

York Access Forum (YAF)
26th January 2026 1:30 – 4.00pm
Thornton Room, West Offices and on Teams
Minutes

Attendees

Name	Organisation (if applicable)
Diane Roworth (DR)	Chair Independent
David Smith (DS)	Access Officer, City of York Council (CYC)
Christine Kyte (CK)	Support Worker (CYC) – note taker
Verity Peak (VP)	York resident
Marilyn Crawshaw (MC)	York Human Rights City Network + York Disability Rights Forum (YDRF)
David Carr (DC)	York Carers Action Group
Dorothy Hounam (DH)	Dementia Yorkshire Volunteer
Bob Tennant (BT)	York resident
Sue Tennant (ST)	York resident
Duncan Mc Intyre (DM)	iTravel Team CYC
Max Boxall (MB)	Head of Public Protection CYC
Pete Kilbane (PK)	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economy and Culture
Andrew Lowson (AL)	Director York Business Improvement District (BID)
Carl Alsop (CA)	Operations Manager, York Business Improvement district (BID)
Nicholas Plumb (NP)	Outer York Inspector North Yorkshire Police
Ben Murphy (BM)	Head of City Development, CYC
Online	
Ian Lawson (IL)	North Yorkshire Accessible Transport Group
Hilary Boon (HL)	Sightloss Council for Thomas Pocklington Trust
Vicky Thompson (VT)	Sightloss Council Coordinator for Yorkshire
Sarah Loftus (SL)	Managing Director Make It York
Lisa Grimbley (LG)	Head of Markets and Events, Make It York

Apologies	
Sian Balsom	Healthwatch
Abi Harrison	Independent
Annabel Martin	York People First
Ashley Fisher	YDRF
Hannah Hardcastle	Accessible Arts & Media
Lauren Talbot	Wilberforce Trust

No.	Item
1	Welcome and introductions
	DR Welcomed all and asked them to introduce themselves. General housekeeping re room and etiquette for hybrid meeting re questions, use of mic etc. Previous minutes agreed.
2	YAF Members Information (DR)
	Eleanor Tew a member of YAF, passed away on 27th December 2025. DR expressed that she had made a considerable contribution to supporting visually impaired and all disabled people and will be sadly missed. Anne Norton is no longer able to be a member of the YAF and her valuable contribution to the group was also acknowledged. Four new attendees, Verity, Dorothy, Sue and Bob were welcomed to their first YAF meeting.
3	Update on Bus Accessibility Tracker Duncan McIntyre, CYC Travel Programme Manager
3.1	DM Summarised the purpose of the bus accessibility tracker namely, to provide one place for updates on all the issues that disabled people have raised re accessing buses. The Enhanced Bus Partnership (EBP) Task + Finish group produced the Bus Tracker spreadsheet, which also lists what is being done in relation to each issue. The tracker is no longer overseen by the EBP It was agreed it was impossible to go through it line by line, instead we would focus on some specific items. DS asked to focus on which items on the spreadsheet have been progressed e.g. a commitment to install push buttons for audio announcements.

3.2	MC asked for clarification on the new cycle lane and bypass policy. there is a new ruling that no cycle lane should proceed if people have to exit buses directly into them. MC sought clarification that CYC was aware of this. DM Agreed that CYC would not be planning any floating bus stops where you must cross a cycle lane to get onto a bus. He stated that as far as he knew, bus stop bypasses would continue to be used DS Clarified CYC is complying with guidance from Dept for Transport on floating bus stops
3.3	DR Tom Horner (TH) had requested that the YAF help CYC prioritise work on issues identified in the tracker and that she had assumed that was what DM was going to bring to this meeting. DM This morning TH asked if we could prioritise the 3 most important areas of work on the list.
3.4	DR YAF can't monitor the work, being done on the Bus Accessibility Tracker, but it does need to have oversight. It was agreed to focus on the wheelchair taxi scheme as 1 item. DM Outlined this scheme which will provide wheelchair users (who are refused access to a bus) a taxi instead. This will be paid for by CYC. The bus driver would complete relevant details on an A5 card, which DS has produced, and give it to the refused passenger. At present the bus companies have not started using these A5 cards. DM has asked for a draft of an alternative ticket format that the bus companies would prefer to use. However, they have not yet provided this. DS Explained that YAF have been involved in the design of the card to ensure that it is accessible. The bus companies want to use a ticket that suits their purposes rather than what has been assessed as accessible by disabled bus users, and which is also acceptable to York Station Taxis for the purpose of invoicing CYC for the taxi fares. DH Suggested that the bus companies have a generic card with the taxi details on and attach the bus ticket to it. DM First Buses have suggested this approach. But DS card should be trialled first. MC Can YAF express our concern that the scheme isn't yet in place, nor do we have data on the number of access refusals and reasons. DR Has emailed Joel Bradley the General Manager of First Buses about the scheme. He has said he is supportive of the scheme but that some issues have held it up. ACTION - DR will follow this up.

	BT Asked if a permit was needed for a wheelchair on a bus and whether the wheelchair has to be crash tested. DS Confirmed that class 2 scooters need a permit and that a wheelchair does not and does not need to be crash tested if it is built to British Safety Institute standards. MC asked about the recording of Information about hate incidents on buses. This has been taken to the Hate Crime Partnership but there is no process to link the information from this with the tracker. This aspect should be part of the tracker. This should be taken forward. Bus Stop Design DS advised that CYC had previously committed to working with the YAF to create a guide on accessible bus stop design. So much on the tracker relates to bus stop design. There is no universal design for every stop, but we need to draw up principles. This was originally agreed with the Enhanced Partnership Bus Forum. DR agreed this would be a priority to work on. BT Bus shelters are being replaced in York at present. This review of what is necessary in a bus stop should have been done before. DS Agreed. When YAF knew about the new contract for bus shelters they asked to be involved in the design process, but it was too late. DM The taxi scheme is the priority at present. Bus stops continue to be upgraded.
3.5	VP Reported that buses do not always stop for her. They drive straight past her and other people waiting at the bus stop. Which is particularly difficult at nighttime. DR Addressing this practice is important in driver training. CYC had not been able to make progress with driver training issues. DS Adaptions to the software to make the timetables more readable has been raised as an issue previously and seemed to have stalled. DM Advised that funding ran out, but is still doable, and work had started but it needs more funding. MC We need a regular system which identifies where there have been improvements. We need evidence that the bus companies are taking the issues raised seriously. DR A better way of reporting back, other than looking at the whole of the tracker, needs to be agreed. ACTION DM Local Cycle Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has been approved and this will inform which cycle lanes and paths will be introduced around the city. DS We were due to look at some sort of standard related to this.

	DR YAF has discussed the LCWIP and asked for an overlay between cycle and pedestrian routes. She agreed to follow this up before any new routes were installed - ACTION
4	Blue Badge access during city centre events Peter Kilbane, Exec member for Economy & Culture
4.1	Anti-terror Traffic Regulation Order (ATTRO) PK We will shortly be running a consultation about a permanent ATTRO for the city centre. BM explained that in late 2025 the police notified us that a temporary ATTRO would be in place during the Christmas Market. Under this ATTRO there was a change in emphasis in terms of identifying and managing risk for different city centre users. Therefore, we put in additional measures for certain classes of vehicle access, including Blue Badge holders. The Permanent ATTRO is an underlying traffic order that can be activated in relation to specific events throughout the year. It allows us to work in a more planned way and have a more collegiate approach. PK CYC didn't want to comply with the temporary ATTRO last year. They wanted to keep the same level of access as the previous year i.e. giving Blue Badge holders access between 5-7pm. We agreed to the police request for a temporary ATTRO because if CYC go against the Chief Constable's advice and anything bad happens, the Leader of the Council would be held personally criminally negligent. PK explained he had visited Chester where there is a permanent ATTRO and met the officers responsible for this. They feel that they have more control over the situation as if they decide through a process of risk assessment that the city centre needs to be closed to vehicles, they can act on that decision. It has to be signed off by the police, but it doesn't come from the police. It is a council officer level decision. They have only enforced it during the Christmas Market, for military parades and in one other exceptional situation. This information changed his view about permanent ATTRO as it gives the local authority more control over the decision-making process. MC What is the criteria for deciding if a risk assessment needs to be done? Do police ever instigate ATTRO and how do you manage that potential disagreement? PK Risk assessments will be done for events that may attract a significant footfall. The assessment lays out these criteria e.g. how likely is it to be targeted. It is done via Safety Advisory Group (SAG) or can be put in place by a Council Officer at a set grade. Police sign

	off can be after the event. He had no examples of police instigation. It all goes through SAG risk assessment process. NP An ATTRO is a multi-agency approach. Police do have the power to close a road under highway legislation anyway, so they don't need an ATTRO if there is a serious risk. PK An ATTRO is a direct response to a threat of a terror attack. If there was a permanent threat, then it could be used to stop vehicles in the city centre. MC An ATTRO allows movement of essential vehicles only. Could Blue Badge holders be deemed essential? PK Regarding vehicle movements granted during the Christmas Market ATTRO – only 2 vehicles were allowed in and the police were satisfied that those drivers were suitably vetted to be allowed in. We will keep requesting access for Blue Badge holders under the ATTRO but they must have the same level of security as vetted drivers. It is up to the police whether they agree to that. BM There wasn't an essential class of vehicles except emergency vehicles which are on a callout. The focus was the risk profile of the vehicle and driver. PK Consultation on a permanent ATTRO will start in early February. The Chief Constable can request to invoke a temporary ATTRO. If we go to a permanent ATTRO it is much more of a multi-agency approach led by CYC. It gives all agencies more influence over the whole process. Chester DS The equivalent Chester Access Forum are supportive of the permanent ATTRO in Chester as they see there is more flexibility with this approach.
4.2	AL Asked about Blue Badge parking situation in Chester compared to York. PK Currently the Chester ATTRO stops Blue Badge access to city centre during the Christmas Market. There is Blue Badge parking near the Cathedral but this cannot be used when the ATTRO is in place. However, Chester has around 100 BB spaces within 100m of the city centre. They have changed all their Council owned spaces to Blue Badge. On balance Chester has more Blue Badge parking than York and it is closer to the city centre. MC How many events might be affected by this? Would this trigger an increase in the exclusion of Blue Badge holders?

	PK This is possible as for example footfall at the Food Festival can be as high as the Christmas Market on some days. ATTROs are for events which attract significant footfall. This may create a tension between safety and attracting people into the city which brings a sense of community and income for businesses. In the UK there is movement to increased restriction of vehicles in populated areas. Because York has good Hostile Vehicle Mitigation, (HVM) the police expect us to use them. We should put events on the protected space. MC Last year YDRF met with Chief Constable about the ATTRO. He felt that timings should be set rather than used flexibility. He also felt the current ring of steel is not sufficient. PK Under a permanent ATTRO, the decision to restrict movement is risk based. This gives you a substantial defence if you end up in court, and it is a collective decision. It has to be flexible as it is in response to risk. DS York Central, park and Coal Drops Square are likely to have high footfall in the future but currently has no HVM planned ? PK Anticipates HVM in that area in the future. Castle Mills car park development will need to be protected with HVM.
4.3	Access to events As a Labour administration our guiding principle is that we want to put on events, and we want everyone to be able to access them. How do we identify peoples access needs and meet these? This has to be done with people, and we must understand their access needs. DS A lot of information has already been gathered on this e.g. MIMA's follow up to the Martin Higgitt report, the local transport Plan. Improving blue badge parking will have an impact on cycles and taxi rank space e.g. increasing BB space on Duncombe Place, Deansgate, Piccadilly (this would mean removing the cycle racks) BT Asked if Blue badge holders can park on double yellow lines for 3 hours, DS Confirmed this is correct. DR Delicate balance between providing Blue Badge spaces and taxi ranks because some people need to use a taxi you get close to the city centre. Principle of more Blue Badge spaces close to city centre is good but the distances will still be difficult for some people. Suggested moving the existing Blue Badge spaces in Coppergate car park to the ground floor. DS All of Coppergate car park is on at least the first floor but moving Blue Badge spaces down may still improve things for some Blue Badge holders.

	PK There are some principles to stick to going forward. We can start work on improving lift maintenance in Coppergate car park. We also need to look at access for bus users. DS If we can reconfigure some of the spaces where Piccadilly meets Parliament St to prioritise access that would be helpful. He also suggested a shuttle bus from Park and Ride to drop off at this point, so this becomes an access hub for drop off and pick up. The shuttle bus would just be for big events. PK This is the start of a process to address people's access needs as part of a whole city approach. Residents and businesses benefit from a lively city. DR Dial a Ride allowed people to get into the city centre. Could this be restarted and be treated differently to other buses in terms of access? SL We can look at each of our events to make them as accessible as possible. Look at the Christmas Market first and hold a workshop to come up with solutions. These could also be used for other events. All event plans will go to SAG earlier in future and have accessibility high on the agenda. We have suggested shuttle buses and to put more seating into the city centre DS The local transport survey asked people where they wanted seating so we already have that information about where more seating should be. We also have an accessible seating standard. AL More clarity is needed. The Christmas Market can bring in 1/3 of traders' income. For cities to thrive you need experiential things happening. We don't want to shut down the city centre with ATTROs for every event. I am unsure how these decisions about ATTROs are made so it can be difficult to come up with solutions. We don't want a business v accessibility issue. There is more work to be done between CYC, businesses, police, Make it York etc to feel as if we are all working together. PK Christmas Markets are a known target for terror attacks. Also, the level of footfall is part of the guidance. Risk assessment will consider whether an event is a known target. There is more work to be done between all agencies, but it is important that disabled people's voices are in any of these meetings which take place.
4.4	Establishing Principles of Accessibility MC Today's meeting has been very helpful. The first part of this meeting was about access to buses. Having a statement of principle and intent is very helpful. In communications you need to state that one solution doesn't suit everyone. Keep restating your principles and giving feedback on what has been done so far. Many disabled people have given their time

	and energy to consultations etc without seeing any related tangible results. The Martin Higgitt report recommended an access hub in the city. There has been a lot of talk about seating in the city centre but for example the picnic tables outside the Art Gallery are not accessible although this has been raised many times. Acomb Front Street is a good example of where disabled people have seen change directly related to their feedback. Enforcement of BB bays needs to be better. Suggests that some shops could help with disabled people getting their shopping to their vehicle etc. CA The BID put out the benches which are outside the Art Gallery. 10% should be wheelchair accessible. PK Making York more accessible is a permanent issue that will need to be permanently worked on. We need a plan, budget and results as soon as possible. We must build on the information that we have already gathered from disabled people and consultants. There will be an ongoing programme of works.
4.5	Consistency DR For some disabled people it is a huge effort to come to a meeting and they may need time to recover, so they are very disheartened if their efforts do not appear to have been acknowledged in decision making. Blue Badge spaces need to be permanent not just for a specific events so that people know where they can park and when. Consistent approach and regular communication are essential. DS We have had City Centre Action Plans 1 and 2 (CCAP 1 and CCAP2) which contain many of the same suggestions. It would help to know what has been included from these into future plans for the city. This will help the disabled community be more aware of upcoming improvements and how these relate to the input they have given to consultations etc. Other examples of 'ongoing accessibility work in York include St Sampsons Centre, For Your Convenience', Guaranteed Wheelchair Taxi scheme, involvement in planning for York Central, Disability Equity Training for CYC staff and more. Businesses can improve their accessibility in order to benefit further from the 'purple pound' (disabled people's spending potential). We must use a pan-disability approach. DR Summarised that establishing a principle of accessibility should be at the top when planning and considered from the beginning. We have a city centre access plan, and we need to let people know how this is progressing.

	PK Reimagining York will take 5 years to show results. We need to make some changes this year. BT How can elderly people who have arrived in York by bus get into the centre more easily from Clarence Street car park.? Can there be a coach drop off point closer to the centre? Also raised the problems faced when accessible toilets are out of action due to vandalism. DR The Equality Act states we should promote good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and this means working together at every stage of a project.
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6	Actions
	Bus Tracker DM will talk to Tom Horner about the commitment to have push buttons for audio information on all bus stops, how many are done and what progress will be made in future. This to be reported to YAF DR Will follow up contact with Joel Bradly of First Buses about the guaranteed taxi scheme. DR / DS to get information from First Buses (via TH) about refusals to wheelchair users and whether this can be regularly reported to YAF. Also, consider if hate crime incidents should be recorded in the tracker? DM to work with DR, DS and Richard Hampton on accessible bus stop design. DM will talk through the tracker with anyone who wants to call him about it. DM Will look into changing the contract relating to the software for bus timetables, so they are easier to read. DM / Richard Hampton to produce data on what bus improvements have been made including a summary of which bus shelters have been improved. TH to provide DR with information which will enable YAF to work out what is feasible to do with the tracker. DM Will ask Andy Vose and Greg Morgan about LCWIP overlay. DM Will clarify whether bus fares are higher when using cash rather than a card and into anomalies related to charges when disabled passengers get onto a bus at a Park + Ride base. DM and DS continue to press for improvements to driver training. City Centre Access DS Ask Peter Grimes if the Chester risk assessment can be shared.

	BM Provide permanent ATTRO consultation dates to DS so it can be circulated to YAF members and others. DS consider developing 'principles' for accessing public events.
7	Next Meeting
	Tuesday 24th March 2026 1:30 – 4pm