
Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee (Calling In)
Date	15 September 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Hunter, Hollyer, Mason, Musson, K Taylor (substitute for Cllr Barnes) and Pearson
Officers in Attendance:	Janie Berry (Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer), Dawn Steel (Head of Civic and Democratic Services), Pippa Corner (Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning - NHS Vale of York CCG and City of York Council), Michael Jones (Head of Housing Delivery), Tracey Carter (Assistant Director of Regeneration and Asset Management), Patrick Looker (Finance Manager) and Louise Cook (Democracy Officer)
Apologies	Councillors Barnes and Rowley

5. **Declarations of Interest**

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, which they might have in the business on the agenda. No interests were declared.

6. **Public Participation**

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

7. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2020 be approved as a correct record, to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

8. **Called In Item: Mental Health Housing and Support**

Members considered a report which set out the reasons for the call-in of the decisions made by the Executive at their meeting on 27 August 2020, in respect of Mental Health Housing and Support and the Committee's remit and powers in relation to the call-in.

The decisions were set out in Annex A to the report, along with the original report to the Executive, at Annex B. Resolution (v) and (vi) on the Decision Sheet had been called in by Cllrs Myers, Pavlovic and Wells for the following reasons:-

- i. 22 The Avenue is a public asset and should be used to help address the city's housing affordability crisis, through its transfer to the council's Housing Revenue Account;
- ii. The Executive's decision ignores the opportunity to help to reduce the city's existing housing waiting list;
- iii. Options should be provided to the Executive as to how 22 The Avenue could be re-developed for housing by the council and put to beneficial use, rather than being sold off to the private sector to profit from a public asset.

Under the provisions of the council's constitution and the requirements of Local Government Act 2000, the following options were available:

- A – not to refer the matter to Executive, in which case the original decisions would be confirmed, or
- B - refer the matter back to Executive with specific recommendations.

Cllr Myers addressed the committee on behalf of the Calling-In Members, explaining in more detail the reasons for the calling-in and responded to questions put by Members. The Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods and the Executive Member for Finance and Performance, on behalf of the Executive, then responded to the calling-in reasons and to Members' questions. Finally, questions were put to officers

responsible for the report at Annex 2. From these submissions and responses, it was ascertained that:

- The Calling-In Members believed Executive should not have finalised the decision to sell 22 The Avenue without considering an analysis of options that could have supported the housing affordability crisis and helped reduce the council housing waitlist, whilst also providing long term revenue. They felt that the transparency around the process used to release 22 The Avenue could have been strengthened in the Executive report and that further analysis would not cause any delay to the 3 year timeline.
- The estimated number of houses that could be delivered on the site was 10 and the capital value of the site was up to £2m.
- The site appraisal demonstrated that 22 The Avenue was an uneconomic Housing Revenue Account site - too small and too high cost for the Housing Delivery Programme.
- Developing the site would lead to fewer homes and fewer affordable homes in the city.
- An update on the Housing Delivery Programme would be brought to Executive on 22 October 2020 and the Asset Management Strategy would be brought to Executive on 26 November 2020.

After a full debate, Cllr Hollyer moved, and Cllr Mason seconded, that Option A be approved. A named vote was taken and Cllrs Fenton, Hollyer, Hunter, Mason and Pearson all voted in favour of the motion, while Cllrs Crawshaw, Musson and K Taylor voted against. It was therefore declared carried by 5 votes to 3.

Members went on to consider whether they wished to make any additional decisions or observations arising from their debate, and it was

Resolved: (i) That Option A be approved and that the original decisions not be referred back to the Executive for reconsideration.

Reason: The Committee does not consider that there were grounds to make specific recommendations to the Executive in respect of the original report.

- (iii) That this Committee would like scrutiny to be engaged in the process used to dispose of council assets, including how this was articulated through the council's decision making process and it be agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair discuss this topic with all Scrutiny Committee Chairs.

- (iii) That this Committee would like the Chair, Vice-Chair and Executive Member for Finance and Performance to consider scrutiny input into the Management Asset Strategy before it be considered by Executive in November.

Reason: To ensure that all decisions relating to council assets were subject to appropriate scrutiny.

Cllr J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.39 pm].