
MEETING	EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR HOUSING & ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES AND ADVISORY PANEL
DATE	11 DECEMBER 2006
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS GREENWOOD (CHAIR), SUE GALLOWAY (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), SUNDERLAND (EXECUTIVE MEMBER), NIMMO, LIVESLEY (SUBSTITUTE), FRASER, HORTON, MRS MILDRED GRUNDY (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBER) AND MS PAT HOLMES (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBER)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS FAIRCLOUGH AND HILL

48. 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 Fraser declared a general personal non prejudicial interest in relation to any HR implications in all the budget proposals as a retired member of Unison.

49. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 30 October 2006 be approved and signed as a correct record.

50. Public Participation

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

Liz Young, Unison, addressed the committee on Agenda Item 12 (Service Plans and Revenue Budget estimates 2007/08). She raised concerns about the recommended savings proposal, contained in Annex 3, to combine Hew Horizons and Community Base, stating that the merger would reduce the number of places available and result in some staff being redeployed. She also highlighted concerns about the need to find £30 000 of savings, and that only £10 000 had been saved so far and it was feared that the other £20 000 could not be achieved without cutting jobs.

51. Housing Revenue Account Service Plan and Budgets 2007/2008

Members considered a report which advised of the revenue estimates for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year 2007/2008. Annex 1 provided a detailed analysis of the HRA's proposed budget.

The report advised that the result of all the variations outlined in paragraphs 17 - 22 was an in-year surplus of £1,530k. The brought forward working balance of £4,835k from 2006/07 was to be used to make a revenue contribution to capital schemes of £912k. The remainder brought forward of £3,923k together with the in year surplus of £1,530k leaves a working balance of £5,453k on the account. The HRA surplus was broadly in line with that forecast in the HRA business plan. It was therefore suggested that the HRA surplus, after using £912k as a revenue contribution, remained on the account to be reviewed once the HRA business plan was updated to reflect both the budget detailed in this report and the 06/07 outturn position. Members were reminded that the HRA surplus was needed to fund future years in line with the Business Plan approved at Housing EMAP in July 2005.

It was highlighted that due to the removal of the payment of rent rebates through the HRA there was now a net surplus on the 'notional HRA' as the rent income now exceeded the subsidy payable by the government for HRA expenditure on management and maintenance etc. This resulted in a 'negative' subsidy payable by the authority to the government of £5,354k for 2007/08. This compared to £4,902k for 2006/07.

Members queried about why the negative subsidy went back to the government. Officers explained that all local authorities had to have a HRA assessment on the number and type of properties to work out how much income the local authority should make. If the local authority makes more than this, then the negative subsidy had to go back to the government.

The Labour Group reserved their position.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive member for Housing be advised to consider the budget proposals for Housing Revenue Account for 2007/08 contained in this report and listed below, and provide comments to be submitted to the Budget Executive on 16 January 2007.

- 2007/2008 Estimate as set out in paragraphs 17 – 20 and Annex 1.
- Growth proposals as set out in paragraph 21.
- Savings / additional income proposals as set out in paragraph 22.
- The brought forward surplus of £4,835k be included within next financial year to be used as outlined in paragraphs 24 -25.

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 ensure a balanced 2007/08 HRA budget is submitted to the Executive.

52. Housing General Fund Service Plan and Budget 2007/08

Members considered a report which presented the 2007/08 budget proposals for Housing General Fund. It included the budget for 2006/07 to show the existing budgets, the budget adjusted and rolled forward from 2006/07, the allocation of pay and price increases for the portfolio, budget service pressure proposals and savings options for the portfolio area, and budget options subject to consultation.

A summary of the budget proposals were contained in Table 1 under paragraph 8. Members were asked for their comments on the budget proposals in the report or alternative suggestions on the investment and savings proposals shown in Annexes 2 and 3.

The Labour Group reserved their position.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to

- (i) Provide comments on the budget proposals for consultation for 2007/08 contained in this report, which will be considered by the Budget Executive on 16 January 2007.
- (ii) Consider the budget proposals for consultation for Housing General Fund for 2007/08 contained in this report and listed below and provide comments to be submitted to the Budget Executive on 16 January 2007.
 - 2007/08 Base budget as set out in paragraph 9;
 - Service Pressure proposals as set out in Annex 2;
 - Savings proposals as set out in Annex 3

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 ensure a balanced 2007/08 budget is presented to the Executive.

53. Review of Housing Fees and Charges

Members considered a report which recommended a revision of fees and charges, which fall within the Housing portfolio.

The report advised that as reported in the 'Housing Rents and Management and Maintenance Allowances 2007/08' the recommended average rent increase for 2007/08 was 5%. Other Housing Revenue

Account fees and charges had been reviewed to include a 5% uplift for accommodation and 2.3% (inflation) for other fees and charges.

Members were presented with two options:

Option 1 – To agree the charges as set out in the report.

Option 2 – To not accept the charges.

The outcome of the proposed changes would be increased income of £19k to the HRA and a reduction in income of £12k to Housing General Fund.

The Labour Group reserved their position.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to consider the proposals for the 2007/08 Housing fees and charges contained in this report and provide comments to be submitted to the Budget Executive on 16th January 2007.

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 ensure a balanced 2007/08 HRA budget is submitted to the Executive.

54. Housing Rents And Management And Maintenance Allowance 2007/08

Members received a report which asked the Executive Member to consider the rent guidelines and the management and maintenance allowances issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for 2007/08.

Members were presented with three options:-

Option 1

In order to reduce the rent increase to within the DCLG limit of 5% a flat rate reduction across all council dwelling rents could be applied which would reduce each individual property rent by £0.45 per week and reduce the average increase to 5%. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) would not lose any income by reducing the average increase from 5.82% to 5% as the reduction in increase from 5.82% to 5% would be compensated for by the DCLG through the rental constraint allowance, which forms part of the housing subsidy calculation.

Option 2 – RECOMMENDED OPTION

In order to reduce the rent increase to within the DCLG limit of 5% a reduction of £1.17 could be applied to bedsits and 1 bed flats. Both of these dwelling types are more difficult to let. Of 597 relets in 05/06 60% were bedsits or 1 bed flats therefore applying the rent reduction in these

areas may make them easier to let and whilst they were void the rent loss would be reduced.

Option 3

To ignore DCLG recommendations and increase council dwelling rents by 5.82%. This option would not generate any additional income for the HRA and would be difficult to justify as the reduction in increase from 5.82% to 5% outlined in options 1 and 2 would be compensated for by the DCLG through the rental constraint allowance as part of the Housing subsidy calculation.

The Labour Group reserved their position.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to approve option 2 and the rent increase in York of 5% be referred to Executive for approval.

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 enable a balanced HRA and comply with rent restructuring policy.

55. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Members considered a report which sought approval of the Revised Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2006/7-2008/9.

Two options were presented to Members:

Option 1 – To approve the Business Plan.

Option 2 – To ask for changes to the Business Plan.

The Business Plan set out the detailed financial plan for investment in council homes to ensure all achieve the decent homes standard by 2010. At present approximately 1,034 (13% of all council homes) did not meet the standard currently. The business plan sets out the timetable and investment profile to ensure that zero non-decent homes would be achieved by 2010/11. This was a key government objective and a priority in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2006-9.

It was queried whether in the capital summary under paragraph 17, the £1912k expenditure on assistance to older and disabled people included the increase of £50k for adaptations. Officers reported that the £1912k did include the £50k increase for adaptations.

Members thanked staff for producing a document that was easy to read and informative.

The Labour Group reserved their position.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to approve the business plan (Option 1).

Decision of the Executive Member for Housing

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

REASON: A thorough review of the plan took place in consultation with members, residents and Government office in 2005, and this year's plan represents only minor amendments to the existing plan projections and an update on progress.

56. Second Review of the 2006/07 Housing Capital Programme and programme for 2007/08 to 2010/11

Members considered a report which presented the second quarter review of the 2006/07 Housing Capital Programme, the resources available to support it and recommended that the Executive Member approved the variations. The report also included the proposed capital programme for 2007/08 to 2010/11.

The Approved Housing Capital Programme for 2006/07 was £10,046. The outcome of the minor variations agreed within officers' delegated authority and the variations outlined in the report result in a £5k decrease in position hence the Programme for 06/07 would stand at £10,041k with £4,581k funded through the MRA. The proposed programme for 2007/08 to 2010/11 attached at annex 2 was fully funded from ring fenced housing resources including the Major Repairs Allowance. There were revenue implications of the proposed demolition of a pair of semi-detached dwellings in the Monkton Road area which had been undermined by subsidence, as outlined in paragraphs 11 and 15.

Members queried about whether there were any other Orlit homes which had structural problems like the two homes being demolished. It was reported that the problems were with the precast concrete frame structure but officers were not anticipating finding other properties with the same problems.

Members raised concerns about the relocation of tenants into the Discus bungalows and requested that officers tried to minimise the number of elderly people moving more than once. Officers reported that figures could be provided on the number of tenants who want to move permanently and who were happy to move into temporary accommodation.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to:

- i. Note the progress on schemes, approve variations in tables 1, 2 and 4 and note minor variations made under officers' delegated authority
- ii. Agree the recommendation of demolition and payment of home loss as outlined in paragraphs 11 & 15.
- iii. Approve the Revenue Contribution for funding of Adaptations to Discus Bungalow customers as noted in paragraph 18 and table 3.
- iv. Consider the proposed capital programme schemes for 2007/08 to 2010/11 and recommend the proposals to the Budget Executive on 16th January 2007.

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 achieve a balanced capital budget.

57. Housing General Fund Service Plan – Second Monitor

Members received a report which provided the Executive Member with updates and progress on Housing General Fund Service Plan agreed from April 2006. A separate report detailed the Housing Revenue Account.

The original budget estimate for Housing General Fund approved by Members was £1,333k. After approval of savings and growth and other approvals including insurance and recharge adjustments, the approved Housing General Fund budget was now £1,212k. This review indicated that there was a forecast underspend of £67k.

Members commented that the figures on the percentage of minor adaptations installed within 7 days from assessment was exceptional.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to note the progress and achievements made in delivering the Housing General Fund Service Plan.

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 on progress on the service plan and progress against objectives.

58. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Service Plan - Second Monitor

Members considered a report which provided the Executive Member with updates and progress on HRA Service Plan agreed from April 2006. A separate report detailed the Housing General Fund.

The original 2006/07 budget reported to members on 6th February 2006 had a working balance of £4,513k. After a number of budget adjustments, including the allocation of recharges and insurances, the balance on the HRA was now estimated to be £4,540k. The net variations of £295k together with the budgeted balance of £4,540k now gave a total estimated balance on the HRA of £4,835k. This was an increase of £22k since the first monitoring report that went to the executive member on 11th September 2006.

Members queried about the figures for non decent council housing stock in Annex 1 being different to those in paragraph 9 of the report. Officers reported that the figure of 12.78% in Annex 1 was the correct one and the figure of 14.79% in paragraph 9 should be 12.78%.

The Executive Member for Housing thanked staff in Housing Services for their work on the HRA and Housing General Fund.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Housing be advised to note the progress and achievements made in delivering the HRA Service Plan.

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 on progress on the service plan and progress against objectives.

59. Service Plans and Revenue Budget Estimates 2007/08

Members received a report which presented an update to the Service Plans for 2007/8 and the 2007/08 budget proposals for Adult Social Services.

A summary of the budget proposals was shown in Table 1 under paragraph 8. Annexes 2 and 3 contained budget service pressure proposals and savings options for the portfolio area.

The Labour Group reserved their position but commented that there were further cuts proposed in the budget, in conjunction with increased fees and charges.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to

(i) Provide comments on the budget proposals for consultation for 2007/08

contained in this report, which will be considered by the Budget Executive on 16 January 2007;

(ii) Consider the budget proposals for consultation for Adult Social Services for 2007/08 contained in this report and listed below and provide comments to be submitted to the Budget Executive on 16 January 2007:

- 2007/08 Base budget as set out in Table 1;
- Service Pressure proposals as set out in Annex 2;
- Savings proposals as set out in Annex 3

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 a balanced 2007/08 budget is presented to the Executive.

60. Standard charges for the use of Residential Homes, Non-Residential Centres and Discretionary Social Care Charges

Members considered a report which sought approval for the level of charges to other local authorities for the use of services within the Social Services portfolio for residential care homes and non-residential centres, and of the maximum charge made to residents of the homes. The report also considered the level of discretionary social care charges.

The report advised that there are no alternative options regarding the standard weekly charges for residential care homes and non-residential centres as shown in Annex A. There was a legislative requirement that the charges were calculated following national guidelines provided to all local authorities. In arriving at the figures quoted the guidelines had been strictly followed.

There were alternative options to the discretionary charges in Annex B. These could include:-

- Option A would be to increase the discretionary charges to the amounts proposed within this report.
- Option B would be not to increase the discretionary charges but leave them at the 2006/07 rates or to increase them by less than the amounts proposed within this report.
- Option C would be to increase the discretionary charges by more than the amounts quoted within this report.

The Labour Group reserved their position but noted the significant reduction in the disability related benefits disregarded from 50% to 35%.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to

- (i) Consider the fees and charges proposals for consultation for Adult Social Services for 2007/08 contained in this report and listed below and provide comments to be submitted to the Budget Executive on 16 January 2007.
- (ii) Approve the following charges to commence from 2nd April 2007
 - (a) the standard weekly charges for residential care homes and non-residential centres as shown in Annex A.
 - (b) the discretionary charges as shown in Annex B.
 - (c) the amount of disability related benefit disregarded reduces from 50% to 35% as per paragraphs 2.8 – 2.10.

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 a balanced 2007/08 budget is presented to the Executive.

61. Second Review of the 2006/07 Social Services Capital Programme and programme for 2007/08 to 2010/11

Members considered a report which presented the second quarter review of the 2006/07 Social Services Capital Programme and the resources available to support it.

The report advised that as there were no variations the Programme would remain at £671k of which £205k was grant funded income.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to note the continuation of the existing capital programme schemes in future years as outlined in paragraph 8.

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 inform the Executive Member and ensure a balanced capital programme in 2007/08.

62. Social Services 2006/7 Service Plan and Budget 2nd Monitor report

Members considered a report which provided an overview of progress on Service Plans agreed in January 2006. This report covered service plans for social services and corporate services. Elements of the Corporate Services monitoring were also relevant to the Housing service plans.

The original budget estimate approved by Members was £31.9m. After approval of savings and growth and other items, including insurance and recharge adjustments, the approved budget was £31.7m. This review indicates an overspend of £1,520k (4.8%) to the approved budget, compared to the first monitor which highlighted a potential overspend of £1,702k. If the actions being taken were achieved, the overspend could reduce to £648k, an increase of 2.2% to budget.

Members requested an update on the provision of home care services and the difficulties of providing this service. It was reported that as from 4 December the council had ceased to be the provider for long term care and that three providers for three different areas were now the providers. There had been initial problems with some companies that were not successful who did not do a handover of staff but these problems were now diminishing.

Members queried about the number of people expressing an interest in direct payment. Officers reported that they were anticipating around 113 people being interested. Concerns were raised by Members that some people were swapping to direct payment to maintain their current cover arrangements, but some companies were charging more than what the council was paying so people were having to top up their payments.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to

- (i) Note and comment on the progress made in delivering Adult Social Services and Corporate Services plans.
- (ii) Note and comment on the projected overspend on adult social services and the measures taken and planned to reduce this.

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 assure that the objectives for adult social services are being delivered in line with the agreed service plans. To ensure that robust plans are in place to bring expenditure on adult social services much closer to the approved budget.

63. Annual Review of Adult Social Services

Members considered a report which informed the Executive Member of the outcome of the annual performance rating by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) of adult social services in York.

CSCI had written to the Director to confirm that the council continues to serve MOST people well and that the service had PROMISING PROSPECTS for improvement. The combination of these two assessments was a TWO STAR rating.

Members thanked staff for their hard work and commitment and welcomed the positive report. It was agreed that a note thanking staff would be sent out on behalf of the committee.

Advice of the Advisory Panel

That the Executive Member for Adult Social Services be advised to note and comment on the annual assessment of adult social care by CSCI.

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 that the improvements achieved in 2005/6 were recognised by the council and that members were aware of the areas highlighted for improvement in the future.

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 5.00 pm and finished at 6.20 pm.