
**Corporate Services, Climate Change and
Scrutiny Management Committee****12 May 2025**

Report of the Head of Democratic Governance

**Preparing for proposed changes to long-term sickness and disability
benefits, Task and Finish Group Review****Summary**

1. This report presents the information in relation to a planned Task and Finish Group into the proposed changes to long-term sickness and disability benefits. Members should consider and decide whether or not to endorse the proposal contained at Annex A.

Background

2. In March 2025 the Government set out a range of proposals which could restrict eligibility for, and reduce the value of, a range of long-term sickness and disability benefits. Some proposals are subject to consultation and therefore may change, whilst others are set to be enacted through legislation. Any agreed changes are not due to come into effect before April 2026.
3. At a Full Council meeting on 27 March 2025 a motion was passed which included the following resolution: *“To request the relevant Scrutiny Committee to undertake a review via a Task and Finish Group, when detailed Government proposals on disability and long-term sickness benefits are known in order to identify likely impacts on the demand for support from the council and its local partners.”*
4. Membership of the Task and Finish Group is yet to be determined.

Aim

5. The aim of the review is to make recommendations as to how the council and partners can most effectively allocate resources to support affected / eligible residents.

Objectives

6. It is proposed that the Task & Finish Group seeks to:
 - Acquire a detailed understanding of the scope of the proposed changes and the likely direct and indirect impacts
 - Establish the number of York residents likely to be affected by the changes and in what ways (and including those currently eligible who are not taking up all the benefits they are / will be entitled to) if the changes are implemented as currently proposed
 - Identify what additional financial or other support affected / eligible residents may seek to access from the council and partners
 - Identify how affected / eligible residents can best be supported to access help, such as applying for other benefits for which they may be eligible
 - Establish whether capacity exists to meet a potential increase in demand for services or support.

Consultation and Methods

7. There will need to be some initial desk-based research to ensure that members of the Task & Finish Group are familiar with the details of the Government proposals and the range of financial and other support that is currently available through the council and partners.
8. This will be followed by interviews with officers and external partners to better understand current provision and to get their insights into likely future demand.
9. There will need to be engagement with residents likely to be directly or indirectly affected, and careful thought will need to be given as to how best to go about this.

Timeframe

10. The proposed timescales are as follows:

- The information-gathering phase will aim to be completed by October 2025
- A draft report will aim to be completed by December 2025 and shared for review as appropriate.
- The aim will be for a report to be considered at the meeting of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee in January 2026

Options

11. Members should consider the following options:
 - a. Endorse the draft remit, objectives and timeframe as proposed;
 - b. Amend the draft remit, objectives or timeframe;
 - c. Add further objectives the Committee agrees are relevant.

Analysis

12. There is no analysis at this stage.

Council Plan

13. A review of the planned changes supports the Council's four core commitments and the Health and Wellbeing priority, as set out in the Council's Plan 2023-27 (*One City, for all*).

Implications

14. There are no implications to be addressed at this stage in the process. Any relevant implications will be identified by the Task & Finish Group during their review.

Risk Management

15. Any identified risks associated with the findings from this review will be included in the draft final report arising from this review.

Recommendations

16. The Committee is asked to:

Consider and endorse the proposed remit, objectives, and timeframe for a Task and Finish scrutiny review of into preparing for proposed changes to long-term sickness and disability benefits or suggest appropriate revisions.

Reason: To enable the Task and Finish Group to proceed with work on the agreed review in line with scrutiny procedures.

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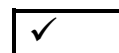
**Report
Approved**



Date 01 May 2025

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A: Task and Finish Group Review into preparing for proposed changes to long-term sickness and disability benefits proposal form.