



## Notice of a public meeting of

### Decision Session - Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Services

**To:** Councillor Simpson-Laing

**Date:** Monday, 3 February 2014

**Time:** 4.30 pm

**Venue:** The Giles Room - 1st Floor West Offices (F022)

## AGENDA

### Notice to Members - Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item\* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democracy Support Group by:

**4:00pm on Wednesday 5 February 2014**, if an item is called in *after* a decision has been taken.

\*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5pm on Thursday 30 January 2014**.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests.
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests.

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

**2. Minutes**

(Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 18 July and 30 July 2013.

**3. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak at the meeting can do so. The deadline for registering is **5pm on Friday 31 January 2014.**

Members of the public may register to speak on an item on the agenda or an issue within the Cabinet Member's remit.

**4. Review of the Service Charges to Sheltered and Sheltered with Extra Care Housing** (Pages 7 - 14)

This report asks the Cabinet Member to consider proposals to amend the way the service charges to the sheltered and sheltered with extra care housing are calculated.

**5. Urgent Business**

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972

For more information about any of the following, please contact the Democracy Officers responsible for servicing this meeting.

- Registering to speak
- Written representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Democracy Officers:

Names: Catherine Clarke and Louise Cook (job share)

Contact Details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- E-mail – [catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk) and [louise.cook@york.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cook@york.gov.uk)

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## **About City of York Council Meetings**

### **Would you like to speak at this meeting?**

If you would, you will need to:

- register by contacting the Democracy Officer (whose name and contact details can be found on the agenda for the meeting) **no later than 5.00 pm** on the last working day before the meeting;
- ensure that what you want to say speak relates to an item of business on the agenda or an issue which the committee has power to consider (speak to the Democracy Officer for advice on this);
- find out about the rules for public speaking from the Democracy Officer.

**A leaflet on public participation is available on the Council's website or from Democratic Services by telephoning York (01904) 551088**

### **Further information about what's being discussed at this meeting**

All the reports which Members will be considering are available for viewing online on the Council's website. Alternatively, copies of individual reports or the full agenda are available from Democratic Services. Contact the Democracy Officer whose name and contact details are given on the agenda for the meeting. **Please note a small charge may be made for full copies of the agenda requested to cover administration costs.**

### **Access Arrangements**

We will make every effort to make the meeting accessible to you. The meeting will usually be held in a wheelchair accessible venue with an induction hearing loop. We can provide the agenda or reports in large print, electronically (computer disk or by email), in Braille or on audio tape. Some formats will take longer than others so please give as much notice as possible (at least 48 hours for Braille or audio tape).

If you have any further access requirements such as parking close-by or a sign language interpreter then please let us know. Contact the Democracy Officer whose name and contact details are given on the order of business for the meeting.

Every effort will also be made to make information available in another language, either by providing translated information or an

interpreter providing sufficient advance notice is given. Telephone York (01904) 551550 for this service.

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## **Holding the Cabinet to Account**

The majority of councillors are not appointed to the Cabinet (39 out of 47). Any 3 non-Cabinet councillors can 'call-in' an item of business following a Cabinet meeting or publication of a Cabinet Member decision. A specially convened Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) will then make its recommendations to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting, where a final decision on the 'called-in' business will be made.

## **Scrutiny Committees**

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

## **Who Gets Agenda and Reports for our Meetings?**

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- Relevant Council Officers get copies of relevant agenda and reports for the committees which they report to;
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- All public agenda/reports can also be accessed online at other public libraries using this link

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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MEETING	DECISION SESSION - CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES
DATE	18 JULY 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR SIMPSON-LAING

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**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At this point in the meeting, the Cabinet Member is asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests she may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

**2. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2013 be approved and signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Councils Public Participation Scheme.

**4. PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TWO TIERED CHARGING ARRANGEMENTS FOR WARDEN CALL**

Consideration was given to a report which presented the outcomes of a consultation on proposals to introduce tiered charging for the Warden Call service together with options and recommendations for approval.

Officers outlined the report and outlined the following proposals which formed the consultation:

Proposal 1 – a two tiered charging regime at £5 for Warden Call and £7 for Telecare.

Proposal 2 - a two tiered charging regime per week of £7 for Warden Call and £10 per week for Telecare.

Proposal 3 – Charge co-habitants of existing customers (an extra £3 per week of the tier 1 rate is set at £5 or an extra £5 if the tier 1 rate is set at £7),

Proposal 4 – to charge for lost equipment (50% of the cost replacement or lost pendants).

Officers advised that the majority of respondents recognised that an increase in the level of charge and the introduction of a two tiered system was reasonable, however there was some concern about the rise in cost amongst some customers.

Officers pointed out that the proposed increases would be staggered with the first increase in September 2013 and the second increase on April 2014 to enable customers to acclimatise to the change in cost.

The Cabinet Member commented that she was content with the recommendations and recognised that such charges needed to be made to meet costs at a time of difficult finances due to cuts in government funding.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member agreed:

- (i) To approve the increase in Warden Call charges from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 to £5 for tier 1 service and £7 for tier 2 service.
- (ii) To approve a further increase in charges from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to £7 for tier 1 service and £10 for tier 2 service.
- (iii) To approve charging cohabitants a further £3 per week where both parties are in receipt of the service.



- (iv) To approve charging customers 50% of the cost for any pendants lost.

REASON: To create a two-tiered charging system for Warden Call with prices that more accurately reflect the actual revenue cost of the service.

**5. AMENDMENTS TO NORTH YORKSHIRE HOME CHOICE COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY.**

Consideration was given to a report which asked the Cabinet Member to agree the proposed changes to the North Yorkshire Home Choice (NYHC) common allocations policy.

Officers outlined the report and drew the Cabinet Members attention to the changes to the policy which were outlined at paragraph 33.

The Cabinet Member advised that she was content with the recommendations and that it is important to have a review of policy at regular intervals due to changes in policy both locally and nationally. It is important for the Council to stay in the NYHC as it gives greater flexibility for housing applicants.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member agreed to:

- (i) Adopt the proposed policy as outlined in Option 1.
- (ii) Continue to give the North Yorkshire Home Choice Board delegated authority to make minor amendments to the policy.

REASON: To ensure the current NYHC policy adheres to new legal requirements, influence final policy and facilitate implementation.

Councillor Simpson Laing, Chair  
[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.20 pm].

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MEETING	DECISION SESSION - CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES
DATE	30 JULY 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR SIMPSON-LAING

## 6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Cabinet Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests she may have in the business on the agenda. She confirmed she had none.

## 7. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

## 8. **'YORPROPERTY' - THE INTRODUCTION OF A VOLUNTARY LANDLORD ACCREDITATION SCHEME IN YORK**

The Cabinet Member considered a report that introduced "YorProperty" a voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme which would support the private rented sector in York.

Officers gave an update and confirmed that they had already received some interest from local landlords who particularly liked Localpad, the web based property management system approach and that the scheme would be launched mid September 2013.

The Cabinet Member stated that Councillors across the country were encouraging Local Authorities to introduce a Voluntary Landlord Accreditations Scheme. The scheme would improve the private rented sector, give those letting confidence in their property and allow people to live in a decent standard of accommodation.

**RESOLVED:** That the implementation of the Landlord Accreditation Scheme as outlined in the report be approved and the Cabinet Member be advised of the final scheme details prior to launch.

**REASON:** To ensure the operation of an effective, fit for purpose accreditation scheme in order to support private rented sector in York.

## **9. TENANCY POLICY**

The Cabinet Member considered a report that asked her to agree to the adoption of a draft tenancy policy for Housing Services.

Officers gave an update and stated that the Government had introduced the requirement for all social landlords to publish a tenancy policy. The reforms included the introduction of flexible (fixed term) tenancies and affordable rent policy, changes to allocations and homelessness and promotion of increased mobility for social tenants.

The Cabinet Member considered the options available in the report and agreed to option 1.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That the Tenancy Policy in its current form be adopted.

(ii) That a further report on tenancy successions be submitted at the earliest opportunity.

**REASON:** All social landlords are required under the Localism Act and the regulatory framework to have a tenancy policy in place by Jan 2013.

Cllr Simpson-Laing, Cabinet Member  
[The meeting started at 4.10 pm and finished at 4.16 pm].



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**Decision Session - Cabinet Member for  
Health, Housing & Adult Social Services**

3 February 2014

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing & Community Safety

**Review of the Service Charges to Sheltered and Sheltered with Extra  
Care Housing**

**Summary**

1. This report asks the Cabinet Member to consider proposals to amend the way the service charges to the sheltered and sheltered with extra care housing are calculated.

**Background**

2. The way the charge is calculated has not been reviewed for many years. There have been a number of significant changes in the interim that have an effect on these calculations and it is against this background that this review has taken place.
3. In April 2002 the government of the day introduced Supporting People funding, the intention being to separate housing support from housing management. The emphasis of the scheme managers at the time was very much on support rather than housing management. This was reflected in our organisation with the staff base being part of the adult care team.
4. During the last decade the street access sheltered schemes without communal facilities have been re designated in recognition that they were no longer seen by tenants as suitable alternatives to the supported housing that is purpose built such as sheltered schemes with all the facilities they offer.
5. In April 2012 the management of the 11 sheltered schemes transferred from Adult Services to Housing Services. As part of the restructure of the housing service the role of the scheme managers was reviewed and a greater emphasis has been placed on the

housing management of the schemes with staff taking on tasks such as letting homes, building management and other low level housing management tasks. There has been a re-evaluation of their job descriptions, in order to reflect the change in their role. These coincided with changes in the way care was delivered to the tenants in the sheltered housing schemes, as well as changes to the Fair Access to Care Services criteria. As part of this review staffing hours at the sheltered schemes were reduced to 24 hours a week.

6. Current staff tasks include:

- Viewings and signing ups new tenants;
- Building management (repairs etc);
- Health and safety – fire alarm tests, legionella etc;
- Equipment checks;
- Addressing tenancy issues (minor anti-social behaviour etc);
- Daily ring round (support);
- Reviewing service plans (support);

7. The role of the Scheme Manager now involves spending approximately 20% of their time on support activities, such as daily checks and updating service plans, and 80% on housing management activities, such as supporting the tenancy management and looking after the safety of the building.

8. It is therefore proposed to realign the service charge to reflect the work that they now do giving a more accurate reflection of their. For those who are eligible for assistance Housing Benefit would cover those activities which are classed as housing management.

9. The Warden Call service is a support function, it provides assurance/insurance which enables people to continue to live independently and safely for longer. The funding which is available for support (the original Supporting People funding) could be appropriately used to cover the cost of Warden Call services, and the element of the Scheme Managers' time which is spent on support.

10. In July 2013 the charges for the Warden Call service were reviewed, as they had not kept pace with the actual cost of the running the service.

11. Warden Call is provided in all the 11 Council schemes as part of the Sheltered Housing offer. This provides a telephone response when

the person activates their pendant or they pull their cord. If they require assistance then wardens will visit them. This service can also offer additional provision including smoke detector; carbon monoxide detector and bogus call detector if required. This means that an emergency response is available to residents 24 hours a day.

12. Following a detailed analysis of the costs associated with providing the service to CYC Sheltered Housing / Extra Care tenants it is proposed to increase the charges to bring them in to line with all other tenures and reflect a full recovery charging model. This would see charges increase to £4.72 for a single occupant, with an additional £3 charge for a second occupant. The charge for the councils Sheltered Housing / Extra Care tenants is lower than non-council customers, this lower charge reflects that the service provided is different given that the council has on site staffing for part of the week, the costs of equipment is also lower than in other tenure types because of the hardwired nature of the equipment.
13. It is also proposed to introduce a charge for lost pendants. It costs £70 to replace and previously these have been replaced at no charge. Warden call now charge of 50% of the cost of a replacement pendant and it is proposed to pass this charge onto tenants where they have lost their pendants.
14. The ring fence on Supporting People funding was removed in 2013, and the funding that was previously allocated to Sheltered Housing from the Supporting People team has now been moved across into the Housing budget. It is therefore appropriate to consider how this funding can be most effectively used to support vulnerable customers.

## **Consultation**

15. Extensive consultation on changes in the warden call charging policy were undertaken by the warden call service as part of their charging review. Details of this are available if required.
16. Consultation with customers about the changes in the structure of management and structure of the Sheltered Housing service has been undertaken as changes have been made.
17. There has been internal consultation with the Warden Call Service, Adult social Care, Housing Benefit and Finance who support this approach.

## Options

18. Option 1 – To continue to calculate the service charge to customers in the same way, and to pass on the full cost of the increase in the charge to Sheltered Housing tenants from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.
19. Option 2 - To continue to calculate the service charge to customers in the same way and to cover the cost of the increase in Warden Call charges through the HRA, and not pass it on to Sheltered Housing tenants
20. Option 3 – To re-structure the service charge so that it fully reflects the changes in the service that is provided. To apply the funding which used to be ‘Supporting People’ to the support component of all tenants’ service charge. To pass on the full cost of the service to customers.

## Analysis

21. Option 1 - This would enable the Council to recoup the full cost of the increase immediately. The increase to tenants would be £3.92 per property plus an additional £3.00 if a second person in the property wished to register.
22. Usually the increase in rent or service charge is capped at RPI plus 0.5% plus £2 per week. However the Council could pass on the full cost of the increase to Warden Call charges plus inflation in April 2014, and review the increase required again in subsequent years.
23. This would ensure that there is no added financial burden on the HRA (Housing Revenue Account), so other tenants, not in receipt of the service would not have to subsidise the cost of the increase in Warden Call charges for Sheltered Housing Tenants. However this could result in financial hardship for vulnerable elderly tenants. Tenants in receipt of housing benefit would see a corresponding increase in their HB.
24. Option 2 – This could prevent tenants from experiencing financial hardship as a result of the increase in charges.



25. However the cost would have to be met through the HRA, which would mean that other Council tenants would be subsidising the increase in charges on behalf of Sheltered Housing tenants. This would be an inequitable approach to tenants, as Council tenants in general needs tenancies are responsible for paying the charge themselves.
26. Option 3 – This option would give an accurate reflection of the role of the Scheme Manager, and the Sheltered Housing Service, therefore it would be a more accountable and transparent way of calculating the service charge.
27. The financial hardship to customers would be minimised, as there would be no financial implication for those customers who are in receipt of full Housing Benefit. The impact on customers who are not in receipt of Housing Benefit would be a maximum of £2.88 per week.
28. This would ensure that there is no added financial burden on the HRA (Housing Revenue Account), so other tenants, not in receipt of the service would not have to subsidise the cost of the increase in Warden Call charges for Sheltered Housing Tenants.

### **Council Plan**

29. The implications directly arising from this report on the corporate priorities are:
  - Protecting Vulnerable People: The sheltered housing schemes provide supported housing to older people who require it. In reviewing the service charge consideration has been given to the vulnerability of the tenants.

### **Implications**

30. The Implications arising directly from this report are:
  - (a) **Financial** – Option 1 and option 3 would have no financial impact on the management of the HRA although with option 1 there will be a financial impact for all tenants. Option 3 would affect those who don't receive housing benefit however the increase would be lower than the charge in option 1. Option 2 would place an additional financial burden upon the HRA as a result of not recovering the full costs of the service provided.

- (b) **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no HR implications in this report
- (c) **Equalities** - Passing on the real cost of the service to Sheltered Housing tenants means that they are being treated the same as tenants in other tenure types.
- (d) **Legal** - None
- (e) **Crime and Disorder** - None
- (f) **Information Technology (IT)** - None
- (g) **Property** - None
- (h) **Other**- None

### **Risk Management**

- 31. There are no risks associated with the amendment to the way the service charge is calculated

### **Recommendations**

- 32. The Cabinet Member is asked to:
  - i. approve Option 3 to re-structure the service charge in order to accurately reflect the service provided.
  - ii. approve charging cohabitants £3 per week where both parties are in receipt of the service. This charge will be made directly by the Warden Call Service.

**Reason** – To ensure an equitable approach to service delivery regardless of tenure and that the service moves to a full cost recovery model to minimise the impact of the HRA. To ensure that the service charge is an accurate representation of the service provided.

**Contact Details**

**Author:**

**Louise Waltham**  
Supported Housing  
Manager  
Tel No. 551680

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

**Steve Waddington**  
Assistant Director housing and  
community safety.

**Report**                      ✓      **Date**    *12 Jan 14*  
**Approved**

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all*                      **All**    *tick*

**Heworth**  
**Clifton**  
**Dringhouses**  
**Westfield**  
**Derwent**  
**Micklegate**  
**Fulford**

**Specialist Implications Officer**  
**Implication: Financial**

Jane Close, Housing Accountant, Tel 01904 55 4175

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

Report to Cabinet Member for Health Housing and Adult Social Services –  
18 July 2013

**Abbreviations**

HRA            Housing Revenue Account  
RPI            Retail Price Index

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