

City of York Council

Resolutions and proceedings of the Meeting of the City of York Council held at The Guildhall, York on Thursday, 15 December 2022, starting at 6.30 pm

Present: The Lord Mayor (Cllr David Carr) in the Chair, and the following Councillors:

Acomb Ward

Bishopthorpe Ward

Lomas

Clifton Ward

Copmanthorpe Ward

D Myers
Wells

Dringhouses & Woodthorpe Ward

Fishergate Ward

Fenton
Mason
Widdowson

D'Agorne
D Taylor

Fulford and Heslington Ward

Guildhall Ward

Aspden

Craghill
Fitzpatrick
Looker

Haxby & Wigginton Ward

Heworth Ward

Cuthbertson
Hollyer
Pearson

Douglas
Perrett
Webb

Heworth Without Ward

Holgate Ward

Ayre

Melly

Hull Road Ward

Musson
Norman
Pavlovic

Huntington and New Earswick
Ward

Cullwick
Orrell
Runciman

Micklegate Ward

Baker
Crawshaw
Kilbane

Osbalwick and Derwent Ward

Warters

Rawcliffe and Clifton Without Ward

Smalley
Waudby

Rural West York Ward

Barker
Hook

Strensall Ward

Doughty
Fisher

Westfield Ward

Daubeney
Hunter
Waller

Wheldrake Ward

Vassie

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barnes, Galvin, Heaton, Rowley, K Taylor and Wann.

31. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Barker declared a pecuniary interest in Motion (iii) at Agenda Item 8, 'Introduction of Council Tax Premium for Second Homes', as the owner of a second home. He left the Chamber during consideration of that motion, and took no part in the debate or decision thereon.

Prior to the debate on Motion (iii) Cllr Cullwick declared, for the sake of transparency, that he was in the process of administering an estate but it was not his second home.

32. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 October 2022 be approved, and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

33. Civic Announcements (18:37)

The Lord Mayor invited Members to observe a minute's silence in memory of Andrew Digwood, former Under-Sheriff, who had died in November 2022.

The Lord Mayor went on to announce the receipt of gifts to the city from the Women's Rugby World Cup teams of Australia, France, the Cook Islands and New Zealand.

Finally, the Lord Mayor invited Cllr Aspden to nominate the Lord Mayor Elect for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group. Cllr Aspden nominated Cllr Chris Cullwick as the Lord Mayor Elect. Cllr Cullwick confirmed that he would be honoured to accept, and nominated Cllr Susan Hunter as his Sheriff.

34. Public Participation (18:41)

It was reported that ten people had registered to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn spoke on governance issues as a matter relevant to the Council or city, raising concerns about the control of governance and the report on Members' Allowances.

The following spoke on Agenda Item 6 (Executive Recommendations) in relation to the 10 Year Strategies, supporting the proposals and the Climate Change Strategy in particular:

- a) Professor Andy Gouldson, Co-Director of the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission.
- b) Laurence Beardmore, President of York and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce.
- c) Professor Charlie Jeffery, Vice Chancellor of the University of York, and Chair of Higher York.
- d) James Farrar, Chief Operating Officer of York and North Yorkshire LEP
- e) Alex McCallion, Director of Works and Precinct, York Minster.
- f) Gareth Parry Forest Managing Director Yorkshire District, Forestry England.
- g) Sarah Loftus, Managing Director of Make It York.

Carl Alsop, of York BID, spoke on Agenda Item 6, regarding the Pavement Café Licence Update. He urged Council not to overlook the impact of the proposals on businesses, and to improve consultation so that business owners could plan ahead.

Flick Williams spoke on Agenda Item 11 (Scrutiny – Report of the Chair of CCSMC), asking why the issue of the accessibility of the Council Chamber had not been through the scrutiny process.

35. Petitions (19:14)

Under Rule B5 2, the following petitions were presented for reference to the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee, in accordance with the Council's petition arrangements:

- (i) A petition presented by Cllr Myers, on behalf of residents of Westminster Rd, Greycliffe Drive and The Avenue, asking the council to explore options for a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in their area.¹

- (ii) A petition presented by Cllr Baker, on behalf of residents calling on the council to take action to tackle safety concerns resulting from drivers using St Benedict's Road as a short cut.²

Action Required

1. Add the petition to explore options for a LTN to the petitions log for referral to CCSMC. SS
2. Add the petition on the use of St Benedict's Road as a short cut to the petitions log for referral to CCSMC. SS

36. **Report of Executive Leader, Questions, and Executive Recommendations (19:17)**

A – Executive Leader's Report

A written report was received from the Executive Leader, Cllr Aspden, on the work of the Executive.

Members were then invited to question the Leader on his report. Questions were received from the floor from the following Members in relation to the subjects listed, and replied to as indicated:

Cost of Living Crisis

From Cllr Webb: Can you detail any new actions or commitments to the city arising from the York Cost of Living Summit?

Response: An update was provided to Executive on this and I would be happy to share it and to discuss what more can be done with you and officers.

[Supplementary: But what has this administration actually done?]

Supplementary Response: I discussed some examples in my speech and report, such as the housing support fund. I will send you the report that outlines feedback and further actions from the Cost of Living Summit. If you have any further suggestions, drop me a line and I would be happy to look at them.

[Supplementary from Cllr Crawshaw: The household support fund is a government scheme, so have you done nothing?]

Supplementary Response: A lot of funding to the council comes from government, and we need to do what we can to utilise it and top it up or enhance it. Please get in touch if you have any suggestions.

Devolution

From Cllr Fenton: Can you give an update on the work of the Joint Devolution Committee?

Response: The first committee meeting took place recently with CYC and NYCC joined by colleagues from the LEP and the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. This was an important first step to ensure we are in a position to access the government funding offered early. Subject to the Council making a decision early next year there is likely to be a second meeting in February or March to progress that to becoming a shadow authority, so that we can capitalise on the funding offered.

[Supplementary from Cllr Douglas: How will you face the challenge of spending the money, including £2.6m on brownfield sites by 2025 – are there any creative ideas of finding partners to make sure we benefit?]

Supplementary Response: We discussed that point at the meeting – it's an ambitious timescale. A call has already gone out for projects and proposals. Ensuring that the wider community is aware of the opportunity to become involved is part of the process we'll take in the coming weeks to benefit from the funding.

[Supplementary from Cllr Warters: Can you clearly outline what levels of adverse reaction to consultation on the devolution proposals would lead to the deal not progressing?]

Supplementary Response: The results will come here for Council to consider and decide on in the new year. So far, there have been more positive than negative responses to consultation and the part most critically commented on has been the prospect of the elected Mayor having powers to raise taxes or business rates.

Council Budget

From Cllr Douglas: What decisions do you intend to take in-year to stabilise the council's finances so it's not at risk of going bust next year?

Response: This has been reported on through various financial monitors to Executive; for example a recruitment freeze on non-essential posts and stopping non-essential spend where services can. There are particular pressures within Adults' and Children's social care and that feeds into the wider conversations about next year's budget. We will do everything we can that does not impact on crucial services.

[Supplementary: So what are you going to cut?]

Supplementary Response: I can't tell you until the government publishes its settlement. I have given examples of what we are doing in-year and we will continue to do things like that.

B – Executive Recommendations

Cllr Aspden moved, and Cllr D'Agorne seconded, the following recommendations contained in Minutes 57-59 of the Executive meeting held on 22 November 2022 and Minute 71 of the Executive meeting held on 15 December 2022:

Minute 57 - 10 Year Strategies

Recommended: That Council adopt the 10 year Strategy and Policy framework, which comprises the Climate Change, Economic and Health and Wellbeing 10 year strategies and the emerging 10 year City Plan.

Reason: To engage partners, city leaders, businesses, stakeholders and residents to work together on key agreed priority areas that aim to actively improve the quality of life for all York's residents.

Minute 58 - Pavement Café Licence Update¹

Recommended: (i) That the following changes be made to local guidance used in the determining of pavement café licenses under the Business and Planning Act 2020:

- a) Cafés only allowed on footways if 1.5m width remains for people to get past (width increased to 2m in high footfall areas, for example busy junctions, near bus stops, etc). In footstreets with access level between footways and carriageway (for example Coney Street), licences may be issued for pavement cafes to cover the full width of the footway. If a licence is refused under the Business and Planning Act it would be possible for the applicant to use the planning permission process (and licensing under Highways Act Part 7A) to seek permission for a pavement café area. If a permission and a licence were to be granted under this process, adequate

access mitigations would be conditioned through the planning permission on a case-by-case basis and all costs associated with required highway improvements would need to be borne by the applicant.

- b) Café areas can be allowed in on-street parking bays, where sufficient parking and loading capacity remains (including for Blue Badge holders) and the café area can be protected from passing traffic (if required). The licence holder will be required to cover all associated costs (changes to the permanent TRO, changes to the kerb line/protection measures).
- c) To require the named licence holder to have completed the ACT Awareness E-learning course and provide additional information to licence holders on the Protect Duty.
- d) To adopt the updated guidance document (Annex B) and proposals for additional information to be provided. Key changes are: updated barriers requirements and specifications, updated access width requirements, strengthened enforcement process, reintroduction of a £100 charge per licence. Additional information to be provided includes: design and set up guidance for licence holders, advice and support on 'How to set-up your pavement cafe area', and information on hospitality venues' duties under the Equality Act. Pavement café licence holders will be written to – to notify them of the changes.

Reason: To clarify the criteria against which pavement café applications will be assessed and mitigate the impact of some pavement cafes on accessibility and to clarify the criteria against which pavement café applications will be assessed and the standards licence holders will be expected to meet and provide additional support and guidance to licence holders.

(ii) That the Policy for Pavement Cafes under the Business and Planning Act 2020 be reviewed by the Licensing & Regulatory Committee and be added to the list of functions of that committee. Officers will continue to determine applications made under that policy.

Reason: So that the Licensing & Regulatory Committee can review the policy.

Minute 59 - Capital Programme - Monitor 2 2022/23 ²

Recommended: That Council approve the adjustments resulting in a decrease in the 2022/23 budget of £38.193m, as detailed in the report and contained in Annex A.

Reason: To enable the effective management and monitoring of the Council's capital programme.

Minute 71 - York 2032: The 10-Year Plan ³

Recommended: That Council approve and adopt the York 2032: 10-Year Plan on behalf of the city.

Reason: To engage partners, city leaders, businesses, stakeholders and residents to work together on key agreed priority areas and actions that aim to actively improve the quality of life for all York's residents.

On being put to the vote, all of the recommendations were declared CARRIED, and it was

Resolved: That the above recommendations be approved. ^{1,2,3}

Action Required

1. Note approval of the recommendations on the Pavement Café Licence Update and take appropriate actions. JG

2. Note approval of the recommendation on the Capital Programme - Monitor 2 2022/23 and take the appropriate action. DM

3. Note approval of the recommendation on York 2032: The 10-Year Plan and take appropriate action. CF

[The meeting was adjourned for a break from
8:25pm to 8:42 pm]

37. Report of Deputy Leader and Questions (20:43)

A written report was received from the Deputy Leader, Cllr D'Agorne.

Members were then invited to question the Deputy Leader on his report. Questions were received from the floor from the following Members in relation to the subjects listed, and replied to as indicated:

Cost of Living Crisis

From Cllr Orrell: Can you update Members on work in the city to support those struggling most this winter, and is there any progress on the Warm Spaces initiative?

Response: Warm Spaces is an important initiative. A number of places such as Explore libraries and community centres are offering that facility, and I very much welcome any other organisations that could be added to the list. 10,000 copies have been produced of a leaflet providing information to residents on how to find out more about the funding sources available for them to access. The leaflet is available online at foodaidnetwork.org.uk and worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/york. We also work with other organisations through the Financial Inclusion Steering Group – there are many ways in which residents can get support at this difficult time, even down to the small things like the York Energy Advice service and the housing Handyperson service.

York Central

From Cllr Hook: Can you update Members on the Riverside Park consultation as part of the York Central plans?

Response: This is an important connection for people to walk and cycle from one area to the city centre, and a sensitive issue given the impact of stopping off Leeman Road. Consultation is under way inviting residents to comment. I'm aware that although we have capital funding to spend on it, this probably won't cover everything we choose to do there and several options are being looked at. When the consultation feedback has been compiled there will be a further report to decide what the money will be spent on.

[Supplementary from Cllr Melly: All the improvements to Riverside Park are necessary and are now more urgent in the light of plans to close Leeman Road. We are told they will cost over £1m but only £0.5m has been allocated. You said in your report that the plans would be funded through the capital programme. Can we take this as a commitment to fully fund the required improvements?]

Supplementary Response: I share your concerns, and it's important to understand the priorities from the perspective of local residents. The budget is constrained - your leader raised questions this morning about how to reduce the capital programme - but we need to spend to ensure long-term investment in the city. It may be that, for example, we have to spend on ensuring the route is gritted and raised or widened to enhance its safety and reduce the impact on the city, residents and the NHS.

[Supplementary from Cllr Crawshaw: Previous funding for other schemes has been removed from the budget for lack of officer time. Can you guarantee to Holgate ward councillors that any money in the budget for these riverside improvements will come with dedicated officer time to deliver or work up the scheme?]

Supplementary Response: Next year's budget will come to Council in February. The funding you refer to hasn't been removed but was identified in a different way to enable ward councillors to take a holistic approach.

Passivhaus homes

From Cllr Pavlovic: If these houses had been built to building regulations instead of Passivhaus standards, how many more affordable homes could you have delivered?

Response: This is not my portfolio area and I don't have that information to hand. This programme was adopted several years ago and is being delivered, so it's rather a hypothetical question.

38. **Motions on Notice (21:18)**

(i) Delivering Effective Customer Services to York Residents

Moved by Cllr Webb and seconded by Cllr Lomas.

"This Council believes that an effective council is one that appropriately supports its staff and is responsive to the needs of all its residents.

Council notes:

- that at least one in ten people are not digitally connected, rising to more than four in ten for the over 75s;
- older residents are less likely to wait for long periods to have their calls answered, and are more likely to have difficulty navigating numbered option-based customer service phone lines;
- that the welcome [4 Cs](#) council policy for comments, concerns, complaints and compliments is tempered by the Local Govt Ombudsman's reported concerns about the way some council departments are responding to complaints;
- the 2,500% increase in average call wait times for residents when calling the council for help over the past two years, from 42 seconds to 18 minutes, not accounting for those calls abandoned altogether;
- the value and importance of calling residents back if their calls are not answered;
- that the complexity and sometimes difficult experience of customer calls, as well as understaffing of the customer services team, are exacerbating the problem of poor staff retention.

Council believes quality of customer service reflects the importance the council attaches to residents' issues, whether online, over the phone or in person.

It further believes:

- that cuts to staffing and policy decisions taken by the current administration are a significant component in current poor response times;
- that we do not currently know the extent of resident calls abandoned due to non-responses by the council;
- that helping residents in the right way at the first opportunity saves time and money for the council;
- suspending the call-back service to residents whose calls go unanswered sends the message that their issues are unimportant;
- new approaches must be considered to operating the council's customer services number to arrest the decline in responsiveness to residents;
- the effect of the removal of staff from the customer services phone line is to make services far more difficult to access for some York residents;
- current and former call-centre staff have been avoidably exposed to increased abuse and a deterioration in their

working conditions due to poor political decision making both in policy and budgetary (staff) cutbacks.

Council resolves to request that the Executive, including as part of its current budget preparations:

- publicly acknowledges the hard work of customer services staff and the impact of cuts on their ability to meet resident expectations, and apologises for the council's ongoing inability to effectively respond to residents' issues in a timely way;
- urgently reinstates the customer services call-back service to residents;
- commits to reviewing the functioning of the relevant council services as a priority, with a focus to include:
 - staffing and operating hours of the customer call centre;
 - ensuring access to non-digital council services is an easy, straightforward process;
 - categorisation of services on, and user-friendliness of, a council website a significant number of residents struggle to navigate;
 - monitoring and recording of abusive calls to staff, including a clear structure for escalation, response and staff well-being support."

Cllr Ayre then moved, and Cllr Cullwick seconded, an amendment to the above motion, as follows:

"In the second paragraph, under 'Council notes:

- after the 4th bullet point, insert:

- *'That the issue is exacerbated by challenge in recruiting to vacancies, as has been experienced by other council services and employers across all sectors;*
- *that prior to covid, service levels and performance were good within the current level of resources;*
- *That recruitment has been ongoing since summer 2021 and there are still 6 vacancies with 2.5 vacancies recruited to but not yet occupied;*
- *That the service has an improving recruitment position and hence improving performance, with average wait times going from 5.5 mins in October to 3.3 mins in November;'*

- in the last bullet point, delete 'understaffing of the customer services team' and substitute 'increased workload since the pandemic'.

- after the last bullet point, insert:
 - *‘That a policy is in place for staff dealing with abusive customers / distressing conversations and weekly training and support sessions have been implemented to further support staff and staff were also paid a retention payment for the April to September period this year.’*

In the fourth paragraph, under ‘It further believes’:

- delete the first two bullet points and substitute:
 - *‘That service levels would not have been affected to the extent they are, if the service had been able to fill vacancies and had the level of additional workload not increased through administration of additional support schemes*
 - *That data is available on total number of calls answered, how many are answered within 20 seconds and the number of abandoned calls. Abandoned calls do not mean the customer did not get their query resolved’.*
- delete the 4th bullet point and substitute:
 - *‘That whilst the call-back service was suspended following the increase in workload in September 2021, it will, as planned, be reimplemented when current vacancies are filled and new staff have been trained. This is not an issue of extra funding, as vacancies are still present due to market competitiveness.’*
- in the 5th bullet point, delete ‘*arrest the decline in*’ and substitute ‘*improve*’
- delete the 6th bullet point and substitute:
 - *‘that had the service been able to fully resource its vacancies then normal service level would have been delivered.’*

In the fifth paragraph, under ‘Council resolves to request that the Executive...’

- in the 1st bullet point, delete ‘*cuts*’ and substitute ‘*increased workloads*’
- in the 2nd bullet point, delete ‘*urgently reinstates*’ and substitute ‘*commits to reinstate*’; and add to the end of the bullet point ‘*once current vacant positions are filled and new staff have been trained*’
- in the 3rd bullet point, before ‘*monitoring and recording*’ in the final sub-bullet point, insert ‘*a more effective and simpler system for*’.”

On being put to the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

The motion, as amended, now read as follows:

“This Council believes that an effective council is one that appropriately supports its staff and is responsive to the needs of all its residents.

Council notes:

- that at least one in ten people are not digitally connected, rising to more than four in ten for the over 75s;
- older residents are less likely to wait for long periods to have their calls answered, and are more likely to have difficulty navigating numbered option-based customer service phone lines;
- that the welcome [4 Cs](#) council policy for comments, concerns, complaints and compliments is tempered by the Local Govt Ombudsman’s reported concerns about the way some council departments are responding to complaints;
- the 2,500% increase in average call wait times for residents when calling the council for help over the past two years, from 42 seconds to 18 minutes, not accounting for those calls abandoned altogether;
- **that the issue is exacerbated by challenge in recruiting to vacancies, as has been experienced by other council services and employers across all sectors;**
- **that prior to covid, service levels and performance were good within the current level of resources;**
- **that recruitment has been ongoing since summer 2021 and there are still 6 vacancies with 2.5 vacancies recruited to but not yet occupied;**
- **that the service has an improving recruitment position and hence improving performance, with average wait times going from 5.5 mins in October to 3.3 mins in November;**
- the value and importance of calling residents back if their calls are not answered;
- that the complexity and sometimes difficult experience of customer calls, as well as **increased workload since the pandemic**, are exacerbating the problem of poor staff retention;
- **that a policy is in place for staff dealing with abusive customers / distressing conversations and weekly training and support sessions have been implemented to further support staff and staff were also paid a retention payment for the April to September period this year.**

Council believes quality of customer service reflects the importance the council attaches to residents' issues, whether online, over the phone or in person.

It further believes:

- **that service levels would not have been affected to the extent they are, if the service had been able to fill vacancies and had the level of additional workload not increased through administration of additional support schemes;**
- **that data is available on total number of calls answered, how many are answered within 20 seconds and the number of abandoned calls. Abandoned calls do not mean the customer did not get their query resolved;**
- that helping residents in the right way at the first opportunity saves time and money for the council;
- **that whilst the call-back service was suspended following the increase in workload in September 2021, it will, as planned, be reimplemented when current vacancies are filled and new staff have been trained. This is not an issue of extra funding, as vacancies are still present due to market competitiveness;**
- new approaches must be considered to operating the council's customer services number to **improve** responsiveness to residents;
- **that had the service been able to fully resource its vacancies then normal service level would have been delivered;**
- current and former call-centre staff have been avoidably exposed to increased abuse and a deterioration in their working conditions due to poor political decision making both in policy and budgetary (staff) cutbacks.

Council resolves to request that the Executive, including as part of its current budget preparations:

- publicly acknowledges the hard work of customer services staff and the impact of **increased workloads** on their ability to meet resident expectations, and apologises for the council's ongoing inability to effectively respond to residents' issues in a timely way;
- **commits to reinstate** the customer services call-back service to residents **once current vacant positions are filled and new staff have been trained;**

- commits to reviewing the functioning of the relevant council services as a priority, with a focus to include:
 - staffing and operating hours of the customer call centre;
 - ensuring access to non-digital council services is an easy, straightforward process;
 - categorisation of services on, and user-friendliness of, a council website a significant number of residents struggle to navigate;
 - **a more effective and simpler system for monitoring and recording of abusive calls to staff, including a clear structure for escalation, response and staff well-being support.**

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED and it was

Resolved: That the above motion, as amended, be approved.¹

(ii) York Opposes Voter ID Requirements

Cllr Hollyer sought consent to alter his motion to incorporate the amendment submitted by Cllr Kilbane.

Council having granted consent, the altered motion was moved by Cllr Hollyer and seconded by Cllr Kilbane, as follows:

“This Council notes that:

- Voters will be required to show an approved form of photographic identification at polling stations from May next year, under measures in the Government’s Elections Act 2022. The secondary legislation is yet however to be finalised and implemented.
- The total cost of the ID roll-out overall could cost £180m over a decade, according to Government’s figures.
- According to the Electoral Reform Society, the accepted forms of photographic identification would disadvantage younger people.
- In September the Electoral Commission issued a stark warning to the Government over their “fundamental concerns” and “alarm” over these plans – which it said could not “be delivered in a way which is fully secure, accessible and workable” in time for the local elections in May.

- There were only four convictions resulting from the allegations of in-person voter fraud during the 2019 General Election.
- Electoral Commission research has found that about 7.5% of the electorate do not have access to any form of photo ID.
- Over 1,100 people were denied a vote in local government elections during the 2018 and 2019 Voter ID pilots.
- After the May 2018 Voter ID pilots, the Electoral Reform Society concluded that the introduction of Voter ID is ‘a sledge hammer to crack a nut’.
- Insufficient information regarding the introduction of the new voter ID policy has been shared with local councils ahead of the May 2023 election.
- There is expected to be a substantial additional strain on staff and resources preparing for the introduction of these changes. Including the issuing of local electoral identity documents, communication of the new rules and the impact of training, retaining and recruiting election day staff who will have extra responsibilities at polling stations.

This Council believes that:

- The introduction of mandatory Voter ID will undermine the democratic process and create barriers to exercising the right to vote, disproportionately affecting ethnic minority, low income, homeless, LGBT+, elderly, disabled and young people.
- The Government should be trying to increase engagement in democracy, not hinder it. The Government should be urgently acting to increase voter registration and turnout.
- If the Conservative Government is intent on using Voter ID to make voting unnecessarily complex for a demographic known to give it less support, local councils must work to find ways to ensure the democratic right to vote is upheld.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Request the Chief Operating Officer writes to the Cabinet Office to express the Council’s serious concern as to the introduction of mandatory Voter ID in any UK elections.
- Request a report is brought to a public meeting of the council’s Executive outlining:
 - the plans and update on preparations to introduce mandatory voter ID for the May 2023 local election in York;

- the potential cost as well as consideration of any practical issues involved in issuing postal vote application forms to every eligible voter on the Electoral Register in York;
- use the council’s communications function to regularly promote postal voting, and frequently in the months prior to an election.”

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED and it was

Resolved: That the above motion be approved.²

(iii) Introduction of Council Tax Premium for Second Homes

Moved by Cllr Fenton and seconded by Cllr Hook.

“The Council notes:

- The regressive and unfair nature of the Council Tax system.
- Second home ownership in York was estimated at 429 in 2020/21, according to the National Housing Federation, and is recognised to have a negative impact in terms of the supply of homes available to meet local housing need.
- The negative impact of an increase in the number of second homes in terms of the supply of homes available to meet local housing need and residents being priced out of the housing market.
- The average house price in York, which was estimated to be £315,202 in June 2022, according to the Land Registry.
- That in 2018, City of York Council introduced a policy to charge an extra 50% (bringing it to a 100%) in Council tax on long-term empty homes in an effort to bring empty homes into proper use.
- Following the announcement in May of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which is still progressing through Parliament without a confirmed timeframe, Councils will be able to utilise a new discretionary council tax premium of up to 100% on second homes which are not let out or lived in for at least 70 days a year.
- Initial, high level analysis, shows that the application of a 100% premium on second homes in York could generate in excess of £740k in additional Council Tax revenue.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Request officers to bring a paper to a meeting of the Executive outlining the implications and options for implementing a 100% council tax premium of second homes in York, with a view to implementing the policy once national legislation has been granted Royal assent.
- Request the Chief Operating Officer to write to relevant Ministers on behalf of the Council in support of the introduction of the council tax premium for second homes and seek assurance that loopholes that could see second home owners avoid the payment of the premium will be addressed.”

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED and it was

Resolved: That the above motion be approved.³

Action Required

1. To note approval of the motion on Delivering Effective Customer Services to York Residents and take appropriate action. IF
2. To note approval of the motion 'York Opposes Voter ID Requirements' and take appropriate action. IF
3. To note approval of the motion on Introduction of Council Tax Premium for Second Homes and take appropriate action. IF

[The guillotine fell at 10:20 pm]

39. Questions to the Leader or Executive Members (22:20)

No questions were put, as the guillotine had fallen.

40. Report of Executive Member (22:20)

The report was received. No questions were put, as the guillotine had fallen.

41. Scrutiny - Report of the Chair of the Customer & Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee (22:20)

The report was received.

42. Appointments and Changes to Membership (22:20)

Resolved: That the appointments and changes to membership on the list at page 49 of the agenda papers be approved.¹

Action Required

1. Make the agreed change to the membership list JB
on the system.

43. Urgent Business - Members' Allowances (20:53)

Council received a report which sought Council's decision on a potential increase to Members' Allowances, prompted by the National Joint Pay Award negotiated for City of York Council employees under national collective bargaining.

The Lord Mayor had agreed to accept this item as Urgent Business to ensure that the increase, if agreed, could be implemented by the end of the financial year.

The Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer introduced the report, at page 1 of Agenda Supplement 1, and granted a general dispensation for all Members to take part in the debate and vote.

During the debate, a Member indicated they had not taken any increases since 2019.

A vote was then taken on the following options, as set out in paragraph 4 of the report:

- Option 1 - Apply 4.04% to both the basic and special responsibility allowances.
- Option 2 - Apply '52.5% less a third' (in line with the calculation methodology used in the 2019 IRP Report) of £1,925 to the basic allowance (which equates to £673) and 4.04% to the special responsibility allowances.
- Option 3 - No uplift and a freeze on the current basic and special responsibility allowances.

Option 1 received 38 votes and Option 3 received 2 votes. There were no votes in favour of Option 2 and no abstentions. **Option 1** was therefore declared CARRIED, and it was

Resolved: That Option 1, to apply 4.04% to both the basic and special responsibility allowances, be approved.¹

Note: This item was brought forward on the agenda by the Lord Mayor and was therefore dealt with before the guillotine fell.

Action Required

1. Note approval of Option 1 in the report and take appropriate action. BR

Cllr D Carr

LORD MAYOR OF YORK

[The meeting started at 6.30 pm and concluded at 10.20 pm]