
Executive

7 November 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 present to the Executive the final report of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee reviewing the topic 'Reducing Carbon Emissions from York's Public & Private Sector Housing'. Having endorsed the recommendations contained in the review at its meeting on 23 October 2006, Scrutiny Management Committee have referred the final report and scrutiny recommendations to the Executive for consideration.
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 consider the report findings and recommendations.

Background

4. Scrutiny Management Committee has considered the draft final report arising from the review on previous occasions and finally endorsed the report and recommendations for referral to the Executive at its last meeting on 23 October 2006.
5. The final report is structured to provide a top down view of the issues around CO₂ emissions and therefore details research and findings in relation to the following:
 - 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 it is felt the Council could 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).

Consultation

7. 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. Further detailed consultation has taken place with both Housing and Financial Services on their initial comments reported to the last meeting and on the underlying intent of the review. It is understood that the Head of Financial Services will attend the meeting to respond to any remaining queries on the financial comments, if necessary.

Options

8. 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.

Analysis

9. Analysis related to the review and subsequent findings is contained throughout the final report attached.
10. In considering its 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.

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 detailed in the report (see summary of recommendations grid).

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. It is suggested that this should be addressed as part of the operational and strategic risk analysis carried out by each directorate.

Recommendations

14. The Executive is asked to consider the final scrutiny report on Guidance on Sustainable Development and its recommendations and indicate its views on those recommendations.

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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 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