
Meeting	Decision Session - Combined Executive Member Decision Session
Date	27 January 2026
Present	Councillors Douglas [until 10:25am], Webb [until 10:47am], Kent, and Pavlovic
Officers in attendance	Michael James - Head of Communications and Engagement Dave Atkinson - Director of Environment and Regulatory Services Liam Dennis - Community Involvement Officer Rachelle White - School Admissions Manager Claire Roberts - School Place Planning Officer Dawn Wood - Early Years Reforms Programme Lead Kerry Lee - Wraparound Project Officer Andrew Bebbington - Housing Development Co-ordinator Pauline Stuchfield - Director of Housing and Community Services Fiona Brown - Building Services Change Manager

54. Appointing a Chair

Resolved: That the arrangements for chairing the meeting would be as follows:

Councillor Douglas, Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships – Agenda items 1-6.

Councillor Kent, Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency – Agenda item 7.

Councillor Webb, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education – Agenda items 8-9.

Councillor Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities – Agenda items 10-14.

55. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

56. Declarations of Interest

The Executive Members were invited to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests, or any disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

57. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes Combined Executive Member Decision Session on Tuesday, 2 December 2026 be approved as a correct record.

58. Public Participation (10:02am)

It was noted that there had been four registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Councillor Waller spoke in relation to agenda items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Councillor Waller stated that every City of York Council tenant should be able to see improvements within their area but that this was no longer the case in York. He continued that it was essential for residents and ward councillors to be involved in the decision-making process for improvements in wards and concluded that he felt consultation with the People Scrutiny Committee was not accurately detailed within the Neighbourhood Improvement Programme 2025/27 report.

Jocelyn Proctor spoke in relation to agenda item 12, Antisocial Behaviour Policy, and shared her previous experience of antisocial behaviour, victimisation from authorities, and trauma caused through systemic racism. She stated that the policy made space to ensure that there was an improvement in the local community, and that the new policy provided security and progress.

Councillor Fenton spoke in relation to agenda items 11 and 13 and reported that the People Scrutiny Committee received the Housing Tenancy Policy and Strategy on 3 December 2025, but that other reports did not see the same level of pre-decision scrutiny. He stated that there needed to be sufficient resources within the Housing Services teams, and close working with Councillors and North Yorkshire Police following approval of these policies. He concluded that there were many housing issues being experienced by tenants that could be resolved quickly such as issues with insulation, and that there needed to be a process underpinning the possibility of residents raising issues within their communities.

Gwen Swinburn spoke on item 6, Communications and Engagement Strategy and discussed the necessity to improve communication with hard to reach areas within York; she highlighted failures to communicate effectively in the past where deprived communities and ward members had not been consulted with on various initiatives.

59. Communications and Engagement Strategy (10:19am)

The Head of Communications and Engagement presented the report and noted that the Communications and Engagement Strategy had a wide-ranging reach throughout City of York Council (CYC) services and there was a statutory requirement for communications to support a civil emergencies response.

The Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships highlighted member engagement that had taken place, including the draft strategy being received by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 1 October 2025, and the feedback received.

Resolved: That the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Policy, Strategy and Partnerships approved the Communications and Engagement Strategy to ensure:

- i. City of York Council (CYC) could use its communications resources in the most effective way to support the organisation's priorities and ambitions.
- ii. The Council focused on relevant communication and engagement with all communities across the city in a fair and equitable way.

Reason: To support the delivery of the Council's core commitments, corporate priorities and to ensure inclusivity, accessibility and to build confidence in the council's delivery.

60. York Walls in Bloom (10:25am)

The Director of Environmental and Regulatory Services, and the Community Involvement Officer presented the item and reflected on the heritage and ecological needs of areas in York, highlighting the importance of having sustainable and resilient planning strategies. It was reported that decisions had been taken in consultation with advice from Historic England.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency:

- i. Approved the Ancient Monuments Team to work with partners to adapt the management of the Bar Walls.
- ii. Approved the principles of site-based management plans reflecting the diverse ecology, heritage, and aesthetics of the City Walls, ensuring best-practice management is achieved.

Reasons:

- i. There are opportunities on the embankments to introduce locally native wildflowers which are suited to the soil conditions and current management arrangements. Although non-native species may produce visually appealing displays, they are of little benefit to the vast majority of our native invertebrates, which co-evolved with native plants; incorporation and enhancement of native plant diversity is paramount to dampening declines in plants and invertebrates.
- ii. This project will support the Council's climate and net zero commitments, align with Historic England's guidance on sustainable heritage management, and improve biodiversity at a nationally significant monument. It will also contribute to placemaking, enhance visitor experience and local amenity, while reducing the maintenance burden on the Council by fostering volunteering and community engagement.

61. Admissions Arrangements for the 2027/28 School Year (10:31am)

The School Admissions Manager, and School Place Planning Officer highlighted the key changes to schools Published Admission Numbers (PAN) as referred to in the report. They highlighted that the report sought approval of admissions policies outlined, and for the proposed oversubscription criteria.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education accepted and supported the proposed changes to the Admission Arrangements for September 2027-2028, as seen in the report and annexes, based on the evidence shown in the Options Analysis and Evidential Basis section of the report.

Reason: To ensure that City of York Council (CYC) continue to meet their statutory duty as set out in the terms of the Education Act 1996 and also work collaboratively with Academy Trusts to meet that duty whilst also appreciating the financial pressure on schools and trusts.

62. Annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2025: Setting Analysis of the Childcare Market Across the City of York (10:38am)

The Early Years Reforms Programme Lead, and the Wraparound Project Officer reported that the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was required on an annual basis, and that the results of the assessment highlighted how CYC was meeting its statutory duties. They noted that the report supported the sustainability of the established market in York, and that the market had remained consistent for the past two years; work was ongoing within wraparound parameters to work with the sector and make sure it remained robust, and work was ongoing with Department for Work and Pensions to help improve recruitment to the sector.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education approved the report to be published on the CYC website, and for a copy to be sent to the Department for education (DfE).

Reason: In order to meet CYC's statutory duty.

63. Housing Tenancy Policy and Strategy (10:47am)

The Director of Housing and Community Services, and the Housing Development Co-ordinator outlined the report and noted that the requirements of the policy were set out by the Housing Regulator and in legislation, and the purpose of the policy was to set out the standard of social housing to other providers.

The Director of Housing and Community Services highlighted three key consultations that had been undertaken for this policy, consultations with: Regulated Social Housing Providers, their tenants, and with the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

The Housing Development Co-ordinator highlighted various definitions and types of Affordable Housing, such as: Traditional Social Housing which represented the majority of social housing in York and was paid at a social rent (of around £100-£110 per week); Affordable Rent which had been brought in nationally in recent years and represented a minority of social housing, giving the option to charge up to 80% of market rates; York's Living Rent policy approach was proposed to undertake an evidenced based assessment in linking Affordable Rent to local incomes with an aim of limiting charges to 45%-65% of market rate.

The Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities provided feedback in that all relevant policies and strategies as referenced within the report should be easily accessible in one place on CYC's website.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities approved:

- i. The Tenancy Policy and Strategy document.
- ii. Affordable Rent to be limited to below 80% of market rent through with the York Living Rent reflecting local lower quartile incomes and the Local Housing Allowance.
- iii. The use of Fixed Term and Flexible Tenancies to be used only in a set of defined criteria that represent exceptional circumstances, to balance security of tenure for tenants alongside making best use of social housing stock. There would be a presumption that Flexible Tenancies would be renewed, otherwise tenants would be offered an alternative suitable property provided they were not in breach of their existing tenancy.

Reasons: To achieve legal and regulatory compliance in respect of matters covered by the Tenancy Policy and Strategy, and to achieve the benefits from the proposed document as set out in the report.

64. Antisocial Behaviour Policy (11:04am)

The Director of Housing and Community Services, and Building Services Change Manager, presented the item and reported, in response to comments made during Public Participation, that pre-decision scrutiny was not possible for this policy due to critical health and safety time constraints, but that following feedback this would be accounted for next time. It was then reported that there were areas on the CYC website for residents to report issues, and they could also report issues in various Hubs around the city.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities approved the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for Council Housing in York.

Reason: To meet statutory requirements and to ensure clearer language and terminology is used and is more comprehensive.

65. Damp and Mould Policy (11:14am)

The Director of Housing and Community Services, and Building Services Change Manager, presented the item and reported that the Damp and Mould Policy had been proposed voluntarily by CYC due to various regulatory and health and safety issues that have arisen to ensure safe homes and ensure that CYC are listening to the voices of those living in CYC houses.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities approved the Damp and Mould Policy.

Reason: To meet statutory requirements and ensure health and safety of CYC's tenants.

66. Neighbourhood Improvement Programme 2025/27 (11:25am)

The Director of Housing and Community Services presented the report and noted that although there were areas for improvement regarding increasing the inclusion of public participation within the programme, funding was currently available which needed to be used; this programme enabled CYC to take action following Estate Walkabouts.

Resolved: That the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities:

- i. Approved the approach for engaging members and communities in proposals for spending NIP (Housing Neighbourhood Improvement Programme) annual funding.
- ii. Approved the NIP HRA (Housing Revenue Account) funded projects and expenditure as follows:
 - £10k initial funding to the Groves Residents Association in relation to the Groves Community Plan, resulting proposals to inform future NIP funding proposals.
 - £250k for Walmgate Proposals priorities.
 - To delegate the procurement of a condition survey of all housing communal areas to Director of Housing & Communities (to maximum contribution of £32k).
 - £30k contribution to an additional E-van for Communities team environment officers.
 - £40k Fund for Communities team environment officers/Neighbourhood Caretakers for community involvement equipment and to undertake repairs arising from walkabouts.
 - £40k contingency for off-programme ad hoc proposals delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities documented by published officer decision.

- iii. Delegated authority to the Director of Housing and Communities, in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance:
- To commence procurement from the market via an open, fair and transparent competitive process and evaluation criteria in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules under Appendix 11 of the Council's Constitution (the "Council's CPRs") and (where applicable) the Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contract Regulations 2015:
 - the condition survey of all housing communal areas.
 - an additional E-van for Communities Team environment officers.
 - any community involvement equipment for Communities Team Environment Officers and Community Caretakers and any required repair works arising from walkabouts.
 - and to determine the provisions of any contracts, and the provisions of any subsequent modifications and/or extensions thereto.
- iv. Approved that the Council would enter into a grant funding agreement with the Groves Residents Association on the terms set out in the Report, and to delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance, to determine the provisions of the grant funding agreement, and the provisions of any subsequent modifications and/or extensions thereto, to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Council's Financial Regulations under Appendix 10a of the Council's Constitution (the "Council's Financial Regs") and the Council's CPRs.
- v. Delegated authority to the Director of Housing & Communities, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance, and subject to consultation with and approval by the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities, to commission and determine the provisions of any grant funding agreements and/or supply, services and/or works contracts relating to any off programme ad hoc proposals and the provisions of any subsequent modifications and/or extensions thereto, to ensure compliance with the relevant public procurement or subsidy control law (as applicable) and the Council's CPRs and Financial Regs, to be documented by published officer decision.

Reasons:

- i. To ensure transparency and clear decision making around the NIP budget priorities and use of HRA expenditure for the benefit of council tenants.
- ii. To ensure all grant funding arrangements are in compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Council's Financial Regs and the Council's CPRs.

Cllrs Douglas, Kent, Pavlovic, and Webb, Chairs

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.44 am].