance calculation is opaque and does not provide us with any insight into what would actually be considered our nearest suitable school. We assume Settle, but that is not necessarily going to be the nearest, dependent on the preferred transport route which may not utilise minor roads. The different schools that we will consider for our children also includes Upper Wharfedale (about 8.5 miles away). We are not in catchment for this school. The proposed policy creates uncertainty over whether transport could be provided, even if we wished to and were capable of funding it ourselves. The proposed policy pushed the onus onto families to find transport solutions at their expense, with the only gain being that of a saving in expenditure for the authority. This is short sighted, and does not take account of the associated structure of the schools admittance and applications approach (i.e. why allow pupils to apply to a school that they could not realistically get to?)! This places pressure on families in both social, wellbeing, and economic terms. A better way would be to ask for contributions to transport costs from families that can afford to do so and allow families and their children the opportunity to apply to and attend the school of their choosing. The policy also does not allow for parents / carers contractual employment situations, and it will be a lottery regarding whether we could transport our children to school or not dependent on what kind off job we have. The policy is not therefore in keeping with the essential and priority aim of government that those capable of employment should be in employment. We strongly object to the proposed policy as whilst it may save financially for the authority in the short term, it will be damaging to the success and wellbeing of schools and pupils and their families.
Adjust the criteria to nearest school and school within x miles tolerance of another school in the catchment area. For example, Upper wharfedale is our closest school (Redacted) away, but our preferred school is Skipton girls high which is (Redacted) away. So its effectively penalising parents for living a few miles to one school or the other.
The fact that xhildren could be forced to go to a school where no other friends could be attending will have a negative effect on childresn mental health They have formed relationships which will help them transition into secondary and yoi will be removing this. Choldren in dofferent scjools with dofferent holidays will be a logistcal nightmare for single parents.
I think provision of school transport still needs to be the catchment school, not just to the nearest school. We live on the border of North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire- on the the north side, our catchment secondary school is King James but the nearest school is Wetherby High. There is no point in having transport to Wetherby High (as the nearest school) as my children will be going to King James and therefore provision should be made for that. I live in (Redacted), and the other 20 children who get on the bus in our village to get to King James will I am sure feel the same.

In my circumstances, without the provision of free transport i would struggle to safely get my children to school and back every day. We live in an area where they would be required to walk along an A road without adult supervision and as shodt workers we simply cannot escort them to school every morning because of work commitments. We have no family in the area to help with getting them to school and financially would struggle to add the cost of two bus passes to our outgoings. The children attend our closest geographical school for these reasons and the provision of free transport when living in the catchment area is important when you consider their safety without it. I believe that without it it is wholly probable that a child would be injured or killed whilst walking along a 60mph road to school. There is no alternative route that is safer for them and it is poorly lit, uneven under foot and involves crossing the railway. The safety of the children who live in the catchment area is paramount and should be seriously considered when making these changes. In my opinion the provision of transport for children attending a school many miles from their home and not their catchment area is where costs should be incurred for parents as this is a choice they make and commit to when not selecting their closest school

I don't really know how to describe the way in which this consultation has been managed other than to use the word 'shocking'. Every part of the process has been poorly executed, leaving schools and local families largely 'unaware' of the impact of the proposals. The following issues have arisen for us and by implication other schools: There was no 'easy to understand' information available for schools/ families The consultation was emailed to a member of staff in charge of buses rather than the Headteacher directly and did not arrive via The Red Bag No impact data was provided unless requested and even then, a very basic error was made and we received data that was entirely inaccurate. This will have been the case for other schools. We had to wait a long time for updated data and the opportunity to discuss our concerns with NYC officers, rendering a large part of the consultation process 'useless'- how can we respond to a consultation when we have no accurate facts to work on? The extension to the process was not shared until we raised this issue at our meeting on Friday 12 April (we were informed of this in the week before the Easter holidays. We were told the extension was in the Red Bag. We had already received the Red Bag that day and it was not included. The extension information was then emailed out via a second Rd Bag later in the day. The extension information did not include the reason ie that the initial data shared was flawed and so if a school had asked for data and had not realised errors were made, the school would be responding based on inaccurate facts. Schools have not been made aware of the impact on other schools either- something we have repeatedly asked for. There has been no updated financial modelling completed, based on the the revised impact data. We have therefore been unable to work effectively across our primary schools to ensure a joined up understanding of the future situation for our school (which will affect all parents with children in Y5 and below) and to respond as a group. I have also been unable to ensure our parents have an accurate shared understanding of the situation as we have had to wait so long for any clarity. I am absolutely sure that the vast majority of parents still have no idea of the implications of this as NYC has failed to work in a transparent way- certainly parents I have spoken to recently from our school and others had little, if any idea, until I sent a letter out this week explaining the changes in the simplest of terms. In terms of the proposal itself, due to the rural nature of North Yorkshire, travel to school should, by necessity be different to the minimum statutory requirement. If the proposals go ahead, and we do indeed end up with 140+ students fewer on roll, our offer will by definition be reduced. Staff will be made redundant and our curriculum and rich extra-curricular offer will shrink. Lots of families choose us because of these- especially those where the students have additional needs. I also have grave concerns for the future of a school based sixth form provision for the children in The Dales. Maintaining a Sixth Form is extremely difficult and with potentially 30 fewer students in each year group, it is hard to see how we can continue to sustain what we now offer and indeed at a certain point, any education offer can become unviable. As very little that we have said to date appears to have been listened to, it is with heavy heart that I fill this in. We have spent days and days working on this matter behind the scenes as the information from NYC has been so poor. I urge officers to listen to the responses to the consultation and make the decision to treat this unique situation in the 'exceptional' way it requires.

I have a child currently accessing transport provided by NY to attend our catchment area secondary school. We also have a further 3 children at primary school who wish to attend the same school in future. Our nearest school is out of our catchment area and I would feel uncomfortable making applications to this school if the eligibility criteria for applications does not change in line with transport policy. In addition, this school is about, but could possibly be less than 3 miles away based on the policy. The route is unpopulated with national speed limit routes which would not be safe for my children to walk unaccompanied, but could be deemed safe to walk with an adult which would leave us having to provide our own transportation. There is no service bus route. This would negatively impact the attendance of my children where any siblings are at primary school. We would have to be in two places at once. Currently my child at secondary school can safely walk to a bus stop for her NY transport from our home. This may also impact the earning ability of my family as one of us would need to reduce our working hours or cease work completely if reduced hours were not possible in demanding careers in order to be available to transport our children to their nearest school on time in absence of any provision or public service bus routes. I also note that it is very difficult for me to verify the costing information you have supplied in relation to transport costs of the county and these compared to other costs due to the delay in publishing audited accounts. There is no indication of how this policy could impact the numbers attending different schools and the pressures and outcomes this could cause in terms of under and over subscriptions - has this been considered? Has any consideration been given to whether cuts to public transportation could be reversed to compensate and alleviate any problems accessing alternative arrangements? Has any consideration been given to the interaction with school place eligibility which is heavily based on catchment area so at odds with this policy? Where will the savings be directed? Are funds to be reinvested in children's services or taken away from children? How would this impact council tax payments?
This seems like a poor proposal, removing choice for parents and also students. This also affect schools such as Richmond School which has a very proud and ancient history of serving the rural and local community. If these changes go ahead, the school role will be significantly affected, removing curriculum choice and taking jobs out of the local economy.
I strongly disagree with the nearest school not being in catchment. It's going to end up with children not getting places at their nearest choice and then not getting transport to their catchment school. It would also involve changing bus routes sometimes to pick one child from a family up when the others get a different bus to the catchment school. Either redraw the catchment areas so children attend the nearest school or keep transporting children to the catchment school. Changing the policy discriminates against rural children and adds to rural deprivation
Settle college could lose pupils and therefore funding if Bentham pupils have to travel to QES in Cumbria. QES is way too big. Settle college is a better school and shares holiday dates with the local primary schools, an important factor for families. Residents should not have to pay to send their children to the better, in county school.
My children attended Settle College and were eligible for free transport as were many other children in Bentham. I firmly believe that free transport should continue for future Bentham pupils. Settle College is the closest school in travelling time and it is in North Yorkshire, and provides quality education for the children of our community. Withdrawing free travel will mean that local children will have to travel outside North Yorkshire and will have a significant negative financial impact on the school.

It seems that, unfortunately, finance seems to take precedent over what is right and best for children, young people and their families. This proposal could mean that siblings attend different schools for a time and it would also mean children moving to a school in a different county to the one they are currently in. The larger issue here is that very good schools will lose pupils to schools that are not as suitable or effective which makes this whole scenario morally abhorrent. I do not know why an LA would want to take students out of a strong improving school and put them in what could be oversubscribed weaker provisions. The modelling and planning around this whole agenda has been poor - inaccurate and not fully thought through. In all honesty, this is a consultation regarding a not fully formed idea rather than an actual proposal. Has it been confirmed that other schools have the facilities and staffing to cater for these children? In some cases - we are talking about huge changes for the sake of 1-2 miles on a journey. The upheaval would be huge and we could end up with a big school having empty space and then the cost of upgrading the other schools (at a cost) with temporary buildings in order to facilitate the moves. School places should not become a postcode lottery otherwise deprivation increases as do life chances. People will start to sell perfectly nice homes and move just to be nearer the school of choice as was the case in years gone by. A review of transport arrangements was always inevitable however clear planning, timely consultation with actual evidence of impact and mapping and a graduated approach would be far more appropriate. Or just increase council tax a little in order to spread the cost burden without the drastic action here. I think most people would rather pay a little more council tax and maintain the status quo. We hope the council will reconsider this rushed decision and spend more time planning and ensure that, at the heart of this, young people are taken into consideration and what is best for them. We are a very good school who deserve to maintain the students we have and look after well. We have a long history of providing a good education to young people in the local community and to reduce this capacity would be detrimental to our school, the young people and the local area.
MY child currently attends St Hilda's primary in Ampleforth (Redacted). Should this school close (which is under consultation at the same time), we would be forced to our nearest school, which is being defined as St Benedict's RC school. St Benedict's is not designated as a rural school it is not a village school, and has a selective admissions policy based on religion. How can we, as parents who are expected to work to create more taxes for UK wealth (government recent policies, for example the additional free school hours for <3 year olds, are wholly designed to make more parents work to ultimately contribute more in tax), be expected to have to reduce our hours to be able to send our child to an inclusive school (e.g. Helmsley). This is leaving us with no choice but to give up/reduce work hours - ultimately, it may mean we leave a currently thriving service village. I can understand how this policy is suitable for more urban areas where there are several schools within small radius areas and therefore catchment areas are relatively arbitrary, but in a rural area we could be in a situation where our nearest school is not suitable on religious grounds (would you send a Catholic child to a Jewish or Islamic school for example?) and does not have a catchment so does not have to take us. Or a catchment school (Husthwaite) that we are within the admission area, but could not travel to, or the nearest inclusive school (Helmsley) but we are not in catchment and so could easily get turned away (in 2027/28 they are currently expected to be at maximum capacity). This ;policy is does not work for rural communities where there are several near schools, which allow parent choice. This is actively removing choice heavily from working parents and is discriminatory towards those of either a none or different faith.

Appendix D2

Date	From	Message
9/3/24	Rishi Sunak	Dear Sir/Madam For your information below. Dear Mr Sunak I have recently learnt about the potential changes to Home-School transport in our area, meaning that our children will only receive paid transport to our closest school. This will potentially have a huge impact on our three children's (currently aged 10, 8 and 3) secondary school education. After thriving at Richmond School myself and progressing to University where I achieved a First Class Honours degree, I will always take their education seriously. My husband had a positive experience at Richmond School too. With the proposed changes, transport will only be provided for Kirkby Stephen Grammar School. Whilst closest, this involves a very tricky journey to school during the winter months over Tailbridge (547m above sea level), which I know you are familiar with. A diversion on lower routes would involve a 50 mile + journey, which is not practical at their age. Schools are complaining about poor attendance records and these changes will definitely not help in our area. Getting a bus company to tender for such a route would be difficult and I would imagine one that would go for the tender, might not be particularly reliable. I would hope the Council will agree when the route is assessed. The second closest school would be Wensleydale School. Again, there would be difficult inclined route to pass if the shortest route was taken, or even the valley routes include lower gritting priorities than the direct Priority 1 gritting route (after the first part from our house to the B6270) to Richmond. Whilst the fees for transport to the preferred school for our children would be considerable and a challenge for us (approximately £2,100/year when they all reach secondary school), we would be forced to pay it if the changes go ahead. My biggest worry would be that a bus would not be available for spaces at all if the changes happen and taking them to school ourselves would not be possible with our jobs (an upland hill farming family and I work part-time away from the farm too). I understand the change will reduce costs in some parts of the county but with only a 3 mile distance between Leyburn and Richmond for us, the difference is negligible but could have a significant impact on our children's school career. I appreciate other counties do not have the option of transport to their catchment schools already (local school only), but I think the nature of our rural area is the reason that the change has not been made here and generations have attended school in Richmond. There are many other families who will be affected negatively in upper Swaledale and I am sure

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		others will be writing to you. Our catchment options are currently the two schools in Richmond and Wensleydale School, I would really hope this continues to be the case and hope you might be able to help in our fight. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Yours sincerely
9/3/24	Rishi Sunak	Dear Mr Rishi Sunak, I write to you as a parent from upper Swaledale with deep concerns about the proposed changes to the current Home-School transport policy. If these changes go ahead our child and all other children in our area will only receive paid transport to our closest school (Kirkby Stephen) which as you know from Keld is over a particularly dangerous route which is never fully gritted in the winter months due to it being deemed unsafe for gritters, let alone buses and cars. I struggle to believe you will get any transport company to take the tender as they will not safely be able to get to school certain times of the year, if they do Swaledale children will unfortunately have very poor attendance records, this will ultimately affect their education which we obviously don't want to see. We get extreme winters in Swaledale with snowdrifts, as well as black ice and sheet ice which on any road is not nice but on the Tailbridge road is lethal. A diversion from Keld to Kirkby Stephen is 50 plus miles which is ridiculous for children of school age. The last person to go to school in Kirkby Stephen from Swaledale is Doris Harker nee Whitehead, this was over 50 years ago which in itself surely highlights that no one from this area has chosen to go to school over this route for a very long time due to the road simply not being fit for transport in winter months. Our second closest school is in Leyburn (Wensleydale School) which also has no safe route in bad weather, Grinton top and Stainton Lane are both roads that are not well gritted in winter. There is only a three mile difference in distance from the Keld - Richmond route and the Keld - Leyburn route. This in my mind is a no brainer especially when you take into account the safety of our children should be the most important factor when it comes to school transport. Not distance. Not money. I urge you to help us stop these changes and put our childrens safety first. Yours sincerely
14/03/24	Rishi Sunak	Having recently been made aware of the new school transport consultation published by NYCC, I have raised my concerns with the council but would like to bring your attention to the issues this may cause, albeit I'm sure you will be being inundated with similar correspondence from other parents in the Dales. In the consultation document there is much focus and consideration on the "safety of walked routes", obviously aimed at those within the 2/3 miles of their school, but no mention of the safety of roads for buses. I assume this is completely obvious and therefore think it is unnecessary for me to be concerned, however I would just like it to be checked that these proposed changes won't actually come into place for the children of Upper Swaledale, and their transport arrangements will remain the same,

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		and they will travel down the dale - currently to Richmond School. This consultation suggests that transport would be provided to 'nearest suitable school' but isn't very clear on what 'suitable' means. The nearest school for Upper Swaledale by road miles is Kirkby Stephen, in Cumbria, but I trust this won't actually be an option that NYCC are considering. The B6270 from Keld to Kirkby Stephen is not a suitable route at all in winter months, which often runs from November through to March. The road is sometimes not gritted at all, due to it being deemed not safe for a gritter. For anyone who lives at the top of Swaledale and experiences first hand how exposed the road is to the extreme weather conditions in winter, it is obvious just how many days school the children would miss if their school transport was over the country border. This would be of huge detriment to their education. The idea of children being transported over a road with a 14% gradient, at 530m altitude to school is simply ridiculous. It is just common sense to continue to take all children of Swaledale down the dale towards Richmond. I understand the proposed changes are with the aim of saving costs. The current transport situation for the children of Swaledale are as follows: A Mini bus from Ravenseat to Gunnerside (10miles), then a coach from Gunnerside to Richmond (17miles). Currently 2 bus contracts, for the whole of Swaledale, with total mileage of 27 miles. Under the proposed changes, the children of Swaledale would be split, around the Gunnerside area, with the children of Upper Swaledale (Gunnerside up to Ravenseat) being transported to Kirkby Stephen (their nearest school), so the situation for Swaledale would be: A Mini bus from Gunnerside to Kirkby Stephen (17miles), plus the existing bus from Gunnerside to Richmond(17miles), so 2 bus contracts, for the whole of Swaledale, with total mileage of 34 miles. Therefore for this specific community, I cannot see how this would be a cost saving, instead it increases total miles between the 2 buses, as well as travelling over a very unsuitable road. I appreciate that I am sure there are many other areas in the whole of North Yorkshire where these changes will decrease costs and improve efficiencies, however I trust that the whole point of this being a consultation is to highlight/confirm any exceptions to these very simplistic changes, and Upper Swaledale must be one of them. The communities living and working in the Dales already face many challenges both logistically and financially for school and work opportunities. Bringing in changes to transport policies like this would completely deter any young families from moving to the area, specifically Upper Swaledale, if their only school options where transport is provided is by travelling over a dangerously high route. NYCC will surely agree that safety is paramount in defining which school is ‘suitable’. If parents had to transport their children to the school that is truly suitable

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		(Richmond) then this would have a hugely negative impact on working parents. Many of these working parents have overcome the challenges of maintaining a career alongside raising young children, and if transporting their children from Upper Swaledale to Richmond, two times a day, was to become the only option, this would take 2 hours out of every working day for all of those working parents. There could be almost 20 vehicles travelling 54 miles a day. I do hope NYCC is not aiming for the dales to become only a museum where tourists visit at weekends, and instead is going to support those who live, work and look after these rural areas. I have never before felt the need to email yourself about any issues, however in this instance the impact this could potentially have is so huge I feel I must contact you and I hope you can provide support in reassuring the people of Upper Swaledale that these changes will not be coming into place for our community.
14/03/24	Rishi Sunak	I have recently learnt about the potential changes to Home-School transport in our area, meaning that our children will only receive paid transport to our closest school. *[REDACTED TEXT]* With the proposed changes, transport will only be provided for Kirkby Stephen Grammar School. Whilst closest, this involves a very tricky journey to school during the winter months over Tailbridge (547m above sea level), which I know you are familiar with. A diversion on lower routes would involve a 50 mile + journey, which is not practical at their age. Schools are complaining about poor attendance records and these changes will definitely not help in our area. Getting a bus company to tender for such a route would be difficult and I would imagine one that would go for the tender, might not be particularly reliable. I would hope the Council will agree when the route is assessed. The second closest school would be Wensleydale School. Again, there would be difficult inclined route to pass if the shortest route was taken, or even the valley routes include lower gritting priorities than the direct Priority 1 gritting route *[REDACTED TEXT]* to Richmond. Whilst the fees for transport to the preferred school for our children would be considerable and a challenge for us (approximately £2,100/year when they all reach secondary school), we would be forced to pay it if the changes go ahead. My biggest worry would be that a bus would not be available for spaces at all if the changes happen and taking them to school ourselves would not be possible with our jobs *[REDACTED TEXT]* I understand the change will reduce costs in some parts of the county but with only a 3 mile distance between Leyburn and Richmond for us, the difference is negligible but could have a significant impact on our children's school career. I appreciate other counties do not have the option of transport to their catchment schools already (local school only), but I think the nature of our rural area is the reason that the change has not been made here and generations have attended school in Richmond. There are many other families who will be affected negatively in upper Swaledale and I am sure

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		others will be writing to you. Our catchment options are currently the two schools in Richmond and Wensleydale School, **REDACTED TEXT CONTINING PERSONAL AND IDENTIFYING INFORMATION*
14/03/24	Rishi Sunak	I write to you as a parent from upper Swaledale with deep concerns about the proposed changes to the current Home-School transport policy. If these changes go ahead our child and all other children in our area will only receive paid transport to our closest school (Kirkby Stephen) which as you know from Keld is over a particularly dangerous route which is never fully gritted in the winter months due to it being deemed unsafe for gritters, let alone buses and cars. I struggle to believe you will get any transport company to take the tender as they will not safely be able to get to school certain times of the year, if they do Swaledale children will unfortunately have very poor attendance records, this will ultimately affect their education which we obviously don't want to see. We get extreme winters in Swaledale with snowdrifts, as well as black ice and sheet ice which on any road is not nice but on the Tailbridge road is lethal. A diversion from Keld to Kirkby Stephen is 50 plus miles which is ridiculous for children of school age. The last person to go to school in Kirkby Stephen from Swaledale [*REDACTED TEXT*] 50 years ago which in itself surely highlights that no one from this area has chosen to go to school over this route for a very long time due to the road simply not being fit for transport in winter months. Our second closest school is in Leyburn (Wensleydale School) which also has no safe route in bad weather, Grinton top and Stainton Lane are both roads that are not well gritted in winter. There is only a three mile difference in distance from the Keld - Richmond route and the Keld - Leyburn route. This in my mind is a no brainer especially when you take into account the safety of our children should be the most important factor when it comes to school transport. Not distance. Not money. I urge you to help us stop these changes and put our childrens safety first. **REDACTED TEXT CONTINING PERSONAL AND IDENTIFYING INFORMATION*
14.03/24	Rishi Sunak	It has recently been brought to our attention that our local council have been reviewing their home to school transport policies. As a part of the policy, North Yorkshire county council would like to amend and change a major part (in our eyes living in the western part of the North Yorkshire) of the policy! In which we think this would have massive detrimental affects on our children! The new policy is stating that the children would have to travel to the nearest school, and this means it could be in a neighbouring county! For us this would be our children would have to apply for Kirkby Stephen school! This for us is not an option! The road is not suitable for a bus or taxi to be carrying school children especially in winter! This road does not get gritted it sits as a height of 1740ft and is completely exposed to all elements of weather! Previously when we have been asking for this road to be gritted, Westmorland council have deemed it not safe for a gritter to be travelling on in bad weather! But yet you're willing to put our children on this road?!

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		If we are right in thinking if this policy goes ahead but we chose not to send to Kirkby Stephen purely on safety issues for our own children, we then have to pay and organise our own transport then to the school of your own choice! The families of the upper Swaledale community, in which we are a part of your constituency. Would like to take this opportunity in asking whether you could discuss this matter further with North Yorkshire county council, as we feel our opinions alone may not help! We just all feel we are getting punished for the beautiful part of the world we live in!
15/03/24	Rishi Sunak	I have just been made aware of proposed changes to school transport and catchment areas by North Yorkshire County Council. I live in Arkengarthdale and under the proposal my child would have to go to secondary school in Barnard Castle, which would mean crossing the A66 road and the Stang Road which is routinely impassable in the winter with snowfall, both of which are extremely dangerous! Not only this but all students in Reeth and Gunnerside Primary School would be split up and sent to different schools which will be deeply distressing for all concerned and totally avoidable. Please put yourself in our shoes, would you consider it acceptable for your children to be sent on a potentially dangerous journey on a daily basis? There is a meeting at Richmond Town Hall tomorrow at 1.30pm that I will be attending with other very concerned parents, we really need your help! I urge you to look into this quickly and take it as seriously as we are.
21/03/24	Rishi Sunak	*[Redacted text]* Reeth and Gunnerside school, it is a small school that around 80 children attend. The proposed changes would mean that our children will be entitled to transport to only their nearest school which would be Wensleydale School in Leyburn. Other children that attend Reeth and Gunnerside school that live further up Swaledale will have transport provided to Kirby Stephen School and those living in Arkengarthdale will have transport provided to Barnard Castle school. There are many reasons why I believe NYC has not thought about the implications to the proposed changes, and I have listed these below. Safety: Wensleydale school is 12 miles away from our home, but the road can be very dangerous, and it is not a priority road that is gritted in the winter, the road can be very steep in places and not always safe to pass other oncoming vehicles, there is also a 7.5 ton weight limit restriction on the road. The current catchment school where transport is provided for all of those living in Swaledale and Arkendarthdale is Richmond school, the road to Richmond along the B6270 is well maintained, gritted as a priority road and is the safest route to school in and out of our Dale. Children living further up Swaledale will be provided with transport to Kirby Stephen school which means them having to travel on roads that are not gritted and can be steep in some places.

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		Children that live in Langthwaite in Arkengarthdale will be provided with transport to Barnard Castle school, again not only going over the Stang which is an ungritted dangerous road, it also means them having to cross the A66. The Department for Education states that school transport will be provided for children if there is not a 'safe' route to walk to school. Why does this policy not extend to mention that transport will be provided on 'safe' roads. Another concern is that children are going to miss a number of days at school due to the roads not being safe to travel on during winter months. Community: Dividing the friendship groups already made at primary school will ruin our community for generations to come, it is unfair to isolate any child when they have been in a class size of 8, then to potentially split them from their friends due to their postcode when being sent to secondary school. Jobs: *[Redacted text]* if transport is not provided to Richmond school I will have to leave my job so that I am able to drive my children to school each day and pick them up, I will look for another job in Richmond. For my employer and many others in the Dales this will have a detrimental impact, they are already short staffed due to the cost of affordable homes and affordable rent in the Dales. Housing: There are many second homes in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, by changing the transport to school it may have a significant knock-on effect of young families wanting to bring their children up here. It could potentially reduce the cost of houses due to families of school age children not wanting to live here or it even increase the amount of second homes, both of which will ruin the community. Local transport: There is very limited local transport that our children could use so this is not even an option. Cost: The proposed cost is just under £800 a year per child if we choose to send our children to Richmond school and that is only if there is a space on the bus to do so, it is not a cost that I can personally afford so I feel that NYC will be forcing myself and many others into a decision based on not having the money to pay for the transport. Consultation: I attended the consultation meeting on Thursday 14th March at Richmond Town Hall along with 6 other people, one of those being the head teacher from Richmond school. I would have been surprised to see such a low turn out however I was expecting it as most other parents I have spoken to did not realise the meeting was on, nor did they understand what the proposed changes would mean for their families. I was also surprised and saddened to hear that the head teacher of Richmond school had not been told about the proposed changes even though it was going to have a detrimental impact on her school. I asked at the meeting why a consultation had not taken place in Swaledale or at Reeth or Gunnerside considering it is going to impact every pupil at the school and the community, I was told that it was because they could not

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		find anywhere to hold the meeting. I have asked as a matter of urgency that a consultation meeting is held in this area before the closing date of the consultation period on April 12th, I was advised they would 'see what they could do'. I understand NYC need to save money, but I do not believe putting this cost onto families is the correct way. I do not also understand how NYC will save money as currently they provide two coaches, these will have to be replaced with at least 5 or 6 minibuses due to the many other schools it will have to provide transport to, a coach will not be able to travel on the road to Wensleydale school due to the restrictions. I am a very concerned parent and I do not believe that any consideration has been taken about the safety of our children when travelling to school or the impact it will have for our community, I feel that NYC are putting initial financial benefits above these. **REDACTED TEXT CONTINING PERSONAL AND IDENTIFYING INFORMATION*
22/03/24	Julian Smith	Following the recent Local Government reorganisation (carried out at the behest of your Government), when Craven District Council and others were subsumed into the much larger and more remote North Yorkshire Council, based at Northallerton, we on the western periphery of the District are now seeing the first fruits of this change. Tomorrow afternoon (Thursday 21st March), a public meeting will be held, here in Ingleton, to explain plans to amend the Home School Travel Policy. The main proposal is 'C - Amendment to the main eligibility criterion to be 'nearest school (with places available)', to match the statutory requirement.' This bland-sounding proposal has considerable, very far-reaching consequences. The nearest secondary school to Ingleton, Bentham and Burton, is in the next county, QES at Kirkby Lonsdale, in Cumbria - 7 miles from Ingleton. Settle College, in N. Yorkshire, is 11 miles from Ingleton. Under the proposal, in future, only travel from Ingleton to QES at Kirkby Lonsdale would be subsidised. The Council clearly anticipates sending children across the County boundary - that is specifically mentioned in the FAQ's on the Consultation. The ramifications are: 1. Everyone leaving the local primary schools would have to apply to QES (Kirkby Lonsdale), initially, which would not have the capacity for all the children. (However, school finances being roll-number dependent, you can be sure they would cram in as many as humanly possible!). Most local children would be sent to QES, but a few others (chosen on a random basis), would not, and would still go to Settle College.

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		Families would be split, to everyone's great inconvenience - and bear in mind that Cumbria and North Yorkshire tend to have entirely different holiday dates. 2. Because Settle College would no longer have these important feeder schools within its catchment, it is estimated it would lose a huge amount of income, and would probably quickly become unviable as a unit. Settle is already a modest-sized, rural secondary school, so is already vulnerable to the financial effects of scale, and it may, perhaps, be considered less important by those in power on the other side of the Pennines. If Settle College were to close, then the children from Settle, Horton and all the surrounding areas (including some travelling from Ingleton etc.) would have to be transported - at great extra expense and hardship - to Skipton (26 miles from Ingleton, on a difficult road). The deleterious effects of such changes to the towns and villages here in West Craven surely hardly need spelling out, as they are obvious and wide-ranging - but perhaps not so to Council bean-counters? 3. Less obviously, but of vital importance, the children from Ingleton and the other schools mentioned currently have the benefit of being part of the North Yorkshire catchment for sporting and other cultural activities. Running, for instance, which is enjoyed greatly by redacted text and redacted text school friends, is based at Giggleswick. Take them out of North Yorkshire's ambit, and they will have to join up with Cumbrian schools, which will be far less convenient, at much greater distance - and impractical on school nights. 4. Although few in number and living near the borders of 'God's Own Country,' and therefore of little consequence, we still pay Council Tax and Business Rates to North Yorkshire Council, and we are entitled to proper services from them in return - especially as those Council Taxes are levied at a higher rate than in Cumbria! The Council will doubtless claim they have to make savings, and this will help them more effectively spend scarce funds. However, I understand, on very good authority, (though unofficially, for obvious reasons!), that the comparative costs to the Council of transporting children to Settle College and QES are - exactly the same! That's because these costs aren't primarily based on mileage, but on time involved, which is identical. So, if there is no actual fiscal advantage to the Council in making this change, one has to ask - what is the point of this exercise? And one is driven to conclude that it must surely be to drive Settle College out of business, in the name of centralisation and 'efficiency.' That would be myopic lunacy. This is a matter which is too important to be left to the tender mercy of a far-away Council with myriad financial problems to solve. *]* **REDACTED TEXT CONTINING PERSONAL AND IDENTIFYING INFORMATION*
26/03/24	Julian Smith	I am writing to you with regards to the consultation that is currently happening for school transport in NYCC. I feel strongly that the rural communities of North Craven are going to be left with no choice but to send their child out of county to QES at Kirkby Lonsdale, as they won't be able to afford school transport to Settle

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		College. The long term affect will be that Settle College will be forced to close due to low numbers. I attended the meeting Ingleton last week, and couldn't help feeling that the blanket approach that is being proposed just will not work for North Craven. **REDACTED TEXT CONTINING PERSONAL AND IDENTIFYING INFORMATION*
28/03/24	Rishi Sunak	We, Arkengarthdale Parish Council, are contacting you with regards to the proposed changes in school transport policy, since we have found the online consultation to be impractical for a parish council. We object to the proposed changes and outline our concerns below. We have also written to NYC to Cllrs Wilkinson and Carlton as we would like our concerns to count as our submission to the consultation. We have been unable to complete the online survey as it has been designed for individual respondents (parents/pupils), rather than groups/committees who need to be able to view the entire survey (rather than one question at a time) in order to reach an agreed response in a time-efficient manner. Neither the technical format nor the question format of the survey makes it easy for a parish council to complete. Our first concern is the timing of the public consultation meeting: Holding it on a lunchtime in the middle of a working week was not convenient for many people, and indeed several parents have indicated that it was impossible for them to attend this meeting owing to work commitments. Our second concern is the lack of clarity in the justification for awarding a contract to a national taxi firm (24x7 Ltd) apparently based in Essex, operating from Ripon. This firm will send buses and drivers from Ripon to transport pupils from Arkengarthdale and Swaledale to Wensleydale, although a local bus operator already exists in Reeth. With no local knowledge of the communities, outlying properties and the local road conditions under certain weather conditions, we are unconvinced that this proposed new arrangement can (a) make financial sense, (b) be environmentally sustainable and, most importantly, (c) be in the best interests of pupil safety. Our third concern is the effect that the proposed changes could have on the interests and well-being of local school pupils. The populations of Arkengarthdale and Swaledale feed the primary school at Reeth, which is geographically and socially the 'centre' of a very close-knit, supportive community for children and adults. Both dales are several miles long. The changes to the policy would effectively segregate local children into three zones according to the geographic distances they live from the nearest school. We can only summise that someone with no local experience of the dynamic of the upper dales' communities or the character of roads between upper Swaledale and Kirkby Stephen (Cumbria), or between upper Arkengarthdale and Barnard Castle (County Durham), or between lower Swaledale/lower Arkengarthdale and Leyburn has devised this

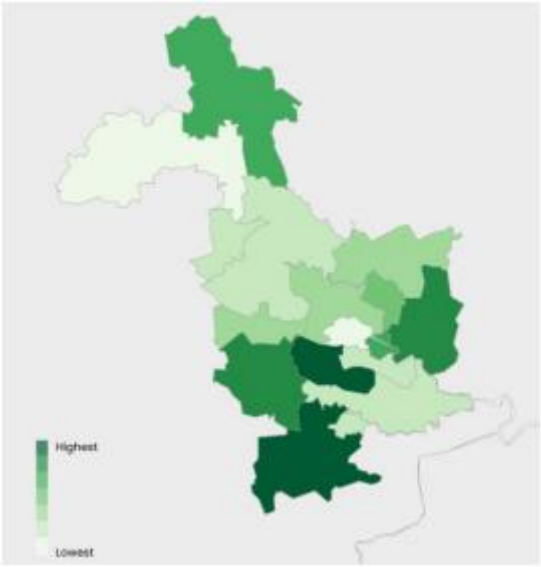
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		plan. Not only are all these roads frequently impassible in bad weather, but the notion of pulling young children out of their core community by sending them to three different schools in three different counties based on journey differentials of just a few miles seems incommensurate with the amount of disruption and distress it could cause. Arkengarthdale Parish Council would like to emphasise the sentiment expressed by many in the local community which is that anyone living in these two dales would not consider this plan to be a sensible or practical proposition as it increases the risk levels in terms of road safety, school attendance and personal well-being. We strongly oppose the proposed changes, and request that the option to continue with existing arrangements is given serious consideration. We would be grateful for clarification on the justification for proposing these changes. If this is financially motivated, we would be grateful if you could share the calculations with us that relate to the options for the current and proposed school bus services specifically for Arkengarthdale, so that we can see for example, how the additional costs relating to increased winter maintenance on the proposed 'Priority Two' bus routes (The Stang and Leyburn moor road) and the increased cost of sending at least twice as many vehicles and drivers to Arkengarthdale make the proposed changes financially feasible. We look forward to hearing from you, Arkengarthdale Parish Council
04/04/24	Rishi Sunak	We, Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council, are contacting you with regard to the proposed changes in school transport policy, since we have found the online consultation to be impractical for a parish council. We object to the proposed changes and outline our concerns below. We have also written to NYC to Cllr Wilkinson as we would like our concerns to count as our submission to the consultation. We have been unable to complete the online survey as it has been designed for individual respondents (parents/pupils), rather than groups/committees who need to be able to view the entire survey (rather than one question at a time) in order to reach an agreed response in a time-efficient manner. Neither the technical format nor the question format of the survey makes it easy for a parish council to complete. Our first concern is the timing of the public consultation meeting: Holding it on a lunchtime in the middle of a working week was not convenient for many people, and indeed several parents have indicated that it was impossible for them to attend this meeting owing to work commitments. Our second concern is the lack of clarity in the justification for awarding a contract to a national taxi firm (24x7 Ltd) apparently based in Essex, operating from Ripon. This firm will send buses and drivers from Ripon to transport pupils from Arkengarthdale and Swaledale to Wensleydale, although a local bus operator already exists in Reeth. With no local knowledge of the communities, outlying properties and the local road conditions under certain weather conditions, we are unconvinced that this proposed new arrangement can (a) make financial sense, (b) be

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		environmentally sustainable and, most importantly, (c) be in the best interests of pupil safety. Our third concern is the effect that the proposed changes could have on the interests and well-being of local school pupils. The populations of Arkengarthdale and Swaledale feed the primary school at Reeth, which is geographically and socially the 'centre' of a very close-knit, supportive community for children and adults. Both dales are several miles long. The changes to the policy would effectively segregate local children into three zones according to the geographic distances they live from the nearest school. We can only surmise that someone with no local experience of the dynamic of the upper dales' communities or the character of roads between upper Swaledale and Kirkby Stephen (Cumbria), or between upper Arkengarthdale and Barnard Castle (County Durham), or between lower Swaledale/lower Arkengarthdale and Leyburn has devised this plan. Not only are all these roads frequently impassible in bad weather, but the notion of pulling young children out of their core community by sending them to three different schools in three different counties based on journey differentials of just a few miles seems incommensurate with the amount of disruption and distress it could cause. Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council would like to emphasize the sentiment expressed by many in the local community which is that anyone living in these two dales would not consider this plan to be a sensible or practical proposition as it increases the risk levels in terms of road safety, school attendance and personal well-being. We strongly oppose the proposed changes, and request that the option to continue with existing arrangements is given serious consideration. We would be grateful for clarification on the justification for proposing these changes. If this is financially motivated, we would be grateful if you could share the calculations with us that relate to the options for the current and proposed school bus services specifically for Reeth, so that we can see for example, how the additional costs relating to increased winter maintenance on the proposed 'Priority Two' bus routes (Leyburn moor road) and the increased cost of sending at least twice as many vehicles and drivers to Arkengarthdale make the proposed changes financially feasible. We look forward to hearing from you, Best wishes Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council
24/04/24	Keir Mather	**24 April 2024 Enquiry received from Keir Mather MP** Please find attached Keir's response for the Home to School Travel Policy consultation dated 24 April 2024. Please could you kindly ensure this is received by the appropriate team(s) - I understand the consultation closes this week. To whom it may concern, I am writing to you in relation to the proposals for a revised Home to School Travel Policy.

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		It is my understanding that the consultation on the new policy ends this week. I note that, in the Council's draft proposals consultation, it was noted that the authority would be seeking the views of local Members of Parliament on the changes. Speaking to constituents across Selby and Ainsty, it has become increasingly apparent that the proposed changes have raised questions and concerns for families who stand to be impacted. I have since carried out a survey, sent to all those who had contacted me on this issue specifically, and also shared via my social media. I intend to share a copy of your anticipated response with those who engaged with the survey - so please do let me know if any of it is to remain confidential. I understand that lots of families are confused about the impact of the proposed amendments for their locality. 50% of survey respondents were not previously aware of the proposed changes. Families have highlighted to me that they would like further clarity on the policy, specifically in relation to school catchment areas. Issues have been highlighted around safety for pupils. One respondent said that the policy, as the proposals currently stand, would mean that their child had to take a 48-minute walk to school along a busy highway, with no proper footpath and inadequate street lighting during the darker months. The Selby area could be impacted disproportionately by the proposed amendment to the main eligibility criterion for free transport to be 'nearest school'. Selby's position on the edge of North Yorkshire means that several of my constituency's communities lie on a tricounty border. For many families in these areas, the 'nearest school' often lies outside the county. The below map shows the level of response to the survey by ward in my constituency:  I would be grateful if you could outline how the council plans to 'assess travel requirements on the grounds of special educational needs, disability and/or mobility on a case-by-case basis for eligible children'.

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		SEND parents have expressed their feeling that greater clarity is needed on this and the proposed changes to travel allowances. As you know, the Selby area also does not have a specialist SEND school. I am pleased that the application for the much-needed new special school for the area is progressing through the planning process. Given that the implementation date is before the new school is set to open, many of the parents who have responded to my survey have understandably expressed concern that choice of provision for children with SEND may now be reduced even further by the proposed changes. Please could you outline whether any specific steps will be taken to mitigate the impact of the changes on the Selby area, taking into account the aforementioned lack of SEND provision and the cross-border challenges? Many parents are understandably worried about the financial impact of this policy change. Families tell me they are struggling with the rising cost of living, and whilst I'm conscious of the need to manage expenditure, I would be grateful if you could outline if any further support will be made available to families. I understand that the 'statutory provision for lowincome families' remains unaffected, however I recognise not all families who will struggle with transport costs will be eligible for this provision. I would welcome any further support you might be able to introduce to mitigate financial worries for families in the Selby area. I am grateful to you for taking the views of my constituents into consideration. It is very important to me that those impacted by changes have the opportunity to voice their concerns. I would be more than happy to discuss any of the above, or any of the details of my survey in greater detail at a mutually convenient time. Thank you for your anticipated response. With best wishes, Keir Mather MP Member of Parliament for Selby and Ainsty

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Appendix D3

Date	From	Message
21/2/24	Kirk Hammerton	**Received from Kirk Hammerton Parish Council** **NYC CONSULTATION ON FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT ENTITLEMENT – KHPC RESPONSE** This is Kirk Hammerton Parish Council's response to North Yorkshire Council's consultation document proposing a revised policy for Home to School Transport. Our response focuses on the main proposed policy change, as described in Part 2C of the explanatory document –"***Amendment to the main eligibility criterion to be "nearest school (with places available)"*** Background We are responding to the consultation not only with regard to how it will affect current secondary school age pupils who live in our Parish, but also having in mind the "Maltkiln" new housing development which NYC proposes to deliver on land close to our village, some of which is within our parish boundary. NYC's Planning Department has recently published a Development Plan Document for Maltkiln. There is to be no secondary school in the new settlement. Pupils will be expected to travel each day to Boroughbridge High School, which is to be upgraded using a capital contribution from the Maltkiln developer. We assume this means that BBHS will be the sole "catchment" school for pupils living in Maltkiln, just as it is at present for pupils who live in Kirk Hammerton. In the case of Maltkiln and KH, the nearest school geographically in North Yorkshire is King James, Knaresborough. That school is also the easiest for pupils to travel to using public transport, because of the train service linking Knaresborough with Cattal and Hammerton stations. King James is not, however, a catchment school. Pupils living in KH (and presumably also Maltkiln) can apply for a place at King James, but pupils who live in the King James catchment area are given priority. There are sometimes places available at that school, but availability tends to be limited. Depending on demographic changes, whether the school is full, or whether some places are available, can vary from one year to the next. It is arguable that schools in Wetherby and Acomb, in York, may be marginally closer to Kirk Hammerton than either KJ or BBHS. Children do not attend those schools, because they are in a different education authority area. We are assuming that the new policy would not be applied in a way that denies free travel to KH residents because schools like these are slightly closer. Commentary The vast majority of our children go to BBHS, because it's their catchment school. All children attending the catchment school should be given free transport. If child A reaches year 7 in 2025 and chooses to attend BBHS, in a year when there happen to be places also available in KJ, it is unfair to require child A's parents to have to pay for transport, simply because child A had the misfortune to reach year 7 age in a year when

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		another school, which they never wanted to go to anyway and is not their catchment school, happens to have places available. If child B, one year younger, elects to go to BBHS in 2026, on reaching year 7 age, and in 2026 there happen to be no places available at KJ, does this mean child B gets free transport to Boroughbridge when child A has to pay for transport for the whole of their time at school? It's obvious that this is unfair. Entitlement to free transport becomes a lottery. When child B reaches year 8, if it then turns out that KJ suddenly has a place available in year 8 (maybe a family happened to relocate, so their child no longer goes to KJ) does that mean child B suddenly has to start paying for transport? The effect of the new policy will be that more parents just drive their children to BBHS, rather than pay for the bus. The inevitable increase in car usage is contrary to NYC's other policies on protecting the environment (and, indeed, directly contradicts its policies for Maltkiln). Given that all the secondary school age children from Maltkiln will be expected to attend BBHS, this situation will affect large numbers of children. In our responses to consultations relating to Maltkiln, we have highlighted the need for a new secondary school in Maltkiln itself, rather than requiring large numbers of pupils to travel to BBHS. If NYC is worried about the costs of free school transport, why don't you just follow our suggestion and ensure schools are located where the majority of the children live? Please can the Education and Planning Departments speak to each other? Once a parent has found a place for their child at a school, it's unlikely they will move the child to another school without good reason. "Good reason" will not include whether the second school happens to have places available that year and so might suddenly become the school to which free transport will be provided. This change of policy won't save NYC any money in our area. Going back to the example above, NYC will have to pay for a bus to transport child B to BBHS, because child B is entitled to free transport. The bus will therefore be running every day, with all the attendant costs, so it's hard to see how the new policy will produce any cost savings for NYC. In these circumstances, why can't child A be allowed on the bus too, without having to pay? How will denying child A this right save NYC any money? If in a given year, there are 2 places available to non-catchment area pupils at KJ, and there are 50 children from Kirk Hammerton who go to BBHS instead, does that mean all 50 have to pay for transport? It makes no sense. Only two of the 50 could ever have gone to the other school. <u>Conclusion</u> It doesn't take long to think of scenarios where the new policy would create obvious unfairness. We have illustrated why it makes no sense in an area like Kirk Hammerton and Maltkiln. This surely can't be the only example in the whole of North Yorkshire.

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		The policy won't save any money, because in most cases buses will have to run anyway and NYC will have to pay for them. The complexities of deciding who qualifies for free transport and who doesn't are described above. Making the decision has the potential to absorb large amounts of management time and distract officials from other duties. The hidden costs should be factored into any calculation of what, if any, savings will be made. NYC Education Department designates a catchment school for children in our village. If it wants to simplify its free travel policy, why doesn't it just give free travel to the catchment school and nowhere else? If parents choose to have their children apply to a different school, they are free to make that choice, but they then become responsible for transport. Wouldn't that be fairer? **Kirk Hammerton Parish Council** **February 2024**
28/2/24	Whixley Parish Council	**Received from Whixley Parish Council**

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		NYC CONSULTATION ON FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT ENTITLEMENT – WPC RESPONSE This is Whixley Parish Council's (WPC) response to North Yorkshire Council's consultation document proposing a revised policy for Home to School Transport. Our response focuses on the main proposed policy change, as described in Part 2C of the explanatory document –***"Amendment to the main eligibility criterion to be "nearest school (with places available)"*** Background We are responding to the consultation not only with regard to how it will affect current secondary school age pupils who live in our Parish, but also having in mind the "Maltkiln" new housing development which NYC proposes to deliver on land close to our village, some of which is within our parish boundary. NYC's Planning Department has recently published a Development Plan Document for Maltkiln. There is to be no secondary school in the new settlement. Pupils will be expected to travel each day to Boroughbridge High School (BHS), which is to be upgraded using contributions from the Maltkiln developer. We assume this means that BHS will be the sole "catchment" school for pupils living in Maltkiln, just as it is for pupils at present who live in Whixley. In the case of Maltkiln and Whixley, the nearest school geographically in North Yorkshire is King James, Knaresborough. That school is also the easiest for pupils to travel to using public transport, because of the train service linking Knaresborough with Cattal stations. King James is not, however, a catchment school. Pupils living in Whixley (and presumably also Maltkiln) can apply for a place at King James, but pupils who live in the King James catchment area are given priority. There are sometimes places available at that school, but availability tends to be limited. Depending on demographic changes, whether the school is full, or whether some places are available, can vary from one year to the next. The vast majority of our children go to BHS, because it's their catchment school. All children attending the catchment school should be given free transport. Is the proposal to ditch the longstanding practise of having catchment schools for which free travel is provided if justified and replace it with free transport only to the closest school. If this is the case a child in Whixley going to their catchment school of BHS either because they wanted to or couldn't get a place at King James wouldn't then get free transport. That's simply not fair and we would strongly urge NYC to drop this policy. The effect of the new policy will therefore be that more parents just drive their children to BHS, rather than pay for the bus, which is contrary to many of NYC's other policies. Given that all the secondary school age children from Maltkiln will be expected to attend BHS, this situation will affect large numbers of children. The need for a new secondary school in Maltkiln has been highlighted on many occasions. This makes more sense than requiring large numbers of pupils to travel to BHS. If NYC is worried about the costs of free
29/4/24	Ingleton Parish Council	**The following was received from Ingleton Parish Council after the consultation period but has been included for consideration.** On behalf of Ingleton Parish Council I would like to raise the following issues following our attendance at the extremely well attended public consultation meeting held at Ingleton Community Centre: 1. We live in an area which is extremely close to the NYC boundary with Lancashire and indeed Cumbria CC, therefore the cross County relationships with schools is of significant importance and indeed relevance as far as your new policy is concerned due to the fact that Queen Elizabeth School at Kirkby Lonsdale enters the equation for secondary education. Have adjoining education authorities been

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		consulted? Are they now going to adopt this strategy? We believe, for our area, this is extremely relevant and important. 2. The option of educating secondary age children from our area in North Yorkshire appears to be under threat. How can that be justified in terms of the future viability of Settle College. It is ironic that, in the past, parents have been refused the option of of free transport to Queen Elizabeth School at Kirkby Lonsdale due to it being under the jurisdiction of a different education authority, If this new policy is implemented the only option, providing there are places available, is Queen Elizabeth School. This represents a total turnaround in our area. 3. Ingleton Primary School is, as we understand, almost up to capacity in terms of numbers. Could this new policy increase numbers? Have any plans to provide an extra classroom at Ingleton Primary to provide extra pupil accommodation? As an aside plans for additional housing in Ingleton could further exacerbate the situation. Kind Regards Ingleton Parish Council Clerk Email : ingletonclerk1@hotmail.com *Redacted Information*
22/3/24	Arkengarthdale Parish Council	**Received from Arkengarthdale Parish Council** [Redacted information] Dear Cllr Wilkinson and Cllr Carlton Cllr Yvonne Peacock suggested that we, Arkengarthdale Parish Council, contact you with regards to the proposed changes in school transport policy, since we have found the online consultation to be impractical for a parish council. We object to the proposed changes and outline our concerns below. We would like this email to count as our submission to the consultation, which we have been unable to complete online as the survey has been designed for individual respondents (parents/pupils), rather than groups/committees who need to be able to view the entire survey (rather than one question at a time) in order to reach an agreed response in a time-efficient manner. Neither the technical format nor the question format of the survey makes it easy for a parish council to complete. Our first concern is the timing of the public consultation meeting: Holding it on a lunchtime in the middle of a working week was not convenient for many people, and indeed several parents have indicated that it was impossible for them to attend this meeting owing to work commitments. Our second concern is the lack of clarity in the justification for awarding a contract to a national taxi firm (24x7 Ltd) apparently based in Essex, operating from Ripon. This firm will send buses and drivers from Ripon to transport pupils from Arkengarthdale and Swaledale to Wensleydale, although a local bus operator already exists in Reeth. With no local

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		knowledge of the communities, outlying properties and the local road conditions under certain weather conditions, we are unconvinced that this proposed new arrangement can (a) make financial sense, (b) be environmentally sustainable and, most importantly, (c) be in the best interests of pupil safety. Our third concern is the effect that the proposed changes could have on the interests and well-being of local school pupils. The populations of Arkengarthdale and Swaledale feed the primary school at Reeth, which is geographically and socially the 'centre' of a very close-knit, supportive community for children and adults. Both dales are several miles long. The changes to the policy would effectively segregate local children into three zones according to the geographic distances they live from the nearest school. We can only summise that someone with no local experience of the dynamic of the upper dales' communities or the character of roads between upper Swaledale and Kirkby Stephen (Cumbria), or between upper Arkengarthdale and Barnard Castle (County Durham), or between lower Swaledale/lower Arkengarthdale and Leyburn has devised this plan. Not only are all these roads frequently impassible in bad weather, but the notion of pulling young children out of their core community by sending them to three different schools in three different counties based on journey differentials of just a few miles seems incommensurate with the amount of disruption and distress it could cause. Arkengarthdale Parish Council would like to emphasise the sentiment expressed by many in the local community which is that anyone living in these two dales would not consider this plan to be a sensible or practical proposition as it increases the risk levels in terms of road safety, school attendance and personal well-being. We strongly oppose the proposed changes, and request that the option to continue with existing arrangements is given serious consideration. We would be grateful for clarification on the justification for proposing these changes. If this is financially motivated, we would be grateful if you could share the calculations with us that relate to the options for the current and proposed school bus services specifically for Arkengarthdale, so that we can see for example, how the additional costs relating to increased winter maintenance on the proposed 'Priority Two' bus routes (The Stang and Leyburn moor road) and the increased cost of sending at least twice as many vehicles and drivers to Arkengarthdale make the proposed changes financially feasible. We look forward to hearing from you, Best wishes Arkengarthdale Parish Council Redacted Information
21/2/24	Reeth Parish Council Clerk	Is this for sharing on social media, or are you corresponding with parents etc separately? Sorry to play devil's advocate, but is one of the reasons that the percentages are so low for council school bus services is the bus route doesn't go to the right places? I find it strange that parents would miss out on a freebie when it would make it easier for them to get to work. Sorry just curious not criticising.

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		Thanks
20/2/24	Clerk to Hellifield Parish Council	This consultation is directed at Parish and Town Councils. Is there any intention to include the public in any such consultation? Or to provide any information that can be cascaded to the public for input to their Council?
20/2/24	Clerk to Sinnington Parish Council	Hi This consultation could go on the agenda or councillors could respond as individuals if they wish.
28/2/24	Clerk to Kirk Hammerton Parish Council	I have a written response from Kirk Hammerton PC regarding the above consultation. I can't answer your on line survey as I am trying to just submit the response. Please can you forward to the correct department as a pdf document?
28/2/24	Clerk to Whixley Parish Council	Morning - me again. Can I submit Whixley PC's responses in pdf form regarding the above consultations as per KHPC? Thanks **NYC CONSULTATION ON FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT ENTITLEMENT – WPC RESPONSE** This is Whixley Parish Council's (WPC) response to North Yorkshire Council's consulta□on document proposing a revised policy for Home to School Transport. Our response focuses on the main proposed policy change, as described in Part 2C of the explanatory document –"***Amendment to the main eligibility criterion to be "nearest school (with places available)"*** Background We are responding to the consulta□on not only with regard to how it will affect current secondary school age pupils who live in our Parish, but also having in mind the "Maltkiln" new housing development which NYC proposes to deliver on land close to our village, some of which is within our parish boundary. NYC's Planning Department has recently published a Development Plan Document for Maltkiln. There is to be no secondary school in the new se□lement. Pupils will be expected to travel each day to Boroughbridge High School (BHS), which is to be upgraded using contribu□ons from the Maltkiln developer. We assume this means that BHS will be the sole "catchment" school for pupils living in Maltkiln, just as it is for pupils at present who live in Whixley. In the case of Maltkiln and Whixley, the nearest school geographically in North Yorkshire is King James, Knaresborough. That school is also the easiest for pupils to travel to using public transport, because of the train service linking Knaresborough with Ca□al sta□ons.

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		King James is not, however, a catchment school. Pupils living in Whixley (and presumably also Maltkiln) can apply for a place at King James, but pupils who live in the King James catchment area are given priority. There are some mes places available at that school, but availability tends to be limited. Depending on demographic changes, whether the school is full, or whether some places are available, can vary from one year to the next. The vast majority of our children go to BHS, because it's their catchment school. All children a ending the catchment school should be given free transport. Is the proposal to ditch the longstanding prac se of having catchment schools for which free travel is provided if jus fied and replace it with free transport only to the closest school. If this is the case a child in Whixley going to their catchment school of BHS either because they wanted to or couldn't get a place at King James wouldn't then get free transport. That's simply not fair and we would strongly urge NYC to drop this policy. The effect of the new policy will therefore be that more parents just drive their children to BHS, rather than pay for the bus, which is contrary to many of NYC's other policies. Given that all the secondary school age children from Maltkiln will be expected to a end BHS, this situa on will affect large numbers of children. The need for a new secondary school in Maltkiln has been highlighted on many occasions. This makes more sense than requiring large numbers of pupils to travel to BHS. If NYC is worried about the costs of free school transport, why don't you just ensure schools are located where the majority of the children live? Please can the Educa on and Planning Departments speak to each other? We would urge NYC to consider this policy in the context of all its other priori es and if the outcome will be to remove the right to free transport to an areas designated catchment school to drop it all together.
6/3/24	Town Clerk, Settle Town Council	Good morning, At the Council meeting held on the 4th March the Council resolved that there were unable to respond to the questionnaire at this moment in time – however they look forward to receiving details on the outcome of the consultation. Best wishes
12/3/24	Clerk to Eppleby Parish Council	Dear H2S, The Parish Council have asked that I contact you as they would clarify regarding the meeting at Richmond Town Hall on Thursday 14th March, who is this meeting intended for? is it parents, Parish Councillors etc? Kind regards

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13/03/24	Clerk to Cononley Parish Council	Good morning Cononley Parish Council considered the review at their meeting on 12/03/24. The online form is aimed at individuals rather than a Parish Council however they wish to make the following comment. The new proposals should apply to the nearest non-selective school rather than just the nearest school. This is due to some students living closer to a selective school but attending the nearest non-selective school.
14/03/24	Clerk to Buckden Parish Council	Please find attached a letter from Richard Ingram, Chair of Buckden Parish Council regarding the current consultation on the changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy. (Redacted Information) 14/03/2024 Dear Ms. Newbold **Ref: Consultation – Home to School Transport** We have reviewed the consultation documentation relating to the changes to Home to School Transport policy and have submitted a response via the online questionnaire. However, we felt it was necessary to draw your attention personally to our very real concerns about the amendment to the main eligibility criterion to: 'nearest school (with places available)'. We appreciate that this is to match the statutory requirement, however, given the potential specific implications for our parish, we believe what is proposed is both impractical and unreasonable. This relates to the specific topography of this part of the Dales. Specifically, there are three hamlets within the parish of Buckden – Oughtershaw, Greenfield and Beckermonds - where children have always gone to Kettlewell School, even though Hawes school is marginally closer – in distance, if not in time. This is because the single-track road over Fleet Moss which stands between these locations and Hawes rises to a height of some 1900 feet; it is the highest road in Yorkshire and is the 13th highest in the UK. It is a single-track road, is frequently blocked by snow and even when not blocked can be dangerously icy as the gritters often can't get up the 1 in 4 gradient section. The parish council strongly believe it is not acceptable for NYC to put our children in danger by requiring them to travel to school on such a road; a secondary consideration is that it would inevitably have a negative impact on their attendance record in winter. We propose that a better way of amending the policy to meet the regulations would be to define a specific catchment area for each school based on the "nearest school" criterion but adjusted to take into account such special factors as roads which are completely unsuitable for school transport. We trust that you will give our proposal serious consideration in your consultation process. Yours sincerely, Richard Ingram Chair Buckden Parish Council
19/03/23	Clerk to Askrigg and Low Abbotside Parish Council	Please find attached letter which I have been asked to send regarding the above. I have also forwarded a copy to Cllr. A Wilkinson Kind regards

		# ASKRIGG & LOW ABBOTSIDE PARISH COUNCIL Redacted Information - _____ _____ 19th March 2024 **Home to school travel policy - consultation** I have been asked to write to you regarding the above. This consultation was discussed at our last Parish Council meeting where those in attendance had concerns over the proposals. We feel that this proposal has not been fully thought through in terms of the impact it will have on those living in deeply rural areas. Additionally, any plans for cost savings in these areas will probably not result in saving any money in our opinion. On behalf of the Chairman, Askrigg & Low Abbotside Parish Council c.c. Mr Stuart Carleton Cllr. Annabel Wilson
21/3/24	Clerk to Arkengarth Parish Council	Cllr Yvonne Peacock suggested that we, Arkengarthdale Parish Council, contact you with regards to the proposed changes in school transport policy, since we have found the online consultation to be impractical for a parish council. We object to the proposed changes and outline our concerns below.

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		We would like this email to count as our submission to the consultation, which we have been unable to complete online as the survey has been designed for individual respondents (parents/pupils), rather than groups/committees who need to be able to view the entire survey (rather than one question at a time) in order to reach an agreed response in a time-efficient manner. Neither the technical format nor the question format of the survey makes it easy for a parish council to complete. Our first concern is the timing of the public consultation meeting: Holding it on a lunchtime in the middle of a working week was not convenient for many people, and indeed several parents have indicated that it was impossible for them to attend this meeting owing to work commitments. Our second concern is the lack of clarity in the justification for awarding a contract to a national taxi firm (24x7 Ltd) apparently based in Essex, operating from Ripon. This firm will send buses and drivers from Ripon to transport pupils from Arkengarthdale and Swaledale to Wensleydale, although a local bus operator already exists in Reeth. With no local knowledge of the communities, outlying properties and the local road conditions under certain weather conditions, we are unconvinced that this proposed new arrangement can (a) make financial sense, (b) be environmentally sustainable and, most importantly, (c) be in the best interests of pupil safety. Our third concern is the effect that the proposed changes could have on the interests and well-being of local school pupils. The populations of Arkengarthdale and Swaledale feed the primary school at Reeth, which is geographically and socially the ‘centre’ of a very close-knit, supportive community for children and adults. Both dales are several miles long. The changes to the policy would effectively segregate local children into three zones according to the geographic distances they live from the nearest school. We can only summise that someone with no local experience of the dynamic of the upper dales’ communities or the character of roads between upper Swaledale and Kirkby Stephen (Cumbria), or between upper Arkengarthdale and Barnard Castle (County Durham), or between lower Swaledale/lower Arkengarthdale and Leyburn has devised this plan. Not only are all these roads frequently impassible in bad weather, but the notion of pulling young children out of their core community by sending them to three different schools in three different counties based on journey differentials of just a few miles seems incommensurate with the amount of disruption and distress it could cause. Arkengarthdale Parish Council would like to emphasise the sentiment expressed by many in the local community which is that anyone living in these two dales would not consider this plan to be a sensible or practical proposition as it increases the risk levels in terms of road safety,

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		school attendance and personal well-being. We strongly oppose the proposed changes, and request that the option to continue with existing arrangements is given serious consideration. We would be grateful for clarification on the justification for proposing these changes. If this is financially motivated, we would be grateful if you could share the calculations with us that relate to the options for the current and proposed school bus services specifically for Arkengarthdale, so that we can see for example, how the additional costs relating to increased winter maintenance on the proposed 'Priority Two' bus routes (The Stang and Leyburn moor road) and the increased cost of sending at least twice as many vehicles and drivers to Arkengarthdale make the proposed changes financially feasible. We look forward to hearing from you, Best wishes Arkengarthdale Parish Council
	Clerk to Tockwith Parish Council	Hi, I would like the Councillors at Tockwith with Wilstrop to look at this survey as a group, however the questions can only be accessed when you've answered the previous question. Do you have the questions in word or pdf format that you can send to me so that I can circulate them?
28/03/24	Clerk to Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council	We, Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council, are contacting you with regard to the proposed changes in school transport policy, since we have found the online consultation to be impractical for a parish council. We object to the proposed changes and outline our concerns below. We have also written to NYC to Cllr Wilkinson as we would like our concerns to count as our submission to the consultation. We have been unable to complete the online survey as it has been designed for individual respondents (parents/pupils), rather than groups/committees who need to be able to view the entire survey (rather than one question at a time) in order to reach an agreed response in a time-efficient manner. Neither the technical format nor the question format of the survey makes it easy for a parish council to complete. Our first concern is the timing of the public consultation meeting: Holding it on a lunchtime in the middle of a working week was not convenient for many people, and indeed several parents have indicated that it was impossible for them to attend this meeting owing to work commitments. Our second concern is the lack of clarity in the justification for awarding a contract to a national taxi firm (24x7 Ltd) apparently based in Essex, operating from Ripon. This firm will send buses and drivers from Ripon to transport pupils from Arkengarthdale and Swaledale to Wensleydale, although a local bus operator already exists in Reeth. With no local

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		knowledge of the communities, outlying properties and the local road conditions under certain weather conditions, we are unconvinced that this proposed new arrangement can (a) make financial sense, (b) be environmentally sustainable and, most importantly, (c) be in the best interests of pupil safety. Our third concern is the effect that the proposed changes could have on the interests and well-being of local school pupils. The populations of Arkengarthdale and Swaledale feed the primary school at Reeth, which is geographically and socially the 'centre' of a very close-knit, supportive community for children and adults. Both dales are several miles long. The changes to the policy would effectively segregate local children into three zones according to the geographic distances they live from the nearest school. We can only surmise that someone with no local experience of the dynamic of the upper dales' communities or the character of roads between upper Swaledale and Kirkby Stephen (Cumbria), or between upper Arkengarthdale and Barnard Castle (County Durham), or between lower Swaledale/lower Arkengarthdale and Leyburn has devised this plan. Not only are all these roads frequently impassible in bad weather, but the notion of pulling young children out of their core community by sending them to three different schools in three different counties based on journey differentials of just a few miles seems incommensurate with the amount of disruption and distress it could cause. Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council would like to emphasize the sentiment expressed by many in the local community which is that anyone living in these two dales would not consider this plan to be a sensible or practical proposition as it increases the risk levels in terms of road safety, school attendance and personal well-being. We strongly oppose the proposed changes, and request that the option to continue with existing arrangements is given serious consideration. We would be grateful for clarification on the justification for proposing these changes. If this is financially motivated, we would be grateful if you could share the calculations with us that relate to the options for the current and proposed school bus services specifically for Reeth, so that we can see for example, how the additional costs relating to increased winter maintenance on the proposed 'Priority Two' bus routes (Leyburn moor road) and the increased cost of sending at least twice as many vehicles and drivers to Arkengarthdale make the proposed changes financially feasible. We look forward to hearing from you, Best wishes Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh Parish Council
2/04/24	Clerk to Tockwith with Wilstrop Parish Council	**Received from Tockwith with Wilstrop Parish Council** **Tockwith with Wilstrop Parish Council** **Feedback from residents regarding the H2S Travel Consultation** **2.04.24** Many thanks for sending this. We had a couple of concerned residents attend the March PC meeting on 25th March and they would like to seek clarification on the below:

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		1) Confirmation that there will no longer be a choice of schools if pupils want to receive H2S transport. 2) There will no longer be catchment schools as such. Everything will be based on the nearest suitable school. 3) "Nearest suitable school" will be regarded as the nearest school to a home address regardless of whether it is in a different Local Authority (this would be Wetherby for Cowthorpe/Tockwith) 4) Will free transport be provided to the nearest school even if it is not in the North Yorkshire LA and will this apply to existing pupils at that school (say, Wetherby). 5) Whether free transport will continue to be provided if a child is already attending the non-nearest secondary school 6) If a child is in the final year of primary and has already been allocated a place at a non-nearest secondary, will they still qualify for free transport 7) If a child already has a sibling at a non-nearest secondary school, will they also qualify for free transport to avoid children from having to attend two different schools 8) Will a bus still go from Tockwith/Cowthorpe to KJS if there are eligible students eg on an EHC plan? And if so, can the child still use the bus on a paid basis 9) If due to the changes, most children from each year at Tockwith decide to go to Wetherby High and there are not enough places for one year, will they then get free travel to KJS (or the 2nd school on the mileage list) for the duration of their time there? The Parish Council is not due to meet now until 22nd April. We'd like to consider the survey at the 22nd April meeting once we've received clarification on the above. Could we be offered at extension until 23rd April to send our responses? Can you confirm that if implemented, only the Knaresborough bus would be eligible for free school travel? If I am reading it correctly, it will effectively take away the choice of secondary schools for young people in Tockwith and Long Marston, as it states free school travel will only be available for the nearest school. Historically the villages have attended both Tadcaster and Knaresborough schools, with the second only 1.5 miles closer than the first. If free travel is removed for future pupils wishing to attend Tadcaster, a significant proportion of children moving up to secondary each year will not be able to attend their school of

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		choice. Being able to choose a school where they feel comfortable, where the environment and approach meets their needs, is critical to young peoples' mental health and enabling them to achieve their academic potential. As the Tadcaster bus also serves villages which are closer to the school on its current route, it will still need to be paid for by NYCC under the new strategy, but the subsidy will be removed from our children. So the savings will be non-existent or minimal, compared to a huge impact on pupil mental health and pupil choice. Is my reading of the policy correct, that for Tockwith there would only be free places on the Knaresborough bus for future cohorts? Please will you represent the needs of children and young people in the village if so, and oppose it? Thanks in advance for any advice, reassurance or support you can offer on this proposal.
8/4/24	Clerk to Muker Parish Council	Good Afternoon. Please find attached a report/letter from Muker parish Council with an Executive Summary concerning the proposal. Please circulate to the appropriate parties concerned with the proposal. Are you able to confirm that the Executive meeting will take place at 11am Monday 10th June 2024 at Scarborough? If so, we ask that you reconsider the venue for us this is a 100 mile 2hr 30 minute journey. Clerk Muker Parish Council. **NYC School Proposals: Executive Summary from Muker Parish Council (MPC)** Upper Swaledale has unique geography, topography and meteorology. The nearest school proposal compared to the current catchment area does not suit our uniqueness. MPC believes that NYC should retain its discretionary powers continuing with catchment area for Upper Swaledale. The consultation has been poor not reaching parents of children. The inconvenient meetings to parents have all been held outside Upper Swaledale! MPC has not been informed. The on-line survey is too restrictive. MPC could have assisted with communication and consultation. The DofE guidance 2024, at paragraph125 has not been followed. Communication has been disjointed and ineffective in reaching parents. The proposal to move children to Kirkby Stephen, Barnard Castle and Leyburn have one common dangerous feature. All involve transporting children over high moor, ungritted, ostensibly single-track roads. Diversion onto gritted roads in our case would involve a 60-mile detour impacting on education. The road to Kirkby Stephen is unsuitable and dangerous in Winter. It is not ideal at any time, poorly maintained with limited passing places. We consider the road a danger to childrens safety and well-being. Who will manage and monitor the extremes in weather deciding when children can and cannot travel to school or home? DofE paragraph 86 concerning Health and safety Law and risk assessment. MPC and parents wish to know how these risks will be permanently eliminated? Also relevant is NYC Draft for consultation February 2024, Section C

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		,Suitability of Travel arrangements. 13, Considering the child's Needs. These **MUST** all be addressed individually. The impact on families and children is unacceptable, causing anxiety having siblings attending different schools. And children from Reeth being moved to 3 different schools is damaging to their social interaction and well-being. Financially we do not see how this is cost effective adding three new routes and continuing routes to Richmond transporting initially 12 children for four years will cost more than it does currently. From 2025 until 2035 a total of 27 children would be required to attend Kirkby Stephen. We have seen no costings to show this will save money in Upper Swaledale. These proposals are not considered environmentally friendly. Richmond schools have been successfully used by Upper Swaledale children for over 70 years. The safest route to school for children. The DofE Travel to School Guidance January 2024, Is **guidance**, it is not mandatory. We implore NYC to retain its discretionary power for Upper Swaledale and retain catchment area, recognising that Upper Swaledale is unique and should be treated as an exception to ensure the safety and well being of all of the children. Clerk Muker Parish Council **NYC proposal for school placements**. North Yorkshire is the largest County in England and one of the most diverse when considering geography, topography and meteorology, particularly in Upper Swaledale. The North Yorkshire Council's (NYC) proposal to change where senior children attend school from Upper Swaledale based on the nearest school, instead of the current catchment area. Is unacceptable. The concept of moving children to their nearest school is understandable in urban areas where there is a greater choice of easily accessible schools. Muker Parish Council(MPC) recognises that policy change proposals concern removing the discretionary power to move from catchment to the nearest school. It does not agree with this proposal considering it unreasonable. There are a number of areas which cause concern. Please see below. **Consultation:** The process has been poor and has failed to serve the needs of children and their parents. The Parish Council has not been informed of this proposal. Parents of current and future children have not received any correspondence from NYC. The Consultation Meetings have been held in the wrong locations at the wrong times.

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		The Parish Council is aware of one parent who was able to go to one meeting. Richmond, Northallerton and Leyburn are not in Upper Swaledale or convenient to parents of children in Muker Parish. MPC is pleased to note that the closing date for comments has been extended to 26 April 2024, but is disappointed to see that no meetings are planned in Upper Swaledale. At least one of the meetings should have been held in Reeth which is a location central to all parents of Upper Swaledale and Arkengarthdale children. Reeth has a perfectly suitable Village Hall, as does Low Row, Gunnerside, Muker and Keld. Department of Education(DoE) Travel to School **Guidance** January 2024. Policy changes- Paragraph 125, Local Authorities, 'As a minimum this should include consulting parents whose children will or maybe affected by the proposed changes and those who may be affected in the future. Parent communication has been poor. The NYC, consultation FAQ page refers to Parish Councils being informed. We have not. MPC could have assisted considerably with consultation and communication. The on-line survey is restrictive, it is for parents and carers. There are many people including MPC of Upper Swaledale who have connections to children and local knowledge who cannot comment. **Communication:** What precisely is the communication strategy for this proposal? So far, it has been poor, in reaching and enabling parents. The use of social media would have been beneficial via the 'Upper Swaledale Community Forum' for example. It sems that some of the schools involved knew nothing of this proposal until they were informed by the parents! There must be full engagement and consultation with the parents at a time and a place convenient to them. All impacted Parish Councils should be informed of the proposal. Then having listened to the concerns of parents, NYC should provide a written response to each one allowing a response back from the parents. **Common factors for the 3 proposed schools:** There are many logistical problems to overcome for the proposal to move children to Kirkby Stephen, Barnard Castle and Leyburn each one has a common dangerous feature. All involve transporting children over high moor, ungritted, ostensibly single-track roads. The impacts of the winter months are clear and will lead to the disruption of childrens education. For 70 years children have travelled to Richmond for senior education without any issue. The reason is clear the journey to Richmond via the B6270 is the easiest, safest and most reliable route to school at all times of the year.

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		Travel to Kirkby Stephen from Upper Swaledale: The road to Kirkby Stephen is a single track ungritted road over the moor, although a continuation of the B6270 it is equivalent to the unclassified routes to Barnard castle and Leyburn. The B6270 is in poor condition and has not been maintained to a suitable standard. The road is currently collapsing around its edges and shoulders, narrowing the road. This is caused by water erosion, vehicles passing each other and low maintenance. Into Cumbria, Tail Brigg is a steep hill to negotiate. Cumbria Council do not grit this hill, due to a gritter leaving the road some years ago, they do not consider it safe! In Winter the variation in weather can be extreme changing suddenly without warning, it can be fine in Kirkby Stephen, but snowing and blowing on the moor road making it dangerous, unsafe and possibly impassable. The same can be said of the routes to Leyburn and Barnard Castle. It has been suggested that in poor weather, the school bus takes a route via gritted roads. This is likely to be down the B6270 to Richmond, then to Scotch Corner to the A66, if indeed that is open! A bizarre situation where the children could be travelling close to the school they should have gone to in order to get to Kirkby Stephen, a diversion of 60 miles each way, with a daily journey time of at least 3 hours plus. In excess of NYC 75 minutes per journey policy. Who decides when children can or cannot travel to and from school? Will there be a system in place to monitor the weather on the top of the moor roads? Who can guarantee that children would be able to get home safely during a winter storm? MPC has grave concerns for the safety of the children traversing this dangerous route in Winter. DoE Travel to School Guidance January 2024. Para 86 states, 'Health and Safety law requires local authorities to put in place practicable control measures to protect their employees and others **(including the children for whom they arrange travel)** from harm' it continues. 'Identify hazards - things that could cause injury or illness; assess the risk – how likely is it that someone could be harmed and how seriously; put in place proportionate measures to eliminate the hazard or control the risk; record their findings; regularly review and update their risk assessments.' MPC and Parents would wish to see a risk assessment to see how the dangers are eliminated and comment on the risk assessment. **Financial Considerations**: MPC is not convinced that these proposals have been correctly costed, NYC available data shows Richmondshire as a whole, but it would be useful to see

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		what the current Upper Swaledale costs are compared with costs to Kirkby Stephen. For transparency what are the current transport costs compared to future costs? Of course, journeys to Richmond will continue for 4 years, plus we have 3 new additional routes. We consider that the first 4 years will cost more and are not convinced that any of the proposal is cost effective. Environmental impacts of 3 new routes should not be ignored. **Children and their safety.** In the NYC Draft for consultation February 2024, Section C, Suitability of Travel arrangements. 13, Considering the child's Needs. 'The Council will ensure that any travel arrangements will take account of the needs of the children concerned. Any travel arrangements should enable the child to travel in reasonable safety and comfort and without any stress, strain or difficulty, so that wherever possible they arrive at school ready to learn. MPC is of the opinion that the well-being, mental health and safety of the children is paramount and should override any other considerations. The prospect of attending a different school is causing anxiety for some of the children, compounded by travel along a dangerous road. MPC is aware of a family with 2 children already attending Richmond schools and their 2 younger ones would have to go to Kirkby Stephen, thus splitting the family. It is inconceivable that siblings should be separated. School holidays, do North Yorkshire, County Durham and Cumbria have the same holiday periods? If not, this could cause additional problems. Are the subjects and facilities at Kirkby Stephen equivalent to Richmond Schools? The disruption and inevitable anxiety for children is unacceptable. The children of Upper Swaledale have known that for generations that their families have travelled to Richmond for their senior education, and are being treated differently to their forebears, separated from some of their friends. Social interaction will reduce as children are dispersed to different schools. Note: Gunnerside children attend Reeth school socialising and making friends unlikely to see them in school again a result of this proposal. Any confusion and apprehension to children must be avoided. MPC considers that this will be a major impact to children with potential to damage their well-being, mental health and education. The danger caused by Winter weather facing driving sleet, snow, frost and ice on a dangerous exposed road is a major risk to their safety. Within Muker Parish at present a total of 12 senior children are and will be attending Richmond Schools, which will continue for 4 years until they have all left. From September 2025 the number of children requiring senior education if required to school in Kirkby Stephen will begin with 3 this will increase each

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		year and by 2035 a total of 27 children would have to attend Kirkby Stephen, this may change slightly up or down as circumstances change. **Family:** MPC recognises that in a rare case a family may by choice find the move acceptable, freedom of choice is important. The vast majority of parents would not choose or even consider Kirkby Stephen School because of their knowledge of the dangers along the route in Winters. Impacts for families will increase, they often have to manage work and other commitments around schooling. It is feasible that some may have to cease working or look for alternative employment to accommodate these proposals. **Conclusion:** There is no evidence of a cost benefit analysis to consider. The consultation process is poor and inadequate, it is not reaching the parents to allow open discussion to raise concerns and grievances. The safety, welfare and well-being of the children appears to be overlooked. The children and their safety are paramount. This proposal is understandably causing children and to a degree parents anxiety about their children's future education. MPC rejects and opposes this proposal. This NYC proposal does not suit the unique circumstances of Upper Swaledale and there has to be an exception by using the discretion in the previous policy, which may have been correctly applied because of the unique circumstances of Upper Swaledale. Finally, the DofE Travel to School Guidance January 2024, Is **guidance**, it is not mandatory. Clerk to Muker Parish Council
13/5/24	Clerk to Reeth Parish Council	Hello All, I have just been told of a large bus (50 seater ish) which was full of kids going to Leyburn via Grinton top. Councillor Frankland and another vehicle met it where the old bridge collapsed and had to move off the road to let him pass. Then, when he got to the sharp bend, he had to stop to give three cars coming the opposite direction time to get right off the road before he was able to pass. This happened on Friday at about 3pm and I have the details of the bus company, if someone would like them, to investigate further.

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		To think that someone is planning on sending school children this way on a regular basis seems terrifying. I went to the tip on Sunday and had to pull over a couple of times due to cars, so I am really glad I didn't meet a bus.
22/4/24		Please find attached a response from Clapham cum Newby Parish council to the consultation. Unfortunately, we found the online survey did not allow us to express our views and have thus had to write a response. Regards *Parish Clerk* *Clapham cum Newby Parish Council* Redacted Information Amanda Newbold Assistant Director, Education & Skills North Yorkshire Council County Hall Racecourse Lane Northallerton DL7 8AD Dear Ms Newbold, Clapham-cum-Newby Parish Council oppose the proposal to withdraw catchment as an eligibility criterion in the school transport policy for next year's admissions onwards. We do so on the following grounds • The proposal will deny some families to the north of Clapham their choice of school solely on the basis of transport costs should they opt to send their children to Settle College instead of across two county borders to Queen Elizabeth School (QES). Many families have a long history with Settle College and it has been the "in county" secondary school of choice for many. This is important. • The proposal will result in substantial costs for those families who have a family history at Settle College or feel Settle College's smaller size and inclusive ethos makes it the right school for their child. This will be especially tough for low-income families who will pay the price for North Yorkshire's alleged cost savings. • This argument is further compounded by a closer examination of the alleged savings to be made. The difference in distance to the two is schools, for many residents of our parish, is negligible. The transport provider has publicly stated that the journey to Kirkby Lonsdale is no quicker than that to Settle. Thus, it is hard to accept such minimal variation as a substantive argument. • Crucially, the effect on SettleCollege will be very significant. The proposed transport policy is likely to result in a net loss of pupils for Settle College. The resultant loss of income would be serious at a time when all school budgets are stretched. The policy would take money out of education spending in North Yorkshire and put it into Cumbria. The ongoing effect of this is that the future of SettleCollege could look much bleaker; loss of income tends to resultin larger class sizes, teacher redundancies and challenges in delivering an in-depth, diverse and fully-inclusive curriculum. Thus, the proposed transport policy would not only impact those children whose transport catchment means they have to go to QES, it would also

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		negatively impact those students attending Settle College, both now and in the future. • Settle College is the traditional centre for secondary education in North Craven and, in particular, our own Parish. This policy will, in effect, divide our parish and we feel strongly that the proposed policy will serve our families and the education of their children poorly. We understand that finances are tight. The prosed transport policy change will not result in financial savings in many cases and, where it does, it is merely moving costs away from the council and onto families in North Yorkshire who can least afford it. In summary, we oppose the loss of catchment area as a criterion for eligibility for school transport for the reasons set out above and on the basis that Clapham-cum-Newby is affected by being in the Settle College catchment are. We ask that you withdraw the proposal and study other ways to make genuine efficiencies in transport provision rather than just pass the burden to families. We have no comment on the other proposals in the transport consultation. Yours sincerely Steven Culver Parish Clerk Clapham cum Newby Parish Council Cc: Cllr David Ireton Rt Hon. Julian Smith M
28/4/24	Clerk to Ingleton Parish Council	Good Morning On behalf of Ingleton Parish Council I would like to raise the following issues following our attendance at the extremely well attended public consultation meeting held at Ingleton Community Centre: 1. We live in an area which is extremely close to the NYC boundary with Lancashire and indeed Cumbria CC, therefore the cross County relationships with schools is of significant importance and indeed relevance as far as your new policy is concerned due to the fact that Queen Elizabeth School at Kirkby Lonsdale enters the equation for secondary education. Have adjoining education authorities been consulted? Are they now going to adopt this strategy? We believe, for our area, this is extremely relevant and important. 2. The option of educating secondary age children from our area in North Yorkshire appears to be under threat. How can that be justified in terms of the future viability of Settle College. It is ironic that, in the past, parents have been refused the option of of free transport to Queen Elizabeth School at Kirkby Lonsdale due to it being under the jurisdiction of a different education authority, If this new policy is implemented the **only option**, providing there are places available, is Queen Elizabeth School. This represents a total turnaround in our area. 3. Ingleton Primary School is, as we understand, almost up to capacity in terms of numbers. Could this new policy increase numbers? Have any plans to provide an extra classroom at Ingleton Primary to provide extra pupil accommodation? As an aside plans for additional housing in Ingleton could further exacerbate the situation. Kind Regards

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14/6/24	Hartlington Parish Council	Hartlington Parish Meeting : Junction of B6265 and Hartlington Raikes To Whom It may Concern Following yet another serious accident on the junction of the B6265 and Hartlington Raikes between a motorcycle and a car, which follows two previous fatalities and several serious injuries, we would dearly like you to look again at the safety remedies surrounding this junction. The parish of Hartlington submitted proposal plans in 2019. Thank you
28/6/24	Clerk to Pateley Bridge Town Council	Hello, Here is the statement that Pateley Bridge Town Council wishes to make. *"The proposed charge for the transport which allows pupils to attend compulsory education is outrageous. People will be forced to make difficult financial choices, particularly poorer families, who will have to make other sacrifices in their lives to afford the transport.* *A pupil who wishes to go on a particular educational establishment may not be able to do so because their family is not able to afford the transport. This will lead to second rate educational options for that child.* *The charge is discriminatory, as people with protected characteristics will be more disadvantaged."* At our meeting on Tuesday, we will establish who wishes to attend the executive to make it.

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From: Councillors

Date	From	Message
19/02/24	Cllr Duckett	I've had some enquiries about the proposed changes. It's the removal of the catchment school that has them puzzled. At present say for someone in Womesley the catchment secondary school is Brayton, but the nearest school is De Lacey in Knottingley. No one chooses to go to De Lacy so presumably any transport provided would be a taxi. Would they still have the choice of Brayton paying for a permit or have to attend De lacy. I'm using this example as I've had two cases from that area at Transport Appeals .
19/02/24	Cllr Brown	Could I ask for one piece of subtle change to avoid problems. Where there is a selective system as in Skipton can we please make the policy that we will pay for transport to the nearest non selective school. We also need the same subtle change with respect to religious schools We don't want to be in the awkward position of telling a parent we cannot give them any funding because they live next to a Roman Catholic school that won't admit them so they have to travel past it to the nearest comprehensive that will
29/02/24	Cllr Murday	A resident has contacted me regarding the arrangements for their son's transport to and from Nidderdale High School. Up until very recently the taxi provided was based in Ripon. Now the taxi comes all the way from Keighley. She has some concerns about the standard of the drivers of the Keighley-based taxis which is difficult, if not impossible, to substantiate. Of greater concern is the extra mileage involved, which she estimates is almost double. When she contacted NYC, she was told that environmental factors are not part of the decision making process when arranging contracts. But that, of course, is not the case. I would be very grateful if you could let me know the reasons for the change in contracting for the taxi service, or at least direct me to the relevant report and decision.
7/03/24	Cllr Nathan Hull	I am emailing you about some issues in respect of Home to School Transport (which I understand Councillor Andrew Murday has also recently contacted you about). I am aware that NYC transports a number of children within my Division, as well as Councillor Murday's neighbouring Division, to and from school by taxi (presumably because this has been viewed as being more cost effective than laying on a school bus or minibus). However, many parents, myself included, are concerned that the taxis being used to ferry our children around are travelling extremely long distances to pick children up and transport them relatively short distances.

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For example, I live in Burnt Yates with my wife and 5 children.

Our middle son, Huey, attends Springwater Special School in Starbeck, 8.4 miles from our home.

The Taxi Firm that takes Huey to and from School is located in Keighley, which is 27.8 miles from our home.

As such, whilst I appreciate that these calculations are not an exact science, the taxi that takes Huey to and from school each day undertakes the following journeys:-

Journey	**Destination**	**Distance**
1. am	Keighley to Burnt Yates	27.8 miles
2. am	Burnt Yates to Springwater School	8.4 miles
3. am	Springwater School back to Keighley	24.9 miles
4. pm	Keighley to Springwater School	24.9 miles
5. pm	Springwater School to Burnt Yates	8.4 miles
6. pm	Burnt Yates back to Keighley	27.8 miles
	Total Miles per day	122.2 miles
	Total Miles per week	611 miles
	Total Miles per annum (39 school weeks)	23,829. miles

Whilst I have no particular issue with the individual taxi firm (or driver) that transports Huey to and from his school, in my opinion, NYC needs to revisit this issue.

Indeed, I am aware from other parents in my Division, and other neighbouring Divisions (and therefore presumably throughout North Yorkshire) that many children are transported to and from their schools by taxis from Keighley.

Without knowing the finer details of the contracts entered into with taxi companies, I am struggling to see why it is a good thing to employ taxi firms that are located outside of the County, and many miles away, to take our children to and from school.

Indeed:-

1. In the first instance, whilst I do not know, I would have thought that it would be cheaper to employ local taxi drivers to do this work.

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		2. It surely goes against all of our “green” and “sustainability” policies to have taxis travelling hundreds of thousands, if not millions of miles, each year, with no passengers sat in them, only to pick up children and drop them off at school only a few miles away from their homes. Those taxis then have to make numerous return journeys, each day, with an empty taxi. This wastes time, money, causes damage to the environment, and unnecessarily clogs up our roads (and causes further ware and tare to our highways) during rush hour. 3. Whilst I appreciate that you cannot force this issue, and that there are strict tendering rules that govern the awarding of NYC contracts, surely it would be preferable, from an economic standpoint, to award these contracts to North Yorkshire based taxi firms (thus supporting the local economy within North Yorkshire). I would appreciate your thoughts on the above as there are numerous local parents, myself included, who think that the current situation, as outlined above, is not ideal.
17/3/24	Cllr Murday	A resident has contacted me regarding the arrangements for their son’s transport to and from Nidderdale High School. Up until very recently the taxi provided was based in Ripon. Now the taxi comes all the way from Keighley. She has some concerns about the standard of the drivers of the Keighley-based taxis which is difficult, if not impossible, to substantiate. Of greater concern is the extra mileage involved, which she estimates is almost double. When she contacted NYC, she was told that environmental factors are not part of the decision making process when arranging contracts. But that, of course, is not the case. I would be very grateful if you could let me know the reasons for the change in contracting for the taxi service, or at least direct me to the relevant report and decision.
18/03/24	Cllr Hull	Thank you for getting back to me about this delicate subject. However, whilst I appreciate that NYC has to follow strict tendering guidelines and also seek best value for money, the concerns that local parents are raising with me are also in respect of the Department of Education’s guidance regarding Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy published in January 2024. I am told, and I must confess I have not verified this personally, that the guidance on page 46 for 2024 and page 8 for 2014 states that local authorities are to promote sustainable modes of school transport and that NYC must publish our own Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy on our website by 31st August each year as per The Education (school information) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/1365). If this is correct, then we may have obligations that are potentially at loggerheads with each other. That is to say, we need to get best value for money, whilst promoting sustainable school transport.

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		I am clearly not in possession of all the facts in respect of the tendering process, how much individual taxi companies are paid for their services and which taxi services actually tender to us for these contracts. However, I am struggling to see how employing taxi companies that are covering over 100 miles each day with an empty taxi is sustainable and it is this that I am struggling to explain to parents. Indeed, by my own back of a fag packet calculations, it could well be the case that NYC is employing taxi firms that are collectively driving hundreds of thousands, if not millions of miles each, from outside of the County with cars that, for the majority of the journey, have no children or passengers in them. If that is the case, so that we can balance off any obligations we have to provide Sustainable School Transport (which I take to mean not only value for money but environmentally friendly trasport) is the tendering process something that needs to be revisited so that an increased importance is put on sustainability?
28/03/24	Cllr Staveley	I wanted to highlight a potential issue regarding the proposed changes to our home school transport policy, specifically how it might affect my own local school, but also others in similar peripheral border locations. Under the proposals there will be a substantial number of children who would currently head towards the local NYC school in Settle, but under the proposals would be pushed towards the “nearest” school in Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria. Which while this is the choice for some even now, is far from the default and if the numbers going to Settle were drastically reduced, would almost certainly undermine the sustainability of Settle College. An issue which has been raised by the College management, including the accuracy of our teams impact assessment on future enrolment numbers. I would also question if as is required when formulating a development plan, there is a duty to cooperate with neighbouring education authorities whose enrolment numbers might be affected by our change in policy? If there isn’t a statutory duty, has there been any consultation with such bodies? I’d be interested to know how many schools on the periphery of North Yorkshire in neighbouring counties will now become the default closest school for residents over existing NYC facilities, information I trust will be available as part of the consultation? So in essence while I support the broad principle of the proposals, I feel there must be recognition of the potential harm and ultimately increased transport costs NYC could incur from closures of schools like Settle College and suggest an amendment to the proposed policy stating that schools outside North Yorkshire should not be considered as the closest option for NYC residents. Thus avoiding the undermining of our own Schooling network and the longer term implications for sustainability and development of our communities as we seek to formulate our future County development plan.

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From: Individuals

Date	Message
21/02/24	I was hoping to get an answer to a question regarding the proposed changes in the H2S transport policy. When my youngest child starts primary school (our catchment school but not the closest by distance in a car), I believe he will not qualify for free transport, is that correct? However, my 2nd child will continue to receive the free transport as she already attends the school and uses the service? Also, both schools, catchment or closest are inaccessible safely by foot as they require crossing the A64 or walking along a 60mph country road. Based on the fact that my youngest child would receive free transport for the closest school (not the catchment school he will likely attend) could he not access the same free transport my 2nd child will continue to access at the catchment school? I have read the policy several times but cannot find any examples of such a situation. I can only find information stating my 2nd will continue to access the transport to avoid disruption and my youngest would not apply. Seems bonkers to think a bus would be put on for one sibling and not the other. I will also have my eldest starting secondary school at the same time.
26/02/24	I have received the home to school policy consultation attached to my daughter's newsletter from her school today. I wanted to double check the detail of her eligibility regardless of whether the catchment area changes would go ahead or not. We have already put forward our choices for *[REDACTED TEXT]* secondary school (Upper Wharfedale) - a decision made knowing that the school transport would be provided for her. Now however, if this change goes ahead, we would be stuck with her attending a school that we can not get her to. The transport would be provided if she went to the school in Skipton however? (Not possible, since we have already submitted choices) Could you clarify for me, just to make sure I haven't read the detail incorrectly?
26/02/24	Please can I check if the information below that is being circulated on the local social media forum is correct? Currently, our pupils who live in Whitley and Eggborough villages have free transport to Brayton Academy & this secondary school has become a popular choice for our parents. At the opposite end of the scale, there is usually a maximum of 1 child per year that applies for admission to Campsmount (and historically that has been because they have lived in Askern, not the local villages).

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	I can see that from Whitley & Eggborough school postcode, the closest seconodary school is still Brayton, however, Whitley is a long, linear village with some pupils living in a housing estate at the far end of the village which is over a mile away from the school & this then means Campsmount is closer. Does this mean that some children who live in the same village & attend the same school will be eligible for free transport to Brayton and some won't? If you could clarify the correct information it would be appreciated. **North Yorkshire Council are holding a consultation on a new Home to School Travel policy for children from reception to year 11** **The proposals will impact on free school transport to high school in our area** **From 2025. a Child would only be eligible for free transport to school if they attend the "nearest" school, even if that "nearest" school is over the county border** **The "nearest" school to Whitley is the Campsmount Academy in Norton.** **If a child applies and gets a place at another school; Sherburn, Selby, Brayton or Snaith, and there are places available at the Campsmount school, then the child would not get free school transport. Currently free school transport is provided to Brayton, the catchment school.** **If there are no places at the Campsmount Academy, then the Council will look at whether the child would have got a place, if they had applied to the Campsmount Academy. And, if they would have got a place at the Campsmount Academy, then they will not get free school transport to the school of their choice.** **If a child applies for the Campsmount Academy and does not get in. then they will get free school transport to the next "nearest" school, which would be Brayton.** **These changes will come into force in September this year so their initial impact will be for children transitioning to high school in 2025.** **The consultation, which runs until 12 April, includes a survey**
1/3/24	I am seeking clarification on the proposal to force pupils away from Settle College due to school transport. As someone who lives in Ingleton (North Yorkshire) and has children who attend North Yorkshire schools, it would appear that the proposal suggests they will no longer be able to attend their catchment school. We are in Settle College's catchment, pay North Yorkshire Council Tax (and quite the council tax it is...) but are, as the crow flies, closer to QES (an academy) in Kirkby Lonsdale. I'm assuming this is an error and some wording needs to be altered to say transport will be for their catchment school - said catchment being controlled by North Yorkshire. If this isn't the case, I can only assume this is a direct attack on Settle College to force it to struggle enough financially to be forced into academisation and out of LA control. This would be

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	somewhat scandalous, so I'm sure it's not the case. I know the official view is money and cost of transport etc, but there's always a back story and there are a growing number of us concerned about what it may be.
6/3/24	My daughter has just accepted a place at Skipton Girls' High School, which is on the same bus route as Skipton Academy. We live in Gargrave. She starts in Yr 7 this September. SGHS is technically further away than Skipton Academy (which is probably the closest suitable school for her), however they are on the same bus route - will she still qualify for a free bus pass? I hope that you can answer this, as it's causing me quite a lot of stress and worry. We are on Universal Credits but don't qualify for free school meals, so I don't think we would qualify for any assistance.
09/03/24	To follow up my response on the questionnaire I have a few photos which I would like to share with you! This is the B6270, the road in which we would have to travel on to go to our nearest school in a neighbouring county! Not the school in which we would chose in what would be in our catchment area and we would choose this due to the road conditions going west!! The B6279 is absolutely treacherous at the best of times and it's bonkers in thinking that you would want the children sending over such a road!! During a snow period along with a cold spell, the road could be closed for up to 2/3 weeks as it is that bad for a gritter to be able to access due to the snowdrifts nearly been up to the bonnet of a tractor!! Winter is not just a couple of days a year, for us winter could last from November and we could get snow as late as April! Within these pictures is a car which has attempted to descend down the hill but has got stuck and has had to walk nearly 5 miles to come and get help from us! There is also a picture of a van on a recovery truck which my husband had taken. This instance he had to rush to the vets and had to travel on his 4 wheeler quad bike as this was the only way of him been able to make it! This had crashed into another car which had got stuck going up the hill and ended up slipping down and doing a 360 turn and getting wedged into the barrier!! There is also a couple of photos which is actually only half a mile from our house at the neighbouring farm and again this did not get treated for a number of days! I really hope you do consider this part of the policy whether it be just for our area and send up an easterly direction to Richmond or Leyburn and this is on a road which gets gritted several times a day or just scrap it all together! We really do feel like we are getting punished for where we live! We aren't in a position to relocate to get a nearest school as we have been farming the same farm for 3 generations! Regards
9/3/24	I am emailing in regards to the school transport consultation, having now completed the survey, I thought I would email my comments instead of using the comments section on the survey. In this consultation document there is much focus and consideration on the "safety of walked routes", obviously aimed at those within the 2/3 miles of their school, but no mention of the safety of roads for buses. I assume this is completely obvious and therefore think it is unnecessary for me to comment, however I would just like to check that these proposed changes won't actually come into place

	for the children of Upper Swaledale, and their transport arrangements will remain the same, and they will travel down the dale - currently to Richmond School. This consultation suggests that transport would be provided to 'nearest suitable school' but isn't very clear on what 'suitable' means. The nearest school for Upper Swaledale by road miles is Kirkby Stephen, in Cumbria, but I trust this won't actually be an option that NYCC are considering. The B6270 from Keld to Kirkby Stephen is not a suitable route at all in winter months, which often runs from November through to March. The road is sometimes not gritted at all, due to it being deemed not safe for a gritter. For anyone who lives at the top of Swaledale and experiences first hand how exposed the road is to the extreme weather conditions in winter, it is obvious just how many days school the children would miss if their school transport was over the country border. This would be of huge detriment to their education. The idea of children being transported over a road with a 14% gradient, at 530m altitude to school is simply ridiculous. It is just common sense to continue to take all children of Swaledale down the dale towards Richmond. I understand the proposed changes are with the aim of saving costs. The current transport situation for the children of Swaledale are as follows: - A Mini bus from Ravenseat to Gunnerside (10miles), then a coach from Gunnerside to Richmond (17miles). Currently 2 bus contracts, for the whole of Swaledale, with total mileage of 27 miles. Under the proposed changes, the children of Swaledale would be split, around the Gunnerside area, with the children of Upper Swaledale (Gunnerside up to Ravenseat) being transported to Kirkby Stephen (their nearest school), so the situation for Swaledale would be: - A Mini bus from Gunnerside to Kirkby Stephen (17miles), plus the existing bus from Gunnerside to Richmond(17miles), so 2 bus contracts, for the whole of Swaledale, with total mileage of 34 miles. Therefore for this specific community, I cannot see how this would be a cost saving, instead it increases total miles between the 2 buses, as well as travelling over a very unsuitable road. I appreciate that I am sure there are many other areas in the whole of North Yorkshire where these changes will decrease costs and improve efficiencies, however I trust that the whole point of this being a consultation is to highlight/confirm any exceptions to these very simplistic changes, and Upper Swaledale must be one of them. The communities living and working in the Dales already face many challenges both logistically and financially for school and work opportunities. Bringing in changes to transport policies like this would completely deter any young families from moving to the area, specifically Upper Swaledale, if their only school options where transport is provided is by travelling over a dangerously high route. NYCC will surely agree that safety is paramount in defining which school is ‘suitable’. If parents had to transport their children to the school that is truly suitable (Richmond) then this would have a hugely negative impact on working parents. Many of these working parents have overcome the challenges of maintaining a career alongside raising young children, and if transporting their children from Upper Swaledale to Richmond, two times a day, was to become

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	the only option, this would take 2 hours out of every working day for all of those working parents. There could be almost 20 vehicles travelling 54 miles a day. I do hope NYCC is not aiming for the dales to become only a museum where tourists visit at weekends, and instead is going to support those who live, work and look after these rural areas.
19/03/24	Good morning, I hope you are well. Please can you send me all information you have regarding the proposal of a parent/carer funded school transport from Swaledale to Richmond school/Home to school transport to geographically the closest school . This should include but not be limited to: - The outlining and detailed ideas of the proposal - The desired outcome of NYCC of the proposal - The minutes of any previous meetings held before todays date - The dates, times and locations of any future meetings after todays date - Findings from the previous meetings before todays date - The ongoing progress of the proposal - The names of the Council officials that are responsible for the proposal and its orchestration - Who is ultimately responsible for making the final decision - Any details of Cumbria council officials that NYCC are loading directly with - Minutes of any previous meetings held with Cumbria council officials - Dates, times and locations of any future meetings being held with Cumbria Council officials regarding any of the matters listed above I hope to receive this at your earliest convenience. However, should I need to obtain this information via a subject access request please inform me ASAP and include details of how this may be obtained. Should you require any further information from myself please do not hesitate to get in touch. Best regards
26/03/24	My daughter has just accepted a place at Skipton Girls' High School, which is on the same bus route as Skipton Academy. We live in Gargrave. She starts in Yr 7 this September. SGHS is technically further away than Skipton Academy (which is probably the closest suitable school for her), however they are on the same bus route - will she still qualify for a free bus pass? I hope that you can answer this, as it's causing me quite a lot of stress and worry. We are on Universal Credits but don't qualify for free school meals, so I don't think we would qualify for any assistance.
29/03/24	I currently have to pay for a seat on a bus for my daughter who attends Campsmount Secondary School and we live in Womersley, at a cost of £750 for a seat on a morning only.

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	The school is classed as out of catchment (despite being around 3 miles away). There is still a bus service running in our village that exists for the children that were entitled to transport before the changes in 2019, I can apply to pay for a place on an annual basis but its not guaranteed and at present they are only offering a seat on a morning. Would the proposed changes effect the current provision for my daughter already in year 8 currently and also how would they effect my daughter due to start Campsmount in September 2024? The current rules stipulate that my children would be entitled to transport to their catchment school (10 miles away); but not on a bus that already runs, 3 miles away, which seems a complete lack of common sense in terms of expenditure. If these queries could be clarified it would be much appreciated
09/04/24	I am emailing in regards to the school transport consultation, having now completed the survey, I thought I would email my comments instead of using the comments section on the survey. In this consultation document there is much focus and consideration on the "safety of walked routes", obviously aimed at those within the 2/3 miles of their school, but no mention of the safety of roads for buses. I assume this is completely obvious and therefore think it is unnecessary for me to comment, however I would just like to check that these proposed changes won't actually come into place for the children of Upper Swaledale, and their transport arrangements will remain the same, and they will travel down the dale - currently to Richmond School. This consultation suggests that transport would be provided to 'nearest suitable school' but isn't very clear on what 'suitable' means. The nearest school for Upper Swaledale by road miles is Kirkby Stephen, in Cumbria, but I trust this won't actually be an option that NYCC are considering. The B6270 from Keld to Kirkby Stephen is not a suitable route at all in winter months, which often runs from November through to March. The road is sometimes not gritted at all, due to it being deemed not safe for a gritter. For anyone who lives at the top of Swaledale and experiences first hand how exposed the road is to the extreme weather conditions in winter, it is obvious just how many days school the children would miss if their school transport was over the country border. This would be of huge detriment to their education. The idea of children being transported over a road with a 14% gradient, at 530m altitude to school is simply ridiculous. It is just common sense to continue to take all children of Swaledale down the dale towards Richmond. I understand the proposed changes are with the aim of saving costs. The current transport situation for the children of Swaledale are as follows: • A Mini bus from Ravenseat to Gunnerside (10miles), then a coach from Gunnerside to Richmond (17miles). Currently 2 bus contracts, for the whole of Swaledale, with total mileage of 27 miles. Under the proposed changes, the children of Swaledale would be split, around the Gunnerside area, with the children of Upper Swaledale (Gunnerside up to Ravenseat) being transported to Kirkby Stephen (their nearest school), so the situation for Swaledale would be: • A Mini bus from Gunnerside to Kirkby Stephen (17miles), plus the existing bus from Gunnerside to Richmond(17miles), so 2 bus contracts, for the whole of Swaledale, with total mileage of 34 miles. Therefore for this specific community, I cannot see how this would be a cost saving, instead it increases total miles between the 2 buses, as well as travelling over a very unsuitable road. I appreciate that I am sure there are many other areas in the whole of North Yorkshire where these changes will decrease costs and improve efficiencies, however I trust that the whole point of this being a consultation is to highlight/confirm any exceptions to these very simplistic changes, and Upper Swaledale must be one of them.

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	The communities living and working in the Dales already face many challenges both logistically and financially for school and work opportunities. Bringing in changes to transport policies like this would completely deter any young families from moving to the area, specifically Upper Swaledale, if their only school options where transport is provided is by travelling over a dangerously high route. NYCC will surely agree that safety is paramount in defining which school is 'suitable'. If parents had to transport their children to the school that is truly suitable (Richmond) then this would have a hugely negative impact on working parents. Many of these working parents have overcome the challenges of maintaining a career alongside raising young children, and if transporting their children from Upper Swaledale to Richmond, two times a day, was to become the only option, this would take 2 hours out of every working day for all of those working parents. There could be almost 20 vehicles travelling 54 miles a day. I do hope NYCC is not aiming for the dales to become only a museum where tourists visit at weekends, and instead is going to support those who live, work and look after these rural areas. I look forward to hearing back from you please.
09/04/24	I am emailing about the proposal that children will now only receive free transport to their nearest school. I live at Muker and have two pre school children. If what is being proposed becomes a reality then they will only receive free transport to Kirkby Stephen secondary school. This would take them over a hill top which would mean they would miss many days of schooling in winter, which would severely affect their education. Tailbridge hill, the descent in to Kirkby Stephen via Nateby does not get gritted as a priority. **REDACTED TEXT** states the "road is closed regularly in winter due to snow and also from ice on the upper sections forcing our customers to find alternative routes. We call the council to come and clear it but we are told it's not a priority road" please see his full letter attached. I would urge you to take this in to account and change the proposal to being the nearest school when using Priorty 1 gritting routes. This would be Richmond school, which is the school that historically upper Swaledale children have attended. There is a reason for this as the route to Kirkby Stephen and those over other tops such as Leyburn are wholly unsuitable. In the 1950's when it was brought in that children from Swaledale had to receive secondary education there was only one child attended Kirkby Stephen and not Richmond, **REDACTED TEXT** You have a duty of care to provide transport for children to be educated, and if you proceed with this proposal that doesn't take in to account Priority 1 gritting routes then you will be failing in that duty of care to children within rural locations **2 Enclosures**: **Enclosure 1: Redacted text** After speaking to one of our customers who is a resident in Muker she was sharing her concerns about the road conditions in winter on the B6270 and her children potentially having to travel on it. We are well aware of this issue as the road is closed regularly in winter due to snow on Tailbrigg and also from ice on the upper sections forcing our customers to try and find alternative routes. We call the council to come and clear it but we are told its not a priority road and after a gritter crashed through the barrier and rolled over one year a gritter will not attempt to clear it without a digger alongside now. **Enclosure 2** To whom it may concern: I have heard about taking children from Swaledale to Kirby Stephen School. In winter it is one of the worsed roads in the North of England. I my self many years ago attended that school had to board during the week and could not get home at the weekends in winter for snow many feet deep. Please think about the safety of the children and also the time they will be unable to attend school

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10/04/24	As a parent of a child, who is due to start secondary school in September 2025, I need to share my concerns of the proposed transport consultation, and illustrate the impact this would have on my physically disabled son. My son has complex needs, including a physically disability, speech and language difficulties, and moderate learning difficulties. Currently, he attends a local mainstream primary school, and I drive him to school every day, as he is unable to walk independently, and uses a walker. We live in Harrogate, and there is currently only 1 school that is accessible to [REDACTED], buy they can't meet his learning and communication needs. All 3 special schools, have a cohort of mainly Neuro Diverse pupils, with large class sizes, and not especially accessible to children using walkers, or who require calm and small classes, because of communication difficulties. My son isn't Neuro Diverse, or Autustic, so they're definitely not appropriate to him. As a result, I've been looking for the most appropriate school for over 18 months now. In total I've looked at over 20 schools in North and West Yorkshire, and have found the best school to meet his needs is in West Yorkshire. But going to school in West Yorkshire would require school transport from door to door. Being directed to the nearest local school wouldn't be appropriate for my son and certainly wouldn't meet his complex needs. My sons year group will be the first to be impacted by changes to school transport. My son is unable to travel to school independently, and having to be driven to school by family members would have a really negative impact on his emotional wellbeing. He desperately wants to be independent in getting to school, as does every high school student. [REDACTED] experiences enough exclusion in life, due to his physical disability, and to further exclude him, from transport, to travel from North Yorkshire, to school in West Yorkshire, that best meets his needs, is utterly unfair. Please take my concerns on board when your finalising the new school transport policy. **Redacted text**
12/04/24	I am writing in response to the current Home to School Transport consultation, of which I have been made aware by a local Councillor. I am concerned that the proposal to change the current provision's criteria of what constitutes a 'nearest suitable school' will lead to the threat of siblings having to be split up in order to access free transport. As a parent and former teacher who lived in rural North Yorkshire for many years, I suspect that this will, in reality, lead to more families using private cars for Home to School Transport, rather than the free buses/pass system. I understand that this is entirely the aim of this cost-cutting exercise, but it is hardly commensurate with reducing emissions, traffic management and the County's strive for Net Zero. Unless this proposal sits alongside a raft of carbon-reducing initiatives such as electric buses, improved charge point provision, upscaling of the Active Transport Networks, it is will be counterproductive aiming for a cleaner, greener North Yorkshire. I urge you to consider not only the financial hardship under which you will be placing families who want nothing more than the best education for their children, but also to adopt a wider, more holistic approach to the question of de-carbonising the overall public and private transport systems in our rural areas.
15/04/24	The council will not see any cost saying whatsoever as the transport companies will just raise their prices. ie, a bus has 10 kids on it, the company charges the council £1 per kid, that is £10 for the bus. The new policy makes 5 kids walk or go in the car, the bus company now needs to charge £2 per kid to pay for that bus to run. The council still pays

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	£10, but now there potentially are 3 extra cars on the road & 2 kids walking & now in danger! I suppose the plan may work in areas where 2 busses are needed & it gets 1 off the run, or removes some taxis. Some services just need to be run better, bus companies usually run their old & knackered busses for the school runs anyway. Offer them less money, they need the school run just as much as the council does!(probably more, they are not the ones trying to cut it) The village & road situation in North Yorkshire is different to London, where everywhere has a footpath & street lighting, around here, were lucky if we have a verge to walk on.
15/04/24	The council will not see any cost saying whatsoever as the transport companies will just raise their prices. ie, a bus has 10 kids on it, the company charges the council £1 per kid, that is £10 for the bus. The new policy makes 5 kids walk or go in the car, the bus company now needs to charge £2 per kid to pay for that bus to run. The council still pays £10, but now there potentially are 3 extra cars on the road & 2 kids walking & now in danger! I suppose the plan may work in areas where 2 busses are needed & it gets 1 off the run, or removes some taxis. Some services just need to be run better, bus companies usually run their old & knackered busses for the school runs anyway. Offer them less money, they need the school run just as much as the council does!(probably more, they are not the ones trying to cut it) The village & road situation in North Yorkshire is different to London, where everywhere has a footpath & street lighting, around here, were lucky if we have a verge to walk on. While I'm on, recently the bus from Tollerton to Alne primary has had a different driver to usual, my child has pointed out that he always triggers the 30mph speed warning & still doesn't slow down when it lights up. Also, there is a female driver on the Tollerton to Easingwold outwood run that my son points out she brakes dangerously hard if anyone is standing up in the isles causing them to fall over, but that may be a police matter?.
18/04/24	How is it determined where the nearest suitable school is...is this determined at policy setting or is it annually, how do parents find out which is their nearest suitable school for transport under the new plan. For example we live in Castleton, my children attend caedmon college whitby, the nearest suitable school is guisborough or brotton, but surely we cannot be expected to send out children to either school? But how would we fins this out. How can it be more financially viable to change the plan to nearest suitable school, including out of county. This would result in financial loss in the county paying other counties for school places, less children in ny schools. Therefore less funding, less staff, less everything in ny schools. And you're still paying the transport costs to get them to a school out of county. It doesn't make sense?! How does this actually save any money at all when rural areas have bus routes that pick up, the bus always runs be there 20 or 40 kids. Does the bus company charge per head? Perhaps you need to adjust the way the bus companies are paid. One flat rate to provide x number of seats transport indefinitely. I would like to be doubly sure I am correct in assuming that my child already in secondary education. Will still receive their free transport, have I understood that any child already

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	with a bus pass will keep that and we will not be expected to pay. Can this change at any point. What is the transport fee, from Castleton to caedmon, be? How is this determined? Also, why am I only finding out about this AFTER the meetings have taken place. Why have schools not been consulted on this when it could have a massive effect on projected intake, on the assumption that those living near county borders will essentially have school options stripped from them based on distance to a school out of county.
16/4/23	I am writing in response to the current Home to School Transport consultation, of which I have been made aware by a local Councillor. I am concerned that the proposal to change the current provision's criteria of what constitutes a 'nearest suitable school' will lead to the threat of siblings having to be split up in order to access free transport. As a parent and former teacher who lived in rural North Yorkshire for many years, I suspect that this will, in reality, lead to more families using private cars for Home to School Transport, rather than the free buses/pass system. I understand that this is entirely the aim of this cost-cutting exercise, but it is hardly commensurate with reducing emissions, traffic management and the County's strive for Net Zero. Unless this proposal sits alongside a raft of carbon-reducing initiatives such as electric buses, improved charge point provision, upscaling of the Active Transport Networks, it is will be counterproductive aiming for a cleaner, greener North Yorkshire. I urge you to consider not only the financial hardship under which you will be placing families who want nothing more than the best education for their children, but also to adopt a wider, more holistic approach to the question of de-carbonising the overall public and private transport systems in our rural areas. Yours sincerely, Parliamentary Candidate for the Green Party , Selby District
21/04/24	I have been given these contact details by my eldest child's secondary school (King James, Knaresborough), to contact if I have any questions regarding the Home to School Transport Consultation. I have many questions, but listed below are ones that I would like answering if possible. I have a child in Y3 at present, so it will potentially affect her once she reaches Y7. I live in a village called Cowthorpe - my eldest child attends King James in Knaresborough in Y8 and my youngest attends Tockwith C of E Primary Academy in Y3. 1. It seems that there will no longer be a choice, as there is currently, for the school to go to if you want to receive H2S transport. Is this the case? 2. There will no longer be catchment schools as such. Everything will be based on the nearest suitable school. Is this the case? 3. "Nearest suitable school" - according to the draft policy this will be regarded as the nearest school to my home address, regardless of whether it is in the same Local Authority or not. Is this correct? 4. Assuming it is correct, then hypothetically, (and the distances might be wrong, and I realise NYC will be releasing a tool to determine where the nearest school is in

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	September); Cowthorpe to school distances (in miles): Wetherby High - 4.3 King James' - 6.5 Boston Spa - 7.4 ...various schools… Tadcaster Grammar - 11.3 If these mileages are correct, then the nearest school is in a neighbouring LA. Will free H2S transport therefore be made available to the school if in a neighbouring LA? 5. Does the neighbouring LA know about the consultation and the potential effects it will have on their school population? 6. For my child already at KJS, will they be OK and will we still receive free H2S transport and an available bus for their time there, through to Y11? 7. If I have a child in Y6 due to go to KJS in September 2024 will they still receive the free H2S transport through to Y11? 8. If I have a child in Y7 at KJS and another in Y4, will I have to pay for child 2 when the time comes? And then will the bus cease to run after a certain length of time - i.e. after my child in Y7 finishes Y11? 9. Will a pupil who lives in Tockwith and already attends Wetherby High school start to get free H2S transport? 10. Will a bus still go from Tockwith/Cowthorpe to KJS if there are eligible students eg on an EHC plan? And if so, will my child be able to use the bus, albeit having to pay for using it? 11. If due to the changes, most children from one year at Tockwith decide to go to Wetherby High and there are not enough places for one year, will they then get free travel to KJS (or the 2nd school on the mileage list) for the duration of their time there? If in the following year, there are enough places at Wetherby, these children will not be eligible for H2S transport to KJS. If in the following year, there aren't enough places at Wetherby, will there then be Hs2 transport available to KJS, and so on. So potential there will always be a bus running to KJS bur each year will be under different criteria. 12. If the above is the case, will there be a bus running to Wetherby and KJS potentially every year? If so, obviously there will be no savings. 13. How much does it cost to provide school transport from Tockwith to King James currently? And also how much does it cost to provide the bus from Cowthorpe to King James (that goes via Arkendale, Coneythorpe and Flaxby (756H route))? 14. How much will it cost to provide transport to Wetherby High School for all these children? 15. What is the estimated total of secondary children it will affect per year, and which area(s) in North Yorkshire will be most affected? I hope you can answer these questions and put my mind at ease (or not!)

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25/04/24	Please find attached a substantive response to the consultation. I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt. I have also completed the online form, which did not provide enough space for this response.

A response to the North Yorkshire Council draft "Home to School Travel Policy - for children from Reception to Year 11" (February 2024) policy.

1. Introduction
2. Children under compulsory school age
3. Accompaniment
4. The Equality Impact Assessment
5. The Equality Act 2010
6. Exceptionality is not the legal test
7. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
8. Applying for transport
9. Recommendations

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1 Introduction

About the LEaP Project

1. The LEaP Project is part of Cerebra, a research charity that supports families of children with brain conditions. It is an innovative problem-solving project that works in conjunction with the School of Law at the University of Leeds. We listen to and understand families and help them to overcome the legal barriers they face to access social care and other support. We do this by providing resources and expertise to enable families to solve problems themselves, and through direct casework. We identify common legal issues that prevent families getting access to services and we develop innovative ways of solving those issues. We aim to reach as many families as we can by sharing our solutions as widely as possible. More information about the LEaP Project is available here.

The Law on School Transport

2. The law underpinning the provision of school transport has not changed. Local authorities have a legal duty under Section 508B and Schedule 35B Education Act 1996 to make school transport arrangements for 'eligible' children, which includes children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problems. The January 2024 statutory guidance produced by the Department for Education, "Travel to school for children of compulsory school age" ("the DfE guidance") does not change this legal duty, nor does it change a local authority's discretionary powers under s508A and s508C. Where guidance departs from the law, the law always takes precedence.

2 Children under compulsory school age

3. The local authority has a discretionary power to provide transport from home to an educational establishment (including a nursery or pre-school ("Early Years")) under s509A Education Act 1996 and for children under compulsory school age attending a school under s508C Education Act 1996.

The current policy

4. The current "Home to school and college transport policy" includes children under compulsory school age, as there is a qualified discretionary arrangement for reception age children attending a school. There is no reference to children under compulsory school age attending

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an Early Years setting. It appears the policy ("the Early Years policy") for these children can be found on the web page "SEND transport - frequently asked questions"[1]:

> **"What is the transport policy for children attending school or nursery before they turn five?**
>
> …
>
> Transport assistance is not provided to children attending nurseries or playgroups, including nursery provision in special school or primary school in which your child will be receiving statutory education in the future."

The proposed policy

5. The consultation document "Home to School Travel Policy - for children from Reception to Year 11" ("the proposed policy") deals with children under compulsory school age in the same way as the current policy - with the same qualified exception for reception age children attending a school (page 4, proposed policy). There is no reference to a separate Early Years policy for children under compulsory school age attending an Early Years setting as there is for post-16 travel.

6. The local authority has adapted the list of qualifying schools set out at s15(2) Schedule 35B Education Act 1996 by removing children below compulsory school age who attend maintained nurseries from consideration (page 6, proposed policy). Similarly, the discretionary powers that cover children below compulsory school age are omitted from the list of "Discretionary Arrangements" on page 10. This implies the local authority will continue to rely on the Early Years policy as set out on the SEND transport FAQs web page.

7. The local authority appears to be operating a blanket Early Years policy, which is unlawful following well-established public law principles. The local authority is fettering its discretion and is susceptible to challenge by judicial review and/or criticism from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) as a result. All applications for transport must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

8. This blanket policy is likely to mean some families have lost out on free transport to an Early Years setting in the past and will continue to do so in the future, should the policy remain in place. As well as being contrary to public law principles, the Early Years policy is likely to be

[1] https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/send-information-parents-and-carers/send-transport-parents-guide/send-transport-frequently-asked-questions

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having a disproportionate effect on families with disabled children, which would be a form of indirect discrimination.

3 Accompaniment

(i) Expecting parents to accompany children of all ages

9. The current policy at section 4.0 makes explicit that, in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance from 2014, local authorities have a duty to provide transport for certain eligible children. That guidance required local authorities to take into account a range of factors, including a child's age and "whether one would ordinarily expect a child of that age to be accompanied".

10. The proposed policy does not require the local authority to consider a child's age or the age appropriateness of accompanying a child. Accompaniment is treated as a matter of ordinary parental responsibility. Essentially the proposed policy says that the daily pressures of fitting work and family commitments around the school run apply to all parents in the same way and it's up to parents to 'fulfil their various responsibilities'.

11. We don't dispute that parents may be expected to accompany their child to and from school where it's age appropriate, whether the child has a disability or not. But the pressures on parents of disabled children are different because their children will need to be accompanied to a much higher age than their non-disabled peers. This shift towards expecting parents to accompany all children, with no regard for a child's age, will therefore have a disproportionate and discriminatory impact on parents of disabled children. It demonstrates a marked failure to understand the very well-documented inequalities faced by parents of disabled children in terms of income, employment, health, well-being and more.[2]

12. In particular, it seems likely that employment opportunities for parents of disabled children, predominantly mothers, will be adversely affected. We hear from parents who have had to reduce their working hours or consider giving up work altogether simply to make themselves available for the school run. In its response to the 2019 DfE draft consultation "Home to school travel and transport for children of compulsory school age Statutory guidance for local authorities", the LGSCO shared our concerns about securing the rights of children with disabilities and their parents and the "undue pressure on parents to accompany their children to school which disproportionately affects children with SEND".[3]

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[2] See for example Contact's various research reports at https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/campaigns-and-research/research/

[3] See Ombudsman's response to the consultation on home to school travel and transport, p10, 29 October 2019

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13. A parent's requirement to accompany a child should be determined by the child's age, not by his or her disability. In our view, expecting parents to accompany disabled children of all ages breaches the prohibition on disability discrimination in the Equality Act 2010. Infantilising disabled young people by expecting their parents to accompany them, whatever their age, amounts to indirect (and arguably direct) disability discrimination and requiring parents to act as escorts in these circumstances constitutes direct discrimination by association. The opening pages of the DfE guidance says that the public sector equality duty ("PSED") is likely to be 'particularly relevant' when local authorities are deciding whether it's reasonable to expect a parent to accompany their child, but the proposed policy fails to have regard to this duty.

14. In Herefordshire Council (18 017 909) - a decision concerning the Equality Act 2010 and discretionary transport for a child in the Early Years, the LGSCO said:

> "63 The Council's new early years / exceptional circumstances transport policy says 'work commitments or arrangements for transporting siblings to other schools are not reasons that can be taken into consideration'. I am not persuaded this approach is compatible with the statutory guidance or the Equality Act. Where a disabled child has to be educated outside their local area due to a need for specialist education this may have an adverse impact on parent's ability to work or care for other siblings. The 2004 guidance is clear that Councils do have to take any adverse impact into account. Councils should not have blanket policies, this would be fettering their discretion, they must look at each case on its individual facts."

15. We believe that treating parents of disabled children in the same way as all other parents may also infringe the prohibition on disability discrimination in the Human Rights Act, which requires public bodies to treat differently persons whose circumstances are significantly different.[4]

16. Failure to ensure that disabled children have access to adequate school transport has also been held to infringe a child's right to an education under the Human Rights Act.[5]

17. The DfE guidance contains a section on promoting independence for eligible children with special educational needs (from para 55), stating that local authorities may take into account how best to support children to develop independence. It appears that requiring parents to accompany children with SEN of any age runs counter to this concept.

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[4] See for example Thlimmenos v Greece (2001) 31 EHRR 15 and Gorry v. Wiltshire Council and others [2012] EWCA Civ 629.
[5] Article 2 of the First Protocol, incorporated in the First Schedule to the Act, provides that 'No person shall be denied the right to education'. See Luke Clements, 'School transport as a human right' (2 April 2023) https://www.lukeclements.co.uk/school-transport-as-a-human-right/#_ftn2 accessed 23 April 2024. See also age as "another status" in para 14 in R (Drexler) v Leicestershire County Council [2019] EWHC 1934 (Admin), [2020] EWCA Civ 502

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(ii) Whether it's reasonable to expect a parent to accompany a child

18. The 'Accompaniment' section of the proposed policy begins by reproducing para 49 of the DfE guidance, missing out the final clause, which states "local authorities must act reasonably in the performance of their functions."

19. The proposed policy appears to set a test which requires a parent to provide, minimally, "good reasons" why transport should be provided, which would not normally include a parent's working pattern or the fact that parents have children and more than one school.

20. The High Court, citing the House of Lords in Devon County Council v George [1989] 1 AC 573 set out that, "the general standard in this area is that "the parent must do those things which are reasonably practicable to be done and which an ordinary prudent parent would do.""[6] In R (on the application of S) v Education Ltd (Waltham Forest) and another [2006] EWHC 3144 the High Court – in a post-16 claim - said, "There is no absolute rule that the parents of children over 16 who cannot travel to school on their own are expected to take them. What parents can be expected to do will depend on their circumstances. There will be cases where it is not reasonable to expect them to drive a child to school. Each case will turn on its facts." (para 33).

21. The test is therefore one of reasonableness, and must take into account the different circumstances parents of disabled children face compared to families without disabled children, otherwise the local authority will disproportionately disadvantage disabled children and their families.

22. Further, the proposed policy does not give examples of what a 'good reason' might be. As previously mentioned, there is a presumption that work commitments, caring responsibilities or taking other children to different schools will not 'normally' be considered good reasons for being unable to accompany a child. While the word 'normally' allows for flexibility in principle, we have already seen in practice that other local authorities are adopting a fixed approach.

(iii) Expecting parents to make 'other suitable arrangements'

23. The proposed policy expects parents not only to accompany disabled children of all ages on the walk to school, but also to 'make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school. It's not clear what 'other suitable arrangements' means.

24. Once it has been decided that a child isn't eligible for transport, then it is obviously up to their parents to decide how to take them to school – there's no expectation that all children must walk to school. But the problem here is that the proposed policy has made the availability of 'other arrangements' part of the eligibility decision itself – i.e. the local authority can now

[6] R. (on the application of M) v Hounslow LBC [2013] EWHC 579 (Admin)

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consider whether a parent can accompany or make 'other arrangements' for a child before deciding whether the child is eligible. In our view, this is inconsistent with the law on school transport[7], which refers only to 'walking' routes and does not provide any legal basis for expecting a parent to drive a child who needs to be accompanied to school. Explanatory notes to the school transport legislation state that

> "a local education authority cannot conclude that, merely because a parent has a car and could drive his or her child to school, the local education authority will not be under a duty to make arrangements..."[8]

25. We also believe that placing the onus on parents to 'make other suitable arrangements' is inconsistent with the Equality Act 2010 as it will have a disproportionate impact on disabled children, who are more likely to need support to travel to school. Relatives and friends may not have the time, commitment or skills needed to support a disabled child on the journey to school. Breakfast clubs may be unaffordable or unable to meet a child's needs.

4 The Equality Act 2010

26. There is no mention of the Equality Act 2010 in the proposed policy, save for a definition of disability which appears in the glossary. The local authority must have due regard to the PSED under s149 Equality Act 2010, and the application of a transport policy engages the Act. Local Authorities are required to have regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity to access education between persons with a disability and those without. The LGSCO has previously criticised a local authority for a lack of reference to the Act[9]:

> 80…The policy also makes no reference to the Equality Act that I can see but, if I am wrong, the Council can tell me. The Equality Act is a key piece of legislation designed to protect disabled people and ensure parity of service between them and their able-bodied peers. And a key aspect of the Equality Act is to ensure that a council does not discriminate against those with a protected characteristic, in this case disability.
>
> …
>
> 85. We expect councils to consider their Equality Act duties when considering the transport needs of children and young adults with special educational needs and disability. They should not be treated less favourably than children and young adults of the same age.

[7] Section 508B and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996
[8] Explanatory notes to the Education and Inspections Act 2006, para 353 (which inserted school transport provisions into the Education Act 1996)
[9] London Borough of Harrow (19 017 779)

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86. So, I consider that there is fault because the Council's transport policy appears silent on its Equality Act duties. But that is not to say officers and the Panel are not aware of these duties.

…

88. Accordingly, I consider that the Council has acted with fault because its transport policy does not make reference to its Equality Act duties and I also consider the Panel's decision did not give sufficient thought to B's disability and whether it was necessary to provide transport to enable her to have the same options as her able-bodied peers and to attend the College of her choice.

27. This omission, in combination with the totality of the documents comprising this consultation, suggests the local authority has not adequately considered its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the impact the proposed policy will have on disabled children and their families.

5 Exceptionality is not the legal test

28. The local authority refers to providing transport in exceptional cases throughout the proposed policy:

- In the 'Exceptional Circumstances' section itself (page 10);
- 'Facilitating Attendance' (page 12);
- 'Residential Children' (page 12) and;
- Stage 2 appeals' (page 21).

29. In all references, the wording is incorrect. For children of compulsory school age, the legal test is not one of exceptionality, but necessity. For non-eligible children of statutory school age, the relevant legislation is set out as follows:

508C Local authorities in England: travel arrangements etc for other children

(1)A local authority in England may make such school travel arrangements as they consider necessary, in relation to any child in the authority's area to whom this section applies, for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child.

(2)This section applies to a child who is not an eligible child for the purposes of section 508B.

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(emphasis added)

30. 'Exceptional' puts the presumptive bar significantly higher than 'necessary', which is likely to be unlawfuland susceptible to legal challenge.[10] The LGSCO has found fault with local authorities that use an exceptionality test.[11] In LB Lewisham (16 009 458) the LGSCO referred to the Post-19 case of Staffordshire County Council v JM (UKUT) 0246 (AAC) 2016 in which the Court said "although the question of what is necessary is a matter for [the council] in deciding that question they must exercise their judgment judiciously and in good faith". The LGSCO concluded that as "there is no evidence the Council has considered what is necessary, rather than if there are exceptional circumstances, this was fault."

31. For children attending 52-week residential schools, the legal test is not exceptionality but, again, one of necessity, this time stemming from s2 Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. The enforceable duty is triggered by the local authority being satisfied the services are necessary.[12]

6 Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970

32. Where a child is not eligible under one of the four categories set out in Section A of the proposed policy, and the local authority decides not to exercise its powers to provide discretionary transport, there may be a duty on the local authority to provide transport under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

33. This duty is not explained within the proposed policy, and as such is an omission. In our view it is not acceptable to state that transport for social care purposes is not covered by the policy. The LGSCO has previously criticised local authorities for failing to publicise or consider its duties to provide free transport under s2 CDPA 1970. See for example Herefordshire Council (21 004 629), in particular the following paragraphs:

> "23. The Council's school transport policy includes reference to the relevant legislation and statutory guidance that underpins the Council's decision making in this area. It is disappointing the Council did not use its latest review of that policy to include a reference to CSDPA and its discretionary powers under this legislation. The Council has agreed to my recommendation to take further action to address this issue below."
>
> 24. I am satisfied with the action the Council has taken to remedy the personal injustice Mrs X experienced. However, I recommend the Council should, within one month of the final

[10] See, by analogy, R (Ross) v West Sussex PCT [2008] EWHC 2252 (Admin), (2008) 11 CCLR 787; and R (M) (Claimant) v Independent Appeal Panel of Haringey [2009] EWHC 2427 (Admin) at para 27.
[11] For example, para 38 LGSCO decision: Leeds City Council (19 019 971)
[12] See R v Gloucestershire CC ex p Barry [1997] AC 584; (1997–98) 1 CCLR 40.

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decision, include reference to its discretionary powers under s.2(1)(c) Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 to its school transport policy and reminds relevant staff, including independent review panel members, of this duty. The Council has agreed to take this action.

25. The Council should provide us with evidence when it has completed the above action." (emphasis added)

34. Without referring to these duties under the CSDPA 1970 the local authority may not be considering its discretionary duties fully and as a result may be unlawfully denying families home to school transport and may be subject to legal challenge or be similarly criticised by the LGSCO.

7 Equality impact assessment ("EIA")

35. The EIA comes to the wrong conclusion about the impact on disabled children and their families, contains faulty analysis and is misleading. The proposed changes will make things worse for disabled children and their families.

36. The EIA states [A] "The requirement for individual assessment under SEN may increase the number of pupil [sic] eligible for assistance' and, [B] 'Individual assessment will ensure children with disability [sic] needs are met on transport.' It goes on to conclude, [C] 'No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified."

37. With respect to statement A, it is not clear how the proposed assessment process for children with special educational needs, disability and mobility issues will be materially different to the current process, which already requires an individual assessment - parents have to make an application and a decision is made based on the evidence that they supply. The local authority, if not satisfied with that evidence, must seek out further evidence until it has enough in order to make a decision in each individual case. The current process already takes into account the factors outlined in the proposed policy on page 7. It is not clear what additional steps an "individual assessment" include over and above the current process. As the proposed eligibility criteria - in particular those around accompaniment - are being made more stringent, the application of the proposed policy' will mean fewer families with disabled children will qualify for home to school transport. Further, the law has not been changed and so it is unclear how a greater number of children could be eligible.

38. Statement B is poorly phrased and can be interpreted in two ways. If the intended meaning is that individual assessments will lawfully identify children who will qualify for free home to school transport, then, as per the totality of this response, we do not agree. The proposed policy will

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restrict transport for disabled children because there is a much broader expectation that parents will make arrangements for their children, no matter what their age, absent of a "good reason". If the intended meaning is concerned with the suitability of the transport the local authority will provide, the law already requires the local authority to make suitable home to school travel arrangements (s508B EA1996, SEND Code of Practice para 4.49) and for a "child to reach school without undue stress, strain or difficulty" (R v Hereford and Worcester County Council, ex parte P 2 [1992] 2 FCR 732). A child's disability needs must already be considered when transport is provided. Proposal B, in this interpretation, represents no change.

39. With respect to statement C, it has been demonstrated that the proposed policy will disproportionately affect disabled children and their families and result in an increased chance of discrimination against them.

40. The EIA fails to consider the impact of discrimination by association. The proposed section on accompaniment will have a disproportionate, negative impact on the parents of disabled children and potentially any siblings of disabled children.

8 Applying for transport

41. We could not find an online application form or any information about how to apply for home to school transport. A link on the web page "School transport for reception to year 11 children", titled "Get in Touch", is available at the very bottom of the page. Once that tab has been clicked, a link is revealed titled "Please contact us" along with a postal address. The link leads to a page called "School and college transport". There is a button on that page called "Apply for school transport for reception to year 11 children" which sends the reader back to the original page "School transport for reception to year 11 children", making this a circular process.

42. By making the application process unavailable online, either through deliberate action or otherwise, families may be put off applying and exercising their legal rights.

9 Recommendations

i. Early Years - amend the scope of the proposed policy to include all children below compulsory school age. Replace the blanket Early Years policy, making explicit that the local authority has a power to provide transport, and that each application will be considered on a case by case basis. In the alternative, write a separate, legally compliant, Early Years policy and cross refer to it in the proposed policy.

ii. Amend the wording on the SEND transport - frequently asked questions page to reflect the law (the Early Years policy).

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	iii. In the section "What legislation does this policy adhere to?" list the Equality Act 2010 and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. iv. Accompaniment – re-write this section to be legally compliant, having due regard to the Equality Act 2010, case law and LGSCO decisions. v. Equality Act 2010 – add a section that explains the local authority's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and how the Act has informed the proposed policy. vi. Exceptionality – re-write this section to reflect the correct, lower legal bar, that of necessity. vii. CSDPA 1970 - add a section that explains the transport duties the local authority has under the CSDPA 1970 and how the local authority will consider whether it is necessary to provide transport under the CSDPA 1970. viii. Acknowledge the Equality Impact Assessment comes to the wrong conclusion with respect to disabled children and consider the impact of discrimination by association on family members. Revise the EIA. ix. Ensure there is a working online transport application process as well as a paper version available. Leap Project, Cerebra 24 April 2024.
26/04/24	Please could I ask for clarification of one of the points on the new proposed changes for free school transport - what is meant by the county boundaries. I longer matter? Does this mean that a child with a home address in North Yorkshire could be made to go to a school that is in County Durham? Thank you in advance for your time in answering this matter.

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Road Safety GB ROSPA THINK!



Assessment of Walked Routes to School

Guidelines

Revised April 2021

Preface

These Guidelines were produced on behalf of Road Safety GB by:

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This version was published in 2012. Latest update - April 2021.

The working group thanks everyone who contributed to the Guideline's development.

The Guidelines comprise three sections:
- Introduction and the Principles used in the Guidelines
- Route Assessment Procedure
- Appendices giving legislation and case law

These Guidelines have been compiled based on existing legislation, best practice, health and safety and case law. They refer to various statutory regulations. These were correct at publication, but officers should check for amendments that may have been issued since this document was published.

The advice given in these Guidelines is believed to be correct at the time of publication. While every care has been taken to ensure accuracy within this document, Road Safety GB or its advisors accept no liability whatever for the information given.

Authorities should consider seeking elected Members' approval if they propose to deviate from these Guidelines.

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Section 1
Introduction and Principles

These guidelines are to help officers carry out assessments on walked routes to school where the journey is below the statutory distance. The assessments are normally required where it is claimed that the route is not acceptable and therefore the Local Authority should provide free transport.

The document contains a method of assessing walked routes to school and relevant extracts from Acts of Parliament and case law relating to transport to school. These guidelines should be taken as a basis from which each local authority can develop their own policy that includes what other factors, if any, are taken into account when offering free transport to those children that live within the statutory distance.

The law relating to schools transport and walked routes to school apply in England and Wales, but may differ in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Scope of these guidelines
When making a report on your assessment using these guidelines it should be made clear that only the relationship between pedestrians and traffic has been assessed; the local authority may also wish to consider and assess a number of other factors in regard to specific individual routes.

The Duty of the Local Authority to provide transport
The legal situation regarding school transport is based on a combination of Education Acts going back over 60 years. The relevant section of each Act is included in the appendices to this document. The most recent legislation states that Local Authorities should make "such travel arrangements as they consider necessary in order to secure that suitable home to school travel arrangements … are made and provided free of charge … to the child." (Education & Inspections Act 2006 s508B (Appendix 1))

Parents must make sure all registered pupils regularly attend school. If they do not, court action may be taken against them unless they can prove that the child's non-attendance is because the pupil is not within walking distance and the LEA has failed to provide transport. Walking distance is defined as up to 2 miles for a child under 8 and up to 3 miles for older children. The walking route must be measured by the "nearest available route" from where their home property meets the highway to the nearest school gate.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 means that since September 2007, the right to receive free school transport has been extended:

- Children aged between 8 and 11 from low income families are also entitled to free transport if they attend their nearest school even if this is more than two miles away.
- In September 2008, the right was extended again to include Secondary aged pupils (age 11-16) from low income families who attend one of the nearest three schools to their home and this is between 2 and 6 miles away, or
- they attend the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief that is between 2 and 15 miles from their home. Details of the regulations surrounding religion and belief are included in Appendix 8.

Section 1
Introduction and Principles (cont)

Principles used in these guidelines

Nearest Available Route
The question of what is the nearest available route has been disputed since the beginning of this legislation. Case law has found that distance and not safety is the appropriate test (Shaxted v Ward 1954 (Appendix 4)) and that a child should be "accompanied as necessary" (Rogers and another v Essex CC 1986 (Appendix 6)).

Case law has found that assessments must look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic only. Personal safety issues of children travelling alone are not considered. Local authorities are not legally obliged to provide free transport just because parents perceive the route to be unsafe on the grounds of personal safety and security. The case law regarding this issue, which is detailed in the appendices, is still relevant despite its creation some decades ago, and will remain so until such time precedents are changed by the courts.

Accompaniment of Children
In the case of Regina v Rogers and another (Appendix 5), the judgement by the House of Lords supported the line consistently taken by Essex County Council that for a route to be available, it must be a route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school. A route would not fail to qualify as "available" because of dangers which would arise if the child was unaccompanied (in this case the route was across common land).

The decision on whether or not a child is accompanied has to remain with the parent / carer and is not necessarily age dependant but will depend on the individual route and the child's ability and maturity.

Age of Pupil and Nature of Route
Section 509 (4) of the 1996 Education Act declares that the local education authority should take into account the age of the pupil and nature of the route (or alternative routes) they are reasonably expected to take when considering whether arrangements for travel are required (Appendix 2).

This is covered in a DfE document "Home to school travel and transport guidance" published in July 2014 (paragraphs 17 to 22). Whilst this guidance states that local education authorities should take a range of factors into consideration when conducting walking route assessments neither the Act nor the guidance provides further information on how these factors should be taken into account. In Wales the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 will apply.

Although they are broadly in line with this Road Safety GB document local authorities will need to decide for themselves how to apply the DfE guidance, also considering earlier Acts and case law.

The officer carrying out the assessment will need to use their professional judgement when applying these guidelines.

Behaviour of the road user
It is presumed that all road users will behave reasonably and responsibly.

Street lighting
On its own the absence of street lighting does not make a route unsafe.

Road Accident Record
The accident record for the route over a minimum period of 3 years should be taken into consideration. The existence of an accident record does not necessarily indicate that the route is unsafe for the journey to school, this would depend on the type, nature and relevance of the incidents. Advice from colleagues working with road casualty data may need to be taken.

Traffic flow
Where the two way (one way of a dual carriageway) traffic flow is below 240 vehicles per hour the road is assessed as safe to cross. This is based on the original County Road Safety Officers Association criteria and is equivalent to 1 vehicle every 15 seconds and allows a reasonable gap time to cross a 7m wide road at a walking speed of 0.91 metres per second. A written record of any vehicle counts should be kept.

If the site assessment shows that traffic flow is greater than 240 vehicles per hour and limits the opportunities to cross, then a gap count assessment could also be carried out.

Definitions

Available Route
An available route is any highway or public right of way that is maintained by the Local Authority. Maintained in this sense means a responsibility to keep open to the public and includes any highway, public right of way or other path or track over which public access is permitted and the use of which does not constitute a trespass. This includes roads, surfaced or un-surfaced, footpaths, bridleways or public land.

Footway
A footway or roadside strip is one that is of adequate usable walking width for the circumstances. To be usable it should be clear of overgrowth, ie shrubs and trees obstructing the footway. The road or side roads may need to be crossed to maintain access to the footway.

It may be more cost effective to clear and maintain a footway than to provide free transport.

Highways
Highways include all public rights of way and public roads.

Public bridleway
Bridleways are highways over which the right of way is on foot, bicycle or on horseback.

Public byway
Byways are open to all traffic, however they are primarily used for walking and riding.

Public footpath
Footpaths are highways over which the right of way is on foot only.

Public Right of Way
Public Rights of Way are public footpaths, bridleways and byways open to all traffic.

Public roads
Roads include motorways, trunk roads, A, B and C class roads as well as other unclassified roads that may or may not be surfaced.

Pupil
A child of compulsory school age (that is between 5 and 16 years old). Local Authorities may have their own policies on help with transport for young people over the age of 16.

Sight Lines
A sight line is important when crossing the road or walking along the roadway. For a route to be non-hazardous:

- lines of sight for a pedestrian must be enough for them to see oncoming vehicles and have sufficient time to safely take avoiding action. Vehicle speeds on individual roads would need to be taken into account.
- lines of sight for a driver (measured from a height of 1.05m) must be enough for them to see pedestrians walking along the carriageway and have sufficient time to safely take avoiding action at whatever speed they are travelling. As an absolute minimum this must be the overall minimum stopping distance for traffic at the recorded 85%ile speed of traffic on that road. (85%ile speed is the speed below which 85% of vehicles travel in normal free flow conditions – a speed survey may need to be carried out to find this information).

Note: Mean speeds may be used as an alternative to the 85%ile.

Visibility
The unobstructed distance you can see when measured from the viewpoint of a driver, measured at 1.05m from the road surface.

The unobstructed distance a pedestrian can see from the point at which they have to cross the road or can see traffic when walking on the roadway.

Step off
A “step off” is where pedestrians can step clear of the roadway onto a reasonably even and firm surface such as a roadside verge.

Traffic Interrupter
Any feature in the highway or environment that create gaps in the traffic flow eg traffic lights, roundabouts etc.

Section 2
Route Assessment Procedure

Points to Consider

The whole route from the child's home to the school should be assessed at a time children would normally be travelling to and from school.

When assessing the safety of a potential walking route, the following points should be considered.

- When assessing the safety of an “available route”, only the potential risk created by traffic, the highway and topographical conditions should be considered (1).

- Each case must be considered on its own merits. Where possible the assessment should be carried out on foot.
  Using on-line street imagery may indicate a route is hazardous, however a site survey may also be necessary. Even if it suggests a route is **not** hazardous a site survey must still be carried out.
  Note: you should be aware of how old the imagery is as it may not show recent changes to the route.

- It is assumed that children are accompanied as necessary by a responsible parent or carer (2).

- A footway, roadside strip of reasonable width and condition, a public footpath or bridleway will all normally be assumed to provide an available route for that part of the journey (3).

- On a road with light traffic flow a verge that can be stepped on by a child and accompanying parent when traffic is passing can normally be assumed to provide an available route.
  This is known as a “step off” (4).

- It is assumed that the road or side roads will be crossed to use a footway or road side strip (5).

- Many available routes may lie along roads that have neither a footway nor verge. On these roads the width of the carriageway, traffic speed and type of traffic (e.g. frequent long or heavy goods vehicles) as well as visibility/sight lines that may be affected by sharp bends, high hedgerows or other obstructions must be considered. It is likely that if a route is found to be lacking in ‘step offs’ then it is also likely to have issues with adequate visibility – the features that affect the availability of ‘step offs’ often impact on visibility – hedges, gradients etc. However, there may be exceptions to this.

- Where roads need to be crossed, the availability of crossing facilities such as central refuges, pedestrian crossings or traffic signals should be taken into consideration. Where no crossing facilities exist the risk assessment of the route should include consideration of each road crossing, bearing in mind traffic speed and flows, sight lines etc.

- The road casualty record along the route.

- A written record of the assessment should be kept.

Section 2
Route Assessment Procedure

- A plan showing the route should be attached to each assessment.
- These guidelines cannot cover every eventuality and situation as there are many subtle variations in the features of routes.



(1) Available route – see definitions, page 6.
(2) Case law – Regina v Devon County Council refers to "accompanied as necessary" (see appendix 7).
(3) Case law – Rogers and another v Essex County Council 1986 refers to available route (see appendix 6).
(4) Step-off – see definitions, page 7.
(5) Footway or roadside strip – see definitions, page 6.

*The road or side roads may need to be crossed to maintain access to the footway.

Section 2
Route Assessment Procedure

If there is a need to cross roads there must also be:

- sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunities to cross safely. The gap time analysis should be used where necessary (see page 11)

or

- Crossing facilities eg, zebra, pelican, puffin crossing etc
- Pedestrian phase at traffic lights
- School Crossing Patrol
- pedestrians refuges

If a road needs to be crossed the visibility at the location should allow a vehicle to stop, given the 85%ile speed (the speed at which 85% of the vehicles travel below) of the traffic flow. Vehicle stopping distances should be taken as those given in the Highway Code.

The presumption is made that all road users follow the highway code and drive to the conditions of the road.

In many rural areas, the exercise of continuous judgement is likely to be required. No criteria can provide all the guidance or answers to every situation that may be encountered.

If there is an adequate footway throughout the whole length of the journey, and there is no need to cross the road, then the route is “safe”. (Informed judgement by the professional may be necessary depending on traffic flows and the nature of the route).

If roads have to be crossed to use a footway or to improve sight lines then it may be necessary to give advice about safe crossing places.

On some country roads the footway may not be continuous. Informed judgement will have to be made about the availability of “step off” points.

Section 2
Route Assessment Procedure

Non-hazardous Route Definition

For a route to be classed as non-hazardous there needs to be:-

Both

A

A continuous adequate footway on roads which carry normal to heavy traffic
or
"Step offs" on roads which have light traffic flow but adequate sight lines to provide sufficient advance warning to drivers and pedestrians.
or
on roads with very light traffic flow, no "step offs", but sufficiently good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning.

And

B

If there is a need to cross roads there must be:-
Sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunities to cross safely.
or
Crossing facilities (eg zebra, pelican crossings)
Pedestrian phase at traffic lights (including necessary refuges)
School Crossing Patrol
Pedestrian refuges

Road Crossing Assessments

The difficulty of crossing at a site can be assessed by considering the number of gaps in the traffic flow that are acceptable to pedestrians. Free flowing traffic may provide gaps randomly and fairly frequently but speeds tend to be higher and gaps would need to be longer in order to cross the road safely.

An acceptable gap to cross from kerb to kerb varies with each person. We recommend that a walking speed of 0.91m per second is used when assessing.

Gap Time

The survey should record the number of gaps in each 5 minute period that are longer than the road crossing time, using 0.91m per second as the walking speed. Four gaps in each 5 minute period indicate a road that can be crossed without too much delay. Longer gaps could be classified as multiple gaps rather than as just one gap. Transport Note 1/95 (Department for Transport) gives further information on assessing gaps in traffic flow for road crossings.

Section 2
Route Assessment Procedure

Site Surveys

Site surveys should usually take place during the period before schools starts in the morning as this is when traffic flow is generally heaviest, unless it can be shown that the afternoon flow is heavier. Further surveys should take place at the end of the school day and again at whichever period has the heaviest traffic flow, giving a minimum of three surveys. Data should be recorded in 5 minute consecutive periods.

Where there is an obstacle such as a narrow bridge along the route, professional judgement will have to be used to assess the relative risk of passing it. The gap criteria given above may be useful and assist in this type of situation.

Traffic Counts

The traffic flow can vary from very low on some country roads to very heavy in urban areas. It will also vary on individual stretches of road depending on the time of day and in some cases time of year and day of the week.

Suggested flow levels:
Low traffic flow – up to 400 vehicles per hour
Medium traffic flow – 400 to 840 vehicles per hour
Heavy traffic flow – over 840 vehicles per hour

It is difficult to define a figure for 'light' and 'very light' traffic flows as its suitability for these assessments depends on the road environment, 'platooning' of traffic and the gaps between 'platoons'. The assessor should use their professional judgement.

It is recommended that traffic counts are recorded as "passenger car" equivalent values (PCUs), by using the following factors:

Passenger Car Units

3 pedal cycles	= 1 PCU
2 motorcycles	= 1 PCU
1 Car	= 1 PCU
1 light goods vehicle (up to 3.5 tonnes gross weight)	= 1 PCU
1 Bus/Coach (over 3.5 tonnes)	= 2 PCUs
Goods Vehicles (over 3.5 tonnes)	= 2 PCUs
Goods Vehicles (over 7.5 tonnes/multi axle lorries)	= 3 PCUs

All vehicle counts are two way except on one way systems. Dual carriageways are counted as one way on each side.

Where the two way (one way of a dual carriageway) traffic flow is below 240 vehicles per hour the road is assessed as safe to cross. This is based on the original County Road Safety Officers Association criteria and is equivalent to 1 vehicle every 15 seconds and allows a reasonable gap time to cross a 7m wide road at a walking speed of 0.91m per second. Where traffic flow is greater than 240 vehicles per hour a local authority may wish to consider a gap count analysis.

Section 3
Appendix 1

Education and Inspections Act 2006

Part 6 School travel and school food
Travel to schools etc

After section 508 of EA 1996 insert—
"508A LEAs in England: duty to promote sustainable modes of travel etc
(1) A local education authority in England must—
(a) prepare for each academic year a document containing their strategy to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area ("a sustainable modes of travel strategy"),
(b) publish the strategy in such manner and by such time as may be prescribed, and
(c) promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area.
(2) Before preparing a sustainable modes of travel strategy, an authority must in particular—
(a) assess the school travel needs of their area, and
(b) assess the facilities and services for sustainable modes of travel to, from and within their area.
(3) "Sustainable modes of travel" are modes of travel which the authority consider may improve either or both of the following—
(a) the physical well-being of those who use them;
(b) the environmental well-being of the whole or a part of their area.
(4) The "school travel needs" of a local education authority's area are—
(a) the needs of children and persons of sixth form age in the authority's area as regards travel mentioned in subsection (5), and
(b) the needs of other children and persons of sixth form age as regards travel mentioned in subsection (6).
(5) The needs of children and persons of sixth form age in the authority's area as regards travel referred to in subsection (4)(a) are their needs as regards travel to and from—
(a) schools at which they receive or are to receive education or training,
(b) institutions within the further education sector at which they receive or are to receive education or training, or
(c) any other places where they receive or are to receive education by virtue of arrangements made in pursuance of section 19(1).
(6) The needs of other children and persons of sixth form age as regards travel referred to in subsection (4)(b) are their needs as regards travel to and from—
(a) schools at which they receive or are to receive education or training,
(b) institutions within the further education sector at which they receive or are to receive education or training, or
(c) any other places where they receive or are to receive education by virtue of arrangements made in pursuance of section 19(1), in so far as that travel relates to travel within the authority's area.
(7) The Secretary of State must issue, and may from time to time revise, guidance in relation to the discharge by a local education authority of their duties under this section.
(8) Before issuing or revising guidance under subsection (7), the Secretary of State must consult such persons as he considers appropriate.
(9) In discharging their duties under this section an authority must—
(a) consult such persons as they consider appropriate, and
(b) have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State under subsection (7).
(10) References in this section to persons of sixth form age are to be construed in accordance with subsection (1) of section 509AC.
(11) In this section, "academic year" has the same meaning as in section 509AC in the case of local education authorities in England."

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(1) After section 508A of EA 1996 insert—
"508B LEAs in England: travel arrangements for eligible children
(1) A local education authority in England must make, in the case of an eligible child in the authority's area to whom subsection (2) applies, such travel arrangements as they consider necessary in order to secure that suitable home to school travel arrangements, for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at the relevant educational establishment in relation to him, are made and provided free of charge in relation to the child.
(2) This subsection applies to an eligible child if—
(a) no travel arrangements relating to travel in either direction between his home and the relevant educational establishment in relation to him, or in both directions, are provided free of charge in relation to him by any person who is not the authority, or
(b) such travel arrangements are provided free of charge in relation to him by any person who is not the authority but those arrangements, taken together with any other such travel arrangements which are so provided, do not provide suitable home to school travel arrangements for the purpose of facilitating his attendance at the relevant educational establishment in relation to him.
(3) "Home to school travel arrangements", in relation to an eligible child, are travel arrangements relating to travel in both directions between the child's home and the relevant educational establishment in question in relation to that child.
(4) "Travel arrangements", in relation to an eligible child, are travel arrangements of any description and include—
(a) arrangements for the provision of transport, and
(b) any of the following arrangements only if they are made with the consent of a parent of the child—
(i) arrangements for the provision of one or more persons to escort the child (whether alone or together with other children) when travelling to or from the relevant educational establishment in relation to the child;
(ii) arrangements for the payment of the whole or any part of a person's reasonable travelling expenses;
(iii) arrangements for the payment of allowances in respect of the use of particular modes of travel.
(5) "Travel arrangements", in relation to an eligible child, include travel arrangements of any description made by any parent of the child only if those arrangements are made by the parent voluntarily.
(6) "Travel arrangements", in relation to an eligible child, do not comprise or include travel arrangements which give rise to additional costs and do not include appropriate protection against those costs.
(7) For the purposes of subsection (6)—
(a) travel arrangements give rise to additional costs only if they give rise to any need to incur expenditure in order for the child to take advantage of anything provided for him in pursuance of the arrangements, and
(b) travel arrangements include appropriate protection against those costs only if they include provision for any expenditure that needs to be incurred for the purpose mentioned in paragraph (a) in the case of the child to be met by the person by whom the arrangements are made.
(8) Travel arrangements are provided free of charge if there is no charge for anything provided in pursuance of the arrangements.
(9) Schedule 35B has effect for the purposes of defining "eligible child" for the purposes of this section.
(10) References to a "relevant educational establishment", in relation to an eligible child, are references to—
(a) in the case of a child who is an eligible child by virtue of falling within any of paragraphs 2, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 12 of Schedule 35B, the qualifying school (within the meaning of that Schedule) at which the child is a registered pupil referred to in the paragraph in question, and
(b) in the case of a child who is an eligible child by virtue of falling within any of paragraphs 3, 5, 7, 10 and 13 of Schedule 35B, the place other than a school, where the child is receiving education by virtue of arrangements made in pursuance of section 19(1), referred to in the paragraph in question.
(11) Regulations may modify subsections (1) and (2) to provide for their application in cases where there is more than one relevant educational establishment in relation to a child.

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508C LEAs in England: travel arrangements etc for other children
(1) A local education authority in England may make such school travel arrangements as they consider necessary, in relation to any child in the authority's area to whom this section applies, for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child.
(2) This section applies to a child who is not an eligible child for the purposes of section 508B.
(3) "School travel arrangements", in relation to such a child, are travel arrangements relating to travel in either direction between his home and any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child, or in both directions.
(4) "Travel arrangements", in relation to such a child, are travel arrangements of any description and include—
(a) arrangements for the provision of transport, and
(b) any of the following arrangements only if they are made with the consent of a parent of the child—
(i) arrangements for the provision of one or more persons to escort the child (whether alone or together with other children) when travelling to or from any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child;
(ii) arrangements for the payment of the whole or any part of a person's reasonable travelling expenses;
(iii) arrangements for the payment of allowances in respect of the use of particular modes of travel.
(5) A local education authority in England may pay, in the case of a child in the authority's area to whom this section applies and in relation to whom no arrangements are made by the authority under subsection (1), the whole or any part, as they think fit, of a person's reasonable travelling expenses in relation to that child's travel in either direction between his home and any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child, or in both directions.
(6) References to a "relevant educational establishment", in relation to a child to whom this section applies, are references to—
(a) any school at which he is a registered pupil,
(b) any institution within the further education sector at which he is receiving education, or
(c) any place other than a school where he is receiving education by virtue of arrangements made in pursuance of section 19(1).
508D Guidance etc in relation to sections 508B and 508C
(1) The Secretary of State must issue, and may from time to time revise, guidance in relation to the discharge by a local education authority of their functions under sections 508B and 508C.
(2) Before issuing or revising guidance under subsection (1), the Secretary of State must consult such persons as he considers appropriate.
(3) In discharging their functions under sections 508B and 508C an authority must have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State under subsection (1).
(4) Regulations may require a local education authority to publish, at such times and in such manner as may be prescribed, such information as may be prescribed with respect to the authority's policy and arrangements relating to the discharge of their functions under section 508B or 508C."
(2) Schedule 8 (which inserts Schedule 35B to EA 1996) has effect.

(1) After section 508D of EA 1996 insert—
"508E LEAs in England: school travel schemes
(1) Schedule 35C has effect in relation to school travel schemes.
(2) Where a school travel scheme is in force under Schedule 35C, the local education authority in England by which the scheme is made must give effect to the scheme by—
(a) making the arrangements which are set out in the scheme as described in paragraph 2(1) of that Schedule as arrangements to be made by the authority,
(b) complying with the requirement of the scheme described in paragraph 2(5) of that Schedule (requirement to

make suitable alternative arrangements),
(c) complying with the requirement of the scheme described in paragraph 3 of that Schedule (travel arrangements for eligible children), and
(d) complying with the scheme's policy applicable to charging and any other requirements of the scheme.
(3) Where a school travel scheme is in force under Schedule 35C, the local education authority in England by which the scheme is made do not have any functions under section 508B or 508C in relation to children in their area.
(4) The Secretary of State must issue, and may from time to time revise, guidance in relation to the discharge by a local education authority in England of any duty under subsection (2) or of any functions under Schedule 35C.
(5) Before issuing or revising guidance under subsection (4), the Secretary of State must consult such persons as he considers appropriate.
(6) In discharging any duty under subsection (2) and in exercising any functions under Schedule 35C, a local education authority in England must have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State under subsection (4)."
(2) Schedule 9 (which inserts Schedule 35C to EA 1996) has effect.
79 Piloting of school travel scheme provisions
(1) The school travel scheme provisions are to be piloted in accordance with regulations made by the Secretary of State.
(2) Regulations under subsection (1) may, in particular, provide for there to be a limit on the number of school travel schemes which may be in force while the school travel scheme provisions are being piloted.
(3) In this section, "the school travel scheme provisions" means section 508E of, and Schedule 35C to, EA 1996.
80 Power to repeal school travel scheme provisions etc
(1) The Secretary of State must prepare and publish, before 1st January 2012, an evaluation of the operation and effect of school travel schemes approved under Schedule 35C to EA 1996.
(2) The Secretary of State may by order provide for the school travel scheme provisions to cease to have effect in relation to local education authorities with effect from such date as may be specified in the order.
(3) The earliest date which may be specified under subsection (2) is 1st August 2012.
(4) The latest date which may be specified under subsection (2) is 1st August 2015.
(5) Power to make an order under this section includes power to make consequential amendments and repeals in any enactment, including this Act and enactments passed or made after the passing of this Act.
(6) In this section, "the school travel scheme provisions" means section 508E of, and Schedule 35C to, EA 1996.
After section 508E of EA 1996 insert—
"508F LEAs in England: provision of transport etc for certain adult learners
(1) A local education authority in England must make such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as they consider necessary, or as the Secretary of State may direct, for the purpose of facilitating the attendance of qualifying adult learners receiving education or training at an institution outside both the further education and higher education sectors.
(2) "Qualifying adult learners" means adult learners for whom the Learning and Skills Council for England has secured—
(a) the provision of education or training at the institution in question, and
(b) the provision of boarding accommodation under section 13 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (persons with learning difficulties).
(3) Any transport provided in pursuance of arrangements under subsection (1) must be provided free of charge.
(4) A local education authority in England may pay the whole or any part, as they think fit, of the reasonable travelling expenses of any adult learner receiving education or training at an institution outside both the further education and higher education sectors for whose transport no arrangements are made under subsection (1).
(5) In considering whether or not they are required by subsection (1) to make arrangements in relation to a

particular person, a local education authority must have regard, amongst other things, to the age of the person and the nature of the routes which he could reasonably be expected to take.
(6) Arrangements made by a local education authority under subsection (1) must make provision for persons receiving full-time education or training at institutions mentioned in subsection (1) which is no less favourable than the provision made in pursuance of the arrangements for persons of the same age with learning difficulties (within the meaning of section 13 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000) for whom the authority secure the provision of education at any other institution.
(7) "Adult learner" means a person who is neither a child nor a person of sixth form age.
(8) The reference in subsection (7) to a person of sixth form age is to be construed in accordance with subsection (1) of section 509AC."

82 Amendments of section 444 of EA 1996 in relation to school travel
(1) Section 444 of EA 1996 (offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil) is amended as follows.
(2) After subsection (3) insert—
"(3A) Subsections (3B) and (3D) apply where the child's home is in England.
(3B) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if the parent proves that—
(a) the local education authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the child under section 508B(1) for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty, or
(b) the local education authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the child by virtue of subsection (2)(c) of section 508E (school travel schemes) for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty.
(3C) For the purposes of subsection (3B)—
(a) the reference to "travel arrangements" in paragraph (a) has the same meaning as in section 508B, and
(b) the reference to "travel arrangements" in paragraph (b) has the same meaning as in paragraph 3 of Schedule 35C.
(3D) Where the school is an independent school which is not a qualifying school, the child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if the parent proves—
(a) that the school is not within walking distance of the child's home,
(b) that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority for boarding accommodation for him at or near the school, and
(c) that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority for enabling him to become a registered pupil at a qualifying school nearer to his home.
(3E) For the purposes of subsection (3D), "qualifying school" has the same meaning as it has for the purposes of Schedule 35B (meaning of "eligible child" for the purposes of section 508B).
(3F) Subsection (4) applies where the child's home is in Wales."
(3) In subsection (5) for "subsection (4)" substitute "subsections (3D) and (4)".
(4) In subsection (6) for "subsection (4)" substitute "subsections (3B), (3D) and (4)".
(5) The amendments made by this section do not apply in relation to any failure of a child to attend at a school or other place in relation to which section 444 of EA 1996 applies which occurs on a day before this section comes into force.
(1) In section 509AA of EA 1996 (provision of transport etc for persons of sixth form age)—
(a) in subsection (9)—
(i) for "Secretary of State" substitute "appropriate authority", and
(ii) for "he" substitute "it",

(b) after subsection (9) insert—
"(9A) The "appropriate authority" means—
(a) in the case of a local education authority in England, the Secretary of State, and
(b) in the case of a local education authority in Wales, the National Assembly for Wales.", and
(c) in subsection (10), after "Secretary of State" insert "(in relation to local education authorities in England) or the National Assembly for Wales (in relation to local education authorities in Wales)".
(2) In section 509AB of EA 1996 (further provision about transport policy statements)—
(a) in subsection (5), for the words from "by the Secretary" to the end substitute "under this section—
(a) by the Learning and Skills Council for England (in the case of an authority in England), or
(b) by the National Assembly for Wales (in the case of an authority in Wales).",
(b) in subsection (6)(d), for the words from "by the Secretary" to the end substitute "for the purposes of this section by the Learning and Skills Council for England (in the case of an authority in England) or the National Assembly for Wales (in the case of an authority in Wales).", and
(c) after subsection (7) insert—
"(8) Any guidance issued by the Learning and Skills Council for England under this section must be published in such manner as the Council thinks fit."
(3) In section 509AC of EA 1996 (interpretation of sections 509AA and 509AB)—
(a) in subsection (6), after "subsection (5)" insert "in relation to its application in the case of local education authorities in England", and
(b) after subsection (6) insert—
"(7) The National Assembly for Wales may by order amend the definition of "academic year" in subsection (5) in relation to its application in the case of local education authorities in Wales."
(4) In section 18 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (c. 21) (supplementary functions of Learning and Skills Council for England), after subsection (5) insert—
"(6) The Secretary of State may by order confer or impose on the Council such powers or duties falling within subsection (7) as he thinks fit.
(7) A power or duty falls within this subsection if it is exercisable in connection with—
(a) the Secretary of State's function under section 509AA(9) of the Education Act 1996 (power to direct LEA to make arrangements additional to those specified in transport policy statement), or
(b) any function of the Secretary of State under any of sections 496 to 497B of the Education Act 1996 as regards anything done, proposed to be done or omitted to be done by a local education authority in England under section 509AA or 509AB of that Act."

After section 509AC of EA 1996 insert—
"509AD LEAs in England: duty to have regard to religion or belief in exercise of travel functions
(1) A local education authority in England must have regard, amongst other things, in exercising any of their travel functions in relation to or in connection with the travel of a person or persons to or from a school, institution or other place, to any wish of a parent of such a person for him to be provided with education or training at a particular school, institution or other place where that wish is based on the parent's religion or belief.
(2) The "travel functions" of a local education authority in England are their functions under any of the following provisions—

- section 508A (duty to promote sustainable modes of travel etc);
- section 508B (travel arrangements for eligible children);
- section 508C (travel arrangements etc for other children);
- section 508E and Schedule 35C (school travel schemes);
- section 508F (transport etc for certain adult learners);
- section 509AA (transport etc for persons of sixth form age).

(3) For the purposes of this section—
(a) "religion" means any religion,
(b) "belief" means any religious or philosophical belief,
(c) a reference to religion includes a reference to lack of religion, and
(d) a reference to belief includes a reference to lack of belief."
85 Further amendments relating to travel to schools etc
Schedule 10 contains further amendments relating to travel to schools and other places where education or training is received.

Section 3
Appendix 2

EDUCATION ACT 1996 Section 509

Provision of Transport etc:

(1) A local education authority shall make such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as they consider necessary, or as the Secretary of State may direct, for the purpose of facilitating the attendance of persons receiving education:-

(a) at schools;

(b) at any institution maintained or assisted by the authority which provides further education or higher education (or both);

(c) at any institution within the further education sector; or

(d) at any institution outside both the further education sector and the higher education sectors, where a further education funding council has secured provision for those persons at the institution under section 4(3) or (5) of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

(2) Any transport provided in pursuance of arrangements under subsection (1) shall be provided free of charge.

(3) A local education authority may pay the whole or any part, as they see fit, of the reasonable travelling expenses of any person receiving education:-

(a) at a school, or

(b) at any such institution as is mentioned in subsection (1), for whose transport no arrangements are made under that subsection.

(4) In considering whether or not they are required by subsection (1) to make arrangements in relation to a particular person, a local education authority shall have regard (amongst other things):-

(a) to the age of the person and the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which he could reasonably be expected to take; and

(b) to any wish of his parent for him to be provided with education at a school or institution in which the religious education provided is that of the religion or denomination to which his parent adheres.

(5) Arrangements made by a local education authority under subsection (1) shall:-

(a) make provision for pupils at grant-maintained schools which is no less favourable than the provision made in pursuance of the arrangements for pupils at schools maintained by a local education authority;

(b) make provision for persons receiving full-time education at any institution within the further education sector which is no less favourable than the provision made in pursuance of the arrangements for pupils of the same age at schools maintained by a local education authority; and

(c) make provision for persons receiving full-time education at institutions mentioned in subsection (1)(d) which is no less favourable than:-

(i) the provision made in pursuance of the arrangements for persons of the same age with learning difficulties (within the meaning of section 15(5) at schools maintained by a local education authority, or

(ii) where there are no such arrangements, the provision made in pursuance of such arrangements for such persons for whom the authority secures the provision of education at any other institution.

(6) Regulations under section 414(6) may require publication (within the meaning of that section) by every local education authority of such information as may be required by the regulations with respect to the authority's policy and arrangements for provision under this section for persons attending institutions mentioned in subsection (1) (c) or (d) who are over compulsory school age and who have not attained the age of 19.

Section 3
Appendix 3

EDUCATION ACT 1996 Section 444

Offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil.

(1) If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.

(2) Subsections (3) to (6) below apply in proceedings for an offence under this section in respect of a child who is not a boarder at the school in which he is a registered pupil.

(3) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if he is...

(a) with leave,
(b) at any time when he was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause, or
(c) on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs.

(4) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if the parent proves:-

(a) that the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home, and
(b) that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority or the funding authority for any of the following:-

(i) his transport to and from the school
(ii) boarding accommodation for him at or near the school, or
(ii) enabling him to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his home.

(5) In subsection (4) 'walking distance':-

(a) in relation to a child who is under the age of eight, means 3.218688 kilometres (two miles), and
(b) in relation to a child who has attained the age of eight, means 4.828032 kilometres (three miles),

in each case measured by the nearest available route.

(6) If it is proved that the child has no fixed abode, subsection (4) shall not apply, but the parent shall be acquitted if he proves:-

(a) that he is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,
(b) that the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and
(c) if the child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted.

(7) In proceedings for an offence under this section in respect of a child who is a boarder at the school at which he is a registered pupil, the child shall be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if he is absent from it without leave during any part of the school term at a time when he was not prevented from being present by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause.

(8) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

(9) In this section 'leave', in relation to a school, means leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school.

Section 3
Appendix 4

The Weekly Law Reports – Shaxted v. Ward Feb. 1954

SHAXTED v. WARD
[QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION (Lord Goddard, C.J. Byrne and Parker, J.J.), January 25 1954.]

Education – School attendance – Duty of parent to secure regular attendance of pupil – 'available route' – Road unsafe for unescorted children – Dangerous crossing – Education Act, 1944 (S31), S39(5).

By the Education Act, 1944 S39(2)(c), a child shall not be deemed to have failed to attend regularly at school if the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within 'walking distance' of the child's home. By S39(5) walking distance means, according to the age of the child, two or three miles measured by 'the nearest available route'.

The appellant, the father of the child, aged six years, who failed to attend school regularly, being charged with an offence under S39(1) of the Act (which provides that, if a child of compulsory school age fails regularly to attend school, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence), contended that, although the direct route from the child's home to the school was within the distance laid down in S39(5) part of the road was unsafe for unescorted children as it included a dangerous crossing, and, therefore, was not an 'available route'; that the nearest available safe route was more than the distance laid down in S39(5); and therefore, there was a reasonable excuse for non-attendance.

Held: Distance, not safety, was the test for determining 'the nearest available route', and, therefore, the school was within walking distance of the child's home, and the appellant was guilty of an offence.

FOR THE EDUCATION ACT, 1944, S39, SEE HALSBURY'S STATUTES Second Edition, Vol. 8, p.183.

Cases referred to:

(1)Hares v. Curtin, [1913] 2 K.B. 328; 82 L.J.K.B. 707; 108 L.T. 974;

76 J.P. 313; 19 Digest 568, 89.

Cases Stated by Kent Justices.

At a court of summary jurisdiction, sitting at Canterbury on Aug. 13, 1953, the respondent, Francis George Ward, an education welfare officer, preferred informations against each of the appellants, Bertie Herbert Harold Shaxted and Albert George Farrier, charging that each, being the parent of a child of compulsory school age, was guilty of an offence against S39(1) of the Education Act, 1944, in that the child, who was a registered pupil at Preston County Primary School, failed to attend regularly thereat between April 21 and June 26, 1953.

It was proved or admitted that each of the appellants was the parent of a child of compulsory school age who was a registered pupil at the said school and failed to attend that school during the period mentioned in the information: that each child lived in the hamlet of West Stourmouth and within the distance from the school laid down in S39(5) of the Act as 'walking distance' in relation to each such child respectively by the direct route; that this route was safe for the children to use if escorted, the bit of road near the school where, owing to the presence

of a dangerous crossing, an escort would be desirable for small children being common to both the children in question; that it was usual, and the duty of parents, to provide escort for their children to and from school, when necessary; that the education authority, nevertheless, arranged for an omnibus taking the children from Stourmouth to and from a secondary school at Sandwich to take the children of the appellants to and from school during the period in question; that on the return journey the omnibus reached the school at 4.45 p.m. to pick up these children there, they having finished their lessons at 3.45 p.m. ; that the appellants wanted a special omnibus from the school and would not provide an escort for their children; that another Stourmouth resident, a Mr S., who was a co-defendant with the appellants and gave evidence, admitted that his son could have attended the school regularly, but he 'had to stand by the other parents'.

On behalf of the appellants it was contended: (i) that the direct routes were not safe for their children to use when returning from school in a party; (ii) that the afternoon bus from school was not suitable transport for the return journey and, (iii) that, therefore, they were prevented by unavoidable cause within the meaning of S39(2)(a) of the Education Act, 1944, from sending their children to school; (iv) that the words 'in relation to a child' of the ages specified in S39(5) referred not merely to the words 'walking distance', but that those words also governed the later words 'nearest available route', limiting those words to such routes only as were safe for a child to use, that the direct routes were not safe for the children and the nearest available safe route was more than the distances specified in the section, and so the children were entitled to transport, but no suitable arrangements had been made for their transport to school. On behalf of the respondent it was contended that 'available route' meant a route which could be followed without committing trespass.

The justices were of the opinion that no defence had been made out because (i) the direct routes were safe for children when escorted; (ii) there was no unavoidable cause, because the direct routes were safe if the parents had escorted their children or arranged for their escort, and also the omnibus provided was suitable in the circumstances; (iii) the suggested interpretation of the words 'available route' was irrelevant because the justices held (a) that the direct routes were, in fact, safe for the children in question, and (b) that the omnibus provided from school was a 'suitable arrangement' for the transport of the said children; (iv) and, further, the suggested interpretation of the words 'available route' was strained and unnatural. The justices held that the school was within walking distance of the home of each appellant so that the appellants were not entitled to transport for their children, and they convicted the appellants. The second appellant withdrew his appeal.

Van Oss for the appellant, Shaxted.

Thesiger, Q.C., and Jupp for the respondent.

LORD GODDARD, C.J., stated the facts and continued: The question is whether or not the school is within walking distance of the child's home. By the Education Act, 1944 S39(1), a parent is guilty of an offence if his child fails to attend regularly at the school where he is a registered pupil, but by S39(2): "...the child shall not be deemed to have failed to attend regularly at school (c) if the parent proves that the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home, and that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority either for his transport to and from the school or for boarding accommodation..."

We need not deal with suitable accommodation if the school is within walking distance, which by S39(5)

"...means in relation to a child who has not attained the age of eight years two miles, and in the case of any other child three miles, measured by the nearest available route."

What the justices had to decide was whether or not the school was within walking distance, and it is said that the route which the child took, and which is under two miles, is not the nearest available route because part of it is said to be dangerous for children to walk alone unescorted. I cannot read the word 'available' as meaning necessarily safe, because we can see how that word got into the Act. By the Elementary Education Act, 1870, S74(3), it was a reasonable excuse:

"That there is no public elementary school open which the child can attend within such distance, not exceeding three miles, measured according to the nearest road from the residence of such child, as the by-laws may prescribe."

The Education Act, 1921, S49(b) provided an identical "reasonable excuse". Before the Act of 1921, in Hares v. Curtin (1), in which it was suggested that a cart track could not be a road and that the walking distance had not been measured according to, "the nearest road".

LORD ALVERSTONE, C.J., giving judgement, said (1913 2 K.B. 331):

"It does not mean a road of any particular class, but simply a route from the residence of the child to the nearest school".

In the Act of 1944 the words used in S39(5) are "two miles... measured by the nearest available route". I do not think that they were meant to make any change in the law, except that a number of somewhat unnecessary words were cut out and there was substituted in the expression which has been used in this court in Hares v. Curtin (1).

To some extent I sympathise with the views of the appellant in the present case. It may be that the parents would like to bring pressure on the Kent County Council to have someone to see that this 'bit of road', as the justices call it, is safe for the children to cross - someone, for example, as is seen in London, wearing a white smock and holding a board with the words "Children Crossing, Stop". That, however, is a matter for the education authority to consider and put into operation if it thinks fit. I can only say, speaking for myself, that a route along which a child can walk and which measures not more than two miles is "the nearest available route". It may sometimes be unsafe. Sometimes the route might be flooded and the child could not walk along it, that might be a reasonable excuse for not using it on that particular day. We are not dealing with that sort of question. We are dealing with the question where the parents think it is not safe. Parliament has not substituted safety for distance as the test. Any question with regard to safety must, and I have no doubt, will, be taken into consideration by the education authority. I think in this case the justices came to a right decision and the appeal fails.

BYRNE, J.:
I agree. Counsel for the appellant contended that the meaning of the word 'available' in the Education Act, 1944 S39(5), is that there is no sound reason why that route should not be used by children. I am bound to say that I cannot read that meaning into that word. The 'nearest available route' means the method by which the two miles are measured from the child's house to the school in order to ascertain whether or not it is a walking distance."

PARKER, J.:
I agree.

Solicitors: Jaques & Co., agents for Girling, Wilson & Bailey, Margate (for the appellant); Sharpe, Pritchard & Co., agents for Gerald Birship, Maidstone (for the respondent).

[Reported by F. GUTTMAN, ESQ., Barrister-at-Law.

Section 3
Appendix 5

The Weekly Law Reports – Farrier v Ward Feb. 12, 1954

[QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION]

* FARRIER v. WARD

1954 Jan. 25 – Lord Goddard C.J. Byrne and Parker JJ.

Education – School – Attendance – 'Walking Distance' – Direct route nor safe for children unless escorted – Meaning of 'nearest available route' – Question of safety – Education Act, 1944 (7 & 8 Geo. 6, c.31), s.39(5).

Section 39(2) of the Education Act, 1944, provides that a child under eight years of age shall not be deemed to have failed to attend school regularly if his parent proves that the school is not within walking distance of the child's home. By subsection (5): the expression 'walking distance' means, in relation to a child who has not attained the age of eight years two miles, measured 'by the nearest available route'.

The words 'nearest available route' in section 39(5) of the Act refer only to measurement of the distance between the child's home and the school; if a route fulfils the requirements of that section as to distance, the fact that it may be unsafe is not material.

CASE STATED by Kent justices sitting at Canterbury.

On July 13, 1953, informations were preferred by Francis George Ward, the County Education Welfare officer, against Bertie Herbert Harold Shaxted and Albert George Farrier, charging that each, being the parent of a child of compulsory school age, was guilty of an offence in that the child was guilty of an offence in that the child who was a registered pupil at Preston County Primary School failed to attend regularly thereat between April 21 and August 26, contrary to section 39(1) of the Education Act, 1944.

At the hearing of the informations the following facts were proved or admitted. Each defendant was the parent of a child of compulsory school age who was under eight years of age and a registered pupil at the Preston school and who failed to attend during the material period. Each child lived in the hamlet of West Stourmouth and the route from his home to the school was under two miles. These routes were safe for the children to use, if escorted. Both children had to travel by a bit of road near the school where an escort would be desirable for small children. It was usual and the duty of parents to provide escort for their children but nevertheless the education authority arranged for an omnibus which took the children from Stourmouth to and from Preston School during the period in question. On the return journey the bus reached Preston School at 4.45 p.m. to collect the children, the children at that school having finished their lessons at 3.45 p.m. The defendants wanted a special omnibus from school and would not provide any escort for their children.

It was contended for the defendants (a) that the direct routes were not safe for their children to use when returning from work in a party; (b) that the afternoon bus provided by the education authority was not suitable transport for the return journey; and (c) that for those reasons they were prevented by unavoidable cause within the meaning of Section 39(2)(c) of the Act from sending their children to school. They also contend that the words "in relation to a child" in Section 39(5) referred not merely to the words 'walking distance' appropriate to the respective ages specified in the subsection but to the later words 'nearest available route', limiting them to such

routes only as were safe for a child of the ages specified to use and that the nearest available safe route was more than the distance specified in the section.

The prosecutor contended that 'available route' meant a route which could be followed without committing trespass.

The justices were of the opinion that the direct routes were safe for children when escorted; that there was no unavoidable cause within the meaning of section 39(2)(c) because the direct routes were safe if the children had escorted the children or arranged for their escort; and that in the circumstances the bus provided was suitable. They considered, therefore, that the suggested interpretation of the words 'available route' was irrelevant, but that if it were relevant the defendants' interpretation of the words 'available route' would be strained and unnatural. Accordingly, they held that the Preston school was within 'walking distance' of the home of both appellants, who were not entitled to transport for their children. The justices convicted the defendants.

The defendant Farrier appealed.

M.D. Van Oss for the appellant

Gerald A. Thesiger Q.C. and K. Jupp for the prosecutor.

Hares v. Curtin was cited in argument [1913] 2 K.B. 328.

LORD GODDARD C.J.
The short point that arises is this: The justices found that the route which these children had to travel was 'safe for these children to use if escorted. The bit of road near the school where an escort would be desirable for small children was common to both the children in question.' I think that the justices recognized that it would be desirable for children to be escorted or in some way conducted along or across a certain piece of road where there was probably a good deal of traffic. They found that it was usual for parents to provide escort for their children to and from school, when necessary.

The real question is whether the school is within walking distance of the children's home because section 39 of the Education Act, 1944, provides that it is a reasonable excuse for the parent to prove 'that the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home, and that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority either for this transport to and from the school or for boarding. By section 39(5); 'walking distance' means in relation to a child who has not attained the age of 8 years two miles, measured by the nearest available route. The justices have to find whether the school is within walking distance; and it is said that the route which the children took, which was under two miles, was not the 'nearest available route' because part of it was said to be dangerous for children to walk along unescorted. I cannot read the word 'available' as meaning necessarily safe, because we can see how these words came to be included in the Act.

By section 74 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, the excuse was if 'there is no public elementary school open which the child can attend within such distance, not exceeding three miles, measured according to the nearest road from the residence of such child, as the by-laws may prescribe'. In section 49(6) of the Education Act, 1921, the reason was 'that there is no public elementary school open which the child can attend within such distance, not exceeding three miles, measured according to the nearest road from the residence of the child, as the by-laws may prescribe'. There is no difference in the words in those Acts.

Before the Act of 1921, it was suggested in Hares v. Curtin which was decided in 1913, that a cart track could not be the nearest road because the walking distance had not been measured according to the nearest road; and Lord Alverstone, giving judgement, said "It does not mean a road of any particular class, but simply a route from the residence of a child to the nearest school."

In the Education Act, 1944, the words used are "two miles measured by the nearest available route." I do not think that it was meant to make any change in the law at all, except that it omits a number of somewhat unnecessary words and substitutes the expression which was used in the court in Hares v. Curtin.

To some extent I sympathize with the views of the parents in this case, and it may be that they would like to bring pressure upon the Kent County Council to have a person on the road to see that 'this bit of the road', as the justices call it, is safe for the children to cross. Those, however, are matters for the education authority to consider and to put into operation if they think fit. I can only say that, if there is a road which measures not more than two miles or a route along which a child can walk and its measurement does not exceed two miles, that is the nearest available route. It may sometimes be unsafe; sometimes the route might be flooded, and, if that happened and the person could not walk along the road, that might be a reasonable excuse for not using it on that particular day, but we are not concerned with that but with a case where the parents think the route is not safe. Parliament has not substituted safety as a test but the distance. Any question with regard to safety must be, and I have no doubt will be, taken into consideration by the education authority. In my opinion, therefore, the justices came to a right decision and the appeal fails.

BYRNE J.
I agree. Mr Van Oss contends that the meaning of the word 'available' is that there is no sound reason why that route should not be used by children. I am bound to say that I cannot read that meaning into the word but, as it appears in the Act of 1944, all that is meant by the 'nearest available route' is the method by which the two miles are to be measured from the child's house to the school in order to ascertain whether it is a walking distance.

PARKER J.
I agree with both judgements which have been delivered.

Appeal dismissed.

Solicitors: Jaques & Co. for Girling, Wilson & Bailey, Margate; Sharpe, Prichard & Co. for Gerald Bishop, Maidstone.

Section 3
Appendix 6

House of Lords Judgement 16.10.86

All England Law Reports
7 November 1986

Rogers and another v Essex County Council

HOUSE OF LORDS

LORD BRIDGE OF HARWICH, LORD BRANDON OF OAKBROOK, LORD MACKAY OF CLASHFERN, LORD ACKNER AND LORD OLIVER OF AYLMERTON

28 July, 16 October 1986

Education – School attendance – Duty of parent to secure regular attendance of pupil – Failure to secure regular attendance – Proceedings against parent – Defence – Distance of home from school – Nearest available route – Shortest route dangerous to unaccompanied child – Whether route "available" – Education Act 1944 S39 (2)(c)(5).

The distance of the shortest public route between a house where a 12 year old child lived and the school where she was registered was 2.94 miles. Part of that route consisted of an isolated, unmade and unlit track which, particularly in winter, would be both difficult and dangerous for a young girl to cross on her own. The child failed to attend school regularly and her parents were convicted of failing to ensure her regular attendance, contrary to S39(2)(c) of the Education Act 1944. The parents appealed, relying on S39(2)(c) of the Act which provided that it was a good defence to show that the school was not within walking distance of the child's home and the local authority had not provided transport or alternative schooling arrangements. In the case of a child over eight years old, "walking distance" was defined by S39(5) as "three miles, measured by the nearest available route." The Crown Court dismissed the appeal but the parent's appeal to the Divisional Court was upheld on the grounds that the nearest available route was that route which the child could safely use unaccompanied. The local authority appealed to the House of Lords, contending that the nearest available route usable without trespassing.

Held:
For the purpose of deciding under S39 of the 1944 Act whether a school was within walking distance of a child's home, the nearest route between the child's home and his or her school was the nearest route along which the child could walk to school with reasonable safety when accompanied by an adult and a route did not fail to qualify as the nearest available route because of dangers which would arise if the child was unaccompanied. The local authority's appeal would therefore be allowed.

Notes:
For the duty of parents to secure attendance of pupils and for statutory defences to proceedings against parent s for non-attendance of registered pupils see 15 Halsbury's Laws (4th Edition) Paras32-33, and for cases on the subject see 19 Digest (Reissue) 499, 503, 3885, 3902.

Case referred to in options

Shaxted v Ward (1954) Farrier v Ward (1954)

Appeal:
Essex County Council appealed, with leave of the Divisional Court of the Queen's Division given on 10 May 1985, against the decision of that court (Parker LJ and Tudor Evans J) on 19 February 1985 allowing an appeal by the respondents, Peter Albert Rogers and Violet Rogers (the parents), by way of case stated against a decision of the Crown Court at Chelmsford (His Honour Judge Ward and justices) on 13 July 1984 dismissing the parents appeal from their conviction by the justices for the county of Essex acting in and for the petty sessional division of Colchester on 23 May 1984 for an offence under SS39 and 40(i) of the Education Act 1944 by reason of the failure of the parents daughter to attend regularly at the Stanway Comprehensive School where she was a registered pupil. The Divisional Court certified that a point of law of general public importance was involved in its decision.

The facts are set out in the opinion of Lord Ackner.

Conrad Dehn QC and David Mellor for the local authority.

Gavin Lightman QC and Edward Irving for the parents.

Their Lordships took time for consideration.

16 October. The following opinions were delivered.

LORD BRIDGE OF HARWICH.
My Lords, for the reasons given in the speech of my noble and learned friend Lord Ackner, with which I agree, I would allow the appeal and answer the certified question in the negative.

LORD BRANDON OF OAKBROOK.
My Lords, I have had the advantage of reading in draft the speech prepared by my noble and learned friend Lord Ackner. I agree with it and for the reasons which he gives I would allow the appeal and make no order as the costs.

LORD MACKAY OF CLASHFERN.
My Lords. I have had the opportunity of reading in draft the speech prepared by Lord Ackner. I agree with it and concur in the order which he proposes.

LORD ACKNER.
My Lords, the short question raised by this appeal is: who is to pay for the transport to the Stanway comprehensive school of Shirley Rogers, a schoolgirl aged 12 at the material time? Should it be the appellants, the Essex County Council, which is the local education authority or the respondents, Shirley's parents? The local authority have offered Shirley the use of the school bus but subject to payment of the concessionary fare of £20 a term, the parents not qualifying for free transport on a means test basis. The parents, in principle, have refused to make any payment for school transport. The answer to the question is provided by the Education Act 1944 of which only a few sections need to be referred to.

Education Act 1944 Section 36 imposes on parents the duty to secure the education of their children. It provides:

"It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

Section 3
Appendix 6

Section 39 imposes the duty on parents to secure regular attendance of registered pupils. Shirley was registered at the Stanway School. This section provides:

(1) If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly thereat, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence against this section.

(2) In any proceedings for an offence against this section in respect of a child who is not a boarder at the school at which he is not a registered pupil, the child shall not be deemed to have failed to attend regularly at the school be reason of his absence therefrom with leave or – (a) at any time when he was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause: (b) on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs: (c) if the parent proves that the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home and that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority either for his transport to and from the school or for boarding ac commodation for him at or near the school or for enabling him to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his home...

(5) In this section the expression... "walking distance" means, in relation to a child who has not attained the age of eight years two miles and in the case of any other child three miles, measured by the nearest available route".

Section 55 relates to the provision of transport and other facilities. As amended, it provides:

(1) A local education authority shall make such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as they consider necessary for as the Secretary of State may direct for the purpose of facilitating the attendance of pupils at schools or country colleges or at any course or class provided in pursuance of a scheme of further education in force for their area and any transport provided in pursuance of such arrangements shall be provided free of charge.

(2) A local education authority may pay the whole, or any part, as the authority think fit, of the reasonable travelling expenses of any pupil in attendance at any school or county college or at such course or class as aforesaid for whose transport no arrangements are made under this section.

This appeal is concerned with the "walking distance" from Shirley's home to her school and in particular whether the nearest available route exceeded three miles, she being in the older age group referred to in S39(5), quoted above. The dispute arises in the following circumstances.

The facts:
The distance from Shirley's home to the school by the shortest route is 2.94 miles. That route involves crossing Copford Plains by an isolated and partly unmade track which is entirely unlighted. In winter this route is one of considerable danger for a young girl who would have to walk over Copford Plains in darkness.

Copford Plains are also extremely difficult to cross in winter and may be passable on foot in the morning but impassable by the evening. There is an alternative route by metalled roads but this is 3.2 miles in length.

The parents quite reasonably regard the Copford Plains route as unsuitable for use by Shirley, if unaccompanied. Thus, since as stated able, the local authority were only prepared to make the school bus available on payment of

the concessionary fare, which the parents were not willing to pay, Shirley stayed away from school during the period from 13 December 1983 until 17 April 1984. Informations were then preferred against the parents by the local authority alleging that the parents were guilty of an offence against S39. On 23 May 1984 the justices for the county of Essex, sitting at Colchester, convicted the parents and ordered that they both be conditionally discharged for a period of 12 months. The parents appealed to the Crown Court at Chelmsford and on 13 July 1984 the appeal against conviction was dismissed.

The appeal against sentence was allowed to the extent of substituting absolute discharges for the conditional discharges imposed by the magistrates. The Crown Court expressed considerable sympathy for the parents but concluded that they were bound by the decision of the Divisional Court in Shaxted v Ward [1954].

The parents appealed by the case stated to the Divisional Court. I have already set out the material facts which the Crown Court found. There was no finding that the route was impassable on any day that Shirley failed to attend or that the route was unsuitable, if she was accompanied. At the hearing of the appeal by the Divisional Court on 4 February 1985 the parents repeated their contention that the nearest available route of which the walking distance from a child's home to his school is measured for the purpose of the 1944 Act, must be, not merely the nearest route which a child can lawfully walk, but a route which a responsible parent would allow a child to use unaccompanied. In a reserved judgement Parker LJ, with whom Tudor Evans J agreed, accepted this and distinguished Shaxted v Ward. On 10 May 1985 the divisional Court gave leave to appeal to your Lordships' House on terms that the local authority would not seek to disturb the order for costs in the Divisional Court and would pay the parents cost of this appeal in any event. The certified point of law of general public importance is in these terms:

"Whether the nearest available route by which the walking distance of a school from a child's home is to be measured for the purposes of the Education Act 1944 must be not merely the nearest route which a child can walk without trespassing but a route which a responsible parent could allow a child to use unaccompanied."

Shaxted v Ward

This decision is, of course, not binding on your Lordships' House and whether or not the Divisional Court was entitled to distinguish it, as it purported to do, is not an issue which need concern your Lordships. Nevertheless, it was a decision of a strong court which has stood unchallenged for over 30 years and has been relied on over that period by local education authorities. It involved considering the crucial S39(5) of the 1944 Act and the facts of the case were similar to the facts in this appeal. It concerned two young children who were under eight years of age and the route from their home to the school, at which they were registered pupils, was under two miles. The route was safe for the children to use, if escorted, but there was a particular portion of the road near the school where for small children, an escort would be desirable. The prosecutor contended that "available route" meant a route which could be followed without committing a trespass. The justices accepted this submission and the parents were convicted. They accordingly appealed by case stated.

At the outset of his judgement Lord Goddard CJ said:

"The short point that arises is this: The Justices found that the route which these children had to travel was "safe for these children to use, if escorted. The bit of road near the school, where an escort would be desirable for small children, was common to both the children in question." I think that the justices recognised that it would be desirable for children to be escorted or in some way conducted along or across a certain piece of road where there was probable a good deal of traffic. They found that it was usual for parents to provide escort for their children to and from school, where necessary".

Having referred to S39 of the 1944 Act Lord Goddard CJ continued;

"The justices have to find whether the school is within walking distance; and it is that the route which the children took, which was under two miles, was not the "nearest available route" because part of it was said to be dangerous for children to walk along unescorted. I cannot read the word "available" as meaning necessarily safe, because we can see how these words came to be included in the Act."

Lord Goddard CJ then considered the earlier Education Acts where the words "measured according to the nearest road" were used and concluded that the words in the 1944 Act "measured by the nearest available route" were not intended to make any change in the law. He then stated:

"To some extent I sympathize with the views of the parents in this case and it may be that they would like to bring pressure upon the Kent County Council to have a person on the road to see that "this bit of the road", as the justices call it, is safe for the children to cross. Those, however, are matters for the education authority to consider and to put into operation if they think fit. I can only say that, if there is a road which measures not more than two miles or a route along which a child can walk and its measurement does not exceed two miles, that is the nearest available route. It may sometimes be unsafe; sometimes the route may be flooded, and, if that happened and the person could not walk along the road, that might be a reasonable excuse for not using it on that particular day, but we are not concerned with that but with a case where the parents think that the route is not safe. Parliament has not substituted safety as the test but the distance. Any question with regard to safety must be and I have no doubt, will be taken into consideration by the education authority. In my opinion, therefore, the justices came to a right decision and the appeal fails."

Byrne and Parker JJ both agreed.

It has been urged before us that in his judgement Lord Goddard CJ, when considering whether a route was available, was discounting all safety considerations. I cannot accept this submission. In the context in which the Lord Chief Justice made his observations he was concerned with a route which was said to be dangerous only if the children walked along it unescorted.

The true meaning of 'availability' in S39(5) of the Act

In the submissions made to your Lordships it was common ground that available in the context of S39(5) means capable of being used. During the course of the argument counsel for the local authority appeared reluctant to accept that for a route to be available it must be reasonably capable of being used. His reluctance seemed to stem from an anxiety on behalf of his clients not to accept the responsibility from time to time of deciding whether or not the route which is the nearest route is reasonably capable of being used by a child of the relevant age not withstanding that under S39(2) the onus is clearly on the parent to prove that the school is not within walking distance of the child's home. It is clear that the word available qualifies the word route. The availability of the route cannot be determined by the mere study of a map. That it must be reasonably practicable for a child to walk a long it to school does not, to my mind, admit of any argument. Of course it must be free from obstructions or obstacles which would make its use impracticable. Dangers inherent in a particular use are factors that must be taken into account when considering its availability. A route which involved crossing a river by means of a footbridge would, other things being equal, qualify as an available route. However, if as a result, for example, of recent severe flooding, the bridge became unstable and unsafe to use, that route would cease to be available.

The short issue in this appeal is whether 'availability' is to be measured by what is reasonable for an unaccompanied child to use? Counsel for the parents was constrained to concede that in a case of a very young school child, certainly a child of five, six or seven. Parliament must have accompanied must have assumed that the child would be accompanied, however short the distance, if there existed any real hazard, e.g. crossing a busy road. Accordingly, there would be few, if any routes in the first category provided for in S39(5) (the two-mile route) which any responsible parent would allow an unaccompanied child to use. If the availability of the route was to be measured by what is reasonable for an unaccompanied child who had not attained the age of eight years, there would have been no point in prescribing in the subsection the two mile route requirement. Any such child with very few exceptions would have to be provided with free transport, although in practice, as Parliament must have appreciated, such a child would almost always be accompanied, so the transport would not, in fact have been necessary at all. The crucial point appears not to have been considered by the Divisional Court. It is certainly not referred to in the judgement of Parker LJ.

What then was the purpose of defining 'walking distance' in relation to a child who had not attained the age of eight years? The answer, to my mind, is clear: it was simply to provide that where the nearest route from home to school was reasonably capable of being used by a child along or (in the majority of cases) with an escort and did not exceed two miles, the school was within 'walking distance' of the child's home. If, as is rightly conceded, the route does not in that situation fail to qualify as 'available' because of the dangers which would be consequent on the child being unaccompanied, when, if at all, would this route thus fail to qualify? Counsel for the parents submits that once the child is of sufficient age to go out on a street alone, then if the route us not reasonably safe for the child to walk along it unaccompanied the route is not 'available'. Quite apart from the fact that there are no words in the section to support such a submission, the test suggested is hopelessly vague. What sort of street is one to have in mind, what sort of traffic is it to carry, what time of day, indeed what weather or season is to be assumed etc? Further, is the test an objective test applicable to all children of a given age or is it to be applied subjectively to the particular child whose parents have raised the issue? The complete impracticability of such a test in itself persuades me that it was never in the contemplation of Parliament. In my judgement a route to be 'available' within the meaning of S39(5) must be a route along which a child accompanied can walk and walk with reasonable safety to school. It does not fail to qualify as 'available' because of dangers which would arise if the child is unaccompanied.

It has been argued that unless your Lordships decide that availability has to be measured by what is reasonable for an unaccompanied child, then parents who normally accompany their children, but who fail to do so temporarily because of some crisis such as illness and as a result the child fails regularly to attend school, will have committed a criminal offence. In my judgement this submission overlooks S39(2)(a) which provides that the child shall not be deemed to have failed to attend regularly if he was prevented from attending by reason of 'any unavoidable cause'.

There is a final point which I would wish to stress. Under S55 of the Act, which is set out in extensor above, the local education authority has a discretion to provide free transport where the relevant walking distance is less than three miles (or, as the case may be, two miles). The local authority in their written case fully accepted that if a local education authority failed unreasonably to exercise this discretion, it would be liable, on an application for judicial review to be ordered to carry out its statutory duty. In fact, in pursuance of their powers under S55(2) the local authority, having been satisfied that the parents did not qualify for free transport on a means test basis, in the exercise of this discretion offered the use of the school bus at the concessionary fare referred to above.

I would accordingly allow this appeal, discharge the order of the Divisional Court and would answer the certified point of law in the negative. In view of the local authority's undertaking not to disturb the order for costs made by the Divisional Court and to pay the costs of the parents of this appeal. I would make no order as to costs.

LORD OLIVER OF AYLMERTON.
My Lords. I have had the opportunity of reading in draft the speech delivered by my noble and learned friend Lord Ackner. I agree with it and concur in the order which he proposes.

Appeal allowed. No order as to costs.

Solicitors: RW Adcock, Chelmsford (for the local authority): Ellison & Co. Colchester (for the parents).

Mary Rose Plummer Barrister.

Section 3
Appendix 7

Article: 'The Times' House of Lords – Law Report December 2nd 1988

Reasonable to expect child to be accompanied

Regina v Devon County Council, Ex parte George

Before Lord Keith of Kinkel, Lord Bradon of Oakbrook, Lord Oliver of Aylmerton, Lord Goff of Chieveley and Lord Lowry [Speeches December 1]

A local education authority has been entitled to refuse free transport to and from school for a boy aged nine who lived 2.8 miles away. The authority had been entitled to conclude that it was reasonably practicable for the boy to be accompanied and to take that into account in reaching its decision.

The House of Lords allowed an appeal by the authority from the Court of Appeal (Lord Donaldson of Lymington, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Parker and Lord Justice Taylor) (The Times March 22; [1988] 3 WLR49) who had reversed the decision of Me Justice Mann dismissing an application by the boy, Christopher Noel George (by his stepfather and next friend Mr Paul George), for judicial review of the authority's decision.

The Education Act 1944 provides by Section 36: "It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause him to receive efficient full time education, by regular attendance at school or otherwise".

By Section 39:

(1) If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, the parent shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) the child shall not be deemed to have failed to attend regularly if the parent proves that the school is not within walking distance of the child's home and that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority for his transport to and from the school.

(5) 'walking distance' means, in relation to a child who has not attained the age of eight years, two miles and in the case of any other child three miles measured by the nearest available route.

By Section 55:

(1) A local education authority shall make such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as they consider necessary, for the purpose of facilitating the attendance of pupils at schools, and the transport provided in pursuance of such arrangements shall be provided free of charge.

(2) A local education authority may pay the whole or any part, as the authority think fit, of the reasonable travelling expenses of any pupil for whose transport no arrangements are made under this section.

(3) In considering whether or not they are required by sub-section (1) above to make arrangements in relation to a particular pupil, the local education authority shall have regard (amongst other things) to the age of the pupil and the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which he could reasonably be expected to take.

(Section 55(2) was amended by section 11 of Schedule 1, Part 1 to the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1984. Subsection (3) was added by amendment under section 53 of the Education Act (No. 2) Act 1986, which came into force on January 7, 1897.)

Mr Conrad Dehn, QC and Mr Raymond Cox for the authority: Lord Campbell of Alloway, QC and Mr John Friel for the Boy.

LORD KEITH said that the boy's route to the school was rural, unlit and without a footpath and used to some extent by tractors, milk tankers and cattle wagons.

The council's policy on school transport was set out in a document including a paragraph 3(d) revised on March 12, 1987: "Transport to be provided without charge to children within the statutory walking distance where (i) having regard amongst other things to the age of the child and the nature of the route or alternative route which he could reasonably be expected to take, they consider it necessary for the purpose of facilitating his attendance at school; (ii) an authorised officer of the school health service certifies that transport is required for the child on medical grounds; (iii) the director of social services advises that there are overriding social needs that make the provision of transport essential; (iv) the education committee decides on the merits of a particular case that special arrangements should be made."

The minutes of the council's school transport panel's decision of March 18, 1987, read:
"We have had regard amongst other things to Christopher's age (nine) and the nature of the route which he could reasonably be expected to take. We are satisfied that the route in question which is 2.8 miles long and therefore within the statutory walking distance for a child of that age is one which an accompanied child can walk with reasonable safety and that the council is not required by section 55(1) ... to make arrangements in relation to him.

"Further, in our opinion, this is not a case where, in the council's discretion, transport should be provided free of charge. None of the circumstances set out in paragraphs 3(d)(i)-(iv) of the council's policy exist.

"There is no suggestion that Christopher is not a normal healthy boy for his age. We would expect a child of Christopher's age walking this route to be accompanied but are not satisfied that it would not be reasonably practicable for one of Christopher's parents to accompany him or otherwise secure his regular attendance at school."

The reference to the child being accompanied clearly had an eye to the decision of the house in Rogers v Essex County Council (1987 AC 66, 78) where Lord Ackner had said:

"A route to be 'available' within the meaning of section 39(5) must be a route along which a child accompanied as necessary can walk and walk with reasonable safety to school. It does not fail to qualify as 'available' because of dangers which would arise of the child is unaccompanied."

To 'facilitate' section 55(1) meant to "make easy, promote, help forward," (Concise Oxford Dictionary). In an Inquiry under the Company Securities (Insider Dealings) Act 1985 (1988 AC 660, 704), Lord Griffiths, in a different context, had paraphrased "necessary" as "really needed", which was a helpful way of expressing the concept.

The question under section 55(1) regarding pupils living within the statutory walking distance was whether the authority considered arrangements for free transport to be necessary for the purpose of facilitating their attendance.

Obviously free transport would make the attendance of every such pupil easier, however close to school he or she happened to live, but that could not determine the matter. It was for the authority, and no one else, to decide whether free transport was really needed for the purpose of promoting the attendance at school of a particular pupil.

That must depend on the authority's view of the circumstances of the particular case, to which it was directed by section 55(3) to have regard. Its function in that respect could be described as a 'discretion', although it was not, of course, an unfettered discretion but rather in the nature of an exercise of judgement.

The intention of Parliament clearly, was that pupils living outside the statutory walking distance would in all cases be provide with free transport and that pupils within that distance would normally walk to school but would be provided with free transport if the authority considered it necessary for the purpose for facilitating their attendance.

His Lordship could find nothing in the council's policy document inconsistent with that intention.

It was apparent that the school transport panel had taken into account Christopher's age and the nature of the route, in particular its length. The senior assistant education officer had inspected it.

There had been material on which the panel might properly have concluded that it was reasonably practicable for the boy to be accompanied, in respect that his stepfather had stated in an affidavit that he was unemployed and available for the purpose.

There was nothing to suggest that the panel had not been exercising a judgement as to whether free transport was necessary for the purpose of facilitating Christopher's attendance at school.

It had been argued on his behalf that the matter of the accompaniment of a child was relevant only to the availability of a route under section 39(5) and that an authority was not entitled to take into account under section 55(1) even the possibility of a child being accompanied.

So, if a route, however short, was unsafe for an unaccompanied child, the authority was obliged to provide free transport. That argument had to be rejected. By section 39, the parent was under a legal duty to bring about the child's attendance at school. There were various things that a parent might have to do to that end, such as seeing that the child got up in the morning and set out in reasonable time. In the case of an unwilling child, it might be necessary for the parent to take the child to school.

In general, the parent had to do those things that were reasonably practicable to be done and that an ordinary prudent parent would do. That might include accompanying the child where it would be unsafe for it to go unaccompanied.

If a child lived 100 yards from school but the route involved crossing a busy trunk route and the parent, although available to do so, refused to accompany the child and refused to allow the child to go to school on the ground that it would be dangerous, the parent would be guilty of an offence under section 39(1); neither paragraph (a) nor paragraph (b) would avail him.

It followed that parliament had contemplated that in appropriate cases a child would be accompanied to school.

So a local education authority was fully entitled, when making a decision under section 55(1), to take into account whether or not there were any circumstances that prevented its being reasonably practicable for the child to be accompanied to school over a route that would fail to be treated as not available to an unaccompanied child.

It had not been demonstrated that the council had made any mistake in law as to the mature and extent of its duties and powers, nor had its decision in the present case been unreasonable. Lord Brandon, Lord Oliver, Lord Goff and Lord Lowry agreed.

Solicitors: Sharpe Pritchard for Mr. W. A. Burkinshaw, Exeter; Teacher Stern Selby.

Section 3
Appendix 8

Guidance on Religion and Belief from DCSF 2006

Section 509AD of the 1996 Act (inserted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006) places a duty on local authorities in fulfilling their duties and exercising their powers relating to travel to have regard to, amongst other things, any wish of a parent for their child to be provided with education or training at a particular school or institution on grounds of the parent's religion or belief. This duty is in addition to the duty on local authorities to make travel arrangements for children of parents on low incomes who attend the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, where they live more than 2 miles, but not more than 15 miles from that school considered (see paras 99 to 101). The definition of "religion or belief" follows that of the Equality Act 2006.

Under this Act, "religion" means any religion, and "belief" means any belief. References to "religion or belief" include references to a lack of religion or belief. It therefore follows that this duty covers all religions and denominations, as well as philosophical beliefs.

It should be noted that "religion" and "belief" are not opposites, and there may be considerable overlaps in the coverage of the two terms.

The definition of "religion" includes those religions widely recognised in this country such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Rastafarianism, Baha'is, Zoroastrians and Jains. Equally, denominations or sects within a religion can be considered as a religion or religious belief, such as Catholicism or Protestantism within Christianity. The Department believes that the main limitation on what constitutes a "religion" is that it must have a clear structure and belief system.

For a "belief" to be worthy of protection, it must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance; be worthy of respect in a democratic society; and not be incompatible with human dignity or the fundamental rights of the child.

Case law suggests that "belief" equates to "conviction", and based on European case law, it has to be more than an opinion or idea. A belief must be genuinely held and the parent bears a heavy burden of showing that it is the real reason for whatever it is they are doing.

Based on case law, the Department considers that the following may be considered as philosophical beliefs in the educational context:

- parental objections to the use of corporal punishment in school;
- belief in single sex education, where that belief is based on the parent's religious views.

"Beliefs" which have been considered as not meeting the requirements of cogency, seriousness, coherence, and so on – and are not therefore included in this duty, include:

- a wish for a child to attend a particular category of school. The case law concerned a grant maintained school, but the Department would consider a specific wish to attend, for example, a grammar school as fitting this category. In the view of the Department, a local authority would not have to have regard to such a wish when determining whether or not to make transport arrangements for a particular child;
- preference for a particular type of management or governance which does not affect the curricula or teaching at the school;

- a belief that a child should be educated privately;
- a wish for child to attend school where they will be taught in a particular language;
- objection to rules requiring that a school uniform must be worn;
- content of school curriculum (sex education) provided that the curriculum did not amount to indoctrination in compatible with a parent's religious or philosophical convictions;
- objections to the curriculum, where special arrangements made by the school or authorities (such as allowing children to be withdrawn from class) ensure the curriculum is not forced on them contrary to their convictions; and
- belief that a child should receive a particular type of educational provision.

This guidance deals with the implications of this duty in relation to the duty to promote sustainable travel, and the duties and powers relating to the provision of travel arrangements to schools and other places.

"Religion or belief" and the duty to promote sustainable travel
The duty to promote sustainable travel includes assessments of the travel needs of children and young people, and of the infrastructure supporting those needs. Travel needs include travel to and from school, further education institutions, and other places where education or training might be delivered, and travel between schools, and between schools and other educational institutions (including further education institutions and all other places where education or training may be delivered).

In fulfilling this duty, local authorities must consider the travel needs of pupils whose parents express a wish, based on religion or belief, for their children to attend a particular institution, and how the existing sustainable travel infrastructure might support travel to such schools and institutions. They must also consider how the infrastructure might be improved so it better meets the needs of children and young people, and how to promote sustainable travel on such journeys.

"Religion or belief" and the provision of school travel arrangements
Many parents will choose to send their children to a school as near as possible to their home. However, some parents choose to send their children to a school with a particular ethos because they adhere to a particular faith, or philosophy. In many cases these schools may be more distant, and many local authorities adopt home to school travel policies that facilitate attendance at such schools. The Act places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements for pupils from low income backgrounds to attend the nearest school preferred on grounds of "religion or belief", where that school is between 2 and 15 miles from their home.

Whilst under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), parents do not enjoy any right to have their children educated at a faith or a secular school, or to have transport arrangements made by their local authority to and from any such school, the Secretary of State hopes that local authorities will continue to think it right not to disturb well established arrangements, some of which have been associated with local agreements or understandings about the siting of such schools.

The Secretary of State continues to attach importance to the opportunity that many parents have to choose a school or college in accordance with their religious or philosophical beliefs, and believes that wherever possible, local authorities should ensure that transport arrangements support the religious or philosophical preference parents express.

Appendix 8

Although the provisions of the Equality Act 2006 (which places a duty on local authorities not to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their religion or belief), do not apply to the exercise of an authority's functions in relation to transport, local authorities will need to be aware of their obligations under human rights legislation.

In exercising their functions, local authorities will therefore need to respect parents' religious and philosophical convictions as to the education to be provided for their children in so far as this is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training, and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure. It may be incompatible, for example, on grounds of excessive journey length, or where the journey may have a detrimental impact on the child's education. Local authorities should also ensure that they do not discriminate contrary to Article 14 of the ECHR. For example, where transport arrangements are made for pupils travelling to denominational schools to facilitate parents' wishes for their child to attend on religious grounds, travel arrangements should also be made for pupils travelling to non-denominational schools, where attendance at those schools enables the children to be educated in accordance with their parents' philosophical convictions, and vice versa.

Children from low income backgrounds are eligible for free travel arrangements to the nearest school preferred on grounds of "religion or belief" (see paras. 99 to 101). However, local authorities may wish to use their discretionary powers to extend transport arrangements beyond this statutory requirement. Where local authorities make arrangements under their discretionary powers (section 508C), and have policies of levying charges for such transport, the Secretary of State believes that local authorities should pay careful attention to the potential impact of any charges on low income families whose parents adhere to a particular faith or philosophy, and who have expressed a preference for a particular school as a result of their religious or their philosophical beliefs. In the Secretary of State's opinion, where local authorities make travel arrangements for such children, these should be provided free of charge in the case of pupils from low income families (pupils entitled to free school meals or whose parents are entitled to their maximum level of Working Tax Credit).

Local authorities should give careful consideration to discrimination issues, and seek legal opinion if they are unsure about the effect of their policies, before publishing them each year.

Case Law referred to in this guidance:

Campbell and Cosans v UK (1982) 4 EHRR 293
Warwick v UK (1989) 60 37 DR 96
R (ota K) v Newham LBC ([2002] EWHC 405 (Admin)
Dove and Dove [2001] ScotCS 291
CB v Merton [2002] EWHC 877 (Admin); R v Department for Education and Employment ex p Begbie [1999] ELR; and W and DM v UK ((1984) 37 DR 96).
Stevens v UK 46 DR 245 (1986)
Alonso and Merino v Spain
Kjedsen, Bus, Madsen and Pedersen v Denmark (1976) I EHRR 711
T v SENT and Wiltshire CC [2002] EWHC 1474 (Admin).

DRAFT Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics
(Form updated May 2015)

Home to School Transport Review

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please contact the Communications Unit on 01609 53 2013 or email communications@northyorks.gov.uk.

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	CYPS, Education and Skills and Inclusion service
Lead Officer and contact details	Amanda Newbold, AD Education & Skills
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Jon Holden – Strategic Planning Manager
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	Consideration of the EIA by the officers involved in the implementation of the policy, and subsequent assessment of applications
When did the due regard process start?	The original project initially started in September 2023 following revised DfE guidance Updated July 2024 post consultation

Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

This EIA is about the proposed changes to the current Home to School Transport Policy following the new statutory guidance.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide home to school travel for eligible children of compulsory school age in accordance with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

The aim of the changes is to ensure the proposed home to school travel policy is compliant with the legislation and guidance.

Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

The proposed changes are due to the current home to school transport policy not meeting the requirement of the checklist produced in the revised statutory guidance.

The overall cost to the Council of the provision of home to school travel is significant and rising at pace. The current policy makes provision for eligibility above and beyond statutory requirements that have associated costs, and the consultation provided opportunity to review these 'discretionary' elements.

The policy publication is linked to the school admissions round, therefore any changes to the travel policy would apply to new admissions and/or travel applications received on or after 1 September 2024 and would affect new entrants to schools (REC and Y7) with effect from September 2025.

Pupils in the current admissions round (starting Reception and Year 7 on 1 Sept 24) and those who apply for a school place prior to September 2024 would not be impacted.
Transport eligibility awarded prior to September 2024 would be honoured (effectively protected from subsequent policy changes) under the current policy, unless there was a change of circumstance for a pupil which required a reassessment of eligibility.

Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?

Six discretionary areas within home to school transport policy have been considered:

- Extended eligibility in the Reception Year
- Extended eligibility in Year 3
- 50/50 second address
- Primary phase denominational transport
- Two days of transition, where possible, for pupils with SEND
- The main eligibility criteria – nearest school / catchment school

Census data from May 2023 showed that in North Yorkshire there were c.75,000 school aged children (reception to year 11) children and c.10,000 pupils accessing home to school transport.

Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

A consultation exercise was undertaken between February and April 2024 in accordance with DfE requirements and which included: -

• schools whose pupils will be affected by the proposed changes, including those located in other

local authority areas;
• parents whose children will (or may) be affected by the proposed changes, including those whose children attend school in a neighbouring authority, and those whose children may be affected in the future – for example, because they live in the catchment area of, or attend the feeder school of, a school affected by the proposed changes; and
• the local Parent Carer Forum

The consultation was publicised to a broad range of other stakeholders including early years providers and their parents, NYC councillors, parish councils in North Yorkshire and neighbouring local authorities. Throughout the consultation a weekly breakdown was provided for the policy owners to review and reflect any issues arising. A total of 16 face to face consultation events were held across North Yorkshire, 70 people attended these events. 1,299 people responded to the online survey.

The consultation events were held at different times to allow those with childcare and working arrangements to opportunity to attend and engage at times which are more convenient. These events were widely published on social media and within local media and community groups as well as on the council's own media: Schools E-red bag, NYC website, corporate Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The consultation was also promoted through SEND parent and community group networks.

A model was created in order to allow officers to consider the possible impacts of the proposed policy revisions on small and rural schools as it was important to avoid any unintended consequences including risk to small school viability, where a small reduction in pupil numbers can be a significant factor. The initial data set which contained indicative school level analysis was presented to the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills so she could consider the indicative school level data confidentiality prior to agreeing the consultation. This was the purpose for creating a school level data set. Since the model had been developed, indicative school level information was offered to school leaders and governors so they could consider the potential impacts of the proposed policy changes on their school setting to support them in fulfilling their management responsibilities.

During the consultation, a small number of schools approached the Council asking officers to check the data modelling as the schools estimates of how many children in their catchment may live closer to another school and therefore may not be eligible to travel in the same way as the current cohort were different to those initially provided by Council officers.

The Council checked and revised the modelling tool. This led to revised indicative school data being provided to individual schools, and the consultation being extended by two weeks, to allow further dialogue with interested schools.

The indicative school level data is not essential for the consultation but was added in order to provide a management indicator for schools in relation to any planning they may wish to do should the policy be implemented from September 2024 (with early impacts expected from Sept 2025).

The model is an estimate of future pupil eligibility, using recent pupil census information but with the proposed policy being applied. The model has many variables including: parental preference for admissions, school popularity/place availability, decisions made by families with siblings under two policies, Free School Meals eligibility over time, family life eg parent job location/other childcare arrangements. This is why an estimate savings range has been created from 20% to 100%.

The estimate shows the possible impacts over a seven-year implementation period (eg possible reduction and possible increase in eligibility over time). Some schools may experience both

reductions and increases of pupils with eligibility with an unknown net effect. Any changes to admission numbers in one school has a direct effect on the neighbouring schools and the Council has statutory responsibility to ensure sufficient school places across the whole county. The Council must also ensure efficient use of resources fulfilling its responsibilities.

The Council does not consider this indicative school level data set essential to the consultation process, this information has been treated confidentially as we believe sharing it would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs in the Council's discussions with schools.

Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost, or reduce costs?

The current financial projection for Home to School Transport is demonstrating a continuous growth which is applying budgetary pressures on the Council to meet its statutory duties.

These proposals will not impact on the current or immediate expenditure as the Council's offer is based on the policy in place at the time of allocation and will be phased out as the current cohort reaches the end of their current placement unless there is substantial change to their eligibility.

If the proposals are implemented it will ensure the Council is meeting it statutory duties. The new policy requirements in the guidance are likely to increase the number of pupils with medical and mobility needs who meet eligibility criteria and potentially lead to increased expenditure.

Whilst some aspects of the policy review may reduce additional travel provision above statutory minimum – the financial benefits of this proposal will not be fully achieved for a seven year period. Analysis prior to and throughout the consultation being undertaken using a large sample of currently eligible travellers suggests that the annual saving at the end of the transition period (when the new policy applies to all) on a like for like basis could be approximately £4m. This figure is based on a number of assumptions, and much will depend on the extent to which the change in the transport arrangements influences future parental preference for schools, and that is difficult to predict with any certainty.

Following the consultation, the 73% of responders indicated that eligibility to transport assistance is a factor in choosing a school place.

Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?	**No impact**	**Make things better**	**Make things worse**	**Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.**
Age	✓	✓	✓	It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on pupils attending mainstream or specialist provision because of their age. In the event that discretionary eligibility for assistance for those children prior to reaching compulsory school age and pupils in year 3 (i.e. from reaching the age of 8 until then end of the school year) then this will have a positive impact for affected pupils. The consultation exercise identified a potential

				negative impact for those households who have one or more children with eligibility for catchment schools under the current policy, but who have younger children whose possible eligibility will be to another (nearer) school. Parents have identified potential logistical difficulties arising from this, including the potential for different school holiday periods where the nearer school is out of county. This issue may only arise during the implementation of the policy. The council's admissions policy, and those of schools / academies where relevant, are not impacted by these proposals and so access to school places is not affected.
Disability		✓		The requirement for individual assessment under SEN may increase the number of pupil eligible for assistance as it no longer relies upon an EHC Plan to identify those pupils eligible, which may lead to more pupils being eligible where they live under the statutory walking distance. Individual assessment will also ensure children with disability needs are met on transport. The responses to the consultation suggested that there would be a negative impact on those with disability. Officers consider that no negative impacts will arise as a result of disability from the six proposed amendments to the discretionary powers.
Sex	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on pupils attending mainstream or specialist provision because of their sex.
Race	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on specific ethnic groups because of the proposals.
Gender reassignment	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on specific groups in relation to gender reassignment as a result of the proposals.
Sexual orientation	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on specific groups in relation to sexual orientation as a result of the proposals.
Religion or belief			✓	The proposed removal of transport for primary age pupils attending schools with designated religious character will have an adverse impact, it is anticipated these number are less than 0.01% of the population and the requests are minimal each year The proposed change to the policy is compliant with the statutory guidance and individual applications will be considered on

				their merit in line with the Guidance.
Pregnancy or maternity	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on specific groups in relation to pregnancy or maternity as a result of the proposals.
Marriage or civil partnership	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on specific groups in relation to marriage or civil partnership as a result of the proposals.

Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who…	**No impact**	**Make things better**	**Make things worse**	**Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.**
Live in a rural area?	✓		✓	The proposed amendment to the main eligibility criterion to nearest school only will only impact upon eligibility to assistance with transport. The admissions policies of the Council and of individual academies / schools where relevant are not impacted by the proposals. The proposals will potentially reduce eligibility for assistance with home to school transport to the catchment school in rural communities in which the catchment school is not the nearest school, however eligibility to the nearest school, e.g. when the distance is in excess of the statutory walking distance, remains in place. A large number of consultation responses received from rural and sparse rural areas were concerned about potential health and safety issues arising from the use of rural roads specifically during periods of adverse weather conditions. The home to school transport commissioning arrangements ensure that providers utilise only suitable vehicles in the provision of transport, including suitability of size for specific routes. Furthermore, all providers are required to assess any risks arising from, for example, weather conditions and to not undertake journeys which they consider cannot be completed safely.
…have a low income?		✓	✓	There remains statutory provision for low income families for children aged 8 and above. Consultation responses indicated concern from families who receive a low income about the impact of the proposed change to the main eligibility criterion to being the nearest school only, identifying that this change would limit

				choice for those families not able to pay for transport in the event that their child did not attend the nearest school. The consultation responses demonstrated that the proposed change to removal of eligibility to catchment would have an adverse impact upon low income families ability to preference a school of choice, as eligibility to transport is a factor here. As a result of the consultation, officers are recommending the provision of an additional discretionary element for secondary age that enables low income families to exercise preferencing to school admissions to up to three schools across a wider area. The cost if approved of this further discretionary provision is approximately £170k per year based on current contract costs. This could allow greater school choice for 96.5% of children, within the sample cohort, receiving Free School Meals who could, had this amendment not been proposed, be affected by the removal of catchment.
Forces families?	✓			It is anticipated there would be no identifiable impact on specific groups in relation to being in the Armed Forces.
Carers			✓	Some consultation responses indicated that the proposed change to the main eligibility criterion to being to the nearest school only would have a negative impact to some people with caring responsibilities, specifically where they have children with eligibility to different schools (as noted above). Any impact would be greatest during the course of the transition / implementation period of the policy.

Section 8. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) **State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.**

Following the consultation and the responses that were received, there is possibility that pupils may be impacted by having combined protected characteristics of age, religion or belief, live in a rural area, receive a low income and families that are carers.

The consultation responses suggest that some families who live in rural area where the nearest and catchment school are not the same school (and who therefore may have current eligibility for

more than one school) but receive low income may be more adversely impacted than those living in an urban area where this may also be the case. The limited alternative transport options in rural areas could force families of low income to attend their nearest school, potentially removing admissions choice.

The admissions policy of both the Council and individual academies / schools where relevant will not be affected by the proposed policy changes and parents will continue to be able to preference different schools as part of the admissions process.

Eligible children will continue to receive assistance with home to school transport, albeit their eligibility will be to the nearest school (with available places) in the event that the proposal is agreed.

Pupils in receipt of free school meals will have additional choice in the event that the proposed policy is agreed.

Section 9. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (**Remember:** we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)	**Tick option chosen**
1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	
2. **Adverse impact - adjust the proposal -** The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	**x**
3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	**x**
4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.	

Explanation of why option has been chosen. (Include any advice given by Legal Services.)

Continue the proposal for five of the six criteria:

- proposals to retain extended eligibility for reception and
- proposal to retain extended eligibility for Year 3
- proposal to remove discretionary eligibility for second home;
- proposal to remove discretionary element for primary children attending designated religious character schools
- proposal to remove discretionary element for children with SEN for 2 days

Continue and adjust the proposal to amend the main eligibility criteria to being the nearest suitable school. The adjustment in light of consultation feedback, Officers are recommending the provision of an additional discretionary element for secondary age pupils that enables low income families living in rural areas to exercise preferencing to school admissions to up to three schools across a wider area.

The Council's finances are such that difficult decisions are having to be made, demand outstrips resources and both nationally & the Council's home to school transport budget is growing rapidly and has been significantly overspent for several years. The Council's proposals will remove

further discretionary elements of the policy whilst ensuring that it is in line with its statutory duties.

Section 10. If the proposal is to be implemented, how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)

Subject to decision being made to implement the proposals the effect of the changes will be phased over 7 years as the Council has the opportunity to protect those who transport arrangements were awarded on the previous policies.
Following the consultation it is clear from those who responded how the proposals will impact upon them. Given the amount of variables, including parental behaviour, we will not see any significant change until after the next round of admissions in summer of 2025.

Following implementation there will be a 24-month Post Implementation Review.

Section 11. Action plan. List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	**Lead**	**By when**	**Progress**	**Monitoring arrangements**
28-day public consultation to commence	Amanda Newbold	19 February 2024	Complete	
Public events to be held across localities	Amanda Newbold / Chris Reynolds	Throughout February and March 2024	Complete	Public events and feedback from these events were monitored through a working group
Public consultation to end.	Amanda Newbold	26 April 2024	Complete	Consultation extended to 26 April
All responses and feedback to be collated and reviewed following consultation.	Jon Holden /Chris Reynolds	Throughout the consultation period & from 26 April to mid May 2024	Complete	Reviewed by lead officers
Options to be revised (if required), EIA to be revised and draft Policy to be updated.	Amanda Newbold	May 2024	Complete	Revised draft policy
Sign-off of revised proposals and updated Home to School Travel Policy	Amanda Newbold	8 July 2024 (Executive Committee)	Complete	
Adoption of	Amanda	24 July 2024		

Home to School Transport Policy	Newbold	(Full Council)		
Publish updated Home to School Travel policy	Amanda Newbold	31st July 2024		
Development and sign-off of implementation and transition plan	Amanda Newbold	1st August – 31st August 2024		This will be completed by a working group
Implementation and transition arrangements commence	Amanda Newbold	1st September 2024 onwards for up to seven years.		
Post implementation evaluation	Amanda Newbold	Spring 2025		
Post implementation review	Amanda Newbold	July 2025		
Post implementation review	Amanda Newbold	July 2027		

Section 12. Summary (Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.)

The paying due regard prior to the consultation highlighted that there may be some adverse impacts to those with protected characteristics of age. However, the consultation showed that there are multiple impacts for more pupils as a result of wider range of protected characteristics such as low income, and rurality especially those with combined protected characteristics.

Officers are recommending the provision of an additional discretionary element for secondary age that enables low income families living in rural areas to exercise preferencing to school admissions to up to three schools across a wider area.
This is a further extension to the extended rights currently within the policy and would mean that: A child is eligible for free travel to school if they are eligible for free school meals or a parent with whom they live receives maximum Working Tax Credit and they are aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 12 miles from their home

Section 13. Sign off section

This revised EIA was completed by: Jon Holden

Name: Jon Holden
Job title: Strategic Planning Manager
Directorate: Children and Young People's Services
Signature: J Holden

Completion date: 08/07/24 Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): A Newbold Date: 08/07/24

Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

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

Version 2: amended 11 August 2021

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:
Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Proposed amendments to the Home to School Transport Policy
Brief description of proposal	Proposed amendments to the Home to School Transport Policy that was adopted by the council in 2019. The most significant proposed amendment is change one of the eligibility criteria from the nearest or catchment schools to the nearest school only
Directorate	CYPS
Service area	Strategic Planning
Lead officer	Jon Holden
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	None
Date impact assessment started	July 2024

Options appraisal
Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide home to school transport for eligible children in accordance with its own published policy.

The proposals in this report are made following a consideration of the savings that would arise from changes to the existing policy to ensure that it has a greater alignment with statutory guidance published by the Department for Education in June 23 (subsequently amended in January 2024).

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

The proposals contained in the report would result in annual savings of up to approximately £4 million, achieved over a 5 year implementation of the policy.

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**		**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
Minimise **greenhouse gas emissions** e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.	Emissions from travel	X			Implementation of the revised policy proposal, limiting eligibility to the nearest suitable school only, will result in an estimated reduction in the amount of home to school transport. The savings would be achieved over a 7 year period for the implementation of the policy. The annual requirement for home to school transport is subject to fluctuations in pupil numbers, parental preferencing of schools, schools' capacity and the home addresses of eligible pupils. As a result it is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the CO2 savings that would be achieved		
	Emissions from construction						
	Emissions from						

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**		**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
Page 450	running of buildings						
	Emissions from data storage						
	Other						
Minimise **waste:** Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic			X		No impact		
Reduce **water** consumption			X		No impact		
Minimise **pollution** (including air, land, water, light and noise)		X			Any reduction in home to school transport that is achieved through the implementation of the policy will have a positive effect upon pollution levels		

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**	**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
Ensure **resilience** to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers		X		No impact anticipated		
Enhance **conservation** and wildlife		X		No impact anticipated		
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of **North Yorkshire's landscape**		X		No impact anticipated		
Other (please state below)		X		No impact anticipated		

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.
N/A

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

Current annual expenditure on home to school transport amounts to £41 million annually arising from the provision of transport to eligible pupils. The requirements for home to school transport vary according to the needs of pupil cohorts but involve the use of a broad range of vehicles by size and type. As a consequence, there is some impact upon climate change arising from vehicle emissions and other impacts.

The implementation of revised proposals, aligned with statutory guidance issued by the DfE would have the effect of limiting some criteria for eligibility, and thus reducing the total amount of transport provided and, as a consequence, have a positive impact upon climate change.

In addition to the proposed implementation of policy proposals it is also proposed that the Council will develop and implement a Sustainable Travel Strategy for all home to school travel (i.e. including that undertaken by pupils not eligible for assistance) and thus have a greater impact upon climate change.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	**Jon Holden**
Job title	**Head of Strategic Planning**
Service area	**Education and Skills**
Directorate	**CYPS**
Signature	Redacted signature
Completion date	**5 July 2024**

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):

Date: A Newbold

North Yorkshire Council

24 July 2024

Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive for Local Engagement

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable Council to consider the appended report 'Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review' as recommended to Council by the Executive at their meeting on 9 July 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 9 July 2024, the Executive considered the appended report 'Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review' and recommended it to Council at their meeting on 24 July 2024.

2.2 As part of the development of proposals for the new North Yorkshire Council, the council size (i.e. the number of councillors) and the boundaries for each division were agreed by the LGBCE for the first four years of the Council's existence. A full boundary review is now required to determine the arrangements for the next administrative term, from May 2027.

2.3 The appended report outlines work to date to develop a proposal for the size of the council, a forecast of electorate numbers in 2030, and a range of other evidence required by the LGBCE as the preliminary phase of the review. It seeks approval of the recommendations of the Boundary Review Member Working Group, in order that they can be submitted to LGBCE.

2.4 The minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 9 July 2024 are available here - Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 9th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That Council consider the appended report 'Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review' as recommended to Council by the Executive at their meeting on 9 July 2024.

Rachel Joyce
Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement
16 July 2024

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

9 July 2024

Council Size Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive for Local Engagement

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Executive about the North Yorkshire Electoral Division Boundary Review and, in line with the first stage of the process, to seek Executive's approval to refer the recommendations of the Boundary Review Member Working Group (BRMWG) to Full Council to allow them to be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 As part of the development of proposals for the new North Yorkshire Council, the council size (i.e. the number of councillors) and the boundaries for each division were agreed by the LGBCE for the first four years of the Council's existence. A full boundary review is now required to determine the arrangements for the next administrative term, from May 2027.

2.2 This report outlines work to date to develop a proposal for the size of the council, a forecast of electorate numbers in 2030, and a range of other evidence required by the LGBCE as the preliminary phase of the review. It seeks approval of the recommendations of the BRMWG, in order that they can be put before Full Council on 24 July 2024, and submitted to LGBCE.

2.3 Appendix A provides a forecast of the number of electors predicted in North Yorkshire by 2030, which represents a 7% increase on current electorate.

2.4 The BRMWG is recommending a council size of 89 members, with each member representing a division individually.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 During the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process, a streamlined approach was taken to the identification of the council size and the divisional boundaries for the new Council. This resulted in a council of 90 elected members and 89 divisions. It was agreed at that time that a full boundary review would be undertaken in the first cycle of the new organisation. The LGBCE contacted North Yorkshire Council in summer 2023 to initiate the review.

3.2 Reviews can be undertaken for a number of reasons, in addition to structural change of an authority. This includes:

- At the request of the local authority
- Electoral imbalance, if either:
    - one electoral ward/division has a +/-30% variance with the local authority electorate average
    - or, 30% or more of the electoral wards/divisions have a +/-10% variance from the local authority average

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- Time period since the previous review, which is normally around 12 and 16 years or every two to three electoral cycles

3.3 Whilst a review was always planned following LGR, the current arrangements have reached a level of imbalance that would trigger a review anyway. There are two divisions which have a variance of more than 30% (Cayton, Wathvale and Bishop Monkton), and 57% of divisions have a variance of more than 10%. This is outlined in Appendix B.

3.4 The Electoral Boundary Review process comprises a full review of all council electoral divisions. There are five key stages as follows. The timescales in brackets are indicative:

- Preliminary Phase – Information gathering and electoral forecasts (to July 2024)
- Phase 1 – Council size, i.e. proposals for the total number of councillors/electoral divisions (July 2024)
- Phase 2 – Consultation on draft proposals and divisional arrangements, i.e. proposals for revised boundaries and names of electoral divisions (August 2024 - May 2025)
- Phase 3 – Parliamentary approval of recommendations (Autumn 2025 - Autumn 2026)
- Phase 4 – Implement new electoral arrangements (May 2027)

4.0 PRELIMINARY PHASE

4.1 In preparation for the analysis required to develop new proposals, LGBCE require a substantial amount of information. This includes the following:

- Geocoded Electoral Register
- Current and Forecast Electorate
- Forecasting Methodology
- Housing Development Data
- Polling District Maps
- Polling District Review Report
- Parish Electoral Arrangements
- Parish Ward Maps
- Local Orders
- Governance Changes
- Stakeholder Database

4.2 Work has been underway since the new year to ensure this information is available. This information will be submitted to the LGBCE shortly after 24 July 2024, subject to Executive and Full Council approval of the electorate forecast and council size proposal.

4.3 The most significant element of work in the preliminary phase is the development of electorate forecasts. The forecasts needs to be five years beyond the end of the review, which is 2030. LGBCE provide guidance on potential approaches, although it is for the council to identify which approach is most appropriate. The council must provide both the forecasts and justification for the projections submitted.

4.4 The draft forecasts have been completed and once submitted to LGBCE are subject to their approval before being used as the basis of the Boundary Review. The forecasts predict a 7% increase in electorate to 517344 by 2030. The forecasts, at division level, are included in Appendix A. Based on the recommended 89 councillors (as described in 5.8), this would give an average division size of 5813 electors.

4.5 Executive is asked to approve the recommendation of these forecasts to Full Council, to allow their submission to the LGBCE. Executive is also asked to provide delegated authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to make any required minor amendments

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to the Electorate Forecast for greater accuracy, in consultation with the Chairman of the BRMWG, prior to its submission.

4.6 The draft forecasts have been produced using an electorate forecasting tool provided by LGBCE. This takes electorate data (at polling district level) for the last three years and, based on Office of National Statistics population estimates, forecasts likely electorate growth. Officers have then reviewed housing development data from Local Plan allocations and planning permissions for sites above 10 houses, mapped it to accurately identify in which polling district the development will be, before calculating the likely electorate figures associated with each development. As the population estimates within the forecasting tool must already have assumed some 'normal' level of housing growth, the additional housing figures have been reduced by 30% before being added to the forecasting tool's electorate prediction. This helps to reduce the likelihood of double-counting and avoid an over-inflated forecast. A detailed description of the methodology used is included in Appendix C.

5.0 PHASE 1 – COUNCIL SIZE

5.1 During the first stage of the review, the LGBCE decides on the number of council members required to enable the council to undertake effective decision making, to discharge its business and responsibilities successfully and to provide for effective community leadership and representation. The LGBCE seeks to understand elected member requirements across three aspects:

- Decision Making – how many councillors are needed to give strategic leadership and direction to the authority.
- Accountability and Scrutiny – how many councillors are needed to provide scrutiny, to meet regulatory requirements and to manage partnerships between the local authority and other organisations.
- Effective Representation – how the representational role of councillors in the local community is discharged and how they engage with people and conduct casework.

5.2 The council should submit a recommendation as to the size of the council at the next election, based on the considerations above. As the review process will have a significant impact on how the council operates and how councillors work, a Member Working Group was established to ensure the process was led by and fully informed by the views of existing Councillors. The group's role is to lead on the preparation of the Council's submission, and to coordinate and involve other members in the development of recommendations to Executive and Full Council. The members of the group are as follows:

	Councillor's Name	**Political Group**
1	Cllr John Weighell (Chairman)	Conservative
2	Cllr Sam Gibbs	Conservative
3	Cllr Mark Crane	Conservative
4	Cllr Heather Phillips	Conservative
5	Cllr David Staveley	Conservative
6	Cllr Caroline Goodrick	The Conservative & Independents Group
7	Cllr Philip Broadbank	Liberal Democrats
8	Cllr Steve Shaw-Wright	Labour
9	Cllr Andy Solloway	North Yorkshire Independent
10	Cllr Kevin Foster	Green Party
11	Cllr Alyson Baker Substitute	Conservative
12	Cllr Nigel Knapton Substitute	Conservative
13	Cllr. Peter Lacey Substitute	Liberal Democrats

5.3 The Working Group has considered each aspect identified by LGBCE in developing its Council Size submission, as well as considering the draft electorate forecasts. Given that

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the council has only recently been formed, and arrangements have been tested over the course of the first year of operation, this has been useful in identifying what has worked well so far. However, it also means that there is not a long historical body of evidence upon which to base the case for one particular approach over another.

5.4 The Working Group considered the membership of committees and the workload associated with other duties of councillors. Given the large geography of the council, there is a need for some decision making to locality based and there must, therefore, be enough councillors to ensure appropriate representation at a locality level. Appendix D is Council Size Submission document which lists the committees of the council. It was recognised that there are no currently plans to significantly alter the approach to committees, and that arrangements have generally worked well since vesting day of the new authority.

5.5 The Working Group also considered the ways of working for Members and representation of local communities. It was recognised that as a unitary authority, it was a different experience for Members compared to previous County and District or Borough roles. Again, the varied geography means that some more urban divisions are small in area, but with significant amounts of casework around regeneration, development and transport. Conversely, the more rural divisions can have extremely sparse populations, but small settlements can increase the number of individual community meetings that a member is expected to attend. Parish council meetings, in particular, can be extremely time consuming, with some Members associated with 15+ parishes. Meetings can often be on the same evenings, making it logistically impossible to attend all.

5.6 Members determined that their preference would be for an odd number of councillors, as this would help to ensure a clear majority in any election.

5.7 Members discussed whether each division should have one or more members representing it. Currently, 88 divisions have one member, and one division has two members. The Working Group concluded that given the opportunity to realign divisions for electoral equality, it would make sense for the divisions to have equal representation. Given the required number of divisions across the geography, this could not feasibly be more than one per division. Executive is asked to approve the recommendation to Full Council that a single member division review is requested from LGBCE.

5.8 On the basis of the above considerations, the Member Working Group voted to recommend a council size of 89 members. Executive is asked to approve this recommendation and refer it to Full Council.

5.9 It should be noted that political or other groups/individuals may present their own submission to the LGBCE either alongside or as an alternative to the Council's formal submission.

6.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

6.1 As above, Councillors have been consulted via the Member Working Group. This has provided cross-party input to the development of recommendations.

6.2 In addition, the LGBCE will consult on potential division patterns from August to November, then again on a final recommendation in 2025. Residents, members, organisations and political parties may all submit suggestions to LGBCE who will consider these when drawing up the model to be put to parliament.

6.3 Although both phases of the consultation will be published, promoted and delivered by LGBCE, the council will provide a stakeholder database to ensure that a broad range of views are invited.

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6.4 The council will also seek to create awareness of the review locally, encouraging engagement with and participation in the consultation using a variety of communication channels to maximise reach. A proactive media release will be issued following the general election and again ahead of consultation going live in August.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 The Member Working Group considered a range of possible numbers of councillors, ranging from significant reductions to significant increases.

7.2 The Group concluded that a large reduction in the number of Councillors would:

- Risk increasing the workload beyond a reasonable amount. This could create a barrier for any potential candidate from maintaining employment alongside being a councillor, which might reduce the opportunities for younger people to stand for elected office. It was also noted that many people have caring responsibilities and creating a larger workload could prevent people from balancing the different responsibilities, with carers disproportionately more likely to be women.
- Create much larger divisions. This would be problematic for sparsely-populated rural areas, as to achieve electoral equality, the geographical area would need to be huge, and this wouldn't be conducive to Members being visible and available to communities. It could make it logistically impossible to attend face-to-face meetings given the travel time required.
- Save money from Member allowances and expenses, but that these savings would likely be reduced by the need for greater officer support to deal with casework and the increased workload in general.

7.3 The Group concluded that a small reduction in the number of Councillors would:

- Have limited impact on workload or division sizes overall.
- Would marginally reduce costs from Member allowances and expenses.

7.4 The Group concluded that a large increase in the number of Councillors would:

- Significantly increase the costs of Member allowances and expenses.
- Run counter to the principles of the LGR Case for Change, providing reduced efficiency.
- Risk creating more Members than are needed for the operations of the authority, with the possibility of less agility in decision-making and more challenge in reaching consensus on issues.

7.5 The Group concluded that a small increase in the number of Councillors would:

- Have limited impact on workload or division sizes overall.
- Would marginally increase costs from Member allowances and expenses, which runs counter to the principles of the LGR Case for Change.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The recommendation of 89 Councillors, if implemented, would very slightly reduce the cost of allowances and expenses. No additional financial implications have been identified.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is empowered to review the electoral arrangements of the Council as per the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The legislation states that 'the total number of members of the council' forms part of an authority's electoral arrangements. The Commission refers to this as 'council size'. The legislation does not set out how many members each authority should

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have. It is the Commission's responsibility to determine the appropriate number of councillors for each authority. The Commission will always recommend a council size that, in its judgement, enables the council to take its decisions effectively, to discharge the business and responsibilities of the council successfully, and provides for effective community leadership and representation.

9.2 Section 57 of the 2009 Act provides that the Council may request the LGBCE to make recommendations as to single-member electoral area. It further provides that the LGBCE must have regard to this request in making its decision. Further if it does not grant the request for single member divisions, it must notify the Council of the reasons for departing from such a request.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 An EIA screening has been undertaken, at Appendix E. No significant impacts were identified based on the recommendations, although the Member Working Group noted that had an option for a significantly reduced number of councillors been recommended, this could have had an impact on age, sex and those with caring responsibilities. This is based on the limited ability of younger councillors to undertake a greater workload whilst balancing other employment, and for those with caring responsibilities who are disproportionately more likely to be women.

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 A climate change impact assessment has been undertaken, at Appendix F. No direct impacts have been identified based on the recommendations.

12.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 It is not envisaged that the recommendations will have significant performance implications. However, in considering the recommended number of councillors, the Member Working Group considered the ability of the council to work effectively and efficiently in the discharge of its duties. Achieving the balance of the appropriate number of councillors for the committees and outside bodies, the workload of members in their communities and efficiency of the decision-making process was at the heart of the discussion and fed into the recommendations.

13.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 The approval of the Council Size submission document will ensure the council's structure and key strategic priorities are taken into consideration during the review, and support the current and future electorate population with fair and equal representation across the county when implemented.

13.2 The submission of an accurate electoral forecast will support future electorate equality, and the supplementary information will allow the LGBCE a full perspective on the implications for North Yorkshire when identifying their proposals.

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 Executive is asked to refer this report to Full Council, recommending that Full Council approve:

i) The submission of a formal request to the LGBCE for a single member division review, as part of subsequent phases of the Electoral Boundary review process.

ii) The 2030 Electorate Forecast for submission to the LGBCE.

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	iii)	The Member Working Group's recommendations within the draft Council Size Submission document (Appendix D) for a council size of 89 members.
	iv)	The submission of all required information to the LGBCE.
	v)	Delegated authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to make any required minor amendments to the Electorate Forecast for accuracy, in consultation with the Chairman of the BRMWG, prior to submission.

APPENDICES:
Appendix A – Electorate Forecast 2030
Appendix B – Current Electoral Variance
Appendix C – Forecasting Methodology
Appendix D – Draft Council Size Submission
Appendix E – Equalities Impact Screening
Appendix F – Climate Change Impact Assessment

Rachel Joyce
Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement
2 July 2024

Report Author and Presenter of Report – Will Boardman, Head of Strategy and Performance

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

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Appendix A - Electorate Forecast

Row Labels	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2023	Electorate 2024	LGBCE 2030 Electorate Forecast	Additional Electors due to housing development	**Final 2030 Forecast**	Electorate Increase 2024-2030	2030 variance from average
Aire Valley	4998	5017	4999	5165	31	5196	197	-11%
Aiskew & Leeming	4487	4560	4656	4714	432	5146	490	-11%
Amotherby & Ampleforth	4578	4263	4301	4520	91	4610	309	-21%
Appleton Roebuck & Church Fenton	4707	4796	4933	4967	206	5173	240	-11%
Barlby & Riccall	4701	4667	4646	4821	69	4890	244	-16%
Bedale	5097	5130	5132	5284	44	5328	196	-8%
Bentham & Ingleton	6090	6152	6209	6348	447	6794	585	17%
Bilton & Nidd Gorge	5943	5889	5881	6093	64	6158	277	6%
Bilton Grange & New Park	5952	5883	5880	6094	48	6142	262	6%
Boroughbridge & Claro	6090	6332	6570	6535	403	6938	368	19%
Brayton & Barlow	5016	4964	4966	5142	162	5304	338	-9%
Camblesforth & Carlton	4819	4871	4898	5019	287	5306	408	-9%
Castle	6821	5402	5471	6081	188	6270	799	8%
Catterick Village & Brompton-on-Swale	4966	4911	4876	5075	453	5528	652	-5%
Cawood & Escrick	4459	4466	4439	4597	15	4613	174	-21%
Cayton	3840	3657	3731	3862	909	4771	1040	-18%
Cliffe & North Duffield	4432	4464	4460	4595	239	4834	374	-17%
Coppice Valley & Duchy	5694	5819	5875	5982	200	6182	307	6%
Danby & Mulgrave	4253	3919	3934	4163	0	4163	229	-28%
Derwent Valley & Moor	4405	4131	4211	4384	74	4458	247	-23%
Easingwold	5622	5636	5737	5847	184	6031	294	4%
Eastfield	5471	4849	5006	5270	1193	6463	1457	11%
Esk Valley & Coast	5862	5475	5516	5796	11	5807	291	0%
Fairfax & Starbeck	6010	5995	6060	6215	0	6215	155	7%
Falsgrave & Stepney	6959	6180	6249	6667	0	6667	418	15%
Filey	6172	5744	5869	6117	146	6263	394	8%
Glusburn, Cross Hills & Sutton-in-Craven	6196	6148	6170	6369	57	6426	256	11%
Great Ayton	4594	4597	4527	4719	0	4719	192	-19%
Harlow & St Georges	6512	6509	6549	6732	64	6797	248	17%
Helmsley & Sinnington	4429	4165	4198	4400	45	4445	247	-24%
High Harrogate & Kingsley	6435	6428	6553	6680	212	6892	339	19%
Hillside & Raskelf	5553	5520	5487	5697	33	5730	243	-1%
Hipswell & Colburn	5885	5916	5966	6112	106	6218	252	7%
Huby & Tollerton	5500	5521	5525	5692	115	5807	282	0%
Hunmanby & Sherburn	5453	5065	5131	5382	124	5506	375	-5%
Hutton Rudby & Osmotherley	5080	5090	5086	5248	37	5285	199	-9%
Killinghall, Hampsthwaite & Saltergate	6105	6360	6496	6524	259	6783	287	17%
Kirkbymoorside & Dales	5573	5308	5414	5605	53	5658	244	-3%
Knaresborough East	6128	6268	6478	6494	594	7088	610	22%
Knaresborough West	6535	6443	6395	6664	27	6692	297	15%
Leyburn & Middleham	4658	4653	4657	4805	182	4987	330	-14%
Malton	5291	4854	4935	5186	19	5205	270	-10%
Masham & Fountains	6190	6115	6234	6378	304	6681	447	15%
Mid Craven	4342	4336	4284	4459	151	4610	326	-21%
Monk Fryston & South Milford	6757	6718	6735	6952	43	6996	261	20%
Morton-on-Swale & Appleton Wiske	5311	5313	5321	5485	99	5585	264	-4%
Newby	5234	4871	4898	5160	0	5160	262	-11%
North Richmondshire	6360	6308	6419	6566	88	6654	235	14%
Northallerton North & Brompton	5187	5442	5543	5565	620	6185	642	6%
Northallerton South	5106	5130	5101	5276	0	5276	175	-9%
Northstead	6427	5478	5501	5984	8	5992	491	3%
Norton	6621	5982	6041	6411	520	6931	890	19%
Oatlands & Pannal	6191	6270	6335	6467	237	6704	369	15%
Osgoldcross	4930	4959	4937	5101	733	5833	896	0%
Ouseburn	4564	4640	4700	4784	312	5096	396	-12%
Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale	4479	4451	4444	4601	17	4618	174	-21%
Pickering	6345	6062	6210	6404	120	6523	313	12%
Richmond	6568	6458	6463	6704	0	6704	241	15%
Ripon Minster & Moorside	6344	6383	6341	6560	11	6570	229	13%
Ripon Ure Bank & Spa	6336	6387	6441	6593	326	6919	478	19%
Romanby	4919	4916	4868	5058	0	5058	190	-13%
Scalby & the Coast	4942	4669	4779	4949	666	5615	836	-3%
Scotton & Lower Wensleydale	4496	4382	4346	4549	26	4575	229	-21%
Seamer	3918	3705	3777	3921	117	4038	261	-31%
Selby East	5601	5667	5801	5872	423	6296	495	8%
Selby West	7593	7606	7618	7850	351	8200	582	41%
Settle & Penyghent	4736	4655	4628	4822	260	5082	454	-13%
Sherburn In Elmet	6683	6798	6811	6981	286	7267	456	25%
Sheriff Hutton & Derwent	5770	5434	5591	5777	0	5777	186	-1%
Skipton East & South	5615	5646	5720	5842	696	6538	818	12%
Skipton North & Embsay-with-Eastby	4662	4743	4836	4900	219	5118	282	-12%
Skipton West & West Craven	4800	4766	4820	4949	227	5176	356	-11%
Sowerby & Topcliffe	5893	6093	6334	6303	235	6538	204	12%
Spofforth with Lower Wharfedale & Tockwith	5094	5189	5238	5340	198	5538	300	-5%
Stokesley	5147	5154	5129	5308	269	5577	448	-4%

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Row Labels	Electorate 2022	Electorate 2023	Electorate 2024	LGBCE 2030 Electorate Forecast	Additional Electors due to housing development	**Final 2030 Forecast**	Electorate Increase 2024-2030	2030 variance from average
Stray, Woodlands & Hookstone	6137	6081	6085	6296	17	6314	229	9%
Tadcaster	5841	5799	5813	6004	57	6061	248	4%
Thirsk	5550	5578	5567	5744	161	5904	337	2%
Thornton Dale & Wolds	5995	5625	5774	5982	0	5982	208	3%
Thorpe Willoughby & Hambleton	5131	5290	5338	5422	369	5791	453	0%
Upper Dales	4535	4540	4520	4677	0	4677	157	-20%
Valley Gardens & Central Harrogate	6258	6142	6183	6392	61	6454	271	11%
Washburn & Birstwith	5308	5300	5316	5478	438	5916	600	2%
Wathvale & Bishop Monkton	6834	7171	7265	7319	336	7654	389	32%
Weaponness & Ramshill	6650	5792	5966	6329	101	6431	465	11%
Wharfedale	4079	4069	4010	4183	19	4201	191	-28%
Whitby Streonshalh	4824	4207	4222	4557	382	4939	717	-15%
Whitby West	6458	5920	5986	6315	122	6438	452	11%
Woodlands	5850	5176	5215	5585	79	5664	449	-3%
Grand Total	**489982**	**479433**	**483576**	**499818**	**17527**	**517344**	**33768**	

Average = 5813

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Appendix B - Electorate variance within existing divisions (2023 data)

Proposed New Ward	No. of Registered Elelctors	No. of Councillors	No. of Registered Electors per Councillor	Variance from average ratio (5364 electors)	Number of divisions with varience +/- 30% of average ratio	% of Divisions with imbalance of greater than 10% from average ratio
Wathvale & Bishop Monkton	7283	1	7,283	35.78%		
Sherburn In Elmet	6802	1	6,802	26.81%	2	57.30%
Monk Fryston & South Milford	6708	1	6,708	25.06%		
Boroughbridge & Claro	6534	1	6,534	21.81%		
High Harrogate & Kingsley	6532	1	6,532	21.77%		
Harlow & St Georges	6480	1	6,480	20.81%		
Knaresborough East	6471	1	6,471	20.64%		
Killinghall, Hampsthwaite & Saltergate	6464	1	6,464	20.51%		
Richmond	6442	1	6,442	20.10%		
Ripon Ure Bank & Spa	6426	1	6,426	19.80%		
North Richmondshire	6405	1	6,405	19.41%		
Knaresborough West	6402	1	6,402	19.35%		
Ripon Minster & Moorside	6367	1	6,367	18.70%		
Sowerby & Topcliffe	6324	1	6,324	17.90%		
Oatlands & Pannal	6323	1	6,323	17.88%		
Falsgrave & Stepney	6233	1	6,233	16.20%		
Pickering	6198	1	6,198	15.55%		
Valley Gardens & Central Harrogate	6195	1	6,195	15.49%		
Bentham & Ingleton	6191	1	6,191	15.42%		
Masham & Fountains	6177	1	6,177	15.16%		
Glusburn, Cross Hills & Sutton-in-Craven	6156	1	6,156	14.77%		
Stray, Woodlands & Hookstone	6103	1	6,103	13.78%		
Fairfax & Starbeck	6039	1	6,039	12.58%		
Norton	6027	1	6,027	12.36%		
Whitby West	5983	1	5,983	11.54%		
Hipswell & Colburn	5977	1	5,977	11.43%		
Weaponness & Ramshill	5960	1	5,960	11.11%		
Filey	5878	1	5,878	9.58%		
Bilton & Nidd Gorge	5873	1	5,873	9.49%		
Bilton Grange & New Park	5872	1	5,872	9.47%		
Coppice Valley & Duchy	5872	1	5,872	9.47%		
Tadcaster	5794	1	5,794	8.02%		
Thornton Dale & Wolds	5767	1	5,767	7.51%		
Selby East	5736	1	5,736	6.94%		
Easingwold	5725	1	5,725	6.73%		
Skipton East & South	5687	1	5,687	6.02%		
Sheriff Hutton & Derwent	5580	1	5,580	4.03%		
Thirsk	5560	1	5,560	3.65%		
Northallerton North & Brompton	5542	1	5,542	3.32%		
Huby & Tollerton	5522	1	5,522	2.95%		
Esk Valley & Coast	5503	1	5,503	2.59%		
Hillside & Raskelf	5499	1	5,499	2.52%		
Northstead	5477	1	5,477	2.11%		
Castle	5467	1	5,467	1.92%		
Kirkbymoorside & Dales	5411	1	5,411	0.88%		
Washburn & Birstwith	5350	1	5,350	-0.26%		
Thorpe Willoughby & Hambleton	5317	1	5,317	-0.88%		
Morton-on-Swale & Appleton Wiske	5304	1	5,304	-1.12%		
Spofforth with Lower Wharfedale & Tockwith	5235	1	5,235	-2.40%		
Woodlands	5188	1	5,188	-3.28%		
Bedale	5142	1	5,142	-4.14%		
Stokesley	5131	1	5,131	-4.34%		
Hunmanby & Sherburn	5115	1	5,115	-4.64%		
Northallerton South	5089	1	5,089	-5.13%		
Hutton Rudby & Osmotherley	5085	1	5,085	-5.20%		
Aire Valley	4992	1	4,992	-6.94%		
Eastfield	4988	1	4,988	-7.01%		
Brayton & Barlow	4962	1	4,962	-7.49%		
Osgoldcross	4933	1	4,933	-8.04%		
Malton	4928	1	4,928	-8.13%		
Appleton Roebuck & Church Fenton	4914	1	4,914	-8.39%		
Newby	4886	1	4,886	-8.91%		
Catterick Village & Brompton-on-Swale	4883	1	4,883	-8.97%		
Camblesforth & Carlton	4880	1	4,880	-9.02%		
Romanby	4856	1	4,856	-9.47%		
Skipton North & Embsay-with-Eastby	4817	1	4,817	-10.20%		
Skipton West & West Craven	4805	1	4,805	-10.42%		
Scalby & the Coast	4772	1	4,772	-11.04%		
Ouseburn	4681	1	4,681	-12.73%		
Aiskew & Leeming	4672	1	4,672	-12.90%		
Leyburn & Middleham	4655	1	4,655	-13.22%		

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Settle & Penyghent	4630	1	4,630	-13.68%
Barlby & Riccall	4625	1	4,625	-13.78%
Great Ayton	4522	1	4,522	-15.70%
Upper Dales	4520	1	4,520	-15.73%
Cliffe & North Duffield	4451	1	4,451	-17.02%
Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale	4431	1	4,431	-17.39%
Cawood & Escrick	4430	1	4,430	-17.41%
Scotton & Lower Wensleydale	4349	1	4,349	-18.92%
Amotherby & Ampleforth	4293	1	4,293	-19.97%
Mid Craven	4283	1	4,283	-20.15%
Whitby Streonshalh	4221	1	4,221	-21.31%
Helmsley & Sinnington	4206	1	4,206	-21.59%
Derwent Valley & Moor	4198	1	4,198	-21.74%
Wharfedale	4015	1	4,015	-25.15%
Danby & Mulgrave	3926	1	3,926	-26.81%
Selby West	7631	2	3,816	-28.87%
Seamer	3777	1	3,777	-29.59%
Cayton	3711	1	3,711	-30.82%

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Appendix C – Boundary Commission Review GIS Processes 2024

New housing developments will be a major factor in determining elector numbers and distribution up to 2030.

Due to the spatial component of housing data, the GIS Team in Data and Intelligence, used GIS mapping software to undertake analysis and assess the impact of housing development on future electors.

Electoral Register Geocoding

Data was extracted from the Electoral Database, Civica Xpress System, on 10/04/2024 and 'geocoded' by matching the Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRN) held in the register to our corporate address gazetteer or Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), which holds the accurate location of properties. Data matching between the Electoral data export and the LLPG resulted in a match rate of 99.86% and allowed the creation of a dataset representing a point on the map indicating the number of electorates per property and the property address details. There is ongoing work to resolve the unmatched records – see Appendix B for a summary of matching.

Using 'point-in-polygon' spatial query of the geocoded elector data, we were able to determine the current number of electors for each political extent. This information was used to populate the Boundary Commission spreadsheet providing the 2024 Elector figures.

The Electors Point Data will be provided to the Boundary Commission as a shapefile.

Housing Development Data

Planning Services provided data on Housing Allocations from relevant local plans and planning applications and other known sources of housing from Housing Monitoring systems and processes.

There is no single source of this information currently, so data was sourced from the former district's Local Plans and various Housing Monitoring Systems. Planning officers provided the Housing totals from the planning policy housing forecast data for 2023-24 and the data included information on the site names and number of properties forecast between 2024-2030.

See Annex 1 for details of each data source per locality (former district area).

GIS Analysis of Housing Development

The housing GIS data was received as both polygons (housing allocations) and points (planning permissions, etc).

Working with the GIS Team, Planning Policy Officers checked all sites for accuracy and all changes were recorded in an Audit Spreadsheet indicating the date and initials of the Planning Officer involved. Where necessary the planning application points were moved to the appropriate location as agreed with the Planning Officer.

All sites with less than 10 houses on the planning permission were removed from the calculations, along with any commenced permissions that fell below the 10 house threshold when the forecast number was adjusted – either by removing the 2023-24 builds from the total assuming these would have been complete, or for sites due for completion in 2023-24 but were still under construction the totals were adjusted based on a % complete estimate from elector data. Any Housing allocations with less than 10 properties have also been removed.

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A similar GIS process of point in polygon spatial query enabled us to count the number of houses expected to be built by 2030 for each political area. The Housing numbers were then added to the Boundary Commission spreadsheet and by applying our average elector occupancy rate per Polling district to the estimated total of residential properties, we were able to calculate a predicted number of electors.
The mapped data will be provided to the Boundary Commission as a shapefile.

GIS Data Checks

As confirmed by the Boundary Commission documentation only housing sites with 10 or more properties were included in the analysis.

Where available Site Name and Planning Application References were added to the data including Housing Allocations with Planning Permission.

The data indicated a site may be due from completion in 2024 but it is clear from the information we have that there are still homes to build these were included if more than 10 homes remaining. In some instances, as a consequence of recent development a site may have less than 10 houses remaining. These sites were excluded as they no longer met the criteria of 10 or more properties.

We can see the development has started in several ways:

- Local knowledge – Planning tell us the site is complete or they know it has started through their checks.
- The Planning Application may indicate how many houses are anticipated in the current and future years up to 2030 – indicating potentially more to come beyond 2024.
- Checking against the OS Base Map may show some housing development within the Housing Allocation Site – where there was none before.
- The LLPG Data may show houses as 'Provisional' which means the properties have been Street Named and Numbered but are not yet occupied.
- The Electoral Data may show electors within the Housing Allocation Site. Some houses have a number of Electors against them, e.g. '2 electors' indicated the house is occupied. Some just indicate Electorates as '0' (zero electorate) – indicating the Electors have not yet moved in but the Electoral system know there are houses on site – therefore indicating more houses to come.

Throughout the GIS analysis an internal web map was provided to members so they could review the data. The figures showed a higher than anticipated elector forecast and as a consequence and in agreement with the Boundary Commission it was agreed to reduce the Housing Estimates by 30% across each Polling district.

GIS Data (Shapefiles) sent to Boundary Commission:

- Ward Boundary 1024 BFC Region
- Polling Districts
- Parish Boundary 2023 BFC Region
- Housing Development – Point Data (a combination of the Housing Allocations and Planning Applications data) Fields: Application/Allocation Name, Application Number (where available), Houses Numbers 2024-2030, Number of Housing reduced by 30%
- Electorate Data – point data showing the number of electors per property – sourced from the Electoral Registration System on 10/04/2024. Fields: Electoral System Reference, UPRN Reference from Local Land and Property Gazetteer, Address, Number of Elector at Address.

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Annex 1

LLPG Matching Summary

	Addresses (UPRNs)	Electors
Electoral Register Total	310353	483761
LLPG Match Total	309917	483576
Difference*	436	185

* This includes potential unmatched, duplicates and queries that need to be resolved. The matching was interrupted by other work commitments of the Elections Team due to the General Election on 4 July 2024.

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The Local Government Boundary Commission for England

North Yorkshire Council

Council Size Submission

DRAFT

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How to Make a Submission

It is recommended that submissions on future governance arrangements and council size follow the guidance provided and use the format below as a template. Submissions should be treated as an opportunity to focus on the future needs of the council and not simply describe the current arrangements. **Submissions should also demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been considered in drawing up the proposal and why you have discounted them**.

The template allows respondents to enter comments directly under each heading. It is not recommended that responses be unduly long; as a guide, it is anticipated that a 15 to 20-page document using this template should suffice. Individual section length may vary depending on the issues to be explained. Where internal documents are referred to URLs should be provided, rather than the document itself. It is also recommended that a table is included that highlights the key paragraphs for the Commission's attention.

'Good' submissions, i.e. those that are considered to be most robust and persuasive, combine the following *key success components* (as set out in the guidance that accompanies this template):

- Clarity on objectives
- A straightforward and evidence-led style
- An understanding of local place and communities
- An understanding of councillors' roles and responsibilities

About You

The respondent should use this space to provide the Commission with a little detail about who is making the submission, whether it is the full Council, Officers on behalf of the Council, a political party or group, a resident group, or an individual.

This submission is on behalf of North Yorkshire Council and will be considered by Full Council. The submission is based on the recommendations of the Cross-Party Members Working Group.

Reason for Review (Request Reviews Only)

Please explain the authority's reasons for requesting this electoral review; it is useful for the Commission to have context. *NB/ If the Commission has identified the authority for review under one if its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

The Context for your proposal

Your submission gives you the opportunity to examine how you wish to organise and run the council for the next 15 - 20 years. **The consideration of future governance arrangements and council size should be set in the wider local and national policy context.** The Commission

expects you to challenge your current arrangements and determine the most appropriate arrangements going forward. In providing context for your submission below, please demonstrate that you have considered the following issues.

- When did your Council last change/reorganise its internal governance arrangements and what impact on effectiveness did that activity have?
- To what extent has transference of strategic and/or service functions impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery and the ability of the Council to focus on its remaining functions?
- Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?
- What influence will local and national policy trends likely have on the Council as an institution?
- What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?

North Yorkshire Council was created on 1 April 2023, bringing together services previously provided by eight councils into one. The Unitary Authority replaced the County Council and the five district councils and two borough councils in North Yorkshire. The Council is currently undertaking a transformation programme to consolidate services, make savings, reduce duplication and improve efficiency.

During the transition to the new council, the initial priority was to secure safe and legal services on day one. This was achieved and performance has largely remained strong across services. There have been some expected challenges in consolidating operations from the eight councils, with the need to align teams, systems, policies and processes, and this has uncovered some variation in performance. However, these have been operational issues rather than governance.

Whilst Councillors have noted an increase in the scope and scale of their roles, compared to previous County and District/Borough arrangements, the existing governance arrangements have proved capable of supporting effective and timely decision-making. No governance issues have been raised through inspections or reviews over the past year.

North Yorkshire Council has a Leader and Executive governance model, which continued from the arrangements within the predecessor North Yorkshire County Council. This model works well and is considered the best option for the council due to the large size of the council and the number of services that the unitary authority delivers.

The new York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority has been set up with Mayoral elections held in May 2024. North Yorkshire Council will work in close partnership with the Combined Authority across a range of issues. Whilst the national policy outlook is uncertain pending the General Election, all the main parties have committed to maintain or enhance local devolution and we expect this model of governance at a sub-regional level to continue.

This council size proposal will not have an impact on the Council's effectiveness, as a small reduction in the number of Councillors from 90 to 89 would have limited impact on workload or division sizes overall.

Local Authority Profile

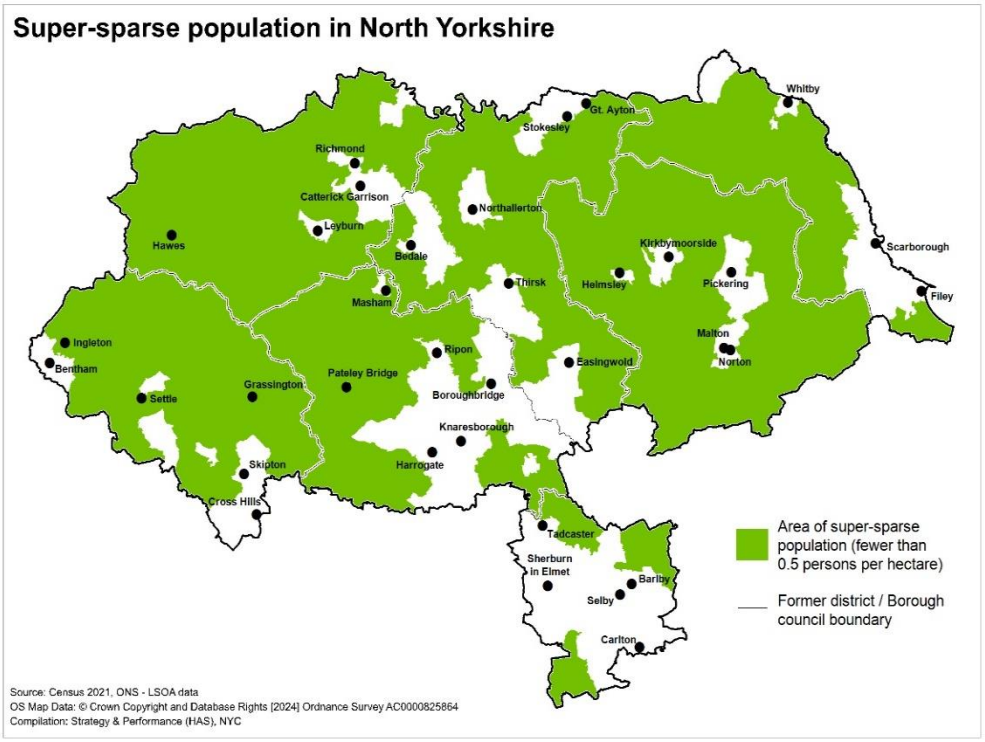
Please provide a short description of the authority and its setting, in particular the local geography, demographics and community characteristics. This should set the scene for the Commission and give it a greater understanding of any current issues. The description should cover all of the following:

- Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?
- Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?
- Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?
- Community characteristics – is there presence of “hidden” or otherwise complex deprivation?
- Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

Further to providing a description, the Commission will be looking for a submission that demonstrates an understanding of place and communities by putting forth arguments on council size based upon local evidence and insight. For example, how does local geography, demographics and community characteristics impact on councillor casework, workload and community engagement?

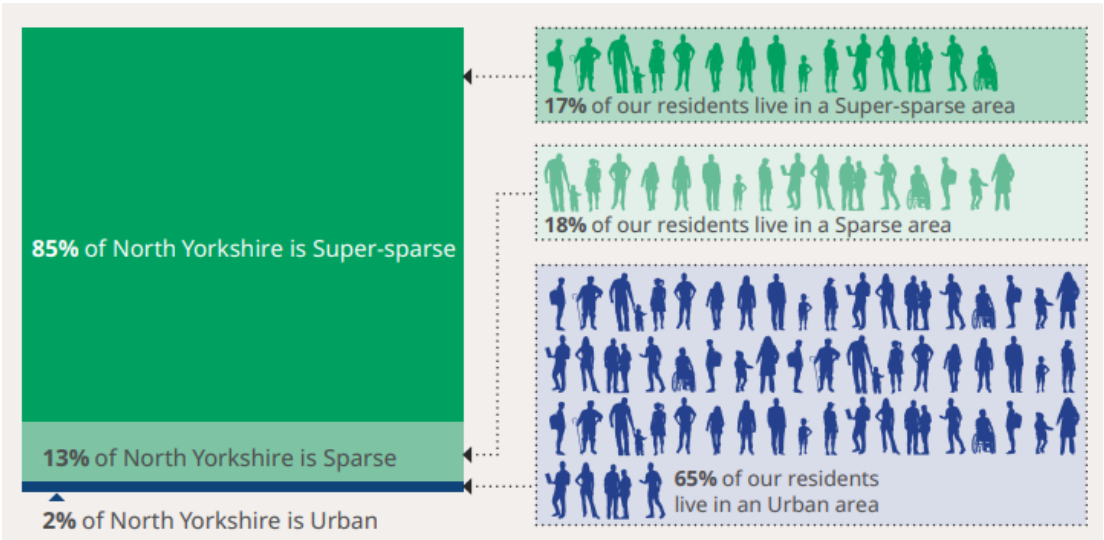
North Yorkshire is the largest geographical county in England. Situated on the south side of the Tees Valley basin, it stretches almost 100 miles across the width of the country, from the east coast to the Lancashire border, down to Selby in the south of the County. The authority covers more than 3,000 square miles (8,000 Sq. Km) of urban, coastal, and predominantly rural terrain, including two National Parks, North York Moors National Park, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It also includes three National Landscapes (former Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)).

The current population of North Yorkshire is estimated at 615493 (census 2021). However, there are only two towns with populations greater than 50,000, being Harrogate and Scarborough. All other towns have a population of less than 25,000, with about 65% of the population living in these urban areas.



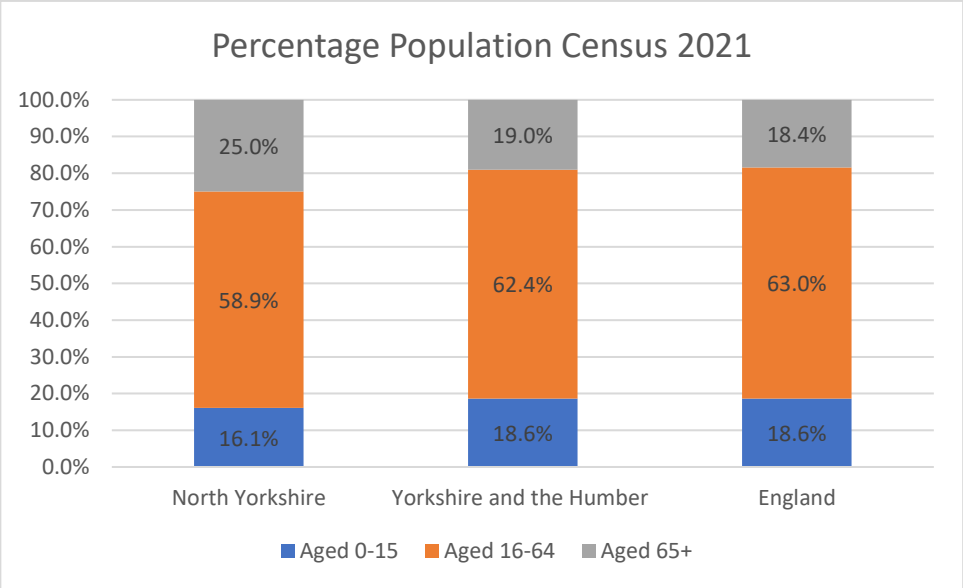
The remaining 35%of the population live in either super sparse or sparce areas of North Yorkshire. This accounts for 98% of the area of the authority.

Sparsely and super-sparsely populated communities present a challenge in terms of inclusion and community sustainability, as well as service delivery. In sparsely populated rural areas people can experience physical and digital isolation with difficulty accessing services, jobs, and transport links.



Urban areas are the connected built-up areas identified by Ordnance Survey mapping that have resident populations above 10,000 people (2011 Census). Rural areas are those areas that are not urban, i.e., consisting of settlements below 10,000 people or are open countryside.

North Yorkshire also has an ageing population with almost a quarter (153,000) of the population aged 65 and over. With projected trend and inward migration of older people to the area, we expect this figure to increase to almost a third by 2035. This will continue to place substantial pressures on social and health care services across the county, especially in remote rural areas. For example, in the Harrogate area this pressure is resulting in a shortage of residential care home places for the over-65s.



One further consequence of this age split is that there are fewer working age people compared to over-65s and under 15s. Known as the dependency ratio, North Yorkshire's is 0.7 while England's is 0.59. This means there are on average only 1.4 working age adults to support each dependent child or older person. Whereas, for England there are 1.86 working age adults to support each dependent child or older person.

Looking to the future, based on the ONS population growth tool, the overall population of North Yorkshire is expected to grow by 4.1% over the period 2021 to 2039. Over the same period, the population across England is expected to grow by 6.97% to 60.961m and by 4.93% to 5.819m in Yorkshire and the Humber.

The following table is based on the ONS Population age structure by single year of age and sex for local authorities, counties, regions, and England as a whole, mid-2021 to mid-2039 and uses the Midyear estimates of population as its base.

	Population Based on MYE								
	2021	2024	2027	2030	2033	2036	2039	Growth	%
Craven	57346	57970	58491	58983	59429	59855	60287	2941	5.1%
Hambleton	91590	92018	92274	92472	92613	92750	92926	1336	1.5%
Harrogate	160783	161183	161212	161190	161339	161612	162134	1351	0.8%
Richmondshire	53466	53468	53489	53467	53455	53472	53564	98	0.2%
Ryedale	56289	57571	58663	59563	60332	60976	61579	5290	9.4%
Scarborough	109714	110587	111364	112042	112607	113084	113561	3847	3.5%
Selby	92053	94592	96695	98525	100130	101545	102912	10859	11.8%

Ny MYE	621241	627389	632188	636242	639905	643294	646963	25722	4.1%
Growth		1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%		4.1%
Ny Census	615400	621490	626244	630260	633889	637246	640880	25480	4.1%

The final row is the NY Census population figure uplifted for growth. However, growth is not uniform with the former Selby and Ryedale district areas having the highest and Richmondshire the lowest.

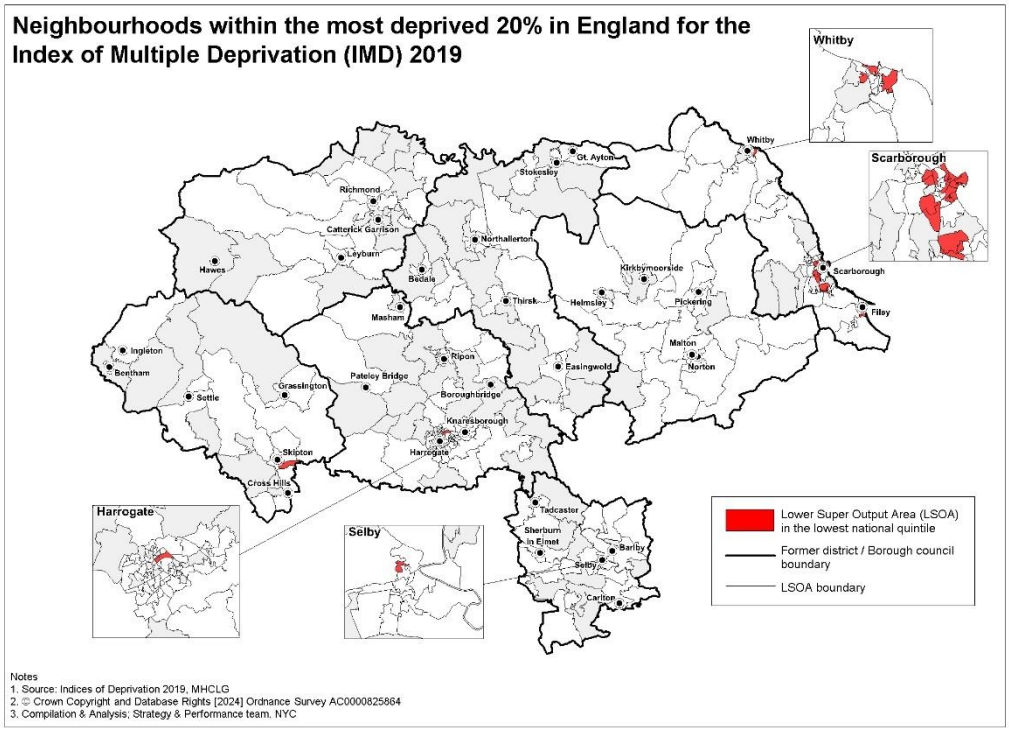
Census pop 2021		Total	M	F	% M	%F
E10000023	North Yorkshire	615,400	313,800	301,700	51%	49%
E07000163	Craven	56,900	29,300	27,600	51%	49%
E07000164	Hambleton	90,700	46,400	44,200	51%	49%
E07000165	Harrogate	162,700	83,000	79,700	51%	49%
E07000166	Richmondshire	49,700	24,300	25,400	49%	51%
E07000167	Ryedale	54,700	28,000	26,700	51%	49%
E07000168	Scarborough	108,800	55,900	52,900	51%	49%
E07000169	Selby	92,000	46,800	45,200	51%	49%

In general terms the male / female split is 51% / 49% across the authority.

Average Age of Population within Local Authority areas	
East Riding of Yorkshire	49.6
North Yorkshire	48.7
North Lincolnshire	44.9
North East Lincolnshire	43.1
Calderdale	42.4
Barnsley	42.2
Rotherham	41.6
Doncaster	41.5
Wakefield	41.4
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	40.6
Kirklees	39.9
South Yorkshire (Met County)	39.8
York	39.3
West Yorkshire (Met County)	38.3
Kingston upon Hull, City of	37.0
Sheffield	36.9
Bradford	36.8
Leeds	36.4

The above table shows the average age of the councils in the Yorkshire and Humber region. It is interesting to note that the higher proportion of residents over-65 pushes up the average age of North Yorkshire's residents to 48.7 years. This is over 12 years older than the lowest authority, Leeds, at 36.4 years. This higher age has implications for the workforce and job market.

Across most indicators, the health and wellbeing of North Yorkshire's residents is generally good. At a countywide level, the Index of Multiple Deprivation shows North Yorkshire to be one of the least deprived local authority areas in England. There are however pockets of deprivation and inequalities that affect specific groups of our population. Some areas of the county fall into the most deprived quintile in the country, particularly to the east with parts of Scarborough town falling within the most deprived 1% nationally most deprived quintile in the country



Prior to 1 April 2023, North Yorkshire operated a two tier system of 7 district and borough councils, and an overarching county council. This arrangement for the 8 councils had 301 councillors between them, although 50 of these sat on both district and county councils. This overall figure was reduced to 89 wards with 90 councillors for the new unitary North Yorkshire as from 2023. The average number of electors is 5,374 ranging from Wathvale & Bishop Monkton with 7,283 electors to Cayton with 3,711 electors. One ward, Selby West with 7,631 electors, has two councillors representing it, with all other wards having a single councillor.

In comparison to other rural unitaries, North Yorkshire has a slightly higher average of 5,374 registered electors per councillor. In comparison, other large rural unitaries include Cornwall with a ratio of 4,994 registered electors per councillor and Cumberland, another new unitary, with a ratio of 4,569 registered electors per councillor. In general terms County Councils have higher levels of electors per Councillor.

Annex1 provides greater detail on this.

Council Size

The Commission believes that councillors have three broad aspects to their role.
These are categorised as: **Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulatory and Partnerships), and Community Leadership**. Submissions should address each of these in turn and provide supporting evidence. Prompts in the boxes below should help shape responses.

Strategic Leadership

Respondents should provide the Commission with details as to how elected members will provide strategic leadership for the authority. Responses should also indicate how many members will be required for this role and why this is justified. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic		
Governance Model	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?* ➢ *The Cabinet model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?* ➢ *If the authority runs a Committee system, we want to understand why the number and size of the committees you propose represents the most appropriate for the authority.* ➢ *By what process does the council aim to formulate strategic and operational policies? How will members in executive, executive support and/or scrutiny positions be involved? What particular demands will this make of them?* ➢ *Whichever governance model you currently operate, a simple assertion that you want to keep the current structure does not in itself, provide an explanation of why that structure best meets the needs of the council and your communities.*
	Analysis	North Yorkshire Council is currently composed of 90 councillors, representing 89 Electoral Divisions. One of the Council's Electoral Divisions is represented by two Members. It is proposed that the number of councillors is reduced to 89, with each Electoral Division represented by one Member. Members are elected every four years with the next full Council elections due to be held in May 2027. Members are given an induction after they have been elected. The Democratic Services Local Area Support Team are responsible for Member learning and development. The current political make-up of the Council is as follows: • Conservative and Independents - 47 • Liberal Democrats and Liberals - 14

		• Labour - 10 • NY Independents - 10 • Green - 4 • Unaffiliated – 5 The council operates a Leader and Executive model of governance. This model works well and is considered the best option for the council due to the large size of the council and the number of services that the unitary authority delivers. This allows decisions to be made in a timely and efficient manner. The council will continue to review the governance arrangements. The Executive and its Members have wide ranging leadership roles. They: • Lead the community planning process, the preparation of the Council's policies and the search for Best Value, with input and advice from Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Area Constituency Committees and any other persons as appropriate; • Lead the preparation of the Council's budget; take decisions on resources and priorities, together with other stakeholders and partners in the local community, to deliver and implement the budget and policies decided by full Council; • and provide the focus for forming partnerships with other local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs. Executive Members regularly attend meetings with Corporate Directors and other lead officers within their respective portfolio's. Executive members are also appointed to sit on a number of outside bodies, which each have varying time commitments. The Leader and Executive Members are active in decisions relating to the running of the council and are often a spokesperson for the council in the local press.
Portfolios	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How many portfolios will there be?* ➢ *What will the role of a portfolio holder be?* ➢ *Will this be a full-time position?* ➢ *Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions?*
	Analysis	The Executive, consisting of the leader and nine Executive Members, makes most decisions, but decisions about the budget and major policy framework are made by the full council.

		The current portfolios are: • **Leader of the Council**, also responsible for communications and emergency planning. • **Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Finance and Resources**, including Pension Fund, Property, Procurement & Commercial, Technology, Transformation, Revenue and Benefits, and HR. • **Children and Families** with responsibility for Inclusion, Fostering and Adoption, Children's Social Care, Safeguarding and Prevention. • **Education, Learning and Skills**, including School Improvement, Early Years, Apprenticeships, Further and Adult Education, FE colleges and UTCs, Music Service, Outdoor Education, School Admissions, Organisation and Transport. • **Highways and Transportation** including Parking Services, Street Scene, Parks and Grounds, Integrated Passenger Transport, Public Rights of Way, Coastal Protection and Flooding. • **Open to Business** including Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration, Visitor Economy, Broadband, Harbours. • **Culture, Arts and Housing** including Culture, Arts, Libraries, Museums, Archives, Key venues, Leisure, and Housing. • **Health and Adult Services** including Public Health, Prevention and Service Development. • **Corporate Services** including Locality Working and Structures, Stronger Communities, Policy and Performance, Refugee and Asylum issues, Community safety including CCTV, Legal and Democratic Services, Members Support, Elections, Customer Contact, Community Networks and Parish Liaison, Locality Budgets, NYLAF & Household Support and Gypsy and Traveller issues. • **Managing our Environment** covering Natural Capital, which includes Climate Change, Carbon Reduction and Biodiversity, Waste Collection and Disposal, Regulatory Services which includes Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing, Bereavement Services, Registrars and Coroners. There is not expected to be any changes to the portfolios in the near future. On average, the Executive formally meets 16 times a year, as well as additional informal meetings. There were 92 Executive reports in the 2023/24 financial year.

		The Council's Executive arrangements delegate decision making to individual Executive members on Executive functions that sit within their portfolio. Before taking decisions within their delegated authority, individual Executive Members will seek advice from relevant Officers. Quarterly performance and finance reports are presented to Executive to scrutinise. Council strategies are also approved by the Executive, with those listed on the Policy Framework also required to be approved by Full Council. The current financial threshold for key decisions is £500,000 or 20% of the gross expenditure of the relevant budget service area, whichever is less.
Delegated Responsibilities	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?* ➢ *How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions?*
	Analysis	The Council's Executive arrangements delegate decision making to individual Executive members on Executive functions that sit within their portfolio. Before taking decisions within their delegated authority, individual Executive Members will seek advice from the relevant Directors and Officers. This approach allows for decisions to be made quickly. A total of 890 Executive Member decisions were made in the 2023/24 financial year. These are the decisions that were approved (rather than those that are still awaiting implementation or were withdrawn). The number is high as Executive Members also have powers to approve Councillor Locality Budget grant recommendations. Executive Members regularly attend meetings with Corporate Directors and other lead officers within their respective portfolios. Individual Executive Members with decision making powers may delegate decisions to Area Constituency Committees, or to Officers. Non- Executive functions are delegated by the council to committees and Officers. **Committee Structure** The table below outlines the expected number of committees and attendances per year. It is estimated that: • 510 positions (figures may change)

		• Average 5.7 seats per councillor (figures may change) Given the large geography of the council, there is a need for some decision making to locality based and there must, therefore, be enough councillors to ensure appropriate representation at a locality level. It was recognised that there are currently no plans to significantly alter the approach to committees, and that arrangements have generally worked well since vesting day of the new authority. Members have also been appointed to outside bodies and key partnerships. For example, Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, County Council Network, and Local Government Association.

Committee	No. of seats	No. of meetings	Overall resource
Full Council	90	4	360
Executive and Portfolios			
Executive	10	16	160
Scrutiny			
Audit Committee	10	6	60
Care and Independence and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board	3	6	18
Scrutiny of Health Committee	16	4	64
Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Regulatory, Licensing, Planning			
General Licensing and Registration Committee	25	6	150
General Licensing and Registration Sub-Committee	3	ad hoc	
Statutory Licensing Committee	15	3	45
Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee	3	ad hoc	
Strategic Planning Committee	15	12	180
Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency planning Committee	7	12	84
Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84

Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Development Plan Committee	22	ad hoc	
Community Engagement			
Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee	13	5	65
Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee	16	5	80
Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee	15	5	75
Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee	16	5	80
Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee	15	5	75
Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee	15	5	75
North Yorkshire Local Access Forum (Duplicated also covered under Outside Bodies)	2	3	6
Other			
Appeals Committee (Homes to School Transport)	5	14	70
Chief Officers Appointments and Disciplinary Committee	10	ad hoc	
Chief Officers Appointments and Disciplinary Sub-Committee	10	ad hoc	
Children's and Young People's Service- Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	2	12	24
Community Development Directorate- Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	2	12	24
Corporate Services- Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	3	weekly	
Employment Appeals Committee	5	ad hoc	
Environment Directorate- Corporate Director and Executive Member for managing our Environment	1	12	12
Environment Directorate- Corporate Director and Executive Member- Highways and Transport	1	12	12

Environment Directorate- Corporate Director and Executive Member- Open to Business	1	12	12
Health and Adult Services- Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	1	12	12
North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)	5	4	20
Pension Fund Committee	10	5	50
Shareholder Committee	3	3	9
Standards and Governance Committee	10	3	30
The Charter Trustees for Harrogate	9	ad hoc	
The Charter Trustees for Scarborough	6	ad hoc	
North Yorkshire Council Committees Total	**510**	**283**	**2,592*** **(Not including ad hoc Committees)**
Key Partnerships			
York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority	2	TBC	
North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board (duplicated from scrutiny section)	3	6	18
Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership			
Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)			
North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel	7		
Outside Bodies (may be subject to change)			
County Councils Network (CCN)	4	X	
Local Government Association (LGA)	4	X	
North York Moors National Park Authority	9	X	
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	10	X	
Other outside Bodies (including Partner and Local Bodies)	177		
Outside Bodies Total	204		

*Estimated number of meetings per year

Accountability

Give the Commission details as to how the authority and its decision makers and partners will be held to account. The Commission is interested in both the internal and external dimensions of this role. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	
Internal Scrutiny	The scrutiny function of authorities has changed considerably. Some use theme or task-and-finish groups, for example, and

	others have a committee system. Scrutiny arrangements may also be affected by the officer support available.
Key lines of explanation	➢ *How will decision makers be held to account?* ➢ *How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?* ➢ *How many task and finish groups will there be? And what will their functions be? What time commitment will be involved for members? And how often will meetings take place?* ➢ *How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?* ➢ *Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.* ➢ *Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value.*
Analysis	The council has six Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise decision- making and the performance of the council. **Overview and Scrutiny Committees:** (see table above for the time commitment required for each committee) • Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee: (16 Members) • Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) • Scrutiny of Health Committee (16 Members) • Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) • Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) • Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) There are 16 members per scrutiny committee. This ensures there is political balance, as well as a range of debate and views to be expressed. The Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee formally ceased as of the 15 May 2024 Council meeting and any outstanding work was re-allocated, in liaison with Scrutiny Board, to the other Overview and Scrutiny committees (with the exception of matters relating to leisure). A new Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 politically balanced Members was created. Any Overview and Scrutiny Committee may appoint one or more sub-committees or task groups either on a standing basis or for a particular purpose or time. The council also has a Scrutiny Board which comprises of chairs from the six Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

		Three Members sit on the North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board.
Statutory Function		This includes planning, licencing and any other regulatory responsibilities. Consider under each of the headings the extent to which decisions will be delegated to officers. How many members will be required to fulfil the statutory requirements of the council?
Planning	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?* ➢ *Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?* ➢ *Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?* ➢ *Will executive members serve on the planning committees?* ➢ *What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members?*
	Analysis	Prior to April 2023, the council was only responsible for county matter planning applications (including minerals and waste), now the council is also responsible for all planning decisions including major, minor and other decisions. A small percentage of planning decisions delegated to Members for determination. There is a countywide Strategic Planning Committee with 15 members. See table above for number of meetings and time commitment for Members. There are six Area Constituency Planning Committees: (each committee has 7 Members). • Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Planning Committee, • Skipton and Ripon, • Richmond (Yorks), • Selby and Ainsty, • Thirsk and Malton, • Scarborough and Whitby. Each Area Constituency Planning Committee has 12 meetings per year. The length of these meeting depends on the items on the agenda. Currently some of the Executive Members do serve on planning committees. The Development Plan Committee meets on an ad hoc basis. The role of the committee is to act as the main sounding board for the preparation of the Local Plan/ Development Plan Documents, except Neighbourhood Plans.

		North York Moors National Park and Yorkshire Dales National Park are also planning authorities in North Yorkshire and make decisions on planning in their areas.
Licensing	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?* ➢ *And what will be the time commitment for members?* ➢ *Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?* ➢ *Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them?*
	Analysis	• The General Licensing and Registration Committee comprises 25 Members of the Council. Of the 25 Members, 15 of those Members will comprise the membership of the Statutory Licensing Committee. • The Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee meets on an ad hoc basis and comprises of 3 Members. • The General Licensing and Registration Sub- Committee meets on an ad hoc basis and is comprised of 3 Members. • The General Licensing and Registration Committee shall have a list of named substitute Members. Those named substitutes can also be appointed to the General Licensing and Registration Sub-Committees. Substitutes must have received licensing training prior to sitting on the Committee. • The appointment of substitute Members to the Statutory Licensing Committee is not permitted and any Sub-Committee Members must be appointed from the Statutory Licensing Committee Membership. See table above for information on number of Councillors, number of meetings and time commitments.
Other Regulatory Bodies	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What will they be, and how many members will they require?* ➢ *Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers.*
	Analysis	The following regulatory bodies support Council business: • **Audit Committee:** 10 Members, as well as substitute Members • **Standards and Governance Committee:** 10 Members • **Appeals Committee (Homes to School Transport):** 5 Members, as well as substitute Members • **Employment Appeals Committee:** 5 Members, as well as additional substitutes. *A group of about 12 Members should develop particular expertise and experience on appeals matters, but only five Members should sit on the committee at any one time. It is intended, therefore, that the Substitution Scheme should be used to vary membership of the committee in order to ensure that the expertise and experience of all Members of the committee, including all Substitute Members, is developed.* • **Chief Officers Appointments and Disciplinary Committee:** 10 Members • **Chief Officers Appointments Sub- Committee:** 10 Members

		• **Pension Fund Committee:** 10 Members • **Shareholder Committee**: 3 Members • **North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE):** 5 Members Information on the number of meetings can be found in the table above.
External Partnerships		Service delivery has changed for councils over time, and many authorities now have a range of delivery partners to work with and hold to account.
Key lines of explanation		➢ *Will council members serve on decision-making partnerships, sub-regional, regional or national bodies? In doing so, are they able to take decisions/make commitments on behalf of the council?* ➢ *How many councillors will be involved in this activity? And what is their expected workload? What proportion of this work is undertaken by portfolio holders?* ➢ *What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload?*
Analysis		Councillors are appointed to the boards of a number of outside bodies, whether this be due to statutory requirement or upon request of the outside body. There are currently 111 Outside Bodies that Members are appointed to (see table above). Some of these bodies have multiple Members appointed to them (204 seats in total). The average number of appointments to an outside body per councillor is 2.29. There is a varying level of time commitments depending which Outside Bodies a Member is appointed to. The list of outside bodies is constantly under review and may be subject to change. Both the Leader and Deputy of North Yorkshire Council are Members of York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. The Leader and some of the Executive Members will need to work closely with the MCA but it is not envisaged that this will lead to a significant increase in workload at this time.

Community Leadership

The Commission understands that there is no single approach to community leadership and that members represent, and provide leadership to, their communities in different ways. The Commission wants to know how members are required to provide effective community leadership and what support the council offers them in this role. For example, does the authority have a defined role and performance system for its elected members? And what support networks are available within the council to help members in their duties? The Commission also wants to see a consideration of **how the use of technology and social media by the council as a whole, and**

by councillors individually, will affect casework, community engagement and local democratic representation. Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.

Topic		Description
Community Leadership	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?* ➢ *Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?* ➢ *How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?* ➢ *Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies?* ➢ *Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident's association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?* ➢ *Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils? Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making?*
	Analysis	Members said the main way they represent and engage with their electorate is through face-to-face interactions such as public meetings for example, Parish and Town Council meetings, community groups, and resident/ tenants' meetings. Due to the size of the county this does mean a lot of time is spent traveling. Members said that social media is a key platform for engaging with the electorate, especially the younger demographic. For example, by replying to comments on social media. All Members are part of one of the 6 Area Constituency Committees: • Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee (13 Members) • Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee (16 Members) • Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee (15 Members) • Selby and Ainsty (16 Members) • Skipton and Ripon (15 Members) • Thirsk and Malton (15 Members) Area Constituency Committees oversee and champion local areas, provide a forum for local issues to be raised, empower and enable delivery of Community Area Action Plans and other local priorities, and hold Division and Executive Members to account.

		Decisions may also be delegated to Area Constituency Committees. The geographies of Area Constituency Committees may change, however, it is not anticipated that any changes to the geographies will directly result in an increase in the workload of Councillors. North Yorkshire has 731 Parishes, with Members regularly attending Parish and Town Council meetings. The number of meetings Members attend depends on individual councillors and the Electoral Division they represent, some attend multiple a week and for a few hours a night. The more rural divisions can have extremely sparse populations, but small settlements can increase the number of individual community meetings that a member is expected to attend. Parish council meetings, in particular, can be extremely time consuming, with some Members associated with 15+ parishes. Meetings can often be on the same evenings, making it logistically impossible to attend all. The involvement of Members in these meetings varies, from providing updates on issues within their divisions, to being a point of contact for North Yorkshire Council. The council has set up five Community Partnerships to bring together local councillors, public sector agencies, communities and businesses to get things done in their local area. This model is currently being trialled, with the aim of rolling it out across North Yorkshire. The council also has eight Member Champions. Member Champions are elected Members who act as an advocate/ spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business. The main responsibility of each Champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent. There are currently Member's Champions for: • Young People • Older people • Climate change • Armed Forces • Digital • Flooding • Cycling/ Active Travel • Road Safety
Casework	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?* ➢ *What support do members receive?* ➢ *How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?*

		➢ *In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?*
	Analysis	Members are expected to undertake casework as part of their overall duties as a councillor. Members sometimes contact Council officers for further information on a particular subject, or the relevant Executive Member, Committee chair or their political groups. Members do not receive any direct day-to-day support from Democratic Services on their casework. As part of the establishment of the new Council, work is underway to review the support that Members need as they go about their business in their Electoral Divisions. Part of this includes training and development opportunities. Members explained that while newsletters were historically used for interacting with residents, most communication is now online, including communication with Parish Councils. There has also been an increase in communication via email. Members also said that local elections were now promoted more through social media, which will continue going forward. However, Members said that the use of digital platforms and social media has not reduced their workload, as most meetings, events, activities still take place face to face. Currently, managing and maintaining social media platforms also creates additional work, however, long-term this has benefits in reaching larger numbers of people. The Council has a one front door approach to customer service. Customers access support and services via one telephone number, one website, one customer service team, customer queries are then dealt with by the relevant Officer.

Other Issues

Respondent may use this space to bring any other issues of relevance to the attention of the Commission.

The Renumeration panel recommended a pay allowance increase for councillors, this shows that councillors are working effectively and efficiently. Therefore, reducing the number of councillors would be a contradictory message.

Summary

In following this template respondents should have been able to provide the Commission with a robust and well-evidenced case for their proposed council size; one which gives a clear explanation as to the governance arrangements and number of councillors required to represent the authority in the future.

Use this space to summarise the proposals and indicate other options considered. Explain why these alternatives were not appropriate in terms of their ability to deliver effective Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership.

North Yorkshire Council proposes that number of councillors is 89.

The following evidence supports this:

- The large geography of North Yorkshire and the rural nature of the county. 35% of the population live in either super sparse or sparce areas of North Yorkshire. This accounts for 98% of the area of the authority. Sparsely and super-sparsely populated communities present a challenge in terms of inclusion and community sustainability, as well as service delivery. Therefore, there is a need for some decision making to be locality based and there must, therefore, be enough councillors to ensure appropriate representation at a locality level. It was recognised that there are currently no plans to significantly alter the approach to committees, and that arrangements have generally worked well since vesting day of the new authority.
- In North Yorkshire the average number of electors per councillor is 5,374. North Yorkshire compares favourably in comparison to other large rural Unitary Authorities. Cornwall has a ratio of 4,994 registered electors per councillor. Cumberland, another new unitary has a ratio of 4,569 registered electors per councillor. In general terms County Councils have higher levels of electors per Councillor. The average number of registered electorate per councillor for County Councils and Unitary Authorities is 4,852.
- The workload of councillors has not reduced, for most councillors this is a full-time commitment, and they do not have time to have other full-time jobs. The Renumeration panel recommended an increased pay allowance for the councillors, this shows that people are working effectively and efficiently, therefore, significantly reducing the number of councillors would be a contradictory message. The Leader and Executive members have significant time commitments and are part of the day-to-day functioning of the Council.
- The varied geography means that some more urban divisions are small in area, but with significant amounts of casework around regeneration, development and transport. Conversely, the more rural divisions can have extremely sparse populations, but small settlements can increase the number of individual community meetings that a member is expected to attend. Parish council meetings, in particular, can be extremely time consuming, with some Members associated with 15+ parishes. Meetings can often be on the same evenings, making it logistically impossible to attend all.
- Members also provide local leadership and sit on Area Constituency Committees, Community Partnerships as well as community groups. Councillors are also appointed to a number of Outside Bodies, with the time commitment varying from Councillor to Councillor.

The Member Working Group considered a range of possible numbers of councillors, ranging from significant reductions to significant increases.

It was concluded that a large reduction in the number of Councillors would:

- Risk increasing the workload beyond a reasonable amount. This could create a barrier for any potential candidate from maintaining employment alongside being a councillor, which might reduce the opportunities for younger people to stand for

elected office. It was also noted that creating a larger workload could prevent those with caring responsibilities from balancing the different responsibilities.

- Create much larger divisions. This would be problematic for sparsely-populated rural areas, as to achieve electoral equality, the geographical area would need to be huge, and this wouldn't be conducive to Members being visible and available to communities. It could make it logistically impossible to attend face-to-face meetings given the travel time required.
- Save money from Member allowances and expenses, but that these savings would likely be reduced by the need for greater officer support to deal with casework and the increased workload in general.

It was concluded that a large increase in the number of Councillors would:

- Significantly increase the costs of Member allowances and expenses.
- Run counter to the principles of the LGR Case for Change, providing reduced efficiency. At a time where residents are struggling with the Cost of living and local government is under increasing financial pressure, and the Council is already undertaking a programme of transformation to help make savings and efficiencies, it is not the time to increase number of councillors significantly which would result in paying additional allowances to new Members.
- Risk creating more Members than are needed for the operations of the authority, with the possibility of less agility in decision-making and more challenge in reaching consensus on issues.

However, a small reduction in the number of Councillors from 90 to 89 would:

- Have limited impact on workload or division sizes overall.
- Would marginally reduce costs from Member allowances and expenses.

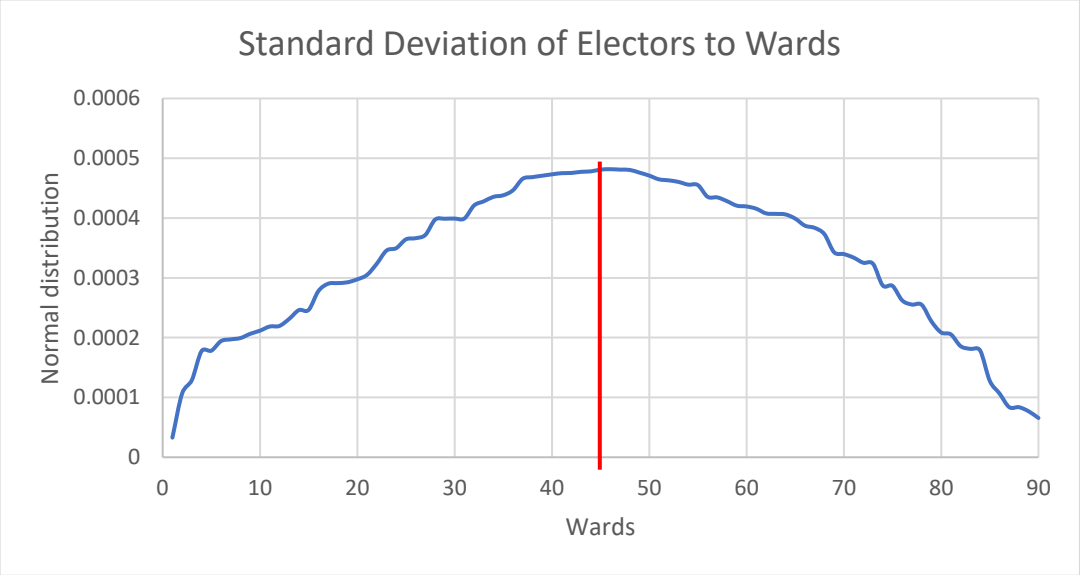
Therefore, a council size of 89 councillors in the future would ensure that there is fair representation for the electorate in North Yorkshire and allow councillors to continue to undertake effective decision making, scrutinise decisions and provide effective community leadership.

Number of Registered Electors per Councillor

Ward Name	No. of Registered Electors	No. of Councillors	Registered Electors per Councillor	Variance from average ratio (5364 electors)
Wathvale & Bishop Monkton	7283	1	7,283	35.78%
Sherburn In Elmet	6802	1	6,802	26.81%
Monk Fryston & South Milford	6708	1	6,708	25.06%
Boroughbridge & Claro	6534	1	6,534	21.81%
High Harrogate & Kingsley	6532	1	6,532	21.77%
Harlow & St Georges	6480	1	6,480	20.81%
Knaresborough East	6471	1	6,471	20.64%
Killinghall, Hampsthwaite & Saltergate	6464	1	6,464	20.51%
Richmond	6442	1	6,442	20.10%
Ripon Ure Bank & Spa	6426	1	6,426	19.80%
North Richmondshire	6405	1	6,405	19.41%
Knaresborough West	6402	1	6,402	19.35%
Ripon Minster & Moorside	6367	1	6,367	18.70%
Sowerby & Topcliffe	6324	1	6,324	17.90%
Oatlands & Pannal	6323	1	6,323	17.88%
Falsgrave & Stepney	6233	1	6,233	16.20%
Pickering	6198	1	6,198	15.55%
Valley Gardens & Central Harrogate	6195	1	6,195	15.49%
Bentham & Ingleton	6191	1	6,191	15.42%
Masham & Fountains	6177	1	6,177	15.16%
Glusburn, Cross Hills & Sutton-in-Craven	6156	1	6,156	14.77%
Stray, Woodlands & Hookstone	6103	1	6,103	13.78%
Fairfax & Starbeck	6039	1	6,039	12.58%
Norton	6027	1	6,027	12.36%
Whitby West	5983	1	5,983	11.54%
Hipswell & Colburn	5977	1	5,977	11.43%
Weaponness & Ramshill	5960	1	5,960	11.11%
Filey	5878	1	5,878	9.58%
Bilton & Nidd Gorge	5873	1	5,873	9.49%
Bilton Grange & New Park	5872	1	5,872	9.47%
Coppice Valley & Duchy	5872	1	5,872	9.47%
Tadcaster	5794	1	5,794	8.02%
Thornton Dale & Wolds	5767	1	5,767	7.51%
Selby East	5736	1	5,736	6.94%
Easingwold	5725	1	5,725	6.73%
Skipton East & South	5687	1	5,687	6.02%
Sheriff Hutton & Derwent	5580	1	5,580	4.03%

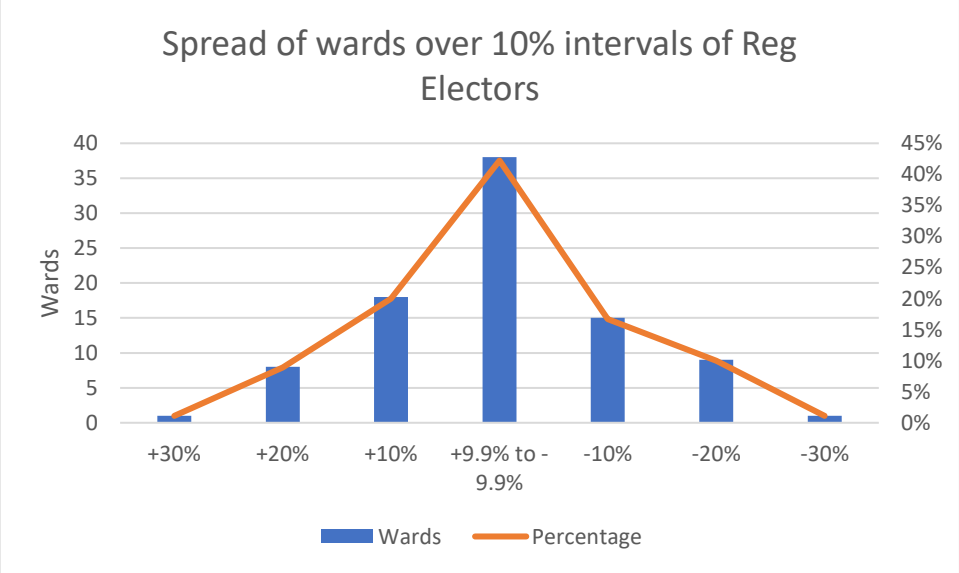
Thirsk	5560	1	5,560	3.65%
Northallerton North & Brompton	5542	1	5,542	3.32%
Huby & Tollerton	5522	1	5,522	2.95%
Esk Valley & Coast	5503	1	5,503	2.59%
Hillside & Raskelf	5499	1	5,499	2.52%
Northstead	5477	1	5,477	2.11%
Castle	5467	1	5,467	1.92%
Kirkbymoorside & Dales	5411	1	5,411	0.88%
Washburn & Birstwith	5350	1	5,350	-0.26%
Thorpe Willoughby & Hambleton	5317	1	5,317	-0.88%
Morton-on-Swale & Appleton Wiske	5304	1	5,304	-1.12%
Spofforth with Lower Wharfedale & Tockwith	5235	1	5,235	-2.40%
Woodlands	5188	1	5,188	-3.28%
Bedale	5142	1	5,142	-4.14%
Stokesley	5131	1	5,131	-4.34%
Hunmanby & Sherburn	5115	1	5,115	-4.64%
Northallerton South	5089	1	5,089	-5.13%
Hutton Rudby & Osmotherley	5085	1	5,085	-5.20%
Aire Valley	4992	1	4,992	-6.94%
Eastfield	4988	1	4,988	-7.01%
Brayton & Barlow	4962	1	4,962	-7.49%
Osgoldcross	4933	1	4,933	-8.04%
Malton	4928	1	4,928	-8.13%
Appleton Roebuck & Church Fenton	4914	1	4,914	-8.39%
Newby	4886	1	4,886	-8.91%
Catterick Village & Brompton-on-Swale	4883	1	4,883	-8.97%
Camblesforth & Carlton	4880	1	4,880	-9.02%
Romanby	4856	1	4,856	-9.47%
Skipton North & Embsay-with-Eastby	4817	1	4,817	-10.20%
Skipton West & West Craven	4805	1	4,805	-10.42%
Scalby & the Coast	4772	1	4,772	-11.04%
Ouseburn	4681	1	4,681	-12.73%
Aiskew & Leeming	4672	1	4,672	-12.90%
Leyburn & Middleham	4655	1	4,655	-13.22%
Settle & Penyghent	4630	1	4,630	-13.68%
Barlby & Riccall	4625	1	4,625	-13.78%
Great Ayton	4522	1	4,522	-15.70%
Upper Dales	4520	1	4,520	-15.73%
Cliffe & North Duffield	4451	1	4,451	-17.02%
Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale	4431	1	4,431	-17.39%
Cawood & Escrick	4430	1	4,430	-17.41%
Scotton & Lower Wensleydale	4349	1	4,349	-18.92%
Amotherby & Ampleforth	4293	1	4,293	-19.97%
Mid Craven	4283	1	4,283	-20.15%
Whitby Streonshalh	4221	1	4,221	-21.31%

Helmsley & Sinnington	4206	1	4,206	-21.59%
Derwent Valley & Moor	4198	1	4,198	-21.74%
Wharfedale	4015	1	4,015	-25.15%
Danby & Mulgrave	3926	1	3,926	-26.81%
Selby West	7631	1	3,815	-28.88%
Seamer	3777	1	3,777	-29.59%
Cayton	3711	1	3,711	-30.82%



The above chart is the standard deviation profile of electors to wards. Ranging from 7283 to 3711 electors per councillor, the spread of councillors conforms to the normal distribution with the majority of wards (51) falling within 1 standard deviation of the mean of 5364.

The second graph below shows the spread of wards over 10% intervals. There are only 2 wards that are +/- 30% of the mean. Wathvale & Bishop Monkton with 7283 electors and Cayton with 3711 electors



Annex 2

Number of Registered Electors per Councillor (2023)

Type	County/ Unitary council	Control	Councillors	Reg Electors 2023	Reg Electors per Councillor
County	Essex	Leader and cabinet	75	1121312	14951
County	Kent	Leader and cabinet	81	1142773	14108
County	Hampshire	Leader and cabinet	78	1059798	13587
County	Hertfordshire	Leader and cabinet	78	874716	11214
County	Lancashire	Leader and cabinet	84	917889	10927
County	Surrey	Leader and cabinet	81	882083	10890
County	Staffordshire	Leader and cabinet	62	667255	10762
County	Devon	Leader and cabinet	60	625899	10432
County	Leicestershire	Leader and cabinet	55	540229	9822
County	Derbyshire	Leader and cabinet	64	621113	9705
County	West Sussex	Leader and cabinet	70	667422	9535
County	Nottinghamshire	Leader and cabinet	66	623229	9443
County	Gloucestershire	Leader and cabinet	53	492714	9296
County	Norfolk	Leader and cabinet	84	707333	8421

County	East Sussex	Leader and cabinet	50	420170	8403
County	Oxfordshire	Leader and cabinet	63	524639	8328
County	Lincolnshire	Leader and cabinet	70	571092	8158
County	Cambridgeshire	Leader and cabinet	61	493444	8089
County	Worcestershire	Leader and cabinet	57	459044	8053
County	Warwickshire	Leader and cabinet	57	448861	7875
County	Suffolk	Leader and cabinet	75	577667	7702
Unitary	North Yorkshire	Leader and cabinet	90	483617	5374
Unitary	Cornwall	Leader and cabinet	87	434438	4994
Unitary	Bristol	Mayor and cabinet	70	323581	4623
Unitary	Cumberland	Leader and cabinet	46	210172	4569
Unitary	Leicester	Mayor and cabinet	54	244503	4528
Unitary	Stoke-on-Trent		44	177791	4041
Unitary	Somerset		110	444093	4037
Unitary	East Riding of Yorkshire		67	269767	4026
Unitary	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole		76	297295	3912
Unitary	Wiltshire		98	382258	3901
Unitary	Cheshire East	Committee system	82	312765	3814
Unitary	Northumberland	Leader and cabinet	67	252806	3773

Unitary	Cheshire West and Chester	Leader and cabinet	70	263663	3767
Unitary	Brighton & Hove		54	199015	3685
Unitary	Nottingham		55	199796	3633
Unitary	Dorset		82	295142	3599
Unitary	Central Bedfordshire		63	223722	3551
Unitary	Milton Keynes		57	202030	3544
Unitary	Derby		51	179841	3526
Unitary	Portsmouth		42	147377	3509
Unitary	Medway		59	206075	3493
Unitary	Plymouth		57	196496	3447
Unitary	North Northamptonshire	Leader and cabinet	78	268606	3444
Unitary	Shropshire	Leader and cabinet	74	249845	3376
Unitary	Bedford	Mayor and cabinet	40	134042	3351
Unitary	North Somerset		50	166913	3338
Unitary	York		47	152989	3255
Unitary	West Northamptonshire	Leader and cabinet	93	298873	3214
Unitary	Kingston upon Hull		57	181905	3191
Unitary	Southampton		51	161079	3158
Unitary	South Gloucestershire		70	219311	3133
Unitary	Durham	Leader and cabinet	126	388130	3080
Unitary	Luton		48	146681	3056
Unitary	North Lincolnshire		43	130239	3029
Unitary	Swindon		57	166451	2920
Unitary	Torbay		36	103231	2868
Unitary	Isle of Wight	Leader and cabinet	39	110328	2829
Unitary	Buckinghamshire	Leader and cabinet	147	415196	2824
Unitary	West Berkshire		43	120232	2796
Unitary	Herefordshire		53	147935	2791
Unitary	North East Lincolnshire		42	116840	2782

Unitary	Warrington	Leader and cabinet	58	160602	2769
Unitary	Westmorland and Furness	Leader and cabinet	65	176452	2715
Unitary	Windsor and Maidenhead		41	109549	2672
Unitary	Stockton-on-Tees		56	143732	2567
Unitary	Southend-on-Sea		51	130094	2551
Unitary	Thurrock		49	122656	2503
Unitary	Telford and Wrekin		54	133544	2473
Unitary	Wokingham		54	132197	2448
Unitary	Reading		48	117436	2447
Unitary	Blackpool	Leader and cabinet	42	102360	2437
Unitary	Peterborough		60	144408	2407
Unitary	Slough		42	100940	2403
Unitary	Bath and North East Somerset		59	136962	2321
Unitary	Bracknell Forest		41	91938	2242
Unitary	Middlesbrough	Mayor and cabinet	46	98612	2144
Unitary	Blackburn with Darwen	Leader and cabinet	51	103989	2039
Unitary	Hartlepool		36	70434	1957
Unitary	Halton	Leader and cabinet	54	94340	1747
Unitary	Redcar & Cleveland		59	101720	1724
Unitary	Darlington		50	79641	1593
Unitary	Rutland		27	29768	1103
				Average	4852
				Median	3493

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	Local Engagement
Service area	Strategy and Performance
Proposal being screened	Boundary Review
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Will Boardman
What are you proposing to do?	The recommendation is to submit a proposal of 89 members as the council's size from May 2027. This is a reduction of one member of the council. The Boundary Commission will consider this and consult on options for boundaries.
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	A Boundary Review is required to improve electoral equality and was agreed as part of LGR. The desired outcome is an efficient democratic structure for the council, with each member representing a broadly equal number of electors. This specific decision is to submit a proposal for 89 councillors, a reduction of one councillor.
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:

- 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. During the development of the proposal, it was recognised that a significant decrease in the number of councillors could impact on the workload and therefore the ability of people to be a councillor whilst also undertaking caring responsibilities. This could have		

	impacted on carers. Women are disproportionately more likely to be carers. However, a reduction of 1 councillor will not alter the workload of members in any meaningful way.			
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.	The proposal of 89 members will not significantly change the way the council operates.			
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full EIA:	
Reason for decision	There is no identified impact of the proposals on any of the protected characteristics.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	*Rachel Joyce*			
Date	25/06/24			

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment (Form created August 2021)

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	**Boundary Review – submission of proposed Council Size and Electorate Forecast**
Brief description of proposal	The recommendation is to submit a proposal of 89 members as the council's size from May 2027. This is a reduction of one member of the council. The Boundary Commission will consider this and consult on options for boundaries.
Directorate	**Local Engagement**
Service area	**Strategy and Performance**
Lead officer	**Will Boardman**
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	

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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.

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Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision	The potential outcome of one fewer councillors will not make a significant difference to emissions or the ability of the council to influence climate action. The main impact considered was the potential for fewer members to have to travel further to cover local community meetings, increasing emissions. However, this would be offset by the reduction in the number of members travelling to council meetings, so it is likely to have a minimal (and currently unquantifiable) impact. For that reason, it is not relevant or proportionate to carry out a full CCIA.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	*Rachel Joyce*			
Date	25/06/2024			

OFFICIAL

North Yorkshire Council

24 July 2024

Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews for Harrogate and Scarborough

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable Council to consider the appended report 'Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews for Harrogate and Scarborough' as recommended to Council by the Standards and Governance Committee at their meeting on 15 July 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 15 July 2024, the Standards and Governance Committee considered the appended report 'Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews for Harrogate and Scarborough'.

2.2 The report presented final recommendations for new town councils to be created for Harrogate and Scarborough, along with proposed minor amendments to parish boundaries in Scarborough affecting three parish councils.

2.3 The minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 15 July 2024 were not available at the time the report was published. A summary of the deliberations of the Committee is included below at section 4.0.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 In July 2022 the Executive approved a Community Governance Review for the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough. Following two stages of public consultation final recommendations relating to the creation of town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough were presented to Council on 19 July 2023. These final recommendations provided for the warding pattern for the town councils to be based on the North Yorkshire Council division boundaries, with two members per ward in Harrogate and three members per ward in Scarborough.

3.2 At Council it was resolved that further work be undertaken to develop a single member warding pattern for Scarborough for public consultation. For Harrogate it was resolved that consultation take place on using the warding pattern of the former Harrogate Borough Council as the basis for a single member warding pattern.

3.3 Following a stage 3 period of public consultation in May 2024 the outcome was as follows:

Harrogate	Number	Percentage
Option 1 – 2 councillor wards	67	22%
Option 2 – 1 councillor wards	212	71%
Don't know / not sure	18	6%
Blank	3	1%
Total	**300**	**100%**

A majority of respondents (71%) were in favour of creating 19 single councillor wards for Harrogate.

Scarborough	Number	Percentage
Option 1 – 3 councillor wards	161	54%
Option 2 – 1 councillor wards	123	42%
Don't know / not sure	11	4%
Blank	0	
Total	**295**	**100%**

A majority of respondents (54%) were in favour of creating 5 wards with three councillors each for Scarborough.

3.4 The report presented to Standards and Governance Committee, therefore, recommended:

1) Harrogate – that the final recommendations be amended to reflect a change to the proposed warding pattern and ward names to be that of the former Harrogate Borough Council
2) Scarborough – that the final recommendations remain unchanged from those presented to the Committee in July 2023.

4.0 DELIBERATIONS OF THE STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

4.1 Members were noted that the consultation supported a single member warding pattern for Harrogate. Members of the Committee considered that a small majority of responses supported multi-member wards for Scarborough. In considering making a recommendation, members were mindful that the results of the consultation was just one of the things they needed to consider in making a recommendation to full Council. In considering the matter for Scarborough, members considered that multi-member wards could lead to confusion as to who was responsible for what and possibly a scenario of only one member doing all the work for a ward. It is noted that single member wards are clear to electors who they are potentially voting for and who is accountable in their ward. Some Committee members had discussed the matter with Scarborough residents who supported single member wards and there were concerns that the 295 consultation responses might not reflect the views of the Scarborough population as a whole. It is noted that the electorate number for un-parished area of Scarborough is over 28,000 and the 295 responses reflected a small minority of all the electorate.

4.2 Members were advised that the consultation had been used as the basis of the officer recommendations in the report and members may wish to give weight to the public view. However, the Committee could make its own recommendations and could consider other factors. It was noted that the consultation was to get the views of the public and it was not a referendum. Therefore, it was also confirmed that should the Committee wish to recommend a single member warding pattern for Scarborough a further consultation would not be required as long as they considered all relevant matters.

4.3 It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations in the report be amended to recommend a single member warding pattern for Scarborough, and on a vote being taken this was approved unanimously. This will result in amendments being made to recommendation ii)B (5) and (7) at section 15.0 of the report, as set out at section 9.0 below.

4.4 The remainder of the recommendations, including a single member warding pattern for Harrogate, as set out in section 15.0 of the report were then approved unanimously.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Standards and Governance Committee on 15 July 2024.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Standards and Governance Committee on 15 July 2024.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Standards and Governance Committee on 15 July 2024.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Standards and Governance Committee on 15 July 2024.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Council consider the appended report 'Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews for Harrogate and Scarborough', referred to Council by the Standards and Governance Committee at its meeting held on 15 July 2024.

9.2 That Council note and consider the recommendations in the report, including the amendments to Recommendation ii) B of the report, namely that:

i) consider the consultation results and equality impact assessment
ii) make recommendations to Council in relation to each of the areas under review at A) to E) below:

A) HARROGATE

(1) to create a new parish for the unparished area of Harrogate

(2) the new parish be named Harrogate

(3) the new parish have a parish council and to name that parish council Harrogate Town Council

(4) the parish come into effect from 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes, and the first election for the town council be 2 May 2025 for a reduced term of two years, with ordinary elections taking place in 2027 and every four years thereafter

(5) the parish be divided into wards, named

Bilton Grange
Bilton Woodfield
Central
Coppice Valley
Duchy
Fairfax
Harlow
High Harrogate
Hookstone
Kingsley
New Park
Oatlands
Old Bilton
Pannal
Saltergate
St Georges
Starbeck
Stray
Valley Gardens

(6) there should be 19 councillors elected to the parish

(7) the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward shall be

Bilton Grange	1
Bilton Woodfield	1
Central	1
Coppice Valley	1
Duchy	1
Fairfax	1
Harlow	1
High Harrogate	1
Hookstone	1
Kingsley	1
New Park	1
Oatlands	1
Old Bilton	1
Pannal	1
Saltergate	1
St Georges	1
Starbeck	1
Stray	1
Valley Gardens	1

(8) the change take effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(9) the boundaries of the new parish and wards should be as shown on the map at Annex A.

B) SCARBOROUGH

(1) to create a new parish for the unparished area of Scarborough

(2) the new parish be named Scarborough

(3) the new parish have a parish council and to name that parish council Scarborough Town Council

(4) the parish come into effect from 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes, and the first election for the town council be 2 May 2025 for a reduced term of two years, with ordinary elections taking place in 2027 and every four years thereafter

(5) the parish be divided into wards, named

Barrowcliff
Falsgrave
Gladstone
Manor Road Park
North Leas
Old Town
Peasholm
Ramshill
Sandybed
Seamer Road
South Cliff
The Bay
Town Centre
Weaponness
Woodlands

(6) there should be 15 councillors elected to the parish

(7) the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward shall be

Barrowcliff	1
Falsgrave	1
Gladstone	1
Manor Road Park	1
North Leas	1
Old Town	1
Peasholm	1
Ramshill	1
Sandybed	1
Seamer Road	1
South Cliff	1
The Bay	1
Town Centre	1
Weaponness	1
Woodlands	1

(8) the change take effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(9) the boundaries of the new parish and wards should be as shown on the map at Annex A.

C) EASTFIELD

(1) the north-eastern boundary line of Eastfield Town Council be extended towards the A165 to match the Eastfield Division and Ward boundaries (and consequentially excluding the 3 known anomalous properties at Osgodby)

(2) the changes take effect on 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

D) NEWBY AND SCALBY

(1) to extend Newby & Scalby Town Council boundary to include all of Charles Williams Apartments, to become coterminous with the Newby Division)

(2) the changes take effect on 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

E) OSGODBY

(1) to extend Osgodby Parish Council boundary to include those 3 properties currently outside of the parish, at the norther boundary line, and to become coterminous with the Cayton Division

(2) the changes take effect on 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

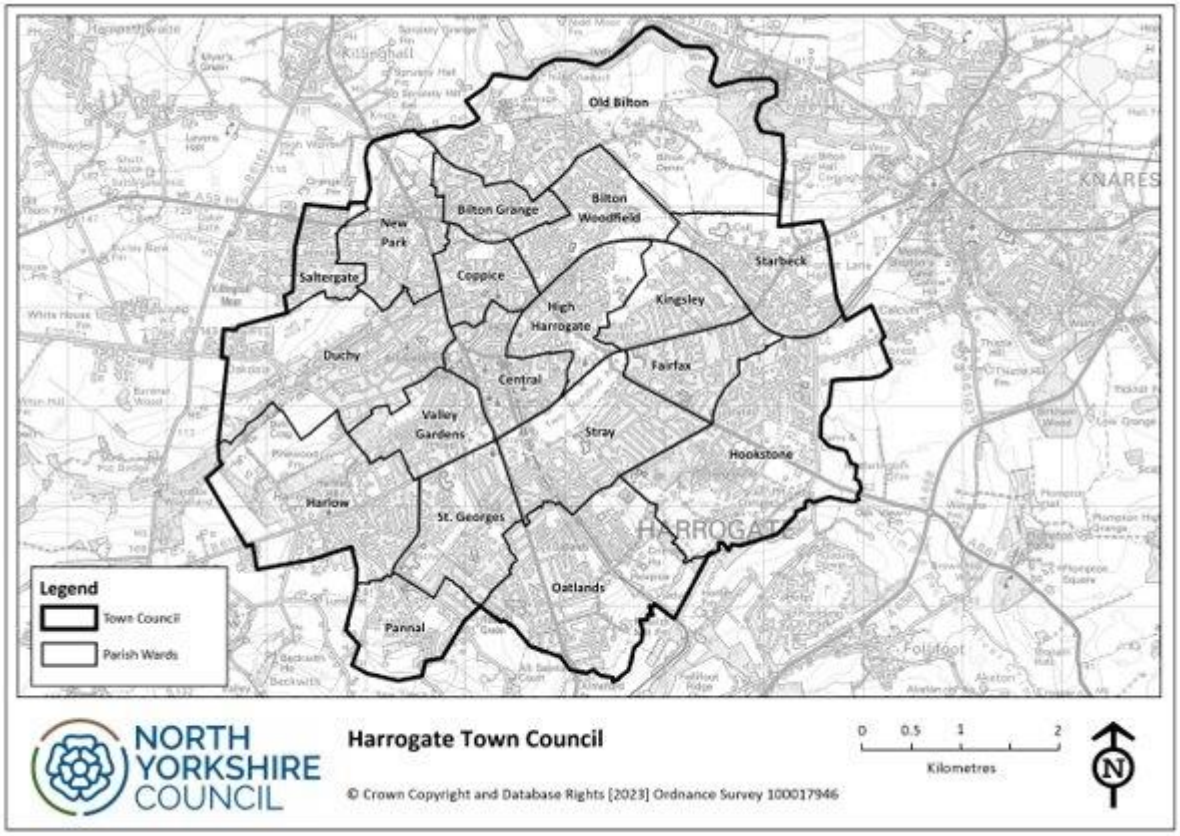
(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

iii) if Council recommends creation of parish councils and changes to existing parishes authority be granted to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources to implement the decisions including making reorganisation orders which amongst other things will set the precept for the first year of the town councils to take effect from 1 April 2025.

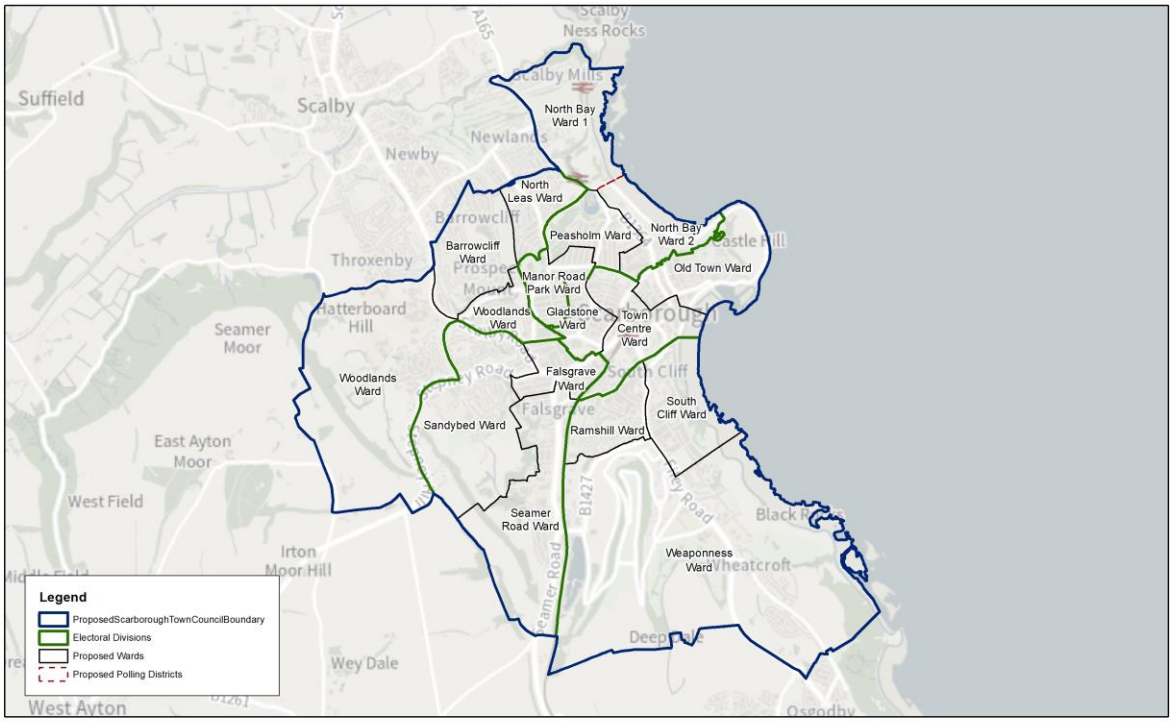
Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall, Northallerton

16 July 2024

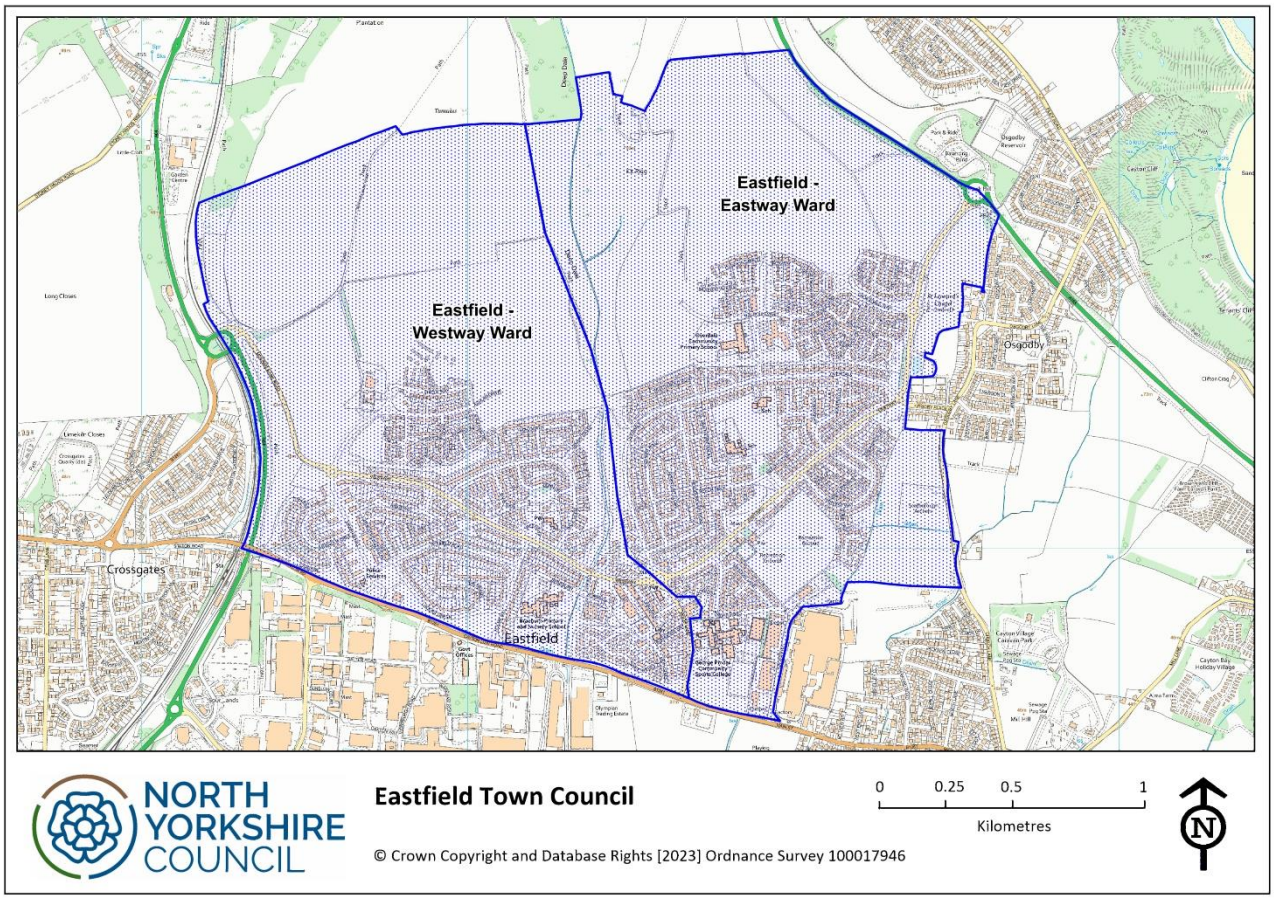
A) HARROGATE



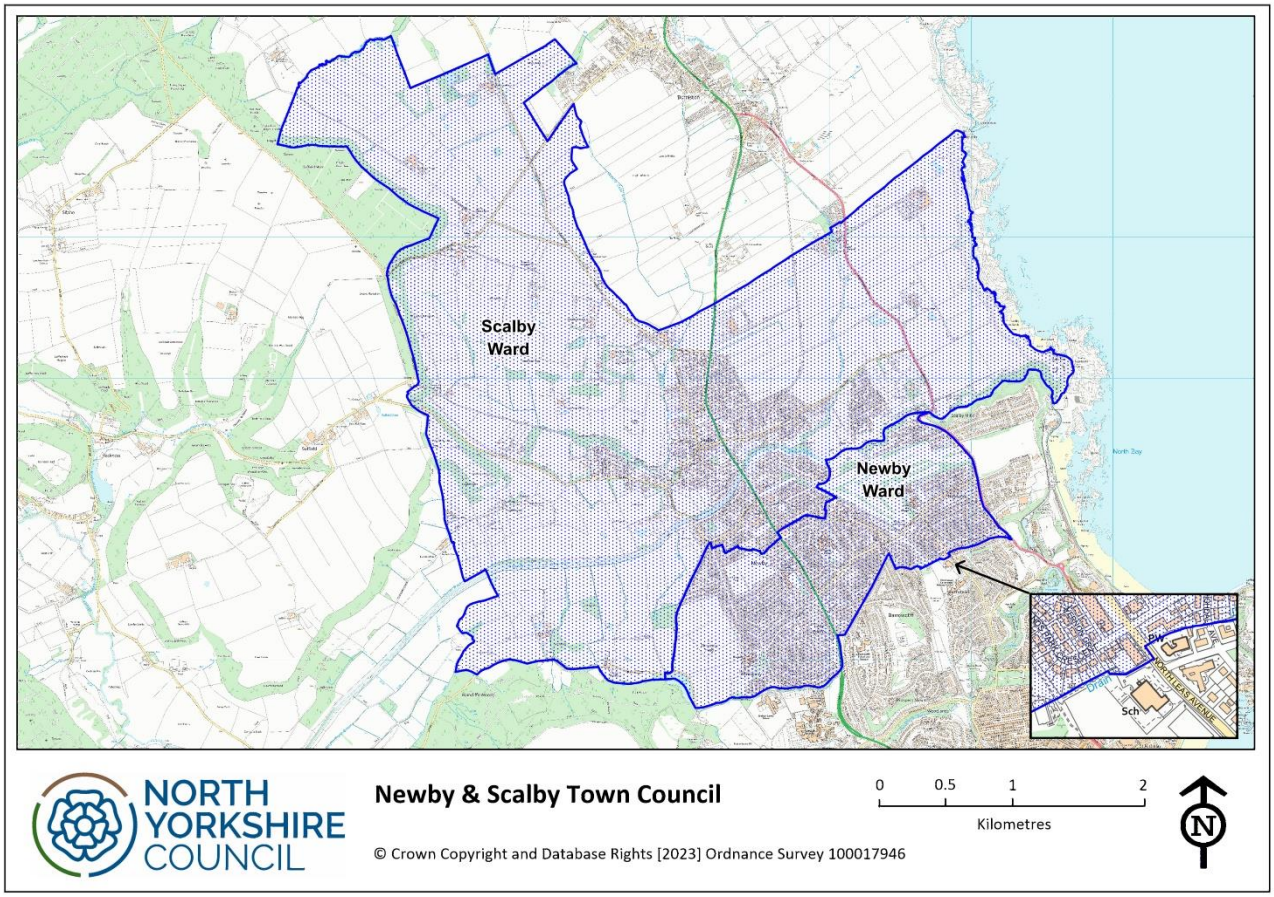
B) SCARBOROUGH



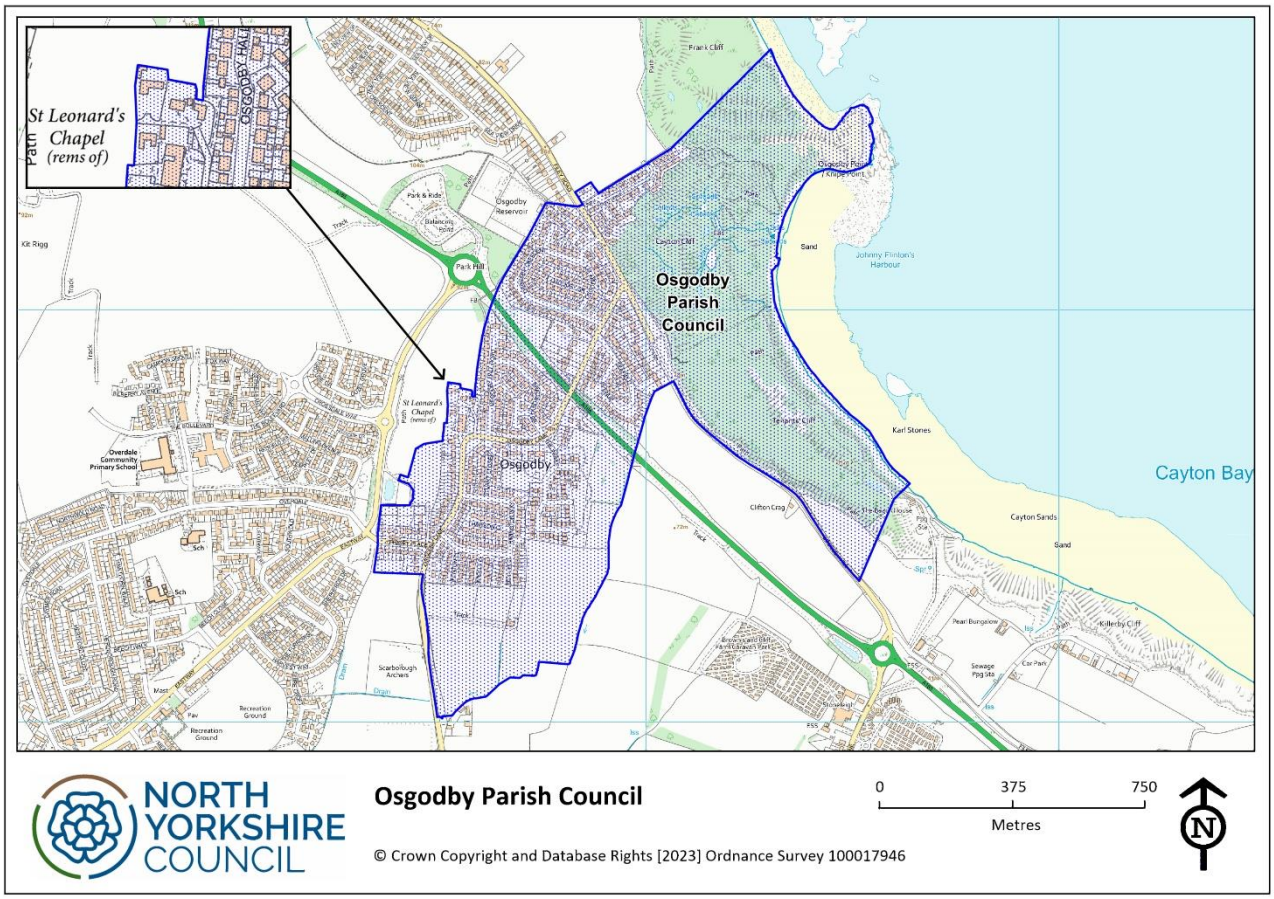
C) EASTFIELD



D) NEWBY AND SCALBY



E) OSGODBY


St Leonard's Chapel (rems of)
Osgodby Parish Council
Osgodby
Cayton Bay
Osgodby Parish Council
0
375
750
Metres
N
NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL
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North Yorkshire Council

Standards and Governance Committee

15 July 2024

Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews for Harrogate and Scarborough

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Following further consultation on the Community Governance Reviews for the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough, to present final recommendations for new town councils to be created for Harrogate and Scarborough, along with proposed minor amendments to parish boundaries in Scarborough affecting three parish councils.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 This report details the outcomes of the recent Stage 3 consultation on warding patterns for the proposed Harrogate and Scarborough Town Councils following the resolution of Council on 19 July 2023.

2.2 The report presents final recommendations in relation to the creation of town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough for consideration by the Standard and Governance Committee and requests the Committee to make recommendations for consideration by Council on 24 July 2024.

2.3 The report also presents final recommendations in relation to the Community Governance Reviews of Eastfield, Newby and Scalby and Osgodby parish councils in which recommendations are made in respect of minor amendments to parish boundaries to align with division boundaries.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A community governance review (CGR) is a review of whole or part of a principal council's area for the purpose of making recommendations in relation to creating, merging or abolishing parishes and the naming and electoral arrangements of parishes. A CGR provides a principal council with the opportunity to consider what the most effective parish governance arrangements might be for a certain area as set out in The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (LGPIHA 2007). The final recommendations documents attached as appendices to this report provide further information on the scope of such reviews and set out the background for each of the reviews referred to at 3.2 below.

3.2 On 19 July 2022 the Executive approved Terms of Reference for CGRs of the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough, and three anomalous areas adjacent to the Scarborough unparished area. A timeline of the CGR is given below:

19 July 2022	Executive approved the Terms of Reference

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August to October 2022	Stage 1 consultation to establish whether there was local interest in creating town councils
10 January 2023	Executive considered the stage 1 consultation responses and agreed draft recommendations for consultation at Stage 2
March to May 2023	Stage 2 consultation on the draft recommendations that town councils be created for Harrogate and Scarborough and the electoral arrangements for those parish councils

3.3 On 5 July 2023 the Standards and Governance Committee considered a report setting out the final recommendations following the stage 2 consultation, which were that town councils be created. The report is attached at Appendix C. The recommendations included proposals in relation to the electoral arrangements for the town councils including the numbers of councillors to be elected, and the warding patterns and names of the wards. For both Harrogate and Scarborough it was proposed that the same warding pattern be used as for North Yorkshire Council:

- Harrogate – it was proposed that there be two parish councillors for each ward, with the exception of Saltergate ward which would only have one, giving a council size of 19 councillors
- Scarborough – it was proposed that there be three parish councillors per ward, giving a council size of 15 parish councillors.

3.4 At the meeting the Committee recommended to Council that town councils be created, but that a warding pattern of single councillors be used for each town council. For Harrogate this should be the ward pattern used by the former Harrogate Borough Council, which consisted of 19 wards. For Scarborough the committee requested that a new warding pattern be developed of 15 single member wards.

3.5 On 19 July 2023 the recommendations of the Standards and Governance Committee were considered by Council and it was resolved that Council:

i) note the consultation results and equality impact assessment

ii) defer making resolutions to conclude the Community Governance Review in order for the following additional work to be undertaken:

(a) for the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services to draft up proposed warding arrangements for Scarborough Town Council to be 15 single member wards

(b) to propose the preferred warding arrangements for Harrogate Town Council to be 19 single member wards on the former Borough warding arrangements

(c) for the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services to carry out the necessary consultation on the revised warding arrangements and for the results of that consultation to be considered at a future Standards and Governance Committee and Council meeting.

4.0 STAGE 3 CONSULTATION

4.1 The stage 3 consultation on warding patterns took place from 6 – 31 May 2024. Appendix A provides information on the methodologies used to. Respondents were asked to select their preferred warding pattern from two options: the multi-member warding pattern previously consulted on, and a single member warding pattern. Respondents were not asked for views on whether town councils should be created.

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4.2 The results of the Harrogate consultation are as detailed below:

Harrogate

	Number	Percentage
Option 1 – 2 councillor wards	67	22%
Option 2 – 1 councillor wards	212	71%
Don't know / not sure	18	6%
Blank	3	1%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Of those residents and other stakeholders who took the time to respond there is a majority in favour of creating 19 single councillor wards for Harrogate.

4.3 The results of the Scarborough consultation are as detailed below:

Scarborough

	Number	Percentage
Option 1 – 3 councillor wards	161	54%
Option 2 – 1 councillor wards	123	42%
Don't know / not sure	11	4%
Blank	0	
Total	**295**	**100%**

Of those residents and other stakeholders who took the time to respond there is a majority in favour of creating 5 wards with three councillors each for Scarborough.

5.0 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS

5.1 Following the stage 3 consultation it is therefore recommended that

1) **Harrogate** – the final recommendations be amended to reflect:
   - a change to the proposed warding pattern and ward names to be that of the former Harrogate Borough Council and consist of 19 single member wards
   - that the new parish come into effect on 1 April 2025, with the first election to be 1 May 2025 for a reduced term of 2 years
   - the change take place on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)
   - all other recommendations remain the same.
2) **Scarborough** – the final recommendations in relation to warding pattern remain unchanged from the recommendations presented to the Committee in July 2023, the final recommendations be amended to reflect:
   - that the new parish come into effect on 1 April 2025, with the first election to be 1 May 2025 for a reduced term of 2 years
   - the change take place on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)
   - all other recommendations remain the same.

Detailed recommendations are set out at section 15.0 of the report.

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5.2 Section 15.0 also contains recommendations in respect of Eastfield, Newby and Scalby and Osgodby Parish Councils.

5.3 Attached at Appendix C to this report is the report considered by Standards and Governance Committee on 5 July 2023 which sets out the responses to the stage 2 consultation and considerations arising from that consultation. Detailed Final Recommendations reports in respect of the five areas under review are also attached. No changes have been made to documents in Appendix C since they were first published.

6.0 CONSIDERATION OF STATUTORY CRITERIA

6.1 The legislation requires that the council must have regard to the need to ensure that community governance within the area under review:

- reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area
- provides effective and convenient governance of the area

6.2 Councils are also advised to consider factors such as:

- what impact proposed community governance arrangements might have on community cohesion
- whether the size (area), population and boundaries proposed for local governance make sense on the ground and contribute to the above criteria;
- whether there are any existing arrangements for community representation in the area which might be undertaking the functions of a parish council

6.3 These statutory criteria are discussed within each consultation report in Appendix C.

7.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 Establishing town councils can be seen as supporting the council's priorities in relation to localities. North Yorkshire Council will aim to work closely with town and parish councils, wider partners and communities to ensure that local priorities drive locally led decision-making and local action. Services and assets can be devolved to town and parish councils and community groups, where they want to take these on and where it would be better value for money for all involved.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

8.1 *Amend the final recommendations:* Any amendments to the final recommendations may require a further consultation on the amended recommendations. An additional period of consultation would lead to a further delay in the implementation date for any town council / change to boundaries.

8.2 *Not to approve the final recommendations to create town councils*: If town councils were not created for Harrogate and / or Scarborough the Charter Trustees would continue until such time as town councils were created. The role of Charter Trustee bodies is limited to ceremonial activities and such bodies would not be able to fulfil the ambitions of the Council to keep service delivery local and empowering local communities.

8.3 *Not to approve the final recommendations to align parish boundaries with division boundaries:* Anomalous areas where boundary lines differ are not easily understood by electors and can cause confusion.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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9.1 The three consultations have cost a total of £92k, which includes the printing and postage costs of two mailings to each household with an information pack, and also £800 for digital marketing.

9.2 A sum of £30k was allocated to the costs of engaging an AEA consultant with specified numbers of days allocated to each stage. Currently spending is below what has been budgeted for and funds are available if further support is required from the AEA.

9.3 Should parish councils be created a parish precept will be added to council tax bills for those living within the relevant areas. In order to create a new town council the council must make a reorganisation order and at that time must anticipate a precept for the new town council. The Charter Trustees for Harrogate and Scarborough were consulted on possible levels of precept before the stage 2 consultation and suggested precept figures were included in the consultation documentation. These figures will be used as the basis for consideration of the level of any precept which will be determined in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources.

9.4 As parish councils are being established there will be set up costs and it is expected that some tasks will need to be carried out before the town councils formally come into being. The costs of these tasks would be initially borne by North Yorkshire Council, then recharged back.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The 2007 Act gave local authorities responsibility for carrying out Community Governance Reviews within the relevant guidance and taking into account consultation responses to ensure that the identities and interests of communities are reflected and that arrangements made are effective and convenient. If town councils are created a review would need to be undertaken about what roles and duties are transferred or undertaken by the new legal entities to determine the potential TUPE implications for any relevant staff affected.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The public consultation was undertaken in such a way as to ensure that a broad range of responses are obtained and no groups were excluded. Every household was sent a letter in the post at both stage 1 and stage 2 consultations. Consultation documents were offered in alternative languages and formats on request. An Equality Impact Assessment screening form is attached at Appendix B.

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None. An initial climate change impact assessment form is attached at Appendix 7 of Appendix C.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS

13.1 The report sets out the outcome of the stage 3 consultation in relation to warding patterns for proposed town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough.

13.2 Final recommendations in relation to the community governance reviews of Harrogate, Scarborough, Eastfield, Newby & Scalby and Osgodby were presented to the Standards and Governance Committee in July 2023.

13.3 Following the stage 3 consultation no changes are recommended to the final recommendations for Scarborough, or the three neighbouring parishes.

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13.4 For Harrogate the stage 3 consultation showed support for a single member warding pattern. It is therefore proposed that the final recommendations be amended in respect of the warding pattern and ward names, as set out in the recommendations below.

13.5 Members are requested to consider the consultation results and take account of the statutory criteria as set out at section 6 of this report when making recommendations to Council on 24 July 2024.

14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives power to local authorities to make decisions about the creation of parishes and the electoral arrangements for parishes created. On 19 July 2022 the council resolved to undertake a community governance review of the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough, and some minor amendments to boundaries of existing parishes adjacent to Scarborough. The council must now make recommendations on whether or not to establish parish councils for Harrogate and Scarborough.

14.2 In making its recommendations the Council must consider representations received during the consultation and can also use its own local knowledge of the area. In accordance with the statutory criteria the recommendations should ensure that the arrangements for the areas are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in the areas and provide effective and convenient governance of the area

14.3 Following the making of a decision the 2007 Act requires councils to make available a document setting out the reasons for the decisions it has taken and to publicise these reasons.

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Standards and Governance Committee are requested to:

i) consider the consultation results and equality impact assessment

ii) make recommendations to Council in relation to each of the areas under review at A) to E) below:

A) HARROGATE

(1) to create a new parish for the unparished area of Harrogate

(2) the new parish be named Harrogate

(3) the new parish have a parish council and to name that parish council Harrogate Town Council

(4) the parish come into effect from 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes, and the first election for the town council be 2 May 2025 for a reduced term of two years, with ordinary elections taking place in 2027 and every four years thereafter

(5) the parish be divided into wards, named

Bilton Grange
Bilton Woodfield
Central
Coppice Valley

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Duchy
Fairfax
Harlow
High Harrogate
Hookstone
Kingsley
New Park
Oatlands
Old Bilton
Pannal
Saltergate
St Georges
Starbeck
Stray
Valley Gardens

(6) there should be 19 councillors elected to the parish

(7) the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward shall be

Bilton Grange	1
Bilton Woodfield	1
Central	1
Coppice Valley	1
Duchy	1
Fairfax	1
Harlow	1
High Harrogate	1
Hookstone	1
Kingsley	1
New Park	1
Oatlands	1
Old Bilton	1
Pannal	1
Saltergate	1
St Georges	1
Starbeck	1
Stray	1
Valley Gardens	1

(8) the change take effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(9) the boundaries of the new parish and wards should be as shown on the map at Annex A

B) SCARBOROUGH

(1) to create a new parish for the unparished area of Scarborough

(2) the new parish be named Scarborough

(3) the new parish have a parish council and to name that parish council Scarborough Town Council

(4) the parish come into effect from 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes, and the first election for the town council be 2 May 2025 for a reduced term of two

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years, with ordinary elections taking place in 2027 and every four years thereafter

(5) the parish be divided into wards, named

Castle
Falsgrave & Stepney
Northstead
Weaponness & Ramshill
Woodlands

(6) there should be 15 councillors elected to the parish

(7) the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward shall be

Castle	3
Falsgrave & Stepney	3
Northstead	3
Weaponness & Ramshill	3
Woodlands	3

(8) the change take effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(9) the boundaries of the new parish and wards should be as shown on the map at Annex A

C) EASTFIELD

(1) the north-eastern boundary line of Eastfield Town Council be extended towards the A165 to match the Eastfield Division and Ward boundaries (and consequentially excluding the 3 known anomalous properties at Osgodby)

(2) the changes take effect on 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

D) NEWBY AND SCALBY

(1) to extend Newby & Scalby Town Council boundary to include all of Charles Williams Apartments, to become coterminous with the Newby Division)

(2) the changes take effect on 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

E) OSGODBY

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(1) to extend Osgodby Parish Council boundary to include those 3 properties currently outside of the parish, at the norther boundary line, and to become coterminous with the Cayton Division

(2) the changes take effect on 1 April 2025 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15 October 2024 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2024)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

iii) if Council recommends creation of parish councils and changes to existing parishes authority be granted to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources to implement the decisions including making reorganisation orders which amongst other things will set the precept for the first year of the town councils to take effect from 1 April 2025.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Consultation methodology
Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix C – Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews relating to the unparished town centres in Harrogate and Scarborough – Report to Standards and Governance Committee – 5 July 2023

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Executive report of 19 July 2022 - Decision on whether to proceed with Community Governance Reviews relating to the unparished town centres in Harrogate and Scarborough

Executive report of 10 January 2023 – Draft Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews relating to the unparished town centres in Harrogate and Scarborough

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
Northallerton

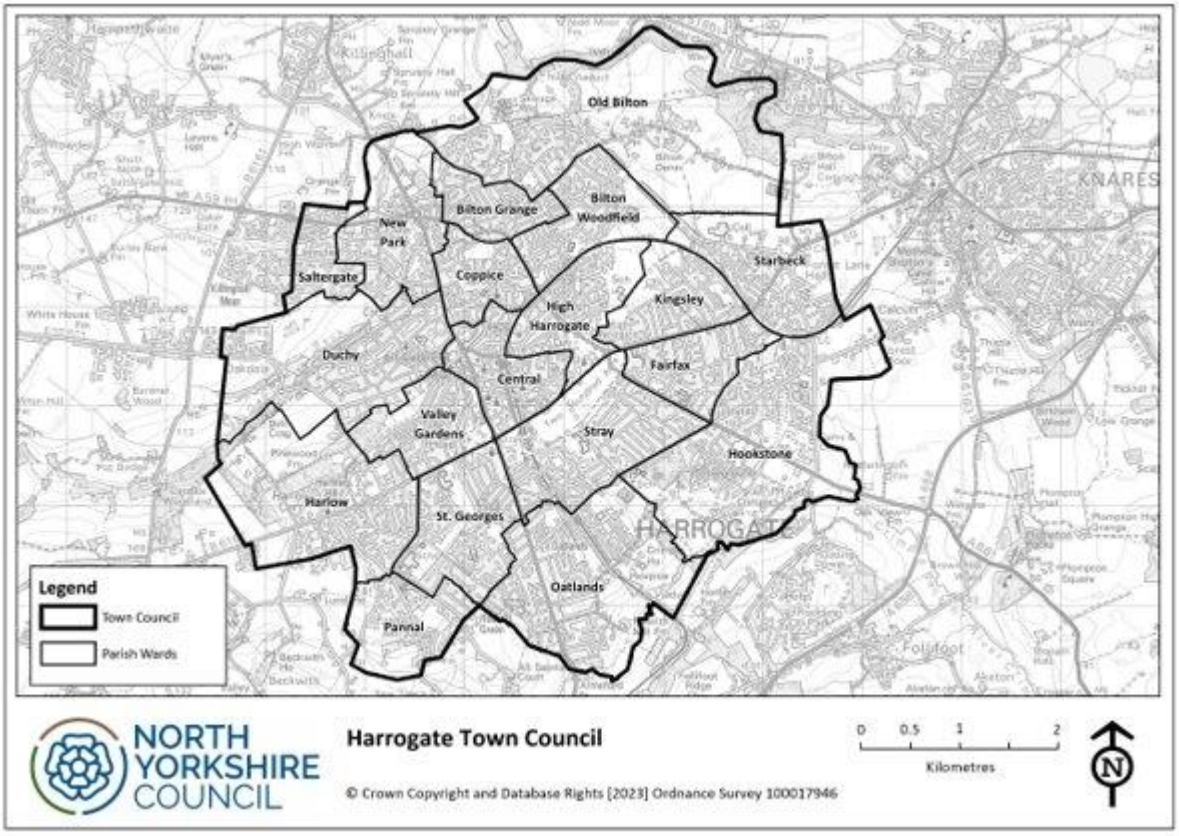
5 July 2024

Report Author – *Elizabeth Jackson – Principal Democratic Services Officer*
Presenters of Report – *Elizabeth Jackson – Principal Democratic Services Officer*
- *Kerry Russett – Head of Electoral Services*

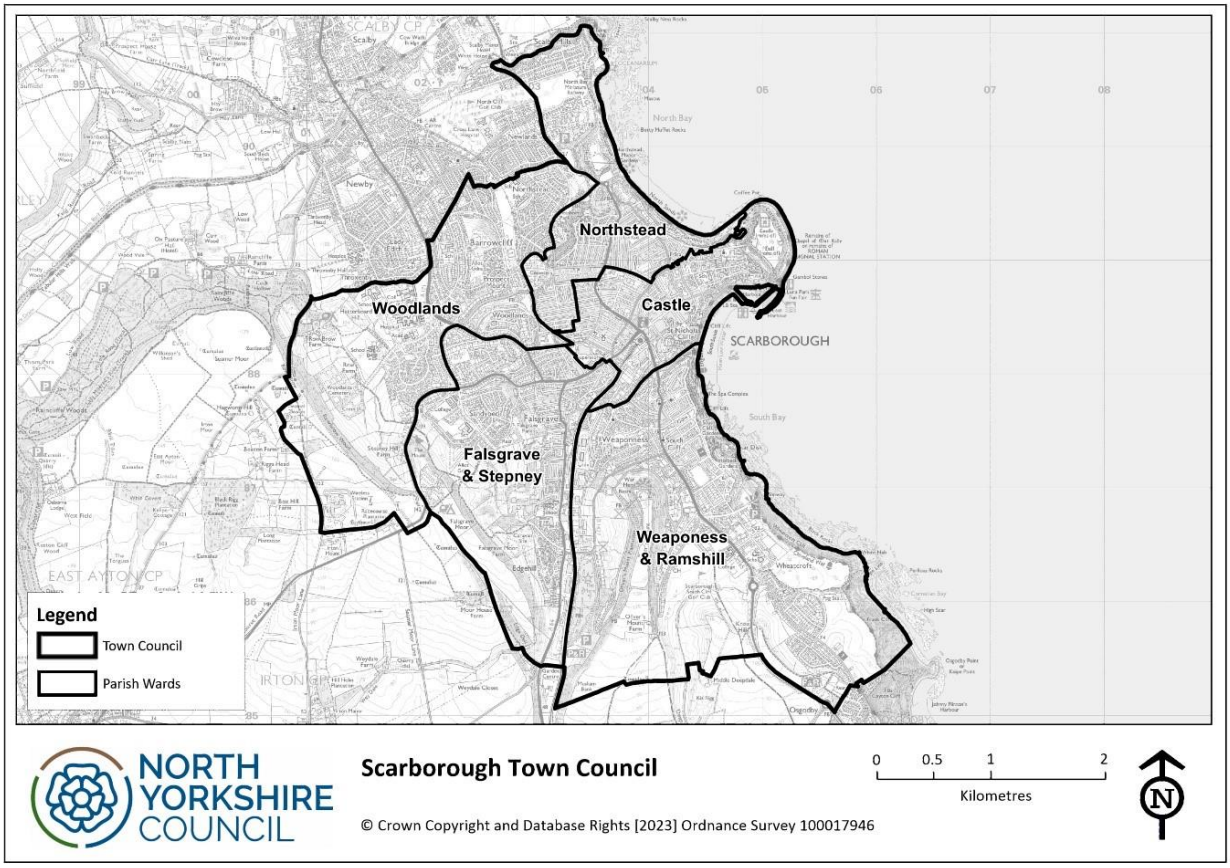
Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

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A) HARROGATE

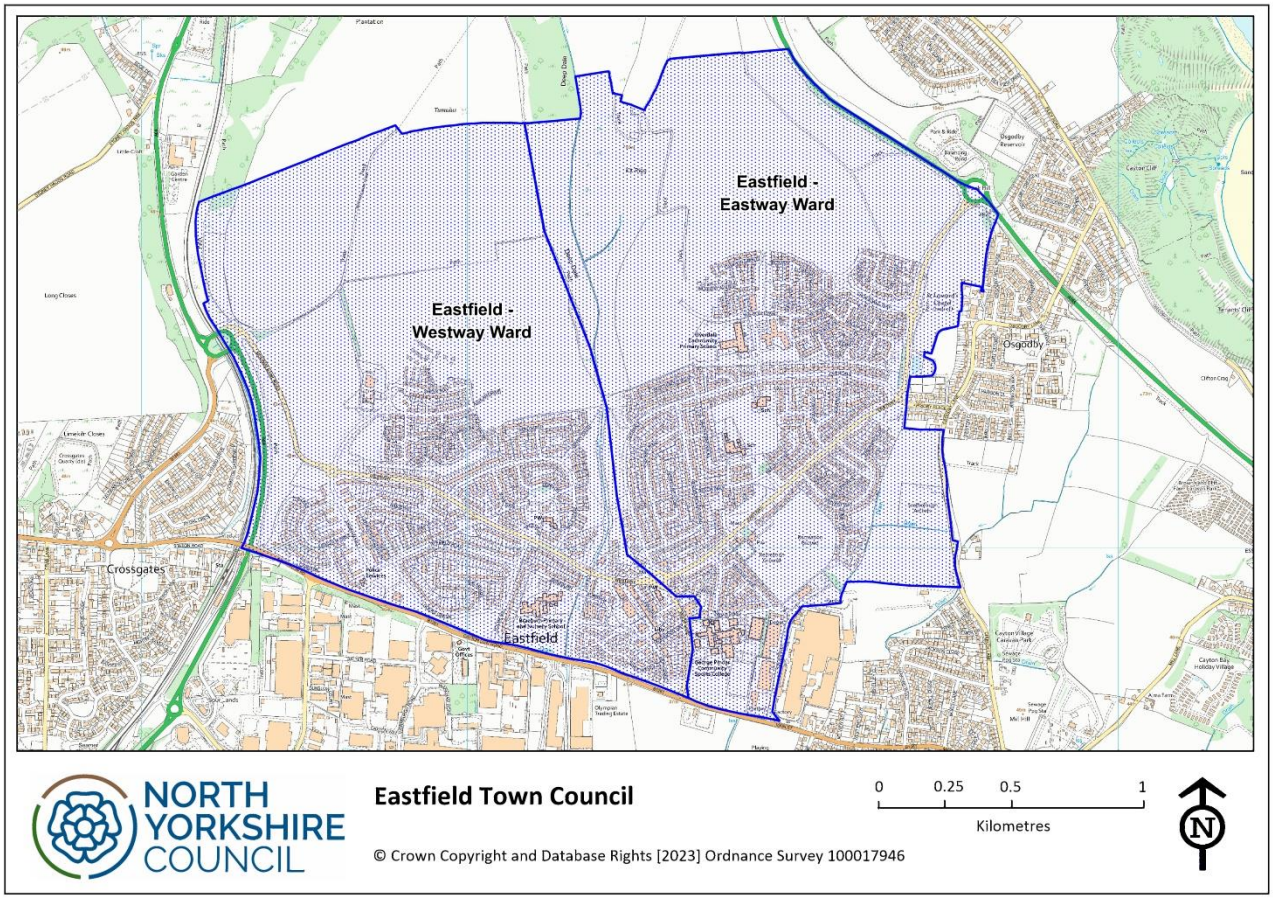


B) SCARBOROUGH

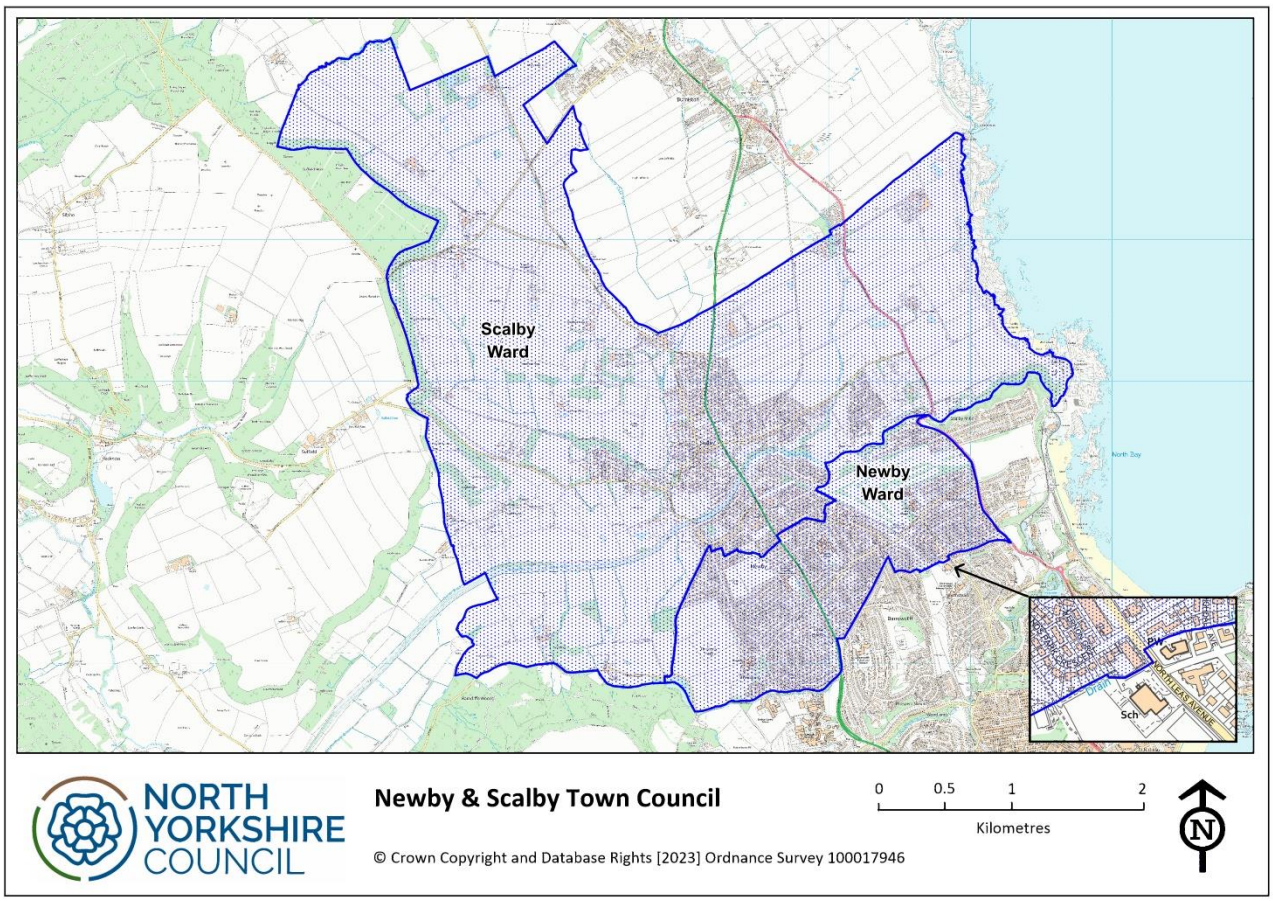


OFFICIAL

C) EASTFIELD

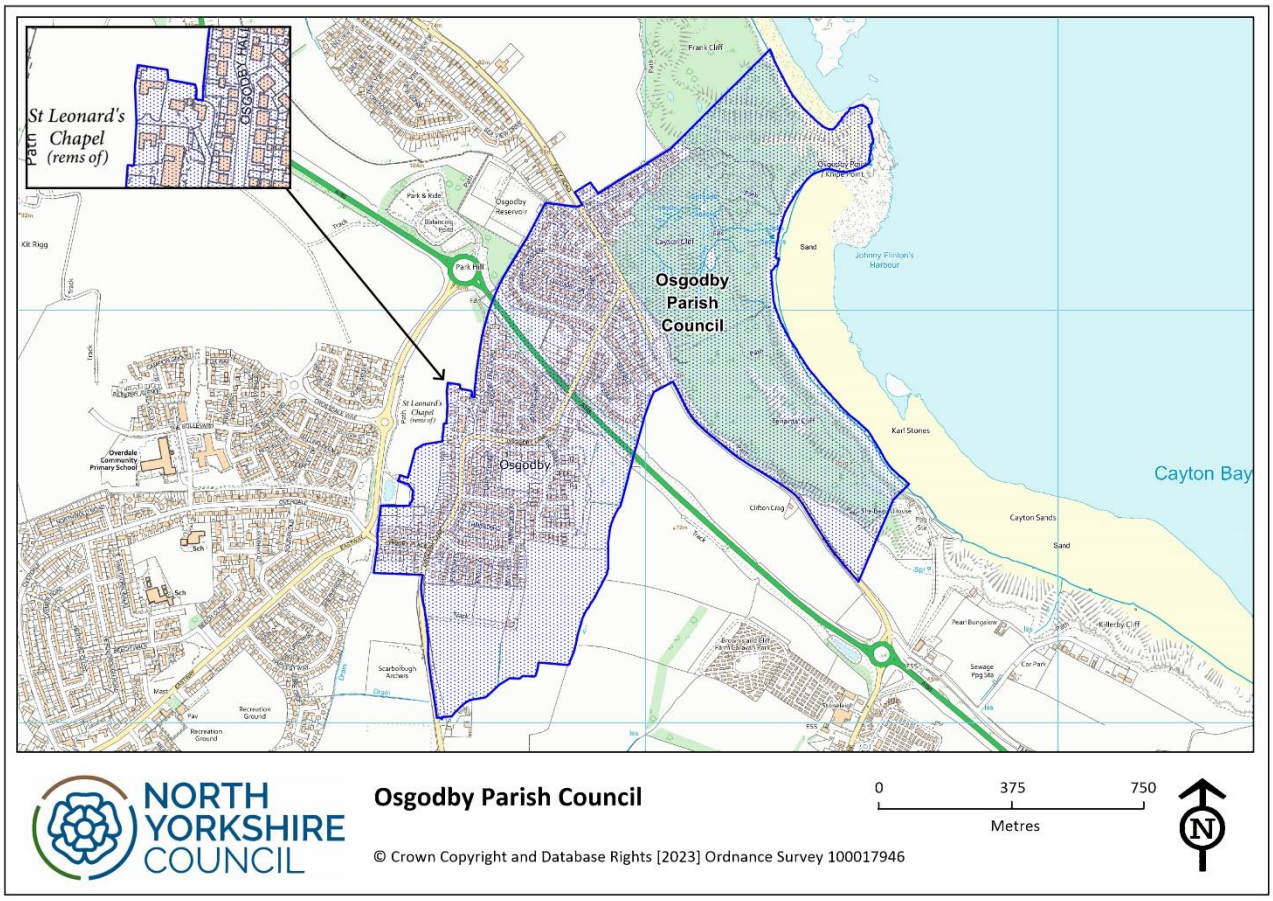


D) NEWBY AND SCALBY



OFFICIAL

E) OSGODBY



OFFICIAL

Community Governance Review- Consultation Stage 3 Methodology

1. Harrogate Unparished Area

- The stage 3 consultation began on Tuesday 7th May 2024, and ran for a period of 4 working weeks, closing on 31st May 2024.

- The Community Governance Review webpage used for the stage 1 and stage 2 consultation was re-instated, and updated with further information for stage 3 including information from both previous consultations and the draft and final recommendations. Links to the Standards and Governance Committee and Full Council reports from July 2023 were added.

- The consultation webpage contained a link to an online survey allowing residents and other stakeholders to submit views on further consultation, seeking a preference of warding patterns.

- An option was provided to request hard copies of the survey via telephone or email for those residents who preferred to complete a paper copy of the survey or who did not have access to the internet.

- Copies of the paper survey and pre-paid return envelopes were made available at Harrogate Civic Centre, Harrogate Library, and Bilton and Woodfield Library.

- Key stakeholders were also emailed a link to the consultation webpage and invited to give their views. This included the following stakeholders:
  - local MPs, and councillors for the relevant area
  - North Yorkshire Council's consultation stakeholder list which included disability groups, business, charities, voluntary groups, local associations, business groups and local public services
  - Any respondees to the initial and consultation who did not already appear on any of the above distribution lists and had requested be included in any future stages of consultation

- The survey which was used for this unparished area invited stakeholders and residents to say whether they preferred the originally proposed 10 wards (based on the North Yorkshire Council divisions), each being represented by 2 members, with the exception of Saltergate which was to be represented by 1 member (19 members in total), or a revised proposal of 19 single member wards based on the previous Harrogate Borough Council warding pattern.

- In addition to the above, NYC social media feeds were used to raise awareness of the further review. All social media posts used a consistent approach with messaging, signposting and branding to avoid confusion for residents.

- A press release entitled "New consultation on plans for town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough " was issued on 7th May 2024 leading to the review gaining coverage in the local press to promote the consultation.

- An 'easy read' version of the information leaflet could be made available on request for residents with learning difficulties and the survey could also be made available in other formats on request.

2. Scarborough Unparished Area

- The stage 3 consultation began on Tuesday 7th May 2024, and ran for a period of 4 working weeks, closing on 31st May 2024.

- The Community Governance Review webpage used for the stage 1 and stage 2 consultation was re-instated, and updated with further information for stage 3 including information from both previous consultations and the draft and final recommendations. Links to the Standards and Governance Committee and Full Council reports from July 2023 were added.

- The consultation webpage contained a link to an online survey allowing residents and other stakeholders to submit views on further consultation, seeking a preference of warding patterns.

- An option was provided to request hard copies of the survey via telephone or email for those residents who preferred to complete a paper copy of the survey or who did not have access to the internet.

- Copies of the paper survey and pre-paid return envelopes were made available at Scarborough Town Hall, Scarborough Library, and Newby and Scalby library and information centre.

- Key stakeholders were also emailed a link to the consultation webpage and invited to give their views. This included the following stakeholders:
    - local MPs, and councillors for the relevant area
    - Directly affected parishes of Eastfield, Newby & Scalby, and Osgodby, as they had areas specifically detailed within the Terms of Reference
    - Parish councils adjoining the unparished area

- North Yorkshire Council's consultation stakeholder list which included disability groups, business, charities, voluntary groups, local associations, business groups and local public services
- Any respondees to the initial and consultation who did not already appear on any of the above distribution lists

- The survey which was used for this unparished area invited stakeholders and residents to say whether they preferred the originally proposed 5 wards (based on the North Yorkshire Council divisions), each being represented by 3 members (15 members in total), or a revised proposal of 15 single member wards. Respondees were able to able to provide comments against their preference.

- In addition to the above, NYC social media feeds were used to raise awareness of the further review. This was supplemented by reminder posts during, and close to the end of the review. All social media posts used a consistent approach with messaging, signposting and branding to avoid confusion for residents.

- A briefing was held with all directly affected NYC members (those representing divisions within the unparished areas) to make them aware of the revised single member ward option for the proposed new town council, and to explain that a further stage of consultation was required to establish a preferred warding arrangement.

- A press release entitled "New consultation on plans for town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough " was issued on 7th May 2024 leading to the review gaining coverage in the local press to promote the consultation.

- Council staff were informed of the review via internal messaging, weekly staff news and the intranet inviting affected colleagues to take part.

- An 'easy read' version of the information leaflet was available on request for residents with learning difficulties and the survey could also be made available in other formats on request.

Appendix B - 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	Central Services
Service area	Democratic/Election services
Proposal being screened	Decision on final recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews relating to the unparished town centres in Harrogate and Scarborough
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Barry Khan, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
What are you proposing to do?	To consider making final recommendations for new town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough, along with proposed minor amendments to parish boundaries in Scarborough.
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	The creation of town councils will enable Harrogate and Scarborough to have stronger and more effective local governance , ensuring parity with the remainder of the county of North Yorkshire
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	It is anticipated the budget of the town council could be between £1m and £1.5m pa, which would be funded through a precept added to council tax bills.

Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics

As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:

- 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 Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.

Protected characteristic	**Potential for adverse impact**		**Don't know/No info available**
	Yes	**No**	
Age		No	
Disability		No	
Sex		No	
Race		No	
Sexual orientation		No	
Gender reassignment		No	
Religion or belief		No	
Pregnancy or maternity		No	

Marriage or civil partnership		No	
NYCC additional characteristics			
People in rural areas		No	
People on a low income		No	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		No	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	It is known that there are areas of deprivation but the creation of town councils is not expected to have a negative impact on such areas.		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	Three sets of consultations have taken place with a wide range of voluntary and community organisations, business groups, charities, disability organisations and community associations. The views of those organisations which responded to the consultation have been considered. The potential creation of town councils will create a new level of local democracy for those unparished areas.		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	Yes (at this stage)	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision	It is not considered that the proposals to create town councils will have a disproportionate impact on areas where there are known inequalities or organisations supporting those with protected characteristics.		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Barry Khan		
Date	5 July 2024		

North Yorkshire Council

Standards and Governance Committee

5 July 2023

Final Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews relating to the unparished town centres in Harrogate and Scarborough

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Following Stage 2 consultation on the Community Governance Reviews for the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough, to present final recommendations for new town councils to be created for Harrogate and Scarborough, along with proposed minor amendments to parish boundaries in Scarborough affecting three parish councils.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 This report provides information on the recent Stage 2 consultation on the draft recommendations that new town councils be created and provides a summary of the consultation responses. An analysis of the responses is included and final recommendations made based on the responses received.

2.2 The report asks the Standards and Governance Committee to consider the consultation responses received and make recommendations for consideration by Council.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A community governance review is a review of whole or part of a principal council's area for the purpose of making recommendations with regard to creating, merging or abolishing parishes and the naming and electoral arrangements of parishes. The final recommendations documents attached as appendices to this report provide further information on the scope of such reviews and set out the background for each of the reviews referred to at 3.2 below.

3.2 On 19 July 2022 the Executive approved the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review (CGR) for the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough, and three anomalous areas adjacent to the Scarborough unparished area. A CGR provides a principal council with the opportunity to consider what the most effective parish governance arrangements might be for a certain area as set out in The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (LGPIHA 2007). The process can lead to the creation of new parish councils and provides a way to make sure that those living in an area, and other interested groups, have a say in how their local communities are represented.

3.3 Following publication of the Terms of Reference the CGR began with Stage 1 consultation from August to October 2022. These consultation responses were used to develop draft recommendations which were considered by the Executive on 10 January 2023. The Executive considered and noted the responses from the stage 1 consultation and agreed a stage 2 consultation on the draft recommendations.

3.4 The North Yorkshire (Structural Changes Order) 2022 conferred transitional powers on the Implementation Executive to undertake community governance reviews during the transitional period up to 31 March 2023. Since 1 April 2023 North Yorkshire Council is the principal council for North Yorkshire and community governance reviews are now a council function under the council's constitution. The terms of reference of the Standards and Governance Committee provides for it to make recommendations to full Council in respect of community governance reviews.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 The LGPIHA 2007 required the Council to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who may have an interest and to take the representations that are received into account by judging them against the statutory criteria.

4.2 The stage 2 consultation on the draft recommendations took place over a period of 9 weeks from 2 March to 5 May 2023. Each household within the areas under review was sent a letter and information pack and invited to provide views either via an online survey or by requesting a paper copy of the survey. More information on the consultation are available in each draft recommendations report.

4.3 The consultation results have been analysed and final recommendations are now presented in relation to each of the five areas under review. Full details of each review including consultation methodologies, analysis, full consultation responses and development of draft recommendations are available in the appendices to this report and the final recommendations for each area are set out in the report recommendations at section 14.

4.4 A summary of the stage 2 consultation outcomes is shown in the table below:

	No. of responses	**Support for creation of a town council**	
Harrogate	1,698	65.5%	
Scarborough	731	69.9%	
Eastfield	256		61.3% support the extension of Eastfield Town Council boundary to include the unparished part of Eastfield Division (Middle Deepdale)
Newby and Scalby	16		75% support the amendment to Newby & Scalby Town Council boundary to include the 12 currently unparished Charles Williams Apartments
Osgodby	1		1 response in total, in support of the extension of Osgodby parish Council boundary to include the 3 currently unparished properties at Osgodby

4.5 It is noted from the above table that of those residents and other stakeholders who took the time to respond there is a majority in favour of creating parish councils in Harrogate and Scarborough. It is noted that the majority of residents did not respond to the consultation but it is important to consider the views of those who have taken the effort to respond and to give their views due weight. For Eastfield, Newby and Scalby and Osgodby the responses provide a mandate to work to align the parish boundaries with division boundaries.

4.6 The final recommendations were presented at an informal Member briefing held on 21 June 2023, to which all Members were invited. Responses were provided to a number of questions from Members and the following comments were made:

HARROGATE

- A proposal was made that the warding pattern for a Harrogate parish reflect the warding pattern used for the former Harrogate Borough Council, and that each ward be represented by one councillor. This proposal would comply with guidance that parish wards should not be divided by a division boundaries. Members felt this could make it easier for the public to identify their ward councillor. Members were advised that such a major change to the proposed warding pattern may require a further consultation as it is a substantial change to the proposals which had been consulted on.
- A number of comments were made in support of single member wards arguing that it would reduce duplication of work by councillors and make it easier for the public to identify their councillor. Officers advised that this could be achieved by amending the warding pattern to that suggested at the bullet point above, or reducing the council size to 10 councillors, both of which might require a further period of consultation.
- Other Members supported multi-member wards, which enabled work to be shared and facilitated team working. In particular there was a proposal that the parish of Harrogate not be warded.
- In response to questions, officers advised that should members wish to amend the final recommendations a further period of consultation may be required, which would delay the implementation date of a town council, meaning the first elections probably wouldn't take place until May 2025.
- Officers advised that following the LGBCE review of division boundaries in advance of the election in 2027 it could be expected that there would be a requirement to review parish ward boundaries should new division boundaries divide parish wards. This would provide an opportunity to review the warding pattern and councillor numbers.

SCARBOROUGH

- It was suggested by some councillors that the parishes not be warded, the reason being that it would enable the councillors to act on behalf of all residents and remove confusion around who residents' ward councillors were.
- A comment was made that not enough information had been provided on what town councillors would do.
- A number of comments were made in relation to the response rate. Some members felt not enough people had responded to provide a mandate for change or that a referendum should have been arranged.
- A comment was made that it would be helpful for NYC councillors for there to also be parish councillors for constituents to speak to.

4.7 *Response rates:* the response rates for the stage 2 consultation are as shown in the table:

Consultation Stage	Harrogate	Scarborough
Households posted to	**35,583**	**21,904**
Responses received for area	1,698	731
Response rate by household	4.77 %	3.34 %

Every household in the areas under review were written to, and every member of a household could respond to the survey. Advice received from the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) is that such response rates are not unusual for community governance reviews, especially when a large number of properties are included in the survey area. Other reviews have proceeded successfully on similar or lower response rates and data obtained in other recent CGRs which resulted in parish councils being created show these figures compare favourably with other reviews. Every household in the areas under review was written to at both stage 1 and stage 2 consultation so the council took reasonable endeavours to ensure that all residents were aware of the consultations and given the opportunity to respond if they wished.

4.8 *Warding Pattern:* a number of different views were expressed in relation to the warding pattern, with some members suggesting an increase in the number of wards to facilitate single member wards, and others suggesting a single ward for the whole of the area of the parish.

In considering whether or not a parish should be divided into wards the principal council must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State and the LGBCE under section 100 of the 2007 Act. This 'Guidance on community governance reviews' provides:

Paragraph 159 states:

> "In considering whether or not a parish should be divided into wards, the 2007 Act requires that consideration be given to whether:
>
> a) the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
>
> b) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented"

Paragraph 163 states:

> "The principal council should also consider the desirability of parish warding in circumstances where the parish is divided by district or London borough ward and/or county division boundaries. It should be mindful of the provisions of Schedule 2 (electoral change in England: considerations on review) to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 in relation to reviews of district or London borough and county council electoral arrangements. These provide that when the LGBCE is making changes to principal council electoral arrangements, **no unwarded parish should be divided by a district or London borough ward or county division boundary, and that no parish ward should be split by such a boundary.** While these provisions do not apply to reviews of parish electoral arrangements, the LGBCE believes that, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, they are relevant considerations for principal councils to take into account when undertaking community governance reviews. For example, if a principal council chooses to establish a new parish in an area which is covered by two or more district or London borough wards or county division boundaries it may also wish to consider the merit of putting parish warding in place to reflect that ward and/or division."

4.9 Given that the area under review covers 10 divisions for Harrogate, and 5 divisions for Scarborough, the recommendations have been made that the division boundaries be used for warding the parish. Both Harrogate and Scarborough consist of a number of different localities, focussed around housing estates or shopping areas, each with their own sense of identity, and residents might find it easier to identify with a particular ward councillor for their area.

4.10 Members provided examples of other town councils where elections take place to a single ward, such as Helmsley. It should be noted that these town councils are relatively small, and none are larger than an electoral division. Close to Harrogate, Knaresborough Town Council and Ripon City Council both cover 4 electoral divisions, their warding pattern reflects the division boundaries and each of the wards has 3 members. We are not aware of any urban parish councils divided into single member wards within North Yorkshire, normally single member parish wards only relate to separate villages in a grouped parish council. The statutory rules for the LGBCE provides that as Harrogate and Scarborough consist of multiple electoral divisions, when they conduct their review in advance of the 2027 elections, they would be obliged to apply parish warding arrangements to any newly formed parish councils.

5.0 CONSIDERATION OF STATUTORY CRITERIA

5.1 The legislation requires that the council must have regard to the need to ensure that community governance within the area under review:

- reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area
- provides effective and convenient governance of the area

5.2 Councils are also advised to consider factors such as:

- what impact proposed community governance arrangements might have on community cohesion; and
- whether the size (area), population and boundaries proposed for local governance make sense on the ground and contribute to the above criteria;
- whether there are any existing arrangements for community representation in the area which might be undertaking the functions of a parish council

5.3 These statutory criteria are discussed within each attached consultation report.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

6.1 Establishing town councils can be seen as supporting the council's priorities in relation to localities. North Yorkshire Council will aim to work closely with town and parish councils, wider partners and communities to ensure that local priorities drive locally led decision-making and local action. Services and assets can be devolved to town and parish councils and community groups, where they want to take these on and where it would be better value for money for all involved.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 *Amend the final recommendations:* Any amendments to the final recommendations may require a further consultation on the amended recommendations. An additional period of consultation would lead to a delay in the implementation date for any town council / change to boundaries, which is currently timetabled for 1 April 2024.

7.2 *Not to approve the final recommendations to create town councils*: If town councils were not created for Harrogate and / or Scarborough the Charter Trustees would continue until such time as town councils were created. The role of Charter Trustee bodies is limited to ceremonial activities and such bodies would not be able to fulfil the ambitions of the Council to keep service delivery local and empowering local communities.

7.3 *Not to approve the final recommendations to align parish boundaries with division boundaries:* Anomalous areas where boundary lines differ are not easily understood by electors and can cause confusion.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The two consultations have cost a total of £92k, which includes the printing and postage costs of two mailings to each household with an information pack, and also £800 for digital marketing.

8.2 A sum of £30k was allocated to the costs of engaging an AEA consultant with specified numbers of days allocated to each stage. Currently spending is below what has been budgeted for and funds are available if further support is required from the AEA.

8.3 Should parish councils be created a parish precept will be added to council tax bills for those living within the relevant areas. In order to create a new town council the council must make a reorganisation order and at that time must anticipate a precept for the new town council. The Charter Trustees for Harrogate and Scarborough were consulted on possible levels of precept before the stage 2 consultation and suggested precept figures were included in the consultation documentation. These figures will be used as the basis for consideration of the level of any precept which will be determined in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources.

8.4 As parish councils are being established there will be set up costs and it is expected that some tasks will need to be carried out before the town councils formally come into being. The costs of these tasks would be initially borne by North Yorkshire Council, then recharged back.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The 2007 Act gave local authorities responsibility for carrying out Community Governance Reviews within the relevant guidance and taking into account consultation responses to ensure that the identities and interests of communities are reflected and that arrangements made are effective and convenient. If town councils are created a review would need to be undertaken about what roles and duties are transferred or undertaken by the new legal entities to determine the potential TUPE implications for any relevant staff affected on 1 April 2024.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The public consultation was undertaken in such a way as to ensure that a broad range of responses are obtained and no groups were excluded. Every household was sent a letter in the post at both stage 1 and stage 2 consultations. Consultation documents were offered in alternative languages and formats on request. An Equality Impact Assessment screening form is attached at Appendix 6.

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None. An initial climate change impact assessment form is attached at Appendix 7.

12.0 CONCLUSIONS

12.1 This report sets out the final recommendations in relation to the community governance reviews of Harrogate, Scarborough, Eastfield, Newby & Scalby and Osgodby. Members are requested to take account of the statutory criteria as set out section 5 of this report in consideration of the final recommendations.

13.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 The Local Government Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives power to local authorities to make decisions about the creation of parishes and the electoral arrangements for parishes created. On 19 July 2022 the council resolved to undertake a community governance review of the unparished parts of Harrogate and Scarborough, and some minor amendments to boundaries of existing parishes adjacent to Scarborough. The council must now make recommendations on whether or not to establish parish councils for Harrogate and Scarborough.

13.2 In making its recommendations the Council must consider representations received during the consultation and can also use its own local knowledge of the area. In accordance with the statutory criteria the recommendations should ensure that the arrangements for the areas are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in the areas and provide effective and convenient governance of the area

13.3 Following the making of a decision the 2007 Act requires councils to make available a document setting out the reasons for the decisions it has taken and to publicise these reasons.

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Standards and Governance Committee are requested to

i) consider the consultation results and equality impact assessment

ii) make recommendations to Council in relation to each of the areas under review at A) to E) below:

A) HARROGATE

(1) to create a new parish for the unparished area of Harrogate

(2) the new parish be named Harrogate

(3) the new parish have a parish council and to name that parish council Harrogate Town Council

(4) the parish come into effect from 1 April 2024 for administrative purposes, and the first election for the town council be 2 May 2024 for a reduced term of three years, with ordinary elections taking place in 2027 and every four years thereafter

(5) the parish be divided into wards, named

Bilton & Nidd Gorge
Bilton Grange & New Park
Coppice Valley & Duchy
Fairfax & Starbeck
Harlow & St Georges
High Harrogate & Kingsley
Oatlands
Saltergate
Stray, Woodlands & Hookstone
Valley Gardens & Central Harrogate

(6) there should be 19 councillors elected to the parish

(7) the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward shall be

Bilton & Nidd Gorge	2
Bilton Grange & New Park	2
Coppice Valley & Duchy	2
Fairfax & Starbeck	2
Harlow & St Georges	2
High Harrogate & Kingsley	2
Oatlands	2
Saltergate	1
Stray, Woodlands & Hookstone	2
Valley Gardens & Central Harrogate	2

(8) the change take effect on 15th October 2023 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2023)

(9) the boundaries of the new parish and wards should be as shown on the map at Annex A

B) SCARBOROUGH

(1) to create a new parish for the unparished area of Scarborough

(2) the new parish be named Scarborough

(3) the new parish have a parish council and to name that parish council Scarborough Town Council

(4) the parish come into effect from 1 April 2024 for administrative purposes, and the first election for the town council be 2 May 2024 for a reduced term of three years, with ordinary elections taking place in 2027 and every four years thereafter

(5) the parish be divided into wards, named

Castle
Falsgrave & Stepney
Northstead
Weaponness & Ramshill
Woodlands

(6) there should be 15 councillors elected to the parish

(7) the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward shall be

Castle	3
Falsgrave & Stepney	3
Northstead	3
Weaponness & Ramshill	3
Woodlands	3

(8) the change take effect on 15th October 2023 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 01 December 2023)

(9) the boundaries of the new parish and wards should be as shown on the map at Annex A

C) EASTFIELD

(1) the north-eastern boundary line of Eastfield Town Council be extended towards the A165 to match the Eastfield Division and Ward boundaries (and consequentially excluding the 3 known anomalous properties at Osgodby)

(2) the changes take effect on 01 April 2024 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15th October 2023 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 01 December 2023)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

D) NEWBY AND SCALBY

(1) to extend Newby & Scalby Town Council boundary to include all of Charles Williams Apartments, to become coterminous with the Newby Division)

(2) the changes take effect on 01 April 2024 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15th October 2023 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 01 December 2023)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

E) OSGODBY

(1) to extend Osgodby Parish Council boundary to include those 3 properties currently outside of the parish, at the norther boundary line, and to become coterminous with the Cayton Division

(2) the changes take effect on 01 April 2024 for administrative purposes.

(3) the change takes effect on 15th October 2023 for electoral purposes (ahead of publication of the revised register planned for 01 December 2023)

(4) the changes should be as shown on the map at Annex A

iii) if Council recommends creation of parish councils and changes to existing parishes authority be granted to the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources to implement the decisions including making reorganisation orders which amongst other things will set the precept for the first year of the town councils to take effect from 1 April 2024.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Harrogate Final Recommendations
Appendix 2 – Scarborough Final Recommendations
Appendix 3 – Eastfield Final Recommendations
Appendix 4 – Newby and Scalby Final Recommendations
Appendix 5 – Osgodby Final Recommendations
Appendix 6 – Equality impact assessment screening form
Appendix 7 – Initial climate change impact assessment form

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Executive report of 10 January 2023 – Draft Recommendations on the Community Governance Reviews relating to the unparished town centres in Harrogate and Scarborough

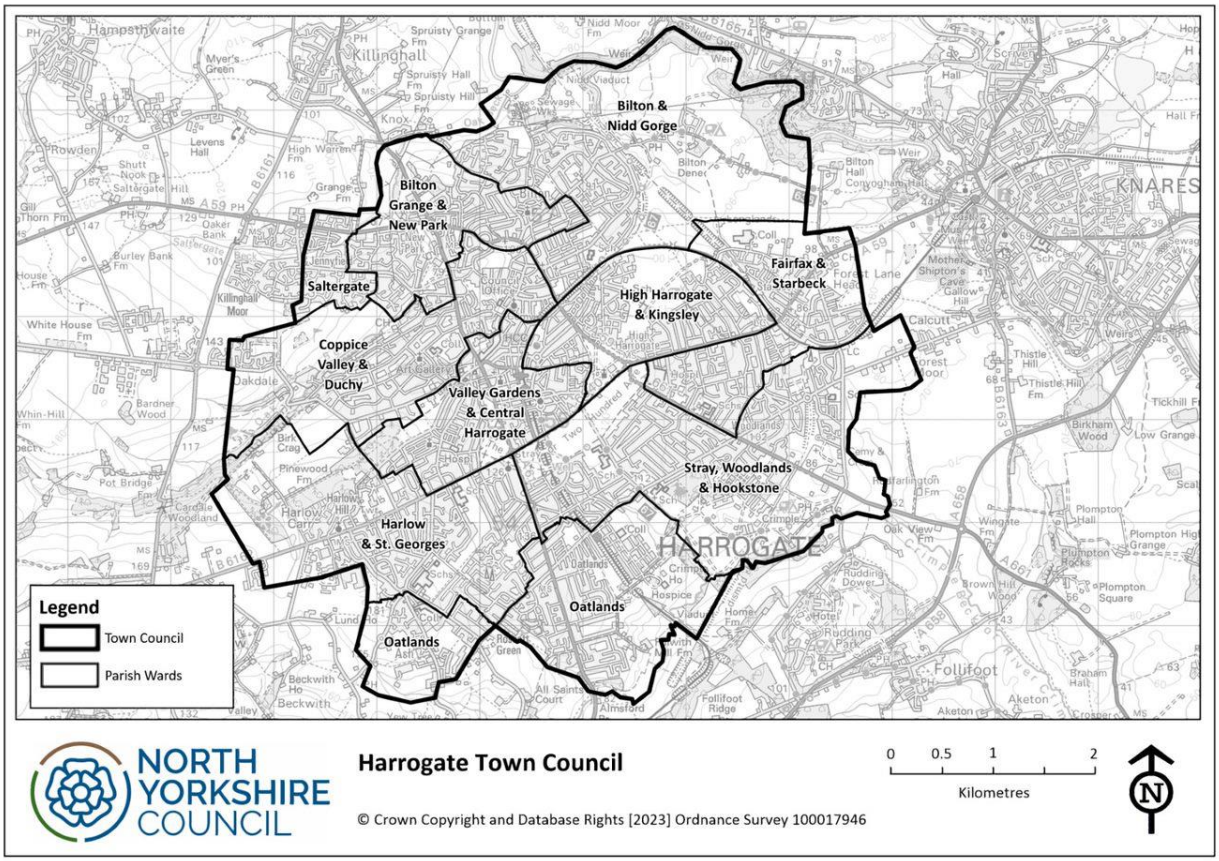
Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)
County Hall
Northallerton

27 June 2023

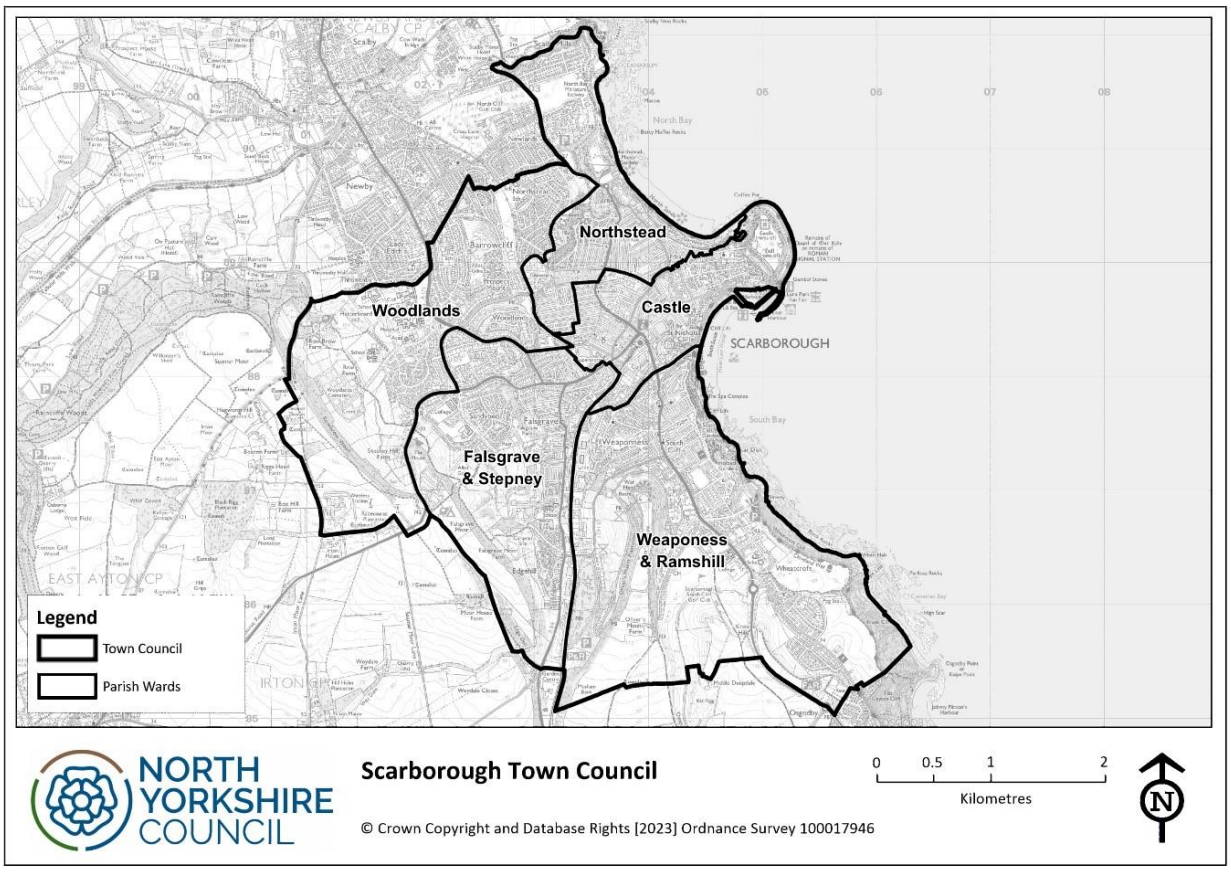
REPORT AUTHORS:
Elizabeth Jackson – Democratic Services Manager
Kerry Russett – Head of Democratic Services and Corporate Modernisation

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

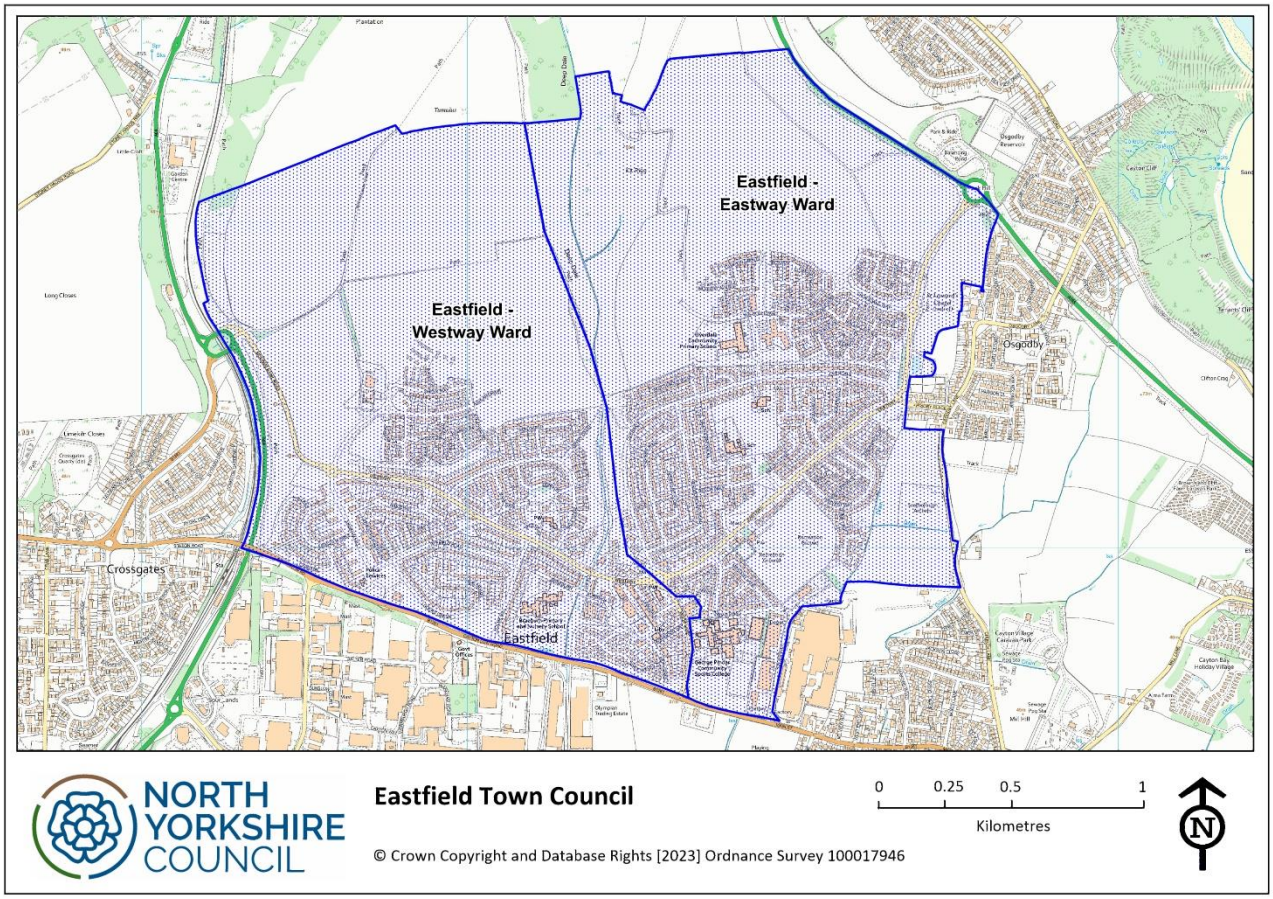
A) HARROGATE



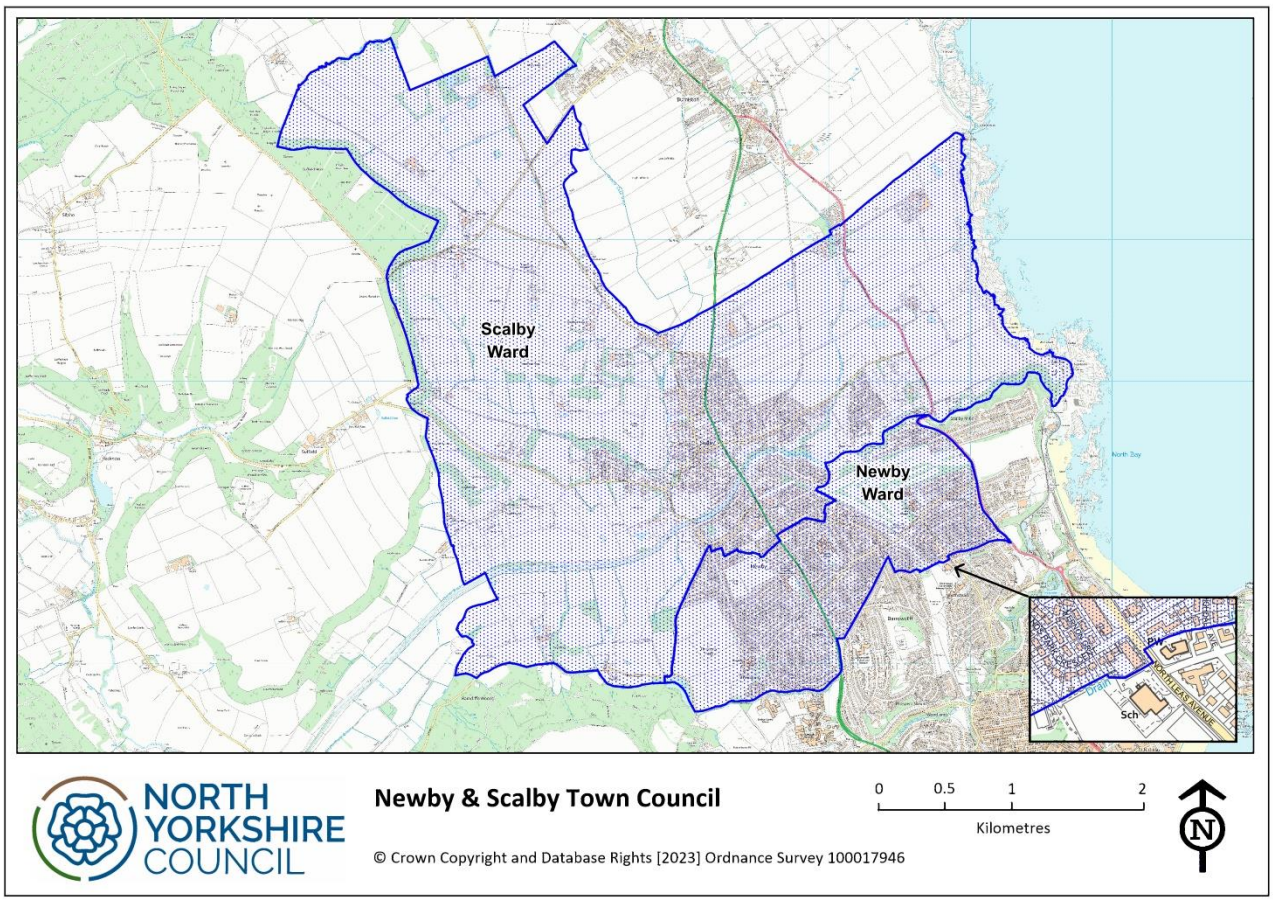
B) SCARBOROUGH



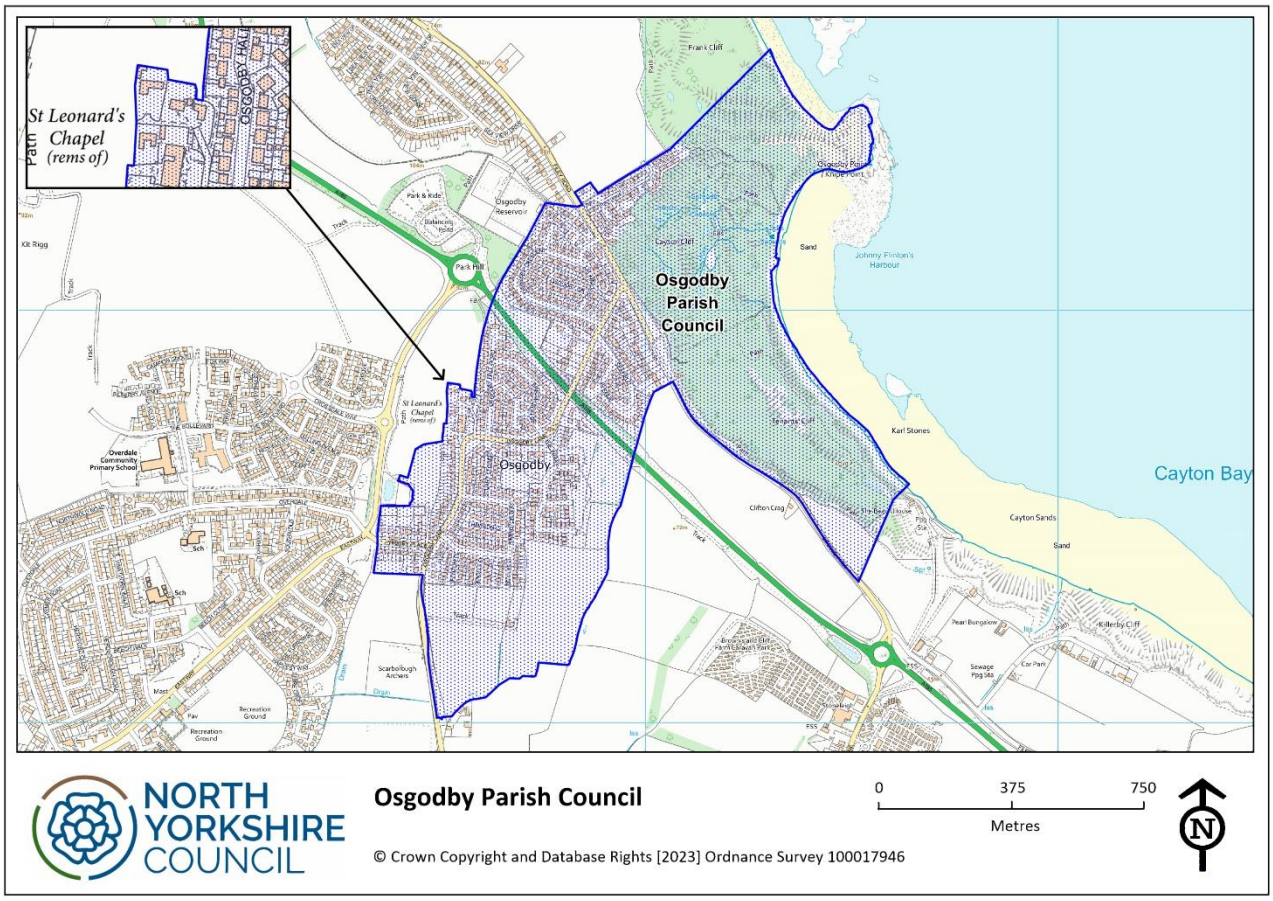
C) EASTFIELD



D) NEWBY AND SCALBY



E) OSGODBY


St Leonard's Chapel (rems of)
Osgodby Parish Council
Osgodby
Cayton Bay
Osgodby Parish Council
0
375
750
Metres
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North Yorkshire Council

Full Council

24 July 2024

North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023–2030 - Approval and Adoption of the North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy Following Public Consultation

Report of the Corporate Director – Health and Adult Services

1.0	**PURPOSE OF REPORT**
1.1	To enable Council to approve and adopt the North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy in line with the resolution of 18th June Executive that a report be taken to Full Council recommending the adoption of the North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 to 2030.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 18th June 2024, the Executive considered the report 'North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2030,' which provided details of the feedback from respondents to the consultation on the draft Strategy, and the amendments made to the Strategy as a result.

2.2 Whilst Full Council are being asked to approve the strategy, it should be noted that it is actually being produced by the North Yorkshire Health & Wellbeing Board, with the work to develop it having been led by an editorial group with senior representation from the council and Humber & North Yorkshire ICB, and an engagement task group with representation from the council, Healthwatch North Yorkshire, HNY ICB and West Yorkshire ICB.

2.3 Once adopted the North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy will be produced as a corporate document in line with our brand guidelines.

2.4 The minutes of the meeting on the Executive on 18th June 2024 are available here- Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 18th June, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 These are covered in the report that went to the Executive on 18th June 2024.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These are covered in the report that went to the Executive on 18th June 2024.

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These are covered in the report that went to the Executive on 18th June 2024.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are covered in the report that went to the Executive on 18th June 2024

7.0	**RECOMMENDATIONS**
7.1	That Council adopt the North Yorkshire Local Joint Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2023 – 2030 as recommended by Executive following consideration of the report 'North Yorkshire Local Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2023 to 2030' at their meeting on 18th June 2024.

Richard Webb - Corporate Director – Health and Adult Services
County Hall, Northallerton

16 July 2024

Health and Wellbeing Board
North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023–2030

For all residents of North Yorkshire to have a fair chance of living a fulfilling life, free from preventable ill health, 'adding years to life and life to years'.



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Foreword

In developing our strategy, we have reviewed data, evidence and research and listened to what local people have told us matters to them. The impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic as well as climate change and the cost of living are affecting the health and wellbeing of people in North Yorkshire. We know that different communities face different challenges, for example in our rural and coastal areas, and that working together with other organisations locally plays an important role in responding effectively to these. We also know that there are differences in health outcomes for different groups in our population.

In response to this, we have identified three priorities of:

- **Prevention** - we will improve the health and wellbeing of all our residents by concentrating on the big actions that will make the most difference to our population
- **Place** - where you live should help you stay well and happy. We want to make sure that where you live does not unfairly reduce the quality of your health or length of your life.
- **People** - we will work with our communities who experience the poorest health outcomes to make sure that they make the most difference to our population.

Our priorities focus on issues where there are opportunities for partners to work together to have a real impact on health and wellbeing outcomes for people of all ages, to provide children with the best start in life and to reduce health inequalities. We know that this strategy will also influence the priorities and actions of individual organisations in North Yorkshire.

As a Health and Wellbeing Board, we will build on our history of working together as partners with local communities to respond to the current and future challenges facing our population. Together we will improve people's health from childhood to later-in-life across North Yorkshire.



Amanda Bloor
Chief Operating Officer, Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership
Vice Chair of North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board



County Councillor Michael Harrison
Executive Member Public Health and Adult Social Care
Chair of North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board

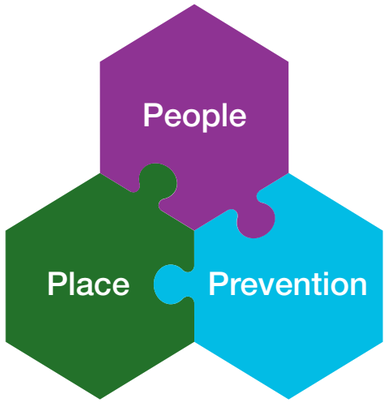
What we want to achieve through our Joint Local Health & Wellbeing Strategy?

For all residents of North Yorkshire to have a fair chance of living a fulfilling life, free from preventable ill health, 'adding years to life and life to years'.

To achieve this ambition, the Health and Wellbeing Board wants everyone - and in particular the **wider health and care system** - to:

Think Prevention	In North Yorkshire, we will improve the health and wellbeing of all our residents by concentrating on the big actions that will make the most difference to our population
Think Place	In North Yorkshire, where you live should help you stay well and happy. We want to make sure that where you live does not unfairly reduce the quality of your health or length of your life
Think People	In North Yorkshire, we will work with our communities who experience the poorest health outcomes to make sure that they can access and benefit from the services and opportunities they need

There are lots of links between Prevention, Place and People; we will work together to connect our actions so that we can tackle health inequalities as effectively as possible.



Our cross-cutting themes act as a focus for the Health and Wellbeing Board to develop our role as leaders in the wider health and care system, and collectively make a difference:

- **Workforce, employment & volunteering opportunities**
- **Digital inclusion and innovation**
- **Making best use of our resources**
- **Accessibility of services and communication**
- **Joining up our coproduction and engagement**

Introduction

What is the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

Each local area must have a Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy which sets out the priorities identified within its Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) that local government, the NHS and other partners will deliver through its Health and Wellbeing Board.

The overall ambition of the **North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board** is to reduce the gap in life expectancy, increase years of healthy life expectancy and reduce differences between health outcomes in our population. **We want to add years to life, and life to years.**

This is our third Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It builds on our previous strategies and sets out priorities for action over the next 7 years.

Our priorities focus on areas where there are opportunities for partners to work together to have a real impact on **health and wellbeing outcomes** for people of all ages, to provide children with the best start in life and to reduce **health inequalities**.

We will work collaboratively as a partnership and with our communities to deliver these priorities.

You can find a short explanation of the words in orange at the end of this strategy.

What do we mean by health inequalities?

Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people. They are created by the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. We all have some influence over our own health through the lifestyle choices that we make, but the conditions we live in and whether we have fair access to services will have a much greater impact. These factors are often referred to as the **building blocks of health**, or **wider determinants of health**:

- Where we are born
- The amount of money we have
- The quality of our education
- Where and what we do for work
- Connections such as digital and social networks
- Where we live
- The food we eat
- Healthcare
- Where and how we play and exercise

People's views of health inequalities

Members of the public from different walks of life spoke to researchers about what health inequalities mean to them. Watch the video here

"The health difference across the country matters. What's on the map is unfair."

"You shouldn't have to learn a system in order to know best how to use it."

"Respect, accept and value all people, regardless of how we look or where we live".

"Decision-makers should involve communities in the beginning, middle and end of decision-making, recognising their strength."

What does health and wellbeing look like in North Yorkshire?

North Yorkshire is a great place to live in lots of ways, with beautiful countryside, vibrant market towns and active communities. Most people in North Yorkshire live relatively healthy lives, and average life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average.

However, it's not the same for all - some groups of people are less healthy and die sooner, from illnesses which we can prevent.

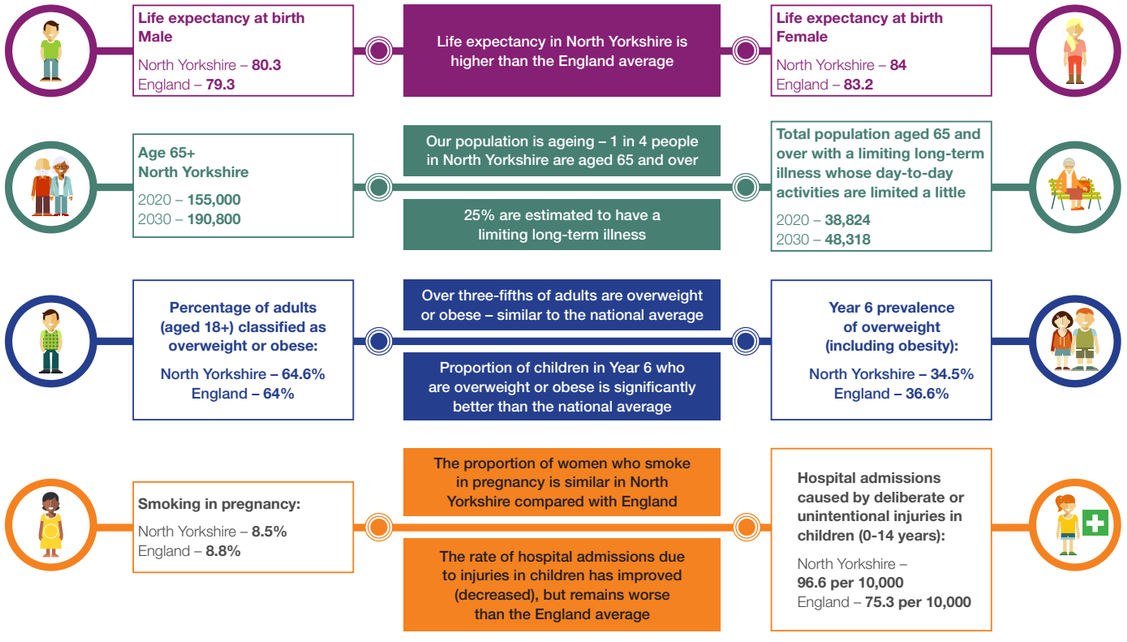
There are also areas where life expectancy is worse, particularly in Scarborough, but also in parts of Selby, Harrogate and Richmondshire. The gap in life expectancy between our most deprived and least deprived wards can be as much as 11 years for men and 10 years for women.

We also know that there are inequalities within wards, and even within streets, including in areas that are not considered 'deprived'. The action we take through this strategy is about reducing these differences.

We serve a total population of 615,400 people with 153,800 people (25%) over the age of 65 years. With projected trends and inward migration of older people to the area, we expect this figure to increase to almost a third by 2035; this is higher than the national average. We will also see an increase in the prevalence of conditions often associated with older age such as falls and dementia.

The actions in this strategy will help us to focus on preventing and delaying the impacts of some of these conditions, improving quality of life and maintaining people's independence for as long as possible.

You can find more facts and figures about health in North Yorkshire here: www.datanorthyorkshire.org/



How we have developed this strategy

To develop this strategy, we looked at what the data was telling us about health in North Yorkshire. We reviewed the progress that had been made under our previous strategy, and we worked with partners to understand what was most important for them. You can find out more about our partners and priorities in the appendix.

We considered the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's health and what we know about this so far, and we also looked at the cost of living crisis and what this meant for people's ability to live healthily.

We looked at what people had told us through engagement during and since the pandemic, to understand their experiences and views of health and social care, and wider health and wellbeing. Although this brought in a wide range of voices and communities across North Yorkshire, some were less well represented – in particular, those groups who experience the poorest health outcomes, including Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Show communities, refugees, asylum seekers and homeless people. Reaching these groups is a priority for this strategy.

In North Yorkshire, our engagement review showed that the cost of living is a concern for all ages, with people sharing worries about money, the impact on mental health, and on physical health if not able to afford to keep homes adequately heated, the choice for some of 'heat or eat', affordability of travel, and young people worried about their parents struggling. This was reinforced in the feedback from our consultation on the draft strategy. People also told us what was important to them to be able to stay healthy and well, including access to healthcare, physical activity, green spaces and social connection.



The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's health and wellbeing has been immense, and it will take many years for the full scale of this to be realised. You can find out more about the impacts of the pandemic in the **North Yorkshire Director of Public Health Annual Report 2021-22** To view click here

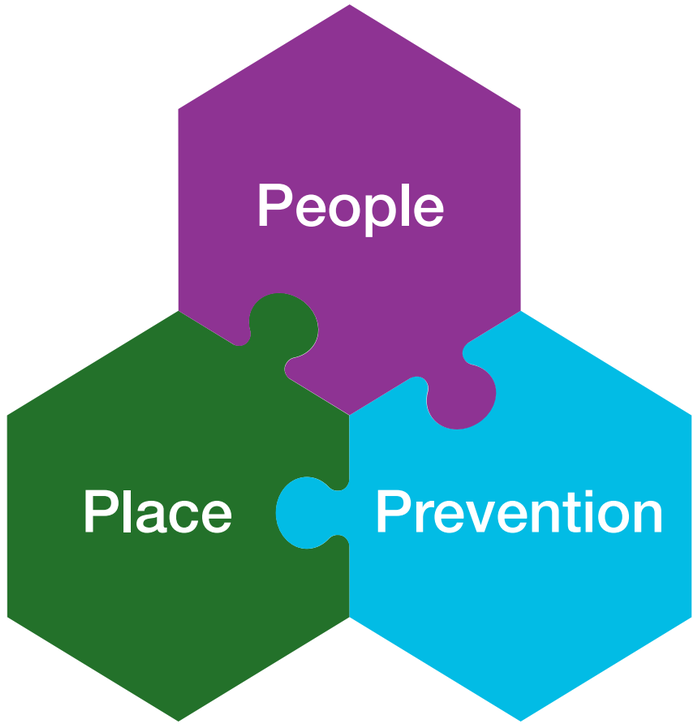
Introducing our strategic priorities

The links between Prevention, Place and People

If the **place** we live in has good housing, access to green spaces, transport, education and employment opportunities, this helps **people** to live well and **prevent** ill health.

However, some **people** who experience the poorest health outcomes live in our most deprived places and are more likely to experience some of the population health major conditions that we want to **prevent** – for example, chronic respiratory disease. They will take these skills with them through to the next generation.

Although we have separate sections in this strategy for **Prevention**, **Place** and **People**, we know that there are lots of links between them. By making sure that we connect up our work across the system, it will be more effective and result in better outcomes for people in North Yorkshire.



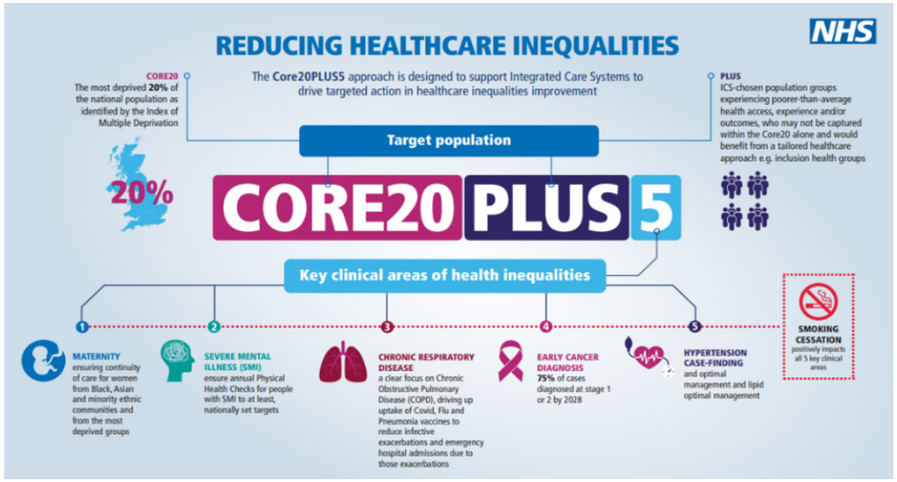
Think people | **Think place** | **Think prevention**

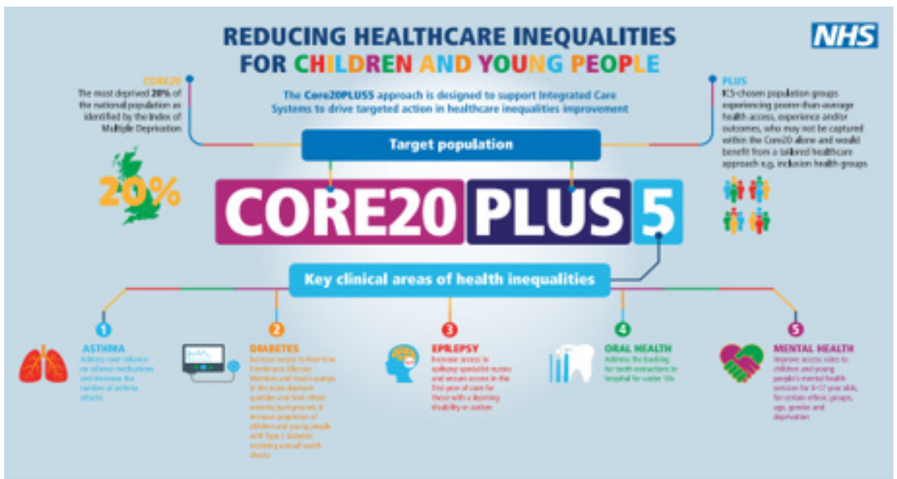
Core20PLUS5

The NHS Core20PLUS5 is a national approach aimed at reducing healthcare inequalities at both national and local level via targeted action.

It concentrates on the most deprived 20% of the national population (Core), the groups that experience poorer than average health outcomes (PLUS), and 5 specific clinical areas (5).

The Core20PLUS5 approach underpins our strategy, and is in turn strengthened by the strategy's focus on the building blocks of health; putting both together, we can ensure a more robust and joined-up response to health inequalities.





For more information about Core20Plus5, please see the following links for children and young people: NHS England Core20PLUS5 – An approach to reducing health inequalities for children and young people and for adults: NHS England » Core20PLUS5 (adults) – an approach to reducing healthcare inequalities

Think Prevention

In North Yorkshire, we will improve the health and wellbeing of all our residents by concentrating on the big actions that will make the most difference to our population.

What does this mean?

North Yorkshire people are healthier, and live longer, than the average for England. But there is still work to do to reduce the number of people affected by conditions that, by everyone working together, can be prevented or delayed. **The national 'Major Conditions Strategy: case for change'** shows that in most instances, poor health arises from living with at least one of 6 major health conditions: cancer, heart disease, musculoskeletal disorders, mental ill-health, dementia and respiratory diseases. Together, these conditions account for over 60% of ill health and early death in England. **One in 4 adults has at least 2 health conditions**.

Many of these illnesses can be prevented where people are able to live healthy lives, underpinned by effective prevention services/ interventions that start in pregnancy and childhood, for example the Healthy Schools Award Programme, and various other initiatives within schools and Early Years settings.

Investing in prevention can protect individuals and their health by improving their quality of life and extending healthy life expectancy.

Activities focussed on prevention are also beneficial to wider parts of the economy such as helping to increase productivity through reduction in sickness absence and lowering costs by reducing the need for hospital care and medical treatment.

We want the **healthy choice to be the first choice** for people. For this to happen people need the skills, opportunities and motivation to take action, supported by a healthy environment and with access to good services.

Skills should first be taught to our youngest residents in schools, promoting good nutrition, active lifestyles, and resilience and wellbeing. They will take these skills with them through to the next generation

Why does it matter?

Many health conditions affect a wide proportion of the population; heart disease, stroke and cancer account for the greatest proportion of deaths within North Yorkshire. 61% of adults are classified as overweight or obese, and in year 6 aged children, the proportion that are overweight or obese is 34%.

More worrying, Reception Year children have higher levels of excess weight than the national average. Although smoking prevalence in North Yorkshire is lower compared to England, in some areas it is higher than the England average.

The rate of hospital admission for alcohol related conditions is worse than the England average. We also need to consider the number of young people starting vaping and then work with partners to reverse this trend.

As we see an increase in the numbers of older people we will also see an increase in falls, frailty and other conditions often associated with old age. Organisations will need to work together to plan services to meet this future demand whilst at the same time focusing on prevention.

What people have told us

Concern about timely access to GP and other health appointments came through as a particularly strong theme in our review of engagement, and people said that it affected their health and their ability to manage long-term conditions. Another strong theme was about both children's and adults' experiences of mental ill-health and problems getting support. We know there are significant concerns around access to autism assessment and support for both children and adults, but with children, this has impacts on education that may be lifelong. Many of the issues mentioned in People and Place are also relevant here, including availability of accessible public transport and what people need for their area to be a healthy place to live. By addressing these barriers, prevention interventions are more likely to succeed.

Access to health care was also a key theme from the consultation on the draft strategy, alongside feedback on what people need to stay healthy, including affordable physical activities, access to green spaces, social connection and support for families.



East Barnby Healthy Schools. Jemison Photographer Ltd.

What we are going to do

- Develop our local response to the national**Major Conditions Strategy** (2023) including:
  - **Supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children** and families, with a focus on those in our communities who have been hit the hardest by the pandemic as evidence on this emerges;
  - Tackling issues which cause health inequalities and make it harder for **people with poor mental health to stay well.** These include employment, loneliness, discrimination, debt and housing;
  - **Preventing the onset and reduce the impact of cardiovascular disease** (CVD) by identifying those at risk earlier, focusing on prevention and improving the management of CVD health conditions.
  - Focus on **prevention** to reduce the risk of people developing long-term conditions by:
  - Continuing to **reduce smoking levels** in North Yorkshire, working towards our aim of achieving 'smoke-free 2030';
  - Continuing the successful partnership approach of the **Healthy Weight Healthy Lives** strategy, developing our whole system transformational approaches to physical activity and access to healthy food.
- Implement the new national **Modern General Practice** model to support recovery of access to primary care in communities. This will support the continuing growth in the number of appointments available in GP Practices.
- Improve **quality and efficiency of patient pathways** across health and social care to free up bed capacity in hospitals, by:
  - Providing **good access to primary care and urgent care** to reduce the need for admission into a hospital bed and reducing the average length of stay in a hospital bed through timely and safe discharge back home or to suitable community-based care;
  - Delivering **quality healthcare through innovative models** eg virtual wards and a new intermediate care model including improvements in triage, assessment, discharge, reablement and community-based care and support;
  - Developing a multi-agency programme of work around **falls and frailty**;
  - Reducing long waits for care and treatment in line with the NHS long term plan and joint forward plans of the ICBs, with a focus on prioritising clinical need.
- Improve uptake of **NHS health checks**, screening and immunisation programmes.
- Implement the **North Yorkshire Sexual, Reproductive Health and HIV strategic framework**, working across the system to deliver the associated action plan.



- In line with our transformation plan, continue the ICB programme of investment in access to NHS dentistry, and use population health data to direct dental funding to the areas of most need to help reduce inequalities.
- Develop robust, flexible commissioning strategies to enable a wider range of dental services including community dental services, intermediate minor oral surgery, referral management service, urgent dental care and dental checks in special educational need schools.
- Implement the Age Friendly Communities framework, co-producing actions with the North Yorkshire Age Friendly Network
- Continue to develop a network of **Community Anchor Organisations** to support individuals, groups and agencies in around 30 local geographies to contribute to prevention goals and reduce health inequalities - making local voices easier to hear, improving social connection, growing volunteering, running community activities or services and developing local solutions to local needs.
- Strengthen the health and wellbeing offer in local libraries including social connection, volunteering opportunities, activities, information & signposting, literacy and digital connection.
- Further develop our partnership approach to the **prevention of seasonal health issues**, including adverse weather planning, heatwaves and climate change, fuel poverty, and prevention of excess winter deaths.
- Improve our approach to **Community Infection Prevention & Control** to support health protection in frontline services across the system.
- Develop a local response to the national **Suicide Prevention Strategy**. Ensure that **parents have the pre and post-natal support they need**:
  - Continue to ensure our Health Visitors
  - provide appropriate support to every family, stepping up care where appropriate and ensuring that women have the right help in the first few years of their child's life;
  - Continue to promote breastfeeding friendly venues and expand breastfeeding peer supporters;
  - Continue to work together on perinatal mental health services;
  - Support local communities to provide parent and baby groups for peer support;
  - Close strategic working between children's services and the Integrated Care Boards.
- Continue to explore funding initiatives to provide **affordable activities** for children, young people and their families.
- Continue to focus on improving children and young people's **mental wellbeing and resilience** via:
  - the Healthy Schools Award Programme and other school initiatives;
  - work with school safeguarding leads around **online safety, peer relationships and mental health and wellbeing**.
- Continue our **health surveillance** to act on those health issues we have identified as being of concern **for children and young people**, including:
  - Childhood admissions from unintentional injuries;
  - Childhood unhealthy weight;
  - Drug and alcohol admissions.
- Maintain the **downward trajectory of unplanned pregnancies in under-18's**, with a sustained focus on Scarborough with higher than England rates.

Think Place

In North Yorkshire, where you live should help you stay well and happy. We want to make sure that where you live does not unfairly reduce the quality of your health or length of your life.

What does this mean?

We know that where we live is important: our access to services, education, homes, supportive networks, employment, green spaces, activities and leisure opportunities affects how healthy and happy we are. We also know that connected and empowered communities will contribute to healthier, happier and flourishing societies, and we want the people of North Yorkshire to be able to actively participate in their locality and feel a strong sense of belonging.

Social, economic and environmental factors interlink to create communities in which we should all be able to thrive. Tackling these building blocks of health can help make significant improvements to the quality of life of all our communities, at both a county level and a neighbourhood level.

Why does this matter?

North Yorkshire is the largest county in England by land area, and its geography ranges from rural to urban and coastal. Eighty-five percent of the county is classed as very rural or super- sparse. This diversity brings many opportunities for quality of life for our communities and for visitors, but also challenges, particularly around delivering consistent and accessible services, affordable homes and access to high-quality education and employment across the area.

The county is relatively prosperous but there are pockets of very high levels of deprivation, particularly in Scarborough town and Whitby.

Life expectancy at birth for men and women in North Yorkshire is generally significantly higher than the England averages. However, as we describe in the introduction to this strategy, at the local level life expectancy across the county varies widely.

As highlighted in the Chief Medical Officer for England's Annual Report 2021, coastal communities include many of the most beautiful, vibrant and historically important places in the country. They also have some of the worst health outcomes in England, with low life expectancy and high rates of many major diseases. There is a 15 year difference in life expectancy for males between the ward with the lowest overall life expectancy (Castle ward, Scarborough district) and that with the highest overall life expectancy (Ripon Minster ward, Harrogate district).

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 highlighted 24 neighbourhoods in North Yorkshire that fall within the most deprived quintile in England, 20 of which are concentrated in Scarborough town and Whitby.

The final report of the independent North Yorkshire Rural Commission (2021) noted the beauty of spacious countryside and opportunities for thriving rural communities, but highlighted problems including a lack of affordable housing, poor public transport links and a huge issue with digital connectivity for both mobile and internet coverage.

What people have told us

In our engagement review, we heard about the importance of place for good health and wellbeing. People said that for good health, they needed affordable public transport; accessible, inclusive and affordable opportunities for exercise, including being in nature; supportive communities and networks. Public transport came through as a key enabler for many of the building blocks of health, and a big concern for people. The geography of North Yorkshire was also highlighted, and in particular the reduction of specialist health care in local areas due to the concentration of specialisms in larger urban areas. For children and young people, what matters to them at all ages is their family, friends, environment and having something to do - this is shown in our Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 focussing on children & young people.

These themes also came through strongly in our consultation on the draft strategy.



What we are going to do?

To build our stronger, fairer and greener places, we will focus on five key actions for Healthy Places: community, homes, food, spaces and movement – and no-one left behind:

Community: we will -

- Ensure that local areas are designed to enhance people's mental and physical health, and involve local people via **neighbourhood planning**.
- Develop approx. **30 informal local Community Partnerships**, predominantly around our market town footprints, and support their focus on prevention and reducing inequalities, in particular offering help to progress any local action plans which have identified health and wellbeing as a local priority.
- Support **voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector** organisations to sustain and grow opportunities to reduce inequalities, and improve the wellbeing and social connectedness of people of all ages.
- Develop opportunities for **communities** across North Yorkshire to have **greater control in leading change** that positively impacts health and wellbeing, and builds resilient, connected communities.



Homes: we will -

- Influence healthy design in the **Housing Strategy** – including work to improve quality of housing, increase energy efficiency of homes, increase adaptable and affordable homes and homes which are flexible for the needs of specific groups.

Food: we will -

- Focus on improving **food infrastructure and the local food environment**, taking a whole system approach that looks to provide accessible, sustainable and nutrient dense food, from food production to distribution, nutrition, consumption and food waste disposal:
  - Develop the first **North Yorkshire Food Strategy** by end of 2024;
  - Focus on developing an Eatwell culture starting with access to good food and education in schools through to affordable and diverse access in communities, and acting on recommendations from food insecurity research and insight project;
  - Work with **farmers and producers** to support access to nutrient-dense food.
- Influence healthy design in the **Economic Growth Strategy** - enhance the growth of local economies by using the approach as set out by the PHE 2021 Inclusive and Sustainable Economies: no-one left behind.

Spaces: we will -

- Influence healthy design in the North Yorkshire Local Plan - we will prioritise the design of places to improve health and wellbeing; ensure developments do not adversely affect health; and use planning to promote creation of healthy places which make healthier choices easier.
- Enable our **Local Care Partnerships** to lead the design of local integrated health and care services across the county.
- In addition to the above actions, take opportunities to **design environments that include:**
  - **High-quality, climate-resilient natural environment and streetscape**, for example increasing street tree planting and urban greening;
  - **Improving indoor and outdoor air quality** to reduce air pollution-related impacts;
  - **Neighbourhoods that are complete and compact**, with enhanced connectivity through walkability and accessibility.
- Influence healthy design in the Community Safety Strategy (due for refresh in 2024) – look for opportunities for the design of places to enhance safety and support community safety priorities.
- Reduce health inequalities in **rural and coastal communities** with an initial focus on:
  - Improving **data and research** into those communities;
  - Increasing health and care workforce in coastal communities working with partners in the academic sector;
  - Building on the work of the **North Yorkshire Rural Commission** to address access issues for health and care;
  - Developing innovative models for **domiciliary care in rural areas**, including care built on community strengths.

Movement: we will -

- Influence healthy design in the **Local Transport Plan** - we will ensure links to Local and Strategic Transport Plans where possible with the aim of providing Active Travel infrastructure; prioritising active travel and safe road use; enhanced accessibility for all ages; improving and creating rural solutions for public transport.
- Physical activity – **develop the new sport and active well-being approach** following the Council's strategic leisure review including:
  - services that complement wider community activity, and create opportunities for **active well-being for all** across our diverse geography;
  - make best use of **open spaces & natural environments**;
  - create evidence based approaches to **tackle major health conditions** (such as weight management, falls prevention, cancer prehab);
  - support **inclusive & accessible activity** for those who find it hardest to participate.

In addition: we will -

- Make sure that all partners have a **shared understanding** of what is meant by a **place-based** approach, by agreeing together our vision and principles for healthy, happy places, and change the way that we **communicate about the building blocks of health** to increase public and partner understanding.
- Maximise the opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of our population through the **devolution deal** for North Yorkshire and York which will support economic growth and strategic infrastructure.

Think ‘People’

In North Yorkshire, we will work with our communities who experience the poorest health outcomes to make sure that they can access and benefit from the services and opportunities they need.

What does this mean?

For many people North Yorkshire is a great place to live a healthy life, and the joint action we take under this strategy will help to sustain this, building on community strengths. Our aims and actions for Think Prevention and Think Place will benefit all our communities.

However we know that there are people within our communities for whom it is much harder to live a healthy lifestyle and to access the right services to prevent ill health. We also know that some people will experience additional barriers – for example, ethnic minority people, disabled people, women and LGBTQ+ people.

By concentrating on areas and population groups where the inequalities are greatest, we will start to close the gap on inequalities and have the biggest impact



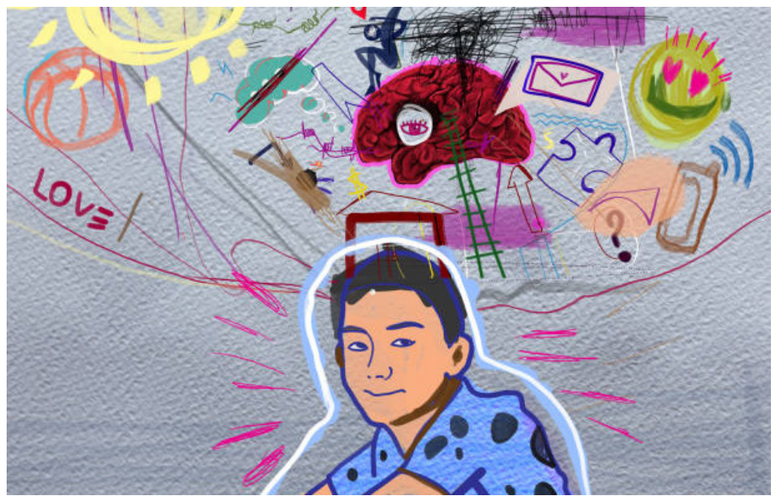
Why does it matter?

Some groups of people across North Yorkshire can experience multiple overlapping risk factors for poorer health, such as trauma, poverty, violence and discrimination. This leads to extremely poor health outcomes - often much worse than the general population, lower average age of death, and greater health inequalities. We want to work together to address this.

We will focus on people who are in at least one of these groups:

- **experience poor mental health and/or mental illness;**
- **have learning disabilities;**
- **are autistic;**
- **are older people living on low income and/ or with multiple health conditions;**
- **experience homelessness;**
- **experience drug and alcohol dependence;**
- **have experienced adversity or difficulty in their childhood;**
- **are vulnerable migrants, refugees and asylum seekers;**
- **live in Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Show communities;**
- **are sex workers;**
- **experience the justice system;**
- **are victims of modern slavery;**
- **military community or veterans.**
- **Carers both paid and unpaid**

Individuals in these groups tend to die younger than the rest of the population and in some of the groups, much younger. For example, the average mortality rate for homeless individuals, prisoners, sex workers and people with substance misuse disorders is between 9 and 15 times higher than the wider population for women and between 5 and 11 times higher than the general population for men. Source: OHID Spotlight. Women spend a significantly greater proportion of their lives in ill health and disability when compared with men. While women make up 51% of the population, historically the health and care system has been designed by men for men. *Source: Women’s Health Strategy, 2022*. There will also be differences in needs within these groups (for example between men and women, through age or culture), so we must understand these differences.



What people have told us

In our engagement review, we heard that for some people there are more barriers to access health care because of who they are.

This included concerns that services lacked awareness of how to support LGBTQ+ people, unreliable access to interpreters for refugees and migrant families, poor availability of accessible information and communication particularly for disabled people and worries about being stigmatised or viewed negatively because of their identity or conditions. Older people have reported feeling excluded from health and other services due to the focus on digital technology. In our consultation on the draft strategy, people said that they needed accessible health and care services, community facilities and information. We heard about the importance of good support for families, and improved access to mental health support. We also heard about the impact of financial exclusion on physical and mental health.



What we are going to do

- Work together to understand more about who and where our **priority groups** are in North Yorkshire, and their barriers to living healthy lives. Use this to develop a framework to support services to **address these barriers in design and delivery.**
- Identify specific actions to support **improved health outcomes for key groups** of people through refreshing our joint strategies for autism, carers, dementia, substance use, mental health, Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND).
- Strengthen how we work with **particular communities** to support improving their health outcomes, for example refugee, asylum seeker and migrant communities and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Show communities.
- Review and improve how we work together to support people with **complex life circumstances**.
- Work together more closely across partners to better **coordinate our responses to financial inclusion for those most in need,** including our work on:
  - affordable, good quality and well-insulated housing;
  - access to affordable food;
  - cash and non-cash based benefits;
  - transport;
  - sports, leisure and wellbeing activities.
- In response to the national 10-year Women's Health Strategy, continue to develop a North Yorkshire approach to **improve the health of women and girls** to reduce the disparities that currently exist.
- Implement a programme of work around **healthy ageing** which includes a focus on reducing inequalities and improving outcomes, particularly in areas where there is a higher proportion of older people.
- Work together across the health and care system to improve **waiting times** for assessment and access to services.
- **Transform the care market** with a focus on rural and coastal areas, dementia and working age people with complex life circumstances. Work across the health and care system to support providers with workforce development initiatives.
- Develop our **specialist housing offer** including Extra Care, Supported Housing and Supported Living to address shortages, particularly for working age people with care and support needs, guided by a new housing framework and in partnership with Housing and Care Providers
- Develop an innovative and improved offer across North Yorkshire to **improve the health and wellbeing both paid and unpaid carers**.
- Strive to enact the recommendations set out in The Best Start for Life Programme.
- Promote and support **mental and physical health in pregnancy** to ensure that our children have the best start in life, including support for parents who may need extra help with their mental and physical health, parenting and the rising cost of living.
- **Support the most vulnerable families** with the **cost of living**, ensuring they are enrolled in schemes for which they are eligible, eg:
  - Free school meals;
  - Healthy Start Scheme;
  - Government-funded childcare;
  - Work with schools to poverty-proof the school environment.
- Initiate a programme of **children and young people's mental health transformation** to ensure that all organisations involved are connected and communicating as an effective system, so that young people receive the right support in the right place at the right time.
- Promote this system of **mental health and wellbeing** around a flexible, asset-focused, needs-based programme of support, in the knowledge that appropriate input will be advised no matter the organisation where concerns are first raised.
- Support children and young people to be **school ready** and continue to maximise their life chances through continuing to **access education and training**.
- For those young people most at risk, in the care system, ensure that the Council's responsibilities as **corporate parent** provide holistic support for the building blocks of health.
- Collectively examine, with our partners, the **children & young people's priorities** for North Yorkshire and determine which are best tackled more locally and which are best tackled at a regional level to make the best use of all our resources.
- Continue working together to **safeguard people of all ages** across the health and care system.



Cross-cutting themes

From our discussions with partners and our engagement work, we have identified some cross-cutting themes. These themes are important to our work under our priorities of Prevention, Place and People. For each of the themes, we also want to make sure that we share knowledge and learning to enhance our effectiveness. As a Health and Wellbeing Board, we will have a programme to develop our role as leaders in the **wider health and care system ("system")** on the following issues:

Workforce, employment and volunteering opportunities

As a **system**, show leadership in providing employment and volunteering opportunities for people who experience barriers to employment, including those who live in areas of deprivation, disabled people, young people with Special Educational Needs and people from our priority groups. We also acknowledge the important contribution the workforce makes to delivering the improvements in this strategy and will equip them with the skills and knowledge they need for their roles and to work with others across the system.

Accessibility of services and communication

As a **system**, ensure that our services and communication channels are accessible to everyone, and in particular make improvements for disabled people and others who may experience barriers to access, making reasonable adjustments to support this. Work with representative groups and communities to identify barriers to access and practical solutions.

Making best use of our resources

As a **system**, we acknowledge the pressures facing each organisation so we will work together to make best use of our collective resources (our people, our finance, our buildings, our research, data and intelligence) to deliver the strategy together. Efficient use of these resources will avoid duplication, maximise impact at a community level and enable delivery at scale where appropriate.

Digital inclusion and innovation

As a **system**, act to reduce digital exclusion and enhance the opportunities provided by digital innovation. We also recognise that some people will not want to access digital solutions, therefore we will engage to understand the reasons, provider alternatives solutions and ensure that people who cannot or do not want to access digital options do not receive a lesser service. In our health and social care services, we will embed digital innovations to support admission avoidance, improve discharge, support digital pathways of care and support people to stay as independent as possible in their own homes and communities.

Joining up our coproduction and engagement

As a **system**, collaborate on our coproduction and engagement work to ensure that we listen to and involve our communities as we implement this strategy, in particular by embedding excellent coproduction practice. Create a better experience for our communities in the way we do this, with the aim of strengthening community relationships, reaching those who are under-represented and managing the demand on community groups (particularly socially excluded groups).



Delivering our Strategy

In North Yorkshire we have a strong working partnership across the health, social care and voluntary organisations who work with local people to prevent ill-health and deliver care. As a Health and Wellbeing Board, we are stronger together and recognise the commitment across the whole system to enable North Yorkshire to be a good place to live a healthier longer life.

The implementation of this strategy presents a powerful opportunity for North Yorkshire to create a partnership system for the future,

building on previous success and momentum of the last strategy and the new developments of the health and care system and unitary council for North Yorkshire. This includes working at the local community level with Local Care Partnerships and Community Partnerships.

The Health and Wellbeing Board will provide leadership and direction to the system and hold organisations, including Integrated Care Systems, to account on how they are delivering the priorities of the North Yorkshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy through annual action plans. The Health and Wellbeing Board will also advocate at both regional and national levels for improvements which will benefit the health of North Yorkshire residents.

Our principles for how we will work collectively to deliver the ambitions of our new strategy?

We will focus on early intervention and prevention in everything we do starting with our youngest children;

We will work with our local communities using an asset based community development approach to identify and support local solutions to improve health and wellbeing

- **We will work to address the building blocks of health that drive poorer health outcomes, for example transport, housing, and access to services;**
- **We will promote inclusion, recognising diversity and reducing inequalities;**
- **We will work with communities to develop a collective understanding of and responsibility for actively managing our health and wellbeing.**

This short film from our neighbours in Leeds explains asset based community development. To view click here



How we will keep track of our progress

Change can take a generation for some of these issues. We recognise that, so we also want to identify other ways we will monitor achievements and progress.

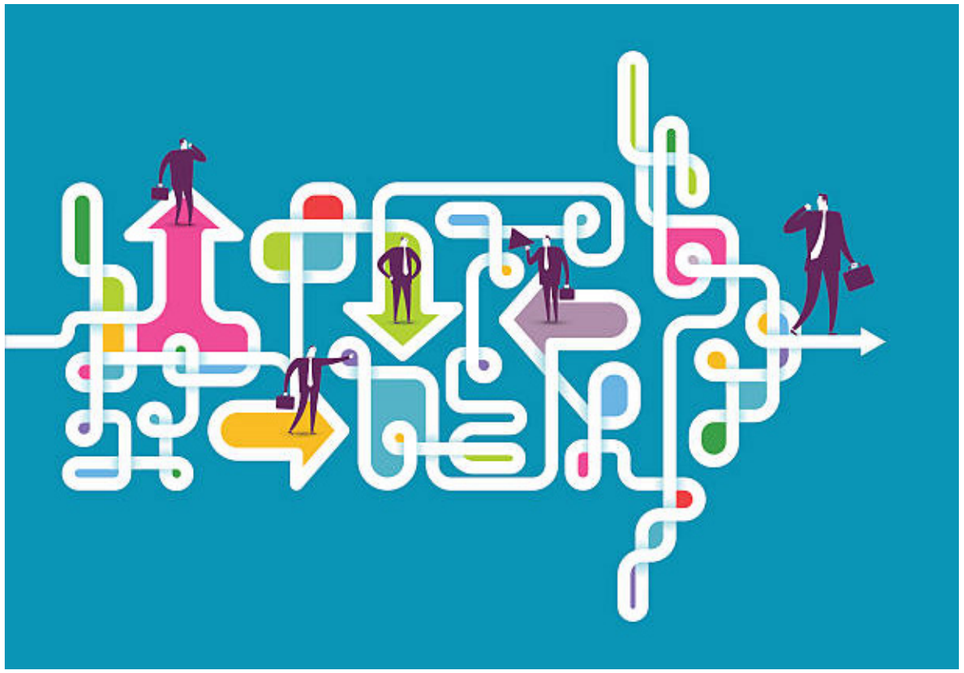
One important measure of our success will be reducing the number of years that people spend in ill-health and reducing unfair variation in this. Achieving this will require action over the long term. Our collective work on our priorities will contribute to this and we will track progress on each of them. We will ensure that our work is evidence-based and informed by research. This will be supported by Public Health intelligence and Population Health Management approaches, and by the new North Yorkshire Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC). The HDRC will better identify the local social, economic and environmental factors that influence the health and wellbeing of our residents, and help partners to shape policies and interventions that promote health equity and reduce health inequalities.

Another important measure will be what people say – the feedback that our communities give us about their experiences, their health and their wellbeing, and how involved they are in making the changes. We will continue to develop the ways that people can get involved in the work of the Board.

External scrutiny will provide additional rigour in the monitoring of our work together, including the new Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection of Adult Social Care and Integrated Care Systems, as well as existing inspection frameworks for health and care providers (CQC) and children's social care and education (OFSTED).

We will develop a delivery plan with ways to measure the difference we are making, and progress reports will be presented at the quarterly Health and Wellbeing Board

Meetings, with information available to the public. In addition to this, the Health and Wellbeing Board will hold a spotlight session on each priority to examine progress in more detail through the year.



Appendix 1

Strategic landscape

In April 2023, the county council and seven district and borough councils in North Yorkshire became one council, making North Yorkshire Council one of the largest councils. The new unitary council delivers a wide range

of local services which contribute to the health and wellbeing of people and places across the county, including housing, social care, leisure, community safety, economic development and planning. In addition, the new York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority launched on 1 February 2024: this new devolution deal for North Yorkshire and York will support economic growth and strategic infrastructure, benefiting the health and wellbeing of our population.

The planning of our local NHS services is now overseen by **Integrated Care Boards** (ICBs). The ICBs work together with all parts of the NHS, local councils and other partners to deliver joined-up care for people, in Integrated Care Systems.

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups.

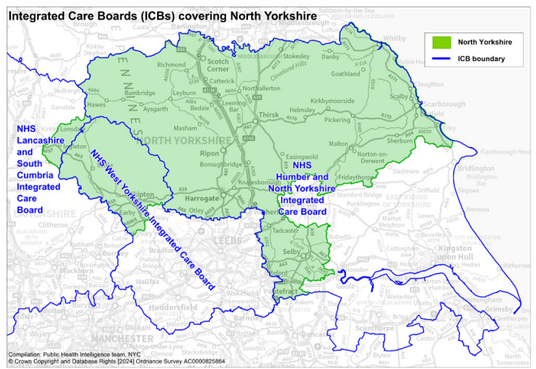
The two main Integrated Care Systems in North Yorkshire are Humber & North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership and Bradford District & Craven Health Care Partnership. They include NHS organisations, local councils, health and care providers and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations.

We all play an important role in reducing health inequalities and improving population health and wellbeing in North Yorkshire.

The establishment of North Yorkshire Council alongside the Integrated Care Boards provides new opportunities to work together with partners to transform local services to improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities.

Our Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been developed in this context. It is both an expression of our shared commitment to delivering actions which add value through working together, and a clear set of priorities to influence the core work and focus of all partners.

The diagrams on the following pages describe how each major sector in our partnership contributes to the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy through both their individual priorities and collective action.



The contribution of local health services to our joint health & wellbeing strategy

North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Prevention | **Place** | **People**

Putting it all together

Shared action to deliver our priorities

Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Systems Integrated Strategy

Narrowing the gap in healthy life expectancy between the highest and lowest levels in our communities by 2030 and increasing healthy life expectancy by five years by 2035:

- Start well
- Live well
- Age well
- Die well

Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Systems North Yorkshire Place Plan Priorities 2023-2028

- Comprehensive and integrated health & social care model
- A high quality care sector, with sufficient capacity to meet demand
- A strong workforce
- Prevention and public health: adding life to years and years to life

West Yorkshire Integrated Care System Bradford & Craven Place Plan

Priorities

- Access to care
- Children & young people
- Healthy communities
- Healthy minds
- People development

Enablers

- Living well
- Reducing inequalities
- Digital data intelligence & insight
- Research & innovation
- Estates

NHS National Annual Operational Plan delivered by ICSs

Priority areas

- Urgent & Emergency Care
- Community Health Services
- Primary Care
- Elective Care
- Cancer
- Diagnostics
- Maternity
- Use of Resources
- Workforce
- Mental Health
- People with a learning disability & autistic people
- Prevention & health inequalities

Key joint partnership strategies: Mental Health, Carers, Healthy Ageing, Autism, Substance Use, SEND, Learning Disability, Tobacco Control, Suicide Prevention, Community Safety, Economic Development, Local Plan, Housing, Transport, Leisure, Food, Community Partnership Plans

The contribution of North Yorkshire Council to our joint health & wellbeing strategy

North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Prevention | **Place** | **People**

Putting it all together

Shared action to deliver our priorities

Council Plan 2023-2027

Health & Wellbeing Priorities

- People are supported to have a good quality of life and enjoy active and healthy lifestyles
- Reduced variations in health through tackling the root causes of inequality
- People can access good public health services and social care across our different communities
- People have control and choice in relation to their independence and social care support

Connected Priorities

- Place and environment; economy; people; organisation

Underpinned by Locality working

- Local services and access; local accountability, action & empowerment

Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) Priorities

- Transformation of the Mental Health system with shared vision with partners around I-Thrive model
- Auto-enrolment in free school meals
- Continued surveillance to address emerging issues and trends for CYP
- Working with wider partners for the safeguarding of every child in North Yorkshire
- Ensuring high quality provision of services for Early Help, Safeguarding, SEND, Education and Transitions to Adulthood
- Delivery of 0 – 19 Healthy Child Programme through partnership
- Striving to enact the recommendations set out in the Best Start for Life Programme

Health & Adult Services Plan

- Opportunities for everyone everywhere
- My time and experiences are valued
- My home, my community, my choice

Public Health Priorities

- Best start in life – for babies, children and young people
- People moving more – improving health and wellbeing through physical activity
- Healthy aging – ensuring that older people are able to age well
- Reducing health inequalities through health place shaping and targeted work with vulnerable groups/ communities
- Ensure measures are in place to protect the population's health
- Improve the mental health of our population
- Ensure the working age population have opportunities to live well
- Work with our NHS partners to maximise our joint effectiveness and impact on health outcomes
- Developing a centre for public health excellence including in research, training and behavioural science

Adult Social Care Improvement Priorities

- Waiting Well
- Reviews
- Direct Payments
- Carers
- Reablement
- Home First
- Complex Care

Key joint partnership strategies: Mental Health, Carers, Healthy Ageing, Autism, Substance Use, SEND, Learning Disability, Tobacco Control, Suicide Prevention, Community Safety, Economic Development, Local Plan, Housing, Transport, Leisure, Food, Community Partnership Plans

The contribution of other key partners to our joint health & wellbeing strategy

North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Prevention | **Place** | **People**

Putting it all together

Shared action to deliver our priorities

Local independent consumer champion for health and social care

Healthwatch North Yorkshire: 2023-2024 priorities

- Continue to build on the work that we have already championed such as GP access, dentistry, social care and mental health
- Expand our reach and engagement with those communities who aren't always listened to or involved in their health & social care
- Establish a people's voice network for North Yorkshire to ensure people are at the heart of decision making

Voluntary and community sector

Community First Yorkshire

- Having a strong collective voice to help raise the profile of voluntary organisations & community groups
- Helping communities & organisations to thrive
- Supporting individuals to help their communities and volunteer

Key joint partnership strategies: Mental Health, Carers, Healthy Ageing, Autism, Substance Use, SEND, Learning Disability, Tobacco Control, Suicide Prevention, Community Safety, Economic Development, Local Plan, Housing, Transport, Leisure, Food, Community Partnership Plans

Glossary

North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board	The North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory committee of North Yorkshire Council and provides a forum where political, clinical, professional and community leaders from across our health and care system come together to improve the health and wellbeing of our local population and reduce health inequalities.
Health and wellbeing outcomes	The difference made by actions to improve health and wellbeing. For example, more people take up regular exercise (action) which results in fewer people being overweight and reducing their risk of heart disease (outcome)
Health inequalities	Unfair and avoidable differences in health across the population, and between different groups within society. These include how long people are likely to live, the health conditions they may experience and the care that is available to them.
Wider determinants of health	The wide range of factors that affect our health – the places we live, our education, the jobs we have, how much money we have, how connected or how isolated we feel
Wider health and care system	All the organisations, community groups and so on that are involved in organising and delivering health and social care – broader than the NHS or the local council
Integrated Care Board	A statutory NHS organisation responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget and arranging for the provision of health services in a specific area.
Integrated Care System	Integrated care systems (ICSs) are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services, and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area.
Socially excluded	Groups that: • Are not consistently recorded in electronic systems (dropping through the system) • Experience stigma and discrimination • Have insecure housing, overcrowding or communal accommodation • Experience barriers in access to health care and other services • Have multiple poor health risk factors (poverty, violence, complex trauma) Such factors lead to extremely poor health outcomes across physical and mental health.
Inclusion health	Making sure that people who experience social exclusion have their health and wellbeing needs met, by targeted activity where required.
Devolution deal	In England, devolution is the transfer of powers and funding from national to local government. It is important because it ensures that decisions are made closer to the local people, communities and businesses they affect. Each devolution deal is negotiated separately between ministers and local council leaders, but most deals devolve a core set of powers relating to transport, skills and economic development.
Local Care Partnerships	Local Care Partnerships help to deliver the aims of the Integrated Care System at a more local level, working in and with communities.
Community Partnerships	North Yorkshire Council is developing Community Partnerships to work in and with communities within North Yorkshire. Community Partnerships will connect with Local Care Partnerships.
Asset-based community development (ABCD)	ABCD focuses on a community's assets, capacities and abilities, rather than on needs, deficits and problems. In this way, communities work together to share skills, strengthen relationships and build on what is strong, not what is wrong.

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North Yorkshire Council
24 July 2024

Proposed Changes to the Constitution for recommendation to full Council

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable Council to consider the appended report 'Proposed Changes to the Constitution' as recommended to Council by the Executive at their meeting on 9 July 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 9 July 2024, the Executive considered the appended report 'Proposed Changes to the Constitution' and recommended it to Council at their meeting on 24 July 2024.

2.2 The Constitution is maintained by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and kept under review on an ongoing basis. Proposed changes to the Constitution are considered by the Members' Working Group on the Constitution and the Executive and ultimately approved by full Council.

2.3 The proposed amendments to the Constitution include changes: to the titles of the Area Constituency Committees and the Area Constituency Planning Committees; to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules; to the definition of a Key Decision is relation to grant applications and acceptance; to the Financial Procedure Rules; and to the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme.

2.4 The minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 9 July 2024 are available here - Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 9th July, 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are covered in the appended report that went to the Executive on 9 July 2024.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That Council consider the appended report 'Proposed Changes to the Constitution' as recommended to Council by the Executive at their meeting on 9 July 2024.

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON
16 July 2024

Background Documents: North Yorkshire Council Constitution; The Local Government 2000 as amended.

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

9 July 2024

Proposed Changes to the Constitution for recommendation to full Council

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To present to the Executive, for reporting back to full Council for information, amendments to the Constitution made by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services under his delegated powers.

1.2 To present to the Executive, for recommendation to full Council for approval, proposed amendments to the Constitution.

2.0 **BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Constitution is maintained by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and kept under review on an ongoing basis. Proposed changes to the Constitution are considered by the Members' Working Group on the Constitution and the Executive and ultimately approved by full Council.

2.2 Under Article 15.02(c) of the Constitution, the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services has delegated power to amend the Constitution:

(i) to correct administrative issues such as cross-references, title changes, typographical errors and formatting;
(ii) to ensure that the Constitution and the Council's procedures meet all legal requirements;
(iii) to reflect changes to arrangements for the distribution of responsibilities and the delegation of powers in accordance with decisions taken by the person(s) or body with authority to take such action; and
(iv) consequentially, to give effect to changes explicitly approved by the full Council;

and any such amendments as set out in sub-paragraph (c)(ii) above shall be reported to the next meeting of the full Council.

3.0 **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

3.1 Part A of the amendments chart at **Appendix 1** sets out proposed amendments to the Constitution for Members' consideration, relating to:

a) the titles of the Area Constituency Committees and the Area Constituency Planning Committees being amended to Area Committees and Area Planning Committees respectively and that the existing geographies remain as they are

until such time as a full review of the geographies can be undertaken, following engagement with Members.

3.2 The more substantive items for consideration are the subject of separate sections of this report below.

3.3 Part B of the amendments chart at **Appendix 1** sets out amendments for information which have been undertaken by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services under his delegated powers in Article 15.02(c) of the Constitution and which are being reported back to full Council for information. Such amendments relate to:

a) correcting typographical/administrative/formatting errors;

b) picking up further consequential amendments (previously agreed by Council) to change references to the Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.4 Subject to any comments Members may have, the Executive is asked to:

a) agree that the proposed amendments to the Constitution set out in Part A of **Appendix 1** be proposed to full Council for approval;

b) note the amendments to the Constitution set out in Part B of **Appendix 1** to this report, made by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services under his delegated powers, for reporting back to full Council for information.

4.0 PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

4.1 Officers have taken the opportunity to undertake an interim review of the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules in the Constitution, specifically related to the current three quote and best value process.

4.2 Certain amendments are proposed to the financial limits for seeking a minimum of three quotes or using the best value process to demonstrate value for money, in order to support a more agile and flexible way of working. The proposed amendments relate to the Council's obligation to comply with transparency requirements.

4.3 On 5 June 2024, the Members' Working Group on the Constitution considered the proposed amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules in this regard and recommended them to the Executive for consideration and recommendation on to full Council.

4.4 Currently the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules state:

MINIMUM THREE QUOTES PROCESS/BEST VALUE FORM

8.5 Where the estimated value of a Contract is above £5,000 excluding VAT, and less than £50,000 including of VAT (taking into account the whole life cost of the Contract including extensions and/or variations) a minimum of three quotes should be sought.

8.6 Where possible quotes should be sought from at least one local supplier based within North Yorkshire and at least one Small and Medium Enterprise (SME).

8.7 If three quotes are not sought, the Contract may be directly awarded using the Best Value Form as long as sufficient justification is given for not undertaking a quotes process. It is the Officer's responsibility to complete the Best Value Form.

8.8 A three quote process/best value form cannot be accepted where the value exceeds the upper limit for this process (i.e., £50,000 inclusive of VAT). If the value of the quote exceeds the upper limit for this process the bids process must be followed in accordance with Rule 9.

4.5 It is recommended that the financial limit for the three quote process/ best value form is amended as detailed in the below table:

Spend Area	**Upper Threshold Limit (Including VAT)**
Goods/ Services contracts (excluding Technology Contracts)	£5,001 up to and including £100,000
Technology Contracts	£5,001 up to and including £150,000
Works contracts	£5,001 up to and including £250,000
Light Touch Contracts (typically social care)	£5,001 up to and including £170,000

4.6 Benchmarking has been undertaken to review what other Local Authorities financial limits are for seeking quotations. This has evidenced that the proposals are in line with similar size councils:

- Cumberland Council - 3 quotes up to £100k
- Somerset Council - 3 quotes up to £100k for goods/ services and £250k works
- Leeds City Council - 3 quotes up to £100k and 4 quotes up to the relevant UK Procurement Threshold
- Barnsley Council - 3 quotes up to £100k for goods/ services and £250k works

4.7 Amending the financial limits will allow the centralised Procurement and Contract Management Service (PCMS) to focus delivery on the key strategic requirements for the council.

4.8 The process for seeking quotations or completing the best value process is more streamlined and will save Officer time and speed up and simplify the procurement process for suppliers. As part of the proposed changes, we would mandate that one quote must be from an SME[1]/ VCSE[2] or local supplier, unless this is not possible due to the nature of the market. This will help the council drive its ambitions around supporting SMEs/ VCSE and businesses within North Yorkshire to do business with the council and reduce the resource burden which is often perceived. It is anticipated that by mandating the requirement to seek at least one quote from an SME, VCSE or local supplier that this could help reduce the environmental impact of contract delivery.

4.9 To ensure transparency related to lower value contracting activity the council will continue to:

[1] Small & Medium Enterprise (SME)
[2] Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCSE)

- Publish the forward procurement plan which provides a pipeline of contract opportunities.
- Comply with requirements to publish on the government Find a Tender site.
- Publish the council's contract register.
- Publish decision records, where applicable.
- Ensure entries are made on the council's forward plan of key decisions, and publish reports, where applicable.

4.10 To minimise any risks associated with increasing the financial limits the following will be implemented:

- The Procurement Manual will be updated with supplementary advice and guidance on how to approach seeking quotes.
- Online quote training will be promoted to all staff.
- Advice will continue to be available from the centralised procurement team.
- The PCMS will review all quotation and best value forms to monitor compliance with the process and ensure transparency requirements are adhered to.
- The Budget Manager will have to approve the quotation / best value form.
- Audit will conduct an annual audit of the quotes/ best value process to provide assurance.

4.11 Certain minor clarifying amendments have been included in the proposed amendments to the Rules since they were considered by the Members' Working Group on the Constitution, by the inclusion of the words "and including" before the threshold figures, to make it clear that the threshold includes that figure. Tracked change amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, reflecting the above proposals, are attached at **Appendix 2**. This tracked change document has been produced since the above proposals were considered by the Members' Working Group on the Constitution but are consistent with the proposals considered by and the views of the Working Group.

4.12 There are no significant financial implications arising from these proposed amendments. It should be noted that under the Council's Finance Procedure Rules, Budget Managers have delegated authority up to £500k. As such the proposed amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules are within this limit. As part of the governance Budget Managers will be required to approve the quotation form / best value form. This information will be routinely reported to the Finance Assistant Directors.

4.13 The proposed changes to the financial limits are in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and comply with the new Procurement Act 2023 regulations which come into effect from 28 October 2024. The processes outlined (quotes / best value) relate only to below UK Procurement Threshold values.

4.14 Subject to any comments Members may have, it is recommended that the Executive recommend the proposed amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to full Council for approval.

5.0 KEY DECISIONS IN RELATION TO GRANT APPLICATIONS AND ACCEPTANCE

5.1 Officers have undertaken an interim review of the application and implication of the Key Decision definition, as detailed in Article 13 of the Constitution, in the context of applications for grants/external funding and the acceptance of any such funding offered, as detailed in the Financial Procedure Rules (FPRs).

5.2 Certain amendments are proposed to the following parts of the Constitution, to support a more agile and flexible way of working:

- the financial limits for applying for and accepting grants and external funding in Rule 28 of the FPRs;
- consequential amendments to paragraph 6 of the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme to reflect the proposed amendments to the financial limits for applying for and accepting grants and external funding in Rule 28 of the FPRs set out above; and
- amending the definition of a Key Decision in Article 13.

Key Decisions

5.3 It is proposed that minor amendments be made to the definition of a Key Decision as set out in Article 13 of the Constitution to add clarity and for consistency of terminology across the Constitution. The amendments are set out by way of tracked changes to Article 13 in **Appendix 3** to this report and include:

- expanding the wording around the community effect limb to clarify how this is defined (see Article 13.03 (b) (i) (bb)); there is no change in application of the provision, just clarity that 'more than one community' means more than one electoral division.
- amending the exclusions to the Key Decision <u>financial</u> limb (see Article 13.03 (b) (ii)).as follows:
  - to include an exemption for direct award grants, as these are offered to the Council without a bid or application process; and
  - to exempt any decisions which are identified on the Procurement Pipeline.

5.4 The inclusion of procurements and contracts identified on the Procurement Pipeline as an exclusion would align to the approach taken for any decisions specifically identified in the budget approved by Council.

5.5 The Procurement Act 2023 is coming into force in Autumn this year and has a significant increase in transparency requirements for the Council. Given the increase in transparency for procurements, pre, during and post contract award the view of Officers is the Council will end up duplicating decisions and information within the public domain (please see **Appendix 4** for the Transparency Requirements/ Notifications for procurements). The proposed exemption of the Procurement Pipeline is intended to streamline and simplify access to information.

5.6 Amending the wording will simplify the application of Key Decisions and aid the cultural and behavioural changes around ensuring sufficient notice of contracting requirements to safeguard entry onto the Council's Procurement Pipeline which is published quarterly. It will also support a more agile and response led organisation to service delivery.

5.7 The proposed changes are in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972; the Local Government Act 2000; The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The flowchart at **Appendix 4** outlines the additional

transparency obligations under the new Procurement Act 2023 which come into effect from 28 October 2024.

Grant applications and acceptance

5.8 The Council's consolidated budget has increased significantly since local government reorganisation in comparison to the budgets of the former District, Borough, and County Council. The Council budget is circa. £1.2bn (2024/25), with grant funding accounting for £210m (2024/25).

5.9 Due to the way in which grant monies are often allocated from central government Officers generally have to operate within extremely short timescales around:

- notification of ability to bid for grant monies.
- accepting and spending grant monies, due to prescribed dates by when funding must be spent.
- there is often a specific date by which the Council must accept the grant. This can be difficult to comply with due to the above reasons.

5.10 The above can make it difficult to meet obligations to bid for grant monies and /or ensure the optimum outcome is delivered within the prescribed timescales for spending and delivery.

5.11 Grants often require a procurement exercise and this compounds the timescales within which the Council is operating.

5.12 On review of the direct award grant process, Officers recommend this process applies to both statutory and discretionary direct award grants.

5.13 Proposed amendments to Rule 28 of the Financial Procedure Rules are set out by way of tracked changes in **Appendix 5** to this report. The proposed amendments to increase the financial limits within Rule 28 should assist with the issues identified above.

5.14 Consequential amendments will also be required to the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme and these are set out in **Appendix 6** to this report. Since the Constitution Working Group considered the proposed amendments, paragraph 6 of the Scheme has been amended in the Constitution (following the May Council meeting) so the amendments are now tracked on an updated extract.

Benchmarking

5.15 Benchmarking has been undertaken to review what other Local Authorities financial limits are for Key Decisions and Grants.

5.16 In relation to Key Decision financial thresholds it is proposed that the values remain "as is" and this is broadly in line with other Authorities reviewed:

- Leeds City Council – expenditure/savings over £500k or significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards.
- Cumberland Council – savings/expenditure equal to or greater than £500k or if the decision will have significant effect on the communities living or working in one or more wards.
- Manchester City Council – expenditure/savings in excess of the lesser of £500k or 10% of the gross operating expenditure for any budget heading in the revenue budget approved by the Council.

- Cheshire West and Chester Council – expenditure/savings of £1m or more or significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

5.17 As a result of the review, the proposals detailed in **Appendix 3** recommend clarifying the wording around communities (see Article 13.03 (b) (i) (bb)).

5.18 In relation to Grant financial thresholds the information varies across the Local Authorities reviewed:

- Leeds City Council – the grant provisions are general within the Financial Regulations in that figures are not stated.
- Cumberland Council – for grants going out Executive approval is needed where over £150k to be provided to a body where it is outside approved budget. For grants coming in, there is a reference to the funding needing to be reported in the annual budget report or budget monitoring reports.
- Manchester City Council – For grants going out the Chief Executive can make grants up to £100k and up to £500k in consultation with the Leader. The Director of Population Health can provide grants for specific duties to be discharged. There is provision for grant bid proposals – Chief Officers and Heads of Service to consult with the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer to seek Executive approval where the grant supports expenditure not in the capital programme.
- Cheshire West and Chester Council – have specific reference to grants in and grants out. Table 1 below details the limits:

Table 1: Approvals for the submission and acceptance of all external funding grant bids

Approval route	Authorisations Required	Consultation Required	Total Value where match funding required	Total Value where no match funding required
ODN[3]	Service Director	Departmental Finance Manager	Up to £100k	Up to £100k
ODN	Service Director; Director of Finance	Relevant Cabinet Member	£100,001 - £250,000	£100,001 - £250,000
ODN	Service Director; Director of Finance; Director of Governance	Relevant Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Legal and Finance	£250,001 - £1,000,000	£250,001 and over
Committee Paper	Cabinet		Over £1,000,000 *This will be a key decision where the match funding is over £1,000,000	

For grants out, there is an annual report to Cabinet and then for those not in the original report;

- Up to £10k – Director approval
- £10,001 - £50k Directors in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Governance and relevant Cabinet Member

[3] Officer Decision Notice

- £50,001 - £500k - Cabinet Member Legal and Finance
- Over £500k – Cabinet approval.

5.19 Many of the Local Authorities reviewed do not have clear financial thresholds for grants coming in/ allocated out. For North Yorkshire Council it is important to have clearly defined requirements for Officers to adhere to. Appendix 1 (section 28.4 and 28.5) sets out the proposals which broadly see the limit increase from £200k to £500k as this aligns to the budget manager authorisation level.

5.20 Subject to any comments Members may have, it is recommended that:

- the proposed amendments to the definition of a Key Decision, as set out in **Appendix 3** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval;

- the proposed amendments to the Financial Procedure Rules as set out in **Appendix 5** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval; and

- the proposed consequential amendments to the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme as set out in **Appendix 6** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The financial implications are set out in the body of this report.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no significant environmental or climate change implications arising from this report.

8.2 A Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening Form is attached at **Appendix 7**.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

9.2 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form is attached at **Appendix 8.**

10.0 CONSULTATION

10.1 Relevant Officers and Members have been consulted on the proposed changes set out in this report and its Appendices.

10.2 This report also incorporates the views of the Members' Working Group on the Constitution as expressed at the Group's meeting on 5 June 2024.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 For the reasons set out in the body of this report and in the Appendices, it is recommended that, subject to any comments Members may have, the matters raised

in this report be considered and the recommendations and proposed changes to the Constitution set out below be recommended to full Council for information and/or approval as indicated.

12.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

12.1 That, subject to any comments Members may have:

(a) the proposed amendments to the Constitution set out in **Part A of Appendix 1** be recommended to full Council for approval;

(b) Members note the amendments to the Constitution set out in **Part B of Appendix 1** to this report, made by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services under his delegated powers, for reporting back to full Council for information;

(c) the proposed amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules as set out in **Appendix 2** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval;

(d) the proposed amendments to the definition of a Key Decision, as set out in **Appendix 3** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval;

(e) the proposed amendments to the Financial Procedure Rules as set out in **Appendix 5** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval;

(f) the proposed consequential amendments to the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme as set out in **Appendix 6** to this report be recommended to full Council for approval.

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

27 June 2024

Background Documents:
North Yorkshire Council Constitution
The Local Government 2000 as amended

Appendices

1. Proposed Amendments Chart
2. Proposed amendments to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules
3. Proposed amendments to the definition of a Key Decision
4. Transparency Requirements/ Notifications for procurements
5. Proposed amendments to the Financial Procedure Rules
6. Proposed consequential amendments to the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme
7. Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening Form
8. Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form

APPENDIX 1

Proposed Amendments to Constitution – for full Council in July 2024

Where amendments are suggested to part of a paragraph, only the relevant part is replicated in the amendment chart below.

PART A: ITEMS FOR DECISION			
Provision in Constitution	**Current Wording**	**Proposed Amendment**	**Reason(s)**
Throughout Constitution		*Remove the word "Constituency" from the titles of, and all references to, the Area Constituency Committees and the Area Constituency Planning Committees in the Constitution, so that their titles become "Area Committee" and "Area Planning Committees".*	It is recommended that the titles of the Area Constituency Committees and the Area Constituency Planning Committees be amended to Area Committees and Area Planning Committees respectively and that the existing geographies remain as they as until such time as a full review of the geographies can be undertaken, following engagement with Members.
PART B: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION			
Whole Constitution		*Minor formatting/typographical/administrative errors have been corrected in the Constitution under the Monitoring Officer's delegated powers as set out in Article 15.02(c)(i) of the Constitution to correct administrative issues.*	To ensure that the Constitution is accurate and up to date.
		Making further consequential amendments (previously agreed) to change references to the Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	To ensure that the Constitution is accurate and up to date.

OFFICIAL

Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. General
3. Compliance with Legislation and Standards
4. Powers and Key Decisions
5. Form of Contract
6. Signature/Sealing of Contracts
7. Bonds and Liquidated Damages
8. Quotes
9. Bids
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11. Above Threshold Process
12. Options for Above Threshold Process
13. Receipt and Opening of Above Threshold Tenders
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16. Exceptions to Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules
17. Compliance, Contract Register and Procurement Pipeline
18. Gateway Process and PSR Governance Process Reports including notification of Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer
19. Contract Management
20. Training for Procurement
21. Declaration of Interests
22. Grants
23. Hiring and Engaging Staff

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*These Rules constitute the Council's Standing Orders in relation to contracts under Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 and apply to all contracts (excluding those stated in **Rule 2.2**), including those made in the course of the discharge of functions which are the responsibility of the Executive.*

Please note that any reference within these Rules to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and any requirement arising from them remain in force in accordance with the Withdrawal Agreement 2019 until replaced by future legislation. The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 comes into effect 1st January 2024 and will replace the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 when arranging health care services and revoke the National Health Service Regulations 2013. Further guidance will be issued by the Procurement and Contract Management Service in due course.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These terms will have the following meanings in the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules:-

Above Threshold Process	means the procurement process to be followed where the estimated whole life value of a Contract exceeds the relevant WTO GPA Threshold
Above Threshold Tender	means a tender submitted as part of an Above Threshold Process
Best Value Form	means the form to be completed to capture the rationale for not seeking bids in accordance with **Rule 8.6**
Competitive Grant Form	means the form to be completed confirming the competitive process being undertaken to award the Grant
Concession	means as defined in Regulation 3(4) of the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016
Constitution	means the Council's Constitution of which these Rules form part
Contract	means any agreement, excluding a Grant, made between the Council and any other person which is intended to be legally enforceable and involves the acceptance of an offer made by one party to commit itself to an action or series of actions and subject to the exceptions in **Rule 2.2**
Contracts Finder	means the web-based portal as described in Chapters 7 & 8 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015
Contract Management Practitioners Group	means the Council's practitioner group responsible for improving contract management standards, chaired by the Senior Contract Officer/s
Contract Register	means the register of Contracts maintained by the Council as set out in **Rule 18.6**
Contractor	means a person or entity with whom the Council has a contract

Council	means The North Yorkshire Council
Decision Record	means a record of a decision produced in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012
Director	means the Chief Executive Officer; Assistant Chief Executive HR and Business Support, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services, Assistant Chief Executive Local Engagement, Corporate Director of Environment; Corporate Director Health and Adult Services; Corporate Director Children and Young People's Service; Corporate Director of Resources; Corporate Director of Community Development as the context requires
Directors Recommendation	means a written record of the decision and justification to apply one of the exceptions set out in **Rule 17.2** to be signed and kept by the relevant Director
Electronic Signatures	means an advanced electronic signature which is: (i) uniquely linked to the signatory; and (ii) capable of identifying the signatory; and (iii) created using means that the signatory can maintain under his/her sole control; and (iv) linked to the data to which it relates in such a manner that any subsequent change of the data is detectable.
E-Sourcing system	means the Council's chosen E-sourcing system
Framework Agreement	means an agreement with one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operator which establishes an arrangement for: (i) multiple orders to be placed with one Contractor (a single supplier framework), or (ii) a framework of multiple Contractors to engage in further competitions or direct award (a multiple supplier framework)
Gateway Process	means the Council's value based gateway commissioning and procurement process that combines assessment and understanding of various aspects of value with appropriate review and scrutiny at defined points in the commissioning and procurement cycle
Grant	means a sum of money awarded by the Council to third parties

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Health Care Services	means those services detailed within Schedule 1 of the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023
HoP	means the Head of Procurement and Contract Management
Internal Audit	means the Council's appointed internal auditors (currently Veritau)
ITB	means an Invitation to Bid
ITQ	means an invitation to Quote
ITT	means an Invitation to Tender
Key Decision	means a decision made in connection with the discharge of a function which is the responsibility of the Executive set out in Article 13.03(b) of the Constitution
Leasing Agreement	means a contract for the provision of finance to enable goods or services to be obtained and where ownership in those goods does not automatically pass to the Council at the end of the contract period
LDSO	means a Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Member	means an elected member of the Council or co-opted member on a Council committee
Monitoring Officer	means the Council's appointed Monitoring Officer
Officer	means a Council employee or other authorised agent
PAB	means the Procurement Assurance Board, chaired by the HoP
Participant	means a person or entity participating in a procurement process, who has expressed an interest in tendering for a Contract or who has tendered for a Contract
PSBO	means Public Sector Buying Organisation
PCR	means the Public Contracts Regulations 2015
Person	means any individual, partnership, company, trust, other local authority, Government department or agency
Procurement and Contract Management Service	means the procurement and contract management team at the Council

Procurement Manual	means the manual to accompany these Rules which provides detailed guidance on procurement techniques and the effect of the Rules
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	means the Council's approved Procurement and Contract Management Strategy
Procurement Pipeline	means the Procurement Pipeline which outlines future procurement requirements of the Council
Property Contract	means a contract which creates an estate or interest in land or buildings
PSR	means The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023
PSR Governance Process	means the Council's value based governance commissioning and procurement process that combines assessment and understanding of various aspects of value with appropriate review and scrutiny at defined points in the commissioning and procurement cycle
Responsible Officer	means the Officer from the directorate who is responsible for the procurement and/or management of a Contract
Rules	means these Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules
SCM	means Senior Category Manager
S151 Officer	means the Council's appointed Section 151 Officer
Services or Supplies	means as defined in Regulation 2 of the PCRs
Social and Other Specific Services	means those services defined as such in Schedule 3 of the PCRs
SQ	means the Selection Questionnaire
Technology Contract	means any contract for technological products or services including IT systems, software and/or hardware.
WTO GPA Threshold	means the current threshold above which the PCR's apply, currently £214,904 inclusive of VAT for services and supplies £663,540.00 inclusive of VAT for social and other specific services and £5,327,609 for works inclusive of VAT
Waiver Request Form	means the prescribed form to be completed when requesting a waiver in accordance with **Rule 17.5**
Works	means as defined in Regulation 2 of the PCRs

1.2 These Rules form part of the overall control framework within which the Council operates. They aim to facilitate sound, innovative service delivery by setting out best

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FPPProcurement Pipeline means the Forward Procurement PlanPipeline which outlines future procurement requirements of the Council¶

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practice for the administration of all procurement and contract management matters throughout the Council, ensuring a high quality of procurement and contract management information, robust procurement and contract management and enabling good decision making. They should not be viewed as a barrier to executive action and are constantly kept under review to ensure that they remain relevant to the day to day activities of the Council and contribute to the delivery of value for money.

1.3 References in these Rules to:-

(a) any legislation (e.g. Act, Statutory Instrument, WTO requirement) include a reference to any amendment or re-enactment of such legislation;

(b) the value of any Contract or Grant are to the total estimated value payable (including VAT where applicable) over the full period of the Contract or Grant including any options or extensions to the Contract or Grant.

(c) Directors, the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer shall be taken to include such Officers as are designated by those officers to undertake the duties and responsibilities set out in these Rules, except in the case of the following Rules:-

(i) Director - **Rules 9.6, 16.1 (e) and (j)**
(ii) S151 Officer - **Rules 2.1**
(iii) Monitoring Officer - **Rules 2.1**

where delegation is not permitted, except in exceptional circumstances. A record of all duties and responsibilities as delegated under these Rules is to be maintained by each Director, the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.

2. GENERAL

2.1 These Rules are made by the Council on the advice of the S151 Officer (in consultation with the Monitoring Officer) under Article 14.02 of the Constitution and define the correct procedures to be followed when the Council enters into any contractual arrangement and should be read in conjunction with the Finance Procedure Rules under Article 14.01 of the Constitution.

2.2 These Rules apply to all Grants and Contracts for Works, Supplies, Services or Social and Other Specific Services, and Health Care Services (unless otherwise specified) but do not apply to: -

(a) contracts of employment;

(b) property contracts (which are covered by the Property Procedure Rules); and

(c) financial instruments (including, but without limitation, shares, bonds, bills of exchange, future or options contracts) (which are covered by the Financial Procedure Rules).

2.3 The S151 Officer (in consultation with the Monitoring Officer) shall review the application and effect of these Rules and make an annual report or as required but no less than once per year to the Audit Committee recommending such amendments to the Rules as are considered appropriate.

2.4 The S151 Officer has produced a Procurement Manual which sets out important issues to be considered in the procurement context. These Rules should be read in conjunction with the Procurement Manual.

2.5 The S151 Officer has also produced a Finance Manual which gives advice on financial procedures.

2.6 Where a contract for the acquisition or hire of goods or services involves any form of Leasing Agreement to finance the transaction then the S151 Officer shall undertake the negotiation of terms and authorise the arrangement in accordance with Rule 20.10 of the Financial Procedure Rules.

2.7 Directors and the HoP shall ensure that all documentation relating to Contracts, Grants and procurement processes is retained in accordance with the Council's Records Retention and Destruction Schedule.

2.8 Where the Council has awarded a contract to any person to supervise or otherwise manage a contract on its behalf such a person shall be required to comply with these Rules as if they were an Officer of the Council.

2.9 Wherever appropriate procurement shall be undertaken using the standard documents contained in the Procurement Manual applying to SQ's, ITT's or ITBs. Wherever alternative documents are to be used they must be approved by the HoP and where appropriate the Monitoring Officer.

2.10 All Officers shall adhere to the approved Procurement and Contract Management Strategy of the Council.

2.11 Where the Council is procuring in partnership with another contracting authority who are the lead procurer, subject to agreement from the HoP, the Council will follow the lead procurers Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules or equivalent.

2.12 Where the total Grant or Contract value is within the values in the first column of **Tables 1-5**, below, the award and transparency procedure in the second and third column must be followed.

2.13 Where a procurement includes two or more types of provision (i.e. Goods, Services and Works) the value shall be based on the provision that characterises the main subject of the Contract in question.

2.14 When a contract comprises a mixture of in-scope Health Care Services and out-of-scope Services or Goods, relevant authorities may only use the PSR to arrange those services when both of the below requirements are satisfied:

- The main subject-matter of the contract is in-scope Health Care Services
- The relevant authority is of the view that the other goods or services could not reasonably be supplied under a separate contract.

2.15 For the purposes of the Transparency Procedures set out in **Tables 1-5** below, the Responsible Officer must also consider the Key Decision criteria set out in Article 13.03(b)(i) of the Constitution when determining whether the procurement comprises a Key Decision.

Table 1: Goods and Services (excluding Social & Other Specific Services)

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 up to and including £5,000 (exclusive of VAT)	A single quotation shall be invited in accordance with **Rule 8**. The opportunity does not need to be advertised on the e-tendering system, contracts finder or Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. Contract details do not need be published on the Contract Register or to Contracts Finder. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
For goods and services (excluding Technology Contracts) £5,001 (excluding VAT) up to and including £100,000 (inclusive of VAT) OR For Technology Contracts £5,001 (excluding VAT) up to and including £150,000 (inclusive of VAT)	Quotes should be invited or the Best Value Form process followed in accordance with **Rule 8**. The opportunity does not need to be advertised on the e-tendering system, contracts finder or Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register. Contract details must be published on Contracts Finder for contracts above £30,000 (incl. VAT). The Responsible Officer will notify the Procurement and Contact Management Service of any Contract awarded to enable the contract to be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder (where applicable). Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).

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Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
		complete the Key Decision process.	
For goods and services (excluding Technology Contracts) £100,001 (inclusive of VAT) up to WTO GPA Threshold (currently £214,904 inclusive of VAT) OR For Technology Contracts £150,001 (inclusive of VAT) up to WTO GPA Threshold (currently £214,904 inclusive of VAT)	Bids must be invited in accordance with **Rule 9**. The opportunity must be advertised on the e-tendering system, Contracts Finder. It does not need to be advertised on Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and on Contracts Finder.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Above WTO GPA Threshold (currently £214,904 inclusive of VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rules 11 and 12**. The opportunity must be advertised on the e-tendering system, Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service.	Approval must be sought through the Gateway Process. The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record Process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and on Contracts Finder.	Two signatures: The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

Table 2: Works and Concessions

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 up to and including £5,000 (exclusive of VAT)	A single quotation shall be invited in accordance with **Rule 8**. The opportunity does not need to be advertised on the e-tendering system, contracts finder or Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. Contract details do not need to be published on the Contract Register or to Contracts Finder. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
For Works Contracts: £5,001 (excluding VAT) up to and including £250,000 (inclusive of VAT) For Concession Contracts: £5,001 (excluding VAT) up to and including £50,000 (inclusive of VAT)	Quotes should be invited or the Best Value Form process followed in accordance with **Rule 8**. The opportunity does not need to be advertised on the e-tendering system, contracts finder or Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register. Contract details must be published on Contracts Finder for contracts above £30,000 (incl. VAT). The Responsible Officer will notify the Procurement and Contract Management Service of any Contract awarded to enable the contract to be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder (where applicable). Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).

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Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
For Works Contracts: £250,001 (inclusive of VAT) up to WTO GPA Threshold (currently £5,327,609 inclusive of VAT for Works) For Concession Contracts: £50,001 (inclusive of VAT) up to WTO GPA Threshold (currently £5,327,609 inclusive of VAT for Works)	Bids must be invited in accordance with **Rule 9**. The opportunity must be advertised on the e-tendering system, Contracts Finder. It does not need to be advertised on Find a Tender Service. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and to Contracts Finder.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. For Contracts with a value of £1,000,000 or greater approval must be sought through the Gateway Process. The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and to Contracts Finder.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). Contracts with a value in excess of £1,000,000 (inclusive of VAT) must be sealed by the Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.
Above WTO GPA Threshold (currently £5,372,609 inclusive of VAT for Works)	Follow the appropriate Procedure as set out in **Rules 11 and 12**. The opportunity must be advertised on the e-tendering system, Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service.	Approval must be sought through the Gateway Process. The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and on Contracts Finder.	Contracts must be sealed by the Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Table 3: Social & Other Specific Services (Excluding Health Care Services)

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 up to and including £5,000 (exclusive of VAT)	A single quotation shall be invited in accordance with **Rule 8**. The opportunity does not need to be advertised on the e-tendering system, contracts finder or Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. Contract details do not need be published on the Contract Register or the Contracts Finder. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
£5,001 up to and including £170,000 (inclusive of VAT)	Quotes should be invited or the Best Value Form process followed in accordance with **Rule 8**. The opportunity does not need to be advertised on the e-tendering system, contracts finder or Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register. Contract details must be published on Contracts Finder for contracts above £30,000 (incl. VAT). The Responsible Officer will notify the Procurement and Contract Management Service of any Contract awarded to enable the contract to be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder (where applicable). Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).

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Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£170,001 (inclusive of VAT) up to WTO GPA Threshold (currently £663,540 inclusive of VAT)	Bids must be invited in accordance with **Rule 9**. The opportunity must be advertised on the e-tendering system, Contracts Finder. It does not need to be advertised on Find a Tender Service.	Contract award is approved by the Responsible Officer. The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and on Contracts Finder.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Above UK Procurement Threshold (currently £663,540 inclusive of VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rules 11 and 12**. The opportunity must be advertised on the e-tendering system, Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service.	Approval must be sought through the Gateway Process. The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and on Contracts Finder.	Two signatures The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Table 4: Health Care Services (Excluding Social & Other Specific Services)

Direct Award Process A

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 – £50,000 (including VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rule 15**. The Gateway Process must be completed. Awarded contract details must be published on the Contract Register, Find a Tender Service and to Contracts Finder.	Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
£50,001 – £500,000 (including VAT)		The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process for Contracts with a value of £50,000 inclusive of VAT or above. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director w[illegible] the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Over £500,000 (including VAT)		The Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	Two signatures The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Direct Award Process B

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 – £50,000 (including VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rule 15**. The Gateway Process must be completed.	Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
£50,001 – £500,000 (including VAT)	Expressions of Interest must be sought on the E-Sourcing system. Awarded contract details must be published on the Contract Register, Find a Tender Service and to Contracts Finder.	The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process for Contracts with a value of £50,000 inclusive of VAT or above. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Over £500,000 (including VAT)		The Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	Two signatures The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Direct Award Process C

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 – £50,000 (including VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rule 15**. The Gateway Process must be completed.	Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
£50,001 – £500,000 (including VAT)	An intention to award notice must be published on Find a Tender Service and to Contracts Finder. Awarded contract details must be published on the Contract Register, Find a Tender Service and to Contracts Finder.	The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process for Contracts with a value of £50,000 inclusive of VAT or above. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Over £500,000 (including VAT)		The Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	Two signatures The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Most Suitable Provider Process

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 – £50,000 (including VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rule 15**. The Gateway Process must be completed.	Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
£50,001 – £500,000 (including VAT)	A Notice of Intention to follow the Most Suitable Provider Process must be published via Find a Tender Service An Intention to Award Notice must be published to Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service. Awarded contract details must be published on the Contract Register, Find a Tender Service and to Contracts Finder.	The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process for Contracts with a value of £50,000 inclusive of VAT or above. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Over £500,000 (including VAT)		The Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	Two signatures The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Competitive Process

Total Contract Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing Contract
£0 – £50,000 (including VAT)	Follow the appropriate procedure as set out in **Rule 15**. The Gateway Process must be completed.	Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
£50,001 – £500,000 (including VAT)	The opportunity must be advertised on the E-Sourcing system, Find a Tender Service and Contracts Finder. Awarded contract details must be published on the Contract Register, Find a Tender Service and to Contracts Finder.	The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process for Contracts with a value of £50,000 inclusive of VAT or above. Where applicable, the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).
Over £500,000 (including VAT)		The Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process.	Two signatures The Director (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf). **AND** The Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf). Sealing (where appropriate) Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6**.

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Table 5: Grants awarded by the Council

Total Grant Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing
£0 up to and including £100,000	The Best Value Form or a Competitive Grant Form must be completed in accordance with **Rule 23**.	The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and/or the Key Decision Process where applicable. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register for contracts above £5,000 (excl. VAT). Contract details must be published on Contracts Finder for contracts above £30,000 (incl. VAT). The Responsible Officer will notify the Procurement and Contract Management Service of any Contract awarded to enable the contract to be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder (where applicable).	One signature The Director within the relevant Directorate (or by an Officer authorised by the Director to sign on the Directors behalf).

Total Grant Value	Award Procedure	Transparency Procedure	Signature/Sealing
£100,000+	A competitive application process must be completed in accordance with **Rule 23**. Where the value is below the thresholds set out in **Rule 19.2** a Competitive Grant Form must be completed. Where the value exceeds the thresholds set out in **Rule 19.2** the Gateway Process must be completed.	The Responsible Officer must complete the Decision Record process and, where applicable, the Key Decision Process. Contract details must be published on the Contract Register and on Contracts Finder.	Sealing Monitoring Officer (or by an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer to sign on his behalf) in accordance with **Rule 6** (unless signing is agreed by the Monitoring Officer).

3. COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

3.1 Every Contract and Grant shall comply with all relevant applicable legislation and government guidance.

3.2 Where relevant, every Contract shall specify that materials used, goods provided, services supplied or works undertaken (as the case may be) shall comply with applicable standards.

4. POWERS AND KEY DECISIONS

4.1 In consultation with the Monitoring Officer Directors shall ensure that the Council has the legal power to enter into any Contract or Grant and that in respect of all Contracts and Grants, regardless of whether they involve the procurement or provision by the Council of Works, Supplies, Services or Social and Other Specific Services, and Health Care Services, Directors shall ensure that no Contract or Grant shall be entered into which is ultra vires.

4.2 Directors shall ensure that a written record of the decision to procure a Grant or Contract is made in accordance with the Gateway process where **Rule 19** applies. Where such a decision comprises a Key Decision under the Constitution, Directors shall ensure that it is entered on to the Forward Plan and treated as a Key Decision in all respects.

5. FORM OF CONTRACT

5.1 Every Contract and Grant shall be evidenced in writing and must be signed or sealed (as appropriate) by both parties. Signature or sealing by the Council shall be in accordance with the requirements set out in **Rule 2** and **Rule 6**.

5.2 Wherever appropriate, and for all Contracts exceeding £50,000 including VAT in value, such written agreements shall be made on the basis of terms and conditions agreed by the Monitoring Officer. Such terms and conditions may be incorporated into standard order conditions. The Council may accept different terms and conditions proposed by a Contractor provided that the advice of the Monitoring Officer as to their effect has been sought and considered.

5.3 The written form of agreement must clearly specify the obligations of the Council and the Contractor and shall include:-

(a) the work to be done or the Supplies, Services or Social and Other Specific Services, or Health and Care Services to be provided

(b) the standards which will apply to what is provided

(c) the price or other consideration payable

(d) the time in which the Contract is to be carried out

(e) the remedies which will apply to any breach of Contract.

6. SIGNATURE/SEALING OF CONTRACTS

6.1 Every written Contract or Grant must be either signed or sealed in accordance with this Rule. The Monitoring Officer (or an Officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer) will determine whether a Contract must be signed or sealed.

6.2 The Monitoring Officer and such of his staff as he may designate are authorised to sign any such contract or Grant.

6.3 The Monitoring Officer also authorises such Contracts or Grants to be signed as outlined in **Rule 2.12, Tables 1-5** and **Rule 1.3(c)** provided that:-

(a) appropriate authority exists for the Council to enter into the Contract, and

(b) the Contract is either:-

(i) in a nationally recognised form, or

(ii) a standard form prepared or approved by the Monitoring Officer, or

(iii) is otherwise in a form approved by the Monitoring Officer; and

(c) any variations to approved forms of Contract must themselves be approved by the Monitoring Officer, whether they are affected by amending the Contract itself or by correspondence.

6.4 Only the Monitoring Officer (or a Legal and Democratic Services' Officer (LDSO) authorised by the Monitoring Officer) may seal a Contract on behalf of the Council, in each case being satisfied that there is appropriate authority to do so. Where agreed by

the Monitoring Officer, electronic Deeds may be executed by the Monitoring Officer or a LDSO using the Council's chosen electronic deeds execution system.

6.5 Signatures may be affixed to a Contract either using physical, handwritten means or an Electronic Signature, as appropriate and in accordance with UK law.

6.6 Electronic Signatures may only be affixed using the Council's chosen electronic signature system or an approved alternative, as agreed by the HoP.

6.7 The use of Electronic Signatures is not permitted in circumstances where:

(a) the Contract is to be sealed (except where 6.4 applies);

(b) a physical handwritten signature needs to be filed;

(c) there is a proviso in the Contract which prevents the use of an Electronic Signature;

(d) the Contract may need to be enforced in a jurisdiction where Electronic Signatures are not accepted;

(e) the Contract needs to be notarised.

7. BONDS AND LIQUIDATED DAMAGES

7.1 Where appropriate the Council shall consider whether to include provision for the payment of liquidated damages by a Contractor for breach of Contract.

7.2 Where considered appropriate by the Council, the Contractor will be required to provide a parent company guarantee/performance bond to secure the performance of the Contract. Such performance bonds should provide for a sum of not less than 10% of the total value of the contract or such other sum as the S151 Officer considers appropriate.

7.3 Agreements made under Section 38 (adoption of new highways) or Section 278 (development of existing highways) of the Highways Act 1980 shall always include provision for a bond in respect of such sum as the Director of Environment shall consider appropriate except where: -

(a) the identity of the developer renders the need for a bond unnecessary, or

(b) adequate alternative security is provided, or

(c) the Director of Environment (in consultation with the S151 Officer) agrees that it is inappropriate for a bond to be required.

8. QUOTES

8.1 Rule 8 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

SINGLE QUOTATION

8.2 Where the estimated value of a Contract is less than or equal to £5,000 excluding VAT or less (taking into account the whole life cost of the Contract, including extensions and/or variations) a quote must be obtained.

8.3 There is no requirement to use an E-Sourcing system or publish the opportunity on Contracts Finder for contracts below £5,000 (excluding VAT).

8.4 A single quote cannot be accepted where the value exceeds £5,000 excluding VAT. If the value of the quote exceeds £5,000 excluding VAT three quotes must be obtained or the best value form completed in accordance with **Rules 8.5 to 8.11**.

MINIMUM THREE QUOTES PROCESS/BEST VALUE FORM

8.5 Where the estimated value of a Contract is above £5,000 excluding VAT, and less than the relevant upper threshold limit set out in the Table below, including VAT (taking into account the whole life cost of the Contract including extensions and/or variations) a minimum of three quotes should be sought.

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Spend Area	Upper Threshold Limit (Including VAT)
Goods/ Services contracts (excluding Technology Contracts)	£5,001 up to and including £100,000
Technology Contracts	£5,001 up to and including £150,000
Works contracts	£5,001 up to and including £250,000
Light Touch Contracts (typically social care)	£5,001 up to and including £170,000

8.6 Where possible quotes should be sought from at least one local supplier based within North Yorkshire. One quote should be from a Small and Medium Enterprise (SME), Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCSE) or local supplier based within North Yorkshire, unless this is not possible due to the nature of the market.

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8.7 If three quotes are not sought, the Contract may be directly awarded using the Best Value Form as long as sufficient justification is given for not undertaking a quotes process. It is the Officer's responsibility to complete the Best Value Form.

8.8 A three quote process/best value form cannot be accepted where the value exceeds the relevant upper limit for this process. If the value of the quote exceeds the relevant upper limit for this process the bids process must be followed in accordance with **Rule 9**.

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8.9 Where the estimated value of a Contract is between £30,000 and £50,000 inclusive of VAT (taking into account the whole life cost of the Contract, including extensions and/or variations):

(a) there is no requirement to advertise the opportunity, however if the Council chooses to advertise the opportunity, then it must also be advertised on Contracts Finder; and

(b) once the contract is awarded, details must be published on Contracts Finder.

8.10 It is the Officer's responsibility to keep a record of quotes sought for audit purposes and to demonstrate best value has been achieved.

8.11 The Responsible Officer must follow the Council's Access to Information Rules, for example the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process where applicable, and publish a decision record.

9. BIDS

9.1 Rule 9 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

9.2 If the estimated value of a Contract exceeds:

- £100,000 inclusive of VAT for Good and Services Contracts (excluding Social & Other Specific Services and Technology Contracts);
- £150,000 inclusive of VAT for Technology Contracts;
- £250,000 inclusive of VAT for Works Contracts;
- £50,000 inclusive of VAT for Concession Contract; or
- £170,000 inclusive of VAT for Social & Other Specific Services (Excluding Health Care Services)

but is less than the appropriate WTO GPA Threshold, bids must be invited from all potential Contractors in accordance with **Rule 2.12, Tables 1-3**.

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9.3 A notice advertising the opportunity shall be published through the E-Sourcing System and on Contracts Finder and, if considered appropriate, a local newspaper and a suitable professional or trade journal or website. The form of advertising shall take into account the value, location and subject matter of the Contract. The notice shall specify brief details of the Contract, how the ITB documents may be obtained and the closing date for receipts of bids by the Council.

9.4 All potential Contractors invited to submit bids shall be provided in all instances with identical information and instructions. Where considered appropriate, Directors may permit potential Contractors who have been invited to submit bids under **Rule 9.2** to also submit variant bids (i.e. bids which do not comply with some or all of the requirements of the primary bid). The same opportunity to submit variant bids must be given to all potential Contractors.

9.5 A written bid may only be considered if:-

(a) it has been received electronically through the E-Sourcing System, or

(b) (where permitted in exceptional circumstances) it has been received in a sealed envelope marked "Bid" and indicating the subject matter of the bid; and

(c) it has been opened after the expiry of the deadline for submissions and at the same time as other bids for the same subject matter in the presence of at least two Officers authorised to open bids.

9.6 Before bids are requested the evaluation criteria must be recorded in writing in the SQ and/ITB documents. The evaluation criteria must be identified and the weighting

between price and quality established and stated in the request for bids sent to participants.

9.7 If a bid other than the lowest or the most economically advantageous bid is to be accepted, the written approval of the Director (in consultation with the S151 Officer or if the relevant Director is the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive) shall be sought and obtained before the bid is accepted.

9.8 A bid cannot be accepted where the value exceeds the relevant WTO GPA Threshold. If the value of the bid exceeds the relevant WTO GPA Threshold a Director must seek tenders in accordance with **Rules 11 and 12**.

9.9 Before a Contract is awarded after a bid exercise such steps shall be taken by the Responsible Officer, as are reasonably necessary (having regard to the subject matter, value, duration of the Contract and other relevant factors) to complete a risk assessment of the potential Contractor's financial stability.

9.10 Bids may be altered only in accordance with **Rule 10**.

9.11 Where a Contract is terminated within the first 6 months of the Contract commencement date, the Council may award the Contract to the second placed supplier, provided that this demonstrates Best Value and with agreement from the HoP in consultation with the appropriate SCM.

9.12 The evaluation of bids shall be carried out by a panel of suitably qualified Officers who are considered appropriate having regard for the subject matter and value of the Contract.

9.13 The Responsible Officer must follow the Council's Access to Information Rules, for example the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process where applicable, and publish a decision record.

10. POST BID NEGOTIATION AND CLARIFICATION

10.1 Rule 10 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

10.2 Post bid negotiations may not be undertaken where the value of the Contract exceeds the relevant WTO GPA Threshold. If the value of the bid exceeds the relevant WTO GPA Threshold, the Director must invite tenders in accordance with **Rules 11 and 12**.

10.3 Post bid negotiations with selected Participants shall only be carried out where: -

(a) post tender negotiations are permitted by law; and

(b) the Director in consultation with the HoP considers that added value may be obtained; and

(c) post bid negotiations are conducted by a team of suitably experienced Officers approved by the Director and who have been trained in post bid negotiations; and

(d) a comprehensive, written record of the post bid negotiations is kept by the Director; and

(e) a clear record of the added value to be obtained as a result of the post bid negotiations is incorporated into the Contract with the successful Participant.

10.4 **Rules 10.2 and 10.3** shall not operate to prevent clarification of all or part of any bid to the extent permitted by law and where such clarifications are sought the provisions of **Rules 10.3(c) and 10.3(d)** shall apply.

11. ABOVE THRESHOLD PROCESS

11.1 Rule 11 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

11.2 Where the estimated value of the Contract exceeds the WTO GPA Threshold, Above Threshold Tenders shall be invited and awarded in accordance with the PCRs and as prescribed in **Rule 11 and 12**.

General Requirements

11.3 Before an Above Threshold Tender is requested the evaluation criteria to be applied to the Above Threshold Tender must be recorded in writing in the SQ and/or ITT document. The evaluation criteria must be identified and the weighting between price and quality established and stated in the SQ and/or ITT sent to Participants.

11.4 Irrespective of the procurement process being undertaken a notice must be published on the Find a Tender Service system and Contracts Finder, where possible this should be through the E-Sourcing system or an appropriate alternative system as agreed with the HoP.

11.5 All Participants invited to submit Above Threshold Tenders shall be provided in all instances with identical instructions and information.

11.6 Where considered appropriate, the HoP may, in consultation with the SCM, permit Participants to submit variant Above Threshold Tenders (i.e. tenders which do not comply with some or all of the requirements of the primary tender). The same opportunity to submit variant Above Threshold Tenders shall be given to all Participants. Variant Above Threshold Tenders shall only be considered if the Participant also submits a compliant primary tender.

11.7 The evaluation of the Above Threshold Tenders shall be carried out by Officers who are considered appropriate having regard for the subject matter and value of the Contract.

11.8 All procurements undertaken in accordance with **Rule 11** shall have a minimum of 3 appropriate Officers (excluding the Procurement and Contract Management Service representative) to undertake the evaluation process. The evaluation process shall include:

- Individual evaluation assessment and scoring
- Consensus marking exercise, chaired by a member of the Procurement and Contract Management Service
- Independent review by SCM, where required
- Moderation by evaluation panel, where required

11.9 All evaluation panel members must have completed the evaluation training prior to completing any evaluation process.

11.10 Where a Contract is terminated within the first 6 months of the Contract commencement date, the Council may award the contract to the second placed supplier with agreement from the HoP in consultation with the Monitoring Officer provided that this demonstrated Best Value and the original award criteria have not changed.

11.11 The Responsible Officer must follow the Council's Access to Information Rules, for example the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process where applicable, and publish a decision record.

12. OPTIONS FOR ABOVE THRESHOLD PROCESS

12.1 Rule 12 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants

12.2 The Gateway Process shall identify which Above Threshold Tender Procedures shall be used to invite tenders for Contracts with a value in excess of the relevant WTO GPA Threshold.

(i) the Open Procedure (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 27)

(ii) the Restricted Procedure (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 28)

(iii) the Competitive Procedure with Negotiation (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 29)

(iv) the Competitive Dialogue Procedure (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 30)

(v) the Innovation Partnership Procurement (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 31)

(vi) use of the Negotiated Procedure without prior publication (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 32)

(vii) Social and Other Specific Services (Light Touch Regime) (as prescribed by PCR Regulations 74-76)

and such identified process shall be used for the invitation of Above Threshold Tenders in accordance with the requirements of the PCR's.

12.3 The Gateway Process shall also identify which of the following techniques and instruments which can be used for Electronic and Aggregated Procurements:

(i) Framework Agreement (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 33)

(ii) Dynamic Purchasing System (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 34)

(iii) Electronic auctions (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 35)

(iv) Electronic catalogues (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 36).

13. RECEIPT AND OPENING OF ABOVE THRESHOLD TENDERS

13.1 Rule 13 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

13.2 A written Above Threshold Tender may only be considered if: -

(a) it has been received electronically through the E-Sourcing System, or (where permitted in exceptional circumstances, and subject to agreement by the HoP) it has been received electronically through an appropriate alternative method, such as a secure email inbox; or

(b) (where permitted under Regulation 84(h)) it has been received in hard copy in a sealed envelope marked "Above Threshold Tender" and indicating the subject matter of the Above Threshold Tender, and the identity of the Participant cannot be ascertained from the tender envelope; and

(c) (subject to **Rule 13.5**) it has been received by the Above Threshold Tender closing date and time.

13.3 The S151 Officer (or a person designated by them) shall be responsible for the reception and safe custody of Above Threshold Tenders until they are opened.

13.4 Electronically submitted Above Threshold Tenders, whether electronic or hard copy must be opened at the same time, in an auditable way, by an independent Officer from the Procurement and Contract Management Service.

13.5 Where permitted under Regulation 84(h) of the PCRs and Above Threshold Tenders are returned in hard copy format a written record shall be maintained by the HoP, of the Above Threshold Tenders received. Such a record shall include the date and time of Above Threshold Tender opening, the identity of the Officer(s) present, the identities of Participants and the tendered sums (where readily ascertainable).

13.6 Above Threshold Tenders submitted in hard copy must be opened at the same time and in the presence of the S151 Officer (or a person designated by them) or, where the Procurement and Contract Management Services is undertaking the procurement, the Monitoring Officer (or an Officer designated).

13.7 If an Above Threshold Tender is received after the specified closing date and time it may not be considered unless the HoP is satisfied that the Above Threshold Tender was submitted electronically or posted or otherwise dispatched in sufficient time to be delivered before the specified time but that delivery was prevented by an event beyond the control of the Participant.

14. ABOVE THRESHOLD TENDER EVALUATION AND ACCEPTANCE

14.1 Rule 14 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

14.2 The relevant officers shall evaluate Above Threshold Tenders using the evaluation criteria published in accordance with **Rule 11.3**.

14.3 Before a Contract is awarded the HoP shall, in consultation with the SCMs, determine whether it is proportionate and appropriate to complete a risk assessment to ascertain the financial stability of the successful Participant. The risk assessment shall take into account the subject matter, complexity, duration, value and any other such factors as may be deemed to be relevant. This shall be recorded in accordance with the Gateway Process (Gate 3) where appropriate.

14.4 On completion of the evaluation of the Above Threshold Tenders received and once all internal approvals have been obtained through the Gateway Process (Gate 3), the HoP (or an Officer authorised by the HoP) shall write to all Participants informing them of the outcome of the Above Threshold Tender evaluation and providing feedback on the content of their submission, in accordance with Regulation 55 of the PCR's.

14.5 The HoP (or an Officer authorised by the HoP) shall wait a minimum of ten days (15 days if not sent electronically) from the date of issue of the letters notifying the Participants of the result of the evaluation before completing the Contract with the successful Participant, except where not required for example for call-offs under an existing Framework.

14.6 The HoP (or an Officer authorised by the HoP) shall send for publication a Contract Award Notice stating the outcome of the procurement procedure no more than 30 days after the award of the Contract.

15. OPTIONS FOR HEALTH CARE SERVICES PROCESS

15.1 The PSR governance process will identify which procedure shall be used for all Health Care Service contracts irrespective of value.

a) Direct Award A (as prescribed by PSR Regulation 7)

b) Direct Award B (as prescribed by PSR Regulation 8)

c) Direct Award C (as prescribed by PSR Regulation 9)

d) The Most Suitable Provider Process (as prescribed by PSR Regulation 10)

e) The Competitive Process (as prescribed by PSR Regulation 11)

Such identified processes shall be used for the invitation and/or contract award in accordance with the requirements of the PSR.

16. CERTIFICATION OF CONTRACTS

16.1 The Local Government (Contracts) Act (LGCA) 1997 clarified the power of local authorities to enter into certain contracts, including Private Finance Initiative Contracts. Where Contracts need to be certified under the 1997 Act, only the following Officers are authorised to do so, following consultation with the relevant Executive Member: the Director Children and Young People's Service, the Director of Environment, the Director Health and Adult Services, the Director of Community Development, the Director of Public Health, the Monitoring Officer and the S151 Officer.

17. EXCEPTIONS TO PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

17.1 Rule 17 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants.

17.2 A Director does not need to invite bids in accordance with **Rule 9** in the following circumstances: -

(a) purchases via Framework Agreements which have been established either by the Council or by other public sector bodies or consortia (including, but not

limited to PSBOs) and where such framework agreements are lawfully accessible to the Council. Contracts awarded from such Framework Agreements shall be awarded in accordance with the provisions of that Framework Agreement; or

(b) the contract is to be awarded to the Council's teckal company which is legally controlled by the Council; or

(c) the instruction of Counsel by the Monitoring Officer; or

(d) where funding is received by the Council, either in its own right or as an accountable body, and the terms of such grant or other external funding state that it must be applied in accordance with those terms; or

(e) purchases at public auctions (including internet auction sites, e.g. Ebay) where the Director is satisfied that value for money will be achieved; or

(f) the purchase of Supplies, Works, Services or Social and Other Specific Services which are of such a specialised nature as to be obtainable from one Contractor only; or

(g) repairs to or the supply of parts for existing proprietary machinery or plant where to obtain such supplies from an alternative supplier would invalidate the warranty or contractual provisions with the existing supplier; or

(h) Social or Other Specific Services Contracts where:-

(i) the service is currently supplied by a Contractor to the satisfaction of the relevant Director, is considered to be offering value for money and where the foreseeable disruption to service users cannot justify the invitation of further bids, or

(ii) the service is of a specialist or personal nature and where service users must be involved in the selection of the Contractor and where the Director Health and Adult Services and the Director Children and Young People's Service considers it inappropriate for bids to be invited, or

(iii) where the relevant Director is satisfied that the urgency of the need for the service prevents the invitation of bids in which case consideration shall be given to the duration of that service; or

(i) in relation to Pilot schemes for a proof of contract/trialling a product or area of innovation.

(j) Contracts where the Director with the agreement of the HoP agree that for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by unforeseeable events unattributable to the Council, the timescales for obtaining bids cannot be met. A written record shall be signed and dated by the Director, whenever this Rule applies.

17.3 Where any of the exceptions set out in **(e) to (j)** above are applied a Directors Recommendation, in consultation with the relevant SCMs, shall be signed, dated and kept. The Procurement and Contract Management Service shall maintain a register of all recommendations made under this Rule.

17.4 A Director does not need to invite Above Threshold Tenders in accordance with **Rule 11 and 12**, in the following circumstances however the gateway process at **Rule 19** shall still apply:

(a) purchases via Framework Agreements which have been established either by the Council or by other public sector bodies or consortia (including, but not limited to PSBO's) and where such Framework Agreements are lawfully accessible to the Council. Contracts awarded from such Framework Agreements shall be awarded in accordance with the provisions of that Framework Agreement. Where appropriate Officers should apply a minimum 10 day standstill period for all call-off Contracts awarded under an existing Framework Agreement. This is not mandatory but is deemed best practice; or

(b) where:

(i) Regulations 12 or 72 of the PCRs apply; or

(ii) any other specific exclusions as set out in the PCRs apply.

Waivers

17.5 Specific exceptions to these Rules are permitted in such other circumstances as the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer may agree.

17.6 Requests for waivers shall be made using the Waiver Request Form prescribed by the S151 Officer which shall specify the reasons for the request.

17.7 Any requests for waivers shall be made in consultation with the relevant SCM's, and be signed, dated and kept. The Procurement and Contract Management Service shall maintain a register of all waivers made under this Rule.

18. COMPLIANCE, CONTRACT REGISTER AND PROCUREMENT PIPELINE

Deleted: FORWARD

Deleted: PLANS

18.1 Every Officer shall comply with these Rules and any unauthorised failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

18.2 The S151 Officer shall be responsible for monitoring adherence to these Rules.

18.3 The HoP shall nominate a representative to act as a key contact point in relation to procurement matters for spend categories; such representatives shall be termed SCMs.

18.4 Each Director, in conjunction with the HoP, shall take all such steps as are reasonably necessary to ensure that Officers within their Directorate are aware of and comply with these Rules, the Procurement Manual and the Finance Manual referred to in **Rule 2.5**.

18.5 An annual report on procurement matters, such report to include an annual procurement plan and actions arising from the annual procurement plan, will be presented to a meeting of the Audit Committee.

18.6 The Council maintains a Contract Register the purpose of which is to record key details of:

18.6.1 all Contracts with an aggregate value of £5,000 (exclusive of VAT) or more; and

18.6.2 all Health Care Services contracts irrespective of value.

18.7 All Responsible Officers will notify the Procurement and Contract Management Service of any Contract awarded:

18.7.1 above £5,000; or

18.7.2 any contract for Health Care Services irrespective of value.

The Responsible Officer will use the format prescribed by the Procurement and Contract Management Service and report this information quarterly.

18.8 The HoP shall ensure that:-

(a) all relevant Contracts (including those Contracts to which **Rule 16** applies) are entered onto the Contract Register; and

(b) the Contract Register is maintained by entering new Contracts onto it and removing expired Contracts from it in line with the Council's Records Retention and Destruction Schedule.

Contracts Finder

18.9 When a Procurement leading to a Contract in excess of £30,000 inclusive of VAT is awarded the Procurement and Contract Management Service shall ensure that such information as is prescribed in the PCRs is published on Contracts Finder via the ESourcing system.

18.10 When a Procurement leading to a Health Care Services Contract of any value is awarded, the Procurement and Contract Management Service shall ensure that such information as is detailed in the PSRs is published on Contracts Finder via the E-Sourcing.

19. GATEWAY PROCESS AND PSR GOVERNANCE PROCESS REPORTS INCLUDING NOTIFICATION OF SECTION 151 OFFICER AND MONITORING OFFICER

19.1 When a procurement or Grant is being considered which is expected to exceed the financial value thresholds specified in **Rule 19.2** the Gateway Process must be completed and signed off by the relevant Officers, as detailed in **Table 5** below.

Table 6: Gateway Process - Authorisation to Approve

Gateway Process gate	**Approval process**
Gate 1 – Commissioning and Procurement Options Appraisal (includes Grants)	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Assistant Director **AND**

	Finance - S151 Officer or delegated Assistant Director **AND** The Monitoring Officer or delegated officer
Gate 2 – Authorisation of Documents	An Officer from the Procurement and Contract Management Service **AND** SCM or delegated Officer
Gate 3 – Contract/ Grant Award	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Assistant Director **AND** Finance - S151 Officer or delegated Assistant Director
Gate 4(a) – Contract / Grant Extension/Variation/Novation	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Assistant Director **AND** Finance - S151 Officer or delegated Assistant Director **AND, *where appropriate*** Monitoring Officer or delegated officer – *only in cases where the extension is not part of the original Contract.*
Gate 4(b) – Contract/ Grant Termination (during the contract period)	PAB or HoP or delegated senior officer **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Assistant Director **AND** Finance - S151 Officer or delegated Assistant Director **AND**

	Monitoring Officer or delegated officer

19.2 The whole contract financial value thresholds for the purposes of **Rule 19.1** are:

(a) Works and Concession Contracts - £1,000,000 inclusive of VAT

(b) Social and Other Specific Services Contracts - £663,540 inclusive of VAT

(c) Goods and Services Contracts - £214,904 inclusive of VAT.

The above values are used to determine the Gateway Process threshold for Grants.

19.3 In relation to Health Care Services contracts the PSR Governance Process must be completed and signed off by the relevant Officers, as detailed in **Table 7** below.

Table 7: PSR Governance Process - Authorisation to Approve

PSR Governance Process	**Approval process**
PSR Direct Award Process A, B or C – Contract Appraisal and Award	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Officer
PSR Most Suitable Provider Process or Competitive Process - Options Appraisal / Project Initiation	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Officer
PSR review – Authorisation of Documents	An Officer from the Procurement and Contract Management Service **AND** SCM or delegated Officer
PSR Most Suitable Provider Process or Competitive Process – Contract/ Grant Award	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Officer
PSR Contract Modification – Contract / Grant Extension/Variation/Novation	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Officer **AND, *where appropriate***

	Monitoring Officer or delegated officer – *only in cases where the extension is not part of the original Contract.*
PSR Contract Termination – Contract / Grant Termination (during the contract period)	PAB or HoP or delegated SCM **AND** The relevant Director or delegated Officer **AND** Monitoring Officer or delegated officer

19.4 The whole contract financial value thresholds for the purposes of **Rule 19.3** are**:**

(a) Health Care Services Contracts – any value

20. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

20.1 The Responsible Officer shall take all such steps as are appropriate to monitor and review the performance of the Contract, having regard to its value, nature, duration and subject matter. As part of the monitoring and review process the Responsible Officer shall maintain adequate records of Contract performance and details of review meetings with the Contractor. Such relevant records and details shall be made available to Internal Audit whenever required and shall be recorded in any relevant Gateway Process report (Gate 4).

20.2 Where appropriate the Responsible Officer will attend the Contract Management Practitioners Group.

Contract Variation/Novation

20.3 Contracts with a value below the relevant WTO GPA Threshold may be varied or extended or novated in accordance with the terms of that Contract. Any proposed variations which have the effect of materially changing the Contract must be approved by the Monitoring Officer, whether or not they are affected by amending the Contract itself or by correspondence.

20.4 Contracts with a value in excess of the relevant WTO GPA Threshold may be varied or extended in accordance with the terms of that Contract and/or as outlined in Regulation 72 of the PCRs. Approval must be sought in accordance with **Rule 19.1**, (Table 5 - Gateway Process - Authorisation to Approve Gate 4a).

20.5 Health Care Services Contract variations must be done in accordance with Regulation 13 of the PSRs. Approval must be sought in accordance with **Rule 19.3**.

Contract Termination

20.6 If an Officer requires a Contract which exceeds the financial values stated in **Rule 19.2** or any Health Care Service Contract to be terminated then this must be done in accordance with the terms of the Contract and in accordance with the PCRs or PSRs,

where applicable. Approval must be sought in accordance with **Rule 19.1** or **Rule 19.3** (as applicable).

21. TRAINING FOR PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

21.1 Where appropriate any Officer involved in procurement activities shall have received a level of formal training commensurate with the nature of the procurement activity being undertaken.

21.2 Where appropriate the Responsible Officer involved in contract management shall have received a level of formal training commensurate with the nature of the contract.

22. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

22.1 A Conflict of Interest declaration must be completed by all members of the evaluation panel. A Confidentiality Agreement or Declaration form must also be completed by any members of the evaluation panel who are not directly employed by the Council, unless there are alternative appropriate confidentiality provisions within the persons appointment documents (such as a consultancy agreement).

22.2 If it comes to the knowledge of a Member, Responsible Officer or other Officer that a Contract or Grant in which they have an interest (determined in accordance with the Members' and/or Officers' Code of Conduct as appropriate) has been or is proposed to be entered into by the Council, they shall immediately give written notice to the Monitoring Officer.

22.3 In relation to Health Care Services Contracts, conflicts of interest must be managed in line with Regulation 21 of the PSRs.

23. GRANTS

23.1 A grant is a sum of funds for a specific purpose. Under a grant agreement, the funder makes a payment to the recipient for a specific purpose. The recipient is not obliged to deliver any goods or services to the funder. The Council may grant-fund third party organisations for example to help deliver community cohesion or to provide complementary activities. Responsible Officers should in consultation with Procurement and Contract Management Service and Monitoring Officer understand if the Grant is subject to the PCRs or PSRs.

23.2 Grants up to and including a value of £100,000 may be directly awarded where a Best Value Form is completed, and subsidy control law must be complied with. It is the Officer's responsibility to complete the Best Value Form.

23.3 For any Grant over £100,000, a competitive grants process must be completed and subsidy control law complied with. Where a competitive grants process is undertaken, a Competitive Grants Form must be completed. Where appropriate, the opportunity should be advertised on the Council's ESourcing system.

23.4 Where the value of a grant exceeds the relevant WTO GPA Threshold, any value for Health Care Service Contracts, or £1,000,000 for works, the Gateway Process shall be completed in accordance with **Rule 19**.

23.5 Specific exceptions to **Rule 23** are permitted in circumstances as the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer may agree.

23.6 The Responsible Officer shall take all such steps as are appropriate to monitor and review the delivery of the grant agreement, having regard to its value, nature, duration and subject matter. As part of the Grant monitoring and review process the Responsible Officer shall maintain adequate records of delivery and details of review meetings with the grant recipient.

24. HIRING AND ENGAGING STAFF

24.1 Where an Officer is hiring or engaging a staff member who is not on the Council payroll there is a legal requirement to determine whether it is the responsibility of the Council to deduct tax and national insurance at source, in accordance with the requirements of the Social Security Contributions (Intermediaries) Regulations 2000, as amended (IR35).

13.03 Types of Decision

(a) Decisions reserved to full Council. Decisions relating to the functions listed in Article 4.02 will be made by the full Council and not delegated.

(b) Key decisions.

(i) A key decision means a decision made in connection with the discharge of a function which is the responsibility of the Executive and which is likely:

(aa) to result in the Council incurring expenditure, or making savings, which are significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(bb) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the area of the Council. ~~more than one community~~.

(ii) For the purposes of (i)(aa) above, savings or expenditure are significant if they are equal to or greater than £500,000 or 20% of the gross expenditure of the relevant budget service area (as explained in the Financial Procedure Rules relating to virement) whichever is the less, but, subject to (i)(bb) above, does not include:

- a decision concerning ~~a bid~~an application for grant or external funding;
- a decision taken on expenditure specifically identified within budget approved by Council on items necessary for normal operational service delivery~~.~~;
- a decision taken on expenditure which is specifically identified on the Procurement Pipeline.

NB: Where the decision will also have a significant impact on more than one community (as well as the significant financial impact) then the above exclusions should not generally be relied upon.

(ii) For the purposes of (i)(aa) and (bb) above, a key decision does not include:

- a decision taken for the purpose of implementing an earlier key decision.

Access to information legislation sets out additional requirements upon local authority decision-making in relation to key decisions. These are incorporated in the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

(iv) A decision maker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

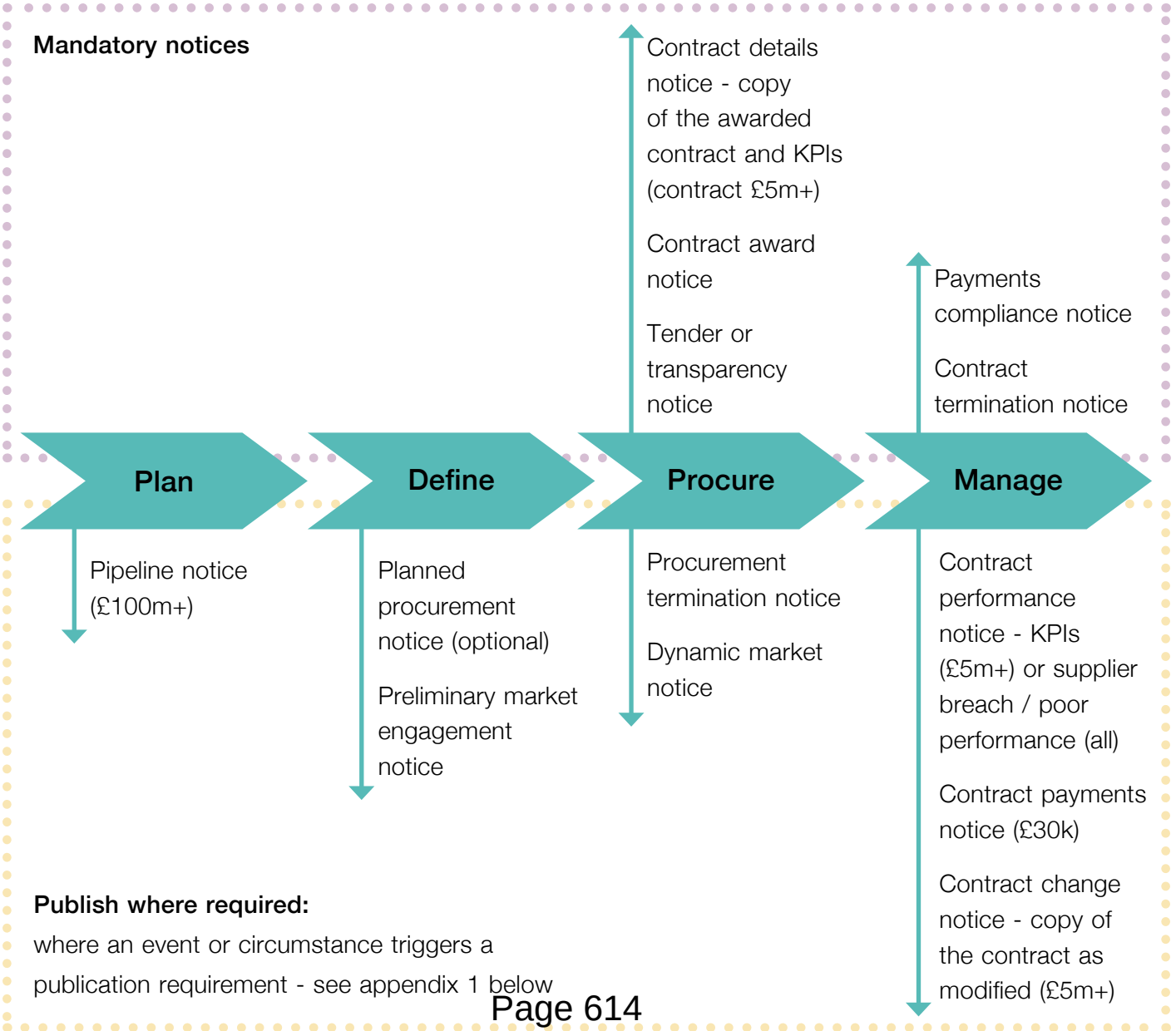
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Government Commercial Function

Transparency notices / publication

Flowchart

This flowchart demonstrates the notices and other information that you may publish throughout the end-to-end procurement lifecycle (depending on the procurement procedure followed, the nature of the contract and / or the contracting authority). **Further details about each notice can be found in the notices fact sheet.**



Appendix 1: publication triggers (publication when required)

The following table sets out the publication triggers that apply to notices and other information that should be 'publish when required' on the central digital platform. Exemptions to publication apply, see the notices fact sheet for more details.

Notice / information	Publication trigger
Pipeline notice	Where organisational procurement spend is £100m+, publish 12-month forward of procurements £2m+
Planned procurement notice	Publish a qualifying planned procurement notice to reduce tender timescales
Preliminary market engagement notice	Publish where pre-market engagement is planned or has taken place (or explain why not, in tender notice)
Procurement termination notice	Publish if, following a tender or transparency notice, the procurement ends without a contract award
Dynamic market notice	Publish to advertise, establish, change or terminate a dynamic market
Copy of awarded contract (and KPIs)	For contracts over £5m total value, KPIs must be set and the contract (redacted as required) published
Contract performance notice	Publish annual KPI data (contracts £5m+), and/or as required to report breach of contract / poor performance
Contract payments notice	Publish where one or more contract payment of £30k+ is made under a public contract (quarterly)
Contract change notice	Publish when making a contract modification (unless exemption applies)

APPENDIX 5

Extracts from Financial Procedure Rules

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28.0 GRANTS AND EXTERNAL FUNDING

28.1 External funding can provide an important source of income to the Council but grant conditions must be carefully examined before any application is submitted or agreement is entered into to ensure they are compatible with the Council's aims and objectives. Grant conditions may also result in the Council committing to future expenditure for which there is no budget provision. A risk assessment must therefore be completed and documented to ensure all potential financial obligations and future liabilities are properly identified.

28.2 The CFO will provide detailed procedural guidance to follow when applying for grant or other external funding, and before any offers of funding are accepted.

28.3 Corporate Directors should consult with the CFO in all circumstances where applications for grants or other external funding are being considered.

Applying for a Grant

28.4 The following approvals are required before applications are submitted. The limits apply to the aggregate level of funding where the grant is to be paid in instalments.

Estimated Value of Grant	Required action / approval
Less than ~~£200,000~~£500,000	Corporate Director in consultation with CFO
~~£200,000~~£500,000 and over	Obtain approval of the CFO in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and other relevant Executive Member(s)*

* Recurring grants and external funding (a grant/funding which has been applied for previously with no substantial change to grant conditions or delivery of the grant) require consultation with the relevant Executive Member(s) at the discretion of the CFO.

Accepting a Grant or External Funding

28.5 The following approvals are required before any offers of grant or other external funding are accepted:

New, discretionary grants and external funding (a new grant/funding which at the discretion of the Council to apply for and has not been applied for previously):

Value of Grant Offer	Required action / approval
Less than ~~£200,000~~£500,000	Obtain approval of the CFO
~~£200,000~~£500,000 - £1m	Obtain approval of the relevant Executive Member(s) in consultation with the CFO and the Executive Member for Finance
Over £1m	Obtain approval of the Executive

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Recurring grants and external funding (a grant which has been applied for previously with no substantial change to ~~grant conditions or~~ delivery of the grant):

Estimated Value of Grant	Required action/approval
Less than ~~£200,000~~£500,000	Corporate Director to inform the CFO
~~£200,000~~£500,000 and over	Obtain approval of the CFO in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and other relevant Executive Member(s) as necessary

Direct award grants (grant provided directly to the Council ~~where it is statutory requirement to provide the prescribed service and~~ where there is no application requirement):

Type of grant	Required action/approval
~~Statutory~~Direct Award grant	Corporate Director to inform the CFO
~~Discretionary~~	~~As per rules for new discretionary grants and recurring grants~~

28.6 Corporate Directors are responsible for ensuring all grant conditions are complied with and the required approvals and certifications are obtained before submitting claims or returns to the relevant funding bodies.

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APPENDIX 6

Extract from Executive Members' Delegation Scheme

…

Each individual member of the Executive has the following responsibilities and powers:

…

6. In respect of grant or other external funding:

   (a) To be consulted, along with the Executive Member for Finance, regarding the submission of bids for grant or other external funding in excess of ~~£200,000~~£500,000 or more (save in the case of recurring grants, where consultation with the Executive Member will be at the discretion of the Chief Finance Officer), as set out in Financial Procedure Rule 28.4; and

   (b) Following consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Executive Member for Finance, to authorise the acceptance of any offer of new discretionary grant or other external funding of ~~£200,000~~£500,000 to £1million (inclusive) in line with the requirements of Rules 28.5 of the Financial Procedure Rules;

   (c) To be consulted, along with the Executive Member for Finance, regarding the acceptance of recurring grant~~s~~ or other external funding of ~~£200,000~~£500,000 or more, as set out in Financial Procedure Rule 28.5;

   subject, in all cases, to the implications for the Council being consistent with the budget and policy framework, and subject also to the requirements of the Financial Procedure Rules in relation to Partnerships and Accountable Bodies at Rules 29 and 30 respectively.

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Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment (Form created August 2021)

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	Proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution
Brief description of proposal	To consider proposed amendments to the Constitution.
Directorate	Central Services
Service area	Legal and Democratic Services
Lead officer	Barry Khan, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, North Yorkshire Council
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Moira Beighton, Senior Governance Lawyer, North Yorkshire Council

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.

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Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	Not relevant/proportionate	Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision	The issues covered by the report do not of themselves present any significant climate change implications.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	BARRY KHAN, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer			
Date	20 June 2024			

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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	Central Services
Service area	Legal and Democratic Services
Proposal being screened	To consider proposed amendments to the Constitution.
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Barry Khan, Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, North Yorkshire Council
What are you proposing to do?	Approve amendments to the Constitution.
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To enable safe and legal decision making for the Council.
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No significant implications.

Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics

As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:

- 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 Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.

Protected characteristic	**Potential for adverse impact**		**Don't know/No info available**
	Yes	**No**	
Age		No	
Disability		No	
Sex		No	
Race		No	
Sexual orientation		No	
Gender reassignment		No	
Religion or belief		No	
Pregnancy or maternity		No	
Marriage or civil partnership		No	
NYCC additional characteristics			
People in rural areas		No	
People on a low income		No	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		No	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	The decision relates to the whole area and applies equally.		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g.	No significant implications.		

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partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.				
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✔	Continue to full EIA:	
Reason for decision	The approval of amendments to the Constitution will not have an adverse impact on any protected characteristic and therefore a full EIA would be disproportionate in this case.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	*Barry Khan*			
Date	20 June 2024			

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies to be considered.

2.0 VACANCIES TO BE APPOINTED TO BY POLITICAL GROUPS

2.1 Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Tony Randerson to be appointed to the vacant unaffiliated independents seat.

2.2 Police Fire and Crime Panel
Councillor David Chance to be appointed as substitute for the Conservatives and Independents.

2.3 Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Planning Committee
Councillor Mark Crane to come off the committee and Councillor Karl Arthur to be appointed.

2.4 Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Planning Committee
Councillor Heather Phillips to come of the committee and Councillor Derek Bastiman to be appointed.

2.5 General Licensing and Registration Committee, including the Sub-Committee
Councillor Paul Haslam to come off the committee following his change from being a Conservative councillor to being unaffiliated independent.

2 x Conservative and Independents vacancy – to be appointed to
Councillor Mike Jordan to be appointed to the vacant North Yorkshire Independent seat.

2.6 Statutory Licensing
1 x Liberal Democrat and Liberal vacancy – to be appointed to
1 x North Yorkshire Independent vacancy – to be appointed to.

2.7 Employment Appeals Committee
1 x Liberal Democrats and Liberals vacancy – to be appointed to.

2.8 Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Tony Randerson (unaffiliated independent) to be appointed to the North Yorkshire Independent vacancy.

2.9 Scrutiny of Health
Councillor Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff (unaffiliated independent) to be appointed to the North Yorkshire Independent vacancy.

2.10 Strategic Planning
1 x North Yorkshire Independent vacancy – Cllr Cattanach to be appointed.

3.0 APPOINTMENTS TO CHAMPION ROLES

3.1 Member Champions are elected Members who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business. Member Champions are appointed by Council. A request has been received from the Leader to review the current appointment to the role of Member Champion for Climate Change, a position that is currently held by Councillor Paul Haslam.

4.0 APPOINTMENTS TO THE MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY

4.1 Audit and Governance Committee
Councillor Arnold Warneken to come off the committee and Councillor Clive Pearson to be appointed.

4.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Clive Pearson to come off the committee and Councillor Arnold Warneken to be appointed.

4.3 Business Committee
Nominations to the Business Committee will be confirmed at the meeting of Council.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no equalities, finance, legal or climate change implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The appointments are to be made by Council as per the Council's Constitution.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 That the Council confirms the appointments to current vacancies on the committees, as per sections 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 of the report, as nominated by the political groups.

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
Northallerton

16 July 2024

Report Author:
Daniel Harry, Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny, North Yorkshire Council
daniel.harry@northyorks.gov.uk

Background Documents:
The Constitution of the Council – NYCConstitutionVersion2May2023.pdf (northyorks.gov.uk)

North Yorkshire Council

Full Council

12 July 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Legal and Democratic Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To bring to the attention of the Council the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24 is provided at Appendix A, on behalf of the Chair of Scrutiny Board, Councillor Karin Sedgwick and the Principle Scrutiny Officer, Diane Parsons.

3.0 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24.

3.1 The report highlights key activity by the council's Overview and Scrutiny function over the period from May 2023 to the beginning of April 2024 in its role of holding the Executive to account and ensuring that value is added to the Council's ongoing work to improve outcomes for customers and communities.

3.2 All decision-making Committees continue to meet in person once again, with some Committees utilising a successful and pragmatic hybrid option for external presenters and additional attendees when possible.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 No alternative options were considered.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant financial considerations.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

9.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To share with Full Council the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2023/24.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

Council is invited to:

10.1 note the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24; and

10.2 consider whether there are any issues arising from the Annual Report which need to be factored into the work programmes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in 2024/25.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:
None

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
Northallerton
12th July 2024

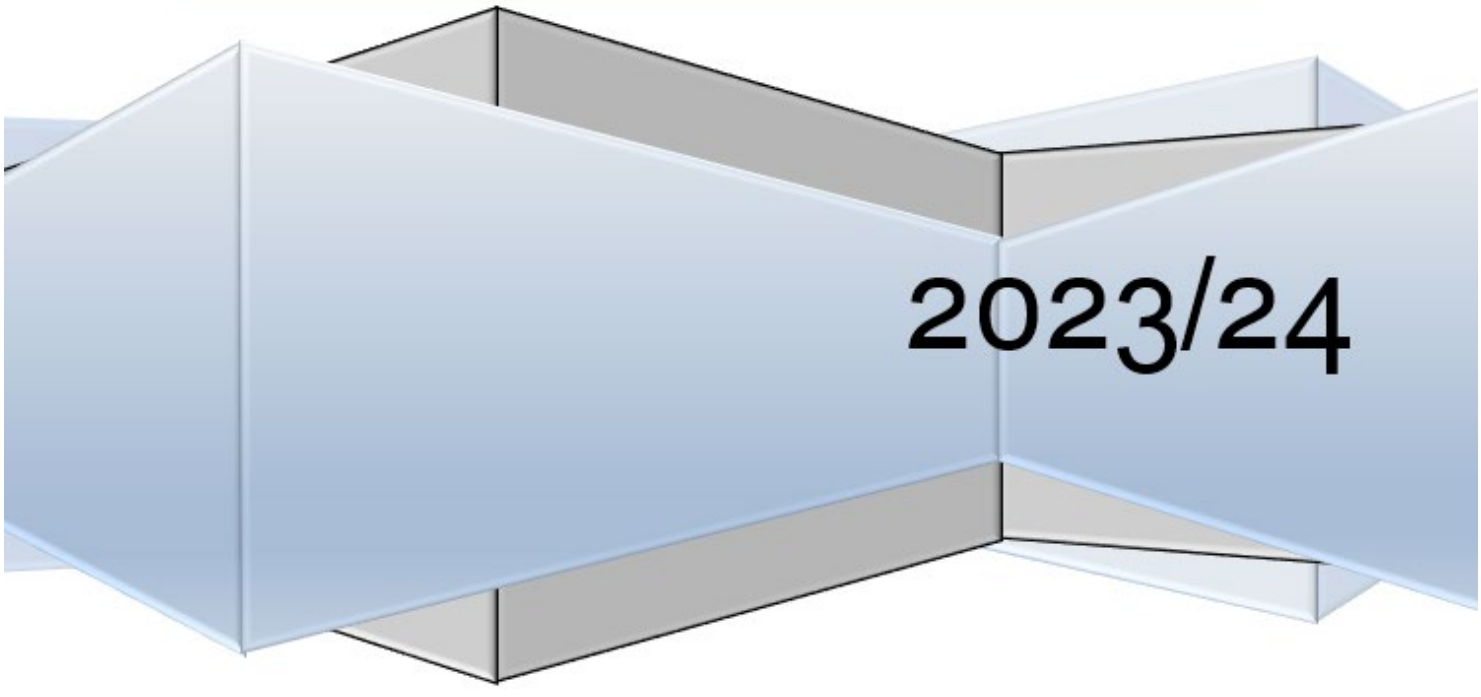
Report Author – Alice Fox, Senior Scrutiny Officer.
Presenter of Report – Councillor Karin Sedgwick, Chair of Scrutiny Board.

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

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

Councillor Karin Sedgwick, Chair of the North Yorkshire Council Scrutiny Board and Diane Parsons, Principal Scrutiny Officer.



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24



Foreword by Councillor Karin Sedgwick, Chair of Scrutiny Board

As Chair of the Scrutiny Board, I am pleased to introduce the 2023/24 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.

It has been just over 12 months since we became a North Yorkshire Council, and I am pleased to say that Members involved in Overview and Scrutiny have embraced the changes in their remits and responsibilities. Councillors continue to work closely with officers, services and partners to ensure that Scrutiny remains a priority.

Bringing the former NYCC and district and borough councils together has given us the opportunity to carry out a thorough scrutiny review. We have looked at how scrutiny was previously delivered in North Yorkshire and have introduced a dedicated team of scrutiny officers to support the scrutiny function.

With Covid restrictions now behind us, we are back to holding in-person meetings, with some hybrid options also being available. Members have engaged in meaningful conversations with a range of services, providing challenge and questions to make sure that there is transparency and accountability.

During the period from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, there have been:

- 24 formal Scrutiny Committee meetings
- 2 informal Scrutiny Committee meetings
- 1 Call-In Meeting
- 1 Member Site Visit

In addition to these, there have also been 26 meetings of the Area Constituency Committees.

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to colleagues, officers and partners for their ongoing support which has made the transition to the new Unitary Authority a smooth process with minimal impact on our communities.

I would also like to record my appreciation to all of the Scrutiny Board Members for their contribution during this past year and wish them well in the forthcoming year.

I commend this report to the Council.

Care and Independence and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Councillor Karin Sedgwick

Purpose: To scrutinise the planning, commissioning, and delivery of services for vulnerable adults, older people and people whose independence needs to be supported by intervention from the public or voluntary sector and housing.

Council Ambition: Every adult has a longer, healthier and independent life.

Summary of issues addressed, engagement activities and updates received over the last 12 months:

- **Care Homes and Assisted Living Accommodation**
  As part of the remit of the Care and Independence and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, we looked at Care Homes and Assisted Living accommodation in North Yorkshire. It was suggested some time ago, that we arrange a visit to Kirkwood Hall in Leyburn. The visit took place in November 2023 and a number of committee members attended. They met with staff and residents and looked at some of the assisted living elements being used by residents. They then had the opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

- **Receiving and scrutinising annual reports:**
  - Older People's Champion 2022/23 – Councillor Caroline Dickinson provided a summary of key areas reviewed and priorities for the coming year.
  - Director of Public Health 2022/23 – "Our Words: A Child's Life in North Yorkshire", covers Early Years; Primary; Secondary; and Late Adolescence and Early Childhood.

- **Receiving updates, presentations and briefings:**
  - Next Generation Extra Care – update on progress and the statement on the ambition to see Extra Care in all key towns in 2023.
  - Digital Lives – discussion around technology enabled care, online care, financial assessments and brokerage to support and enhance the experience of people and their independence in their own homes.
  - Unpaid Carers – overview of the support provided to adult carers of adults in North Yorkshire.
  - Direct Payments – update of how NYC is ensuring that Direct Payments help to enable more choice and control over the support people receive, and how their social care needs are met.

- Development of the Integrated Care Systems and Partnerships that cover North Yorkshire – discussion about what it means for social care and the risks.
- Suicide Prevention and Audit – update on activity, prevalence and action.
- Local Account – a review of the published account.
- Dementia Care – update on provision and strategy development.
- Domestic Abuse Policy – information on the aims and scope of the new policy.
- Housing Strategy – the committee received an overview on housing and the strategy, the Council's ambitions, priorities and targets, and how we fulfil our role as a strategic housing authority.
- Adult Social Care Pressures and Charging reform (Trailblazer) – update on cost of generic home care and target date for the restart of ASC charging reform.

It was agreed at Full Council on 15 May 2024 that a new Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be established. This would draw consideration of housing matters out of the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee, bringing it into its own committee, thereby ensuring that this broad brief can be given the focus that will be needed.

The Committee's work programme for 2024/25 is currently being finalised, but possible areas of interest include:

- Progress update on extra care delivery
- Shared Lives Scheme
- Transforming care and current supported housing service overview
- Care and Accommodation Update
- Changes to Care Provider services after the pandemic
- Progress on a transformational approach to short breaks

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Councillor Barbara Brodigan

Purpose: To scrutinise the planning, commissioning, and delivery of services for children, young people and their families, including education, care and protection, and family support.

Council Ambitions: Every child and young person has the best possible start in life.

The main focus for the year has been establishing a dedicated task and finish group that reviewed the SEND provision in Scarborough and Whitby.

Summary of issues addressed, engagement activities and updates received over the last 12 months:

- **A Scrutiny Task and Finish Group focussing on SEND provision in Scarborough and Whitby.**
  At Full Council meeting on 17 May 2023, the Chair of the Committee accepted a proposal to establish a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to look at SEND Provision in the Scarbrough area. The Committee agreed to extend the review to include Whitby. The key areas of focus included: looking at how parents/carers of children and young people with SEND are supported in their children's education; and how can access to information, advice and support be improved. A Working Party looked at key information regarding SEND in North Yorkshire. Further data was collated by: holding face to face engagement sessions with parents, carers, school governors, charities and a commercial provider; taking Scarborough and Whitby data from a county wide SEND survey; receiving feedback from 2 focus group sessions organised by Parent Carer Voice. A report with key findings and recommendations was presented to the Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee in March 2024 and the Executive Committee in April 2024. An update will be taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee later on this year.

- **The Call-In request regarding an Executive decision.**
  In March 2024, an additional committee meeting convened following a Call-In request after the Executive decision to cease to maintain a primary school due to no pupils on roll. The Committee listened to the Ward Councillor, public statements from the Parish Councillor and a local parent, and from the Corporate Director. Whilst understanding that it is always a

difficult decision when considering to cease to maintain a school, the Committee gave due consideration to the information presented to them and agreed by show of hands with the decision made by the Executive.

- **Annual reports:**
  - Young Person's Champion 2022/23 – Councillor Alyson Baker presented a summary of events where she met with children and young people, and meetings she attended with officers and agencies working with CYP, especially with young people from the Ukraine and refugees and asylum seekers.
  - Child Death Overview Panel 2022/23 – overview of key findings and information on the two priorities for the coming year: "Who's Sober" and "Roadwise".
  - North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership 2022/23 – presentation that included referral numbers, achievements within the Sub-Groups and priorities for 2023/24.
  - Draft North Yorkshire Substance Use Strategy 2024/26 – the Committee was pleased that Public Health engaged with them on this piece of work whilst the strategy was still being developed.
  - Director of Public Health 2022/23 – "Our Words: A Child's Life in North Yorkshire", covers Early Years; Primary; Secondary; and Late Adolescence and Early Childhood.

- **Receiving updates, presentations and briefings:**
  - Early Years – presentation focussing on Early Education and Child Care.
  - Growing Up in North Yorkshire survey 2022 – summary of the results of the bi-annual survey of primary and secondary pupils.
  - Annual Learning and Skills Service – information on Community Education, Adult Skills, High Needs Education and Apprenticeships in Health and Social Care.
  - School closures and Governance – presentation covering school closures, process and academies, Governor recruitment, training and retention.
  - Children and Young People's Mental Health – impact that social isolation and disruption to education has on CYP mental health, waiting times for treatment for eating disorders, waiting times for autism diagnosis.
  - Schools update (organisation, performance, and funding) – presentation including information on number of schools academizing, Ofsted ratings, and finances.
  - Transitions/Preparation for Adulthood – summary including training for the SEND Team, pathways support young people moving from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care
  - Healthy Child Service- focussing on the Four Pillars: 0=6yrs; Safeguarding and Children in Care; Emotional Health and Resilience; Infant Feeding, Family Diet and Nutrition.

The Committee's work programme for 2024/25 will include:

- Receiving a report from the Directorate about the school support and governance process that NYC currently provide for primary and secondary schools.
- Strategic Review – general update.
- Receiving feedback from young people about the North Yorkshire Youth Commission and their priorities for the year ahead.
- Exploring whether additional task and finish groups should be established to address key areas to scrutinise on a deeper level.

- **Receiving annual reports from:**
  - Young Person's Champion 2023/4.
  - Child Death Overview Panel 2023/4.
  - North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership 2023/24.
  - North Yorkshire SACRE 2023/4.
  - Director of Public Health 2023/24.

- **Receiving updates, presentations and briefings:**
  - FEAST (Food. Entertainment. Arts. Sport. Together) Festival - how it supports children and young people during the school holidays.
  - Foster Carers Services – numbers/trends and recruitment of foster carers.
  - Children accessing alternative provision (including health needs) – general update.
  - SEND Employment Forum – an update.
  - SEND provision in the Scarborough and Whitby area – update on the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group.
  - Schools update – performance and standards, funding, strategic planning, and financial position.
  - Criminal exploitation - update on the areas where criminals seek to exploit children and young people, e.g., County Lines.

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Councillor David Ireton

Purpose: To consider the Council's corporate organisation and structure, resource allocation, asset management, procurement policy, people strategy, equality and diversity, performance managements, communications and access to services. Partnership working, community development, community engagement, community strategies and community safety.

Council Ambitions: Leading for North Yorkshire; North Yorkshire is a place with a strong economy and a commitment to sustainable growth; Innovative and forward-thinking Council.

Summary of issues addressed, engagement and updates received over the last 12 months:

- **Notice of Motion at Full Council**
  In July 2023 there was a Notice of Motion proposed at Full Council asking for the ban on trail hunting on Council owned land. The Motion focussed on the practicality of such a ban (and not a broader debate about the pros and cons of hunting with dogs). This generated some public interest and a number of Councillors spoke both in favour and against the Motion. The Committee made a recommendation that trail hunting on Council owned land should not be introduced.

- **North Yorkshire Police Fire & Crime Commissioner**
  In March 2024, North Yorkshire Police Fire & Crime Commissioner Zoe Metcalfe attended a Committee meeting and provided an overview of the progress and improvement against the inspection reports produced by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire and Rescue Services.

- **Receiving annual reviews and reports:**
  - Locality Budgets - annual review of Councillor Locality Budgets 2022/23.
  - North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement – annual programme update.
  - Community Libraries – annual update.
  - Resilience and Emergencies - annual overview of the National Resilience Standards and NYC's current performance, together with an overview of ongoing Resilience and Emergencies work.

- **Receiving updates, presentations and briefings:**
  - Workforce Update - including baseline workforce data for the new Council.

- Community Safety - bi-annual updates on Community Safety Plan Delivery & Partnership Working.
- Youth Justice - performance update.
- Stronger Communities - bi-annual update on work of the Stronger Communities team and progress update on the corporate volunteering project.
- Customer Access - update on the operation of the Parish Portal and Parish Council engagement.
- Property Services – including a bi-annual performance update, and an update on property rationalisation.
- Council Plan 2024-28 Development - update on Council Plan Refresh including Review of Council Priorities
- Information Technology - progress update on IT Network and Systems Consolidation.
- Equality and Diversity - overview of progress with achieving the Council's new Equality and Diversity objectives.

The Committee's work programme for 2024/25 will include:

- Workforce Update (including a restructure update).
- North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Programme.
- Quarterly Transformation Updates.
- Bi-annual Updates on Community Safety Plan Delivery and Partnership Working.
- Bi-annual Updates on the work of the Stronger Communities Team.

- **Receiving annual updates about:**
  - Locality Budgets.
  - Community Libraries.
  - Youth Justice Annual Performance Update.
  - Operation of the Parish Portal and Parish Council Engagement.
  - Council Plan Refresh including Review of Council Priorities.
  - National Resilience Standards and NYC's Current Performance.
  - Operation of the Customer Portal.

Scrutiny of Health Committee

Chair: Councillor Andrew Lee

Purpose: To review any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services in the County; to act as a lever to improve the health of local people, ensuring that their needs are considered as an integral part of the delivery and development of health services.

Council Ambitions: Every child and young person has the best possible start in life; Every adult has a longer, healthier an independent life.

Summary of issues addressed, engagement and updates received over the last 12 months:

- **Autism Strategy Convening**
  The Committee has been very much involved in the progress of the Autism Strategy Convening.

- **Funding for Hospices**
  The Committee issued a press release in December 2023 highlighting the issues being faced by the three hospices covering North Yorkshire in relation to a funding crisis. The trusts face a struggle in raising sufficient funding to continue to provide adequate end-of-life and palliative services. This includes specialist inpatient beds, community-based end-of-life care, outpatient clinics, lymphoedema services and bereavement counselling and support. The Chair of the committee agreed to highlight this with colleagues in the NHS in order to ensure we are all doing our utmost to support and raise awareness of this situation.

- **Receiving annual reports from:**
  - Director of Public Health.

- **Receiving updates, presentations and briefings about:**
  - Response to workforce pressures in adult social care.
  - Update from Yorkshire Air Ambulance.
  - Primary Care in North Yorkshire from the Integrated care Board.
  - NHS Estate Information.

- Hyper Acute Stroke Services across North Yorkshire.
- Urgent care Delivery in York and the East Coast.
- North Yorkshire Place and Planning Infrastructure.
- Update on Catterick Integrated Care Campus.
- Update on the Mental Health Service.
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Trust Inspection results.
- North Yorkshire Hospice Care.
- Airedale New Hospital Update.
- Neo Natal Services at Airedale.
- Update on the Autism Strategy.

The Committee's work programme for 2024/25 will include:

- Looking at the referral of a Motion from Full Council (February 2024) in relation to products containing glyphosate or neonicotinoids.
- Strategic Review.
- Feedback from young people about the North Yorkshire Youth Commission.

- **Receiving annual reports from:**
  - Director of Public Health's.
  - 2023/24.

- **Receiving updates, presentation and briefings about:**
  - The Better Care Fund.
  - Yorkshire Ambulance Service update in relation to the new ambulance station in Scarborough including investment plans and staffing model.
  - Implementation of the All Age Autism Strategy.
  - Healthwatch North Yorkshire.

Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Councillor Malcolm Taylor

Purpose: To scrutinise the decisions made by the Executive regarding the creation of the new unitary authority.

Council Ambitions: Leading for North Yorkshire; Every child and young person has the best possible start in life; Every adult has a longer, healthier an independent life; North Yorkshire is a place with a strong economy and a commitment to sustainable growth; Innovative and forward-thinking Council.

Summary of issues addressed, engagement and updates received over the last 12 months:

- **Whitby and Scarborough Harbours Visits**
  The Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee visited Whitby and Scarborough harbours to better understand the ports. They also met with the operators at the Whitby Lobster Hatchery.

- **Receiving updates, presentations and briefings about:**
  - Customer Services.
  - Transformation.
  - Community Development.
  - Planning Service.
  - North Yorkshire Economic Growth Strategy.
  - North Yorkshire Destination Management Plan.
  - Strategic Leisure Review.
  - Mayoral Combined Authority Governance.
  - Delivering Restructures.
  - Harbour Services
  - Bereavement Services.

The Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee formally ceased on 15 May 2024 at the Full Council meeting, with any outstanding work re-allocated (in liaison with Scrutiny Board), to the other overview and scrutiny committees (with the exception of matters relating to leisure and culture).

Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Councillor David Staveley

Purpose: To scrutinise the transport and communications infrastructure of all kinds and how the transport needs of the community are met. Support businesses, economic development and regeneration, helping people develop their skills, including lifelong learning. Sustainable development, climate change strategy, countryside management, waste management, environmental conservation and enhancement flooding and cultural issues.

Council Ambitions: Leading for North Yorkshire; North Yorkshire is a place with a strong economy and a commitment to sustainable growth; Innovative and forward-thinking Council.

Summary of issues addressed, engagement and updates received over the last 12 months:

- **Highways Reinstatements and Road Closure Working Group**
  This was established to improve communication with communities and partners regarding the definition of works and try to minimise any negative impact that building and highways works have on communities. The working group worked closely with bus operators to mitigate the effect of road closures, and also liaised with Parish Councils to inform them of the One Network tool for monitoring and communicating road closure information.

- **Consultation with Members**
  Utilising informal meetings via Teams helped to improve engagement with Members, providing further scrutiny and meaningful feedback and consultation. This method was particularly effective when formulating the Climate Change Strategy and conducting the Train Station Ticket Office consultation. It would have been very difficult to achieve this through additional in person meetings.

- **Public Engagement**
  Referral of questions from ACC brought local issues to the TEE O&S Committee which were then considered from a more strategic view. There was engagement and interest from the North Yorkshire Climate Coalition in making public statements and addressing the committee.

- **Flooding Prevention**
  On gully clearances to prevent flooding on highways, Members made several requests to share information and schedules to better inform Councillors and keep them up to date.

- **Review of Motion on Water Quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity and economy**
  At the meeting of Full Council on 19 July 2023, the Chairman decided that a Notice of Motion submitted on water quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity and economy should be referred to the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The motion was then presented on 19 October 2023 to the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a series of recommendations were referred back to Full Council for approval. At the meeting of Full Council on 15 November 2023, it was unanimously agreed to support the motion on water quality, accepting in full the recommendations put forward by the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was also put forward as an additional recommendation at the Council meeting and subsequently agreed that the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the motion in six months, which is scheduled for July 2024.

- **Notice of Motion on United Sustainable Development Goals**
  At Full Council on 15 November 2023, the Chair decided that a Notice of Motion on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals should be passed to both the TEEE O&S and the Audit Committee for consideration, with the intention of it being considered and responses brought back to the 21 February 2024 meeting of Full Council. The Notice of Motion stated that the council should: a. Adopt the UN SDGs as a framework for informing our local authority's policies, work programs, and initiatives. b. Contribute to the achievement of the UN SDGs through the council strategies and developing plans. c. Actively engage and collaborates with other local authorities, organisations, and community groups to share best practices, experiences, and lessons learned in advancing the UN SDGs. d. Receive an annual report setting out the Council’s contributions to the global agenda for sustainable development. It was resolved by TEEE O&S that the following recommendations on the UN SDGs motion be considered by Full Council:
  1. The Committee notes that the Council is already working towards delivering some of the objectives that the UN SDGs outline;
  2. Ask that the Executive Member for Managing our Environment informs Council Leadership Teams to make them aware of the importance of and the commitment to the UN SDGs,
  3. The Council use and reference the UN SDGs in the ongoing development and communication of the Council Plan.

At the Full Council meeting on 21 February 2024, the recommendations were approved unanimously.

The Committee's work programme for 2024/25 will include:

- Six-month review of the Water Quality motion.
- Follow up of 20mph speed limit queries raised (previously raised at a meeting in January 2024).
- 2 x biannual scrutiny updates of the Climate Change Strategy.
- North Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Tree and Woodland Policy.
- Let's Talk Rubbish.
- North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan.
- Tourism Destination Management Plan & York and North Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership.
- Major Regeneration Projects Update.
- Support for North Yorkshire businesses.
- Annual Report from the Member Champion for Climate Change.
- Parking Strategy Development.
- HGV Weight Orders.
- Enviro Crime.
- Allerton Waste Recovery Park.

Overview and scrutiny functions are also supported through the following bodies:

Scrutiny Board – this is made up of the Chairs of the six thematic Overview and Scrutiny committees, along with the Champions for Young People, Older People and Climate Change, and enables co-ordination across all five thematic Overview and Scrutiny committees.

Police, Fire and Crime Panel - which scrutinises the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. There is also a Complaints Sub-Committee which meets on an ad-hoc basis. The Council is the host authority for the Panel and the Panel is supported by the Council's Scrutiny team, along with Officers providing guidance from Legal, Communications and Finance.

Corporate Parenting Members Group – this is not a formal Committee but acts as an informal advisory group to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children's and Young Peoples Services, the Executive and Council. The group performs a role consistent with statutory guidance for local authorities to promote the health and well-being of looked-after children.

County and Unitary Councils' Officer Overview and Scrutiny Network

North Yorkshire Council is a member of this group which meets virtually on a quarterly basis. The Network is an opportunity for officers across the county to share information and ideas.

Over the last year, the network has:

- Heard from other County and Unitary Councils on best practice issues.
- Received a summary of how scrutiny structures work within local authorities across the network.
- Received updates on statutory overview and scrutiny guidance.
- Received updates from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

The Network has been helpful during the initial transition to the new Unitary Council and continues to be a useful platform for advice and support.

Call-In

There has been one Call-In in 2023/24 (Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Powers of call in apply to:

- all collective executive decisions (by the Executive and its committees and Area Constituency Committees);
- executive decisions (key or otherwise) by individual Executive Members; and
- key decisions by Officers.

This means that after the decision has been taken there will be a 5 clear working day 'standstill' period from publication of the minutes/decision record (not the date of decision), before the decision can be implemented. This is the call-in period. It allows any six Councillors to call the decision in for review by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In-depth reviews

There has been one in-depth overview and scrutiny review over the past 12 months, which focussed on SEND provision in Scarborough and Whitby (Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee**)**.

It is anticipated that there will be more reviews and task and finish group set up during the coming year. We now have a dedicated Scrutiny Team who will work closely with the overview and scrutiny committees and senior managers to explore the areas which could benefit from in-depth scrutiny support.

Other Approaches

Work with the Area Constituency Committees
The Council's six Area Constituency Committees (ACC's) have continued to work closely with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Examples of this collaborative working include:

Skipton and Ripon ACC:

- A petition asking for an investigation into the Upper Nidderdale Federation was submitted to the Skipton and Ripon ACC and the issue was raised with the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is due to receive a report on the roles and responsibilities of governing boards and the relationship between the Local Authority and maintained schools.

Scarborough and Whitby ACC:

- A Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision in the Scarborough and Whitby area involved Members of the ACC and the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report was considered and endorsed by both Committees before adoption by the Executive at its meeting on 16 April 2024.

The ACCs will continue to work with Scrutiny and Democratic Services to address issues within specific geographical areas.

Directorates
Scrutiny Committees and Officers regularly meet with colleagues in all Directorates to discuss the workplans of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Joint Scrutiny
The West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has continued to meet to discuss issues of strategic concern in health across West and North Yorkshire.

Member Working Groups
Member Working Groups engage with Members across all parties in shaping future policy and strategy. These meetings are private and not published and whilst they are invaluable in assessing views, they are not formal scrutiny.

How to find out more about Overview and Scrutiny:

Further information on Overview and Scrutiny is available on the North Yorkshire Council website - Overview and scrutiny | North Yorkshire Council

Or contact the Principal Scrutiny Officer, Diane Parsons
Email: diane.parsons@northyorks.gov.uk or T: 01609 532750

Committee papers are available from the North Yorkshire Council website as follows - Committee structure | North Yorkshire Council

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

School performance

Summer Term 2024

In the period 1st September 2023 to 30 April 2024 there were 80 published inspections of state-funded North Yorkshire schools. Of these, 80 were of primary schools, 6 of secondary schools, 1 Pupil Referral Unit and 1 special school inspection.

Of the 80 inspections, 46 were Section 5 graded inspections, 30 were Section 8 ungraded inspections and 4 were monitoring visits of schools judged requires improvement or inadequate. Safeguarding has continued to be judged effective in all schools and academies during this period. This continues the positive trend previously reported.

Ofsted performance of North Yorkshire state-funded schools compared to national as at 31 May 2024

The proportion of good and outstanding schools in North Yorkshire has improved by 3% (from 84%) in the period since 31st August 2023. In the same period, the rate of improvement nationally has improved by 1% (from 89%).
87% of schools in NY are judged to be good and outstanding compared to 90% nationally.

School Capital

At its meeting on the 11 June the Executive approved the Schools Capital Programme for 2024-25.
The programme that was approved provides for investment in schools totalling almost £7.5 million, funded from an allocation of £5.8 million received from the DfE as well as underspends and contingency sums that have been retained from previous programmes.

Whilst this investment will not meet the totality of the investment requirements associated with the schools for which the Council is responsible the programme will address priority works to ensure that those schools continue to provide safe and weather tight environments for learning.

On 16th July the Executive will consider the proposal to Cease to Maintain St Hilda's Ampleforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School.

SEND Capital Programme

The Council's SEND Capital Programme is continuing to be implemented. Most recently a new Targeted Mainstream Provision was opened at Cambrai Primary School taking the total TMPs to 11 across the county. A consultation to establish two further TMPs at Norton Community Primary School and Dishforth Airfield Primary Schools with an aim to open them in January 2025 is underway.

Major investments in new and existing special schools are also progressing. Work to expand Springwater School by 45 places remains on track to be ready for September 2025. Planning permission has been granted for the building of the new Special School in Selby and works have begun to deliver the necessary highways alterations. Additionally, the

Council are investing over £3m into the former Woodfield Primary School site to provide a new special school for 80 children.

Outdoor Learning

- Development work is progressing as detailed in the programme plan. The tenders have been assessed and a recommendation has been made. The intended start date is October and will be confirmed once a contractor has been appointed, with works on site taking approximately 36 weeks.

- Again, both North Yorkshire Outdoor Learning centres have been successful in receiving funding to offer holiday activities and food (HAF) programmes during the school summer holidays. The service has received funding for 196 young people to attend activity days at the centres, during the school summer holiday period.

Early Years and Wraparound Provision

- A newly appointed Wraparound Co-ordinator took up the post on 8th April 2024 on a two-year contract to support the expansion of the wraparound provision.

- From the Summer Term 2024 headcount data, there were 782 two-year-old children funded under the Disadvantage criteria and 2,968 children funded under the new Working Parent Entitlement criteria. The DfE confirmed that in North Yorkshire, 94.4% of Working Parent Entitlement codes for two-year-old children the Summer Term had been validated from those issued.

- In June, the DfE confirmed that so far 6 codes have been validated for children under one years old from 168 issued and so far 102 codes have been validated for children aged 12 – 23 months from 1182 issued.

- Take up for Disadvantage two-year-old funding remains stable in North Yorkshire. Across the county, take up for the three terms was 86% in Autumn 2023, 83% in Spring 2024 and 86% in Summer 2024. The % take up represents those families who may have been potentially eligible and who applied for the funding and met the eligibility criteria and subsequently took up the funded place.

- The Delivery Support Plan and Capital Grant Funding for the expansion for the wraparound provision for working parents in Reception to Year 6 was submitted to the DfE for approval on 14th June 2024.

- It is anticipated that the council's 'Delivery Support Grant Funding and Capital application form' and guidance for wraparound provision will be released to PVI providers and schools on 15th July with three deadlines for submission: 31st July, 30th August and 20th September.

Music service

- The Music Service has been successful in securing the bid to remain as Hub Lead Organisation for both North Yorkshire and York. We are now working closely with our York partners and have already invited schools to sing in York Minster, organised some joint training for staff and begun plans for a major joint concert next year.
- We are running our County Youth Ensembles from July 7th to 12th at Giggleswick School. Over 70 young performers will take part in chamber orchestra, junior orchestra, choir and Big Band activities. We will be joined by professional sax player, Matt Anderson for a day.

- Ten of our rural primary school experienced a project which the music service worked on with Playground Proms. This introduced children to classical music in a fun and exciting way. The children also got to write their own songs. It was a great success, and we are planning a further round of concerts next year.
- We are in the process of implementing our new billing and management system. This should improve the customer journey, simplifying processes and saving money in other areas such as printing and debt management.

Adult Learning

- Adult Learning continued its strong recruitment trend with increased learner numbers for both community learning and adult skills.
- The Personalised Learning College team have continued work to shape a qualification based framework for their 2024/25 learner programmes. Numbers of learners are expected to increase next year and will include the first cohort of Supported Interns.
- The Multiply adult numeracy programme is entering its final year, having reached over 10,000 people. This had been nationally celebrated with the North Yorkshire led consortium recently receiving two awards.

Skills Update

The next few months will be used to establish the new skills strategy team. Working with public and private sector partners we will establish our position within the North Yorkshire Skills sector as we continue to focus on new and existing strategies relating to Adult Learning and Skills engagement, to employability and to the Learning and Skills Improvement Plan and action plan.

Medium Term Financial Strategy – July 2024

The Children and Young People's Service is facing a number of significant cost pressures arising from an unprecedented rise in the number of children and young people assessed as requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan since 2015. This continues to affect demand-led budgets including High Needs budgets and SEN Transport. Increase demand within Children and Families teams has also given rise to cost pressures. Within this context, the Directorate have identified mitigating actions in 2024-25. The approach continues to prioritise and maintain frontline service delivery as much as possible.
Although this information appears in my Statement to Council it should be noted that both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service have joint responsibility for all relevant resources.

COUNCILLOR ANNABEL WILKINSON

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD

Revenue Budget / Housing Revenue Account / Capital Expenditure

Since last Full Council the Executive considered the outturn position for the first full year of the new Council. I had previously indicated that we were on track to record an underspend against budget and I am pleased to report that we saw a £11m saving against Budget. It is important, however, that we note that the Budget was based upon a £30m contribution from reserves so the outturn position, while pleasing, still represents an in-year deficit of £19m.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the anticipated recurring shortfall at £28m for next year (rising to £48m in 2023/27) so those additional savings in 2023/24 that are recurring will be able to help reduce the projected deficit. We will, of course, need further savings proposals to come forward and we eagerly await the new government's Spending Review to learn more about the scale of likely financial challenge that councils, and North Yorkshire in particular face.

The Housing Revenue Account also reported a £1.8m surplus – these ring-fenced funds will provide future capacity for reinvestment in the service for the benefit of our tenants. Whilst a number of the in[1]year savings/surpluses have been generated as a result of fortuitous circumstance, such as improved investment returns and inflation on utilities settling below expectations, overall, the HRA revenue budget is broadly sound and rent collection rates are good. This provides a stable base to help meet the upcoming challenges around regulatory standards as we continue to move towards active planned maintenance programmes and away from higher-cost responsive repairs and reduce void turnaround days.

Overall capital expenditure for 2023/24 was £178.2m against a budget of £231.9m. When capital receipts and grants are taken into account the net position showed an underspend of £12.9m, largely the result of slippage.

Looking ahead, the capital investment requirements of the Council are expected to be considerable and creating financial capacity whilst balancing the need for a sustainable revenue budget will be an on-going challenge. In addition to future needs, there is growing pressure on the existing Capital Plan including those capital projects that were inherited from the eight predecessor councils. The impact of high inflation and supply chain issues post-Covid means that there is a higher level of volatility in building and engineering project costs. For that reason, as highlighted above, funds have been earmarked to help mitigate the risks.

Productivity Plans & Savings

As most members will be aware, the previous minister for local government required all councils to produce a productivity plan and to submit this to government. The Executive considered a productivity plan as part of the quarter 4 revenue and capital monitoring reports and I'm pleased to say that it was approved. The plan has now been submitted to government and is available on the council's website.

It is worth noting that this Council is able to do a good response to the request for a productivity plan due to the enviable opportunities that unitarisation presents us. The efficiencies that we are able to enjoy due to the removal of duplication means that we can demonstrate that we have a good plan that helps to fill up our savings barometer. I can now report that we have a plan where savings as a consequence of unitarisation are estimated to total circa £39m and we are hopeful that there will be more to come as the new structures and ways of working bed-in leading to further opportunities being identified. We must all, however, remember that even after these savings we

still have the projected £48m deficit referred to above so we will still have to make some difficult decisions to retain the sound financial management that we have worked so hard to earn.

Property Rationalisation

Following on from my last update I am pleased to confirm that the 'quick win' asset rationalisation proposals are on track to deliver revenue savings in excess of £800k per annum and capital receipts well in excess of £1m. In addition to the financial benefits derived by the council, the repurposing of the surplus assets identified through the proposals will support the local economy through inward investment and the provision of alternative employment uses.

On the back of the quick wins project a review is now underway to look at the option of relocating the customer function from Stone Cross, Northallerton to the ground floor of Tenement House, which is a vacant, Council owned asset located at the nearby Treadmills site. This proposal will not only support the longer-term aspiration to repurpose the currently underutilised Stone Cross and Tenement House sites, but also provide a modern, fit for purpose, and accessible customer access point within central Northallerton. If the plans are progressed it is hoped that the move will take place during the current financial year.

In addition to the quick win proposals the property team generated circa £6m in capital receipts during the year ended 31 March 2024 through the disposal of surplus or low yield property assets. A number of other land and property disposals are currently under negotiation, with the capital receipts due to be delivered in the current financial year. These receipts will be used to support the Council's existing and future capital programme.

An initial asset list has been compiled from predecessor Council records and shows that North Yorkshire Council has inherited a portfolio of over 3,000 land and property assets. A key focus of the property team in the coming months will be to develop a programme of reviews on those assets to identify future asset rationalisation and redevelopment opportunities. Consideration will be given as to how best to engage with members around this work, including the Asset Rationalisation Member Working Group, Corporate and Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the wider elected membership. Further updates on this work will be presented later in the year.

Technology

Quarter one has been a productive one for Technology Services with three sets of IT systems completing their consolidation in July. Our Legal Services case management system Iken, the homelessness system in Housing Options Service called Jigsaw, and Modern.Gov will all be fully consolidated onto the same version, network and contract this month enabling services to work more effectively as one. Work on consolidating systems for Revenues and Benefits, the Customer Platform and Planning are all continuing as planned.

The update of all Council laptops to a new more modern and more secure operating system, Windows 11, has also started this month. It will take a total of about 15 months to complete, at which point everyone will be on the same operating system and the same central network. The benefits of upgrading to Windows 11 include allowing staff to work more efficiently as one council by enhancing productivity and connectivity across our legacy networks even if their systems have not been consolidated. Upgrading to a standard laptop build also simplifies IT management and mitigates risks related to cyber security and future software compatibility. People will get a 'new to you' laptop rolled out Service by Service, and everyone will be providing with training and support that includes what to do before and after being upgraded.

NJC Pay Award 2024-2025

The Council, like the vast majority of local authorities, is part of the national arrangements for the annual inflationary pay review for employees on NJC terms and conditions (excluding teachers and Soulbury). The Council does not negotiate or determine the annual pay settlement locally but instead applies the outcome of the national negotiations. National Employers confirmed 16 May 2024 a final offer has been made to the Trade Union Side for 1 April 2024 of £1,290 on pay points 2 to 43, and a 2.5% increase on pay points 44 and above and on NJC allowances. Grade AB would start at £12.26 per hour, an increase of 5.7%. The 3 trade unions are consulting with their members nationally, with consultation concluding by 10th July. Unison and Unite recommended their members should reject the employers' offer, and 81% of Unison members who voted did vote to reject. GMB is consulting without a recommendation to accept or reject the offer. The pay increase when agreed will be applied from 1 April 2024.

The total additional cost for the Council of the employers' pay offer has been calculated as £14m (including on costs) or an additional 4.8% on the pay bill. This is subject to confirmation as there are a number of significant staff restructures currently in progress. The provision for pay awards made in the budget was sufficient to cover this offer and further refinement will be made when the final position is reached.

GARETH DADD

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR OPEN TO BUSINESS
including Economic Development & Regeneration, Planning, Visitor Economy, Broadband, and Harbours

Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism & Skills

The UK Shared Prosperity Funds and Rural England Prosperity funding is in the final year of delivery to complete by the end of March 2025. The third year of the programme carries a £15m budget following expenditure of £7m across years 1 and 2. North Yorkshire Council has been the most successful local authority in delivering its Year 1 and 2 allocations and as a result has received all of its Year 3 allocation funds paid in advance. Work has started on evaluating the programme and understanding the impact of the funding in supporting businesses and communities and promoting Pride in Place.

Joint working with the Combined Authority for York and North Yorkshire continues and NYC officers are currently producing detailed business cases to submit 'Gainshare' funding bids towards the improvement of Selby Station (to reflect the surrounding Transforming Cities Fund scheme), a new boat lift at Scarborough, new EV charging points in several market towns, and improved junctions, traffic signals and public space in central Harrogate, linked to the Transforming Cities Fund scheme. Funding is also being sought to develop the detailed business cases of other future projects including Selby Abbey Quarter, Wyvern Link Road at Skipton, Ripon mobility hub, regeneration sites at Scarborough, and several housing sites. With funding from the Combined Authority, detailed technical, design and costing work will be undertaken for each project to support future funding bids to the Mayoral Combined Authority and to government.

The proposals to fully refurbish and enhance the Tadcaster bus station building gained planning permission in March and the work for this scheme is now out to tender, with cost proposals due back mid-July. Start on site is still anticipated in September, with completion in March 2025. The enhancement scheme for part of Low Street shopping area in Sherburn-in-Elmet was approved by Planning Committee on 1 May. The team continue to work with the Town Council and relevant landowners to finalise the scheme, and secure licences for access to complete the works.

Good progress has been made on the Scarborough Long Term Plan for Towns against the short timescales set by Government for submission of the Vision and Short Term Investment Plan for Scarborough. The Long Term Plan for Towns provides Scarborough with circa £20m to spend on local priorities over the next 10 years, and will help attract other private sector and public sector investment into the town. The Town Board, made up of local partners and the Council, has engaged widely to review and develop an initial set of priorities which can form the basis of the initial submission to Government required by August. Work will continue over the summer to further refine and test the proposals and a final list will be considered by the Town Board and then the Council in the early Autumn.

Planning applications for the West Pier in Scarborough and the Maritime Centre in Whitby have been submitted. The appointment of contractors and start on site are scheduled for Autumn this year.

The Catterick Garrison LUF project is still due to complete in late summer 2025. We now have a construction contractor Wilmot Dixon who are working to complete the Stage 2 Cost plan and detailed program of works for a start on site in September 2024. The Catterick Garrison LUF now has an Artist (BEAM) involved with the project and completed on a very successful initial workshop with local community groups and schools. A joint community roadshow event was conducted over the last week of May and first week of June in Catterick Garrison and Richmond Town Centre with the Catterick Integrated Care Campus. Both aspects where very well received and all feedback from local residents was very positive even gaining positive feedback from residents that where initially sceptical on the last roadshow. Overall the Catterick Garrison LUF development is progressing well, and remains within scope and budget for completion in September 2025.

The Destination Management Plan (DMP) is in the final stages of development. 2023 STEAM data has now been returned and is being analysed in order to develop growth targets. York & North Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) officers meet with Make it York, City of York Council and Visit England on a monthly basis to continue development of a Y&NY LVEP Framework, Growth Plan and Partnership Agreement. Input from the Mayoral Combined Authority will be sought once the Framework has been developed.

In a bid to attract more business event organisers to choose a venue in North Yorkshire, the tourism team had a stand at The Meetings Show with stand partners Harrogate Convention Centre and Scarborough. The team also hosted a Visit North Yorkshire stand at the Great Yorkshire Show, showcasing North Yorkshire as a visitor destination, and encouraging those who visit the Great Yorkshire Show to explore more of the county and extend their stay in future years.

A campaign named ‘Find your escape’ is currently live, looking to encourage visitors to explore North Yorkshire’s gardens and outdoor spaces. The campaign targets a family audience as well as couples aged 50+ travelling without children and will run until October.

Planning

The Planning Service continues to make significant progress on the Council’s future planning policies and land allocations:

- The initial stage of targeted informal consultation is underway with members, Infrastructure providers, the development industry, neighbouring authorities and other key stakeholders.
- Work has begun on the preparation of the evidence base for the new local plan, including the Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment, which will determine the level of new homes and jobs that the new plan will need to provide for.
- The ‘Call for Sites’ consultation has taken place and Officers are currently taking stock of the sites submitted for consideration to help to meet the future needs of North Yorkshire.
- The service is on track to launch a public consultation on key issues and options for the new plan before the end of 2024 – the first major stage of consultation on the plan.
- The final stage of formal public consultation on the Selby Local Plan closed on 19 April and Officers are currently reviewing comments and key issues raised.
- The service continues to support the preparation of numerous Neighbourhood Plans, led by local communities across North Yorkshire.

From 1 April until the middle of June the service had dealt with 32 major, 335 minor and 699 other and 5 County matter applications. In addition, we have also dealt with a considerable number of other types of applications, including prior approvals, screening opinions, scoping reports, trees, hedgerows, discharge of conditions, telecommunications etc. Performance across all application types is within statutory targets. During the same period, the Constituency Area Planning and Strategic Committees have now met 15 times. In terms of Planning Enforcement, since 1 April 2024, we have closed approximately 355 cases.

West Harrogate Infrastructure Delivery Strategy (WHIDS) and update to the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule was signed off on 24 June. The WHIDS is a coordination tool to capture the inter-dependences of site delivery and the roll-out of key infrastructure. This is particularly important for West Harrogate as there are multiple allocations/sites and multiple ownerships, promoters, and developers. Separately the site promoters have concluded work on the cumulative transport strategy and will submit this alongside each of their planning applications.

As part of the certification of the Building Control Services Quality Assurance Systems under ISO 9001:2015 the external audited from TRADA visited the service earlier this year to interrogate the processes that are in place to ensure that the service provides a high-quality service to its service users. This audit was completed without any non-compliances or opportunities for improvement being highlighted which means that the QA system has been re-certified for a further 3 years.

The QA certification covers all aspects of the service including the processing applications, inspection of work, enforcement of the building regulations requirements, handling dangerous buildings, customer requirements, Policy, Training, complaints, continual improvement etc.

Having such an accolade in place is important to the service as it demonstrates and provides confidence to service users that they will receive a quality service from the team. Since 6 April it has now also become a requirement of the Building Safety Regulator that Building Control services have a QA system in place and to have one that is externally accredited allows the Council to provide that reassurance to the regulator.

Harbours

The Harbours have undergone a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Health-check, the health-check appeared to go well and we will wait for the report and action any recommendations. The Harbours also recently underwent an annual Local Aids to Navigation (LAtN) inspection, conducted by Trinity House acting as the General Lighthouse Authority (GLA). This inspection also appeared to be positive.

Unfortunately, we have experienced some unforeseen mechanical and staffing issues with the dredger, which we now hope to be rectified by mid-July. We have also sounded Whitby Harbour and identified key target areas for dredging, and it is our intention to still complete our full dredging program. In Scarborough Harbour, we are waiting for a Marine Management Organisation (MMO) licence for dredging, once we are in receipt of this, we shall schedule the Scarborough Harbour Dredging Program.

During the winter period the East Pier at Whitby sustained significant surface damage to some sandstone and pointing, we have now spent £15k on remedial repairs in keeping with the historic aesthetics of the pier. Also, on inspection we identified that some ladders needed repair, and we are actioning repairs as soon as possible and the Pier will remain closed until this work is complete.

Extensive repairs are required at Whitby Fish Quay as identified in the Harbours Infrastructure programme. Dive surveys have been commissioned and following receipt of the findings our engineers will develop a programme of repair work to this area.

COUNCILLOR MARK CRANE

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

25 JULY 2024

**STATEMENT OF COUNCILLOR HEATHER PHILLIPS,
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES**

Legal and Democratic Services

The migration of the historical committee papers from the former district and borough council committee management systems to the North Yorkshire Council Modern Gov system is near completion. This will enable members, officers and the public to review committee papers and minutes relating to all of the former district and borough councils in one place on the North Yorkshire Council website.

The School Admission Appeals Service has completed the administration of the bulk admissions appeals for primary and secondary schools ahead of the school holidays and the start of the September school term. The appeals are heard by an independent panel of volunteers, without whom the process could not be administered.

On 22 April 2024, the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities published updated statutory guidance. This new guidance refreshes that previously published in 2019. Scrutiny Board has reviewed the document and the issues raised, taking the opportunity for a high-level review or health check of the Council's scrutiny function. The outcome of this will inform future developments in scrutiny practice as the new scrutiny team is embedded following the restructure in February 2024.

An initial meeting of the internal Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety has led to the identification of a number of actions and pilot pieces of work that can be undertaken to promote the safety of councillors as they go about their duties, either at formal committee meetings of the Council or in their division. This is in addition to ongoing briefings; circulation of information from the LGA, Electoral Commission and others; support with the installation of physical safety measures at home; and liaison with the Police. The safety of elected members is a key concern for the Council and critical to the delivery of the democratic process locally.

Localities Service

As part of the Council wider service restructures, the work to establish the new Localities Service structure has now completed. The new Localities Service went live on 1 May 2024 and is made up of three service teams:

- Communities (incorporating the work of the Public Health funded Stronger Communities Programme, voluntary and community sector funding, local partnerships, prevention, social regeneration and community resilience);
- Parish Liaison and Local Devolution (incorporating projects such as parish charter, parish liaison and engagement, service devolution pilots, community right to challenge and assets of community value); and
- Migrant Programmes (bringing together a number of existing refugee and asylum seeker programmes, Homes for Ukraine programme and other community-based support initiatives into a single team).

The teams have commenced reconfiguring workloads and will continue to be in liaison with Elected Members to support them in their community leadership role.

Communities

Community Anchor Organisations (CAOs)

The 25 place-based organisations from across the county continue to work with the Localities and other service teams to progress a Community Anchor model for North Yorkshire; in Q1, this included a review of the organisational development action plans and progressing prevention pilots with Health & Adult Services. The UKSPF funded collaborative support programme for CAOs, delivered by Community First Yorkshire (CFY) and Better Connect continues. It is tailored to meet the needs of each organisation and will broadly include the development and delivery of resources and training, one to one support meetings, partnership events and networking opportunities. Collaborative work with our key voluntary sector partners in our larger urban areas of Harrogate and Scarborough has concluded and an Anchor model has been identified for each, further work is taking place to develop the grant specification.
The small scale Inspire grants scheme has continued to run, with 50 awarded in the last quarter. The team has also continued to work alongside various voluntary and community groups to support organisational development and capacity building activity.

Community Partnerships

The team continues to develop the ambition of supporting local partnership and multi-agency working through the establishment of local Community Partnerships, focussing on principal towns and surrounding areas, and reflecting natural communities. This is taking a phased approach, with the team working in five pilot areas: Easingwold, Leyburn and Middleham, Ripon, Sherburn in Elmet and Forest and Dale (Thornton-le-Dale and rural hinterland). A progress report is scheduled to be considered by the Executive in September.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Localities continue to take the lead role in the delivery of the Communities strand of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme. An advisory group is in place made up of public and voluntary sector partners, who are overseeing the delivery of the work being progressed on the year one and two allocations, as well as over-seeing year three allocations. Notable progress has been made in the following areas:

- The Community Grants fund has made 30 awards to date, representing £520,000 worth of investment. This fund is now closed to new applications.
- The Village Halls and Community Buildings Grant fund closed in Q1. It has awarded £815,000 worth of investment into a range of valued local community assets. A total of 33 awards have been made over the two years, with 15 awarded in Q1 this year.
- The Physical Activity, Sport and Active Travel Fund continues to be successfully delivered by North Yorkshire Sport on behalf of the Council after its launch in autumn 2023. This programme is also now fully allocated with 57 organisations receiving a total of £725,000 of funding. In addition, 8 projects have received a total £450,000 for large scale works via the capital grants fund.
- The Digital Inclusion Fund was launched in April 2024. The ambition for the investment is to stimulate digital inclusion activity through learning, skills, resources, and volunteering, in a range of existing and new settings targeting digital and health inequalities. The funding comprises of

£200,000 capital grants fund and £336,000 revenue budget for digital learning and skills. The first phase of awards has completed awarding 16 grants with a total value of £180,435. A digital inclusion support package for successful applicants is currently being finalised and procured and the fund re-opened for new applications on 5th July 2024.

Local Food Support

Following the 'Food Summit' - a partnership and engagement event to launch the findings of the collaborative food insecurity insight study undertaken in conjunction with City of York Council in September 2023 - four online Community of Practice sessions have now taken place with local free or low cost food providers, focussing on place based collaborative food access models, cash/income first approaches, more than food (wrap around support available for those accessing food provision) and mixed income models. A number of dedicated key stakeholder conversations continue to take place in relation to this work, including with colleagues in Public Health as they continue to develop the North Yorkshire Food Strategy.

Wider Partnership Conference and Community Awards

The annual Partnership Conference will take place on Friday 25th October at the Pavilions of Harrogate. The theme of this year's conference is around 'Responding to Change'. Nominations for the annual Community Awards have opened, the categories this year are:

- Best Community Group
- Best Community Project
- Lifetime Achievement in Volunteering

The Awards will be presented at the Conference.

Parish Liaison & Local Devolution

Work has been progressing on the commitment to review the Parish Charter and a meeting has taken place with the Parish Charter working group in May with a further meeting planned for October/November. The agreements in the Charter are being worked through and an action plan developed that sets out the detail required to monitor these commitments. Once this has been finalised it will also inform other work currently being developed including improved contact with the Council, Parish Council communication/engagement generally, baseline performance measures and the opportunity for the Parish sector to provide regular feedback. Some particular areas of work are :

- Area based Parish Liaison meetings
- Area based drop-ins - themed and general discussion opportunities
- Regular informal engagement with representative Parish meetings/councils
- Opportunities for shared training and development

This work is at an early stage, but the intention is that the Parish Charter forms the framework for Parish Liaison generally and that there is an action plan developed that sets out the ongoing and future requirements with measures to monitor progress and demonstrate improvement.

Migrant Programmes

Homes For Ukraine

Between 1st April 2024 and 30th June 2024, there were 35 new arrivals (6 children and 29 adults) in North Yorkshire through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. This is in addition to the 1501 arrivals, since the start of the scheme to the end of 2023/24.

Visas are now granted for an 18 month period, whereas earlier arrivals were granted 3 years. There is the option for a further 18 month extension, which Ukrainians can apply for three months before their current visa expires.

Wrap around support including a dedicated information telephone line, financial packages to support people with housing, employability support, adult learning and community integration continues to be provided.

Economic Migrants

Progress is ongoing to develop a Lottery funded countywide programme of support for economic migrants building on the successful POMOC programme that operates in the former Scarborough and Ryedale areas and supports migrants to access services and to contribute meaningfully to social and civic life.

Resettlement

As of 30 June 2024, North Yorkshire has resettled 397 persons (80 households) under the Afghan resettlement schemes (since August 2021). From that figure, 30 persons (six households) have moved out of county. During Q1 2024/25 37 individuals from eight households have started their resettlement journey in North Yorkshire.

The United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) is a scheme that can be used for the UK to respond to refugee crises anywhere in the globe and has been operational in North Yorkshire since February 2021. To date 175 people (45 households) have been resettled in North Yorkshire. There were no arrivals through this scheme during Q1 2024/25.

Integration support for the resettlement schemes arrivals continues to be provided in partnership with the Refugee Council with initial tenancy support being provided by North Yorkshire Council's dedicated refugee housing officers.

Asylum

The Migrant Programmes Team is in regular contact with Mears, the organisation contracted by the Home Office to find dispersal housing in Yorkshire and Humber, to identify potential suitable sites across the county. Two hotels, one in Northallerton and one in Selby, currently accommodate families and single males respectively.

Councillor Locality Budgets

The tenth year of the scheme started on 13 May 2024 and the last date for the receipt of recommendations will be 31 January 2025. Members are able to make recommendations totalling £10,000 and the arrangements are as in previous years with the addition that funding will not be

awarded for 100% of the cost of a project or activity undertaken or managed by an external organisation. External organisations are expected to meet a proportion of the cost of projects or activities from their own funds or from a funder other than North Yorkshire Council. Councillors are also required to round down their awarded funding to the nearest £10.

177 recommendations have been made to date, amounting to £172,160 (19.13%) of the allocated funding.

Customer, Revenue and Benefits Service

As part of the Council wider restructure, Customer, Revenue and Benefits have completed staff consultation on the new structures and have moved to the next stage of implementation. The new teams will be crucial in the delivery of the Council Plan, Customer Experience Strategy, and Customer Transformation Programme.

Household Support Fund (HSF) 5 – Q1 Update

A fifth phase of the Household Support Fund was launched in Q1 and will run until 30 September 2024. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funded programme aims to support those most in need or crisis with rising living costs.

In line with the expenditure guidelines and the agreed eligibility framework and delivery plan, c21,500 households across North Yorkshire will receive a direct award in the form of a £140 shopping voucher to support them over the summer months. This will encompass eligible families, pensioners and working age adult households, who were in receipt of maximum Council Tax Reduction (CTR) as of 1 June 2024. In addition to this, funding has been awarded to:

- North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF), enabling the maximum number of awards for emergency food and utilities to remain at four over a 12-month rolling period until 30 September 2024.
- The provision of an Energy Support Scheme, delivered by North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre until 30 September 2024.
- Food Support: a grants scheme for providers of free or low-cost food was launched in Q1, with 25 awards made to increase capacity in the system until 30 September 2024.
- Cost of living support for Care Leavers via the NYC Care Leavers Team.
- An Exceptional Circumstances Fund will be delivered, to support those who may have missed out on direct award support due to circumstances beyond their control throughout the time period the direct award is live (24 June 2024 - 5 August 2024).

North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF)

In Q1, 2024/25, 3,044 applications were received[1] with an 89% approval rate. A total of £351,849.41 was spent[2], with 39% on food and energy vouchers, and 61% on standard awards.

.Quarterly data update:

- On average, NYLAF received 234 applications a week this quarter.

[1] Compared to 3,112 applications received and the 2,858 approved in Q1, 2023/24
[2] Compared to £378,393.71 spent Q1, 2023/24.

- There have been 318 first time applicants to the Fund this quarter.
- Vulnerability category data is also monitored monthly. It shows no *significant* change in who is being supported through the scheme and in which geographical areas, with those experiencing mental health challenges (20%) and those homeless (13%) coming through the Fund more than anyone else. For the first time ever, however, this Quarter, NYLAF received the same % of applications from those with 1 or more physical disabilities (5%) as families under extreme pressure.

Other key areas of note this quarter include:

- As well as the reported figures above, further food parcels were delivered across the Scarborough town area through our ongoing partnership with the Rainbow Centre. In Q1, 294 were delivered.
- NYLAF has supported the Governments Homes for Ukraine Scheme, with 27 awards going to refugees or host families this quarter to directly support those that have fled Ukraine.

Customer Service

In our first year operating as one customer service team we have supported:

- 650,566 customers over the phone
- 80,951 customer face to face
- 186,382 customer e-mails enquiries
- 34,393 enquiries generated from the website "get in touch" link.

In total that **952,292** customers supported across our 8 customer service teams

In Q1 the top demand through the customer service team have been:

- Bin's, Recycling and waste
- Council Tax
- Housing and homelessness
- Roads, Parking and Travel
- Social Care

In Q1 the customer services team have assisted the elections team to deliver the two elections. The team supported elections through handling their phone calls at first point of contact, providing face to face resource to help elections check ID for both residents and staff, and released resource to help deliver the election on both polling day and the count. Overall, in Q1 the customer services team received 5,724 calls for Elections and saw an increase in footfall by 622 customers for election related enquiries.

The team have also supported the roll out of the household support scheme, and council tax reminders, as well as business as usual.

COUNCILLOR HEATHER PHILLIPS

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

A59 Kex Gill

I am pleased to report the A59 Kex Gill was re-opened on Friday 21 June, one week ahead of programme and well before the Great Yorkshire Show. This represents a significant engineering effort with the installation of 85m of sheet piling, 10m deep, together with new drainage, utility diversions and road reconstruction. Meanwhile, works to the new road are progressing, with opening planned for Spring 2026.

Transforming Cities Fund – Harrogate, Selby and Skipton

We continue to make progress on work on transformative Gateway schemes to improve access to three of North Yorkshire's rail stations. Full Business Cases have been submitted to West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Department for Transport (DfT). All three have now been approved. Work is expected to commence in Skipton and Harrogate in the Autumn, while Selby is to commence early in the New Year.

Surface Dressing 2024

North Yorkshire's annual surface dressing programme commenced at the beginning of April. When completed the programme of works this season will have covered some 142 miles of roads at a cost of around £5m. This cost-effective way of maintaining skid-resistant and waterproofing road surfaces helps prevent potholes and can extend the life of a road by up to ten years.

Progress was somewhat hampered by repeated spells of wet weather, particularly during April, and the programme had to be continually revised to reflect this. I am pleased to report that most of the programme, some 200 locations, was complete at the time of writing, with only 16 sites left to do. Remaining works should be complete by the first week in August.

Sutton Bank

Colleagues will be aware of our longstanding approach to maintaining Sutton Bank, by undertaking a range of activities on this section of the A170 via an annual closure. This year, we expect Sutton Bank to be closed for eight days from Sunday 8 September to Sunday 15 September inclusive. This will allow for an array of maintenance tasks to take place, not only to Sutton Bank but also to the highway in nearby Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe. This coordinated approach will mean disruption to the public is kept to an absolute minimum.

Lane Rental

I am pleased to say we are taking tougher action to tackle congestion from roadworks, with efforts to introduce a Lane Rental Scheme in North Yorkshire continuing at pace. This would be the first scheme of its type in the North of England, with contractors facing fees of up to £2,500 per day for conducting works at peak times.

We are about to embark on a 12-week consultation exercise on the proposed scheme and we anticipate making a formal application to the Department for Transport in November 2024. We expect to introduce the scheme next year.

Parks and Grounds

It's the busiest time of the year for parks and grounds staff, with grass cutting and planting activities at their peak. I am pleased to report that a new management structure is now in place, with the single, unified team sharing expertise and resources. A recent example has been the strong collaboration across all front-line services to ensure our towns were looking their very best for key events such as Armed Forces Day in Scarborough and the Harrogate International Festival.

Buses

Transdev unveiled their new Zebra buses last week in Harrogate with a launch of the re-branded 36 bus. Working in partnership with Transdev, we received a £7m Department of Transport grant funding to put alongside £12m from Transdev to deliver a project that will see all their Harrogate fleet convert to zero emission vehicles by early September 2024. It will deliver 20 single and 19 double-deck electric zero emission vehicles in total.

COUNCILLOR KEANE DUNCAN

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HARRISON

Combatting Drugs

The Joint Combatting Drugs Unit (JCDU) and the Department of Health and Social Care's Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) visited our Drugs & Alcohol Partnership at Police HQ in Northallerton in May where we were able to showcase some of our examples of innovative practice that are contributing to the delivery of our substance use strategy. This included the North Yorkshire Drug Analysis Project, North Yorkshire Connected Spaces and the Drink Drug Hub – which is our harm reduction web resource and training platform.

The JCDU is responsible for oversight of the Government's ten-year drugs strategy. OHID acts as a central hub for monitoring and improving substance use treatment in England, working alongside local authorities.

Public Health, Adult Social Care, Community Development, Localities, and Children and Young People's Service directorates were joined by a wide range of partners including Police, Probation, North Yorkshire Horizons and RISE, Humber & NY Integrated Care Board, and people with lived and living experience – North Yorkshire Connected Spaces.

Safeguarding

The 2024 safeguarding week took place in June and focussed on areas such as substance use, language and stigma, safeguarding concerns, stories of hope and recovery from addiction, learning from safeguarding adult reviews and much more.

The theme was 'Safeguarding is everybody's business' and the Safeguarding Adults Board, Adult Social Care and Public Health delivered 12 interactive sessions as part of the week-long programme, with attendance of 50+ people at each session. Over 900 people signed up for the North Yorkshire adult sessions alone which were co-delivered alongside people with lived experience.

This is such an important subject, and I am keen to help anyone who feels they need more information on this subject.

Separately, Adrian Green has taken up the post of Independent Chair for the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board in succession to Dr Sue Proctor. Until recently he was working for Durham Police as a Divisional Commander. I would like to welcome Adrian and to thank Sue for her excellent work as Chair over the last few years.

Good Care Month

Our Care Provider Services celebrated Good Care Month throughout June with a series of events. These have included celebrations with people the teams support as well as training and awareness sessions with a spotlight on quality, dignity, equality, diversity and inclusion. There has also been an emphasis on wellbeing and fun culminating with a dancing

competition ‘Come Dance with Care Provider Services’ across all care provider services, which was supported by the wider HAS teams. I am keen to support these initiatives as feedback from last year’s competition was that it was thoroughly enjoyed by both people in receipt of support and our care professionals who said it had a positive impact on team morale.

Healthy Schools

On 19th June, the Healthy Schools Award Programme held a celebration event in RHS Harlow Carr Gardens in Harrogate, presenting awards to several schools. Children had the opportunity to attend workshops on oral health, wellbeing and how gardens are beneficial to health, as well as being treated to various activities over the course of the day. Over 80% of North Yorkshire schools are now actively working on the various award levels and City of York schools have joined the programme too.

Centre for Ageing Better

The Centre for Ageing Better is a “What Works” organisation leading work nationally around older people. This includes highlighting and championing issues around housing, ageism, and employment as well as supporting local communities to become age friendly, linking with the World Health Organisation. The Centre leads a national age friendly steering group and the council recently hosted them in Northallerton and so took the opportunity to arrange visits to local projects including Northallerton Men’s Shed, Rivendale Extra Care, Hambleton Community Action and the Northallerton over 50’s forum.

Members of the national team attending included representatives from Northern Ireland, Scotland, London, Sunderland, Sheffield and Bolton and were joined by colleagues from North Yorkshire Council and the Older Person’s Champion Cllr Caroline Dickinson.

NHS Bradford and Craven

I would like to thank Nancy O’Neill, Chief Operating Officer at NHS Bradford and Craven who leaves her role in September after nearly 43 years’ service in the NHS. Nancy has played a key role in health services in Craven (and across North Yorkshire) for many years, including vital help she provided during the first COVID lockdown with supplying much-needed testing kits to people living in care homes across many areas of the County. She will be much missed by her NHS and local government colleagues.

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HARRISON

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, ARTS & HOUSING
including Culture, Arts, Libraries, Museums, Archives, Key venues, Leisure and Housing

Leisure and Culture

Venues and Attractions

Scarborough Spa has recently hosted a number of sell out events including Punk Fest Weekend, Fortress Festival Weekend and two Paul Smith comedy nights. All have rebooked for next year and are already selling fast.

The first show of the 2024 Open Air Theatre season started on 2 June with Status Quo performing to over 7,000 people. This will be followed by artists including Simple Minds, Anne-Marie, Deacon Blue, Tom Jones and Johnny Marr, with 18 concerts in total this season.

The second Filey Food Festival of 2024 took place in June, with almost 10,000 visitors and with excellent feedback from stall holders and visitors over the weekend.

Armed Forces Day has added another flying display to the programme with the Aerial Stunt Team, the Titans, booked to attend. Seafest took place 19-21 July. Fish and Ships in Whitby took place on 18 and 19 May and received fantastic feedback and the team area looking to grow the event in 2025 with great support this year from local business and the fishing community.

Sport and Active Wellbeing

Aquanatal, a new class for pregnant women, is being offered at Northallerton Leisure Centre. The Centre is working in partnership with the South Tees NHS Foundation Trust to support the health and wellbeing of the community by providing accessible activities. The sessions are being led by qualified midwives from James Cook University and the Friarage Hospitals and include pool and studio-based sessions of exercises, relaxation and education.

FEAST gives eligible children and young people in North Yorkshire the opportunity to book onto school holiday activities for free, where each day they will also receive a free hot meal or packed lunch. Following a successful trial in the Christmas holidays at Northallerton Leisure Centre, sessions will again be delivered during the summer holidays at both Northallerton Leisure Centre and Stokesley Leisure Centre with young people able to participate in swimming and other games and activities.

Libraries

The Local and Community History Month throughout May saw libraries across North Yorkshire celebrate all that is great about our local communities by holding activities and events to get people interested in the history of their area. This included a collaboration with the Archives Service to deliver a series of ‘pop up’ archive sessions in Pickering, Selby, Settle, Easingwold and Harrogate Libraries. A highlight was a talk in partnership with Dr Tosh Warwick of the University of Sheffield who played to a packed crowd at Scarborough Library uncovering the “Lost Football Grounds of Yorkshire” .

The service was pleased to be recognised nationally at the Libraries Connected annual awards where some of our staff and volunteers were shortlisted for projects in the Culture and Creativity category. This included recognition for the multimedia immersive exhibition 'More Than a Name on a Memorial'.

Also shortlisted was the Ey Up! project. Ey Up! came from a seed of an idea when working with the University of Leeds Dialect for Local and Community History Month 2022 and resulted in libraries making lasting connections with partners, volunteers, funders, artists, film makers and participants from hard-to-reach groups. The Ey Up! project was awarded the runner up prize in the awards with the judges describing the project as 'powerful' and 'emotive' and were particularly impressed by the team's centralised approach to fundraising.

Volunteers' Week 3-9 June 2024 provided an excellent opportunity for libraries and the wider Council to celebrate the significant contribution volunteers make all year round in delivering public services and making North Yorkshire a better place to live. Libraries in Catterick, Harrogate and Pickering hosted Volunteers Week drop-in events organised by the Resourcing Solutions team, providing a chance for all volunteers who support Council services to meet up, enjoy light refreshments and meet and receive recognition from the Council Chair, Cllr Roberta Swiers. Twenty-four volunteers attended the three events and very much enjoyed socialising with volunteers from other services. Many libraries (both NYC and community-managed) held their own celebration events to recognise their volunteers.

Dementia Collections, a new collection of books to help people living with dementia, was launched at Bentham Library on 17 May to coincide with Dementia Awareness Week and is now available in libraries across North Yorkshire. The books provide information, advice and support as well as personal stories aimed at those with dementia and their families, including the younger generation.

Culture and Archives

Selby Place Partnership Fund Project is now underway following the successful launch of the 'We Are Here' digital art installation that previewed at Selby Abbey on 6 June. 'We Are Here' is the first of many creative community place-based programmes as part of the 2-year project, which aims to install civic pride, tell the stories of communities and regenerate the towns of Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet.

Craven Museum has had fantastic coverage in the local and national media as one of five shortlisted museums for the coveted Arts Fund Museum of the Year 2024. The award ceremony is in July, where the winner will be announced.

Archives at Dusk, the annual event to encourage more audiences to find out more about the archives service, and encourage communities to engage with their heritage, took place at North Yorkshire Archives on 23 May. Over 200 people came through the doors for the latest exhibition. 'Treasures from the Parish Chest: exploring North Yorkshire's church history from archives to architecture' and around half of attendees were first time visitors.

Work continues to develop the new Cultural Strategy for North Yorkshire and York, with a range of consultation events and meetings scheduled throughout the summer.

Housing

Selective Licensing Scheme

The new Selective Licensing scheme in Scarborough, covering parts of the Castle, Northstead and Falsgrave and Stepney council divisions went live on 1 June. Up to the end of June a total of 143 applications had been received. With the Early Bird discount scheme coming to an end

at the end of August, officers will be sending out reminders to landlords to get applications in as soon as possible, to ensure they benefit from the discount. In total, it is envisaged that around 1,000 licences will be issued based on the number of private rented properties known to be within the designated area.

Rural Housing Enablers

Our rural housing enablers are working hard paving the way for the delivery of affordable rural housing. Two Housing Needs surveys were recently completed in the Escrick/Riccall and Kelfield as well as in Newton Kyme/Billborough both of which have identified need for affordable housing. They are now working with the communities and partners to bring forward rural exception sites. Their work is also paying off with several schemes having obtained planning permission. These include an affordable housing scheme for 20 homes in Swinton near Malton on a rural exception site as well as an affordable rural scheme of 58 homes in Amotherby (near Malton). Further work with several communities and landowners is on-going and we are expecting this to result in further rural exception delivering affordable homes in our rural areas.

The rural enablers were at the Great Yorkshire Show on 10 July, sharing a stand with the Country Land and Business Association. This included a round table discussion to understand what would incentivise landowners to bring sites forward for rural affordable housing.

HUG 2

The Home Upgrade Grant 2 project is available to help off gas residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes, offering insulation, solar PV and renewable heating systems. The project is progressing well with installations exceeding the monthly targets for Year 2. We have now installed 231 measures to 121 properties, with many properties benefitting from multiple measures. We have spent just over £2m and are on target to achieve the project target of 250 properties with a total spend of approximately £6m. The project has created approximately £1.9m in lifetime savings over all properties, with each household saving an average of £639 per property per year. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero have indicated that further monies will be made available should we be in a position to install additional properties over and above the current targets.

Digital Switchover – Lifeline Services

The Public Switched Telephone Network will be retired by Openreach by January 2027. Landline calls will then be delivered over digital technology called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) which uses a broadband connection. The change will affect all third party devices that rely on a phone line. This includes critical equipment like telecare and fire alarms.

The responsibility for communicating with residents is with the communications providers, with an expectation that they have provision for people who could be made vulnerable by the switch. This can be anyone who is reliant on their landline, for example, telecare users, those without a mobile signal or without a mobile phone or those who are at risk of power cuts (as the new digital lines do not carry power).

This is a concerning topic for many people, but we have working with our lifeline customers to mitigate any risk to the efficiency of their lifeline equipment. This includes working with the main communications providers to ensure a joined-up approach in North Yorkshire. We have data sharing agreements in place to identify all of our service users and ensure the digital switch is seamless for them.

We have been chosen to take part in BT's Digital Voice Telecare pilot trial, the aim of which is to work closely with service providers. This pilot will switch a handful of users to Digital Voice and our lifeline operators are going to be physically working with these engineers during the migration in order to provide the telecare expertise and to ensure our customers remain connected should the migration encounter any issues.

Housing Advice and Homelessness approaches

North Yorkshire's Housing Needs team have assisted a total of 5422 households with Housing Advice or assistance in 2023/24, of which 2582 applied as homeless or were at risk of homelessness. In 48% of these cases the homelessness was prevented or relieved quickly, before a main long term housing duty decision was made, for example resolving rent arrears, budgeting difficulties, family mediation or accessing alternative accommodation. During the process some cases disengage, some are not classed as homeless or in priority need after investigations. We accepted a statutory housing duty in 500 cases.

Temporary Accommodation

As of 31 March 2024 there were 240 households in temporary accommodation provided under homeless legislation, which consisted of 139 in council-owned or registered provider-procured accommodation and 101 in bed and breakfast or other high cost emergency accommodation. This number has fluctuated between 200 and 240 households at the end of quarter counts over the last 12 months. Going forward we will not only be looking to reduce the numbers in temporary accommodation, but through the development programme, look at the type of temporary accommodation being used and reducing the need for as many emergency bed and breakfast placements.

Approval of Business cases for the development of temporary accommodation

The team are excited about the prospect of an additional 90 temporary accommodation units across North Yorkshire, including a purpose-built supported accommodation project for homeless customers. This will reduce time spent in bed and breakfast for households, provide much better accommodation and reduce costs for the council. We are hoping to get this moving as soon as possible, starting in Scarborough.

BEAM

The Housing Options Teams are excited to begin a pilot with BEAM Ltd, an organisation set up to help people who are in temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation and employment. The pilot will provide assistance to 27 households across North Yorkshire and will focus on those homeless in temporary accommodation. BEAM Ltd have developed significant relationships across North Yorkshire and this enables them to offer employment and support opportunities not openly available to many of our service users. The housing options team look forward to seeing some favourable outcomes.

Other news

Cook and Eat sessions at Fern House, Harrogate are proving to be a great success with residents learning how to cook a nutritious meal whilst enjoying interactions with other residents. The sessions started with just a couple of the residents, but the numbers are growing and the sessions are fast becoming a highlight of the week.

Food is generously donated by the Harrogate Convention Centre following a menu plan drawn up each week by the residents. They are shown how to prepare the food and work together to produce a tasty lunch that they then sit down and share together. So far they have made pizza, curry, sausage and mash, chili con carne and shepherd's pie!

COUNCILLOR SIMON MYERS

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

Children and Family Performance

The Children and Families Service continues to see a rise in the families that need support throughout each service area. In the financial year 2023/24 we have seen referrals to Children & Families top 5,000 for the first time ever. There has been sustained demand at Early Help with caseloads sitting at over 1,500 for 10 successive months. There has been a record number (8,207) of contacts at the front door. Despite the significant rise in referrals, performance remains strong. Children and Family Assessments completed within 45 days was at 96%, 95% of Early Help Initial Assessments were completed within 20 working days and 97% of Early Help Assessments were reviewed within 6 weeks. The numbers of children in care is also rising with the additional support to the National Transfer Scheme for those children who are unaccompanied.

Senior leaders are monitoring the increased volume closely to ensure that we continue to provide an exemplary service to our vulnerable children.

Foster Service

We continue to support a high number of carers both within North Yorkshire and those who live outside of North Yorkshire where children have been placed with family members who are approved as North Yorkshire's connected carers. The numbers of connected carers continue to increase in line with the Children and Families practice model. This is very positive as it sees children remain within their network and those carers supported by the fostering service.

Fostering fortnight was held in May with many events held around the county. We continually look for new ways to promote fostering and attract new enquiries into the service. Our Golden Hello for newly approved carers has been extended to the end of the year, Dec 2024. To date there have been a number of payments made to newly approved foster carers.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

North Yorkshire Children and Families service continue to deliver against the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). The Council has continued to increase accommodation through developing partnerships with local landlords as well as utilising and developing existing council properties for 16+ children who are able to manage semi-independence. A dedicated social work team supports these young people as children in our care. The Minority Inclusion Support Team (MIST) is fully staffed and provides daily support to the young people in our supported accommodation. We have received recent compliments from Migration Yorkshire (who coordinate the transfers) and the Home Office for our good communication and efficient work to progress transfers. However, it should be noted that we are still at only 46% of our allocated quota so continued pace is needed from corporate teams to identify and utilize additional properties for 16/17-year-old UAS children.

In addition to arrivals through the NTS, we continue to receive a steady flow of referrals from the adult hotels in our area. There is continued pressure to age assess these young people. Notice had been received that these hotels are to close in July 2024. This should reduce the

demand and will be closely monitored. However, to date only one hotel has closed and no firm date has been given for the other to close.

SLIP (Sector-led improvement)

In December 2023 NYC were successful in their bid to participate in the DfEs new SLIP Programme for 2024-2025, which includes the opportunity build on the No Wrong Door legacy established through the Strengthening Families Protecting Children's (SFPC) Programme.

At the end of Quarter 1 NYC have already secured 70% of their total days to be delivered for the year, and the team have already identified strong leads with 4 further local authorities who require SLIP support. This should enable delivery of the full Programme and associated funding.

NY Voice Team

The Youth Voice and Creative Engagement team, have a number of working groups lead by children and young people who are children in care and care leavers. The group have developed a project to consider how they could help and improve the first night in foster care.

NY voice team have a "Strong Girls Club" which meets monthly at Carlton Lodge Outdoor Education centre. A girl's group has been established in the Selby area for Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) girls, in partnership with the Elective Home Education team. The team have secured an opportunity for the group to attend Selby College on a Wednesday afternoon, to take part in taster sessions. Many of the girls are now asking for support to enroll at the college and attend their 14+provision and complete a qualification in this area. Parents are in full support of this and have built trusting relationships with the staff supporting this group.

Corporate Parenting Members' Group

I am pleased to report that the 2022/23 Annual Report of the Group is available https://edemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD765&ID=765&RPID=4988470
The report reflects our work as "corporate parents" over the past year and I would urge Member colleagues to take time to read the document.

Inclusive Communities and Delivering Better Value

Following the successful grant application in March 2024 which the council received £1m, workstreams have been underway to support the Inclusive Communities pilot.

A project designed to support 60 children with autism or complex needs transitioning from Nursery to Reception or Year 6 to Year 7 is underway. Early feedback from families is very positive about the project. This includes direct work with children and settings: every child has an individualised transition plan to ensure that attendance and transition into their local mainstream setting is successful in the autumn term.

An Inclusive Practice Framework and Self-Evaluation toolkit is also being developed. The first draft of this framework has been completed and will be piloted with 36 schools in the autumn term. It is anticipated that this will help schools to support more children to successfully attend their local mainstream school.

Adaptations have been made to the delivery model of the SEND Hubs which support children and schools in each locality. Schools have been the recipient of several tailored visits by an identified inclusion partner and have been extremely positive about the support that this tailored approach has provided them in terms of SEND and Inclusion.

Performance of Statutory Assessment and Education, Health Care Plans

The Inclusion Service continues to receive high numbers of requests for assessment for an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan, however, there has been a small decrease in new requests received between Jan 24 to end of June 24 compared to the same time frame in 2023.
The number of EHC plans issued following an assessment is continuing to rise. The overall back log of EHC plans not processed in a timely manner following review is now reducing.

Educational Psychology

Focused performance and improvement meetings continue with a focus on increasing the number of EHC plans being issued within a 20-week period. Alongside this we have strengthened our direct workforce, have continued to recruit to the educational psychologists team and we have plans to recruit additional assistant and trainee educational psychologists.

Medium Term Financial Strategy – July 2024

The Children and Young People's Service is facing a number of significant cost pressures arising from an unprecedented rise in the number of children and young people assessed as requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan since 2015. This continues to affect demand-led budgets including High Needs budgets and SEN Transport. Spending on Home to School Transport (for mainstream and SEN transport) is anticipated to exceed £50m in the current financial year – a review has been undertaken of current arrangements including consideration of policy elements that exceed the statutory requirements. Increased demand within Children and Families teams has also given rise to cost pressures. Within this context, the Directorate have identified mitigating actions in 2024-25. The approach continues to prioritise and maintain frontline service delivery as much as possible.

Although this information appears in my Statement to Council it should be noted that both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service have joint responsibility for all relevant resources.

COUNCILLOR JANET SANDERSON

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR MANAGING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Climate Change

The Climate Change Delivery Pathway is in the process of being finalised to be brought forward for approval in August this year. This document outlines how the Climate Change Strategy is being implemented across Directorates and embedded into our all our services. This will remain an interactive and dynamic document which will be supported by the development of a monitoring and evaluation programme in addition to strengthening our focus on Climate Adaptation and to support our communities and businesses to do likewise.

Following my last update, I am happy to announce that the team with support of Council colleagues have secured an additional allocation of £550,000 which has gone toward the Business Sustainability grants in the Shared Prosperity Fund. This, coupled with the Community Climate Action fund continues to promote visible climate actions with funding being given for community and business projects to decarbonise. More recently you may have seen HECK! – a local business which has been able to install solar panels to help save them 55 tonnes of carbon emissions per year. Also, 13 independent care homes have been approved for decarbonisation audits to review how they can reduce energy costs and improve business resilience.

Work is continuing on our Devolution Deal Net Zero Fund projects, with grants being made for community buildings decarbonisation, electric Vehicles for community transport and feasibility projects for decarbonising harbours and waste services underway.

Natural Capital Service – since my last update, the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has now formally designated the River Nidd at Knaresborough Lido with formal bathing water status. Whilst this is good news and brings with it greater opportunities for water quality interventions, we note the challenges that exist with water quality generally across our region and continue to work with internal and external partners and government departments to improve the situation. More recently a River Catchment Partnerships forum was held on 24 June which sees North Yorkshire taking a leadership role to bring together key stakeholders in support of better water quality.

Along with four local authorities in Teesside, NYC is a member for the Crustacean Deaths Working Group that has been investigating the cause and impacts of the major die off of crabs and lobsters that affected the Cleveland and North Yorkshire coast in the Autumn of 2021. The Working Group will be meeting through the autumn of 2024. A ‘holding statement’ published by the Working Group in May included a call for the establishment of a formal public inquiry into this matter.

Work continues on the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and you may recall the Head of Environment and Sustainability attending the members’ seminar during early June to give a presentation and progress update on the LNRS. I’d like to thank all members who contributed to the discussion and gave positive feedback which is now being incorporated or actioned. The LNRS project team is currently reviewing DEFRA’s advice on mapping opportunities for nature recovery and the implication for the overall map that will cover all North Yorkshire and York. They are devising an approach that will need to be agreed with DEFRA and this may result in a delay to the programme that was shared at the members’ seminar.

Across both our National Landscapes (Nidderdale and Howardian Hills), we have recently had the 2024/2025 funding confirmations allocated which has seen an increase in grant funding provided which enables continued support being provided to farmers and landowners across these locations. Progress also remains ongoing for the development of the new National Landscape Management Plans for our two national landscapes and for their Nature Recovery Plans, which will complement the North Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

A recent presentation from the Howardian Hills National Landscape manager at the Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee also resulted in a comprehensive overview of their work across the National Landscape. It was interesting also, to hear the progress in relation to the Yorkshire Wolds designation and cross-party support generally. Whilst this was paused during the general election, work will now continue, including a public consultation for local communities and stakeholders in the area. I would welcome the support of relevant local members in promoting the consultation.

Waste

Member Working Group – Members will be aware that a cross-party Task and Finish Group was set up to help shape future waste services. I am grateful to the group's members for their constructive contributions to this work.

The group has been involved in the development of the Let's Talk Rubbish public engagement exercise, which started earlier this month and will run until September. Its purpose is to gather views on both existing collection arrangements and the councils' proposals for future harmonisation. I hope that Members will both submit their own views and also encourage their residents and parish councils to respond.

Improved Collection Services – the harmonised garden waste service goes from strength to strength. Over 122,000 licences have been purchased so far for the 2024 season with almost 87% of these being online signups. Building on the strength of the garden waste service, from June the bulky waste collection service has been provided in house across the North Yorkshire area with consistent fees and charges and improved customer journey.

Bulky Waste - as part of our ongoing efforts to align service provision across North Yorkshire, the bulky waste collection service that was outsourced to Yorwaste in Scarborough and Harrogate has now been brought back in-house. Customers have seen no change, but we have been able to deliver the service more cost-effectively by using North Yorkshire Council staff. We are keen to deliver what is a popular service in the most efficient way across North Yorkshire.

Licensing

Taxis – a draft Inclusive Service Plan is now progressing through internal processes and is expected to go out to full formal consultation in September. This will have a particular focus on access to wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages. We believe that this will be the first Inclusive Service Plan in the country following on from updated Government guidance. Linked to the Inclusive Service Plan, we will also be undertaking the first full review of our Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy which will take account of comments made by the trade and our own team throughout the last year. It will also reflect the updated Government guidance.

Other Licences - since 1 April 2023 we have now delivered just over fifty Licensing Sub-Committee hearings dealing with individual licence applications. These largely relate to taxi and alcohol licences and are taking place in the locality offices overseen by three Licensing Committee Members. Animal Welfare Licensing work, such as dog boarding and breeding, horse riding and animal exhibition, continues to be an area of continuing harmonisation and significant workload. The Licensing Act and Gambling Act policies will commence review over

summer. The summer season sees a general increase in activity for the Licensing Team with caravan parks, holiday destinations and the European football championships bringing people together in licensed premises. This is particularly evident on the East coast.

Systems - with Regulatory and Housing Enforcement Services colleagues, work is underway to bring together the digital management systems formerly used by the seven district councils. This is a significant piece of work which will take an anticipated 18 months to complete. It will bring efficiencies and improved customer experience as well as allowing us to fully deliver our restructured services.

Regulatory Services

Farming, Food & Health - the Animal Health team continues to regulate disease risk amongst North Yorkshire farmed animals, by ensuring a robust response to the commission of animal health and animal by-product criminal offences.

A current case involves a North Yorkshire farmer who is the subject of investigation of serious allegations which could carry a custodial sentence. This is an indication of how seriously the Council and the Courts take the welfare of farmed animals and the importance of protecting the food chain and integrity of the industry.

In terms of supporting our farmers the Animal Health team continue to associate a proportion of the offending witnessed within the industry with the emotional and financial pressures currently being felt by the farming community. As a result, the team continue to forge links with partners such as the Farming Community Network and the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution in order that vulnerable farmers can get the assistance they require to maintain appropriate standards, prevent the risk of disease and protect the welfare of their animals.

In addition to farmed animal disease risk, the team also continues to monitor instances of infectious disease, working closely with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to respond to outbreaks in local manufacturing premises and viral outbreaks emanating from events held at North Yorkshire entertainment venues.

As well as the reactive work, the team also contributes to proactive partner projects with one such example being the UKHSA's ongoing Mosquito Surveillance programme. In an effort to track the migration of the Tiger Mosquito from mainland Europe, the team is working over the summer months with Coneygarth Services Lorry Park at Leeming Bar, placing mosquito traps at 10 locations around the site to check for the presence of this particular species.

With a mixture of Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers, the recently restructured team also monitor the local food environment on a risk-based intelligence led basis. In delivering statutory functions, imposed by the government by way of the Food Standards Agency, the team undertake inspections at the majority of North Yorkshire's 6000+ food retailers, producers and manufacturers. Inspection criteria include standards of hygiene, identification of the presence of allergens and compliance with labelling and compositional standards.

Our Regulatory Services Officers give advice to businesses and individuals to help them comply with regulations. Enforcement action will take place, across all the functions, when criminal offences are identified, or where further action is considered necessary and proportionate when a business owner has failed to heed the advice given, in order to bring their premises and operations up to the required standard.

This principle also applies to the enforcement of Health and Safety at Work Act offences that may occur across North Yorkshire businesses. Unfortunately, incidents do occur as a result of personal negligence and/or businesses failing to demonstrate their acceptance and mitigation of risk.

With a joint enforcement role alongside the Health and Safety Executive, the team is currently investigating one fatality and several instances of serious personal injury which have resulted from North Yorkshire businesses failing to introduce appropriate risk assessment and safety procedures, both of which being a legal requirement to protect staff from injury or death.

Environmental Protection - the first North Yorkshire Council Air Quality Annual Status Report (2024) has been submitted to DEFRA in compliance with its end of June deadline; this is an annual statutory return.

This document combines and updates air quality monitoring data and ongoing improvement measures from across all seven previous District and Borough Council localities. It will form the basis of future reports and gives us a framework to build upon as an organisation to further improve the air quality of the county for the benefit of all its residents, businesses, and visitors.

We shall continue to work with partners in the Council's Steering Group to further improve air quality and this will be included in our Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), due for submission on 30 September. A draft AQAP was produced and submitted to DEFRA in March.

National Trading Standards eCrime Team and NYtech - the trial relating to overseas call centres targeting elderly and vulnerable UK consumers concluded at Leeds Crown. Five people were convicted of operating UK companies that acted as fronts for the call centres, transferring over £1.2m defrauded from UK victims to the fraudsters running the call centres. They were given a total of 11½ years in prison.

The group convicted at an earlier trial of running a fraudulent online ticketing business have now been sentenced. The business sold tickets that had been acquired fraudulently for many high-profile music and cultural events. Four defendants were sentenced to 9½ years in prison.

The team has been tackling the issue of illicit vapes, particularly those targeted at children, being sold online and via social media. Since April we have removed over 500 listings and 15 web sites that relate to thousands of illicit and potentially harmful products.

Registration Service

Reforms to death registration are due to be implemented in early September. This change requires the new NHS Medical Examiner service to scrutinise the cause of all deaths, expanding from their current remit of deaths occurring in hospital. This additional step for community deaths will increase the time period until a death can be registered but will decrease the administrative burden on the service in quality assuring causes of deaths with GP surgeries.

The Registration Service has enhanced its death registration appointments by the addition of the full "Tell Us Once" Service when the informant is the next of kin and can provide additional evidence of identification. This reduces the additional administrative burden on the bereaved without impacting on service delivery as the full Tell Us Once process, which informs all central and local government departments of a death, can be completed in a single appointment. For informants who are not the next of kin then the Tell Us Once Service is still activated, however additional steps are required to be completed after the registration and this allows for the same system of informing central and local government departments.

Coroners Service

The Coroner's Service continues to support the work of HM Senior Coroner. Changes in processes are being undertaken to ensure that the changes to death registration can be managed effectively. Further changes are being made by the seconded Senior Coroner's Officer to improve the case management processes undertaken in preparing inquest files for the Coroner. Standardised service level agreements with hospital trusts for mortuary provision are being implemented to harmonise longstanding agreements made prior to the three jurisdictions being merged in 2020.

Bereavement Service

Training in memorial safety testing has taken place for additional staff to increase the pool of officers who can carry out this tasking across all cemeteries and churchyards. Policies and procedures are being harmonised and procurement of a recording and monitoring system is being integrated into the crematoria management system.

The Bereavement Service is working with Parks and Grounds to devise a new harmonised long-term strategy for the upkeep of cemeteries and churchyards across North Yorkshire ensuring that high standards are in place and consistent across the whole Council.

Additional staff have been recruited in the Harrogate area to ensure that there is enough local capacity at our busiest crematorium and to ensure progress can be made on cemetery maintenance.

COUNCILLOR GREG WHITE

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY BOARD

Scrutiny Board brings together the Chairs of the six thematic overview and scrutiny committees at the Council and the Older Peoples', Young People's and Climate Change Champions. It provides an opportunity for a whole council view of scrutiny activity, which avoids gaps and overlaps and helps establish a lead committee for areas of joint interest. It also provides a forum in which the key performance issues for the Council can be reviewed and items for further scrutiny identified.

The scrutiny function was created to act as a check on and balance to the executive and it is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements. There has been one meeting of Scrutiny Board since my last statement to Council.

The meeting of Scrutiny Board on 24 May 2024 focussed upon the scrutiny of the Executive Q4 Performance and Finance Management Report, ahead of the members of the Board attending the meeting of the Executive on Tuesday 28 May 2024. Some of the issues raised at the Executive meeting by members of the Scrutiny Board are highlighted below:

- The reduction in the number of applications to the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund over the last quarter at a time when the cost-of-living crisis is still having an impact upon people's finances
- The declining numbers of smokers and what resources the Council needs to put into smoking cessation programmes through public health
- The importance of NHS health checks in terms of ill-health prevention and early intervention
- The increase in referrals to children's social care and re-referrals
- The number of Education Health Care Plans that are incomplete and subject to (successful) appeal when they go to Tribunal
- The increase in the number of children being home educated
- The reasons why children are suspended and excluded from school and what the role of the Council is in addressing this
- The alignment of the garden waste collection (brown bins) across the county since the creation of the new unitary council and whether this has led to a reduction in the level of composting
- The increase in reported fly-tipping and what is driving this
- Increases in the number of virtual visits to libraries and whether there is a need to move investment away from buildings and into IT infrastructure to support this growth.

Updates were also provided by the Climate Change Champion, the Older People's Champion and the Young People's Champion on key elements of their work over the past 3 months. The themes covered by the updates included:

- The annual reports of the Champions have been presented at the meetings of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees
- Ageing well and key issues such as falls prevention, exercise and the links to health and wellbeing, and employment opportunities for older and retired people
- Concerns have been raised by some representative groups for older people around the transition to a cashless society and also the digital switchover for landlines

- Support for corporate parenting and children who are looked after and key issues such as: engagement with a range of different services health and other services that can assist them; and the ongoing work of the Virtual School
- Climate change and a focus upon developing and embedding a suite of detailed measures of performance for progress against the carbon reduction targets.

Members of Scrutiny Board also reviewed a number of matters that directly related to the Council's scrutiny function, including:

- The allocation of work from the former Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee (non-housing and leisure) to other scrutiny committees, following the cessation of that committee and constitution of the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting of Council on 15 May 2024.
- The updated statutory guidance on local authority scrutiny published by the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in April 2024. This new guidance refreshes that previously published in 2019. Whilst the guidance does not identify anything of immediate concern, it does serve as a useful baseline against which to undertake a high-level review or health check of the Council's scrutiny function.
- A review of Area Constituency Committee (ACC) work programmes and cross-over with overview and scrutiny. It is important that the ACCs and the overview and scrutiny committees link in with one another so that work is effectively co-ordinated and value added.
- Two motions that were referred to Scrutiny Board from Council on 15 May 2024: 1) care experience as a protected characteristic; and 2) public land for cultivation. A decision was made as to which overview and scrutiny committees were best suited to take these forward and then make recommendations to Council.

Members of Scrutiny Board are next due meet at 10am on Friday 16 August 2024. At that meeting, the Executive Q1 Performance and Finance Management Report will be scrutinised.

COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK
16 July 2024

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE CORPORATE & PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Since the Chairman's last statement to Council on 15 May 2024, the Corporate & Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met once on 10 June 2024, when the Committee considered the following items of business:

- Transformation Strategy Presentation
- Annual Workforce Update
- North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Update
- Annual Review of Councillor Locality Budgets 2023-24
- Notice of Motion - Increase Residents Right to Grow

The Committee were pleased to note the progress to date in transforming the organisation and recognised the complexity of restructuring the council's workforce and its influence on the timing of service transformation. The Committee noted the savings proposals, sought clarity on member involvement and requested an updated timeline for completing the work. It was agreed the Committee should receive regular future overview updates as well as a specific update on delivering the customer objective at their next meeting in September and an update on technology improvements at a later meeting.

The Workforce update provided the Committee with an overview of the changing workforce supported by a range of workforce data. It drew attention to a number of challenges e.g. sickness levels and the staff age profile, and in response, the Committee will be receiving a detailed report on sickness levels at its September meeting.

In regard to the update on the UKRS and Afghan resettlement programme in North Yorkshire, the Committee noted the higher than expected number of Afghan refugees and the growing number of Pakistani and Iranian refugees. They also noted the reliance on using MOD housing and the future challenge that would bring given that the MOD properties would only be available for three years. Members recognised the use of MOD housing made it impossible to achieve an equal geographical spread of placements across the county and expressed concern about the potential future strain it would put on the provision of Council housing at the end of the three-year period. They were therefore pleased to note the Council was working closely with the MOD on a local plan to actively seek a solution.

In regard to the annual review of Councillor Locality Budgets 2023-24, the Committee were disappointed to note that some members had spent less than half of their allocated budget.

In regard to the notice of motion to increase residents right to grow, the Committee agreed there was likely to be much to consider in regard to the proposal and therefore agreed that officers should be given sufficient time to gather all the relevant information for the Committee's consideration at its next formal meeting in September 2024, with the intention of reporting back to full Council in November 2024.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW WILLIAMS

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCRUTINY OF HEALTH COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR ANDREW LEE

The Scrutiny of Health Committee has a responsibility to review any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services within the County, including Ambulance Trusts and the policies of the Health and Care Partnerships. A key part of that responsibility is requiring NHS bodies to consult health scrutiny on proposals for substantial developments or variations to local health service provision. The Committee contributes to annual health checks by providing feedback to the Integrated Care Boards and the NHS Trusts serving North Yorkshire on their performance and the experiences that the Committee has had with them.

Committee Meeting on 14 June 2024

The Committee last met on 14 June 2024, in person in The Grand meeting room at County Hall. At that meeting, Members considered items on:

- Yorkshire Ambulance Service (update on service delivery and developments)
- The Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2022/23
- Better Care Fund 2023/25
- Consultation on Community Water Fluoridation Expansion in North East England

Outlined below are further details in relation to some of the areas that the committee has been looking at.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service

The Committee received an annual update from the ambulance service (YAS) on service delivery, challenges and recent developments. Key areas incorporated into the update included the following:

- An outline of operational demand for YAS, which continues to be high
- Initiatives underway to support the achievement of the 'category 2' patient target, including increasing Hear and Treat rates.
- A summary around NHS 111 demand patterns.
- An update on the YAS Estates Strategy including the position on the Scarborough ambulance station.

Members' key concerns revolved around patient transfer times and availability of ambulances in more rural areas. The committee has requested further data on transfer times to the north of the county, for example to Darlington and Middlesbrough, as this was not included within the report. A request has also been put to YAS to provide further detail around the rising costs of the Scarborough ambulance station project, which has been placed on hold.

Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2022/23

The Director of Public Health presented the 2022-23 Annual Report "In Our Words: A Child's Life in North Yorkshire", which focussed on the 151,000 children and young people under 25 living in North Yorkshire, which had been prepared in conjunction with the Youth Council. The report highlighted the rapid impact of digitisation, and mental health and wellbeing and made a number of recommendations, as well as providing an update on the 2021-22 Annual Report, "Learning From COVID-19".

The committee thanked the Director of Public Health for sharing the report. Members discussed the links between poor oral health and financial deprivation, and asked about the steps being undertaken to prevent poor oral health in children under five. The committee heard about the partnership work being undertaken through the NHS, Public Health and the council's children's services to help tackle some of the factors determining poor health in children.

Members thanked officers for their report, and highlighted that they were willing to offer assistance in acting as a link to their communities, highlighting initiatives to residents and providing feedback and local context.

Better Care Fund 2023/25.

The Director of Public Health presented a report updating members on the Better Care Fund (BCF) for 2023-25, which included:

- the Better Care Fund Submission for 2023-2025;
- The Quarterly returns for the second, third and fourth quarters of 2023/2024; and
- The Better Care Fund Addendum Submission for 2024/25.

Members considered the use of the BCF to strategically focus on prevention and stimulate joint working and sought reassurance that funding isn't being used reactively where services are experiencing financial strain. The committee heard about the careful prioritisation of funding allocations and that care partnerships are still developing. A discussion also took place regarding recruitment and retention of adult care staff through the Make Care Matter campaign.

The committee will receive the Annual Report for 2023/24 towards the end of this calendar year.

Consultation on Community Water Fluoridation Expansion in North East England

Members considered a report inviting comment on a government consultation regarding the expansion of community water fluoridation schemes across North East England, which would affect some northern areas of North Yorkshire. Comments were invited to be fed back to the Executive Member, responding on the Council's behalf as NYC is a statutory consultee. The committee heard from the Director of Public Health that fluoridation is promoted as part of preventing tooth decay, particularly in children. The committee also heard from an NHS dental health specialist who spoke to some of the scientific context to the promotion of this expansion.

The committee concluded overall that it was supportive of fluoridation when viewed as part of a broader package of public health interventions and factors (such as encouraging supervised teeth brushing in children) that are needed to prevent and reduce tooth decay. The committee did acknowledge that there are contrary views to community water fluoridation but having considered the scientific basis around potential health impacts such as fluorosis, Members felt that on balance the outcomes are very favourable, particularly in looking to help prevent tooth decay in children. Clearly if any further evidence is developed to indicate that this matter would need to be revisited by the committee then they would welcome the Director of Public Health keeping them apprised.

Committee Work Programme

Having previously discussed at length the challenges facing healthcare across the County generally and in particular the areas the Committee felt would be a priority in terms of Scrutiny over the next 18-24 months, the workplan has been updated to reflect this.

The Committee is keen to work collaboratively and will therefore continue to link in with the Council's Area Constituency Committees (ACC's) to ensure focus is maintained at a local level and also the Scrutiny Board to facilitate a County wide perspective. The Committee will also continue to work closely with the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee allowing continued joint working around social care.

The next meeting of the committee will be at 10am on 13th September 2024.

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF CHAIR OF THE TRANSPORT, ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Since the last Full Council meeting in May, the committee recently met on Monday 8 July to receive the following reports.

Review of Motion on Water Quality for improvements in health, wildlife, biodiversity and economy

This report updated the committee on the progress made by officers following the adoption of the water quality motion at the November 2023 meeting of Full Council six months ago.

There was general satisfaction from committee members with the progress detailed in the officer report, however the composition of the North Yorkshire River Catchments Forum (NYRCF) was the focus of the subsequent discussion and debate.

In particular, the lack of elected member representation on the forum was felt to create something of a democratic deficit in the process. As such, the committee felt it appropriate to recommend that the Executive Member for Managing our Environment attend future meetings of the forum, and to provide feedback to the TEEE O&S committee as part of the ongoing review process, along with the option of any Councillor who wishes to, being allowed to observe in person, or have access to the notes/minutes of future NYRCF meetings as deemed appropriate.

Concern was also expressed that the National Farmers Union (NFU) were not represented at the initial meeting, given the role the farming industry has to play in environmental management. Although it was not clear if this was by choice or a failure to engage, reassurances were given that they would be part of future meetings.

Members requested all points from the agreed motion be kept under check and progress reviewed again by the committee in a further six months.

It was also recommended to re-send the letter to request that the policy issues raised in the agreed Notice of Motion be included as part of the National Planning Policy Framework to the new Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, along with the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government following the recent General Election.

Network Strategy Update

The report updated committee members on actions outstanding from the January 2024 meeting.

There was further clarity sought on the progress of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) across the county, a specific speed limit issue with Station Parade in Harrogate and the current position of partners with regards to introducing fixed speed cameras.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the committee will take place Thursday 17 October 2024, starting at 10am. The committee will consider the results of the ongoing public consultation on ‘Let’s Talk Rubbish’, our biannual scrutiny of the Climate Change Strategy, progress with the creation of

a Tree and Woodland policy for the county and to take a strategic look at the North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

COUNCILLOR DAVID STAVELEY
11 July 2024

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF CHAIR

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Since the last Full Council, there have been 2 committee meetings, held on 20 May and 21 June.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 20 May 2024 – Informal Meeting: Home to School Transport Policy Proposals

This was a meeting to discuss the new Home to School Transport Policy proposals. Due to timescales and availability, it was agreed that this would be an informal meeting held over Teams. The committee received a very detailed presentation from the Assistant Director for Education and Skills that outlined the Department for Education's revised statutory guidance covering travel to school for children of compulsory school age. The Assistant Director explained that the Council is now consulting on the proposed new home to school travel policy for North Yorkshire to ensure compliance with the new statutory guidance. The consultation is also a review of the discretionary areas of the Council's current travel policy, that are above and beyond the statutory requirements of the guidance. Although a petition to "Stop School Bus Cuts" was submitted to NYC as part of the consultation process, it did not meet the required 500 or more signatories to be debated at the local Area Constituency Committee. It has, however, been referred to the Children and Young People's Services for consideration as part of the consultation.

In response to this, questions and comments were raised by committee members including:

- What defines a "suitable school".
- Whether pupils who currently qualify for school travel will still remain eligible and would siblings who have not yet started school also qualify.
- Will home to school transport for 16 to 18 year olds also be considered.
- Concerns around safe walking routes for children, especially in rural areas.

The Committee has welcomed the opportunity to be able to feed into the Home to School consultation and we look forward to receiving an update from Children and Young People's Service in dure course.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 21 June 2024
https://edemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1241&MId=7816&Ver=4

Public Statements
We received 5 public statements: 1 focussed on the process of assigning special school placements; 2 focussed on the adoption system; and 2 focussed on support for foster carers. The Corporate Director and the Assistant Director for Children and Families provided comprehensive responses to them all.

Schools Governance – Roles and Responsibilities of Governing Boards and the Relationship between the Local Authority and Maintained Schools
This agenda item was requested a result of the Call-In meeting held in April 2024, it was agreed that further information about roles and responsibilities would offer a better insight around processes and procedures. We received a presentation by the Assistant Director for Education and Skills, Head of Strategic Planning, Head of School Improvement and Head of Finance.

The key points are summarised below:

- Everyone agreed that school governors and governing bodies do an outstanding job.
- It isn't always the closure of a school that impacts the community, rather, it's often other factors that occur before a school closes that creates the impact. These include elements such as not enough affordable housing or jobs, and low pupil numbers.
- Extensive consultation and procedures are followed which is a lengthy and thorough process, and it will be at least 2 years before a governing body will contact a local authority to explore closing a school.
- Whilst some schools are closing, new ones are opening or merging with others, and NYC is always available to support governing boards and local Councillors throughout the process.

FEAST (Food, Entertainment, Arts and Sport Together)

We considered the FEAST Impact Report for 2023, which outlined the range of free holiday activities being provided to the most disadvantaged children and young people across the county, including young carers, refugees and asylum seekers and children with SEND. Some Councillors have funded FEAST activities and meals by allocating some of their locality budget.

The key points are summarised below:

- The DfE have funded FEAST through their Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) grant since 2021/22 and 2024/25 is the final year of that funding period.
- Children receive free healthy food that meets the School Food Standard, and FEAST supports families through promoting healthy lifestyles and signposting to services.
- They work in partnership with a consortium of local voluntary and community-based providers and the team is encouraging them to look for additional funding so that they can continue the work after 2025.
- FEAST are always mindful to provide activities in the more rural parts of the county.

Fostering North Yorkshire Update

We received an update from the Assistant Director for Children and Families. Whilst the Committee heard from personal experience the growing pressures of being a foster carer, they also heard that many carers are happy and pleased with the level of support they receive, which offers reassurance. The Assistant Director urged foster carers to contact the service with any concerns.

The key points are summarised below:

- There have been 17 Golden Hello's of £500 since January 2023.
- Over 75% of children living in foster homes are in stable long-term arrangements.
- There has been an increase in children under 5 and 5-9 living in foster care, whilst the largest cohort of carers is 55-59yrs.

Annual Report of the Young People's Champion

We considered Councillor Baker's annual report which highlighted the range of activities, engagement and networking she has participated in on behalf of the council. She pointed out that she has also supported and signposted a lot of families to council services.

Treating Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic

This item is in response to the Notice of Motion at Full Council in May 2024 which called to treat care experience as a protected characteristic. We considered a report from the Corporate Director. The Committee agreed the first step would be to consult with care leavers to hear their views, as engaging with them is paramount. They asked the Corporate Parenting Members' Group to lead on this and report back at the next CFOSC in October.

COUNCILLOR BARBARA BRODIGAN

11 July 2024

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE HOUSING & LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

This is the first statement from the new Housing & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Committee which has met once since the last meeting of full Council, on 10 June 2024, at which the Committee received introductory presentations on both areas of its remit.

In regard to housing, the Committee recognised the new regime is a huge shift for local authorities, and that alongside ensuring it meets the appropriate standards with its own housing stock, the Authority also has a legal responsibility to enforce housing standards within the private sector.

The Committee went on to consider:

- The findings from the recently completed Housing Review, recognising it provided a starting position for performance improvement in three key areas of compliance i.e. tenant satisfaction, the accounting position and complaints.
- A presentation on the HRA Policy Framework – the Committee welcomed the opportunity to assist in the future development of the required policies via a Task & Finish group and agreed they would like a future update on the findings from the planned consultation on the ASB Policy and Tenancy Policy.

The Committee also identified a number of other areas for consideration at future meetings e.g.:

- The findings from a review of the Homelessness Strategy
- Progress updates on the ongoing work towards compliance with the new Social Housing Regulations across the four key themes i.e. safety and quality; transparency, influence and accountability; neighbourhood and community; and tenancy
- Bi-annual updates on the delivery of the Housing Improvement Plan

In order to enable the scrutiny of housing related matters, the Committee are keen to develop their understanding and therefore agreed a training plan. The first training session was held on 23rd July provided by a representative from the office of the Regulator for Social Housing.

In regard to leisure (encompassing culture, leisure, archives and libraries), the Committee considered the key challenges and opportunities. They recognised the ongoing need to identify appropriate funding streams in order to maintain buildings and enable the delivery of activities, noting the current condition of some assets would make this quite challenging. They noted the planned asset condition surveys and recognised there may be future opportunities for asset disposal, perhaps to be run by town councils etc. They also agreed the need to maintain a balance between commercial and community use of buildings.

The Committee went on to consider the recommendations arising from the recent Strategic Leisure Review and noted the planned development of a new vision and service model built on three pillars i.e.: facilities; local delivery; and community infrastructure.

At its September meeting the Committee will be considering a draft Cultural Strategy for North Yorkshire as well as receiving an annual update on Library Services.

COUNCILLOR MALCOLM TAYLOR

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR OF CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Care and Independence Overview & Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the needs of vulnerable adults, older people and people whose independence needs to be supported by intervention from the public or voluntary sector and housing.

Since the Chairman's last statement to Council in May 2024, the Committee has met once on 19 June 2024, when the Committee considered the following items of business:

- Health & Adult Social Care Performance Update
- Presentation on Adult Social Care Market - Service Development & Transformation Plan

The committee received a state of nation presentation from the Corporate Director for Health and Adult Services on performance across the health and adult social care directorate. This highlighted a number of areas of challenge which the committee were keen to explore further and agreed to add the following to the committee's work programme:

- Hospital Discharges
- Substance Abuse
- Short Term Placements
- Living Well Review

The Committee also requested an overview of the findings of a recent peer challenge looking at ASC Assurance which had recently been undertaken ahead of an expected CQC inspection.

In regard to the presentation on the ASC service development and transformation plan, the Committee were pleased to note the market position statement was being updated and would be published in 6-8 weeks., and the ongoing pilot in the Nidderdale Trust area to improve home care as they recognised this had been a longstanding area of challenge.

The Committee queried the cause of the increase in early onset dementia, and noted there was no evidence of a clinical reason for the increase nationally. They agreed it was important to understand the reasons in order to manage any longer term trend.

Finally, the Committee agreed to undertake a deeper dive in to direct payments for Young People's Care and requested an update for their next meeting.

The next meeting of the committee will be at 10am on 26 September 2024.

COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 July 2024

Report on Special Urgency and Call-in Exemption decisions under Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16

Report of the Leader of the Council

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide the Council with a report on the use of the special urgency and call-in exemption procedures under Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 in respect of decisions taken since the Council's last meeting.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council's Constitution provides that if a matter which is likely to be a key decision has not been included on the Council's Forward Plan for the requisite period, the decision may still be taken if an urgency procedure is followed.

2.2 The Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution set out two urgency procedures, depending on the time available before the decision needs to be taken: the Rule 15 General Exception Urgency procedure and the Rule 16 Special Urgency procedure for use in more urgent cases. Use of the latter procedure is required to be reported back to full Council.

2.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution set out a call-in exemption process at Rule 16, use of which is also reported back to Council.

3.0 SPECIAL URGENCY AND CALL IN EXEMPTION PROCEDURES

3.1 Under Access to Information Procedure Rule 16:

16.1 Where the date by which a decision must be made makes compliance with Rule 15 (general exception) impracticable, then the decision can only be made if the decision maker (if an individual) or the Chair of the body making the decision, obtains the written agreement of the Chair of a relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred. If there is no Chair of a relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or if the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee is unable to act, then the agreement of the Chair of the Council, or in their absence the Vice-Chair will suffice.

16.2 As soon as reasonably practicable after the decision maker has obtained agreement under Rule 16.1 above, they must make available at the Council's offices a notice setting out the reasons why the meeting is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred and publish the notice on the Council's website.

3.2 Access to Information Procedure Rule 17 then includes provision for the reporting back to full Council on the use of the Rule 16 special urgency procedure:

17.3 **Reports on special urgency decisions**

17.3.1 The Leader will submit to the next meeting of the Council, a report on any executive decisions taken in the circumstances set out in Rule 16 (special urgency). The report must include particulars of the decision, a summary of the matters in respect

of which the decision was made, the reasons for it and the reasons for use of the special urgency procedure.

17.3.2 The Leader must submit at least one report under 17.3.1 annually to Council.

3.3 Under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(h):

(h) The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Executive is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interest. The Chair of the Council must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair's consent shall be required. In the absence of both, the Head of Paid Service or their nominee's consent shall be required. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

3.4 This report therefore provides the report back to full Council on the use of the special urgency and call-in exemption procedures since the last meeting of full Council on 19 July. Rule 15 (General Urgency) notices have also been referenced where they also include call in exemption.

4.0 USE OF SPECIAL URGENCY AND CALL IN EXEMPTION PROCEDURES

4.1 At the time of writing this report, the use of special urgency and call-in exemption procedures in relation to decisions taken since the last meeting of full Council on 15 May 2024, is as summarised below. Full details of the decisions taken under the procedures and the reasons for them along with the reasons for using the special urgency and/or call in exemption procedures can be accessed via the hyperlinks.

4.1.1 Consultation on changes to the Council's Home to School Travel Policy

Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 – Call in Exemption

On 16 July 2024 the Executive will consider a report detailing the outcome of a consultation on a proposed new Home to School Travel Policy for North Yorkshire. Approval will be sought for the proposed policy to move forward for adoption by the Council in July 2024.Originally the report was to have been considered in June, however the calling of the general election for 4 July meant the item needed to be deferred until after the pre-election period. To enable timely progress of the matter exemption from call-in was sought to ensure the matter could be considered by Council on 24 July.

4.1.2 Foregill Bridge – Award of Contract

Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 – Special Urgency

Decision - Foregill Bridge - Award of Contract | North Yorkshire Council

On 14 June 2024 the Assistant Director – Resources (Environment) considered a report in which approval was sought to award a contract for repair works to be carried out at Foregill Bridge, Richmond. During temporary stabilisation works, two large voids within the structure were uncovered and the structure was in a partially collapsed state and required urgent repair. A timely decision was required as to leave the structure without urgent maintenance posed a risk to public safety and potentially may have had an impact on the local area.

4.1.3 Waltonwrays – General Maintenance Works – Award of Contract

Access to information Procedure Rule 16 – Special Urgency

Issue details - Waltonwrays, Skipton - General Maintenance Works - Award of Contract | North Yorkshire Council

On 15 July the Assistant Director - Highways and Transportation, Parking Services, Parks and Grounds will consider a report seeking approval for award of contract for general maintenance works of £532,951 to PBS Construction Limited at Waltonwrays. The decision could not be deferred to enable the timely consideration and progress of the matter due to the impact of the environmental conditions. To enable co-operation with utility works the contract needed to commence and complete within a very tight timescale and to avoid greater disruption.

4.1.4 Slipper Socials – Arts Council grant funding application

Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 – Call-in Exemption

On 24 July the Corporate Director of Community Development will consider a report in relation to the North Yorkshire library service which would like to bid for funding to deliver a series of ten 'Slipper Socials' aimed at supporting older people to live in their own homes for longer. As well as being fitted for, and gifted, anti-slip slippers, local library staff and volunteers will promote regular library activities, and clubs and societies in the area, to help combat loneliness and isolation. The decision could not be deferred as the Arts Council had indicated that the process would take approximately 8 weeks and at the request of partners it was intended to launch the programme of events to coincide with the International Day of Older people on 1 October 2024. Therefore it was not possible to give the full 28 days' notice on the forward plan and a request was made that call-in not apply.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications are considered in the report and the linked decision records.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The legal implications are considered in the report and the linked decision records.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 Consultation has been undertaken with relevant officers and Members prior to the use of the urgency and/or call-in exemption procedures.

10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To report back to full Council on the use of the special urgency and call-in exemption procedures in compliance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That full Council receives and notes this report.

COUNCILLOR CARL LES
Leader of the Council

16 July 2024

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Background Documents:
The Council Constitution - NYC Constitution - Version 7 - May 2024.pdf (northyorks.gov.uk)

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