



Notice of a public meeting of

Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee

- To:** Councillors Fenton (Chair), Pavlovic (Vice-Chair), Baker, Cuthbertson, Fitzpatrick, Vassie and Wells
- Date:** Wednesday, 7 December 2022
- Time:** 5.30 pm
- Venue:** The George Hudson Board Room - 1st Floor West Offices (F045)

AGENDA

- 1. Declarations of Interest**
At this point in the meeting, members are asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.
- 2. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)
To approve and sign the minutes of the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18 October 2022.
- 3. Public Participation**
At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting. The deadline for registering at this meeting is at **5.00pm on Monday 5 December 2022**.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The public meeting can be viewed on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Housing Support Around Cost of Living Increases (Pages 5 - 14)

This paper sets out a range of challenges being faced by council housing tenants as a result of the cost of living increases and outlines the response of the Housing department to these challenges. The paper also sets out the potential implications for future delivery of existing housing strategies.

5. Q2 22-23 Finance and Performance Monitor (Pages 15 - 24)

This report provides details of the Q2 2022-23 monitoring position for both finance and performance across Housing & Community Safety. The paper incorporates data to September 2022, which was reported to Executive on 22 November 2022.

6. Work Plan (Pages 25 - 26)

To receive a plan of reports currently expected to be presented to future meetings of the Committee up to March 2023.

7. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer

Margo Budreviciute

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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats.

Contact details are set out above.

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	18 October 2022
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Pavlovic (Vice-Chair), Vassie, Fitzpatrick and Wells
Apologies	Councillors Cuthbertson
Officers in Attendance	Neil Ferris, Corporate Director of Place Denis Southall, Head of Housing Lewis Rodgers, Resettlement Services Manager

7. Declarations of Interest (17:36)

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registrable interest they might have had in respect of business on this agenda, if they hadn't already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. Cllr Pavlovic declared that he was previously employed in the homeless sector and was involved with the resettlement contract pre-2016.

8. Minutes (17:38)

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 September 2022 be approved and signed as an accurate record.

9. Public Participation (17:38)

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

10. Scrutiny Resettlement Services Update Including Winter Provision and Strategy Update 2022

Members discussed a report on the current homelessness situation and the winter night provision for rough sleepers and single homeless people in York.

The Committee raised concerns over the uptick in the number of rough sleepers from previous years combined with the decrease in funding

offered by the central Government and increase in anti-social behaviour. They also noted issues with the annual street count that is commencing following the start of the winter provision on 1 November 2022, where some rough sleepers may be in emergency accommodation, and were worried this would result in skewed figures and further loss of funding.

Officers stated that the number of rough sleepers has increased from the previous year and as a result, the Council had attempted to place bids to increase funding from the Government, but this was unsuccessful due to changes in policies that now favour the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping. They also explained that the Council has regular meetings and discussions with other organisations and local authorities to monitor the number of rough sleepers so are confident that the counts conducted by Homeless Link will be accurate.

Clarification on the winter provision was sought by Members and Officers confirmed that the provision made accommodation more accessible to rough sleepers as they do not have to engage with certain Council services to be placed in the accommodation. They agreed to state that there is a winter sleeping provision in place so there may be fewer rough sleepers in their reports.

Members enquired about the current capacity in temporary accommodation for rough sleepers, how numbers will be managed if they are full prior to 1 November and what the process moving forward will be. Officers explained that they no longer have access to the 4 additional units at the Salvation Army but that they are analysing and making use of their existing assets, such as Crombie House, to accommodate people. They also plan to do more sophisticated prevention work in the future to identify reasons for rough sleeping alongside expanding their housing capacity and funding.

Members noted some issues with the current resettlement policy of needing to engage with Council services for a minimum of 6 months and how this may be a barrier if there is an increase in the number of rough sleepers due to cost-of-living crisis and rise in evictions. Officers commented that the time frame can be reviewed and that there are private sector team routes available to rehouse people quickly.

Questions surrounding the Council's staff were raised, including how they support rough sleepers who may be part of the LGBTQ+ community, and Officers confirmed training is provided and that peer support is available. Moreover, Members also noted the increase in workload for staff and asked whether they are managing this. Officers explained that the Council has employed more staff and changed how they work to improve effectiveness and efficiency but there are still ongoing issues

Covid precautions and preparations were also discussed by Members to ensure the Council is equipped to support rough sleepers. Officers explained that the Council has extensive resources and PPE stock, that they can utilise quickly if/when necessary.

Resolved:

- i. That the report on the updated Resettlement Services be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on the homelessness situation and the winter night provision for rough sleepers and single homeless people in York.

11. York Housing Allocations - Scrutiny October 2022

Members considered a report on the York Housing Allocations Policy. They asked if there have been any changes in the types of households applying for social housing due to the pandemic and cost of living crises and Officers explained there has been an increase in numbers but no large changes in patterns and that they are monitoring this.

The issue of council tax banding on newly built social housing was discussed and how it can become a barrier for, and unaffordable to, people on low incomes/benefit recipients as they may be unable to cover the high taxes and charges. Officers explained that the Council does not have control of this as the tax is calculated on the house price and type but there are benefits such as Council Tax Support and Discretionary Housing Payment available for such residents. They also suggested that it may be useful to investigate the type of housing that is built and ask for a mix of housing types from developers to mitigate these issues.

Members also raised questions about the possibility to complete retrofitting works while homes are vacant. Officers explained they are looking into this but that at present, this would take too long so the focus is on retrofitting properties that are already occupied.

Members asked for an update on the Mental Health cluster unit concept and what is being done to move the project along to completion. Officers stated that there were issues with finding a developer but they are now revisiting the model and setting up a mental health housing panel to move complex cases into the pathway. They confirmed one of the two proposed buildings was built and is currently being used to house homeless families.

Questions were raised about housing accessibility and quality for care leavers and young people, including whether they can keep their

accommodation if they move out of the city to attend university. Officers responded that they are not able to keep stock for university students but may be able to investigate this further before reassuring Members that care leavers who return permanently are given high priority for housing. They also explained that they have had some challenges with housing stock and had a backlog of repairs during the Covid period, but this is now improving, and they are having meetings with young people to develop housing.

Housing for offenders was discussed and questions surrounding how the Council supports them when they are released arose and Officers explained that there are a lot of difficulties with this due to lack of support, advice, and resources. Members highlighted the importance of the Council relinquishing tenancies at the earliest point of someone being sent into custody so that they are not acquiring rent arrears which will then become a barrier upon release. Officers suggested having a refresher of this protocol with staff and will re-engage with probation staff to make sure they are aware and mindful of this issue.

Officers provided some suggestions on things Members can do to support Housing Options staff which included providing feedback on any IT issues. They also requested that people are conscious of the reality of the housing market in York and be willing to look at other options, such as shared ownership and private sector options to help staff and their workload.

Resolved:

- i. That the report on York Allocations Policy be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on York's approach to the housing waiting list and vulnerable groups.

12. Work Plan

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee work plan be noted.

Reason: To ensure the Committee has a program of work for 2022-23.

Councillor Fenton, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.35 pm and finished at 7.40 pm].



**Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods Scrutiny
Committee****7 December 2022****Report of the Director of Housing Economy and Regeneration****Update on support for Council tenants through the impact of cost of living increases.****Summary**

1. This paper sets out a range of challenges being faced by council housing tenants as a result of the cost of living increases and outlines the response of the Housing department to these challenges. The paper also sets out the potential implications for future delivery of existing housing strategies.

Background

2. Housing is currently high on the national political agenda, not only regarding affordability and the cost of living and but also around housing conditions and standards including the Decent Homes Standard, regulatory compliance, issues around damp and mould, energy efficiency and impact of increasing mortgage payments including those being passed on to those privately renting through increasing rents. The future of 'no fault' evictions is also a current issue.
3. The cost of living crisis comes on the back a decade of austerity, the impacts of the covid pandemic and world events affecting trade. This note focuses on the current accounts of tenants in our general needs stock and Independent Living Communities.
4. All City of York Council Tenants have either a secure (lifetime) tenancy or an introductory tenancy (becomes secure unless ended within the first year) with a standard escalation process for rent collection built-in to our current IT system, Open Housing. At the end of March 2020, the council decided to suspend recovery action and the government introduced a ban on evictions and the restrictions on the ability to serve Notices of Seeking Possessions, including lengthening the notice period considerably. All of these short-term measures ended by October 2021. and standard legal processes have applied since then.

5. A pre-court protocol for rent arrears exists which all landlords must comply with regardless of tenure. This ensures that all tenants are treated fairly in the collection of the rental amounts and arrears.

[Pre court protocol](#) link

6. The standard escalation process was suspended in March 2020 when a stop was placed on all formal arrears recovery e.g. serving notices and applying to court for (suspended) possession orders. This caused an increase of arrears which we have been working hard to reduce but the cost-of-living crisis means that many people who live in our homes find it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.
7. Executive received a general update on the impact of cost-of-living increases on 22 November 2022. That paper can be found [here](#).
8. Since the last update to Scrutiny in December 2021, Housing Services have implemented a new, fully integrated Housing IT system, which brings together all areas of Housing and Building Services into a single system. This happened over the first few months of the year. A Business Change and Support team led on implementation and have delivered extensive training on this system for staff. This team continue to work on outstanding issues and improvements to the existing system. This is not an uncommon problem when new and complex IT systems are implemented. The implementation, training and system issues have impacted on our performance generally including income collection. Initially there were particular issues around income collection, including the escalation process and Direct Debits which have needed extensive manual intervention, but these are largely resolved now.

Current arrears position

End Of Month	Amount	No of Accounts in Arrears
April 2021	£1,149,964	2509
October 2021	£1,304,198	2672
April 2022	£1,457,056	2754
Oct 2022	£1,794,194.	3079

Universal Credit (UC) claimants

9. There are currently 3185 current claims for UC across our current general needs properties, Independent Living Communities (ILC) and Thirteen Group Properties which we manage on behalf of that organisation.

10. The current arrears figure for these cases is £1,294,733 which equates to £406.51 average per tenant. The number of tenants claiming UC has decreased over the last few months but we expect there to be a rise in UC claims going forwards with the cost of living crisis.
11. We currently need to wait for arrears to accrue for 8 weeks before we are able to make any application to the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) for any deductions for arrears. We are doing this more often now as people start to struggle and find it increasingly difficult to manage their budgets.
12. In terms of Housing Costs from UC these are also decreasing as the DWP can take payments for any UC advance payments and any other instruction they see fit such as maintenance payments, previous over payment of DWP and HMRC debt before the tenant receives their housing and personal costs. This means that people are starting to use their already depleted housing costs for ever more expensive everyday essentials.

Current actions

Standard actions taken around rent arrears cases:

13. Before any notice is served or application to court is made the Housing Management Officers (HMO's) ensure that contact is made, advice is offered, signposting is done, referrals made and repayment agreements are negotiated.
14. All contacts are recorded on the Open Housing system which is the base of taking any formal action such as serving a *notice of intention to seek possession* and/or application to court for a warrant. Evidence is presented to the court in the form of a statement of the case history, when needed.
15. In each contact made, successful or not, the tenant will be offered as much support as possible before going through the escalation process. This includes:
 - Providing general and specific advice at all stages – website, fact sheets, verbal and written advice, with the emphasis on early intervention and prevention. If residents are having issues paying their rent, we ask them to discuss this with us to help find a solution.
 - Alerting tenants in writing when they go into arrears or break the terms of a repayment arrangement. We have a set of standard letters and information on where to get help that we use for this purpose.
 - Making contact in a variety of ways, usually in the way that is most convenient for the person in question. This includes email, text, home visit, video call, phone, face to face or virtual advice sessions, to

encourage getting back on track with repayments or re-assess any changes in circumstance.

- Making manageable arrangements to pay rent and an amount off the arrears if the resident cannot afford to repay the debt in full.
- Making sure that tenants maximise their income (such as signposting to welfare support) and that this covers their outgoings, providing advice on making appropriate adjustments where this is not the case.
- Assisting with downsizing their home where appropriate or applying for discretionary housing benefit to cover bedroom tax.
- Identifying other debts and taking this into account whilst emphasising the need to pay priority debts.
- Providing direct low level interventions and support to make sure benefit claims are made successfully.
- Identifying issues and making referrals to other organisations or departments that can provide more specialist support e.g. long term debt management, health and wellbeing issues, Children's early help, Local Area Coordination / Talking Point, Live Well York, digital inclusion, adaptations, and referral for housing support through Single Access Point.
- Providing quarterly rent statements to all tenants by post.
- Information and advice on social media and in Open Door tenants and leaseholder magazine.

Specific responses to cost of living issues

16. Housing Services are part of the Advice York network and actively promote all the help available nationally and locally to residents. This includes making people aware of benefits, grants and services that can provide relief such as food banks, food and fuel vouchers, council tax help and energy awards for example. I've included some of the information that staff use to do this as attachments.
17. Each Housing Management Officer (HMO) has to a minimum of a day a week to undertake their income reviews each week. This is time where they will not be available to the public to call in as they are solely concentrating on income. We have had to do this as HMO is very reactive and responsive role and it is easy to be distracted without the specific time to do these.
18. Housing Team Leaders are also monitoring and supervising more intensively and providing more support to HMOs utilising reports that have been developed around arrears. Additional training on Open Housing and around

arrears is ongoing to ensure that all staff are using the IT system as efficiently as possible and are providing consistent support to residents around rent and income.

19. The Housing Management Pilot due to come online Jan 2023 is intended to help people more successfully set up and maintain tenancies as well as providing more support for those who are struggling to sustain their tenancy. Two new roles have been created to provide this support. Given budgetary restrictions there are no more resources available to do this, so it means changes to the existing housing patches and staffing. Full information will be made available to councillors, colleagues and customers in advance of go live. Documentation is being reviewed in light of the pilot to support the approach.
20. York Housing Association provide an Intensive Housing Management support service to complement the work that Housing Management do. This includes intensive work to support tenancy sustainment ranging from behavioural issues, finances through to issues such as hoarding.
21. The Financial Hardship Fund was an initial £80K fund set up to support people in rent arrears where no other help existed for them during the worst of the covid pandemic. This fund is nearly exhausted, but we have been able to bring in £30k of unallocated funds from an HRA contribution to a fund currently administered by the Local Area Coordinators. Awards are paid directly to the rent account.
22. There is an opportunity to use some of the £25k energy advice funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund for delivery during 2022/23. We are currently exploring ideas around this focussing on buying in bespoke targeted energy saving advice for tenants.
23. Debt Relief Orders (DRO). People in debt can apply for these orders which can include rent arrears. The use of these has increased over time and we expect this trend to continue. Citizens Advice York often help people apply for these in the context of stabilising and managing family budgets going forward. We are reviewing how we process these as the debt sits on Open Housing for 12 months and is then written off unless they are paid off or the circumstances of the person in question improve. Since April, 19 of our tenants have been granted DROs totalling over £33k of housing debt.
24. Whilst we work to avoid formal arrears actions including notices, court hearing and orders as well as evictions, this is necessary in some cases. We currently have 532 cases in the legal system. We have had 4 evictions for rent arrears this financial year.

Benefits calculators used:

<https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>

Housing Management Arrears Action plan:

25. This plan was brought to the Scrutiny meeting December 2021 and is being worked through.

Short term:

- Focus on standard arrears actions, getting hep to people and working with partners
- Articles in Open Door about what's out there
- Support staff through the current difficulties and get them go live ready

Medium Term

- Implement Open Housing and realise the benefits in monitoring, reporting, self-serve and communications
- Resolve recruitment issues

Longer term

- Service review around support to our customers at critical times
- Campaign on Direct Debit take up
- Targeted publicity based on evidence from the new system
- Develop pre-tenancy work to improve digital inclusion, financial literacy / resilience and ensure affordability.
- Explore idea of community champions around energy switching (assuming this becomes relevant again) and the benefits of accessing services on line
- Develop profiled tenancy and wellbeing visits to identify early interventions including those around finances

Impact on service charges

26. Electricity supplied to the Council has increased by 128% since 31 March 2022. Gas prices rose by 402% on 1 April and then again on 1 October and even after the commercial cap it is currently around 500% higher than the 31 March 2022 price. We are currently forecasting a further 50% increase on 1 April 2023, although this figure keeps changing.
27. The impact on the HRA is that the utility bills across all sites have gone from £377k in 2021/22 to £1.22m in 2022/23 and are set to rise to £1.9m in 2023/24. Across the 11 Independent Living Community sites, the utility bills

have increased from £203k in 2021/22 to £990k this year. The average charge for tenants in 2021/22 for electricity in the communal areas was £166 p/a, if we were to pass on the actual charge in 2022/23, this would be an average of £464 p.a. Gas was an average of £288 p.a. for communal and direct charges, if we were to pass on the actual costs in 2022/23 this would be an average of £2,063 p.a. (highest is Barstow House at £4,053 which is not realistic).

28. This is in the wider financial context for Housing with big pressure on budgets across the Council. A similar position exists with our hostel accommodation.
29. Options around service charges are being developed and will be discussed as part of the budget setting process. Obviously, these increased costs have to be paid from somewhere if not directly picked up by those tenants affected, which will have a dramatic impact on the wider Housing Revenue Account. This is in the wider financial context for Housing with big pressure on budgets across the Council.

Other help around housing costs

Energy efficiency programme

30. This financial year we expect to deliver over 500 substantial energy efficiency improvement measures to around 250 homes across all tenures. The majority of these works are wholly or predominantly funded utilising around £3m government funding which we successfully secured in 2021/22.
31. In addition to this the council is undertaking a series of 'quick win' interventions over the coming six months to help residents stay warm. £60K of HRA funding has been allocated for a post, van rental and materials. This runs alongside and through Falls Prevention Service. Project started beginning of November, with actual visits commencing 7 November. Currently due to end 31/3/23. Initial letter to 350 council properties with a D rated Energy Performance Certificate which could be easily improved to C rated. 41 referrals received as a result of these letters and over 20 visits undertaken so far. Most common measures are changing the home to energy efficient light bulbs and draught proofing older, wooden external doors. To date £343.57 spent on bulbs which should save 2586kw/h or £880 off bills based on 0.34p per unit of electricity. Yearly carbon saving of 499 kg based on Govt. Figures. Other issues identified with properties during the visit reported to the appropriate service e.g. repairs.
32. A Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2 bid is under development to deliver further energy efficiency improvements to over 100 council homes, for a programme around £2m including 50% match funding for. This proposal would fully commit the £2m HRA Retrofit Fund and should the bid be successful, around 190 council homes would be improved to at least an EPC C standard utilising this existing budget.

33. A draft Retrofit Action Plan is currently out to formal public consultation and sets out the need and range of tools available to both deliver and facilitate further retrofit works over the coming years. The Retrofit Action Plan aims to reduce emissions and energy bills across all tenures and will be considered by Executive later this year.

Conclusion

34. Many Council tenants are struggling to cover all their costs at present and the situation is unlikely to improve in the short term. Housing Services will continue to work with people to ensure they have the best chance of sustaining their tenancies. This paper sets out how increased utilities costs are directly impacting upon the HRA. This is also impacting across the board as inflationary increases on all goods and services mean that everything costs more whilst income budgets are either constrained by government rent caps or impacted by reduced rent recovery. This will have a significant immediate impact upon the HRA and longer term future investment plans.

Implications

35. None identified.

Recommendations

36. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the information in the report.

Reason:

- i. To update the Committee on the challenges council housing tenants face as a result of the cost of living increases.
- ii. To update the Committee on the Council's housing strategies.

Contact Details

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Chief officer responsible for this report

Tracey Carter - Director of Housing
Economy and Regeneration

Report Approved **Date** 28/11/22

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- Early Support Grant Scheme Guidance Sept 2022 (available online)
- York Fuel Food Voucher Scheme Guidance 24 Nov 22 (available online)
- Worrying About Money - Final York Leaflet Aug 22 (available online)
- Local Support Application Checklist – April 2022 (available online)
- Local Financial Support Schemes Overview 22 6 22 (available online)

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Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee

7 December 2022

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy and Place

2022/23 Finance and Performance Monitor Q2

Summary

1. This report provides details of the Q2 2022-23 monitoring position for both finance and performance across Housing & Community Safety. The paper incorporates data to September 2022, which was reported to Executive on 22 November 2022.

Recommendations

2. The Committee is asked to note the financial and performance management position across Housing & Community Safety.
3. Reason: to ensure expenditure is kept within the approved budget and performance is effectively scrutinised.

Financial Analysis Q2 2022-23

4. The table below provides a more detailed breakdown of the forecasts for services within Housing and Community Safety.

Service Area	Expend Budget £'000's	Income Budget £'000	Net Budget £'000	Projected Variance £'000's
Building Maintenance	14,502	-15,021	-519	0
Housing Options and Homelessness	5,024	-3,680	1,344	0
Private Sector Housing	1,259	-1,071	189	0
Community Safety	756	-81	675	0
Housing and Com. Safety (Gen Fund)	21,541	19,853	1,688	0

5. The Housing and Community Safety service are forecasting a nil variance at quarter 2 on general fund.

6. Housing Options and Homelessness includes the front-line services provided to those in need of housing support, the provision of hostels at Peasholme and Howe Hill as well as homelessness initiatives. There are pressures arising from increased energy costs at the two general fund hostels however it is considered that these can be offset from savings arising from staffing vacancies and maximising the use of external funding.

Housing Revenue Account

7. The Housing Revenue Account is forecasting an overspend of c £2m in 2022/23 compared to the original budget. The table below provides a more detailed breakdown along with commentary below.

Activity area	2022/23 Net Budget	Forecast 2022/23	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Repairs & Maintenance	8,270	8,870	600
General Management	6,843	6,613	-230
Special Services	3,391	4,341	950
Other Expenditure	17,857	17,724	-133
Dwelling rents	-33,244	-32,692	552
Non-Dwelling Rents	-456	-422	34
Charges for Services	-1,854	-1,617	237
Other Income	-460	-460	0
Total	347	2,357	+2,010

8. The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2022/23 is a deficit of £347k. The rising cost of utilities is having a significant impact on the HRA budgets as well as other inflationary rises such as the pay award and the cost of materials and repairs, with the overall forecast being £2m above the budget.
9. The cost of repairs to council housing stock has risen since the start of the year due to these inflationary increases in materials, sub-contractor costs and fuel rises. In addition, the agreed pay award has contributed to the increased labour costs of the in-house workforce. As the level of these increases are higher than was forecast when the budget was set, the Repairs Team are expecting a pressure on the cost of maintaining our housing stock of around c£600k in 2022/23. The team are working to increase the number of jobs that are completed on the first visit to improve

efficiencies and reduce sub-contractor spend in order to mitigate this increase.

10. Rental income for general needs properties is forecast to be £552k below budget due to the number of void properties across the portfolio. A third of these properties are long term voids, such as Glen Lodge and Bell Farm, where the properties are awaiting large scale capital works. The number of voids outside this category has decreased from 140 in June to 110 in October 2022, meaning more voids are being returned to re-let, than the number of empty properties received, each week.
11. The cost of gas and electric have increased far higher than the original forecast creating a pressure of c£800k above budget and the pay award is forecast to be a further £170k above the budget, meaning overall the HRA is forecasting a deficit position of £2.357m.
12. When taking out one-off expenditure items relating to revenue contributions to capital, the HRA is forecasting an operational loss of £600k in the year which is unsustainable in the long term. This will need to be addressed as part of the 2023/24 budget process. The Government have also completed a consultation on whether to cap rent increases in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to protect residents against the potential cost of rent increases. Whilst this could be seen as good news for residents (particularly those not in receipt of benefits), if the measure is not supported from government funding, this will put significant pressure on the HRA going forward as costs increase quicker than income. This will lead to savings being required from the HRA in future years.
13. The HRA working balance position as of 31 March 2022 was £29.57m. The HRA projected outturn position means the working balance will reduce to £27.2m on 31 March 2023. This compares to the balance forecast within the latest business plan of £29.15m. The current HRA debt totals £149m.
14. The working balance has been increasing in order to start repaying the £121.5m debt that the HRA incurred as part of self-financing in 2012. The current business plan assumes that reserves are set aside to enable to the debt to be repaid over the period 2023/24 to 2042/43.

Performance – Service Delivery

15. In spite of the many challenges that the organisation and City has faced over the last two years, performance across the wider organisation, not just the Council plan indicators, has continued to remain high and continues to compare favourably when benchmarked against other areas

with similar characteristics to York. Whilst Covid and the actions taken to tackle the global pandemic have in places affected performance in the short-term, the general pattern for data and information monitored by the Council is that levels of resident and customer satisfaction, timeliness, and responsiveness, as well as various directorate and service based indicators, have remained positive.

16. It is likely that due to impacts of COVID, a number of the Council Plan indicators will continue to see a change both in terms of their numbers and their direction of travel in future reporting periods. The majority of the performance measures within the Council Plan have a lag between the data being available and the current reporting period and therefore impacts will not be immediately seen and may occur over several years as new data becomes available.
17. The Executive for the Council Plan (2019-23) agreed a core set of strategic indicators to help monitor the council priorities and these provide the structure for performance updates in this report. The indicators have been grouped around the eight outcome areas included in the Council Plan. Some indicators are not measured on a quarterly basis and the DoT (Direction of Travel) is calculated on the latest three results whether they are annual or quarterly.
18. Relevant performance items around the Council plan topics “Creating homes and World-class infrastructure” and “Safe communities and culture for all” are reported below, as historically other topics in the Council plan are reported to the other various scrutiny setups.

Creating homes and World-class infrastructure						
	Previous Data	Latest Data	DoT	Frequency	Benchmarks	Data Next Available
Net Additional Homes Provided - (YTD)	402 (2021/22)	337 (at Q2 2022/23)	➡	Bi-annual	Not available	2022/23 data available in June 2023
Net Housing Consents - (YTD)	327 (2021/22)	467 (at Q2 2022/23)	➡	Bi-annual	Not available	2022/23 data available in June 2023
Number of homeless households with dependent children in temporary accommodation - (Snapshot)	10 (2020/21)	28 (2021/22)	⬆️ Bad	Quarterly	Not available	Q1 2022/23 data available in November 2022
Average number of days to re-let empty properties (excluding temporary accommodation) - (YTD)	94.67 (Q1 2022/23)	77.65 (Q2 2022/23)	➡	Monthly	Not available	Q3 2022/23 data available in January 2023
Energy efficiency - Average SAP rating for all Council Homes	70.60 (2020/21)	70.60 (2021/22)	➡	Annual	Not available	2022/23 data available in September 2023
Number of new affordable homes delivered in York	35 (Q1 2022/23)	3 (Q2 2022/23)	⬇️ Bad	Quarterly	Not available	Q3 2022/23 data available in January 2023
Average broadband download speed (Mb/s)	147.1 (2020/21)	159.3 (2021/22)	➡	Annual	National Data 2021/22 82.6	2022/23 data available in September 2023
Superfast broadband availability	94.13% (2020/21)	95.53% (2021/22)	➡	Annual	National Data 2021/22 95.86%	2022/23 data available in September 2023

The DoT (Direction of Travel) is calculated on the latest three data points whether they are annual or quarterly.
All historic data is available via the Open Data Platform

New Additional Homes Provided

19. Between 1 April 2022 and 30 September 2022 there were a total of 337 net housing completions. This represents a near return to pre-pandemic levels of housing completions and the figures are similar to those achieved in both 2018 and 2019 for the same 6-month monitoring period. However, this year's figures are heavily influenced by the completion of 232 student flats at Frederick House, Fulford Road and with labour and materials shortages still being experienced by housebuilders, these factors continue to affect housing delivery rates throughout the authority area.
20. Some of the main features of the housing completions have been;
 - 232 student cluster flats were completed at Frederick House, Fulford Road in time for the new academic year;
 - 107 homes were completed on housing sites;
 - A total of 319 new build homes were completed whilst 3 homes were demolished;
 - Individual sites that saw the construction of five or less dwellings contributed an additional 42 homes, and
 - Development sites at the Germany Beck site in Fulford (40) and the Former Lowfield School site (16) were the most significant individual sites that provided housing completions, whilst the first completions at the Former Civil Service Club, Boroughbridge Road (4) also took place.

Net Housing Consents

21. Planning applications determined between 1 April 2022 and 30 September 2022 resulted in the approval of 467 net additional homes. Compared to last year's update covering the same equivalent monitoring period this represents a return to a level of consents needed to meet our housing requirement.
22. The main features of the consents approved were;
 - 261 of all net homes consented (55.9%) were granted on traditional (Use Class C3) housing sites;
 - Sites granted approval for traditional (Use Class C3) housing included Development Site Hospital Fields Road and Ordnance Lane (85), Os Field 2800 Eastfield Lane Dunnington (83), and Cherry Tree House 218 Fifth Avenue (48);
 - Approval was granted for two privately managed student accommodation developments that totalled 208 'cluster' flats at Mecca Bingo (68) Fishergate (104) and Alton Cars York Ltd 3 James Street (104) and represents 44.5% of all approvals over the monitoring period;

- A further 158 homes in Copmanthorpe were approved through a resolution to grant consent by councillors with the application being referred to the Secretary of State for determination;
- An application on Land North of Monks Cross that is allocated within the draft Local Plan (ST8) for 970 homes went to appeal in January 2022 due to non-determination and a decision from the Secretary of State is imminent. Indications are that CYC Planning Committee would have approved this scheme if the Local Plan had been adopted, and
- A further application for circa 300 homes at Huntington South Moor, New Lane also went to appeal in January and has been sent to the Secretary of State for consideration. CYC do not support this site for development.

Number of homeless households with dependent children in temporary accommodation

23. The latest available data shows that there were 28 homeless households with dependent children in temporary accommodation at the end of 2021-22 which is 57% of total households in temporary accommodation, an increase from 33% at the start of the year. The national figures for England consistently showed throughout 2021-22 that around 62% of households in temporary accommodation were households with children. With increasing costs of living and demand for new housing the figures may suggest York is catching up to the national picture in this area although still a little below the benchmark. It should be noted that these figures are snapshot figures and therefore may fluctuate between the snapshot dates.

Average number of days to re-let empty Council properties (excluding temporary accommodation)

24. The average number of days to re-let empty Council properties (excluding temporary accommodation) was 78 days at the end of Q2 2022-23. Although still high, this has reduced from 108 days at the end of May 2022.
25. The Building Services department continues to experience significant challenges associated with the national issues of significant competition for skilled tradespeople and the shortage of building materials. This is in addition to the service continuing to work through the pent up demand for the service following the full release of lockdown restrictions. At the start of the calendar year, an “Action Plan” was created to support improvement through these challenges. The total number of void properties at the end of September 2022 was 89, which although still very high, has reduced from a peak of 152 at the end of Q2 2021-22.

Energy efficiency – Average SAP rating for all Council Homes

26. The provisional average SAP rating for all Council homes in 2021-22 is 70.6. This is primarily based on our stock condition survey of 2019. A large scale stock appraisal exercise is underway as part of development of an energy efficiency and retrofit strategy for council homes, a process which includes work with carbon reduction analysts, Parity Projects Portfolio, to model energy performance, and identify the most cost-effective route to net-zero. One key output of this work will be a detailed analysis of multiple sources of energy performance data, however further property surveys are needed in order to update the current estimate. It is also noted that the numerous sources that have been utilised to date in this exercise support this estimate.

Number of new affordable homes delivered in York

27. There were 224 new affordable homes delivered in York during 2021-22 which was a large increase on the 130 delivered during 2020-21.
28. During the first six months of 2022-23 there have been 38 new affordable homes delivered which is a large reduction from previous years. A further 120 affordable homes completions are currently expected during 2022-23, which would constitute a total of 158 in the year. It is important to note that significant change is possible in the final outturn where, for example, unanticipated site or market factors result in some delay to completion beyond the financial year end.
29. There is a significant future pipeline of affordable homes with planning permission in place across the council's own newbuild development programme and section 106 planning gain negotiated affordable housing. Inclusive of applications with a resolution to approve from Planning Committee, there are around 950 affordable homes identified in approved planning applications. The progress ranges from sites that are being built out currently to others with substantial infrastructure or remediation challenges to resolve prior to development. Over 350 of these have progressed through detailed planning, either as a Full application or Reserved Matters. The remainder are at Outline stage, with more uncertainty on timescales and final delivery levels, including the York Central affordable housing contribution.

Superfast broadband availability/Average broadband download speed (Mbs)

30. In 2021-22, 95.5% of properties in York had access to superfast broadband, which compares to 94.1% in 2020-21. This increase can be attributed to the Council's continued work with service providers to improve infrastructure.

31. The average broadband download speed in York in 2021-22 was 159.3 Mb/s, which compares to 147.1 Mb/s in 2020-21 and 56.1 Mb/s in 2019-20. The national benchmark download speed is 82.6 Mb/s in 2021-22. This data is provided by an Ofcom panel of consumers so should be treated as an indication rather than actual figures.

Safe Communities and culture for all						
	Previous Data	Latest Data	DoT	Frequency	Benchmarks	Data Next Available
% of Talkabout panel satisfied with their local area as a place to live	84.38% (2021/22)	84.73% (Q1 2022/23)	→	Bi-annual	Community Life Survey 2020/21 79%	Q3 2022/23 data available in January 2023
All Crime per 1000 population	18 (Q1 2022/23)	6.5 (August 2022)	↑ Bad	Monthly	National Data 2021/22 86.3	Q2 2022/23 data available in November 2022
Number of Incidents of ASB within the city centre ARZ	245 (Q1 2022/23)	255 (Q2 2022-23)	↓ Good	Monthly	Not available	Q3 2022/23 data available in January 2023
The DoT (Direction of Travel) is calculated on the latest three data points whether they are annual or quarterly. All historic data is available via the Open Data Platform						

% of Talkabout panel satisfied with their local area as a place to live

32. Talkabout panel surveys are run twice a year in Q1 and Q3 and therefore there is no update in this monitor. Previous data is shown within the table.

All Crime per 1000 population

33. Overall crime levels in York for 2021-22 showed that levels had risen slightly since 2020-21 and were back to pre-pandemic levels (67.4 in 2021-22 and 66 in 2019-20). Figures for 2022-23 up to the end of August suggest that overall crime levels are remaining fairly stable. Data for Q2 2022-23 will be available by the end of November 2022.

Number of Incidents of ASB within the city centre (Alcohol Restriction Zone)

34. There were 1,276 incidents of anti-social behaviour within the city centre alcohol restriction zone during 2021-22, compared to 1,410 in 2020-21, and continues the year-on-year reduction seen since 2018-19. Figures for the first half of 2022-23 (500) indicate that this reduction is continuing.
35. Across the city as a whole, there were 1,351 calls for service recorded by North Yorkshire Police linked to anti-social behaviour during Q2 2022-23. This is lower than during the same reporting period in previous years (1,704 in Q2 2021-22 and 2,105 in Q2 2020-21).

Annexes

36. All performance data (and approximately 1,000 further datasets) within this document is made available in machine-readable format through the Council's open data platform at www.yorkopendata.org under the "performance scorecards" section.

Consultation

37. Not applicable.

Options

38. Not applicable.

Council Plan

39. The information and issues included in this report demonstrate progress on achieving the priorities set out in the Council Plan.

Implications

40. The implications are:

- **Financial** are contained throughout the main body of the report.
- **Human Resources (HR)** There are no HR implications related to the recommendations
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** Whilst there are no specific implications within this report, services undertaken by the council make due consideration of these implications as a matter of course.
- **Legal** There are no legal implications related to the recommendations
- **Crime and Disorder** There are no crime and disorder implications related to the recommendations
- **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications related to the recommendations
- **Property** There are no property implications related to the recommendations
- **Other** There are no other implications related to the recommendations

Risk Management

41. An assessment of risks is completed as part of the annual budget setting exercise. These risks are managed effectively through regular reporting and corrective action being taken where necessary and appropriate.

Contact Details

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Wards Affected: All			✓
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

Glossary of Abbreviations used in the report:

ASB	Anti Social Behaviour
CYC	City of York Council
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure

Scrutiny Area	Meeting Date	Publication Date	Meeting Type	Agenda
HCS	07/12/2022		Committee	1) Q2 Monitor 2) Update on how the Housing team is supporting tenants with the impact of the cost of living increase, eg rent arrears
HCS	14/03/2023		Committee	Q3 Monitor

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