

Policy Motion 1: Introduce a Yorkshire Travel Pass

Proposer: David Herdson

Summator: tbc

Conference notes that:

- A. People are more likely to use public transport where services are reliable, good value and easy to access.
- B. London's Oyster Card and Manchester's Bee Network enable travellers to use public transport within their regions multi-modally and efficiently.
- C. Yorkshire's equivalent schemes are a jumble, being:
 - a. Less flexible.
 - b. Geographically restricted, operating only or primarily within Combined Authority areas.
- D. Developments in technology in recent years mean operators and public bodies could be far more ambitious, encompassing and innovative in how Pass schemes could operate than Yorkshire currently has, and even that any other region or nation within the UK has.

Conference reaffirms Liberal Democrat commitment to:

- I. Encouraging the public to transition toward more sustainable transport use by making public transport and active travel more attractive, cheaper and easier such as with the 'Cut the Cost: Keep Britain Moving' initiative this year.
- II. Enhancing regional connectivity.
- III. Tackling rural transport isolation and cost, including through on-demand bus services.
- IV. Designing public transport around community needs, including network-wide ticketing schemes as in London.

Conference call on Yorkshire Liberal Democrats to:

- 1. Support the principle of a Yorkshire Travel Pass, which:
 - a. Could initially be used to pay for travel or services for publicly operated or regulated:
 - i. Rail
 - ii. Scheduled buses
 - iii. Trams
 - b. Could ultimately be used to also pay for:
 - i. Park-and-ride
 - ii. Bike hire
 - iii. Electric recharging
 - iv. Parking
 - v. On-demand bus services
 - c. Would be valid across all of Yorkshire.
 - d. Would allow access into neighbouring counties or authorities, subject to local agreement.
 - e. Would be available as an app or a physical card.
 - f. Would enable users to buy real-time or advance single-use tickets and services, and time- or area-based passes.
 - g. Would enable users to track services in real-time.
 - h. Travellers would use to tap-on/tap-off via uniform technology, backed up (subject to the traveller's consent) by GPS tracking so that passengers are not overcharged if they forget to tap out.

- i. Would calculate the cheapest fare for a traveller's journeys and services, as Oyster and Bee do in Greater London and Greater Manchester.
2. Reaffirm support for the development of on-demand buses within the county, which could be linked to and booked through the Yorkshire Travel Pass, for areas and times where and when conventional services are not viable.

Policy Motion 2: Establish a Yorkshire Assembly

Proposer: Samuel Jackson

Summator: tbc

Note: this would replace and update existing regional policy on the subject.

Conference notes that:

- A. As a by-election candidate and Labour leadership candidate, Andy Burnham promised to devolve greater powers from Westminster and Whitehall.
- B. Devolution in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Greater London has seen the establishment of legislative assemblies with powers over matters such as health and education.
- C. Devolution in England outside of Greater London has:
 - a) Seen limited transfers of economic development powers.
 - b) Invested powers in:
 - i. Directly elected 'metro mayors' often aided by appointed advisors.
 - ii. Indirectly elected boards comprising local councillors elected via First Past the Post.
 - c) Been asymmetric, with regions such as Thames Valley and the Three Counties yet to receive combined authorities.

Conference further notes that Westminster still has significant influence over how devolved governments operate, such as with the repeal and re-adoption of Supplementary Voting for metro mayoral elections.

Conference believes that recent approaches to devolving powers have proved uneven, insufficiently democratic and focused primarily on cities and urban centres.

Conference reaffirms Liberal Democrat commitment to:

- I. Devolving power from Westminster and Whitehall to local communities.
- II. Establishing a federal UK.
- III. The adoption of Single Transferable Voting for general elections and English local elections.

Conference also reaffirms Yorkshire Liberal Democrat commitment to establishing a devolved assembly in Yorkshire.

Yorkshire Liberal Democrats Conference calls for:

1. The establishment of a devolved Yorkshire Assembly:
 - a) Whose jurisdiction would include the ceremonial counties of West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and East Yorkshire, and the local authorities of the City of York and North Yorkshire.
 - b) With responsibility for:
 - i. Agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development.
 - ii. Culture.
 - iii. Economic development.
 - iv. Education and training.
 - v. Environment.
 - vi. Health and health services.

- vii. Local government and communities.
- viii. Regional elections.
- ix. Tourism.
- x. Transport matters within Yorkshire.
- c) Whose members – Members of the Yorkshire Assembly (MYAs) – would:
 - i. Total twice the number of Westminster MPs in Yorkshire.
 - ii. Be elected via Single Transferable Voting.
 - iii. Represent multimember constituencies based on local authorities, or wards therein if a local authority's population entitles it to seven or more MYAs.
- d) Situated in York as the historic county town.
- e) From which a Yorkshire Government would be derived, headed by a First Minister and comprising portfolio-holding ministers.
- 2. The dissolution of metro mayoralities and combined authorities within Yorkshire and the transfer of their powers to the Yorkshire Assembly.
- 3. Reform of the International Territorial Level regions of England, replacing Yorkshire & Humber with a Yorkshire region coterminous with the jurisdiction of a Yorkshire Assembly and transferring North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire to the East Midlands.

Amendment 1

At the end of the motion, add to Yorkshire Liberal Democrats Conference calls for::

- 4. A referendum in Redcar & Cleveland and Middlesbrough on whether residents wish to be part of Yorkshire and come under the jurisdiction of a Yorkshire Assembly, or to remain part of North East England and the Tees Valley strategic authority.

Amendment 2

Delete Yorkshire Liberal Democrats Conference calls for 3, and replace with:

- 3. A referendum in North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire on whether residents wish to be part of a Yorkshire and Humber region and the jurisdiction of its devolved assembly, or to form part of the East Midlands region.

Policy Motion 3: Increase Food Security by Combatting Food Waste

Proposer: Samuel Jackson

Summator: tbc

Conference notes that:

- A. In 2025, 9.5 million tonnes of food was wasted in the UK, with:
 - a) Two-thirds being edible at point of disposal.
 - b) 70% coming from households, averaging £470 worth wasted per household.
 - c) Retailers generating upwards of 270,000 tonnes annually.
 - d) Its disposal in landfill generating 25 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions.
- B. An estimated 8.4 million people in the UK experience food insecurity, including 700,000 people in Yorkshire.
- C. In the past decade, the UK has experienced the highest food price inflation in 40 years.
- D. The Food and Drink Federation expects food inflation to reach at least 9% by the end of 2026.
- E. Only 7% of surplus food from the retail and manufacturing is redistributed.

Conference further notes that:

- I. Food waste can be attributed to:
 - a) Aesthetic standards.
 - b) Labelling confusion.
 - c) Overbuying and poor meal planning.
 - d) Inadequate storage.
 - e) Retail promotions encouraging excess purchases.
 - f) Limited redistribution infrastructure.
- II. While the UK is committed to halving food waste by 2030 as per UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3, much of the Government's Resource and Waste Strategy was dropped or never implemented.
- III. In May 2025, a £15m surplus food fund was created to support redistribution to organisations including food banks and homeless shelters.
- IV. The Food Foundation found that in 2024 food insecure households bought 60% less fruit and 44% fewer vegetables than the UK average.
- V. Farm input costs rose on average by 44% between 2019 and 2024:
 - a) While England's agriculture budget during that period remained at £2.4bn.
 - b) Namely for fertiliser, fuel, electricity, animal feed and interest rates on loans and overdrafts.
 - c) With those costs passed on to shoppers.
- VI. Food-sharing apps including Olio and Too Good To Good, while used by supermarkets to redistribute surplus food, prohibit charitable direct giving.
- VII. Food waste:
 - a) Was not addressed in the policy motion *Feeding Britain: A Food Security Emergency* passed at Autumn 2026 Conference.
 - b) Is not currently addressed in the Food Bill proposed by Rural Affairs spokesperson Sarah Dyke MP.

Conference believes that large-scale food waste is:

- a. Unjustifiable in the face of food insecurity.
- b. Symptomatic of poorly managed and insecure food supply chains.
- c. Contributing to extreme weather partly responsible for disrupting food supply chains.

Conference reaffirms the Liberal Democrats' commitment to the proposals of *Feeding Britain* to responsibly increase domestic agricultural production and procurement of domestically produced food and to improve public nutrition.

Conference calls for the Yorkshire Liberal Democrats to support:

1. Reform of food package date labelling to:
 - a) Feature dual display of best before and use-by dates.
 - b) Preclude sell-by or display-by dates.
2. Greater surplus food redistribution by:
 - a) Increasing the surplus food fund.
 - b) Providing farmers with targeted tax incentives.
 - c) Promoting joint food redistribution enterprises between local authorities, food businesses and redistribution organisations.
 - d) Requiring food-sharing apps to enable food redistribution via charitable organisations.
3. Greater consumption of 'ugly' produce by:
 - a) Removing barriers to farmer's markets.
 - b) Supporting on-farm and online sales by farmers.
 - c) Mandating Whole Crop Purchasing by large food retailers.
4. A Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) tax on food retailers with 100 employees or more.
5. Inclusion of meal planning, food storage, labelling literacy and creative cookery with leftovers in the national curriculum.
6. Reform of the waste hierarchy to:
 - a) Promote farm-level benefits including food waste utilisation to produce supplementary fertiliser and energy supplies.
 - b) Prohibit disposal via landfill, sewers or incineration without energy retrieval.
7. Negotiations to establish a joint Home Nations strategy to reduce food waste.