
Meeting	Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	23 December 2019
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Pavlovic (Vice-Chair), Mason, Vassie, Wells and Musson
Apologies	Councillors Baker

26. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

27. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting of the committee held on 25 November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

28. Public Participation

It was noted that there had been one registration to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme. Elin Hullis, Chair of the Nunnery Area Residents Association spoke under the general remit of the Committee. She outlined the anti-social behaviour problems in the Nunnery Lane area noting that there had been problems related to a number of council tenants. She noted that the area had been designated as a hot spot. She thanked the Ward Councillors for their work but added that the council's housing policies were failing residents. She noted that residents wanted to work more closely with the council on its housing policy and she invited Members to attend Residents Association meetings.

29. Homelessness and Winter Night Provision Update

Members considered a report that provided an update on the current homelessness situation and the winter night provision for rough sleepers

and single homeless people in York in December 2019. The City of York (CYC) Head of Housing and Manager of the Salvation Army Early Intervention and Prevention team were in attendance to update Members.

The Manager of the Salvation Army Early Intervention and Prevention team explained the role of the Salvation Army in facilitating street walks and involving other agencies (police, council) where they could. He explained that there was currently between 15 to 20 people begging in the city centre every day and of this, a number were from outside York. He noted that help had been offered to and declined by a number of people. He was asked and explained that a number of people had travelled to York for the Christmas period. He explained the methodology for the official street count as a person having to be bedded down to be included in the street count. The Head of Housing highlighted that work on homelessness and rough sleeping went on throughout the year by CYC staff, external organisations and volunteers. He reiterated that the count was a snapshot. He noted the range of options available to the homeless and rough sleepers. He was asked and clarified:

- The current homelessness situation including the targets and actual numbers.
- That the handover for James Street was in January
- The impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) which included putting in timescales that elongated the process and added points at which decisions could be appealed.

In answer to questions from Members, the Head of Housing and Manager of the Salvation Army Early Intervention and Prevention team explained that:

There was no one definition of a strong street culture and it included but was not limited to begging, dependency, mental health issues, street drinking and drug taking.

The Salvation Army boxing club at Redeness Street had helped homeless individuals and people with drug and alcohol addictions.

Resolved: That the update on homelessness and winter night provision be noted.

Reason: In order to be kept update on the update on the current homelessness situation and the winter night provision for rough sleepers and single homeless people in York in December 2019.

30. Housing Needs, Allocation and Availability Update

Members considered a report that provided an update on housing needs and availability, with a focus on the housing register, allocations policy and council housing. The Head of Housing outlined the report. The Head of Housing outlined the report and in response to questions he and the Housing Development Officer explained that:

- The number of affordable homes built referred to the number of right to buy homes
- The experimental data was based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) definition.
- There was a number of different pieces of legislation that informed CYC Policy on problem tenants and this was a complex issue.
- A range of measures to address the funding of CCTV on Nunnery Lane could be discussed with the Nunnery Lane Residents Association. The Chair noted that Ward funding had been allocated in the 2019 emergency council budget and he urged the housing department to work with other agencies. The Head of Housing added that he would be happy to work with other agencies.
- York had a lower percentage of social housing than other cities and the number of people in the bronze band was lower in other comparative cities.
- Social housing was needed in the city and in terms of affordability related to all sections of the city with a focus on those in the most need.

Members requested a chart detailing the number of social homes. The Chair thanked Officers for their update.

Resolved: That the information provided in the report be noted.

Reason: In order to be kept updated on housing needs and availability in the city.

31. Scoping Report - Affordable Housing on Private Developments

Members considered a scoping report that proposed a focus for further work the committee on the affordable housing on private development topic that was considered at the previous meeting.

The Housing Development Officer outlined the report noting the proposal for the review, including aim, consultation and timescales.

It was agreed that the Chair and Cllr Pavlovic would form the Task Group with the Chair to contact Cllr Baker, who was not present at the meeting, to see if she would like to join the group.

Resolved: That the aims, objectives, timescale and consultation for the review as detailed in the report be taken forward for completion by July 2020.

Reason: To comply with Scrutiny protocols and procedures

32. Work Plan

Members considered the committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2019-20 municipal year.

Resolved: That the work plan updated with the following items for future meetings:

24 February 2020

1. Temporary Accommodation - Street homeless, winter provision
2. Environmental Retrofitting
3. Work Plan

23 March 2020

1. Safer York Partnership Bi-annual Report
2. Housing Standards in the Private Rental Sector
3. Housing Fraud – Internal Audit Actions

Reason: To follow up on the decisions made at this meeting and to keep the work plan updated.

Cllr Fenton, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.20 pm].