

The 'Better Decision Making' tool has been designed to help you consider the impact of your proposal on the health and wellbeing of communities, the environment, and local economy. It draws upon the priorities set out in our Council Plan and will help us to provide inclusive and discrimination-free services by considering the equalities and human rights implications of the decisions we make. The purpose of this tool is to avoid decisions being made in isolation, and to encourage evidence-based decision making that carefully balances social, economic and environmental factors, helping us to become a more responsive and resilient organisation.

The Better Decision Making tool should be used when proposing new projects, services, policies or strategies, or significant amendments to them. The tool should be completed at the earliest opportunity, ideally when you are just beginning to develop a proposal. However, it can be completed at any stage of the decision-making process. If the tool is completed just prior to the Executive, it can still help to guide future courses of action as the proposal is implemented.

The Better Decision Making tool must be attached as an annex to Executive reports. A brief summary of your findings should be reported in the One Planet Council / Equalities section of the report itself.

Guidance to help you complete the assessment can be obtained by hovering over the relevant question.

Please complete all fields. If you wish to enter multiple paragraphs in any of the boxes, hold down 'Alt' before hitting 'Enter'.

Introduction

Service submitting the proposal:	Housing Standards and Adaptations
Name of person completing the assessment:	Ruth Abbott
Job title:	Housing Standards and Adaptations Manager
Directorate:	HHASC
Date Completed:	5th March 2020
Date Approved (form to be checked by head of service):	

Section 1: What is the proposal?

1.1	Name of the service, project, programme, policy or strategy being assessed? The report provides a response to a Motion around Empty Properties
1.2	What are the main aims of the proposal? Members asked for a report to be brought as there has been a slight increase in the number of empty properties in the city. Although Members recognised that there had been a slight increase in the number of reported empty properties it was still low in comparison both to the regional and national but they wanted to understand why there had been a reported rise and what options they could consider to tackle empty homes
1.3	What are the key outcomes? There are three options considered by the recommendation is to continue with the current strategy and level of resource within the Housing Standards and Adaptations team, focussing on healthy homes interventions to both homeowners and empty property owners but to bring back a progress paper in six months to the Executive member for Housing and Community Safety

Section 2: Evidence

2.1	What data / evidence is available to support the proposal and understand its likely impact? (e.g. hate crime figures, obesity levels, recycling statistics) An audit of Council tax data
2.2	What public / stakeholder consultation has been undertaken and what were the findings? Contacting the owners of empty properties which had been identified as such through the Council Tax process

	Are there any other initiatives that may produce a combined impact with this proposal? (e.g. will the same individuals / communities of identity also be impacted by a different project or policy?)
2.3	N/A

Section 3: Impact on One Planet principles

Please summarise any potential positive and negative impacts that may arise from your proposal on residents or staff.
This section relates to the impact of your proposal on the ten One Planet principles.

For 'Impact', please select from the options in the drop-down menu.
If you wish to enter multiple paragraphs in any of the boxes, hold down 'Alt' before hitting 'Enter'.

Equity and Local Economy

Does your proposal?	Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.1 Impact positively on the business community in York?	Positive	Vacant dwellings often have a detrimental impact on the value of neighbouring properties and the amenities of the neighbourhood in which they are situated
3.2 Provide additional employment or training opportunities in the city?	Positive	Empty properties represent a significant waste of valuable housing resource, at a time of both a severe affordable housing shortage, and low rates of new housing completion
3.3 Help improve the lives of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds or underrepresented groups?	Positive	Empty properties represent a significant waste of valuable housing resource, at a time of both a severe affordable housing shortage, and low rates of new housing completion

Health & Happiness

Does your proposal?	Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.4 Improve the physical health or emotional wellbeing of residents or staff?	Positive	Improve the health and wellbeing of residents
3.5 Help reduce health inequalities?	Positive	Poor Housing and lack of affordable housing is known to have an impact on health
3.6 Encourage residents to be more responsible for their own health?	Positive	There is significant body of evidence (Marmot Review) which
3.7 Reduce crime or fear of crime?	Positive	Vacant dwellings can attract anti social behaviour including vandalism , fly t-tipping crime causing blight on neighbourhoods and distress to neighbours
3.8 Help to give children and young people a good start in life?	Positive	Poor Housing and lack of affordable housing is known to have an impact on health

Culture & Community

Does your proposal?	Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.9 Help bring communities together?	Positive	By working to improve housing across the city helps to improve neighbourhoods and reduce stress to neighbours
3.10 Improve access to services for residents, especially those most in need?	Neutral	
3.11 Improve the cultural offerings of York?	Positive	By having a healthy neighbourhoods attracts new residents and their visitors to the city.
3.12 Encourage residents to be more socially responsible?	Positive	There is a significant body of evidence that improving housing conditions improves neighbourhoods

Zero Carbon and Sustainable Water

Does your proposal?	Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
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3.13	Minimise the amount of energy we use and / or reduce the amount of energy we pay for? E.g. through the use of low or zero carbon sources of energy?	Positive	Where improvements are made to housing, energy efficiency measures are included to reduce fuel poverty and carbon
3.14	Minimise the amount of water we use and/or reduce the amount of water we pay for?	Neutral	this is not included as part of bringing empty properties back in to use

Zero Waste

Does your proposal?		Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.15	Reduce waste and the amount of money we pay to dispose of waste by maximising reuse and/or recycling of materials?	Neutral	this is not included as part of bringing empty properties back in to use

Sustainable Transport

Does your proposal?		Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.16	Encourage the use of sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling, ultra low emission vehicles and public transport?	Unsure	this is not included as part of bringing empty properties back in to use
3.17	Help improve the quality of the air we breathe?	Unsure	See above

Sustainable Materials

Does your proposal?		Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.18	Minimise the environmental impact of the goods and services used?	Positive	Re-using Empty homes has a positive impact on the environment and reduces, albeit only a little, the need for new builds

Local and Sustainable Food

Does your proposal?		Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.19	Maximise opportunities to support local and sustainable food initiatives?	Neutral	this is not included as part of bringing empty properties back in to use

Land Use and Wildlife

Does your proposal?		Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
3.20	Maximise opportunities to conserve or enhance the natural environment?	Positive	Re-using Empty homes has a positive impact on the environment and reduces, albeit only a little, the need for new builds
3.21	Improve the quality of the built environment?	Positive	By improving the physical standards of the properties improves the wider neighbourhood and the city
3.22	Preserve the character and setting of the historic city of York?	Positive	there are a few properties which are within the walls of the city but by ensuring that the properties are brought back in to use will improve the city
3.23	Enable residents to enjoy public spaces?	Positive	Improving the physical standards of the properties has a positive impact on the built environment

3.40	Additional space to comment on the impacts		
carrying out a range of healthy homes interventions helps improve the quality of life for the individuals, improves neighbourhoods and has a positive impact on the city as a whole			

Section 4: Impact on Equalities and Human Rights

Please summarise any potential positive and negative impacts that may arise from your proposal on staff or residents. This section relates to the impact of your proposal on **advancing equalities and human rights** and should build on the impacts you identified in the previous section.

For 'Impact', please select from the options in the drop-down menu.
If you wish to enter multiple paragraphs in any of the boxes, hold down 'Alt' before hitting 'Enter'

Equalities

Will the proposal **adversely impact** upon 'communities of identity'?
Will it **help advance equality** or **foster good relations** between people in 'communities of identity'?

		Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
4.1	Age	Positive	there is a short of suitable affordable homes in the city especially for young first time buyers. By bringing back, albeit a few Empty homes in to use will support this group. Many of the properties owned and occupied which also require interventions
4.2	Disability	Neutral	
4.3	Gender	Neutral	
4.4	Gender Reassignment	Neutral	
4.5	Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	
4.6	Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	
4.7	Race	Neutral	
4.8	Religion or belief	Neutral	
4.9	Sexual orientation	Neutral	
4.10	Carer	Neutral	
4.11	Lowest income groups	Positive	By providing, albeit only a few in number, more housing will have a positive impact. The Healthy Homes Officer where practicable refers Empty Property owners to YorHome Scheme the Council's social letting agency.
4.12	Veterans, Armed forces community	Neutral	

Human Rights

Consider how a human rights approach is evident in the proposal

	Impact	What are the impacts and how do you know?
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4.13	Right to education	Neutral	Increasing the supply of the homes, albeit only a few in number has a positive impact
4.14	Right not to be subjected to torture, degrading treatment or punishment	Unsure	
4.15	Right to a fair and public hearing	Positive	Use of any legislative powers will be in line with the law and rights of appeal through that process
4.16	Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	Positive	Healthy home interventions helps to support both homeowners/empty property owners and the wider neighbourhood
4.17	Freedom of expression	Unsure	
4.18	Right not to be subject to discrimination	Neutral	
4.19	Other Rights	Positive	We work with a range of partners to ensure that individuals living in or owning dilapidated homes are supported

4.20	Additional space to comment on the impacts		





Section 5: Planning for Improvement

5.1	What have you changed in order to improve the impact of the proposal on the One Planet principles? (please consider the questions you marked either mixed or negative, as well as any additional positive impacts that may be achievable)
	This is a response to a council motion

5.2	What have you changed in order to improve the impact of the proposal on equalities and human rights? (please consider the questions you marked either mixed or negative, as well as any additional positive impacts that may be achievable)
	We have carried out an audit and have found that a significant number of homes which were recorded as empty were not empty or were going to be brought back in to use imminently

5.3	Going forward, what further evidence or consultation is needed to ensure the proposal delivers its intended benefits? e.g. consultation with specific vulnerable groups, additional data)
	We are recommending that a progress report is brought back to the Executive Member in 6 months time

5.4	Please record any outstanding actions needed to maximise benefits or minimise negative impacts in relation to this proposal? (Expand / insert more rows if needed)
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Action	Person(s)	Due date
Review Resources - JD/recruitment to implement scheme	Ruth Abbott	01//10/2020
Review processes and procedures	Ruth Abbott	01/10/2020
Review ICT to support above	ICT/Ruth Abbott	01/10/2020
Develop marketing and communication plan	Ruth Abbott	01/09/2020

In the One Planet / Equalities section of your Executive report, please briefly summarise the changes you have made (or intend to make) in order to improve the social, economic and environmental impact of your proposal.