
Scrutiny Management Committee

Date of meeting

Report of the 'The Reducing Carbon Emissions Scrutiny Sub Committee'

Reducing Carbon Emissions from York's Public and Private Sector Housing.

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Scrutiny Management Committee of the final round of consultation on the implementation of recommendations and revisions to the report discussed at their previous meeting.
2. The main findings arising from the work carried out by the Scrutiny Sub Committee are as follows:
 - The council has a number of obligations as set out in various Acts and international, national and regional guidance to promote sustainable forms of energy in the home and reduce harmful emissions.
 - CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty are seen as linked issues. The recommendations therefore refer to both reducing CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty.
 - Renewable microgeneration – i.e. domestic scale wind, solar or biomass generation is seen as integral to tackling fuel poverty and therefore reducing CO₂ emissions.
 - Yorkshire and Humberside region is the second poorest nationally in terms of fuel poverty
 - York has two wards in the bottom 10% nationally and five wards in the bottom 10% regionally concerning fuel poverty. Almost 1 in 4 households live in fuel poverty rising to almost 1 in three households in the poorest wards.
 - City of York Council Housing stock has above national average SAP(energy efficiency) rating but is still the lowest in the region.
 - York residents have the lowest rate of access to funding to increase home insulation and energy efficiency and therefore, potentially, spends more money on fuel and creates more CO₂ emissions.

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

Background

4. Drafts of the final report were previously presented to SMC in July where further work was initially agreed to conclude the review by September 2006. Amendments to the attached report requested by SMC were incorporated for the September 2006.
5. At the September meeting Members were disappointed at what they felt to be a disproportionately negative response from Officers regarding the financial implications of recommendations. Members felt that officers in Finance should be consulted further regarding their understanding of the underlying rationale for the recommendations as the comments in respect of implications did not appear to reflect this.
6. Further consultation has now been conducted and the recommendations have been adjusted to reflect discussions and the intended purpose of the review. As a result, the officer comments made in response to this review have now been revised and these are incorporated within the report at Annex A.
7. References to all Annexes in previous versions of the report remain the same. The final report is structured to provide a top down view of the issues around CO₂ emissions and therefore details research and findings in relation to the following:
 - Global/International issues
 - National responses and issues
 - Regional responses and obligations, and
 - Local obligations and implications.
8. The 12 recommendations contained in the report still focus on the following areas where the Council can take immediate action:
 - Strategies and action plans (recommendations 1, 10,)
 - Planning guidance and building regulations (recommendations 2, 3, 4, 6)
 - Standards, Monitoring and assessment (recommendations 5, 7, 8, 9)
 - Raising awareness (recommendations 11, 12).

Main Changes

9. The main changes to the September draft were detailed in the cover report for the last SMC meeting. The only further changes are in respect of the financial implications as outlined above.

Consultation

10. During the detailed work undertaken by the Scrutiny Sub Committee full consultation has been carried out and recognition of those consulted has been made at the end of the report. As explained in paragraphs 4-6 above, further detailed consultation has taken place with both Housing and Financial Services on their initial comments reported to the last meeting and on the underlying intent of the review. It is understood that the Head of Financial Services will attend the meeting to respond to any remaining queries on the financial comments, if necessary.

Options

11. During the course of review the Sub Committee have taken views on information provided as best practice and much of this is provided in the Annexes to the report, and available on line on the Council's website with the reports for the September meeting of this Committee. The recommendations reflect those considerations and alternative options are not therefore presented.

Analysis

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

Corporate Priorities

13. The wider topic of sustainability has been a Council Corporate Aim for many years. The recently approved Corporate Priorities includes improvements to the 'quality and availability of decent and affordable homes in the city'.

Implications

14. The implications arising from each of the recommendations are detailed in the report (see summary of recommendations pages 7 & 8).

Risk Management

15. The report highlights the issues and implications for York of a number of national and regional guidance. The risks to the Council are that its responsibilities to promote more energy efficiency and assess and monitor progress across the city are not fully embedded. It is suggested that this should be addressed as part of the operational and strategic risk analysis carried out by each directorate.

Recommendations

16. The Scrutiny Management Committee are asked to :

- Note the comments made by the relevant officers.
- Endorse the revised recommendations contained within the final report;
- Agree for the report to be considered by the Executive at the earliest opportunity.

Contact Details

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Report Approved **Date** 16.10.06

Chief Officer's name
 Title

Report Approved 16.10.06

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

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Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: See Annex A

Annexes

Annex A: Final Report Reducing Carbon Emissions from York's Public and Private Sector Housing.

Annex Aa: Scrutiny Topic Registration Form

Annex Ab: HACKW report re fuel Poverty and Health Impacts

Annex Ac: Affordable warmth Action Plan for Yorkshire and the Humber

Annex Ad: Section of Regional Local Authority Cabinet Energy Champions Questionnaire

Annex Ae: Mapping Domestic Thermal Efficiency in York

Annex Af: Affordable Warmth Strategy Development

Annex Ag: Sketching the Energy Efficient Home