

<b>Meeting:</b>	Combined Executive Member Decision Session
<b>Meeting date:</b>	27 January 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Pauline Stuchfield, Director of Housing and Communities
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Councillor Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities

## Decision Report: Housing Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (NIP)

### Subject of Report

- 1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget includes a £170k annual capital budget for investing into estates improvement. The Neighbourhood Improvement Programme will deliver improvements to the areas around council homes.
- 2 In accordance with the Executive decision on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 in the Housing Landlord Report:

*The primary focus of the funds will be:*

- *Building community capacity to co-manage shared spaces.*
- *Support wider estate regeneration work, for example supporting The Groves Neighbourhood Plan objectives, Walmgate Proposals and supporting the development of neighbourhood plans in other areas.*
- *Supporting measures to reduce Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), for example through new lighting, security gates and the closing off of unsafe passageways.*
- *Improving communal areas around council houses and apartments, such as improving hardstanding areas, tree and shrub planting, and enabling community and resident activity.*

*This funding will not be used for building repair tasks, this work will be funded from general repairs budgets.*

3. Where possible an annual programme will be set in advance and approved by the Executive Member, acknowledging that the first schedule of projects in this report utilises a significant carry forward amount from previous years. Ad hoc decisions during the year will be delegated to the Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities.
4. The opportunity to deliver larger scale substantive developments (as opposed to the previous Housing Environmental Improvement Programme (HEIP) programme) will allow greater benefits and flexibility to deliver change and improvements at scale in a more timely manner. Small requests however can be supported through a variety of measures, for example, through the ward funding process in accordance with ward priorities.
5. Members will be asked identify priorities areas for NIP funding ahead of the annual process and the appropriate source of funding will be advised back to members, if available.
6. It is possible that ad hoc schemes which support timely interventions are required and therefore a contingency budget will be allocated for approval through officer decisions during the year.

## **Benefits and Challenges**

7. The availability of funding to support the areas outlined in paragraph 2 strengthen community capacity by enabling residents to co-manage shared spaces, fostering greater ownership and collaboration. They support wider estate regeneration by aligning with neighbourhood plans and local development proposals, ensuring improvements reflect community priorities. Enhancements such as better lighting, security gates and the removal of unsafe routes help reduce anti-social behaviour and improve safety. Upgrading communal areas around council homes and apartments through landscaping and improved spaces creates more attractive, usable environments that encourage positive resident activity and community wellbeing.
8. There are no significant risks or challenges identified in approval of this document.

## **Policy Basis for Decision**

9. This funding programme aligns with the ambitions in the Council Plan (“One City, for All” 2023–27) to work closely with communities and target support where it is most needed, including through neighbourhood planning and community engagement processes. It delivers benefits against all four core commitments of Equalities & Human Rights, Affordability, Climate Change and Health.
10. Complementing this is the York Neighbourhood Model, a wider place-based service delivery approach being developed to create integrated neighbourhood teams that bring together professionals from health, care, housing, voluntary groups, and residents to provide joined-up early intervention, prevention and community support tailored to local needs. This model aims to strengthen collective action at neighbourhood level, build on residents’ strengths and assets, improve coordination of services, and focus on outcomes that matter locally, while also encouraging co-production with communities and partners.
11. Together, these programmes and ambitions emphasise community empowerment, multi-agency collaboration, place-based, preventative working, and investment in local spaces and services to improve liveability, safety, wellbeing and resident influence over how their neighbourhoods develop.

## **Financial Strategy Implications**

12. The NIP is part of the HRA Capital Programme and currently stands at £170k a year dedicated to improving the physical environment around council owned homes, and influenced by neighbourhood planning priorities and city-wide opportunities, to improve council estate improvements. The budget for the capital scheme including slippage for 2025/26 is £402k, with a further £170k per annum subject to annual budget decisions. In 2025/26 £75k has been used to contribute to the Neighbourhood Caretakers and a further £14k committed in year on communal drying areas.

## Recommendations and Reasons

13. The Executive Member is asked to:

- a. Approve the approach for engaging members and communities in proposals for spending NIP annual funding.
- b. Approve the NIP HRA funded projects and expenditure as follows:
  - **£10k** initial funding to the Groves Residents Association in relation to the Groves Community Plan, resulting proposals to inform future NIP funding proposals;
  - **£250k** for Walmgate Proposals priorities;
  - Delegate the procurement of a condition survey of all housing communal areas to Director of Housing & Communities (to maximum contribution of **£32k**)
  - **£30k** contribution to an additional E-van for Communities team environment officers,
  - **£40k Fund** for Communities team environment officers/Neighbourhood Caretakers for community involvement equipment and to undertake repairs arising from walkabouts.
  - **£40k contingency** for off-programme ad hoc proposals delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities documented by published officer decision.
- c. To delegate authority the Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance:
  - to commence procurement from the market via an open, fair and transparent competitive process and evaluation criteria in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules under Appendix 11 of the Council's Constitution (the "**Council's CPRs**") and (where applicable) the Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contract Regulations 2015:
    - the condition survey of all housing communal areas;

- an additional E-van for Communities Team environment officers; and
- any community involvement equipment for Communities Team Environment Officers and Community Caretakers and any required repair works arising from walkabouts,

and to determine the provisions of any contracts, and the provisions of any subsequent modifications and/or extensions thereto.

- d. To approve that the Council enters into a grant funding agreement with the Groves Residents Association on the terms set out in this Report, and to delegate authority to the Director of Housing & Communities, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance, to determine the provisions of the grant funding agreement, and the provisions of any subsequent modifications and/or extensions thereto, to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Council's Financial Regulations under Appendix 10a of the Council's Constitution (the "**Council's Financial Regs**") and the Council's CPRs.
- e. Subject to consultation with and approval by the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities, to delegate authority to the Director of Housing & Communities, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance, to commission and determine the provisions of any grant funding agreements and/or supply, services and/or works contracts relating to any off programme ad hoc proposals and the provisions of any subsequent modifications and/or extensions thereto, to ensure compliance with the relevant public procurement or subsidy control law (as applicable) and the Council's CPRs and Financial Regs, to be documented by published officer decision.

*Reasons:*

- i. *To ensure transparency and clear decision making around the NIP budget priorities and use of HRA expenditure for the benefit of council tenants.*
- ii. *To ensure all grant funding arrangements are in compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Council's Financial Regs and the Council's CPRs*

## Background

14. The following recommendations have been previously agreed by Executive:

### **June 2025 - extract from Housing Landlord Annual Report:**

*Approve the principles of the Neighbourhood Investment\* Programme (para 23), allowing the service to respond more effectively to the priorities of council house tenants.*

\*Should be 'Improvement'

Those principles are summarised in Paragraph 2 above.

### **October 2025 – extract from Housing Delivery Update Report:**

- k) *Delegate authority for the future allocation of Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (NIP) funding to the Director of Housing and Communities in consultation with Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Community Safety to support projects such as those outlined in Walmgate Improvement Proposals. The HDP will support the creation of good quality spaces whilst the NIP will improve existing spaces through targeted investment.*

## Consultation Analysis

15. Community engagement has shaped the Walmgate Improvement Proposals and earlier the Groves Community Plan identifying projects that residents have prioritised, and further refinement of these proposals will continue with local residents and ward councillors through community meetings and dialogue.
16. In future years, subject to budget availability, consultation will take place with ward councillors before the programme is launched each year on proposals for consideration.

## Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

17. The following proposals are recommended for approval:

### Neighbourhood Programmes

- **The Groves Community Plan.** Allocate **£10k** to the Groves Residents Association, to work with officers on a set of proposals that could be funded by NIP in the future, building on the 2020 Plan and relating to council owned land.
- **Walmgate Proposals.** Allocate **£250k** provisional budget for Walmgate Proposal priorities as outlined to Executive in October 2025:

*3 c) Note the progress of the Walmgate Improvement Proposals and approve request for delegated authorities to allocate Neighbourhood Improvement Programme funding towards this and other such projects;*

Subject to final consultation with residents and ward councillors.

### City wide programmes:

- **Condition survey of all communal areas** on CYC council housing land and property. This will inform work which will require significant investment from the Housing Capital Programme. The cost is to be agreed based on a quote for survey work; the maximum funding available from NIP funding is **£32k**. The procurement, final award, and determination of the relevant terms and conditions for this survey work (along with any subsequent modifications and extensions thereto) should be delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance.
- **Purchase an additional E-van** for Communities team environment officers who work closely with public realm. Neighbourhood Caretakers but predominantly with voluntary organisations and resident volunteers– **one off £30k** to focus on work on HRA land, open space and communal areas.

Running costs should be covered from various grants each year and /or managed from existing budgets. The procurement and determination of the relevant terms and conditions of purchase for the E-van should be delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance.

- **£40k Fund** for Communities team environment officers/Neighbourhood Caretakers for equipment **to support community involvement and to undertake repairs** arising from walkabouts on council housing estates. The procurement, final award, and determination of the relevant terms and conditions for the purchase of this equipment and any required repair services (along with any subsequent modifications and extensions thereto) should be delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance.
  - **£40k contingency** for off-programme **ad hoc proposals** delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities documented by published officer decisions. Any decision relating to any required public contracts and/or grant agreements (along with any subsequent modifications and extensions thereto) should be delegated to Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Governance.
18. The Executive Member could choose any of the following for each recommendation and item of proposed expenditure:
- Approve the recommendations and or accept/decline individual spending proposals
  - Decline the recommendations.
19. The Executive Member is recommended to accept all the recommendations and spending proposals in order to enact the previous recommendations of Executive made in June and October 2025 and support the delivery of neighbourhood improvements across York in areas of council housing communities.



## Organisational Impact and Implications

20.

- **Financial,** The proposals in this report must all relate developments and services on council housing land and provided to council tenants. All expenditure is within existing budget allocations.
- **Human Resources:** There are no HR implications contained within this report projects will be delivered within existing team resources

- **Legal:**

Under Rule 8.10 of the Council CPRs, Executive or the relevant Executive Member may agree, or authorise another Officer to enter a contract under their delegated powers where the aggregate contract value (including any extensions) is worth more than £250,000 but less than £500,000, unless the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer have approved the Procurement as Routine.

- It is already noted that at Executive in October 2025, the Director of Housing and Communities in consultation with Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Community Safety was delegated authority for the future allocation of Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (NIP) funding to support projects such as those outlined in Walmgate Improvement Proposals.
- Any agreements required for any supplies of goods/equipment, services and/or works following consultation with and approval from the Executive Member will require advice and input from Legal Services. Any procurement/commissioning for any supplies of goods/equipment, services and/or works will require advice from Legal Services and Commercial Procurement on the different routes and the associated advantages and risks of each route to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and our Constitution (see **Procurement** below).
- The award of any grant funding by the Council to any third party is subject to:
  - Rules 5(f) and 5(g) of the Financial Regs; and
  - Rule 4 of the Council's CPRs.

- Any grant funding agreements to be awarded to any third-party following consultation with and approval from the Executive Member must be drafted and concluded with input from Legal Services to ensure compliance with the Council's CPRs, the Council's Financial Regs, and the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Legal Services and Finance must be consulted with regards to any transparency and disclosure requirements under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Any grant funding agreement entered into will have no procurement law implications; however, the Council cannot elect to award a Grant where the sole purpose for doing so would be to avoid conducting a competitive tender process in accordance with the Council's CPRs and (where applicable) the Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contract Regulations 2015; further advice must be sought from Legal Service where necessary. Legal Services and Finance must also be consulted with regards to any transparency and disclosure requirements under the Subsidy Control Act 2022.
  
- **Procurement**, where the need for procurement of services arises, Procurement must be a tool to deliver those outcomes. Services and/or works must be procured via a compliant process in accordance with the Council's CPRs and where applicable, the Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Further advice regarding the procurement process and development of procurement strategies must be sought from the Commercial Procurement team.
  
- **Health and Wellbeing**: The provision of safe, communities, housing estates and surrounding environment is a major factor in reducing health inequalities. Public health support the recommendations in the report.
  
- **Environment and Climate action**, By improving communal areas, including inclusive and accessible routes which prioritise walking, cycling or wheelchair use, focused on distinct neighbourhood strengths and assets, the Local Transport Strategy ambition of improving health generating travel options where movement is a barrier and reducing carbon emissions from transport will be supported. Safer routes will again secure health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.

An E-van will reduce operational emissions associated with the Communities team and voluntary groups.

Improvements to the communal areas surrounding Council owned housing assets should consider the potential for biodiversity enhancement, access to green space to support health and wellbeing improvements, climate adaptation resilience and carbon sequestration. For example, trees will provide cover and shade to prevent overheating, sequester carbon emissions, create new habitats and improve mental and physical wellbeing. The creation or enhancement of new natural capital could also generate income through nature-based markets for carbon credits and biodiversity net gain.

- **Affordability**, The proposals will bring opportunities and services to a local level for example building on other investments as a local community hub in Walmgate. The combined proposals seek to improve life quality and reduce health inequalities for those living with low incomes.
- **Equalities and Human Rights:** The Council recognises, and needs to take into account its Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it in the exercise of a public authority's functions).

Where Executive decisions have been taken previously they are supported by EIAs and future projects will secure the involvement of all residents with protected characteristics. The process of consulting on the recommendations in this report will identify any equalities implications on a case-by-case basis, and these will be addressed in any future reports. The report has positive impacts on Human Rights with regard to the following:

- **Article 8 - Right to Respect for Private and Family Life, Home, and Correspondence:**  
Neighbourhood-based delivery helps residents remain in their homes and communities, with wraparound support that respects privacy, dignity, and family life.

- **Protocol 1, Article 1 - Protection of Property:** Support for housing stability and local environment improvements helps residents maintain secure, habitable homes
- **Article 10 – Freedom of Expression and Participation:** Residents are empowered to shape priorities and influence service design through neighbourhood governance and co-production forums.
- **Data Protection and Privacy:** The data protection impact assessment (DPIAs) screening questions were completed for the recommendations and options in this report and as there is no personal, special categories or criminal offence data being processed to set these out, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA at this time. However, this will be reviewed following the approved recommendations and options from this report and a DPIA completed if required.
- **Communications:** The actions arising from each scheme will be supported by our ongoing programme of tenant communications and, where required, targeted communications to key partners and within communities. The exact approach will be determined by the communication outcomes we're seeking to achieve in each case.
- **Economy.** Improvements to the environment and places where the city's employees live and work will improve staff morale, health, recruitment and retention across all sectors involved including the voluntary and community sector, and the health and care workforce.

## Risks and Mitigations

21. There are no significant risks or challenges identified in approval of this document.

## Wards Impacted

22. City wide, however this report is delivering delegated decisions already made by Executive as outlined in the report.

## Contact details

For further information please contact the author of this Decision Report.

### Author

<b>Name:</b>	Pauline Stuchfield
<b>Job Title:</b>	Director of Housing and Communities
<b>Service Area:</b>	Housing
<b>Email</b>	pauline.stuchfield@york.gov.uk
<b>Report approved:</b>	Yes
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### Abbreviations

ASB	Anti Social Behaviour
CPRs	Contract Procedure Rules
DPIA	Data Protection Impact Assessment
HDP	Housing Delivery Programme
HEIP	Housing Environmental Improvement Programme
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
MFA	Minimal Financial Assistance
NIP	Neighbourhood Improvement Programme
SPEI	Services of Public Economic Interest
SPEIA	Services of Public Economic Interest Assistance

### Background papers

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 - Housing Landlord Annual Report:**

.Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 3 June 2025, 4.30 pm

#### **October 2025 –Housing Delivery Update Report:**

Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 7 October 2025, 4.30 pm

### Annexes

None.