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## Scrutiny Management Committee

23 October 2006

Report of the 'Guidance For Sustainable Development Scrutiny Sub Committee'

## Guidance For Sustainable Development

### Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Scrutiny Management Committee of the final revisions to the draft report discussed at their July meeting. It incorporates changes to the previous report recommended by Scrutiny Management Committee to assist access to the report and provide further detail of the rationale underpinning recommendations.
2. The main findings arising from the work carried out by the Scrutiny Sub Committee are as follows:
  - The council has a number of obligations as set out in various legislative Acts with international, national and regional guidance. The obligations to promote sustainable building and sustainable planning practices require the local authority in partnership with others to actively promote and adopt measures to reduce harmful emissions, mitigate against and adjust to climate change.
  - Addressing Climate Change is not simply a matter of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from heat and power sources. The recommendations therefore refer to water usage, natural carbon grounding, lifelong building, bio-diversity and waste management.
  - York's development documents are now out of step with Planning Policy statement 22 regarding embedded renewable generation – i.e. domestic scale wind, solar or biomass generation and the report addresses this.
  - York's lack of a strategic approach to trees has left the city performing joint fourth poorest in respect of national urban and rural tree density requirements. This is particularly poor given the role of trees in improving air quality and carbon grounding.
  - York's historic environment should not be an obstacle to increased sustainable build within the city, indeed this environment offers many opportunities.

3. Members are requested to endorse the recommendations and agree that the report be progressed through to the Executive.

## **Background**

4. A draft final report has been previously presented to SMC on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and it was agreed that further work be undertaken to conclude the review. The Committees recommended amendments to the previous report have now been incorporated into the attached report. References to all Annexes in the previous report remain and are also accessible electronically as they have been previously circulated and considered.
5. The final report is structured to provide a view of the key issues around sustainability in planning complimentary to the development of a robust (and Climate Change aware) Local Development Framework. As such, it details research and findings within the following headings:
  - Climate Change and Sustainable Planning and Development
  - Recognising Environmental Whole Life Costs and the Eco-Footprint
  - Addressing Climate Change, Insecurity of Fuel Supply and Fuel Poverty
  - Solar Gain
  - Community Light
  - Extreme Water Scenarios
  - Air Quality, Carbon Grounding, and Trees
  - Future Proofing the Past
  - Future Proofing the Future: Life Long Building
  - Supporting Understanding and Application of Sustainable Development

## **Main Changes**

6. The main changes to the earlier draft report are as follows:
  - A chairs forward which also provides a summary of main findings and recommendations has been provided at the front to of the report.
  - Summary outlines explicitly providing a brief over-view of the rationale for the recommendations.
  - All the recommendations have been subject to further detailed consultation with officers in City Strategy (Planning, Sustainability, Arboricultural, Conservation Architects) to ensure;
    - a. Phrasing did not conflict with the ongoing consultation process for the LDF.

- b. Responsibility for the development of strategies and plans was within the most appropriate officer portfolios.

## **Consultation**

7. During the detailed work undertaken by the former Planning and Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee / Guidance for Sustainable Development Scrutiny Sub Committee full consultation has been carried out and recognition of those consulted has been included and at the end of the report. As indicated above, further officer consultation has been undertaken on the report and recommendations since the last meeting and comments have been addressed as part of the revisions made to the report.

## **Options**

8. During the course of review the Sub Committee have taken views on information provided as best practice and much of this is evidenced through the Annexes to the report. The recommendations reflect those considerations and alternative options are not therefore presented.

## **Analysis**

9. All analysis is presented in the body of the report.

## **Corporate Priorities**

10. The wider topic of sustainability has been a Council Corporate Aim for many years. The recently approved Corporate Priorities now incorporates stronger priorities in respect of sustainability. A detailed breakdown of how recommendations fit with achieving corporate priorities is given below and within the report.

### **IMPROVING QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY**

#### **Decrease the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill;**

- Recommendation 1: In implying greater consideration for the re-use of materials and the use of materials with longevity exceeding the whole-life, including environmental, costs of sourcing.
- Recommendation 16: In ensuring developers build in appropriate storage facilitating waste separation and recycling

#### **Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport;**

Recommendation 17: in ensuring planning proposals consider the local services, especially health, available to people within walking or easy public transportation distance.

**Improve the actual and perceived condition and appearance of city's streets, housing estates and publicly accessible spaces;**

Recommendations 8,9,10 11 and 15: In promoting greener spaces large and small and the inclusion of trees and other natural softening features throughout the built environment.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION, SKILLS AND LEARNING**

**Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects;**

Recommendations 18,19,20,21 and 22: In supporting people to understand and access the skills, education, techniques and expertise required to conduct effective business in an economic environment increasingly driven by sustainability as a material consideration.

**STRENGTHENING AND DIVERSIFYING YORK'S ECONOMY**

**Improve contribution that Science City York makes economic prosperity**

See above

**IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

**Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest**

Recommendations 8,9,10 11 and 15: In promoting greener spaces large and small and the inclusion of trees and other natural softening features throughout the built environment. This will improve air quality for all and encourage greater use of open amenity space and walking

**Improve the quality and availability of decent affordable homes in the city**

Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 16: in supporting the development of homes which cost least in terms of energy and water consumption throughout their life and which are readily adaptable to peoples changing life circumstances.

**ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**Improve our focus on the needs of customers and residents in designing and providing services.**

All recommendations in supporting the authority its partners and citizens to adapt to and mitigate against climate change.

**Improve leadership at all levels to provide clear, consistent direction to the organisation**

Recommendations 18,19,20,21 and 22: In supporting people to understand and access the skills, education, techniques and expertise required to conduct effective business in an economic environment increasingly driven by sustainability as a material consideration. Recommendations 23,24 and 25 supporting the authority to act as an exemplar of best practice both internally and in its relationship with partners both locally, nationally and region wide.

**Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York**

Recommendations 1, 18,19,20,21, 22, 23, 24 and 25: In supporting achievement through partnership to address climate change

**Improve efficiency and reduce waste to free-up more resources**

Recommendation 24: In mitigating against rising costs from unsustainable practice.

## **Implications**

11. The implications arising from each of the recommendations have been addressed as part of the further officer consultation previously referred to and every effort has been made to take account of those comments in the revised recommendations and report. Detailed comments from the Head of Financial Services are, additionally, included in the summary of implications grid included in the final report.

## **Risk Management**

12. The report highlights the issues and implications for York of a number of national and regional guidance. The risks to the Council are that its responsibilities to promote an understanding of Climate change, energy efficiency, good water management and better holistic sustainable practice in planning and building might not be strategically and uniformly addressed.

## **Recommendations**

13. The Scrutiny Management Committee are asked to :
  - Note the changes to the report.
  - endorse the recommendations and final draft report of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee;
  - Agree for the report to be considered by the Executive as soon as possible.

## Contact Details

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**Report Approved**  **Date** 16.10.06

Chief Officer's name  
Title

**Report Approved**  **Date** 16.10.06

## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Tom Wilkinson, Financial Services

**Wards Affected:** List wards or tick box to indicate all

**All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers: See Annex A**

## Annexes

**Annex A: Final Report Guidance on Sustainable Development  
Sub-Annexes**

**Aa. Scrutiny Topic Registration Form**

**Ab. Sustainable Developer Guidance Energy Chapter Draft**

**Ac. Sustainable Developer Guidance Water Chapter Draft**

**Ad. Sustainable Developer Guidance Buildings Chapter Draft**

**Ae. Sustainable Developer Guidance Renewable Energy Chapter  
Draft**

**Af. Sustainable Developer Guidance Land Use Chapter Draft**

**Ag. Sustainable Developer Guidance Waste Chapter Draft**

**Ah. Promotion of Sustainable Construction Methods and the  
Implications for Building Control Staffing levels.**