



## Core Principles of Localism in Yorkshire and Humber

### Our Position

Leaders of Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) welcome the renewed enthusiasm for ‘**localism**’ in national politics. We are pleased to see that all the main political parties now offer strong support to the idea of decentralising power and control from Whitehall to local communities.

‘**Localism**’ offers new opportunities for bridging the gap that has opened up between citizens and the state and between the richest and most disadvantaged people in society; but it could become an empty phrase if it does not lead to a significant strengthening of our democratically elected local government system.

### Our Core Principles

There are seven main (but inter-related and complementary) reasons why a fresh emphasis on ‘**localism**’ is essential for the wellbeing and success of the country:

- **Better Outcomes**
- **Delivering Efficiently**
- **Democracy**
- **Services**
- **Community**
- **Strategic Collaboration**
- **Shaping Place**

### Better Outcomes

Improving the lives of citizens and communities is the fundamental role of government. Despite intensive central intervention and periods of great economic growth, the gap between the richest and our poorest communities has widened. We need place-based approaches to address local problems; and only local government, with its knowledge and democratic accountability, can lead and deliver this.

**LGYH is developing a suite of ‘business cases’ to demonstrate how a truly local approach can deliver better outcomes.**

### Delivering Efficiently

Local authorities in Yorkshire and Humber have a proven track record of delivering efficiencies – in 2008/09 we delivered collectively savings of £177m. But as we face the reality of severe public sector funding cuts, it is essential that we do even more to maintain excellent front line services. To achieve this we must redesign and streamline the entire public service delivery model, to eradicate duplication and ensure accountability to communities.

**For example, LGYH is undertaking practical, case study-focused work with PricewaterhouseCoopers on ‘Total Capital’, looking at maximising public sector investment, overcoming the obstacles to this and what new models of investment we need to establish.**

### Democracy

Only by bringing power closer to communities will it be possible to begin to restore public trust in the political system. Voter turnout in local elections is likely to increase if citizens can see that their local council exercises real power over important matters of local concern and if they can have a genuine influence over all the activities and decision-making of their public services. Local democratic influence and accountability must, therefore, be extended to cover all public services delivered in our localities and communities.

## Services

Multi-professional, flexible teams building new kinds of relationships with their localities can deliver much more cost effective public services than central or regional agencies working in relative isolation. The 'Total Place' initiative holds great promise for public service improvement and delivering better outcomes, but it will only have a positive impact if it is seen as something beyond an 'initiative' and shifts to 'Total Place-based Governance' and aligned decision-making.

## Community

Advancing the common good at the local level is at the heart of local government. Enhancing **localism** means bringing the energies of local communities to bear on local concerns by developing a new set of relationships between citizens, the state and the various public service providers. This focus on a community-orientated approach can play a vital role in building social cohesion and confidence in communities.

## Strategic Collaboration

Effective approaches to '**localism**' will be tuned to local circumstances and also support collaboration where this is needed to deliver services more efficiently and deliver improved outcomes for citizens and communities. There has been a degree of "fudging" of regional arrangements across the country following the Sub National Review. In Yorkshire and Humber, however, we have worked to maximise the democratic mandate in the new arrangements we have created. Recognising the centrality of local mandate also demands greater accountability and scrutiny and we welcome this.

Making sure that Regional and Sub-Regional Strategy formation is place-based, built from local priorities has been our approach. We have used the principle of subsidiarity, which means only working on things at a level other than local if you can demonstrate clear added value. We welcome, in particular, the Leeds City Region Forerunner and urge that fruitful innovations stemming from this pilot are extended to other established functional social and economic geographies of Yorkshire and Humber.

## Shaping Place and being prepared for future uncertainties

Local Councils need the autonomy and space to operate in order to shape, shield and prepare places for the future. Excessive direction and resource constraints only limit the potential for places to be well served by public services. Through proactive local leadership public services are better able to cope with disruptive threats and stresses whilst at the same time maximise opportunities through more innovative, locally distinctive and tailored working.

## About Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH)



LGYH is the regional partnership of the 32 local authorities including councils, police, fire & rescue and national parks. Its membership provides a regional strategic vision for local government in Yorkshire and Humber. Through the Leaders and Chief Executives, it provides political and managerial local government leadership for public sector delivery across Yorkshire and Humber.

### What makes the organisation different?

- It is a one-stop, integrated regional local authority body.
- It delivers a work programme which is developed and agreed by local authority leaders, police and fire authority chairs.
- It is responsive to the needs of local authorities.
- It is dynamic, proactive and will support local authorities to deliver better outcomes for communities.



**For more information visit: [www.lgyh.gov.uk](http://www.lgyh.gov.uk)**