
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR HOUSING & ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	14 JANUARY 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HOGG (CHAIR), SUE GALLOWAY (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), SUNDERLAND (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), BOWGETT, FRASER, HORTON, TAYLOR AND WISEMAN
APOLOGIES	MRS MILDRED GRUNDY AND MS PAT HOLMES (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBERS)

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Hogg declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the business generally, as his mother received respite care in City of York Council homes.

Cllr Fraser declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in any staffing issues referred to in agenda item 5 (Revenue and Capital Budget Estimate 2008/09), as a member of the retired section of UNISON.

47. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the Press & Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Annex A to Agenda Item 10 (Housing Capital Programme- Materials Procurement E-Auction) on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), which is classed as exempt under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006.

48. MINUTES

In response to an issue raised under Minute 39 (Housing and Adult Social Services 2007/08 Service Plans and Budget Second Monitor), Officers provided an update on their enquiries concerning the rent position of tenants of Discus Bungalows. The matter had been discussed with the York Housing Association and a full benefit check was currently being carried out in respect of all tenants. It was noted that the Council had no legal powers to assist tenants other than a general power to assist the community, subject to a test of reasonableness. Details of this advice would be circulated to Members.¹

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Executive Members and Advisory Panel, held on 10 December 2007, be approved and signed by the Chair and Executive Members as a correct record.

Action Required

1. Circulate written advice to Members.

LE

49. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OTHER SPEAKERS

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme, in relation to agenda item 5 (Revenue and Capital Budget Estimate 2008/09). There had also been two requests to speak on this item, on behalf of UNISON.

Rachel Barber, manager of the Early Intervention and Prevention Team at the Salvation Army, spoke on the potentially negative impact of the savings proposal to reconfigure the contract for the early intervention and prevention of rough sleepers (HSHS14), both on the service provided by her team and on other services such as the police, mental health and hospitals. She circulated written details to support her comments.

Sally Hutchinson, of Age Concern, spoke about the savings proposal to increase charges for day care (HSHS10), in relation to the Day Clubs run by Age Concern and funded by the Council. She circulated written details of the activities of the clubs, noting that they offered quality, affordable day services, for which there was an increasing need in the community, and often struggled for sufficient funding.

Liz Young, of UNISON, indicated that she would be speaking on behalf of both herself and Jean Churm, who had asked to speak but was unable to attend the meeting. She expressed disappointment at the proposals to reduce hours and amalgamate teams in the Home Care service (HSMS3-5), suggesting that this would increase pressure on the service and lead to increased car usage, environmental impact and mileage claims. On behalf of Jean Churm, she voiced concerns about savings proposals to increase eligibility criteria (HSH11A), close the CYC component of Sycamore House (HSHS2) and reduce the number of homeless casework / prevention workers (HSHS13), due to the effect of these measures upon customers and staff.

50. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008/09

Members considered a report which presented the 2008/09 budget proposals for Housing and Adult Social Services, including:

- the revenue budget for 2007/08, showing existing budgets (Annex 1)
- the budget adjusted and rolled forward from 2007/08 into 2008/09
- the provisional allocation of pay and price increases for the portfolio
- officer proposals for budget service pressure costs and savings options for the portfolio area (Annexes 2 and 3)
- fees and charges proposals (Annex 4)

- other revenue budget options for consultation (Annex 5)
- the existing approved capital programme (Annex 6)
- options for new capital schemes (Annex 7)
- the Housing Revenue Account (Annex 8).

A summary of the General Fund budget proposals was provided in Table 1 in paragraph 7 of the report. As proposals for savings/growth currently being considered by the individual EMAP meetings would not result in a balanced budget, Executive Members were required to consider alternative options. Members were asked for their comments or alternative suggestions, as part of the consultation process, on the proposals shown in Annexes 2, 3, 5 and 7, which would be considered by the Executive. Comments were sought in particular on the items listed for consultation in Annexes 5 and 7, which did not at present form part of the intended budget. Options had been shared in outline with representatives of users of adult social services and carers. They had expressed opposition to raising the threshold for eligibility for social care and to differential charging, and concerns over charging levels already being high in York.

Members sought clarity in particular on the implications of proposals to:

- Reduce Home Care hours (Annex 3, HSMS3, HSMS4, HSMS)
- Increase Discretionary Charges for Day Care (Annex 4)
- Increase eligibility criteria for care services (Annex 5, HSHS11A)
- Increase income from charges by removing the disregard of disability related benefit (Annex 5, HSHS9)
- Reduce the number of homeless casework / prevention workers (Annex 5, HSHS13)
- Reconfigure the early intervention and prevention contract (HSHS14)

In response to Members' queries and to issues raised under Public Participation, Officers confirmed that:

- Home Care did not include personal care and the reduced hours would not affect the service to customers. Detailed work on these proposals (including consultation with staff) was still ongoing.
- The increased Day Care charges would still be less than those charged by some other authorities – details would be circulated to Members.
- They shared the concerns expressed proposals HSHS 13 and HSHS14 but had been required to look at all areas to achieve savings.

The Labour Group Members indicated that they wished to reserve their position on the budget at this stage.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Members be advised to note and refer to the Executive the concerns recorded above, together with the following budget proposals:¹

- (i) the 2008/09 Base Budget as set out in paragraph 7 of the report;
- (ii) the service pressure proposals set out in Annex 2;

- (iii) the savings set out in Annex 3.
- (iv) the fees and charges set out in Annex 4.
- (v) the other revenue budget options for consultation set out in Annex 5.
- (vi) the options for new capital schemes in Annex 7.
- (vii) the Housing Revenue Budget set out in Annex 8

Decision of the Executive Members

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: As part of the consultation for the 2008/09 budget setting process.

Action Required

Refer budget proposals and Members' concerns re some of the proposed savings to Executive. LE

51. DIRECTORATE SERVICE PLAN

Members considered a report which presented the directorate and service plans for Housing and Adult Social Services (HASS) covering the period 2008-2011.

The plans, which were annexed to the report, comprised a Directorate Plan, linking the work of HASS to the Council's corporate objectives, and six service plans detailing the service aims, key objectives and performance targets.

It was noted that there were still a few amendments to be made to the Corporate Plan, including the addition of the corporate improvement priority which was led by HASS (page 3). Officers also agreed to check whether the figures for the landlord service (page 4) included tenancies managed on behalf of Housing Associations.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Members be advised to endorse and approve the Directorate Plan for Housing and Adult Social Services and the associated Service Plans.¹

Decision of the Executive Members

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: So that the Council's corporate and departmental objectives can be achieved.

Action Required

1. Confirm and begin to implement the Service Plan.

LE

52. DRAFT HOUSING RENTS AND MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES 2008/09

Members considered a report which set out the draft rent guidelines and the draft management and maintenance allowances issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government for 2008/09.

The Government had agreed a phased change in rents over 10 years in April 2002, to ensure that all councils and housing associations set their rents on a new, fair and consistent basis. The deadline for rent convergence, whereby similar properties would be charged at similar rents regardless of who owned the property, had been extended to 2016/17. The effect of the extension would be to reduce potential increases for tenants.

Consideration was given to the following options:

Option 1 - To continue rent restructuring with convergence in 2011/12 and increase rents by 6.28%. This would be against Government guidance on rent restructuring and would generate income above the level assumed in the Government's subsidy calculation.

Option 2 - To continue rent restructuring with convergence in 2016/17 and increase rents by 5.25%. This was the recommended option.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to agree Option 2 - to increase rents in York by 5.25% - and refer this to the Executive for approval.¹

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: In accordance with Government guidance, and to ensure a balanced Housing Revenue Account.

Action Required

1. Refer decision to Executive.

LE

53. FUTURE OPTIONS FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ON ORDNANCE LANE, YORK

Members considered a report which outlined future options available to bring the temporary accommodation at Ordnance Lane, York, up to decent homes standard. An in-principle endorsement of a capital bid to Communities and Local Government for a resettlement project for young people through the Places of Change programme was also requested.

Key criteria that would relate to any Places of Change bid submitted from York were set out in paragraph 15 of the report. It was noted that a number of different options would need to be explored in more detail concerning the future of Ordnance Lane and that this would be necessary irrespective

of the success of any bid. Proposals for the future could include any of the following options:

Option 1 - Demolish the existing scheme and replace it with a new build providing 25 x 2 bed self contained units for temporary accommodation, and a Places of Change/Foyer scheme of 20 x en suite units for 16/20 year olds.

Option 2 - Demolish the existing facility, re-build a 25 x 2 bed self-contained scheme for temporary accommodation and consider redeveloping the rest of the site for affordable housing.

Option 3 - Refurbish the existing buildings up to decent homes standards, acknowledging that there will be an element of shared facilities

Option 4 - Dispose of the current Ordnance Lane site on the open market and relocate the existing use with or without the Places of Change / foyer scheme to a new site.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Endorse the expression of interest submission to Communities and Local Government for capital funding for a Young Persons Places of Change project.¹
- (ii) Agree to explore future options for Ordnance Lane temporary accommodation.²

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: This solution will provide people going through the homeless or resettlement route with accommodation that is fit for the 21st Century and which improves their life chances by providing training in trades and life skills which will also help to sustain future tenancies in the long term.

Action Required

1. Submit expression of interest to CLG by 8 February deadline. LE LE
2. Begin to explore future options for Ordnance Lane hostel site.

54. REVIEW OF HARD WIRED SHELTERED STREET SCHEMES

Members considered a report which examined the options for the sustainability of the current hard wired street schemes that the council managed and sought approval to re-designate the properties to general housing needs.

The report related to the following hard-wired schemes:

Scheme	Numbers of Properties
Bell Farm Ave	16
Huntington Rd	4
Jackson Street	21
Lowther Street	17
March Street	9
Middleham Ave	3
Total	70

These Sheltered Housing Schemes had originally been built as general needs flats but had been re-designated for older people following a shortage of sheltered properties in the city. Difficulties were now being encountered with letting these properties. Members were therefore asked to consider the following options for their future management:

Option 1 – Convert from hard-wired to lifeline phones. This would involve disconnecting the hard-wired systems, offering existing customers a lifeline phone and removing the dedicated warden service. When vacancies occurred these would then be offered as sensitive general needs lettings.

Option 2 – Maintain the status quo. This was not recommended, as it would not resolve the current problems around letting these properties.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to:

- (i) Approve Option 1 - the conversion of the current hard wired street schemes to lifeline telephones.¹
- (ii) Approve the re-designation of the properties listed in paragraph 5 of the report to general housing needs.²

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To ensure that the properties remain popular and sustainable in the future.

Action Required

1. Implement conversion to lifeline phones. LE
2. Re-designate properties to general needs housing. LE

55. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME - MATERIALS PROCUREMENT E-AUCTION

Members considered a report which presented the results of a procurement exercise undertaken for the supply of materials for the housing capital programme modernisation schemes.

From 2006, Partnering Contracts had been used for Tenants Choice and Central Heating programmes to achieve Decent Homes. At that time, the materials used had remained the same in order to maintain service for customers and ease the tender process. Attention had since turned towards the purchasing of these materials with a view to achieving efficiencies and refreshing customers' choice. It had also been judged beneficial to join the Northern Housing Consortium (NHC), a materials purchasing consortium of other Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords, in order to save time and achieve economies of scale which the Council could not manage on its own.

In alliance with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), the NHC had undertaken a large procurement exercise aimed at Decent Homes materials. Member authorities had agreed the total tender package in terms of prospective volumes required and common standard specifications. Further details of the tender process were outlined in the report and a summary of the tender scores was provided in exempt Annex A. Members were asked to decide whether or not to use the supplier framework resulting from this process. It was recommended that they select Option 1 – to use the framework – as this would enable the Council to benefit from the savings achieved by the process, obviate the need to undertake individual tenders and enable customers to receive new ranges of materials from 1 April 2008.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member be advised to agree Option 1, to use the supplier framework and accept the kitchen supplier under Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), as noted in paragraph 18 of the report.¹

Decision of the Executive Member

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To secure quality and value for money on behalf of the Council's tenants.

Action Required

1. Confirm acceptance with NHC/OGC and progress the supplier contracts.

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CLLR SUE SUNDERLAND
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING

CLLR SUE GALLOWAY
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

CLLR CHRIS HOGG,
Chair of Advisory Panel
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.50 pm].