

Precept Consultation Report 2025-2026

Policing

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1.0 Background and Consultation Approach

1.1 Background

Annual council tax bills inform residents about their contributions to local council services and other essential public services across York and North Yorkshire, such as the Police and Fire and Rescue Service. These contributions are known as “precepts” and vary based on the property band.

The Mayor is legally responsible for setting both the policing precept and the Mayoral General Precept, which now includes fire and rescue services. The Government sets national referendum principles that cap council tax increases before a referendum is required. These principles apply to the policing precept but not to the Mayoral General Precept.

When setting the policing precept, the Mayor must consider the views of council tax payers across York and North Yorkshire. Although consultation on the Mayoral General Precept is not legally required, it ensures transparency, accountability, and public engagement in decisions affecting local taxation and public services.

For the 2025/2026 period, it is assumed that the Mayor will not increase any ‘non-fire’ elements of the Mayoral General Precept and will only seek to raise the ‘fire and rescue’ element.

1.2 Consultation Approach

The Mayor’s precept consultation aimed to understand how much more the public would be prepared to pay via their council tax for policing and separately for fire and rescue services in 2025/2026.

Between 2 December 2024 and 20 January 2025, an online, self-completion survey was open to the public of York and North Yorkshire with paper copies available on request and to download. Questions around both precepting areas were combined within one survey. The order in which people considered each was rotated; 50% answered the policing precept question first, 50% the fire and rescue precept question.

To help gain a more representative sample, a number of targeted community engagement activities were conducted to increase participation from minority groups. These activities included high street outreach events across the county, interactions with local businesses and emails to seldom-heard communities. Over 2400 contacts were made, 1200 individual and 1200 via email, and many more promotional leaflets were distributed.

A comprehensive Communications Plan ensured the survey was extensively promoted via media releases and social media including; Facebook and Nextdoor (reaching 77,879 households in 421 neighbourhoods). Posters and leaflets were distributed to all North Yorkshire and City of York libraries to raise awareness of the survey. All users of the Community Messaging system in North Yorkshire and the City of York (16,000 people) were notified about the survey and an email was sent to all local MPs and Councillors in December, to raise community awareness. Stakeholders and York businesses were

provided with a toolkit to help promote the survey and asked to engage their staff in the consultation. The Mayor also recorded three videos to help promote the consultation.

During the consultation period, responses were reviewed and targeted social media posts were used to increase responses from underrepresented areas and communities.

The consultation yielded 2,311 responses.

2.0 Respondent Profile

A total of 2,311 responses were received to the Mayor’s 2025/2026 precept consultation. The following tables provide a profile of the respondents. Figures may not always sum to 100% due to rounding.

The questionnaire was made freely available to any individual who pays council tax in York or North Yorkshire. This means that the response profile, particularly among younger age groups, may not be fully representative of the York and North Yorkshire population.

Table 1: Responses by Demographics (Mid-Year Population Estimates 2020 for age and gender; Census 2011 for ethnic group and disability)

Characteristic		Count	% Valid responses	* York and North Yorkshire population 16+ %
AGE	Under 25	20	1%	12%
	25-35	167	8%	14%
	36-45	196	10%	13%
	46-55	299	15%	16%
	56-65	451	22%	17%
	66-75	551	27%	15%
	Over 75	333	17%	13%
	TOTAL	2017	100%	100%
GENDER	Male	1182	59%	49%
	Female	828	41%	51%
	TOTAL	2010	100%	100%
ETHNIC GROUP	White	1933	97%	97%
	Other Ethnic Background	51	3%	3%
	TOTAL	1984	100%	100%
DISABILITY (self-defined)	Yes	510	26%	/
	No	1476	74%	/
	TOTAL	1986	100%	/

Table 2 below indicates that the responses are broadly representative by location (although York in particular is under-represented and Hambleton over-represented).

Table 2: Responses by Area compared to the North Yorkshire population aged 16+ (Census 2011)

Location (where live)	Count	% Valid responses	* York and North Yorkshire population 16+ %
Craven	158	7%	7%
Hambleton	455	21%	11%
Harrogate	337	16%	19%
Richmondshire	209	10%	6%
Ryedale	155	7%	7%
Scarborough	247	12%	13%
Selby	208	10%	11%
York	364	17%	26%
TOTAL	2133	100%	100%

3.0 Main findings

3.1 Level of Support for Precept Increase

Respondents were provided with information about the funding and budget of North Yorkshire Police. The questionnaire is appended for reference.

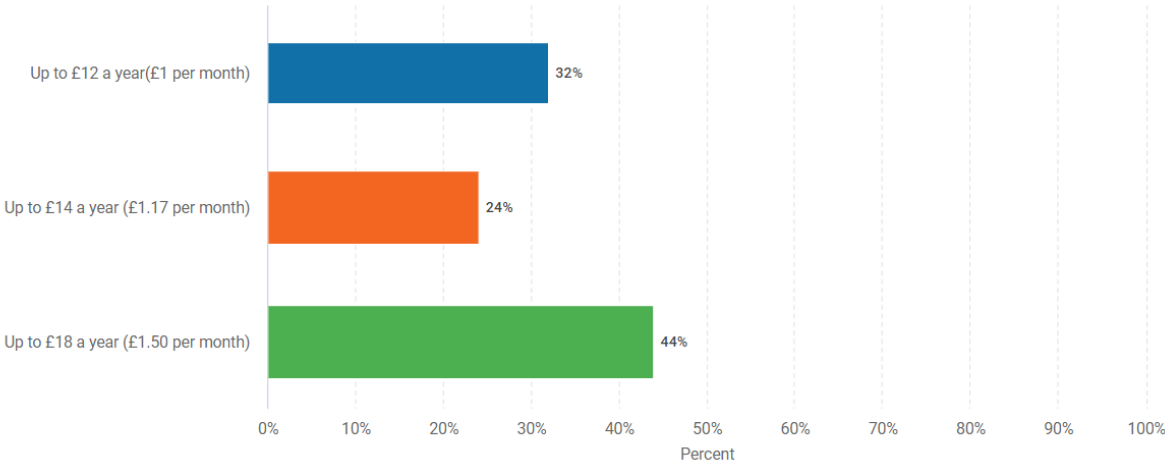
The following options are based on the amount of council tax an average Band D property would pay for policing. This is currently £306.86 per year.

Question: How much more are you willing to pay each year for policing in York and North Yorkshire?

- **Up to £12 a year (£1 per month)**
This would raise around £3.8 million but is below the organisation's inflationary pressures and would likely lead to reductions in current levels of service delivery unless savings could be delivered.
- **Up to £14 a year (£1.17 per month)**
This would raise around £4.4 million, matching the organisation's inflationary pressures. Current levels of service delivery would be maintained and it would hopefully allow some investment. For example, in neighbourhood policing, early intervention and prevention activities and tackling violence against women and girls.
- **Up to £18 a year (£1.50 per month)**
This would raise around £5.7 million and is likely to be higher than the organisation's inflationary pressures, allowing more significant investment. For example, in neighbourhood policing, early intervention and prevention activities and tackling violence against women and girls.

Responses to the policing precept question are summarised in Figure 1 below. The majority of respondents (66%) support an increase of at least £14, the most popular option being an increase of up to £18 (44%).

Figure 1: Additional amount people are willing to pay for policing



3.2 Sub-Group Analysis

Table 4 below provides an analysis of opinion by Sub-Groups.

There is a positive correlation between household income and the additional amount people are willing to pay for policing services. Respondents with a household income under £20,000 were much more likely to choose the lowest increase of up to £12, while those with an income above £20,000 were more likely to choose the highest increase of up to £18.

Those living in Craven, Harrogate, Richmondshire and Selby and people under 35 or over 66 years old are most likely to support an increase of at least £14 (over 70% of respondents).

Table 4: Opinion by Sub-Groups (bases: those answering in brackets)

Sub-group	Up to £12	Up to £14	Up to £18	Total who support an increase of at least £14
TOTAL (2005)	32%	24%	44%	68%
BY AREA				
Craven (140)	29%	24%	47%	71%
Hambleton (426)	37%	23%	40%	63%
Harrogate (300)	28%	25%	47%	72%
Richmondshire (190)	29%	29%	42%	71%
Ryedale (133)	31%	25%	44%	69%
Scarborough (208)	34%	23%	42%	65%
Selby (190)	30%	22%	48%	70%
York (328)	34%	20%	46%	66%
BY AGE				
18-24 (20)	30%	20%	50%	70%
25-35 (153)	30%	18%	52%	70%
36-45 (180)	36%	23%	42%	65%
46-55 (272)	39%	17%	44%	61%
56-65 (399)	34%	20%	46%	66%
66-75 (516)	28%	26%	46%	72%
Over 75 (293)	22%	33%	45%	78%
BY GENDER				
Male (1,055)	31%	22%	47%	69%
Female (769)	31%	26%	43%	69%
BY DISABILITY (self-defined)				
Yes (442)	34%	35%	41%	76%
No (1364)	29%	23%	47%	70%
BY ETHNICITY				
White (1762)	31%	23%	46%	69%
Other ethnicity (44)	43%	27%	30%	57%

Sub-group	Up to £12	Up to £14	Up to £18	Total who support an increase of at least £14
BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
Less than £10,000 (46)	50%	35%	15%	50%
£10,001 - £20,000 (259)	45%	24%	31%	55%
£20,001 - £40,000 (449)	29%	26%	45%	71%
£40,001 - £60,000 (365)	26%	21%	53%	74%
£60,001 - £80,000 (188)	22%	19%	59%	78%
£80,001 - £100,000 (127)	32%	16%	52%	68%
More than £100,000 (93)	26%	15%	59%	74%

*Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding

Key		Under 60% support for at least £14
		Over 70% support for at least £14

3.3 General Comments on the Police Precept

People were asked to explain the reasons for their response.

Do you have any comments about the police precept that may help us understand your response?

The main themes are:

- Need to increase police presence/police officers/neighbourhood policing (205). 27 respondents specifically mentioned the need for increased resources/presence in rural areas.
- Find savings and efficiencies within the service to release funds (193)
- Not willing to pay any level of increase (134)
- Limited by affordability (91 responses), many noted the cost of living crisis, being pensioners and losing winter fuel payments
- 51 respondents listed specific areas of focus for investment including road safety, tackling drugs and addressing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
- Essential service to keep people safe/don't reduce service (124)

"As long as the extra funds are actually invested in Policing, and hiring new, competent officers, I'm more than happy to pay more. The almost zero presence of Police has undoubtedly played a part in the higher levels of crime recently."

"Throwing money at this situation is a lazy way of chancing a solution. The correct approach is to review and better manage existing funds."

"Ideally no increase, we are in a cost of living crisis and any increase is a struggle."

"Willing to do this ONLY when I see precisely what it will be spent on, how, and how success will be measured."

"The police are an important investment in order to keep our streets and homes safe."