

Report of the 'Guidance For Sustainable Development Scrutiny Sub Committee'

Guidance For Sustainable Development

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Executive the final report on the scrutiny review relating to 'Guidance for Sustainable Development'. At its meeting on 26 February 2007, Scrutiny Management Committee endorsed this report for referral to the Executive.
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 legislative Acts with international, national and regional guidance. The obligations to promote sustainable building and sustainable planning practices require the local authority in partnership with others to actively promote and adopt measures to reduce harmful emissions, mitigate against and adjust to climate change.
 - Addressing Climate Change is not simply a matter of reducing CO₂ emissions from heat and power sources. The recommendations therefore refer to water usage, natural carbon grounding, lifelong building, bio-diversity and waste management.
 - York's development documents are now out of step with Planning Policy statement 22 regarding embedded renewable generation – i.e. domestic scale wind, solar or biomass generation and the report addresses this.
 - York's lack of a strategic approach to trees has left the city performing joint fourth poorest in respect of national urban and rural tree density requirements. This is particularly poor given the role of trees in improving air quality and carbon grounding.
 - York's historic environment should not be an obstacle to increased sustainable build within the city, indeed this environment offers many opportunities.

Background

3. This report had previously been considered by Scrutiny Management Committee and they requested that advice be sought from the Head of Network Management (City Strategy) on the associated highways implications, in an effort to clarify the relationship with existing and ongoing Supplementary Planning Guidance and improve understanding of the hugely technical issues.

Consultation

4. Relevant officers from City Strategy, particularly those responsible for the preparation of the Local Development Framework, have been heavily involved throughout the review process and where possible the report at Annex A and the recommendations reflect the views expressed.
5. Following the request from Scrutiny Management Committee the following officers then reviewed the recommendations contained within the final report to identify any potential gaps, duplication, and to provide a focus for action:
 - LSP and LAA officers
 - Transport Planning Unit and Network Management Section
 - York Consultancy

Options

6. The options available to the Executive are:
 - i. to approve the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review in full or part;
 - ii. to endorse the spirit of those recommendations but propose some specific actions to reflect the intent of the findings; or
 - iii. to reject the proposed recommendations and outline alternative proposals, where applicable
7. In considering the available options, the Executive will wish to consider any potential financial or other impact and the appropriateness, or otherwise, of supporting the scrutiny recommendations in part or full – see comments included in implications schedule within the final report.

Analysis

8. The final report is structured to provide a view of the key issues around sustainability in planning, complimentary to the development of a robust (and Climate Change aware) Local Development Framework. As such, it details research and findings within the following headings:
 - Climate Change and Sustainable Planning and Development
 - Recognising Environmental Whole Life Costs and the Eco-Footprint
 - Addressing Climate Change, Insecurity of Fuel Supply and Fuel Poverty
 - Solar Gain

- Community Light
- Extreme Water Scenarios
- Air Quality, Carbon Grounding, and Trees
- Future Proofing the Past
- Future Proofing the Future: Life Long Building
- Supporting Understanding and Application of Sustainable Development

Corporate Priorities

9. The wider topic of sustainability has been a Council corporate aim for many years. The recently approved Corporate Priorities now incorporate more specific priorities in respect of sustainability. A detailed breakdown of how recommendations fit with achieving corporate priorities is given within the report.

Implications

10. The implications arising from each of the recommendations have been addressed as part of the officer consultation previously referred to. In addition, detailed comments from the Head of Financial Services and officers within City Strategy are included in the summary of implications grid included in the final report.

Risk Management

11. The report highlights the issues and implications for York arising from various national and regional guidance. The risks to the Council are that its responsibilities to promote an understanding of Climate change, energy efficiency, good water management and better holistic sustainable practice in planning and building might not be strategically and uniformly addressed through any other review in the near future.

Recommendations

12. The Executive is asked to consider the final scrutiny report on Guidance on Sustainable Development together with its recommendations and associated implications, and indicate its views on those recommendations.

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Report Approved



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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

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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

Annex A: Final Report Guidance on Sustainable Development

Annex B: Scrutiny Topic Registration Form

Annex C: Sustainable Developer Guidance Energy Chapter Draft

Annex D: Sustainable Developer Guidance Water Chapter Draft

Annex E: Sustainable Developer Guidance Buildings Chapter Draft

Annex F: Sustainable Developer Guidance Renewable Energy Chapter Draft

Annex G: Sustainable Developer Guidance Land Use Chapter Draft

Annex H: Sustainable Developer Guidance Waste Chapter Draft

Annex I: Promotion of Sustainable Construction Methods and the Implications for Building Control Staffing levels.