

Annex B

THE YORK
FAIRNESS
COMMISSION

A Fairer York, a Better York:

**An Independent Report by the York Fairness
Commission to the City of York Council**

Interim Report

28 November 2011

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FOREWORD

Following the local elections in May this year, City of York Council made a decision to establish an independent non-political advisory body which would examine matters of social justice in York. This was the birth of the Fairness Commission.

In a difficult economic climate with cuts to local budgets an inevitable reality due to constraints being passed down from central Government, our challenge was to prepare a report which would help inform the City of York Council about local priorities and needs, ahead of the Council's Budget setting process for the 2012-2014 period.

We launched the Fairness Commission in July, with the wide-reaching aim of tackling poverty and injustice in all their forms. The Commissioners were put in place as experts in the field of social justice and fairness issues, with a good working knowledge of our great city. We are indebted to them for their contribution and for devoting their time on a voluntary basis.

We came to the Fairness Commission with open minds, looking forward to listening not only to our expert Commissioners, but also to hearing the views of the people of York.

What a discussion we have had: passionate, eloquent and creative with so many different voices joining in along the way. We would like to thank each and every one of the people who have contributed to this report; those who spoke at the public meetings, those who wrote to us or emailed, and those who gave us a call. The insight you have given has been invaluable.

Our three pronged vision is to ensure the well-being of each person in the community; to provide access to services and support; and to make the provision of work a priority.

As our country goes through tough economic times we need to remember that not all in our society are greatly privileged. This is a once in a generation opportunity to tackle some of the social evils that devastate and debilitate our communities.

We do not pretend to be politicians. We are simply interested and concerned individuals offering our advice to those who are elected to take

decisions for the community in the interests of the common good. It is for the people of York, and their representatives, to take the final decision on how the findings of the Fairness Commission are implemented – or indeed if they are to be implemented at all.

We hope that this interim report provides some insight for City of York Council as they struggle with the impossible task of reducing their budgets and yet maintaining excellent services for the people of York.

This report makes 30 recommendations on how fairness can be improved – some are specific actions and others are broader policy themes. We have also outlined where we believe savings could be made to enable the investment that needs to be made in certain key policy areas. Unenviable choices need to be made and we do not claim to have all the answers. However, we hope that the 10 Fairness Principles we have set out will help inform this difficult process.

You can judge how healthy a society is by how it treats the most vulnerable people. For the Commission ‘fairness’ is about increasing equality of opportunity and income and making sure that available resources are focussed on reducing inequality.

York, in all its beauty and strength, should reflect the very best standard of fairness. We hope that this report will be a significant step on the road to a fairer, more equal, city.

+Sentamu Ebor



The Archbishop of York
Dr John Sentamu
Sponsor of the York Fairness Commission

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Redfern'.



Ruth Redfern
Chair
York Fairness Commission

The York Fairness Commission is a non-political, completely independent and entirely voluntary advisory body. The members of the Commission were appointed based on their areas of professional expertise; personal commitment to equalities, fairness and social justice; and knowledge of and/or stake in the York community.

The Commission comprises:

- Sponsor: The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu
- Chair: Ruth Redfern, Assistant Chief Executive of Yorkshire Forward
- Vice chair: John Lister, Finance Director, Aviva Life UK
- Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (both University of York based specialists in epidemiology, co-authors of *The Spirit Level* and co-founders of the Equality Trust)
- John Kennedy: Director of Care Services, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Acknowledgements

The Commission would like to thank:

- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation for supporting the assembly of the research evidence
- Professor Roy Sainsbury and Dr Jacqueline Davidson, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York
- Dr Anna Barford and Emily Alexander, The Equality Trust
- City of York Council staff for supplying information and supporting the work of the Commission

Contents

Foreword

Executive Summary

1. Introduction
2. York in Context
3. Fairness Principles
4. Budget Guidance
5. Consultation: results and recommendations
6. Next Steps

Annexes

- a) Consultation results
- b) Main data sources
- c) Additional information on York's policy context
- d) York Fairness Commission budget
- e) York Fairness Commission methodology

Executive Summary

The York Fairness Commission has been established to promote and advise on the achievement of greater fairness and equality in York.

There is a compelling case for why reduced inequalities and stronger societies go hand in hand and why greater equality benefits everyone. York is, for many, a great city to live in, and one which suffers less deprivation than many others. However concentrations of hardship and inequality exist, and tackling these ills can make York a fairer, better city for all residents. These inequalities are being compounded by the current economic climate and financial challenges we face. We can do one of two things. We can let events take their course, budget cuts will happen anyway, in the full knowledge that the people paying the highest price will be those who can least afford it. Or we can work to ensure that the burden is fair for the benefit of us all.

The focus of this interim report is to advise the City of York Council on the difficult decisions it faces in setting its budget for 2012/13 and 2013/14 in the face of very sizeable funding cuts. Conclusions are based on an examination of life in York, the policy context that applies, and wide consultation with individuals and groups. Our core approach is to identify a set of principles which can inform, steer and ‘fairness proof’ decision making. In summary, **these ten Fairness Principles are to:**

- i. **Make reducing inequalities a prime focus in policy and decision making.**
- ii. **Support and empower the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.**
- iii. **Adopt a long term view** that considers the long term impacts of choices as well as short term savings and recognises that prevention is better than cure.
- iv. **Listen and Engage** so as to make budget decisions in a way that is open, transparent and informed by York’s people.

- v. **Generate new income** to reduce the scale and depth of the cuts needed to balance the budget.
- vi. **Make budget decisions based on evidence, values and needs**, not by applying flat rate percentage cuts or favouring services that have always been provided.
- vii. **Take into account wider factors that affect inequalities in York.**
- viii. **Target investments and services geographically** where necessary to reduce inequalities and improve life chances in the most disadvantaged areas.
- ix. **Promote and prioritise economic growth that maximises benefits to people.**
- x. **Ensure a ‘best in class’ Council** that delivers services efficiently and effectively and acts as an influential role model in tackling inequalities.

The Commission offers budget guidance based on these principles, including a targeted approach to directorate savings and services, exploring income earning opportunities, and becoming a best in class employer, procurer and service provider. We make 30 detailed recommendations that have stemmed from and span analysis of the budget and consultation input. These are grouped under relevant headings below and detailed further in the main body of the report.

The Commission’s recommendations to the City of York Council are to:

On Potential for Savings and Protection of Essential Services

1. Explore elements of Highways spend as a potential area for major savings.
2. Remove budget allocations to Ward Committees.
3. Protect named services (principally Children’s Social Care and Adult Provision).

On Generating New and Additional Income to Help Protect Services

4. Raise Council Tax by 3.5 - 6% to protect services and avert steeper rises in the future.
5. Facilitate sustainable economic growth to boost long term income.
6. Explore options for introducing a York Visitor Heritage Contribution (a 'tourist tax').
7. Explore and adopt creative approaches to income generation.

On the Council as an Efficient, Effective and Equitable Role Model

8. Act as a role model for best practice procurement processes.
9. Collaborate more and better across sectors to deliver better and get more from the available resource.
10. Work towards more even distribution of pay, and fairness in terms and conditions.
11. Continue to explore the implications of paying a Living Wage within the Council and set a realistic time frame for its introduction.
12. Ensure the Council is best in class for efficient delivery systems, co-ordination across services, and a culture where staff are engaged, valued and respected.

On Incomes, Employment and the Economy

13. Put benefit advisors where they are most easily accessible to users.
14. Continue and expand work to reduce the living costs/bills of those in greatest need (e.g. through energy efficiency measures and tackling fuel poverty).
15. Ensure economic development strategy and activity focuses on the quality and accessibility as well as the quantity of jobs, and on inclusion as well as growth.
16. Deliver a programme of action that tackles barriers to work (e.g. child care).

17. Encourage the creation of 'green jobs' in sustainable industries.

18. Make training and employment opportunities for young people a priority and radically expand the number of apprenticeships on offer.

On Transport

19. Extend the 'YoZone' card for discounted bus fares up to the age of 18 and explore other ways to reduce transport costs for young people.

20. Make public transport concessionary fares for disabled people apply all day.

On Specific Groups: Young People, Older People and Disabled People

21. Introduce a new 'York Youth Card' that encourages and enables retailers, leisure providers and others to offer discounts to young people (age 16-21).

22. Puts in place mechanisms to enable children and young people from low income backgrounds to participate in enriching school based activities (e.g. music, sport, drama, trips) that they otherwise may not be able to afford.

23. Explore the reasons behind and take action to combat the gap in educational attainment between pupils from lower income households and others.

24. Collaborate with the voluntary sector to make the best possible use of the skills of older people and young people as volunteers.

25. Routinely involve disabled people in the design of services and facilities.

26. Recognise and support the valuable role played by carers.

27. Ensure information gets to those who need it and is easy to understand (e.g. in plain English and in forms accessible to people who have difficulty reading).

28. Efficiently manage facilities installed into homes to assist disabled people.

On Health and the Voluntary Sector

29. Act upon research into the reasons for health inequalities in York.

30. Work together with and support the voluntary sector more closely and extensively.

The Fairness Commission will continue to meet after this report has been considered and consult further to inform a final report in spring 2012. This will explore and recommend how the city as a whole – not just the Council – can contribute to making York a fairer place and a better one for all of its citizens.

1. Introduction

A Fairer York, a Better York

York is a wonderful city, and for most of us, a great place to live. Visitor perceptions revolve around York's rich heritage, beguiling shops and streets and its cosmopolitan cultural offer. Most people's impressions are of an attractive and prosperous city.

As residents we know there is much more to York than the postcard images. Much of the 'real York' we experience every day is good too. For most people, levels of health, education and income are better than average, crime is low, and there are opportunities to access and enjoy York's attractive cityscape and its green spaces. The city's economy is growing, buoyed by assets such as our leading edge universities and strengths in science, technology and innovation.

But this is not everybody's experience of living in York. Whilst two fifths of the population live in areas that are in the best of 20% in England, eight areas of the city are in the most deprived 20%. They are home to around 13,000 people, just under 7%, of York's population. In these areas, and for those with low incomes but living in other parts of the city, there are the tell-tale signs of deprivation: shorter life expectancy, higher crime, less material wealth and often a poverty of opportunity and aspiration.

What is striking about York is not so much the scale of deprivation, but the gap between 'affluent York' and 'excluded York'. Perhaps the greatest challenge – and opportunity – facing the city is to tackle these inequalities, and to do so in ways that take people out of deprivation and maintain the well-being that others already enjoy.

Reduced inequalities go hand in hand with stronger societies. A number of sources, including the Marmot Review¹, the book 'The Spirit Level'² and independent review of it by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation³, make a compelling case for why greater equality is better for everyone. In

¹ The Marmot Review: Fair Society, Healthy Lives, the Marmot Review Team, 2010

² The Spirit Level, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, Penguin Books, 2009

³ Does Income Inequality Cause Health and Social Problems?, Karen Rowlington, JRF, 2011

developed countries such as the UK, greater levels of inequality correspond to reduced well-being on a whole spectrum of indicators including physical and mental health, crime, child well-being and drug abuse.

Bigger income differences create bigger social distances, increasing the sense of superiority at the top and inferiority at the bottom. That diminishes social cohesion and damages the social fabric. Whilst the benefits of greater equality are most sharply felt by those at the 'lower end' on any given indicator, they extend across whole societies. Working towards greater equality should no longer be framed in terms of charity and sacrifice; it is also about enlightened self-interest.

York, like most cities, finds itself at a point where factors outside its control mean that hardship and inequalities are likely to grow. Employment is down in the wake of the 2008/09 recession and a national economy that has now been stagnant for a year. With living costs rising faster than incomes and public sector spending cuts biting hard, there are challenging times ahead. Making the most of all York's assets – including those people who are underprivileged and whose abilities are often untapped – will be key to overcoming the challenges ahead.

Clearly many factors that affect York and the life of its citizens are driven by global trends and national policies. That includes the macroeconomic context and the patterns of increasing inequalities witnessed in different degrees over decades. The budget savings and cuts the Council will have to make have in effect been forced onto it by central government as part of its deficit reduction strategy. Nevertheless the decisions York takes now and the ways it responds to the pressures it faces will play a crucial role in shaping its future. The opportunity remains to create a more equal, a fairer and a better city; one where the perception of quality of life is more than matched by reality across the whole city.

The York Fairness Commission

As part of its local election manifesto, the Labour Party in York pledged to create a Fairness Commission for the city. After success in the May local elections and winning leadership of the Council, that commitment has

been followed through. Under the patronage of the Archbishop of York, an independent York Fairness Commission has been established. The Commission is one of the first such bodies in the UK, and it puts York in the vanguard of a movement that is growing in influence and momentum.

The Commission's overall purpose is to promote and advise on the achievement of greater fairness and equality in York. As emerged in the consultation, we know fairness can mean different things to different people. Rather than conduct an extensive debate about definitions here, our take is simple – that increasing equality, particularly of incomes, and standing up for and empowering those who are most vulnerable in society will increase fairness too.

Our work involves a two stage process.

The first of those stages, and the focus of this report, is to advise the City of York Council on the difficult decisions it faces in setting its budget for 2012/13 and 2013/14 in the face of very sizeable funding cuts. Our advice on service provision and priorities is intended to square commitment to equity and social justice with the challenging fiscal and policy framework local government faces.

Different ways of making the budget balance – be they to do with cuts, generating income or doing things differently – will have different impacts on people across the city and on fairness. In making recommendations about how to do so in the fairest way possible, we have first sought to listen to the views and ideas of local people. A wide and open consultation process included meetings open to groups and individuals, as well as the chance to take part through emails, a web site or sending in a short questionnaire postcard. The exercise has been of great value and its findings are summarised in section 6 of this report.

The second stage of our work will be to complete a wider ranging report over a longer time frame looking more fully at options, ideas and practical steps that can be taken to make York a fairer place – including but going beyond the role and priorities of the City Council. We expect to complete this work in spring 2012.

This Interim Report

This interim report is timed so as to be able to influence the Council's budget setting process. It begins by putting the work of the Commission in the context of York. We look at how the city and its people fare on a range of social and economic indicators, at the policies in place in the city and what all of this means in terms of equalities.

The report covers wide ranging themes including **work, access and wellbeing**. Section 2 sets out York's context in terms of statistics and indicators under each of these three headings. The Commission's recommendations are presented across two sections (section 4 on Budget Guidance and section 5 on Consultation). They include clear pointers on budget priorities and practical proposals to make a difference, and are informed by (although not directly structured around) these three themes. A set of high level 'Fairness Principles' is also presented (in section 3) to guide decision making in achieving fairer outcomes.

We hope this report assists the City of York Council in making difficult budgetary and policy choices. We thank the countless groups and individuals who have invested their time and energy in contributing to the process, especially through the consultation. And above all, we hope this report marks the start of a journey towards a better, brighter, fairer future for York and all of its citizens and communities.

2. York in Context

Evidence and the challenges for fairness

Evidence points to some clear fairness challenges for York and the Council. These need to be addressed if the city is to become a more equal place, where great gaps no longer exist between those who do and do not enjoy a good quality of life and access to opportunity. Key issues include:

- Addressing **multiple challenges in the city's eight deprived wards** for example around long term unemployment, low skills and health inequalities.
- Reducing **child poverty**, noting trends in increases in workless households with children and take up of free school meals, in turn linked to lower attainment and school attendance and long term impacts on life chances.
- Providing for the **increase in adult social care** brought about by the city's ageing population.
- Tackling **housing affordability**.

2.1 The current position in York: what does the data say?

York is a city which, on the face of it, is thriving. Its economy is strong and mixed; its population is well educated, relatively affluent and healthy; and it takes full advantage of its rich built and natural environment. In fact, 40% of people live in the best 20% of lower super output areas (LSOA)⁴ in the Country.

⁴ Super Output Areas (SOAs) are geographically designed areas used for the collection and publication of small area statistics. Lower Layer Super Output Areas are even smaller catchments. They average 1,500 residents. Use of these output areas allows statistical data to be collected in a way that gives an improved basis for comparison and monitoring of policy across the country over time because the units are more similar in size of population than, for example, electoral wards. There are 118 LSOAs in York.

On closer inspection however we can see that high averages mask some significant issues that question how fair and equal the city is. Some of these issues spread across the city such as rapid population growth, a changing age and diversity profile and house prices that are high compared to average incomes and unaffordable for many. Others are concentrated in very specific areas, to such a degree that the city is home to eight LSOAs (from a total 118 LSOAs in York) in the 20% most deprived nationally and one in the 10% most deprived. This represents just under 7% of the city's population, roughly 13,000 people. That said, not all people experiencing economic and social inequality live in the deprived parts of the city. There are poor people living in more affluent areas, and in these instances the gaps are perhaps more starkly apparent. It is important that these people are not overlooked in the design of interventions to tackle disadvantage because they do not live in a known deprived area. This mixed picture of strong performance on the one hand and poor on the other – and the gaps that it creates between people - presents significant 'fairness' challenges to the Council in its policy and budgetary decisions.

Evidence here is presented under the three themes of work, well-being and access. Details of the main sources used in compiling this evidence base are included in Annex B.

Demographics

Between 2000 and 2010 the population of York grew by 13% to 202,400 persons, double the national rate of increase. The latest population projections suggest that there will be a 30% increase by 2031, bringing the number of residents to 249,000. The UK's trend for an ageing population is mirrored here; although large population increases amongst young adults are also being observed. York's minority ethnic population also appears to be growing rapidly. Whilst the proportion of the non-white British population varies across wards, 2008 data shows that the biggest populations are in Heslington (bearing in mind the large overseas student population in this area), Fishergate and Guildhall. The lowest non-white British population is in Acomb.

The economy and working in York

York's economy is in a strong position. It has had success in diversifying away from its industrial past towards an economy increasingly based on knowledge, services and higher value added businesses. The city makes a vital contribution to the economic performance of both the Leeds and the York and North Yorkshire City Regions and is nationally competitive in particular science and research and development fields.

Despite the recession and a number of high profile business restructures and closures leaving large numbers of people unemployed, the city has more people in employment (71.7%) when compared to regional (68.4%) and national (70.4%) rates. York has less unemployment too at 2.6% below the regional and 1.6% below the national averages. It also has a lower percentage of its working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) – 2.5% compared to 4.4% regionally and 3.7% nationally.

The city is renowned for good levels of skills and qualifications, with York ranked 5th in a table of 64 UK cities for high level qualifications. The figure for York is 39.9% of the working age population with NVQ level 4 or above, against a UK average of 29.9%.

Whilst this is positive news, when we look across a range of indicators we can see that these figures are disproportionately made up of specific groups and in specific places, demonstrating negative impacts on fairness and equality in the city.

- The number of those claiming out of work benefits in York at 10,270 (7.4%) is lower than that for the region (13%) and nationally (12.3%). However **some areas of the city have higher numbers of claimants**, which include Westfield (16%), Guildhall (14%), Heworth (12%) and Clifton (11%). It is in these areas that employment deprivation and involuntary exclusion from the labour market (IMD 2010) is concentrated; and where the impact of the economic downturn since June 2009 has had the most negative impact. Westfield has seen a particularly high rise, doubling from June 2008 to January 2010. This is shown on the graph below, where the vertical axis shows actual

numbers of people claiming. These five wards make up 52% of the long term unemployment across York.

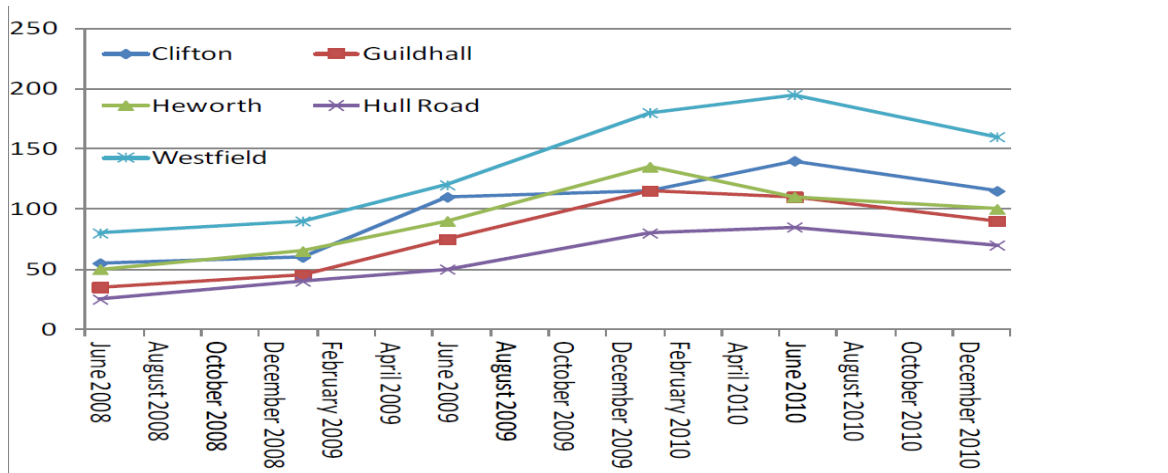


Figure 1: Mid to Long Term Job Seekers Allowance claimants (>6 months) in the five most deprived wards in York

- Some groups have been impacted more than others. **Female claimants** in York is for example at the highest level for 13 years. **Young people** too have been hard hit, particularly those that live in the city's most deprived wards as shown below.

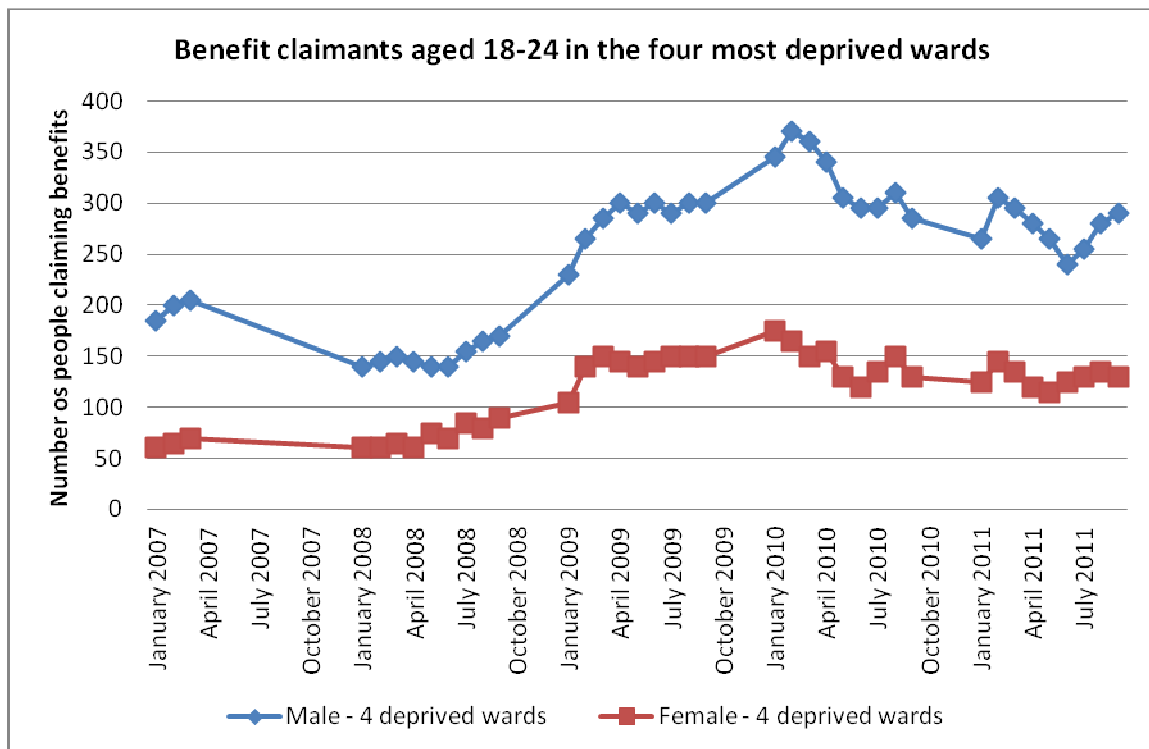


Figure 2: Male and female benefit claimants aged 18-24 in York's four most deprived wards, 2007-2011

- The number of ***workless households in York is increasing*** and stood at 12,000 in 2009 (17.3% of households compared to 15% in 2008).
- The number of ***workless households with children has increased*** by 50% from 2,000 in 2008 to 3,000 in 2009. As of 2010/11, this accounted for 10% of all households with children, compared to 6.8% in 2008.
- The ***average wage is improving but is still lower*** than the Great Britain average and the gap is widening. IMD 2010 places areas within Hull Road and Clifton wards as the lowest ranking locally for income deprivation. For Hull Road this means it is also in the lowest 10% nationally.
- Large ***differences in skills levels*** exist by areas with nine areas of York ranked within the poorest 10% in the Country for education, skills and training deprivation (IMD 2010). These areas are within Acomb, Clifton (x2), Heworth, Hull Road and Westfield (x4) wards.

Well-being and quality of life in York

It is fair to say that York residents generally experience better health and well-being across a range of indicators than is typical of England as a whole. However, in keeping with the trend that we have seen in relation to the economy, the averages are again masking deeper rooted issues largely confined – although not exclusively, as discussed earlier - to specific groups and/or locations.

York ranks 244 out of 354 local authorities across England on the 2010 IMD (where 1 is most deprived). This is an improvement from 219 in 2004 and 242 in 2007. It equates to 6.6% of the city's population living in deprivation compared to an England average of 19.9%. This improvement is encouraging, however, the city still has eight areas in the poorest 20% in England, and one (Kingsway West) in the 10% most deprived areas nationally. The high general levels of well-being and

quality of life enjoyed by the majority of York residents are not being experienced by people in these areas. In particular we see:

- Where **life expectancy** in York for both men and women is higher than the national average, at 79.6 years for men (England: 78.3) and 83.2 years for women (England: 82.3); it is 9.9 years lower for men and 3.6 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of York than in the least deprived areas.
- **Health deprivation** scores on IMD 2010 show the lowest five ranked areas to be within Guildhall, Micklegate and Westfield (x3), with one area within Westfield ward placed in the 10% lowest ranking nationally.
- The overall percentage of people in York with **limiting long-term illness** at 16.6% (30,064) is lower than regionally (19.5%) and nationally (17.9%), with four wards having between 19% and 20%, including Huntington and New Earswick, Westfield, Fulford, and Guildhall.
- **Disability Living Allowance Claimants** has risen by 24% between 2002 and 2010 which is above the regional rate (23%) albeit less than the national rate (31%). More encouragingly though, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance Claimants have decreased by 31% over the same period.
- Although **child poverty** in York has decreased and is below the regional and national average, it is still above the target levels set in the Child Poverty Act. There are 4,450 children living in poverty in the city and the 10 lowest ranking areas of deprivation locally account for 32% of those children. There are five wards where it is above the regional and national average. These include Clifton, Hull Road, Westfield, Guildhall, and Heworth; with some hotspots where the figure is more than double the ward average. These five wards account for nearly 60% of all child poverty in York.

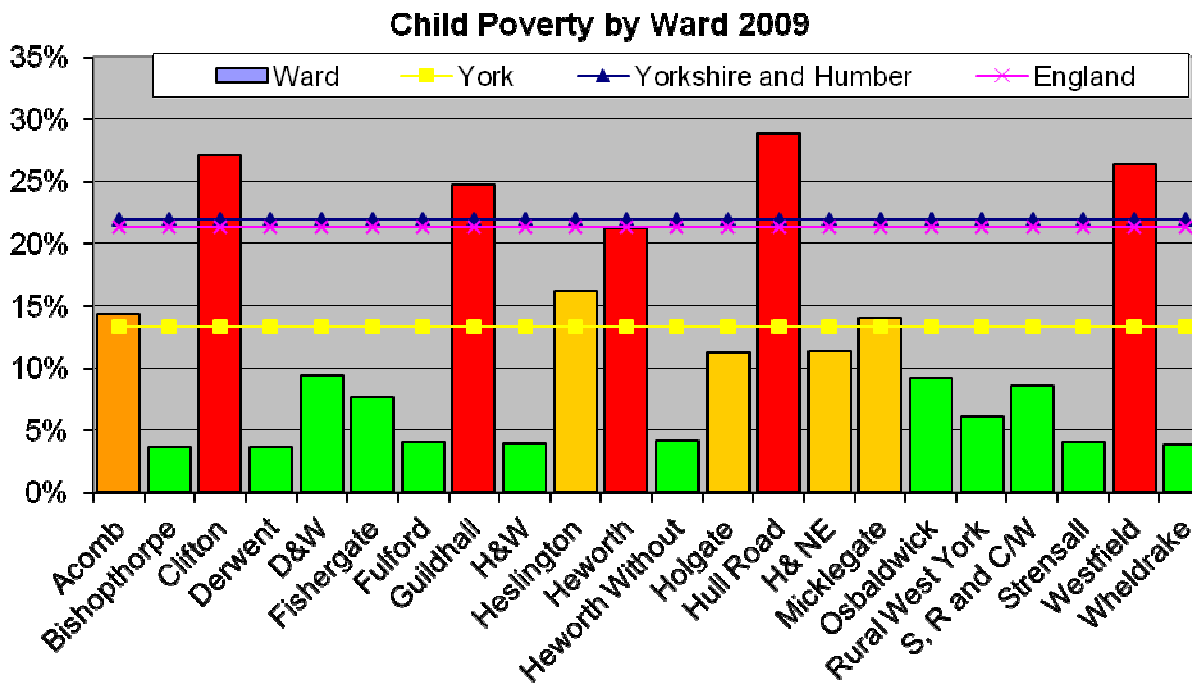


Figure 3: Child poverty by ward 2009

There has been an increase of 15% in children who are eligible for **free school meals** from 1,984 children in 2007/08 to 2,294 children in 2010/11. Those areas with higher numbers of eligible children include Clifton, Hull Road and Westfield wards, with one in five children eligible. Alongside this, although there has been an improvement, the attainment gap between children in York who do and do not receive **free school meals** or who live in deprived areas is still significant as shown in the Figure 4. Evidence is clear that educational achievement is crucial in determining an individual's life prospects. Attaining qualifications reduces a child's long term likelihood of being unemployed or earning a poor wage. It is key to a good start in life and a route out of intergenerational cycles of disadvantage and inequality.

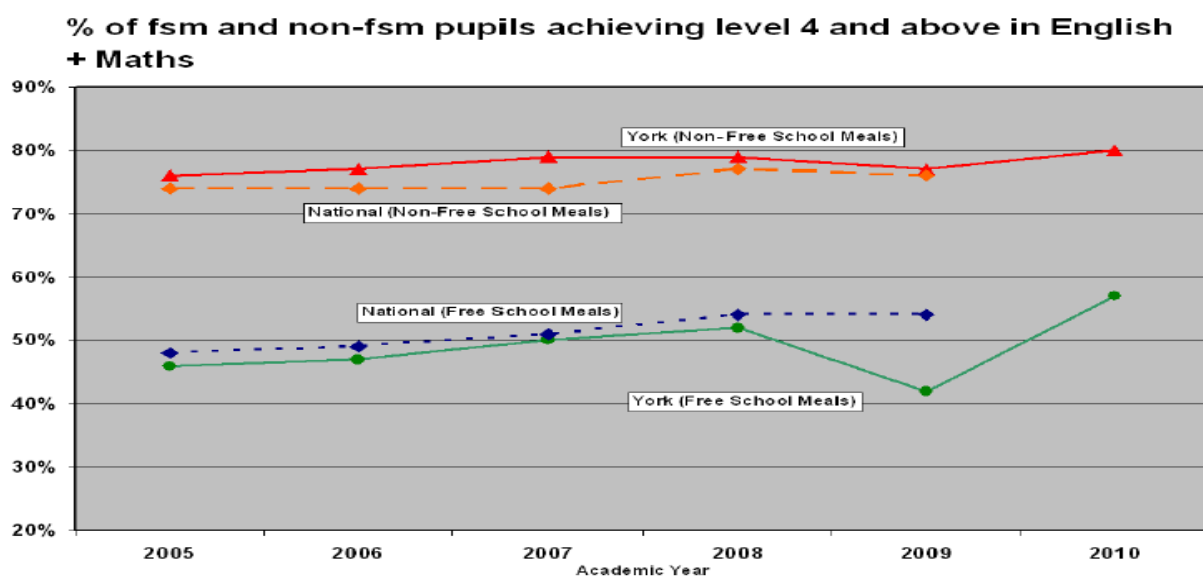


Figure 4: Attainment differences in English and Maths between those eligible with Free School Meals and those without, 2005-2010

- York has experienced excellent reductions in the number of **NEETs** (young people not in education, employment or training). However, 32% of NEETs in York are young disabled people, compared to 22% nationally; and currently disabled young people or those with learning difficulties in York are twice as likely to be NEET. In particular, this affects young people in the Westfield, Clifton, Hull Road, Heworth and Holgate wards.
- **Teenage pregnancies**, although holding at a fairly stable level, are concentrated in Westfield, Hull Road, Heworth and Clifton wards.
- The number of **Adult Social Services** customers (community, residential and care home) has increased by 11% since 2007/08 demonstrating the city's ageing profile. More people are living independently now, however, in terms of **vulnerable older people**, 3.7% of York's population are classed as "elderly people reliant on state support". 39% of this group live in Heworth, Huntington and Westfield.
- The latest available data from 2008 suggests that **fuel poverty** affects 15.1% of households in the city (12,680 households) compared to 18.2% in the region and 15.6% nationally and is concentrated in Acomb, Westfield, Fishergate and Guidhall. High increases in energy bills over recent years are likely to have increased that figure.

- Three areas within Fishergate, Holgate and Micklegate wards are ranked within the lowest 10% of the Country for **living environment deprivation** (IMD 2010), which takes into account the individual's immediate surroundings in and outside the home. Those areas ranked as the six lowest locally for the **rate of recorded crime** are also within the lowest 10% nationally. These areas are within Guildhall (x2), Heworth, Holgate, Hull Road and Westfield wards.

Access in York

In the current economic and fiscal environment, local authorities across England are finding meeting affordable housing targets challenging. York is no exception. The very nature of the city presents a number of physical constraints that exacerbate the situation. As a result, whilst there has been an improvement, just 8% of actual 'local housing need' is being met. In fact the total number of new homes built in York is currently less per annum than the number of affordable homes needed.

There is intense competition for housing in York. House prices are high and often well beyond the reach of households on average incomes, whilst private sector rents are amongst the highest in the North of England. Current market conditions suggest new housing supply is likely to remain constrained. In this context those households less able to compete are more likely to live in inappropriate and overcrowded housing that can have a detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing.

In addition:

- Most homes in York are in good condition across the private and the social rented sectors. Where **non-decent homes** exist, they are concentrated in the Guildhall, Micklegate and Hull Road wards
- **Elderly households** comprise 33% of all households living in non decent housing; and **economically vulnerable households** represent 26%, signalling ongoing linkages between vulnerable households and non-decent homes

- York's **ageing population** has significant implications for housing provision in the city and the way in which people are supported to live independently for as long as possible, with important knock-on savings made in terms of residential care costs
- Over 650 households were prevented from being homeless during 2010/11 through a focus on homelessness prevention. Recently however, there has been a reversal in this sustained downward trend with the number of **households placed in temporary accommodation** rising from 79 in 2009/10 to 94 in 2010/11 as shown in figure 5 below.
- The needs of those who live on **Gypsy and Traveller sites** must be considered, where there is also a shortfall in supply that can compound other disadvantages such as access to healthcare, education and employment.

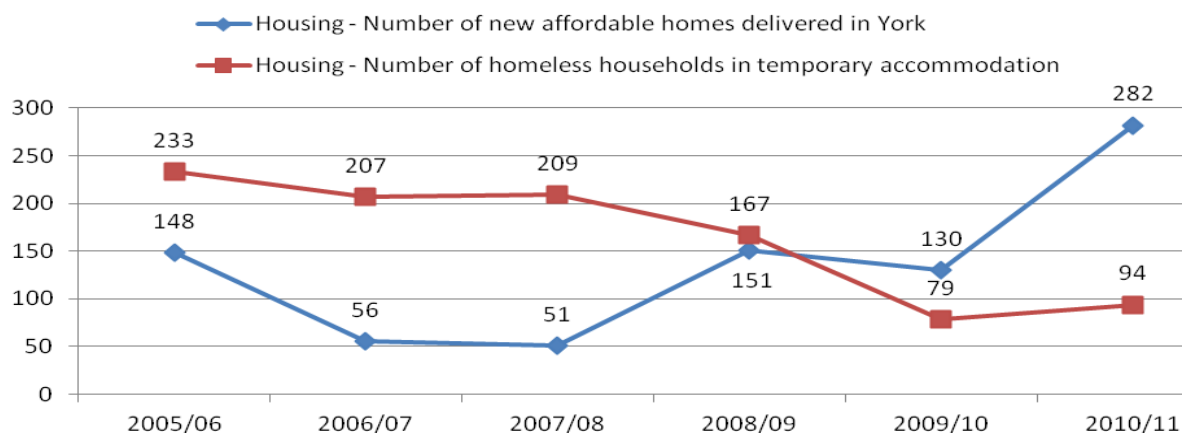


Figure 5: Housing need and provision over time

Physical access to services and employment via effective transportation networks is also a big issue for the city. More people are now cycling in York, and levels of traffic congestion are stable, but:

- Bus passenger journeys are down; and **bus punctuality and waiting times** remain an issue, with the city ranked in the bottom quartile for both amongst local authorities in England.

- An ***Equality Impact Assessment of the Local Transport Plan 2011-2031*** highlighted a number of concerns. These included a lack of visual / audible / tactile public transport information for blind or partially sighted people and for those who have difficulty reading English; isolation and lack of access to opportunities, services and facilities for young, older or disabled people and BME groups due to lack of sufficient and suitable public transport, particularly in rural areas; and young people being prevented from getting to employment opportunities due to inadequate or expensive public transport.

Finally on access, there is evidence (York Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011-14) to suggest that access to ***good, affordable childcare*** that is available at the times that parents need it, particularly in deprived wards and amongst certain income groups, is acting as a barrier to work.

2.2 York's strategy, policy and plans

York, like other cities, is working to ensure that inequality is not compounded against a backdrop of economic recession. The political environment also has an influence. Alongside deep reductions in government spending, the Coalition's localism agenda and drive to build 'the big society' is key. It expects citizens and communities to create better economic and social outcomes by becoming socially productive⁵ - to have much greater involvement in determining what services they value and need, how they are delivered and to move away from a reliance on state funded universal provision. The Council has an important role to play in facilitating this, and making sure communities are cohesive enough to come together in this way.

The Council has made clear its intentions to develop a fairer city and make sure that opportunities are available to all parts of the community. It has a range of strategies, policies and plans in place that set out priorities and will guide decisions on budget allocations. Each of these should keep in mind the Fairness Principles set out in this report. This will

⁵ See for instance: From social security to social productivity: a vision for 2020 public services, report of the Commission on 2020 Public Services, 2010.

ensure that all policy delivery impacts positively on fairer outcomes for people in York and contributes to achievement of the Council's fairness ambitions.

Given that this report is focused on providing a framework against which the Council can 'fairness test' its decisions on budget cuts, the key document to consider is the Council's own business plan **Delivering for the People of York: The Council Plan 2011-15**. Its five priority areas each provide an opportunity to think about how *all* citizens will be impacted. Examples are set out in Annex C along with details of further Council plans to address the negative outcomes of economic inequalities.

The Council employs nearly 7,000 staff. It also has an extensive pool of casual workers used to cover sickness absence and other short-term staffing needs due to sudden or temporary increases in workload in areas such as schools, libraries, leisure centres, and residential care homes. A staff pool manages this process. The Council sets out its own intentions to be a model employer through its **Corporate Fairness and Inclusion Strategy and Single Equality Scheme**. It has been through deliberations regarding pay and reward grading structures, including the potential for paying a living wage. Chief Executive pay levels have not changed since October 2007. Likewise Director pay increments have been held since April 2008. In 2010 the pay ratios in the Council for Chief Executive pay (where 1 equals the Council's lowest pay rate) was 10.8:1. For Directors, the ratio was 7.3 to 8.5:1; and Assistant Directors 5.5 to 6.1:1. Assistant Director pay has been reviewed, which if implemented would go some way to reducing pay inequality, but this has not been extended to the highest earning officers. As a major employer and procurer in the city, the Council can lead by example in setting a maximum pay ratio itself and then within companies to which it contracts services, with preference made to those companies with lower ratios or those that pay a living wage.

3. Fairness Principles

The Commission is working at a time when the rapid pace of change is matched by the difficulty of the decisions that have to be taken. Our brief is to offer guidance to the City of York Council on its budgeting approach and priorities within a very tight timeframe, and from a standpoint that is high level compared to the detail of the budget choices ahead.

Given that context, a cornerstone of our approach is to establish a set of overall “Fairness Principles” that are used to ‘fairness proof’ courses of action. This section presents a set of ten such principles that can guide long term progress towards a fairer York. We recommend they be used as a constant reference point for decision making, both on the overall budget setting approach and priorities and detailed choices about specific areas of spending.

The ten principles are:

- i. **Make reducing inequalities a prime focus in policy and decision making.** By this we mean an ongoing, consistently applied process to tackle socio-economic inequalities such as in incomes, health and well-being. Success should be based on changes in outcomes, and these should be routinely monitored over time.
- ii. **Support and empower the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.** This is often entwined with reducing socio-economic disparities. Not all people within a ‘disadvantaged group’ are or would wish to be seen as ‘disadvantaged’ themselves. So it is important not to define people purely by one aspect, such as their age, ethnicity or being disabled. Nevertheless decision making should advance the interests of groups of people who face disproportionate disadvantage or hardship, especially where they are less able to do so themselves.
- iii. **Adopt a long term view.** Despite the pressures to focus on balancing the budget over the next two years, it is vital to consider the long term impacts of choices as well as short term savings. Prevention is better than cure, and cuts or a failure to invest in some key areas will lead to

much bigger costs in the future, economic as well as social. Good examples include early years provision and education, and activity to prevent people from offending or reoffending.

- iv. **Listen and Engage.** Priorities, policy and practical decisions about budget choices should be made in a way that is open, transparent and informed by York's people. This needs to be an ongoing process, and a proactive one that takes steps to reach parts of the community that are not as well represented or vocal as others.
- v. Find ways to **generate new income** to reduce the scale and depth of cuts needed to balance the budget. Whilst some revenue raising opportunities have been explored, there remains scope for more. Wherever possible, new and imaginative ways should be found to earn income, especially revenues that are drawn from discretionary spending and those most able to contribute.
- vi. **Make budget decisions based on evidence, values and needs**, not by applying flat rate percentage cuts or favouring services that have always been provided over new ones. For instance, there should be a 'level playing field' between established services and new functions the Council could or has to take on because responsibility has moved to it from another organisation.
- vii. **Take into account wider factors that affect inequalities in York**, such as those driven by national policy. Some of the cuts and changes that are being driven nationally will hit those on low incomes hardest, for instance changes in benefits and removal of grants. These impacts should be considered alongside those of any budget cuts so that potential for a 'double whammy' on the disadvantaged can be considered and avoided as far as possible.
- viii. **Target investments and services geographically to reduce inequalities and improve life chances in the most disadvantaged areas** where necessary. With a constrained budget, universal provision will not always be possible. If cuts have to be made in some areas and not others, services in the city centre that are accessible to

all and those in the areas with the greatest concentrations of poverty and disadvantage should be prioritised.

- ix. Promote and prioritise economic growth that maximises benefits to people.** A lack of economic growth can hit jobs, services and incomes. However, growth does not automatically create employment nor 'trickle down' to the poorest communities. Economic policy should be focused on securing high quality, sustainable growth that delivers maximum benefit for people, including jobs, well-being and a good environment.
- x. A 'best in class' Council** that delivers services efficiently and effectively and acts as an influential role model in tackling inequalities. This will involve:
- Providing vision, leadership and setting an example in all that it does;
 - A culture where staff are engaged, valued and respected;
 - Using better systems, co-ordination, training and management to enhance efficiency and deliver savings without impairing service delivery;
 - More joining up and collaboration with other bodies that work with and impact on communities, including the voluntary sector; and
 - Using its pay structures, terms and conditions and procurement policies to reduce income differentials and make progress towards a 'living wage'.

4. Budget Guidance

It is without doubt that the City of York Council finds itself in an extremely challenging financial position. Central to this is the impact of the Coalition Government's extensive deficit reduction programme, which has led to one of the tightest settlements for local authorities in the post war period. For York this means a total reduction in government funding over the next four years of 28%. This cut has been heavily frontloaded, with the Council asked to make a cut of 13.3% in 2011/12. This equates to a saving of £21m in 2011/12, with a further £12m in 2012/13.

This situation is compounded by a number of other factors. Continued uncertainty in the macro-economic environment is placing downward pressure on the Council's income generating services as people and businesses have less money to spend. This includes a Council Tax freeze in 2011/12 through a zero percent increase on 2010/11 rates. There are also unavoidable financial pressures arising for example from the city's ageing population, increased number of children and adults requiring intensive social support, and increases in the cost of waste disposal.

The above combined has forced individual directorates in the Council to make difficult decisions around spending priorities that has already had very real consequences for service delivery and support within the city. It is with this that the York Fairness Commission is primarily concerned. It poses the question, how can the Council set its 2012/14 budget within the given financial context to best deliver for the people of York, ensuring that the gap between those who already face social and economic inequality and those who are better off does not get wider?

Budget recommendations

The Commission makes recommendations to the Council in three areas to assist in achieving this goal. These are guided by the Fairness Principles (as set out in section 3). They have been made using an analysis of investment and savings decisions taken in developing the 2011/12 budget; and take account of messages arising from the public consultation. In their application, we expect the Council to use evidence and best practice in all cut versus saving decisions. Further Commission

recommendations that go beyond the budget process are included in section 5.

A. Potential for savings and protection of essential services

Rather than apply a universal flat rate cut across all directorates, the Commission recommends that some directorates absorb a greater proportion of cuts than others so as to reduce negative impacts on inequalities. In particular, we urge protection of the Adults, Children and Education directorate and its specific responsibilities for Children's Social Care and Adult Provision. Decisions around how cuts are allocated should be made such that:

- targeting by theme and by place allows money to follow need;
- a short term saving or investment is made against an assessment of long term impact on outcomes and requirement for further funding;
- directorates look for efficient operation even in protected areas such that best in class services are still provided to the end user; and
- the extent of cuts to services in previous years are taken into account in making decisions about future budgets.

With this in mind, the Commission recommends:

1. Highways spend is explored as a potential area of major saving:

Certain areas of transport are key to fairness and equalities and should not be compromised. These include areas such as road safety, securing a modern fit for purpose public transport network (especially good and affordable bus services), and achieving the positive impacts on health and well-being that York achieves as a cycle friendly city. However, the Commission believes other areas of highways spend offer considerable potential for savings and reallocation of money to other priorities with greater benefits for fairness and equality. Areas for consideration include reduced spend on road maintenance and exploring new delivery models such as procurement of shared services with North Yorkshire County Council for highways functions.

2. Removing budget allocation to Ward Committees: In 2011/12 this amounted to spend of £731,990 (not including the additional financial cost of administering the fund) for local councillors and residents to use for example to fund local projects. The Commission does not dismiss the role that these Committees can play in bringing people together to discuss and find solutions to what matters most to them and to hold their elected representative to account. However, in a tough financial climate where cuts must be made with Fairness Principles in mind, the Commission feels this money could be better targeted at support in specific areas of need or amongst specific groups to help the Council deliver a strategic approach to achieving reduced social and economic inequalities in the city. This may enable specific improvements or regeneration projects to be targeted to the most deprived areas, with the participation of local people. Removing this budget is also in tune with national policy thinking around a more socially productive society (discussed above in section 2.2), where citizens are actively engaged in creating better social and economic outcomes and move beyond a grant giving state driven model.

3. Protecting named services: From analysis of 2011/12 budget proposals the Commission recommends that spend in Children's Social Care and Adult Provision is protected. We recognise that this service has been protected from cuts and seen investment in previous years and welcome genuine efficiencies where these would not adversely affect service users or the staff delivering them. However, overall, this is an area of spend with great impact on fairness and it needs to be safeguarded. It chimes strongly with the principle of taking a long term view and prevention being better than a cure. An example given during the consultation was of cuts to youth offending services saving moderately small amounts in the short term when compared to the significant investment required in future years to rectify long term consequences of underinvestment and support.

There are no other service areas that the Commission feel should be protected in their entirety. There are however individual elements of other specific service areas that the Commission deems to impact significantly on fairness and that should as such be protected despite the wider service area being open to cuts. Generally we have avoided making recommendations about individual budget lines, and instead advise that

the Council uses the Fairness Principles to guide the detailed budgeting process. However, we felt it important to flag a small number of services that should be protected and which also serve as examples of the type of spending that the Fairness Principles support.

Table 2: Examples of areas to protect in specific service areas

Service area	Protect where it impacts on...
School improvement	Provision to vulnerable children or minority groups as well as early years provision and 16-19 year olds
Adult assessment	Provision to vulnerable adults and of mental health services, e.g. respite care, occupational therapy
Integrated commissioning	Ability of Council to be best in class and in turn lead to more efficient operation and delivery through reduced duplication and enhanced partnership arrangements
Communities and culture	Voluntary sector funding, opportunities for children and young people in deprived areas to access play and recreation, and library provision
Environment	Work to reduce fuel and energy costs, access to public conveniences for less abled people, street lighting in areas of higher crime, pest control for people already living in poor conditions
Housing and public protection	Homeless people and other vulnerable groups and the quality of the housing stock available to them, Citizens Advice Bureau debt advice
Economy and asset management	Balancing sustainable economic growth with a need to connect all residents to economic opportunity; and ensuring local people have the skills to match local business needs, to widen labour market participation and more evenly distribute wealth to reduce income inequality
Strategic planning and transport	Subsidised bus services for particular services shown to connect people to jobs or services that would otherwise not be provided, cycle training, transport services that allow disadvantaged people to move with ease around the city (e.g. Dial & Ride) at a price they can afford

Additionally, the Council makes financial contributions to a number of outside bodies, for example York's Theatre Royal and Visit York. In light of a constrained budget, the Commission recommends that in all cases where contributions are sought from outside bodies, the Council applies a rigorous test of economic and social impact and outcomes to ensure that maximum value for money is achieved alongside a viable long term plan for organisations achieving financial sustainability. Embedding a framework of this type will enable the Council to prioritise scarce resource amongst competing priorities on a fair basis and drive organisations seeking funding to be as effective as possible.

B. Generating new and additional income to help protect essential services

The Commission recommends that the Council proactively and imaginatively seeks out ways of generating additional income that will reduce the need to make cuts elsewhere and put service provision on a more sustainable footing. The Council should consider income earning potential in the following areas:

4. Raising Council Tax by 3.5 - 6%: York's Council Tax rate was frozen at 2010/11 rates for the 2011/12 period with a grant from central Government to cover the shortfall. The Government has offered to provide some additional funding to councils who freeze council tax for a further year to compensate for lost revenue. However, we understand this will be limited to the equivalent of up to a 2.5 - 3% rise in rates whilst inflation is running at around double that rate. Furthermore the 'baseline' for future settlements would not take inflation during 2012/13 into account either. This would mean a significant real terms cut and lead to a significant shortfall in Council finances that would have to be managed through an even greater hike in Council Tax in future years.

Given the current rate of inflation, and the uncertainty of Government funding in future years, the Commission advises the Council to implement a gradual year on year rise now as opposed to a further year freeze. We recommend this is around the level of inflation – sufficient to make the rejection of the Government's one year freeze proposal worthwhile, but

not so high that it is unaffordable for council tax payers. We further recommend that some of this additional revenue is used to fund Council Tax rebates for those on low incomes, which are set to become the responsibility of the local authority. To be clear, we are recommending this increase in the interest of long term fairness. This is on the basis that income generation is as important as budget cuts. It is unfair that the poorest suffer from budget cuts whilst the relatively well off are protected from Council Tax increases. Of course, there is a balance to be struck, but this recommendation is also made on the foundation of York currently having the second lowest Council Tax of all 55 Unitary Authorities in England.

5. Facilitating sustainable economic growth to boost long term income: Some Council services, functions and operations are essentially investments that should lead to income or other economic rewards in the long term. Some of these may result in revenues that come directly to the Council (e.g. land and property deals where the Council may in future gain revenue as a landlord). In other cases the benefit may arise in the shape of business growth and new jobs in the city.

Investment in tourism is a good example. Ensuring that the city has an attractive offer, including upkeep of the city's heritage and environment, cultural events and attractions will bring in additional tourists and visitor spend. This helps to keep more businesses running and growing and creates or protects jobs within them. Investment in areas such as inward investment and the Science City initiative may also bring employment returns long term.

Hence, we recommend that where investments lead to economic returns that include future revenues or jobs accessible to all these are viewed favourably within the budget setting process. Equally, we recommend that ways are found to lever in greater contributions from the businesses or sectors that accrue most benefit from Council investments (see recommendation 6 below for one example). Finally, we suggest that resource is put in place in the Council to connect economic development activity to inclusion, that is to say, a role with the remit of helping local businesses to connect to the local labour market and vice versa.

6. A York Visitor Heritage Contribution (a 'tourist tax'): Subject to legal limitations, the Council should explore the options around charging a visitor contribution up to the value of £1 per head per night. This could raise a significant amount of money each year to help alleviate the pressures of being a world class tourist destination, to invest in maintaining the sustainable growth of the sector, and to relieve pressure on other areas of the Council's budget where funds are used to support tourism activity. The costs would ensure that residents further benefit from tourism, and caps could be put in place to ensure charges are at a level which does not deter visitors.

7. Explore and adopt creative approaches to income generation:

Whilst some new income generating measures have been introduced, we believe there is scope to go further, particularly as there is a sizeable proportion of York's population who are relatively affluent and have higher than average disposable income. The Commission recommends exploring opportunities for 'nudging' - encouraging additional discretionary spend by individuals that do not force those on lower incomes to pay higher costs or receive inferior levels of service.

Examples of different types of 'nudging' policies the costs/benefits and practicalities of which the Council should explore are:

a) asking people if they would wish to make a donation on top of the advertised price of a service (e.g. leisure bookings) to support Council activity to support those in greatest need - either generally or a named service or good cause campaign.

b) setting a higher advertised price for services that automatically includes a donation to a good cause (as above), but with the option for people to say they would prefer not to pay the additional contribution.

c) setting up a scheme similar to a) or b) above but on a York wide basis so that it can include donations from customers paying for private sector services (e.g. leisure and tourist attractions, hotel/restaurant bills). This would allow businesses to support the scheme if they would like to.

d) asking people if they would make an extra voluntary contribution on top of their Council Tax bills to support services/good causes, especially if Council Tax is frozen

Some or all of these options may work best if an independent 'York Welfare Fund' or similar is established that would raise money for named good causes including activities the Council would like to support but cannot afford to run (e.g. a Sure Start centre or additional 'enrichment' activities for children from low income backgrounds).

Leisure and other pay at point of use services are probably the main area for such 'nudging' initiatives, although other examples exist. One is allotments, where a person on low income who is using the allotment to provide for his or her family would probably not choose (or have) to pay any additional money, whereas somebody on a high income who enjoys the allotment chiefly as a hobby may choose to do so.

With the right type of communication and transparency, this type of policy has potential to generate significant local goodwill and create city wide engagement in the fairness agenda. The Council's Talkabout citizen panel would be a useful means of discussing this concept with local residents.

There may also be opportunities around:

- Setting up **leisure facilities as Trusts** may then enable these operations to claim gift aid from the Government on top of what users pay in entry fees (the way visitor attractions often do). The feasibility of this would need to be explored, but if it is possible it has the potential to generate significant additional revenue without any additional cost to service users; and
- **Generating further use of and income from historic, council owned buildings** that would be attractive to tourists or for commercial bookings and which are presently not fully utilised.

C. The Council as an efficient, effective and equitable role model

The Council can make a significant contribution to creating a more equal city in the way that it goes about its own business. It also has a responsibility for fairness and equality to its own staff as a major employer in the city. This is fundamentally about being best in class by using strong leadership, good management and investment (often at little or no cost) in staff training and development to drive up productivity and deliver a better service to the end user. The Commission recommend that the Council seeks to:

8. Act as a role model for best practice procurement processes: This can include exploring innovative delivery models, measuring best value not just on cheapest price but on an assessment of how best to deliver citizen-focused services, and stipulating that suppliers have sound management practices for example fair terms and conditions for staff, small pay ratios, good employee relations and environmental policies of their own.

9. Collaborate more and better across sectors and use joined up working – especially with the voluntary sector – as a way of getting more for the available resource and delivering an enhanced service to the end user (see also recommendation 30 in section 5).

10. More even distribution of pay and fairness in terms and conditions: Ensuring that pay is distributed more fairly is a powerful tool in ensuring equality and fairness and acting as a best in class employer. The Commission recognises that the Council's pay ratio between the highest and lowest paid staff is already lower than many organisations at around 10.8 to 1, and far lower than ratios of 300:1 or so in many large FTSE 100 businesses such as banks. We recommend moving toward a maximum pay ratio of 10:1 is considered alongside a transparent mechanism for linking performance to pay.

11. A Living Wage: The Council is currently working with the University of York to understand the implications of it paying a living wage. This work will report by 31st December 2011. Taking the findings of this into account, the Commission recommends setting a realistic time frame for introducing a living wage policy.

12. Ensure the Council is best in class for efficient delivery systems, co-ordination across services, and a culture where staff are engaged, valued and respected: Creating this type of culture, particularly in current circumstances is vital and will underpin the Council's ability to successfully deliver its ambitions for a fairer York. The Commission asks the Council to make the necessary investment in managing change and in doing so act as a role model to organisations undergoing structural change. We also urge the Council to do all it can to support people who are at risk of redundancy, paying particular attention to age and gender profile and specific needs or issues that this may create.

5. Consultation: Results and Recommendations

This section briefly summarises the consultation process and the headline themes it raises. It sets out the issues raised and our response to them. The recommendations in this section build on and form an integrated set with those we make in the Budget Guidance section.

5.1 The Consultation Process and Emerging Headline Themes

The Commission felt it vital that this report is informed and influenced by individuals and groups across York. A public consultation process was carried out to enable this, running from a launch event on 21 September to 18 October 2011. We wanted the process to offer both the opportunity for anybody in York to easily take part and for it to allow more in-depth inputs and the chance for discussion. To that end the process comprised the following elements:

- Simple opportunities to submit responses via 'postcard' questionnaires
- Opportunities for formal written submissions
- Opportunities to input via the web site or email
- A series of six participation events held between 21 September and 5 October, including events open to groups, the public, and City of York Council staff

The response to the consultation was valuable and wide ranging. Details of the process and responses are included in Annex A and Annex E. A full report of findings, completed by the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York, is also available.

Across the consultation process the main themes that emerged were:

- Employment
- Income
- Transport
- Young people

- Older people
- Disabled people (and wider discrimination and diversity issues)
- Health
- The Voluntary Sector and Volunteering
- Access

These issues emerged across all the channels through which people made inputs. Courses of action under each are now discussed. Additionally, discussions with Council staff, many of them on the ‘front line’ and well placed to spot issues and better ways of doing things, identified particular concerns relating to ex offenders, homeless people, the travelling community in York and youth offenders. These are also covered in the full report of findings and raised here as appropriate.

5.2 Results and Recommendations

‘Access’ was a recurring theme and arose in relation to many of the other concerns – access to work and training, access to services, and access to information for example. Because of its overarching nature, access is dealt with as a cross cutting theme that is relevant to all of the headings that follow.

The concept of fairness was discussed in some submissions. Interpretations varied. For a few it was primarily about making sure that their own needs and preferences were met. Others saw it as about making sure that people ‘get what they deserve’ – so that hard work or self-improvement reaps rewards for example. Some made points about specific issues, such as costs of and eligibility for social care and services. For most however it was about gaps between the worst and best off in society, and the needs of those who are disadvantaged, vulnerable or discriminated against.

Most of the consultation was focused on specific issues and the realities of living in York. This input has directly informed the recommendations that we make. These are set out, issue by issue and alongside brief commentary in the sections below. Our other recommendations in the

budget section are also usually informed by the thrust of the consultation results. They are cross referenced here rather than repeated.

A. Income

There was considerable discussion around incomes. That spanned wages, levels of debt, (cuts in) benefits and the rising cost of living. There were calls for more equality of income and a higher minimum wage or 'living wage' (see section 4, recommendation 11). It is hard to get good information about people's real disposable income after housing and bills have been covered. But it was clear that for many people reduced incomes set against rising food, energy and transport prices translated into reduced well-being and a struggle to get by.

The Commission's recommendations in response are that the City of York Council:

13. Puts benefit advisors where they are most easily accessible to users. This will ensure they are accessible and can more effectively help people to make full use of the benefits they are entitled to.

14. Continues and expands work to reduce the living costs/bills of those in greatest need. One example is to tackle fuel poverty by improving insulation or installing micro-generation capacity (e.g. solar panels) into people's homes, including through partnership with the private and voluntary sector as well as management of its own housing stock. It also includes striving to ensure that child care, public transport and leisure costs are affordable to those on low incomes. Allotments are a further example of where council provision can help. Whilst for some gardening may be a hobby, for those on low incomes the ability to grow cheap, healthy food can help with budgeting and contribute to well-being.

B. Employment

People felt that there are too few jobs and that many of those on offer involve long hours and low wages. As statistics show incomes and employment in York to be close to national average, this suggests

employment issues may be pronounced for certain groups or in certain types of job (e.g. tourism related). Low incomes are further exacerbated by York's relatively high housing costs.

For many though, the issue was simply getting a job. Some felt that employers discriminate against young people, older people, ethnic minorities (e.g. travellers) and disabled people; others had problems getting public transport to work for jobs that started early or finished late in the day. Jobs for young people, and routes into them such as training and apprenticeships, were a particular area of concern.

The Commission's recommendations to the City of York Council are that:

15. Economic development strategy and activity focuses on quality and accessibility as well as the quantity of jobs, and on inclusion as well as growth. This should include resource and activity within the Council's economic development function to help businesses (e.g. inward investors) to recruit local people, and to connect people in deprived communities to employment and training opportunities.

16. A programme of action tackles barriers to work, including childcare, transport, skills/learning, access for disabled people, and attitudes and awareness (of employers and potential employees).

17. It encourages the creation of 'green jobs' in sustainable industries, e.g. related to energy, waste and other low carbon industries.

18. It makes training and employment opportunities for young people a priority and radically expands the number of apprenticeships. This should include working with employers, colleges and other relevant agencies creating significant numbers of apprenticeships within the Council.

C. Transport

Transport was a big issue for many people and one of the most prominent in the consultation. Good, affordable transport is essential to allow people to get to work (as already discussed) as well as to access education, services and to simply get on with life.

Public transport, especially bus services, was the biggest areas of concern. People felt these were unreliable, expensive and inadequate, with too few services away from the main bus corridors and outside of the main daytime hours.

Some stressed the benefits of continued improvement of cycling and pedestrian facilities (which provide low/no cost and healthy travel options) whilst others were more concerned about car parking costs.

The Commission's recommendations to the City of York Council are:

19. To extend the 'YoZone' card for discounted bus fares up the age of 18 (it is currently 16) and explore other ways to reduce transport costs for young people.

20. For public transport concessionary fares for disabled people to apply all day (currently they begin at 9am which hampers access to work).

An additional relevant recommendation is made in the Budget Guidance section of this report (section 4, recommendation 1) which seek to protect areas of the transport budget that subsidise bus services and discounts for those on low incomes, as well as safeguarding the budget covering cycle and pedestrian facilities and road safety measures. These areas of Highways spend are a high priority in terms of socio-economic benefits and reducing inequalities.

D. Children and Young People

A combination of the tough economic climate and national policy decisions (such as removal of the Educational Maintenance Allowance and increases in tuition fees) are hitting young people hard. Rises in transport and leisure costs are compounding these difficulties for many young people, reducing their opportunities and making it harder to get about, to do things, and to kickstart their careers. Some said potential closure of youth clubs due to cuts would make matters worse still. Others pointed to the higher costs that would emerge in the long term (for society) if services that sought to prevent youth offending or to respond to special educational needs were cut back.

In our budget recommendations we have prioritised areas of educational spend (including early years and 16-19, see recommendation 3) and under Transport we have called for the extension of the YoZone card to benefit more young people (see recommendation 19).

We further support measures to ensure that children from low income families are not prevented from doing 'enriching' school based activities because they cannot afford it (e.g. music, sport, drama, school trips). The Council should strive to minimise income based divisions between classmates, and ensure that all children and young people can pursue activities they enjoy and excel at. This can boost self-esteem and confidence and have lasting benefits in terms of employability, inclusion and life opportunities.

The Commission recommends that the City of York Council:

21. Introduces a new 'York Youth Card' and encourages retailers, leisure providers and others to offer discounts to young people (age 16-21) holding such a card. Given high youth unemployment, this would put other young people on a level with students who are often able to access discounts on production of a student card. The key thing would simply be to have an accredited card that businesses are aware of and which enables them to target offers at young people in the city and to gain and publicise commitment from a number of key businesses to accept the card to get the ball rolling.

22. Puts in place mechanisms to enable children and young people from low income backgrounds to participate in enriching school based activities (e.g. music, sport, drama, trips) that they otherwise may not be able to afford.

23. Explores the reasons behind and takes action to combat the gap in educational attainment between pupils from lower income households (entitled to free school meals) and others. Responses could include looking at resourcing and teaching in relevant schools, refining selection and catchments policy, targeting of early years provision, or influencing outside and cultural factors such as role models and aspirations.

E. Older People

A wide range of issues affecting older people were raised. Many of these were general issues affecting older people (and others) regardless of income such as winter pavement maintenance and provision of seating and toilets in the city centre.

Whilst some issues affect older people regardless of income, inequalities between older people can themselves be very pronounced: some are in comparatively comfortable positions; others struggle to make ends meet. Rising food and energy prices are having an acute impact, with too many facing the stark choice of 'heating or eating'. Stepping up and targeting work to tackle fuel poverty is all the more important in this context (see also the previous 'Incomes' subsection). For instance there may be scope to develop initiatives to work with the private sector to install microrenewables (e.g. photovoltaic panels on roofs) and to use the proceeds from feed in tariffs to offset energy bills.

Trends towards an ageing population bring with them added pressures for Social Care. Finding fair ways to meet increasing care needs within a tight budget is a major challenge, and one that was picked up in the consultation. We have no direct recommendation to make on the complex issue of what and when contributions are levied from whom. However, we advise that this issue is kept under review, and in the budget

guidance section we propose making social care budgets a top priority for protection from cuts (see section 4, recommendation 3).

One area where specific action should be possible is in better utilising the talents of older people as volunteers. This can add to cohesion and well-being in numerous ways, helping to counter the isolation that some older people can experience at the same time as making good use of their skills, wisdom and time to benefit society. There are also good reasons to encourage and enable volunteering by young people, and the connection between young and older people can further benefit society.

The Commission recommends that:

24. The City of York Council and the voluntary sector further collaborate to make the best possible use of the skills of older people (alongside young people) as volunteers (see also recommendation 30 on voluntary sector collaboration).

F. Diversity and Disabled People

Issues facing disabled people – and those who care for them – came through loud and clear. Certain specific measures have already been covered elsewhere (see recommendation 20 under Transport). However a number of other, often quite specific points also emerged.

The Commission recommends that the City of York Council:

25. Routinely involve disabled people in the design of services and facilities – to get things right from the start, rather than to advise on how to correct them ‘after the event’, often at greater expense.

26. Recognises and supports the valuable role played by carers and takes measures to assist them wherever possible, including those designed to ‘give carers a break’.

27. Ensure information gets to those who need it and is easy to understand (e.g. in plain English and in forms accessible to people with

who have difficulty reading). This includes ensuring that the ‘choice based lettings’ housing scheme can be fully and easily used by people with reading or learning difficulties.

28. Efficiently manages facilities installed into homes to assist disabled people (specifically, stair lifts) to ensure they are re-used rather than discarded once a house is let to a different tenant who does not need them.

G. Health

People saw health as central to well-being. However, they raised it most often when specific health or care issues affected themselves or those close to them. Mental health was one such example. A compelling case was made stressing the importance of good mental health to quality of life and the need to cast off the stigma that can still surround mental health. In the budget guidance section we have recommended that those budgets that support work on mental health are protected (see section 4, recommendation 3).

There is a relationship between income inequalities and health inequalities, especially for men, where York has a gap of ten years in life expectancy between those who are most and least affluent. Currently, only around 4% of health expenditure is on public health – in essence on prevention rather than cure. The City of York Council is soon to take over public health responsibilities from the Primary Care Trust. In doing so it has an opportunity to look at public health and health inequalities afresh, to fairness proof potential activities, and prioritise those that will reduce inequalities.

The Commission recommends that the City of York Council:

29. Act upon research into the reasons for health inequalities in York, especially in men, with activities targeted in accordance with the findings.

H. Volunteering and the Voluntary Sector

The role and value of the voluntary sector was a core theme emerging in the consultation. The reach and capacity of the sector was apparent, as was the dedication of the many who work in the sector, whether paid staff or volunteers. We recommend that voluntary sector support is protected where possible (see section 4, recommendation 3).

It is apparent that there are a great range of voluntary groups, each often running their own initiatives. Sometimes these overlap with functions delivered by the City of York Council or other public bodies.

Whilst there is already some joining up between groups and organisations and with the local authority, this appears not to be as systematic and extensive as it might be. There may well be potential to deliver both more, and more efficiently, by imaginatively and more extensively utilising the great capacity in the voluntary sector and connecting it more strongly to public sector provision. Accreditation, such as through a 'YORVOL' scheme may have a role in enabling such joining up by building confidence and certainty about the services that are offered.

Furthermore, there are a number of areas where voluntary sector groups share similar needs that they are unable to properly resource, or where shared provision may reduce costs for all (e.g. premises, fundraising, marketing).

The Commission recommends that:

30. The City of York Council and the voluntary sector in York work together more closely and extensively to empower and meet the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, and to further other causes where they have a shared interest. This should include exploring potential for shared support functions and premises.

6. Next Steps

This interim report is to be presented to the City of York Council Private Cabinet by the York Fairness Commission on 21st November 2011 and to the wider Council on 28th November. Following debate and discussion in that forum, it will then be used within the Council throughout the process of setting the budget for 2012-14. Individual directorates will consider their saving and investment proposals in light of the principles and recommendations set out here. The Council's final budget will be agreed by full Council by the 23rd February 2012.

The Fairness Commission will continue to meet after this initial interim report has been presented. The objective will be to hold a second round of consultation and engagement with partners, stakeholders and residents in York in February and March of 2012. The goal will be to produce a more detailed analysis of how the city on the whole – not just the Council – can contribute to making York a fairer place. A final report will be published in the spring, including details of how progress against agreed fairness goals will be monitored, measured and reported on.

ANNEXES

Annex A: Consultation Results

The public consultation process was completed between early September and 18 October 2011. This was a tighter timetable than we would have liked, but one that was necessary to allow the results to be collated in time to properly inform this report and the subsequent Council budget setting process.

The process comprised the following elements:

- Simple opportunities to submit responses via ‘postcard’ questionnaires that were widely distributed at venues around the city from early September
- Opportunities for formal written submissions from 15 September
- Opportunities to input via the web site or email from 15 September
- Opportunities to give views individually on the phone or in person
- A series of six consultation meetings held between 21 September and 5 October, and including events open to community groups, members of the public, minority or potentially disadvantaged groups and City of York Council and other public sector staff.

Because of the anticipated difficulty in engaging with significant numbers of individual residents in the tight timescales the Commission’s focus at the first two consultation events was to engage with groups who could represent and speak for those whose voices are often hard to hear in the community.

Groups who attended meetings, spoke at meetings or submitted written views were:

York CVS

York Mind and Our Celebration

York CAB

York Mental Health Forum

York Older People's Assembly	Age UK
York Environment Forum	York Independent Living Network
RADAR	York People First
York Housing Association	York Green Party
York High School	Young Inspectors
Inspired Youth	Choose2
York Youth Council	York Racial Equality Network
York Blind & Partially Sighted society	Churches Together
York Carers Forum	Wilf Ward Trust
York University Student Union	York St John University
NHS York and North Yorkshire	Askham Bryan College
York LINK	York Open Planning Forum
North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue	York Cares
North Yorkshire Police	

In total, the response to the consultation elicited around 100 written responses from individuals and the above groups, which were a mixture of returned postcards and post it comments, website replies and formal written submissions. In addition, in depth submissions were presented at the launch event which attracted 55 people from 31 organisations whilst subsequent public events had a total of 13 discussion groups, each involving 3-9 people.

In total, including members of groups represented at the events, it is estimated that the process reached over 2,000 people. Whilst we would have preferred more people to be directly involved in it, the process was of great value in opening up the work of the Commission and bringing wide ranging and often carefully thought through views to the fore. A full report of the findings has been completed by the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York and was used as source material for this report.

Across the consultation process the main themes that emerged concerned:

- Employment
- Income
- Transport

- Young people
- Older people
- Disabled people (and wider discrimination and diversity issues)
- Health
- The Voluntary Sector and Volunteering
- Access

These issues presented themselves strongly across all the channels through which people made inputs.

Specific Issues from Discussions at meetings and Written Comments

These inputs brought out many detailed points, often put across with much thought and feeling.

Employment & Training

Employment in York was a common theme. There is a widely held view that York needs more jobs, better quality jobs, less employer discrimination and jobs with fair terms and conditions. The need for more employment opportunities for young people (and training/apprenticeships) was a specific and commonly raised point. Pay levels and a higher minimum wage (or living wage) was an issue for young people but went wider too, whilst others pointed out an unhelpful and in their eyes unjust distribution of work:

“It is just not fair that some people are being over worked while other people cannot get work”.

Income and the Cost of Living

Income was connected to work (see above) but also raised as an issue in terms of benefits and the money people had to live off. The need for good, accessible benefits and money advice for older people was raised specifically. The perceived high cost of living in York put incomes under further strain. Facilities that were singled out as expensive for residents included swimming pools, child care, museums and family activities.

Transport

Transport issues were very common and the transport system was seen as inadequate, unreliable and expensive – especially for young people, the unemployed and those on low incomes. Specific comments included extending the YoZone card to age 18, more electric (real time information) signs at bus stops which give up to date information on running times and prevent the need to read complicated timetables, and ensuring bus services in the early morning and evening are sufficient to allow people to get to and from work or other activities. Others pointed to the benefits of more walking or cycling as a healthy, low cost, low pollution option, or suggested reducing travel levels and pollution further.

Health

Health came through chiefly in relation to specific groups and needs. People were aware of the Primary Care Trust deficit and worried about the impact this may have on services. The issue of mental health and the need to remove the stigma around it was put forward passionately. Other issues raised were access to NHS dentists and social isolation of older people.

Young People

Several submissions and points made in discussion pinpointed the difficulties facing young people and the need to improve conditions for them. Aside from routes into housing, work and training, the limited range of things to do – and the cost of doing them – was a real issue. Extending the ‘YoZone’ card to age 18, and looking to create or extend other discount schemes for young people would prove popular.

Disabled People

Points covered social, financial and physical issues and included support for people with learning difficulties, the need for more carers, and support for carers themselves. Access to social opportunities – including learning and sport – and to training and work were also issues. The point was also made that the capabilities of disabled people are often underestimated by employers and the educational system. It is important to focus on the whole person and what they can do and not to define people by a disability.

There were calls for equivalent concessions on public transport for disabled people and to extend the times at which concessions on public transport could be used (to before 9am). The difficulties of accessing buildings (in a historic city) were also highlighted:

“Make York better for disabled people – it’s a nightmare.”

Social Division, Discrimination and Diversity

Some saw York as a socially divided city. It was pointed out that although many people don’t see York as an ethnically diverse city, there is an increasing BME population, and the cosmopolitan nature of the city is buoyed by significant numbers of overseas students from around the world.

Groups felt to be facing “*severe social and economic disadvantage*” included the travelling community, and more general points were made about the need to challenge racism, ensure BME communities are represented, and to improve access to services for refugees and asylum seekers.

The Voluntary Sector and Volunteering

The value of the voluntary sector, whether paid or volunteers, came through loud and clear. The sector was seen as able to reach some of the poorest and most vulnerable residents and to have expert knowledge and credibility that was a real asset. Continued funding for the sector was seen as important alongside opportunities for greater collaboration and co-ordination between the Council and the voluntary sector. Some suggested that there should be more incentives to get people in York to volunteer.

Access

The theme of access came through in a number of ways. Some have already been covered under the themes of transport, work, and issues facing older people, younger people, disabled people and minority ethnic communities. Other aspects included access to participation in decision making, enabling local people to better access services, and making sure they were available and accessible to all. This included points about

presenting information in a variety of different ways, including face to face options for those who cannot access information through the internet.

Access to information was seen as crucial. Some favoured a 'one stop shop' staffed by competent and sympathetic personnel. Others liked services to be locally accessible. Whatever model, getting good information to the people who need it was seen as key:

"One of the worst forms of unfairness is ignorance and being deprived of information which helps people to find ways in which they might improve their circumstances".

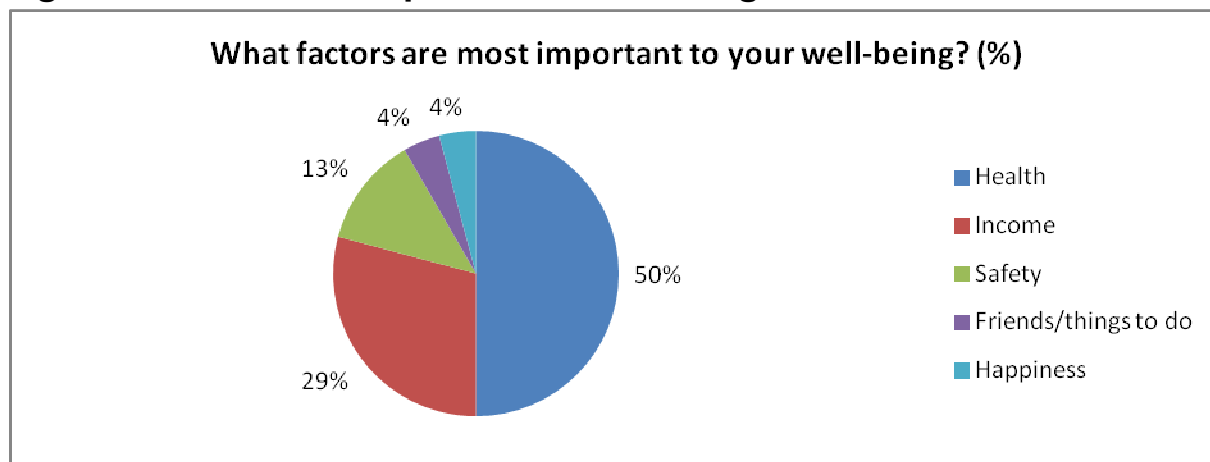
Other Issues

- **Education:** disparate points were raised including tuition fees, the end of EMA, fitness facilities in schools, and access to learning for adults and older people.
- **Environment:** concerns included more green space, action on litter, and avoiding building more out of town facilities, especially shopping centres, that are hard to get to without a car. Others pointed to opportunities for 'green jobs'; and to reduce (fuel) poverty through better insulation.
- **Older People:** suggestions for things that would improve life for older people included addressing fuel poverty for those on low incomes, the reform of social care, accessible buildings, safe streets and footpaths, more seats and public toilets, and better bus scheduling.

The format of the consultation and its analysis means that it is hard to quantitatively compare the importance of these issues to people. The Commission was seeking through its open approach to public engagement to get qualitative insight and understanding into what really mattered to people. These insights have influenced the Commissioner's overall thinking and approach to the formulation of the report's recommendations.

The website survey is the exception where a more detailed analysis has been possible as the responses were to set questions.

Figure 6: Website Responses: Well-Being



The web survey asked people to choose the most important of a number of predefined factors, meaning that its results are not directly comparable with other means of consultation where responses were left open. Of the options it offered, responses around health and income were by far the most prominent. Income and work also came through very strongly in the written responses and meetings as we saw earlier.

The web survey also asked people whether anything was preventing an improvement in their well-being. Around a half said nothing was, a quarter made no response. The views about what would improve well-being were wide ranging:

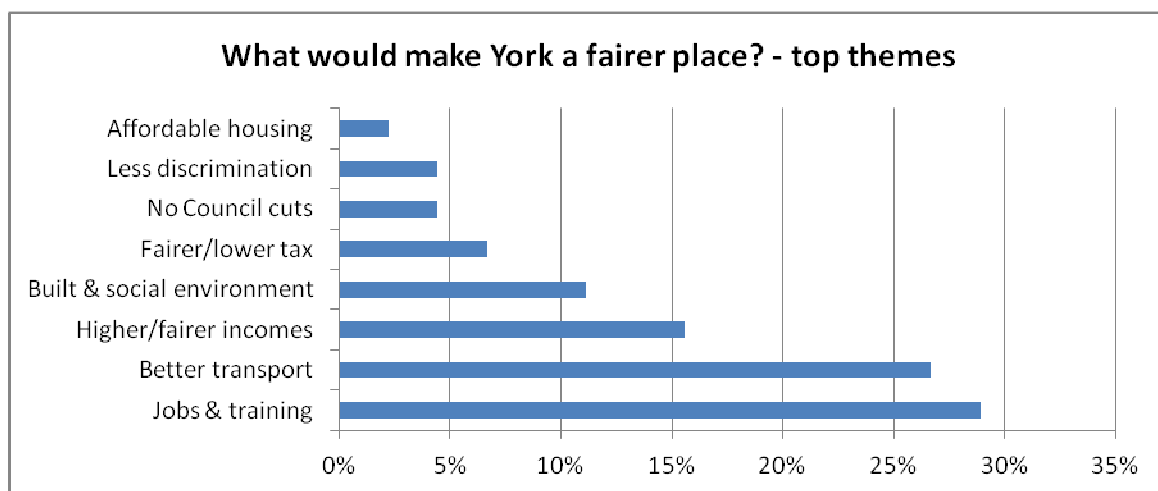
- somewhere safe to go and make friends
- getting a job and the chance to own a house
- not living in a 'capitalist culture' where 'ordinary people suffer'
- less tax and 'subsidising of others'
- free entry for locals into tourist attractions
- improved street lighting
- less ageism – especially towards those who are 'overqualified'

Other questions on the website concerned whether people had access to the information, learning opportunities, work and services that they needed. Again the majority view was one of general satisfaction, or at

least a lack of pressing specific issues they felt they should raise – around 80% felt they did have access to what they needed. However, others did point to issues, particularly about getting a job, training and childcare.

Finally, the website asked what would make York a fairer place. The chart shows the main themes that emerged.

Figure 7: Website responses - What would make York a Fairer Place?



The chart shows how the total responses were split between the broad themes. The gist of the points around each theme are summarised below:

Jobs & Training: more jobs and apprenticeships, especially for young people.

Transport: the two biggest issues were a desire for better bus services that ran more reliably and extensively, and more/cheaper car parking, especially for residents.

Incomes: the thrust of comments was towards more equal incomes, a living wage and affordable childcare.

Built & Social Environment: comments ranging from more pubs and public toilets to outdoor eating areas, open spaces and places for young people to ‘chill’.

Fairer/Lower Tax: included calls for lower council tax and a flat rate council tax.

No Council Cuts: a number of strident calls to resist the demands to make cuts.

Diversity/Discrimination: specific points about less discrimination against older people and students.

Affordable Housing: a desire to see more affordable homes.

Annex B: Main data sources

The data used in pulling together this report are wide reaching and varied. For this interim report broad data sources are provided here. For the final report to be published in spring 2012, a fully referenced supporting evidence base document will be provided.

- Preliminary Context Report, Business Intelligence Unit, City of York Council, July 2011
- York Context Report, Dr Anna Barford and Emily Alexander, The Equality Trust, September 2011
- York Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011
- Adult, Children's and Education Service, City of York Council, 2011, Pupil Level Annual School Census: City Of York Council Primary Schools
- Child Poverty Needs Assessment, City of York Council, September 2011
- City of York Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011-2014
- City of York Council, Fuel Poverty Review: A call for evidence. March 2011
- City of York Council Private Sector Fuel Poverty 2008
- Indices of Deprivation 2010, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2011

Annex C: Additional information on York’s policy context

Section 2.2 of this report looks at the policy context in which the City Council operates. Key to this is its own Business Plan for 2011-15 – Delivering for the People of York. Its five priority areas each provide an opportunity to think about how all citizens in the city will be impacted, examples of which are set out in the table below.

Table 1: Fairness considerations for the Council’s 2011-15 Business Plan

Priority area	Considerations to ensure equality of outcomes
<p>Create jobs and grow the economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing sustainable economic growth with a need to connect all residents to economic opportunity • Fully understanding the barriers that prevent people taking up employment opportunities • Ensuring local people have skills to match local business needs, particularly in new knowledge based industries, to widen labour market participation and more evenly distribute wealth • Encouraging sound business practice amongst local employers such that more businesses consider flexible working, part time/job shares, paying a living wage, apprenticeships, adapting premises etc. • Taking care that a higher than average number of people employed in the city in the public sector are not adversely affected by cuts • Increasing the role that the voluntary sector plays in service provision
<p>Get York moving</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using evidence to distinguish which modes of transport have the biggest impact on equality and then working to ensure these are fit for purpose through strong partnerships with business and public transport providers for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring people can access employment sites • Services affordable to all • Considered timetabling, routes and integrated transport planning • Continuing York as a cycling city, recognising the important health and well-being impacts that this

	makes
Build strong communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to build cohesive sustainable communities and a culture that values the diversity of all • Encouraging volunteers to come forward and ensuring they have the skills and support they need to be successful • Encouraging private sector Corporate Social Responsibility
Protect vulnerable people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to provide the community care people need to remain living independently • How to best utilise talents and capacities of all people and maximise the contribution they make • Understanding the strong link between health and employment and ensuring the effect of growing unemployment in the city's deprived communities does not lead to widening of health inequalities
Protect the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all communities have access to green space and to the city's heritage • Engaging all households in environmental good practice through adequate local recycling and composting facilities, and household energy efficiency to help reduce energy bills and fuel poverty • Exploiting the potential of the green economy for local employment opportunities and volunteering • Community engagement in local renewable energy generation schemes

There are a number of other key strategies and plans in place in the city that will be important to delivering the Council's fairness ambitions. Their successful implementation will make a significant impact on breaking deep rooted and long term cycles of inequality, but clearly will require innovative, integrated approaches to delivery in an environment of significantly less available funding.

1. The city's **Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2012** states that "every child and young person in York deserves the chance to reach their full potential and live their dreams". Furthermore that the city will "stretch the most able, support those who start at a disadvantage, and protect and nurture the most vulnerable." It has at its heart principles that every child is unique, must be given the chance to reach their full potential; that families are vital; and that early intervention to

vulnerable families or those struggling against disadvantage or discrimination is key. It also stresses the role of education in narrowing the gap in achievements of children from different communities.

2. The city's **Child Poverty Strategy** complements the above and aims to "take at least 1,000 children out of poverty by 2020" so poverty in childhood does not translate into lifelong poor experiences and outcomes, for example ability to secure a good income, participate in society, be of sound mental and physical health etc. It focuses on areas such as skills, childcare, health and adult learning as means of helping families to support their children, improving living conditions, and supporting families to improve their finances to move out of poverty including through the living wage concept.
3. On **adult social care**, over 7,000 vulnerable adults receive social care services in York. The Council's overarching objective is to safeguard such adults, to promote their independence, enable them to make real life choices and give them control over their daily lives.
4. The **Strategy for Carers 2009-2011** is in place to make sure people providing care have access to the support and services they need.
5. A **Strategy for Older People 2006-2021** and **Vision for Older People's Health and Well-being in York 2010-2015** is guiding the Council to take a long term view of the services that older people will need in York – vital given the city's ageing population profile. Longer independent living, dementia care provision, avoiding isolation, and sheltered housing provision are all considered.
6. On **education**, work through YorOK recognises and sets out to tackle disparities in performance amongst certain groups in the city, particularly those children who are in care, receiving free school meals and those from minority ethnic groups. It also endeavours to provide an integrated range of youth support services and activities, with quicker and easier ways to respond early to the needs of vulnerable young people; and to work to improve outcomes for children and young disabled people or who have a Special Educational Need.

7. A review of **health** services in York and North Yorkshire recognises the critical importance of mental health and a need to ensure the style of service is suitable. It has a particular focus on a shift towards preventative treatments and care by primary and community services, and away from inpatient care. This applies particularly for those with mild to moderate mental ill health.
8. The **York Housing Strategy 2011-15** will be central in meeting the housing needs of York. A key element will be to maximise the supply of decent environmentally sustainable homes that people can afford; and ensuring that housing stock meets the needs of specific groups such as the elderly, disabled people and people from the travelling community. It aims also to reduce and tackle the causes of homelessness and in this regard read across to other policies around inclusion and employability in the Council will be important.
9. **Local Transport Plan 3 2011-2031** has as part of its vision an intention to make York easier to get around and to provide equal access to opportunities for employment, education, training, good health and leisure for all.

Annex D: York Fairness Commission budget

The Council allocated a budget to support the costs of the Commission's activities.

The table below summarises all the Commission's costs from July 2011 when the Commissioners were first appointed up to and including the publication and presentation of the Interim Report on 28th November 2011.

Summary of Fairness Commission Costs

Meetings	<i>Venue hire, refreshments, AV and BSL interpreters for 5 meetings</i>	2,942
Website	<i>Design, development & hosting</i>	6,500
Interim Report	<i>Production and presentation</i>	5,325
Design, print & distribution	<i>Postcards, posters and meeting leaflets</i>	2,385
Publicity	<i>Photography & advertising</i>	425
Travel		350
Misc	<i>Postage, stationery & books</i>	230
Total cost		18,157

The Commissioners received no payment for their work for the Commission.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has funded an independent research team to:

- research background data about the York context

- synthesise City of York Council's existing plans and strategies for the report authors
- analyse the consultation feedback

Annex E: York Fairness Commission methodology

The Commission methodology consisted of two main strands of activity.

- *Public consultation* about fairness in York to hear the concerns, priorities and ideas of York residents and community stakeholders using a number of channels
- *Background research* to inform the Commission of key facts about inequality in York set in a national context and to give the Commission an understanding of City of York Council's existing plans, priorities and financial status.

An independent research team drawn from the Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) and the Equality Trust and funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation was set up to support both strands of work. The design and delivery of the public consultation activities was shaped by the Commission and staffed by CYC staff working for the Commission in this part of its remit.

Public consultation methodology

The feedback from all channels was handed to a SPRU researcher. The following channels were used:

- ***Freepost postcard and poster campaign***

During early September 5,000 Fairness Commission postcards and 500 posters advertising the public meetings and other access channels were distributed to Council receptions, libraries, community centres and other public places.

The postcards asked 'What three things would make York a Fairer Place?' and 'Is York a fair place for you and your family?'

A cut-out insert with the postcard questions was also reproduced in a feature article in The Press.

- ***A survey on the website***

<http://www.yorkfairnesscommission.org.uk>

The website was launched on 15th September and carried full information about the commission and its purpose, all contact channels, meeting dates and details. The site also directs people to a web survey form where people were asked to give their views on-line. The first set of questions was the same as those on the postcards. There were additional questions about wellbeing, access and work.

- ***Invitation to make submissions by email***

People were invited to write in their personal views or make submissions on behalf of groups or organisations to a Fairness Commission email address yourviews@yorkfairnesscommission.org.uk

- ***5 public meetings*** were held at different times of day at various city locations.

Date	Time	Venue
21 September 2011	7pm to 9pm	Ron Cooke Hub
28 th September 2011	1.15pm to 3.15pm	Priory Street
30 th September 2011	2pm to 4pm	New Earswick Folk Hall
1 st October 2011	10am to 1pm	Priory Street
5 th October 2011	7pm to 9pm	York High School

The meetings were designed to give people attending the opportunity to discuss in small groups their views on fairness, barriers to wellbeing, access and work in York and their ideas for how the Council should prioritise its spending.

The whole of the first meeting was recorded and the individual submissions of speakers have been transcribed. At all other meetings facilitators at each table supported the discussion and scribes took notes of the table discussions to reflect all the views that were stated. Individuals were also invited to record their views on post-it notes. The researcher responsible for the analysis of all the consultation feedback

attended all the meetings and debriefed the scribes immediately after each meeting.

- ***One event for Council and other public sector staff***

An event was held on 3rd October to which Council and other public sector staff were invited to several sessions throughout the day. The format of the sessions was similar to the public meetings. Staff were additionally asked to comment from their perspective as providers of services to vulnerable people on how services could be made fairer and how to reduce any wasteful spending. All discussions were noted and details passed to the researcher.

- ***Phone and face to face***

A Fairness Commission phone-line was set up to take calls to book places at the public meetings or to give views to the Commission on the phone. Appointments were also made available to see people face to face in the Council's main Customer Centre when a BSL interpreter was available.

Publicity

- York Fairness Commission website - Facebook page and twitter account
- Postcards and posters - distribution of meeting flyers for the last 3 public meetings
- 2 interviews on Radio York
- Quarter page adverts in the Press and Advertiser
- 5 press releases and a Press Feature article

Research methodology

City of York Council provided an extensive set of documents and data to the Commission and responded throughout the research period to any requests for further information or clarification. The documents included:

- Key facts about York and its residents with a focus on areas of identified inequality or deprivation and how these compare with the rest of the UK

- City of York Council's existing plans, priorities and strategies
- City of York Council's financial strategy, budget and savings requirements

The Commission asked the research team to:

- Develop a York Context report including a full analysis of data relevant to fairness, deprivation and inequality setting York in a national context.
- Provide a synthesis of the Council's existing plans, priorities and initiatives highlighting those aspects particularly relevant to the Commission's interests

The purpose of these documents was to provide the Commission with sound background information when considering the consultation feedback and developing their recommendations.

These documents have also provided source material for the independent report authors who have written the report for the Commission.