

Local Government North Yorkshire and York 28 January 2011

Review of LGNY Y Theme Boards and other partnerships structures Report of the Honorary Secretary

Purpose of the report

- 1 The LGNY Y meeting on 8 October 2010 resolved that a small working group of Chief Executives jointly undertake a review of LGNY Y Thematic Boards and other partnership structures at regional, sub-regional and local level, that the group comprise four or five people and the Honorary Secretary, that the group be chaired by the Honorary Secretary, and that recommendations be submitted to LGNY Y's meeting to be held on 28 January 2011.
- 2 This report has been prepared following a meeting of Chief Executives' working group.

Introduction

- 3 The context for partnership working is rapidly changing. Alongside substantial cuts in public spending, councils and their partners are responding to the:
 - emerging Localism and Big Society agendas
 - significant health and policing reforms
 - abolition of Regional Development Agencies and creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships
 - removal of much of the top down partnership 'wiring' including the abolition of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and Local Area Agreements
 - piloting of Community (Place-Based) Budgets
- 4 Sustainable Community Strategies (SCS) remain a statutory duty, but most areas in England are reviewing their SCS with the intention of reducing the number of priorities to better reflect the new context and take account of the reduction in capacity.
- 5 There is general agreement that partnership structures in North Yorkshire need to be rationalised. The current structures are too complex and unaffordable. Bureaucracy and overhead costs need to be reduced to free-up time and resources to focus on service provision, without losing the benefits of cross-sector and inter-organisation partnership working. However, it is important to be clear that a review of partnerships is not intended to stop partners working together - partnership working within North Yorkshire should be encouraged, but only where it adds value and is efficient.

- 6 The suggested principles for a new approach are:
- the minimum number and simplest of partnership structures, consistent with delivering the required outcomes and statutory requirements
 - a North Yorkshire and York approach to county / sub-regional partnership structures as far as possible, recognising that a degree of pragmatism will be required given the different local authority structures in North Yorkshire and York
 - local partnerships, including shared community engagement arrangements, at the most appropriate local level
 - the use of task and finish groups to deal with particular issues, rather than standing thematic partnerships or sub-groups

Regional partnership structures

- 7 The abolition of the Regional Development Agency and the Integrated Regional Strategy has removed the rationale for the Joint Regional Board and Thematic Boards, so these have ceased or are ceasing to meet. Local Government Yorkshire and Humber is expected to continue, but with a reduced infrastructure. It is likely that the LGYH Leaders Board will continue to comprise two representatives from each of the four functional sub-regions, with a continuing role for LGNY in appointing the representatives from North Yorkshire.

LGNY

- 8 The Chief Executives' working group was of the view that LGNY should be retained given its key role in bringing together the nine council leaders in the North Yorkshire and York to promote effective working between local authorities.
- 9 LGNY currently has four Thematic Boards mirroring arrangements at the regional level:
- Economy and Skills Board
 - Transport Board
 - Housing Board
 - Spatial Planning Board

Given that the arrangements at the regional level have ceased or are ceasing to meet, it is recommended that LGNY considers whether it wishes to retain some or all the four LGNY Thematic Boards, in particular the Housing and Transport Boards.

- 10 Consideration should be given to whether the membership of LGNY should include organisations other than the nine local authorities. Issues to be considered are:

10.1 When LGNY was established it was agreed to include the national park

authorities in recognition of their role as local planning authorities and the direct representational link through LGNYY to regional planning structures. Should the membership of LGNYY continue to include national park authorities, given that direct representational link no longer exists?

- 10.2 More recently the non-executive leadership of the PCT, police, and fire and rescue authorities have been invited to participate in some LGNYY discussions on a regular basis recognising their key role as public service commissioners or providers. Should these authorities be invited to become members of LGNYY or continue to be invited to participate in some or all LGNYY discussions on a regular basis?
- 10.3 Subject to legislation, the police authority will be replaced by a directly elected police and crime commissioner in 2012. Given the electoral mandate of the commissioner, should s/he be invited to become a member of LGNYY or invited to participate in some or all LGNYY discussions on a regular basis?

The view of the Chief Executives' working group was that membership of LGNYY should be restricted to the nine council leaders.

Other sub-regional partnership structures

- 11 There are a small number of partnerships that, subject to legislation, it is expected will have to exist locally:
 - 11.1 There will be Local Enterprise Partnerships, with membership drawn from the business sector and local authorities.
 - 11.2 It is expected that the North Yorkshire County Council and the City of York Council will be required to establish Health and Wellbeing Boards with a joint duty (with GP commissioning consortia) to prepare and implement a joint health and wellbeing strategy.
 - 11.3 It is expected that Children's Trusts will be relieved of statutory requirements and that oversight of joint commissioning with the NHS for children's care, public health, and health improvement will become a responsibility of the Health and Wellbeing Boards. North Yorkshire County Council and the City of York Council will need to consider whether to continue with their Children's Trusts to push forward the strategic development of children's services.
 - 11.4 Partners, through the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum, are currently reviewing the partnership arrangements for community safety. The requirement to have a Community Safety Partnership remains, but the recent policing white paper encourages consolidation at police force level.

- 11.5 There is a continuing requirement to have a Local Resilience Forum bringing together specific organisations across the police force area to work together to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
- 12 To provide leadership and coordination across the above partnerships and public services generally, and to advise LGNYY, it is proposed to establish a Chief Executives' Group comprising the chief executives or equivalents of the nine local authorities, national park authorities, PCT, police, fire and rescue, plus an appropriate representative of the voluntary and community sector and the business sector. The Chief Executives' Group will also maintain an overview of transport, housing and skills issues, including reporting on these issues to LGNYY.
- 13 The attached diagram sets out the proposed sub-regional partnership structures. The dotted lines between LGNYY and the other partnerships indicate key communication links; the boards will not legally be accountable to LGNYY.
- 14 Given the roles of LGNYY and the other partnerships outlined above, it is proposed that the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (NYSP) Executive and NYSP Thematic Partnerships cease to exist.
- 15 Any issues that could not otherwise be dealt with through LGNYY and the other partnerships outlined above would be managed through a task and finish group approach managed by LGNYY or the Chief Executives Group.
- 16 Consideration should be given by the new Chief Executives' Group (paragraph 12) to how the wide range of organisations active in North Yorkshire currently participating in the NYSP Wider Partnership can continue to be involved appropriately in the new arrangements. The NYSP Wider Partnership has shown itself to be a good forum for consultation and briefing, with a consistently high engagement from participants. At the very least these organisations will need to be consulted on the North Yorkshire Sustainable Community Strategy and, with the appropriate inclusion of organisations active in York, it could be the basis of a good forum for consultation and briefing on behalf of all the sub-regional partnerships.

Local partnership structures

- 17 The City of York and the seven districts in North Yorkshire each has a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), most with a number of thematic and/or geographical sub-groups. There is no statutory requirement on councils to maintain a LSP and the view of the Chief Executives' working group was the opportunity should be taken to review local partnership arrangements, including shared community engagement arrangements. Whilst the detailed arrangements will vary from district to district, it would be helpful if LGNYY could consider and agree some common principles

with a view to rationalising and making local partnership arrangements more effective.

- 18 It is suggested that this review be undertaken by a small working group of Chief Executives, chaired by a District Council Chief Executive, with recommendations to be submitted to LGNYY's meeting to be held on 24 June 2011.

Recommendations

- 19 That LGNYY consider and agree:
- the suggested principles for a new approach (paragraph 6)
 - whether to retain LGNYY (paragraph 8)
 - whether to retain some or all of the four LGNYY Thematic Boards (paragraph 9)
 - whether the membership of LGNYY should include organisations other than the nine local authorities (paragraph 10)
 - the other proposed sub-regional partnership structures (paragraphs 11 to 16)
 - to appoint a small working group of Chief Executives, chaired by a District Council Chief Executive, to undertake a review of local partnership arrangements, including shared community engagement arrangements, in order to propose some common principles with a view to rationalising and making local partnership arrangements more effective, and to submit recommendations to LGNYY's meeting to be held on 24 June 2011 (paragraphs 17 and 18)
- 20 That the Honorary Secretary be requested to draft amendments to the LGNYY constitution to implement the agreed principles and recommendations with regard to its structure, for approval by LGNYY at its meeting on 24 June 2011.

Richard Flinton
Honorary Secretary
Local Government North Yorkshire and York
18 January 2011

Background papers: LGNYY constitution

