

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NORTH YORKSHIRE AND YORK

16 APRIL 2010

Integrated Regional Strategy/Yorkshire and Humber Strategy

Purpose of the report

1. This report is to update members on progress on taking forward the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS). The IRS was a product of the Sub-regional review of economic development and was included in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 which was given Royal Assent in October.
2. It draws together into one document the previously statutory based Regional Spatial Strategy and the non –statutory Regional Economic Strategy. The IRS is now referred to as the Yorkshire and Humber Strategy.
3. The report was originally to be considered at the January meeting of LGNYY which was cancelled. The report has been updated and now seeks specifically agreement to prepare a Sub Regional Integrated Strategy.

Background

4. Responsibility for developing the Yorkshire and Humber Strategy rests with local authorities (working together regionally through Local Government Yorkshire and Humber) and Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency. The overarching Joint Regional Board (JRB) will oversee the development of, and approve, the Strategy.
5. Six workstreams have been established to bring together key partners and technical expertise from across the region, including all four functional sub regions. These will work together and have strong interrelationships. The workstreams are:
 - Economy and Skills
 - Transport
 - Housing and Regeneration
 - Spatial Planning
 - Climate change and Environmental Resources
 - Quality of Life and Equalities.
6. Transport, housing and regeneration and spatial planning are led by regional thematic boards which are mainly replicated by boards in York and North Yorkshire. There is a sub regional Economy and Skills Board which also takes responsibility for regeneration.
7. Regionally the skills strand is dealt with by the regional Work and Skills Board and Yorkshire Forward itself leads on the economy issues.
8. The other two workstreams have a less developed presence and will have a relationship to other structures such as the region's Climate Change Partnership and the new, Independent Sustainability Board.

9. Within each of these workstreams, 'Key Lines of Enquiry' have been established in consultation with partners. These express the strategic challenges facing the region as a series of questions. They will guide what information and evidence is sought and pulled together to inform the content of the Strategy.
10. The Joint Regional Board has agreed that the Yorkshire and Humber Strategy will be more spatially specific, and built from local and functional sub-regional priorities. Functional Sub-Regions have a central role to play in contributing their perspective to the Yorkshire and Humber Strategy.

The Timetable

11. A Project Plan for the IRS was approved by the Joint Regional Board (JRB) in October. This includes a timetable for IRS development setting out a process for refining understanding of the evidence and the policy implications in a series of incremental steps. The JRB will be the principal decision making structure at regional level and many of the stages in the timetable are structured to inform key decisions that need to be taken by the JRB.
 - a. Stage 1: Project Planning & Key Lines of Enquiry, August – October 2009
 - b. Stage 2: Initial Evidence & Outcomes, November – December 2009
 - c. Stage 3: Further Evidence & Developing Policy Options, January – July 2010
 - d. Stage 4: Consulting on Policy Options, August – October 2010
 - e. Stage 5: Production of a Draft IRS, November 2010 – January 2011
 - f. Stage 6: Statutory Consultation on Draft IRS, February – April 2011
 - g. Stage 7: Examination in Public, June - December 2011
 - h. Stage 8: Regional Refinement & Finalisation of the IRS, January – October 2012
12. We are currently in stage 3 of the process and each theme has completed an evidence gathering stage at the end of March involving regional and sub regional partnerships. It is however expected that evidence will continue to be collected further over the next few months.
13. There is a level of uncertainty on this process because of the election which has acted as a brake on early consideration of policy issues and also may lead to major changes in the approach to regional strategies.

Issues for this Sub Region

14. The following is the position on the each of the themes sub regionally

Economy and Skills – interim economic assessment prepared - finalized by June

Transport – baselines for sub regional strategy prepared -strategy to be prepared in 2010

Housing - strategy prepared and consultation completed in March

Spatial Planning – initial evidence drawn together

15. There are no local theme groups for the other themes but some work is being taken forward.

Climate change and Environmental Resources – this has been awaiting regional evidence. It is intended that a discussion will be held between interested parties in April or May

Quality of Life and Equalities- this will be taken forward by the Local Strategic Partnerships working with LGYH

16. It is intended to develop connections between these areas of activity so that the sub region can play an active role in the new regional Independent Sustainability Board.
17. The Partnership Unit has facilitated discussions between the sub regional theme officer leads for housing, transport, spatial planning and the economy. Discussions have also been held with Yorkshire Forward including staff from their Chief economists unit, strategy section and the Office of National Statistics. LGYH staff are also involved and are assisting on spatial planning and wider coordination.

A Sub Regional Strategy

18. In that context Chief Executives in the sub region meeting at the Partnership Executive (for Economy and Skills) consider that there should be some form of sub regional integrated Strategy. The view was that this might be a 'light' document that might be prepared before October 2010.
19. One of its roles would be to capture the IRS work in a form that could act as an advocacy document for the sub region that would be responsive to whatever might be the outcome of the election in respect of the future of regional strategies and the potential development of a greater emphasis on a sub regional approach.
20. It would also provide the mechanism for each theme to firstly demonstrate the connectivity with other themes in their work and coordinate policy between spatial planning, the economy, Housing and transport and connect that to the themes of Climate change and Environment and Quality of Life.
21. A similar approach is being taken in the three City regions in the region and the Tees valley. An important consideration will be to ensure alignment with the Leeds City Region where geographies overlap. The York and North Yorkshire Strategy would need to be built around the spatial geographies in the Regional spatial strategy and that have already been used for the economic assessment to ensure it provides added value and a context for taking forward these issues at the City and District level. These are
 - Leeds City Region
 - York sub area (parts in Leeds City Region)
 - Remote Rural areas in the west and east
 - Coast
 - Vales and Tees links
22. It is proposed that the Partnership Executive should take overall responsibility for this process and report back to this meeting.

Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (RIEP)

23. This activity is being supported by RIEP funds of £290,000 made available from LGYH's economy strand. This is supporting

- Preparation of the economic assessment
- Engagement with the private and voluntary sectors
- Support for the spatial planning work
- Joint working in the York sub area
- Preparing a sub regional strategy
- Liaison on climate change and quality of life workstreams
- Coordination of data with CAA work

Recommendations

24. It is recommended that agreement is given that work should proceed on a sub regional strategy led by Chief Executives working through the Partnership Executive.

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