



Agenda Item

Scrutiny Management Committee

25 September 2006

Report of the 'The Reducing Carbon Emissions Scrutiny Sub Committee'

Reducing Carbon Emissions from York's Public and Private Sector Housing.

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Scrutiny Management Committee of the final revisions to the draft report discussed at their previous meeting. It incorporates changes to the previous report recommended by the Sub-Committee and Scrutiny Management Committee.
2. The main findings arising from the work carried out by the Scrutiny Sub Committee are as follows:
 - The council has a number of obligations as set out in various Acts and international, national and regional guidance to promote sustainable forms of energy in the home and reduce harmful emissions.
 - CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty are seen as linked issues. The recommendations therefore refer to both reducing CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty.
 - Renewable microgeneration – i.e. domestic scale wind, solar or biomass generation is seen as integral to tackling fuel poverty and therefore reducing CO₂ emissions.
 - Yorkshire and Humberside region is the second poorest nationally in terms of fuel poverty
 - York has two wards in the bottom 10% nationally and five wards in the bottom 10% regionally concerning fuel poverty. Almost 1 in 4 households live in fuel poverty rising to almost 1 in three households in the poorest wards.
 - City of York Council Housing stock has above national average SAP(energy efficiency) rating but is still the lowest in the region.
 - York residents have the lowest rate of access to funding to increase home insulation and energy efficiency and therefore, potentially, spends more money on fuel and creates more CO₂ emissions.

3. Members are requested to endorse the recommendations and agree that the report be progressed through to the Executive.

Background

4. A draft final report has been previously presented to SMC on the 24th July 2006 and it was agreed that further work be undertaken to conclude the review. Amendments to the previous report have now been incorporated into the attached report. References to all Annexes in the previous report remain and are accessible electronically as they have been previously circulated and considered.
5. The final report is structured to provide a top down view of the issues around CO₂ emissions and therefore details research and findings at the following levels:
 - Global/International issues
 - National responses and issues
 - Regional responses and obligations, and
 - Local obligations and implications.
6. The 12 recommendations contained in the report focus on the following areas where the Council can take immediate action:
 - Strategies and action plans (recommendations 1, 10,)
 - Planning guidance and building regulations (recommendations 2, 3, 4, 6)
 - Standards, Monitoring and assessment (recommendations 5, 7, 8, 9)
 - Raising awareness (recommendations 11, 12).

Main Changes

7. The main changes to the earlier draft report are as follows:
 - A summary of main findings and recommendations has been provided at the front of the report.
 - Table 1 in the summary outlines the key lines of research, impact and remedies for the four levels of findings, that is; international/global, national, regional and local.

- Table 2 has been inserted to provide a picture of York in relation to fuel poverty(see paragraphs 43). This shows that Westfield and Clifton have the most households considered to live in fuel poverty.
- Paragraphs 51 to 60 have been added to the report and provides specific information from Housing Services on progress made on a number of issues. In summary these are:
 - a. Working in partnership with the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC)
 - b. Contacted private rented sector landlords and tenants to raise awareness about energy efficiency, and
 - c. Initiated a number of communication campaigns to draw attention to energy efficiency and grants available.
- Changed the first recommendation to place the responsibility for the development of strategies and plans through the relevant officers.
- Generally the report has been amended to focus on the key findings of the sub committee. The full draft copy of the report and the full annexes will be available as reference material for the implementation of the recommendations.

Consultation

8. During the detailed work undertaken by the Scrutiny Sub Committee full consultation has been carried out and recognition of those consulted has been made at the end of the report.

Options

9. During the course of review the Sub Committee have taken views on information provided as best practice and much of this is provided in the Annexes to the report, and available electronically on the Council website under 'Reducing Carbon Emissions Scrutiny Sub-Committee'. The recommendations reflect those considerations and alternative options are not presented.

Analysis

10. All analysis is presented in the body of the report.

Corporate Priorities

11. The wider topic of sustainability has been a Council Corporate Aim for many years. The recently approved Corporate Priorities includes improvements to the 'quality and availability of decent and affordable homes in the city'.

Implications

12. The implications arising from each of the recommendations are currently being consulted on with relevant departmental officers and details of all comments received will be circulated to all Members of Scrutiny Management Committee before the meeting.

Risk Management

13. The report highlights the issues and implications for York of a number of national and regional guidance. The risks to the Council are that its responsibilities to promote more energy efficiency and assess and monitor progress across the city are not fully embedded. This should be addressed as part of the operational and strategic risk analysis carried out by each directorate.

Recommendations

14. The Scrutiny Management Committee are asked to :
- Note the changes to the report.
 - Endorse the recommendations for submission to the Executive, as redrafted and make any additional comments necessary in the light of receipt of departmental officer comments on the implications associated with the recommendations.

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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Various – see implications sheet to be circulated to Members of the Committee prior to meeting

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: See Annex A

Annexes (attached for Members of the Committee only)

Annex A: Final Report Reducing Carbon Emissions from York's Public and Private Sector Housing.

Annex Aa: Scrutiny Topic Registration Form

Annex Ab: HACKW report re fuel Poverty and Health Impacts

Annex Ac: Affordable warmth Action Plan for Yorkshire and the Humber

Annex Ad: Section of Regional Local Authority Cabinet Energy Champions Questionnaire

Annex Ae: Mapping Domestic Thermal Efficiency in York

Annex Af: Affordable Warmth Strategy Development

Annex Ag: Sketching the Energy Efficient Home