

Report of the Corporate & Scrutiny Management Committee

Improving Community Resilience Scrutiny Review Final Report – Cover Report

Summary

1. This cover report presents the final report arising from the Improving Community Resilience scrutiny review – see Appendix 1, and asks Cabinet to approve the recommendations arising from the review.

Background & Review Objectives

2. At a meeting in September 2012, the Committee agreed they would like to carry out a review on adaptation to climate change. Their concerns centred on the increase in localised surface water flooding (not river flooding) and they questioned what plans the Council had in place to respond.
3. In November 2012, the Committee received a presentation on the changing climate, flood risk and emergency planning in respect of flooding in general. They considered information on York's vulnerability to past events e.g. flooding, snow, wind and storms etc, and, the consequential disruption to Council and/or Partner organisations processes i.e. interference with day to day service delivery and normal operational regime. They also looked at the predicted changes in climate for the future and its potential impact and a December 2012 Cabinet report on Surface Water Management.
4. Having considered all of the information provided, the committee agreed that a review of Surface Water Management was not required following Cabinet's recent approval of the Council's new Surface Water Management Plan. The Committee queried if surface water management planning was being carried out at a ward/community level, but learnt that the new plan was generic for across the whole city. This raised the question of community preparedness for any form of

emergency, as the Committee perceived a gap in emergency preparedness at community level. They therefore agreed that the focus of their scrutiny review should be on the arrangements in place to enable communities to be more resilient in times of emergency.

Review Conclusions

5. Having received a detailed presentation on the approach taken by East Riding of Yorkshire Council, the Committee agreed it could be adapted and combined with current practices e.g. Snow Wardens, Flood Wardens etc, for introduction across York.
6. They also suggested that the introduction of community emergency plans could be supported by the Council's Emergency Planning Unit and the Communities & Equalities Team could assist with community engagement.
7. Officers confirmed that a number of the council's partners i.e. North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and Yorkshire Water, would be willing to support and help fund the process of introducing community resilience plans.
8. Finally, the Committee agreed it would also be useful to provide individual households with advice and guidance on emergency preparedness.

Recommendations

9. In order to ensure community preparedness for any form of emergency and enable Communities to build their own resilience, the Cabinet are recommended to:
 - i) Strengthen Community Resilience by following best practice as implemented by others (e.g. East Riding of Yorkshire Council) through the introduction of Community Resilience Plans
 - ii) Work with Communities to help them identify any available external funding,
 - iii) Work with appropriate partners to encourage their support and assistance.

Council Plan 2011-15

10. The introduction of Community Emergency Plans would support the Council's aim to make Communities safe, resilient and cohesive.

Implications & Risk Management

11. During their development project, East Riding of Yorkshire Council successfully managed the associated risks and addressed the issues around insurance. If such a project were to be undertaken in York, the risks, and financial and HR implications could be similarly managed.

Options

12. Having considered the scrutiny final report attached, the Cabinet may choose
 - i. To approve the recommendations
 - ii. Not to approve some or all of the recommendations listed above.

Recommendation

13. Taking into consideration all of the information contained within the final report attached and its annexes, the Cabinet are recommended to:
 - i. Approve the recommendations arising from the review, as shown in paragraph 9 above.

Reason: To conclude the Scrutiny Review in line with CYC Scrutiny procedures and protocols

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Report Approved**Date**

December 2012

Wards Affected:

For further information please contact the author of the report

All**Background Papers:**

See information contained within the final report attached

Appendices:

Appendix 1 –Final Report