

**Report to:** Local Government North Yorkshire & York

**Date:** 16 April 2010

**Report by:** Mr Wallace Sampson, Chief Executive  
Harrogate Borough Council

**Subject:** **LGNY&Y Housing Board**

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## **1.0 GOVERNANCE**

- 1.1 The LGNY&Y Housing Board has now been established and held its first meeting on 3 December 2009, with a further Board meeting on 15 March 2010. Councillor Jean Butterfield (Harrogate) has been elected as Chair with Councillor Neville Huxtable (Hambleton) as Vice-Chair.
- 1.2 The draft terms of reference were submitted to the Board for approval, however, a query has been raised by the City of York Council about whether both the National Parks Authorities and NYCC should be entitled to vote on matters relating to housing funding and investment (see Appendix 1, Paragraph 5).
- 1.3 A question has also arisen regarding whether the Housing Board (and indeed all the sub-regional boards) should be formally constituted as a 'Joint Committees' under the Local Government Act. In addition, there appears to be some confusion about the powers of the new sub-regional boards against individual local authority governance arrangements (see Appendix 1, Paragraph 5).
- 1.4 As a consequence of the above, the Housing Board has deferred adoption of the terms of reference, pending further consideration by the Board of LGNY&Y.
- 1.5 The minutes of the Housing Board are appended to this briefing for further information.

## **2.0 GENERAL PROGRESS**

- 2.1 377 new affordable homes were delivered during 2008/2009 giving a cumulative total of 806 new affordable homes (2007/2008 and 2008/2009) - this equates to 36% of the LAA affordable homes target. 135 new affordable units have been delivered for the first half of 2009/2010 (44 in quarter 1 and 91 in quarter 2). The overall target is 2220 new affordable homes which means that 42.4% of the overall target was met up to the end of September. The results for the second half of 2009/2010 were awaited at the time of writing this report. Only 14 affordable housing units were delivered during quarter 3 of the current financial year.

- 2.2 The Local Authority managed Rural Housing Enabler programme has bedded in well and is starting to show results. The programme delivered 152 units during 2008/2009 with a further 200 units anticipated during 2009/2010. A governance structure and performance management system are in place to ensure that focus on delivery is maintained. Funding has been secured to undertake a review of the programme so far to inform investment decisions after 31 March 2011.
- 2.3 The sub-regional financial appraisal service continues to be used by Local Authority Planning Officers via the Valuation Office in Leeds. This service assists Local Authority Planning Officers when negotiating the number of affordable housing units on private development sites. The service has not been fully utilised due to housing market conditions.
- 2.4 A single Homeless Strategy for North Yorkshire (excluding York) is being implemented with homeless prevention targets being exceeded. 1877 homeless households had their homelessness prevented during 2008/2009 compared to 989 households assisted during 2007/2008.
- 2.5 A single Housing Strategy for the sub-region has been drafted following a comprehensive county-wide consultation exercise. The Local Government North Yorkshire and York Housing Board is managing the development of the strategy and have approved the draft, subject to some amendments and feedback from the North Yorkshire Housing Forum. A further "mini" county-wide consultation exercise on the draft will start in January for a six-week period.
- 2.6 The sub-region performed well in the Homes & Communities Agency mini bid round during the current financial year. More details are available on request but 403 units of affordable accommodation will be funded as a result of successful bids, representing approximately £22.7 million in HCA grant flowing into the sub-region.
- 2.7 Each Local Authority is also making best use of funding from the Prime Minister's "Housing Pledge" which can be summarised as follows (national allocations):-
- funding to allow Councils to build housing - £750 million
  - continuous market engagement - an extra £750 million
  - kickstart funding for stalled housing sites - £900 million
  - cavity wall insulation - £84 million
  - low carbon solutions - £21 million
- 2.8 A sub-regional research project on the housing needs of Gypsy and Travellers has been completed. An action plan has been approved by the former North Yorkshire Strategic Housing Board and a Gypsy and Traveller Support Manager appointed to take the actions forward. Further sub-regional research has been undertaken to understand the needs of show people and the BME community.
- 2.9 The LGNY&Y Housing Board have agreed an approach to manage a 23.5% cut in the sub-regional housing allocation for 2010/2011. The cut is due to the top slicing of funding to accommodate the Prime Minister's housing pledge.

- 2.10 The LGNY&Y Housing Board have also approved a sub-regional housing market/needs assessment as the key priority in terms of research needs for 2010/2011, subject to funding.
- 2.11 A programme to deliver new affordable housing (primarily for vulnerable groups) via a £5.6 million Second Homes Discount Fund is being developed. An evaluation model and evaluation panel have been established with a view to submitting a full deliverable programme to the County Council by 31 March 2010.

### **3.0 MAIN ISSUES FOR THE HOUSING BOARD**

- 3.1 The main barrier continues to relate to the affordable homes target as current market conditions have created a slow down in the house building sector which means the planning system can only make a limited contribution to the target. The original target was based on the assumption that output from planning gain would increase as the LDF process created more robust planning policies in relation to affordable housing.
- 3.2 Lack of suitable land continues to be a barrier to the delivery of affordable housing.
- 3.3 The Supporting People programme has a budget reduction strategy in place to accommodate a projected a £2 million deficit by 31 March 2011. The books must be balanced which will mean efficiency and decommissioning measures being implemented over the coming months.

### **4.0 ISSUES FOR THE LGNY&Y BOARD**

- 4.1 Voting rights of non-housing authorities (paragraph 1.2).
- 4.2 Necessity for constitution as 'Joint Committees' (paragraph 1.3).
- 4.3 Relationship between sub-regional boards and individual local authority governance arrangements (paragraph 1.3).

**Appendix 1** - Minutes of the LGNY&Y Housing Board dated 3 December 2009.

**Minutes of Local Government North Yorkshire and York Housing Board held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009.**

**1) Attendance / Apologies**

Attendance :

Dawn Saxby – Harrogate BC  
Andrew Rowe – Scarborough BC  
Cllr Jonathan Dixon – Scarborough BC  
Helen Fielding – Hambleton DC  
Cllr Neville Huxtable – Hambleton DC  
Cllr Jean Butterfield – Harrogate BC  
Colin Dales – Richmondshire DC  
Sue Walters-Thompson – NY Housing Partnership  
David Vasey – NY Housing Partnership  
Alan Jenks – Harrogate BC  
Marcia Cunningham – Government Office  
Cllr Peter Wood – Richmondshire DC  
Cllr Richard Foster – Craven DC  
Wyn Ashton – Craven DC  
Cllr Yvonne Peacock – YDNPA  
Cllr John Fort – NYCC  
Cllr Gillian Ivey – Selby DC  
Cllr Jonathan Morley – CYC  
Cllr Bastiman – Scarborough BC  
Steve Waddington – CYC  
Simon Parkinson – Selby DC

**2) Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

Cllr Jean Butterfield was elected as Chair of the new Board.

Cllr Neville Huxtable was elected as Vice Chair of the new Board.

Cllr Gillian Ivey was elected as Chair of the Supporting People Members Committee

Cllr Yvonne Peacock was elected Chair of the Second Homes Evaluation Panel

Cllr John Fort was elected Vice Chair of the Second Homes Evaluation Panel

No nominations were received for the Chair of the Rural Housing Enabler Network.

**3) Minutes of Meeting Held 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendments :

- Cllr Morley amendment – Item 4 – views were expressed for and against majority voting
- Cllr Morley amendment – Item 4 – the words relating to the first bullet point are amended from (ie not a CYC issue) to (eg not a CYC issue)

Matters Arising :

- Andrew Rowe explained that it had not been possible to invite Salford University to this Board meeting to present the BME research findings but will be invited to the next Board meeting.

#### **4) North Yorkshire Housing Forum**

Cllr Neville Huxtable gave a verbal update on the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> November, the substantive issue being consultation on the draft single housing strategy.

#### **5) Draft Terms of Reference**

Colin Dales presented the draft terms of reference , highlighting the key points :

- the two National Park Authorities have full voting rights
- the proposed quorate figure is 6
- the majority voting (2 clear votes) system was proposed.

The following points were raised :

- CYC queried whether representative bodies not party to sub regional funding allocations (e.g. National Park Authorities and NYCC) should be able to vote on resource / funding decisions
- CYC suggested that “sub regional” should be used where appropriate e.g. at 4.2 and 4.7
- General query as to whether the Board should be formally constituted as a Joint Committee under the Local Government Act and any governance consequences for individual Local Authorities need to be considered.
- CYC suggested that 5 working days for papers circulation is not sufficient and suggested 10 working days

**The Board agreed to :**

- defer a decision following an options report to the next meeting and requested Colin Dales take a steer from the Leaders / Chief Execs Board.

#### **6) Single Housing Strategy – Consultation on Draft**

Sue Walters-Thompson presented a report on the draft strategy and proposed consultation arrangements.

**The Board agreed to :**

- approve the format and content of the draft strategy
- approve the consultation proposal as set out
- approve amendments following feedback from the Housing Forum, CYC, NY Partnership Unit , NYMNPA.

**7) Second Homes Discount Affordable Housing Fund**

Colin Dales gave a verbal update on the current position :

- 6 expressions of interest had been received as part of round 1
- The round 1 evaluation panel will be convened before Christmas
- If the “pot” is over subscribed failed bids will be forwarded to round 2 unless the reasons for rejection cannot be overcome in time to meet round 2 deadlines
- Regular updates will be provided for the Board

**The Board agreed to :**

- note the updated position

**8) Sub Regional Allocation for 2010/11**

Colin Dales presented a report on an anticipated 23.5% reduction in the sub region’s housing allocation in 2010/11. It was stressed that feedback from Local Authorities suggested that G & T funding could be spent during 10/11 but most deliverable schemes related to refurbishment rather than new provision.

**The Board agreed to :**

- manage the funding reduction by approving option 5 within the report
- that the G & T allocation within option 5 can only be used to fund new provision
- that Local Authorities submit bids / business cases for new provision projects to the Board prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010
- that any un allocated G & T funding is redistributed to support better homes expenditure on a pro rata basis to individual Local Authorities

**9) Sub Regional Research Priorities and Funding**

Colin Dales presented a report on sub regional research priorities. It was stressed that sub regional funding after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 may not be eligible for sub regional research.

**The Board agreed to :**

- approve the commissioning of a sub regional housing market / needs assessment during 2010/11 in line with the approach previously approved by the Board
- that the 2011 to 2014 sub regional funding plan prioritises a sub regional stock condition survey as the key research priority subject to any restrictions placed on the sub regional allocation

## **10) Sub Regional Monitoring Update – Quarter 2 09/10**

David Vasey presented an update on spending and outputs for quarter 2.

### **The Board agreed to :**

- to note the report.

## **11)Enhanced Joint Working Action Plan – Private Sector Housing**

Wyn Ashton and Simon Parkinson presented a report , updating the Board on progress being made on private sector housing.

### **The Board agreed to :**

- note the updated position

## **12)Future Meeting Dates**

Colin Dales presented a report on proposed meeting dates of the Housing Forum, Chief Housing Officers Group and the Board for 2010 /2011.

### **The Board agreed to :**

- adopt the meeting dates subject to Board meetings being put back by 1 week in each cycle.
- Colin Dales circulating revised meeting dates in line with the above

### **Any Other Business**

- Colin Dales advised that the Homes and Communities Agency had a resource to give advice / assistance on achieving high quality , sustainable building design within the sub region. The project would be targeted at development control teams but would also include RSL development teams.

**The Board supported this initiative.**

- Cllr Huxtable proposed an alternative venue for future meetings – Thirsk Leisure Centre.  
The **Board agreed to meet at the new location , subject to any requirements by Harrogate BC as the administering authority**