

**48/05 – YORKSHIRE REGIONAL HOME LOANS SERVICE – THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A HOME APPRECIATION LOAN FOR LOCAL
AUTHORITIES IN NORTH YORKSHIRE – FORWARD PLAN**

REFERENCE NO. 06/05/HH108: The Executive Officer (Housing Strategy) submitted a written report with regard to the participation of the Council in the Yorkshire Regional Home Loans Service in respect of duties for the making and payment of home appreciation loans to homeowners in the Harrogate district. The scheme envisaged the delegation of arrangements to Sheffield City Council in order to provide owner-occupied households living in non-decent accommodation with an affordable means of financing works and, in particular, reaching those households unable to take advantage of conventional high street lending. The proposals also represented an example of partnership working and, in addition, the development of new policy tools such as loans linked to property appreciation and as encouraged by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) Cabinet endorse the principles of the Yorkshire Regional Home Loans Service and support its use within the district of Harrogate; and

(2) Cabinet formally resolves to delegate to Sheffield City Council, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Section 101 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000, as amended, its functions in respect of the making and payment of Home Appreciation Loans to homeowners in the Harrogate District under its Private Sector Housing Policy, so as to assist the implementation of the Yorkshire Regional Home Loans Service (“the Scheme”).

Reason for making decision:

All local authorities in North Yorkshire have worked together to develop a property appreciation loan scheme, initially called the North Yorkshire WISH, aimed at helping the vulnerable and elderly stay Warm, Independent, Safe and Healthy. As a result of information sharing and working with West and South Yorkshire a new larger Yorkshire Regional scheme has evolved which aims to compliment each authority’s existing Private Sector Policy and provide owner occupied households living in non-decent accommodation an affordable means of financing works. In particular, the scheme aims to reach those households unable to take advantage of conventional high street lending.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister encourages both partnership working and the development of new policy tools such as loans linked to property appreciation. This initiative meets both these objectives.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Not to support the development of a new policy tool, which is now intended to be

available throughout the Yorkshire Region. This is rejected on the grounds that the scheme will compliment and strengthen the Council's Private Sector Housing Policy and will not require any additional resources to finance or run the initiative.

Seek to promote equity release through the Home Improvement Trust's House Proud Scheme. This is rejected on the basis of both the staffing and financial resources, which would need to be available to make the scheme work. Alternative commercial loans through the Home Improvement Trust (linked to the Houseproud scheme but not replicating it in its entirety) remain available via the local Home Improvement Agency.

(6.08 – 6.09 pm)

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