
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR HOUSING & ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	15 JANUARY 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS GREENWOOD (CHAIR), SUE GALLOWAY (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), FAIRCLOUGH, LIVESLEY (SUBSTITUTE), FRASER, HORTON AND HILL
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS SUNDERLAND, NIMMO, MRS MILDRED GRUNDY AND MS PAT HOLMES

64. 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 Sue Galloway declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 5 (Proposal to Designate Acomb Wood & Acomb Meadow as a Statutory Local Nature Reserve) as a member of the Friends of Acomb Wood.

65. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 December 2006 be approved and signed as a correct record.

66. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak under the Council's Public Participation scheme.

Sue Lister, from the Older Peoples Assembly, spoke on Agenda Item 7 (Long Term Commissioning Strategy for Older People in York). She highlighted that older people needed to be recognised as a resource and to utilise their skills. Ms Lister also emphasised that hobbies helped to occupy their time but if they deteriorate into a downward spiral, for example as a result of illness, it was then that they became a burden on the system. She informed Members of the various activities which had been organised, such as the 50+ festival, 50+ games and 50+ food and drink, which opened possibilities for involvement to older people. A copy of the 50+ newsletter from the York Older People's Assembly was circulated around Members for information.

67. Rechargeable Repairs

Members considered a report which asked the Executive Member to approve a new approach to the recovery of rechargeable repairs.

Members were presented with two options:-

Option 1 - Identify the most regularly ordered rechargeable repairs and put a fixed value on the charge based on historic cost data and officer experience. The charges would be increased annually in line with the building index. Raise the invoices using the iworld IT system. The recovery process would be done through the financial ledger by housing services. The list of repairs would be updated on a regular basis to ensure that it reflected the most common rechargeable repairs.

Option 2 - Retain the existing system of recovery.

Members welcomed the new approach, in particular the requirement for payment, or an agreed payment plan, in advance of the repairs being carried out, unless the work was deemed necessary to ensure that the property remained wind or weather tight, or was of a health or safety nature.

Members queried about what charges would be made for cases where the damage was not wilful damage or wear and tear, such as damage as a result of illness. Officers reported that each case would be looked at individually and a decision to charge or not would be based on its own merits.

Members requested the following changes to the proposed charges contained in Annex 1:-

Glazing – separate prices for single glazing, double glazing, and size of glass up to 0.5m², 0.5-1m², and over 1m².

Washing machine **and dishwasher** leaks, tap connectors, hoses (tenants responsibility) - £30.00

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to approve Option 1 to identify the most regularly ordered rechargeable repairs and put a fixed value on the charge based on historic cost data and officer experience, with the following amendments to Annex 1:-

Glazing – separate prices for single glazing, double glazing, and size of glass up to 0.5m², 0.5-1m², and over 1m².

Washing machine **and dishwasher** leaks, tap connectors, hoses (tenants responsibility) - £30.00

Decision of the Executive Member for Housing

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory panel as set out above be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: It would lead to an improved service to, and greater clarity for, customers. It would also result in greater efficiency for the council.

68. Proposal to Designate Acomb Wood & Acomb Meadow as a Statutory Local Nature Reserve

Members considered a report which proposed that Acomb Wood and Acomb Meadow be declared a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) as part of the development of a city wide network of Local Nature Reserves. As parts of the site were in differing Executive portfolios the report was presented to both the Executive Members for Housing and Leisure and Culture for approval.

Members were presented with two options:-

Option 1: Declare Acomb Wood & Acomb Meadow as a Local Nature Reserve.

Option 2: Do not declare Acomb Wood & Acomb Meadow as a Local Nature Reserve.

Members requested officers to investigate the split management of other sites and the implications of changing the management to being under one Executive portfolio.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to approve Option 1 and Acomb Wood & Acomb Meadow be designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

Decision of the Executive Member for Housing

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel as set out above be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: The designation as an LNR would bring positive benefits to the local community and to the site itself. It would help preserve & enhance the site for future years, send a positive message to the local community, and ensure good management practices were followed in consultation with Natural England.

69. Results of the 2006 Annual Housing Service Monitor

Members considered a report which provided the Executive Member with the headline results of the 2006 Annual Housing Service Monitor and was supplemented by a presentation to Members at the meeting.

The Annual Housing Services Monitor was a tenant satisfaction survey which had been carried out in York every year since 1990. During September 2006 a postal survey was mailed to 1800 council tenants

selected at random. A total of 878 tenants returned the questionnaire which represented a good response rate of 49% of the sample.

Officers reported some amendments to the figures in the report. Under bullet point 24, the figure for satisfaction with neighbourhoods in 2005 should be 84% and not 74%, and it did not reverse a downward trend. Under bullet point 32, the perceived helpfulness of staff remained static at 81%, and had not risen from 74% in 2005.

The presentation to Members gave a more detailed analysis of the results, including breakdowns according to estate management areas. It was reported that the satisfaction with the overall service remained high, with 80% of tenants stating that they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied. However, there was a steady decrease in the agreement that City of York Council was a good landlord, and a decline in satisfaction regarding value for money, and action taken about nuisance or disturbances. More tenants were dissatisfied with their neighbourhood than in 2005.

Some members raised concerns about the results of the survey, stating that the figures showed a downward trend. Officers reported that there had been variations in satisfaction over the past few years and that there was a need to reconnect with customers, whose involvement was at a low level. It was reported that the survey would be used as a tool to improve the services provided. Members requested officers to scrutinize these figures and look into the underlying issues.

Cllr Horton proposed a motion that the recommendation be amended to "That the advisory panel advise the Executive Member for Housing to note **with concern** the summary results of the 2006 Annual Housing Service Monitor." This motion was seconded by Cllr Fraser. The motion was put to the vote and the motion was lost.

Cllrs Fraser, Horton and Hill requested that their votes against the decision be recorded.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to note the summary results of the 2006 Annual Housing Service Monitor.

Decision of the Executive Member for Housing

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel as set out above be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To inform the Executive Member.

70. Long Term Commissioning Strategy for Older People in York

Members considered a report which informed Members of the development of a long term commissioning strategy for older people and sought agreement to the framework for the development and delivery of

this strategy. Members received a short presentation on the details contained in the Annexes to the report.

Members were presented with two options:-

Option 1 - Continue providing services in the same way, but increase capacity and funding to meet growing demand. This option was unlikely to meet the challenges of the Government's White Paper, and was unlikely to meet the vision contained within the joint strategy for York Never Too Old. It was unlikely that funding would increase in line with demographic growth to make this option affordable.

Option 2 - Embark on a longer-term programme to reshape services and to target interventions where they were most needed and most effective. This would include a new emphasis on prevention and inclusive services, which offer control and choice and which allow statutory services to focus on those with the most complex needs.

The presentation covered a range of key issues including why have a Long Term Commissioning strategy, our approach, key messages, population change, need for services, cost, capacity, alternatives, dementia and carers. It was reported that current services were not sustainable and cross cutting action involving a wide range of stakeholders, including providers, the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Older Peoples Assembly was required. Members were informed that the cost of meeting the projected future needs in 2020 would be at least £7million more than what the cost was in 2005. Officers highlighted that there was a need to provide earlier, more effective intervention and support.

Members commented that earlier intervention could be difficult to achieve as a lot of carers struggled on their own for a while before seeking help. Officers reported that they were exploring ways of how to work with the PCT and GP surgeries to identify earlier any support required. The Executive Member for Adult Social Services informed members that the PCT had given categorical assurance that they would work with the council to develop the strategy. Furthermore the voluntary sector and independent sector would be invited to work with the council on the strategy as well.

Members queried about how robust the projections were and commented that some projections were based on pro rata's of existing take up which might shift over time as carers get older and were less able to do the caring. Officers reported that there were a lot of variables which could alter the projections, but these predictions were a starting point for developing the strategy.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to agree Option 2 which recommends embarking on a longer-term programme to reshape services for older people in York and to target interventions where they are most needed and most effective.

Decision of the Executive Member for Adult Social Services

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel as set out above be accepted and endorsed.

REASONS:

- i) Government messages are clear that strategic commissioning should become a core activity for both local authorities and health.
- ii) There will be major challenges in the next 15 years to meet the needs and aspirations of the growing older population in York.
- iii) Government policy and local strategy has identified that the current service models need to change to meet these major challenges.
- iv) It is essential that we engage user and carers, providers and other stakeholders in identifying the way forward and the long term commissioning strategy will help that dialogue develop.

71. Review of Non Residential Charging Policy

Members considered a report which recommended that the Executive Member agreed an updated charging policy for non residential care services subject to approval of the 2007/08 budget by the Executive in January.

Members were presented with two options:-

Option 1 - To agree the updated non residential charging policy as attached at Annex 1.

Option 2 - To not agree the updated policy and continue with the current situation where there was no formal policy document that could be shared with customers.

The main changes included within the revised policy were charging on planned care, disability related benefit disregards, and clarity of policy.

Members requested that officers make the application process as transparent as possible to reduce the level of bureaucracy involved. Officers reported that a welfare benefits advisor would be sent out to the customer to help them fill in the application form.

The Labour Group reserved their position in relation to the disability related benefit disregards until the Budget.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to agree option 1 and the introduction of the revised non residential charging policy with effect from April 2007 subject to the agreement of the budget proposals at the Executive in January and full budget council in February.

Decision of the Executive Member for Adult Social Services

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel as set out above be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: To ensure clarity and equity for customers and to ensure the department has a balanced budget for 2007/08.

72. Approval of proposals for implementation of the Mental Capacity Act

Members considered a report which informed the Executive Member of action that had been taken and was required to implement the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 was due to come into force in England and Wales in April 2007. The Act provided, for the first time, a statutory framework for assessing whether a person has capacity, for acting and making decisions on behalf of individuals who lack capacity and for empowering and protecting vulnerable people who were not able to make their own decisions. It made it clear who could take decisions, in which situations and how they should go about this. It enabled people to plan ahead for a time when they may lose capacity. It addressed the issue of providing care and treatment for people who lack capacity. Its scope was wide-ranging, involving decisions regarding personal welfare and financial affairs.

The Local Authority was responsible for commissioning an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate service (IMCA). The IMCA had a clear role in supporting a person lacking capacity who had no-one else to act on their behalf. There was a specific grant of £6,306 for 2006/07 and £18,975 for 2007/08, for the commissioning of the IMCA service in York.

Officers reported that a process was underway to pool resources with North Yorkshire County Council for the setting up of the IMCA service.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to note the contents of this report.

Decision of the Executive Member for Adult Social Services

RESOLVED: That the advice of the Advisory Panel as set out above be accepted and endorsed.

REASON: The Mental Capacity Act 2005 would be implemented on 1 April 2007 and Local Authorities would be required to make the appropriate arrangements for systems to be in place by this time.

CLLR SUE SUNDERLAND
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING

CLLR SUE GALLOWAY
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

CLLR JANET GREENWOOD
Chair of Advisory Panel
The meeting started at 5.05 pm and finished at 7.30 pm.