

Ftr are cause of controversy once more

By [Milda Sabunaite](#)

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THE BUS COMPANY 'First' has been paid another £250,000 by the City of York Council and bus ticket prices are to be raised again.

The unpopular Ftr bus project was originally billed at £450,000 but has already cost the city more than 1.5 million pounds. According to Labour councillor Tracey Simpson-Laing who is the vice-chair of the Council's City Strategy and Advisory Panel, the money has been spent on various changes and alterations across the route that were necessary to adapt the streets of York for the non-standard sized buses but were not included in the primary project plans. "They just kept finding things that needed doing and did not plan first." said Simpson-Laing.

The councillor said she was still not confident that the Ftr bus project will not require more financing from the Council. "I have asked if any more [money] will be allocated, they have said no - they have said this to me at each time they have reported the spending of more money."

The councillor also expressed dissatisfaction with the ticket machine system in the Ftr buses which causes inconvenience to many passengers. "I strongly believe that buses should be turn up & travel and that no one should be financially disadvantaged - such as higher cash cost tickets and inability to obtain change if you did not have the correct money", said Simpson-Laing. "It would have been easier to buy tickets at the Park & Ride sites, then there would not have been the farce with the ticket machines."

The money that has been paid to 'First' bus company came from the Government Local Transport Fund and not Council Tax; however, York residents are still to experience a change in their budget as the Ftr bus ticket prices were raised on Sunday 21 January. A First York representative said, all one-day-ticket prices have gone up by 10 - 30 pence and the student ten-journey-ticket now costs £11 instead of £10.

Despite the disappointment about this increase, many students feel they do not have an alternative to paying the higher price. "No one wants to walk that far in gale force winds and very few freshers have cars," said Helen Jones of Eden's Court. "It's not fair, because 'First' is able to raise the prices as much as they want to - disproportionately to fuel price rises - and a lot of students will still be reliant on them." However, Simpson-Laing said 'First' should expect a decrease in customers. "If 'First' and CYC want people to use buses for the environments sake then continued price rises will only deter residents. It will be more attractive to take the car to town and park than stand at a drafty bus stop with no idea of when the next bus will actually turn up."



3 comments

J allen

12 Apr '07 at 4:30 pm

the £250.000 york council has 'paid' first.

Is not for the Ftr its for the Free Travel that the Over 60s and other Council Card holders have.

The Government allowed 'Free' travel for over 60s, but this has backfired as 1) over 60s are abusing the system by jumping a bus to go say 50 yds. the driver logs that pass on his / her ticket machine, this is then billed to the local council. Its is happening all over the country !!

2) any person that is unable to work for long term illness, or has had their driving licence taken away due to ill health substance or alcohol abuse, can have such a pass, there for the over 60s free travel works for them also.

all any bus company is doing is claiming back what rightfully is theirs, after all it is a business

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Paul Mercer

31 Jul '07 at 8:27 pm

You lot really are stupid
as J allen says its the council payment
for OAP passes. check your facts before making comment IDIOTS

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P.Miller

22 Sep '07 at 7:01 pm

Here here, I have just seen this forum,
as As J Allen & Paul Mercer, both stated
its the OAP (council Passes)
that First Quite rightly has Applied for covering costs of travel. I am not sure who and or where the above
person or persons
live or which planet ! I guess its just another student rant not knowing the true facts,
IDIOTS !!!

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