
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING & ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	8 DECEMBER 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS MORLEY (CHAIR), BOWGETT (VICE-CHAIR), SUE GALLOWAY (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), HYMAN, SIMPSON-LAING, TAYLOR, WISEMAN, MCLAUGHLIN (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER) AND GUMLEY (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR HORTON

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. Councillor Morley declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 4 (Approval of the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2008-2013) as the owner of tenanted properties.

33. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair and the Executive Member as a correct record.

34. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

35. APPROVAL OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY 2008 - 2013

Members considered a report, which asked them to note the review of the Private Sector Housing Strategy and sought approval for the contents of a new Strategy, covering the period between 2008 and 2013. The Strategy set out how the Council and its partners would work to help improve and maintain the condition and management of owner occupied and privately rented homes in York.

Officers informed Members that conditions of properties had improved though there were difficulties with early pre-1919 properties. General improvements had been made as well as improvements in energy efficiency, but that there was still work to be done. Officers informed

Members that a Private Stock Conditions Survey had been completed, the executive summary was attached as an appendix to this report and that the full report would be on line shortly.

In response to Members questions, Officers confirmed that a physical survey by the surveyor had been undertaken and that there had been 1721 responses. Officers confirmed that the consultation exercise had included landlords who had attended the landlord conference in March, and who had indicated that they wished to participate in a consultation exercise, and letting agents in the city. Officers also agreed to inform Members the exact tolerance levels for the statistics but did confirm that they had been collected in accordance with government guidelines² and Officers agreed to provide the electronic link for Members to the full survey report.³

In response to Members questions about the issue of Cert funding and working with utility companies, Officers stated that the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey had confirmed that York generally has high-energy efficiency and fewer people in receipt of benefits making York a less attractive area for the utilities companies to work with on this issue.

On the question of energy efficiency grants, publicity and take-up raised by Members, Officers reported that they were on target to exceed last year's outturn of 170 grants. Another grant was also available to landlords, which pays up to 50% of the total cost with a maximum grant of £4000. Officers informed Members that they were working with Energy Advice Centres, Primary Care Trusts and benefits advice agencies, as well as running general advertising campaigns with targeting of areas where this information is most needed, particularly where there is a concentration of elderly people on fixed incomes.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to endorse the Private Sector Housing Strategy and recommend it to the Executive for approval.¹

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To ensure that the housing in York continues to be maintained and managed to a high standard

Action Required

1. The Private Sector Housing Strategy be recommended to the Executive for approval SB
2. Officers to inform Members of the exact tolerance levels for the statistics. SB
3. Officers to provide the electronic link to the full report for Members. SB

36. HOUSING AND ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME – MONITOR 2

Members considered a report which informed them of the likely outturn position of the 2008/09 Capital Programme based on the spend profile and information to October 2008/2009 and sought approval to any resulting changes to the programme. The report also informed the Executive Member of any slippage and sought approval for the associated funding to be slipped between the relevant financial years to reflect this.

In response to questions from Members, Officers replied that there had to be an element of estimation with regard to funding, as costs varied depending on the nature of the work and the property. This had been budgeted for, but needed to be monitored. Officers also noted that in terms of Tenant Choice backfills there had been an increase in unit costs, yet a decrease in unit costs for the Tenant Choice programme in the Tang Hall area.

It was noted that if more funding could be made available then this would help to keep people in their own homes and also help builders during the economic downturn.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Note the progress on schemes.
- (ii) Approve the variations set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

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

37. CHANGES TO THE DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS PROGRAMME

Members considered a report, which outlined the proposed changes to the Grants and Assistance Policy to take account of the changes to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

The report also advised Members about the pressure on the adaptations budget this year and forecast the potential impact on next year's budget, and highlighted the additional funding requirements that had been requested through the Capital Resource Allocation Model (CRAM) process.

In response to questions raised by Members, Officers responded that the Council had the discretion to impose a limited charge if a grant had been made and the property was sold within 10 years from the certified date of the grant. It was also confirmed by Officers that access to gardens could be via the back or front door, not both and that each case was assessed on its own merits in terms of what was reasonable and practical.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Note the briefing provided regarding pressures on the adaptations budget in the current year and the forecasted potential impact on next year's budget.
- (ii) Approve option 1 – To revise the existing policy in line with the proposed policy changes relating to:
 - a) the general consent; and
 - b) access to the gardens.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To ensure that vulnerable people remain independent and safe in their own homes, by the provision of a fast and responsive service, which provides value for money.

38. STRATEGY FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF SUPPORT TO PEOPLE WITH A PHYSICAL AND/OR SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

Members considered a report, which outlined the outcome of consultation undertaken since June 2008 to develop a Physical and Sensory Impairment Strategy for adult social care in York.

The Assistant Director for Commissioning and Partnerships outlined the priorities with regard to consultation built into the strategy as outlined in paragraph 10 of the report. The Officer also reminded Members of the government priority for all councils to set up Centres for Independent Living (CIL) by 2010, which would be independent and user led.

In response to questions from Members, Officers confirmed that:

- This strategy provided a stronger focus and that the CIL would offer the opportunity to create a one-stop shop and would give a broader focus to these issues.
- With regard to the six wards, the information used for the strategy was based on the 2001 Census, though this may now be out of date.
- It was important to keep an eye on changing ethnic demographics.

- Additional information on Equality Legal Issues, Page 72 Annex 2, could be made available if required by Members.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Approve the Strategy
- (ii) Seek further Officer reports on the implementation of the Strategy and progress towards the development of a Centre for Independent Living.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To support the social inclusion and development of support to people with a physical or sensory impairment.

39. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSIONING STRATEGY 2008-2011

Members considered a report on the multi agency North Yorkshire Mental Health Commissioning Strategy. The Strategy had been developed by the lead Mental Health Commissioning Agency – NYYPCT, to ensure that the commissioning of services in North Yorkshire and the York area reflected national drivers and strategies, while providing consistency across North Yorkshire and the York Primary Care area.

Officers explained that the report presented was draft version 14. This report has undergone wide consultation over 12-16 months and there may be some very minor changes to the appendices, but that there would be no changes to the overall content.

The Director of Housing and Adult Social Services stated that mental health affects a large number of people, with an impact on housing, employment and education and one of the main focuses of the report was how to make the services more personal.

Following a comment from the Executive Member, Officers agreed that an executive summary would be available once the final version was ready¹. In a response to a Member's question, it was agreed that the report and map would be made available on the Internet², as the information appeared too small to read clearly in the agenda annex item.

Members stated that it was an excellent report and the Executive Member commented that it was very fit for purpose.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to endorse the Mental Health Strategy and proposed action to support its delivery.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To improve services for residents in York with mental health problems.

Action Required

1. Officers to provide an Executive Summary for Members, SB
once the final report version has been made.
2. Officers to make the full report and map available on the SB
Internet.

40. 2008/9 SERVICE PLANS AND BUDGET 2ND MONITOR REPORT

Members considered a report that advised them of the progress made against the service plan targets for Housing and Adult Social Services and the projected financial outturns for 2008/9 based on the half-year results.

The Director of Housing and Adult Social Services highlighted the main aspects of the report and the various annexes to Members. On the question of homelessness, he stated that there had been a reduction in the number of families in temporary accommodation, yet there was still much to be done. He stated that a report on letting policy was due in the New Year. With regard to the lack of credit, a lot of work had been done in relation to public investment, mortgage rescue and stimulating the market. With regard to people with disabilities, York was already a leading authority and York was pushing to become an accessible city. The number of people making direct payments had risen. An area of concern was how quickly new referrals could be dealt with. The target was 28 days and much effort is taking place in this area. On the financial side, an underspend was predicted in the overall departmental General Fund position.

In response, Members commented that a lot of good work had been done in terms of providing the target number of affordable homes for 08/09, despite the credit crunch.

In response to questions raised by Members, Officers responded that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) figures had been broken down by area, tenancy type and by major works.

It was noted that the six Changing Places – Acomb Library, Willow House, Burtonstone Lane, Silver Street, Civic Centre and the Danesgate Centre – were all purpose facilities that would be used by people with disabilities and that could facilitate very good access throughout the city when all six become available. Other options would continue to be pursued on new developments and with retailers.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to note the content of the report and the comments by Members thereon.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: So that the Executive Member is briefed on the projected performance and financial outturns for Housing and Adult Social Services.

41. INDEPENDENCE, WELL BEING AND CHOICE – OUTCOME OF INSPECTION BY THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION (CSCI)

Members considered a report, which asked them to comment on the details of the CSCI inspection report received at the meeting on 20th October and the improvement plan presented at the same meeting. The City of York was included in the CSCI national programme of inspections of Independence, Well Being and Choice for 2007-2009. The objective of the inspection was to evaluate the City of York's performance in ensuring social care outcomes for the population – particularly in relation the experiences of people who need social care services and with leadership and commissioning for the delivery of those services.

The Director of Housing and Adult Social Services highlighted the main aspects of the report. He noted that the two biggest areas were: Safeguarding Adults and Staff Recruitment.

In response to questions raised by Members, Officers confirmed that:

- Record keeping at safeguarding meetings was being professionalised.
- The re-launch of safeguarding procedures would give clarity over all safeguarding issues. In respect of financial abuse, whilst there had been, at the time of inspection, evidence of disproportionate numbers in York compared to other authorities for 2007/8, a subsequent review undertaken had not revealed any significant patterns and figures for the first half of 2008/9 were in proportion with other authorities.
- In respect of people receiving Direct payments there had been no evidence of financial abuse and whilst the authority was signposting people to get assistance from accredited providers, individuals had choice and the role of the local authority was limited in this matter.
- It was confirmed that there were higher levels of safeguarding referrals, but new resources had been agreed - an additional manager had been recruited to lead on safeguarding, additional care management to reduce pressure on the Intake Team, and a dedicated minute taking role.

- That the findings of the inspection were fully accepted.
- On the question of the reporting of rushed visits to clients, it was confirmed that short visits of 15 minutes were made mainly for checking purposes, rather than for personal care. If longer visits were needed the costs would go up considerably. The department would be analysing the 15-minute visits and also looking at access to the warden call system as an alternative in some cases.
- Hospital discharge. a) With regard to jointly managing the discharge process with NHS protocols, these protocols were being revised and there would not just be winter planning meetings, but more local meetings throughout the year on a monthly basis. b) Whilst the delays in discharges were now significantly reduced, the emphasis from the inspectors was moving to quality of outcomes and work on reviewing the hospital discharge protocols, and would take into account the need for follow-up after discharge through a quality assurance survey.
- There had been some hard to reach individuals in the different ethnic groups.

The Executive Member noted that Safeguarding was an issue at the top of the agenda for older people, but that it was a non-statutory requirement and did not have the same strong statutory basis as child protection. In the light of the recent history of Harringey, she added that the question arose of how an independent chair for the York Safeguarding Adult Partnership Board could be encouraged. The Executive Member also referred to the Safeguarding Adults 'No Secrets' Consultation meeting held in November 2008 in Harrogate, where it had been noted that other authorities were facing similar issues. It was stated that a response to the 'No Secrets' Meeting would be considered at its meeting in January 2009. (Any response from the Board would be made available to HASS EMAP Members).

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- Note the report on the inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection and the improvement plan presented to the meeting on the 20 October 2008.
- Receive a progress report on the improvement plan in six months time¹.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: (i) To enable formal consideration of the inspection's findings and the Council's response.
(ii) To ensure the effective scrutiny of the improvement plan.

Action Required

1. Add progress report to the work plan.

SB

42. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES 2007/8

Members considered a report, which informed them of the outcome of the annual performance rating by the Commission for Social Care Inspection of adult social services in York. The assessment, confirmed in a letter from CSIC, was as follows:

- Delivery outcomes: Adequate
- Capacity for improvement: Uncertain
- Overall performance rating: 1 Star

The Director of Housing and Adult Social Services highlighted the main aspects of the assessment. He stated that York was not failing, but needed to do better and that a way forward with key areas for development was recorded in annex 1 to this report. York was also looking to ensure it partners with other key authorities and was talking to two authorities with regard to safeguarding and performance management for a logic check.

It was noted that partners also had a key role to play and Officers reported a very positive meeting with York Health Group.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Note the report and to comment on the annual performance assessment of adult social care by CSCI.
- (ii) Agree to receive an Improvement Plan in January or February 2009¹.

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: (i) To ensure that improvements achieved in 2006/7 are recognised by the Council and the Members are aware of the areas highlighted for improvement.
(ii) To ensure that progress is being made on the Key Areas for Development.

Action Required

1. Officers to provide an improvement plan report for January or February 2009.

SB

Councillor Morley, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.05 pm and finished at 7.10 pm].