

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities
Date	28 February 2024
Present	Councillor Pavlovic (Executive Member)
Officers in Attendance	Peter Holt - Accounts and Assets Team Leader, Housing Tenancy Kate Grandfield – Housing Management Service Manager, Supported Housing

9. Declarations of Interest (10:02am)

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any disclosable pecuniary interests, or other registerable interests he might have in the respect of business on the agenda, if he had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. None were declared.

10. Minutes (10:03am)

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2023 be approved and then signed as a correct record by the Executive Member.

11. Public Participation (10:03am)

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

Charlotte Roberts of the National Energy Foundation (NEF) spoke on the issue of Fuel Poverty within York. She stated that over 50 calls had been received from North Yorkshire so far this year, seeking advice over energy solutions from people without heat or in debt. She advised that the NEF work alongside the services offered by the local authority. "Better Housing, Better Help" scheme, provides help and advice on fuel efficiency. She had come to speak today to raise awareness with York residents, as while many might not reach out directly to the charity directly they may reach out to the council and the NEF would be happy to work with the council to help these people. The Executive Member noted that Ms Roberts had sent through information on the services offered by the NEF and this could be made available to officers or residents on request.

12. Review of Council Garage Licence Agreement (10:08am)

The Executive Member considered a report presented by the Accounts and Assets Team Leader, Housing Tenancy and the Housing Management Service Manager, Supported Housing. This report sought review of the Council's current Garage Licence Agreement as the current arrangement did not contain a mechanism to annually adjust the licence fee. Upon agreement with full council, the new proposal would allow for automatic annual increases to licence fees, negating the need for officers to do this manually.

The Accounts and Assets Team Leader, Housing Tenancy advised that this had been through consultation, and legal advice had been taken, resulting in the recommendation that subject to Executive Member's approval, the current agreement would be terminated and tenants would be required to sign a new one within 28 days to agree to the new charging mechanism.

The Executive Member highlighted poll responses from 127 residents, 83% of whom agreed that information on the changes was clearly conveyed and 61% agreed that 4 weeks' notice for the proposed fee increase was acceptable.

The Executive Member noted that the final wording of the new agreement was still to be determined, pending legal advice, as discussed in the report. Officers clarified that the legal team were happy that everything proposed was legally compliant. The Executive Member asked whether there would be any recourse for people who needed a garage for health/disability reasons and refused to sign the new agreement for any reason. Officers confirmed that mitigating circumstances such as these would be taken into consideration.

Resolved: That Option 2 set out in paragraph 27 of the report be approved, to agree, in principle, the proposed changes to the licence agreement, to allow an automatic licence fee increase and exclusions from the waiting list due to housing related debt.

Reason: To ensure that Garage License Agreements remain fit for purpose and fees can be applied in a timely and less resource intensive manner.

Councillor Michael Pavlovic, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 10.02 am and finished at 10.17 am].