

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT NORTH YORKSHIRE AND YORK****28 JANUARY 2011****REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON REGIONAL BODIES****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the reports of elected Members appointed, by LGNY, to serve on various regional bodies concerning the recent proceedings of those bodies.

**2.0 LGYH EXECUTIVE –  
REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN WATSON OBE**

- 2.1 LGYH Executive met on 16 December 2010. There are four significant issues upon which I should report:-
- 2.2 LGY&H will not (as some had expected) be winding up its operations at the end of 2010/11. Although the Yorkshire Forward funding has come to an end and all member Local Authorities are seeking to reduce their subscriptions to such organisations, LGY&H will continue throughout 2011/12 – albeit in a heavily truncated form. Individual Local Authority subscriptions will fall by 40% from this year’s levels. Doncaster has pulled out entirely but everyone else has stayed in. NYCC was one of two Authorities that had called for a 75% cut in subscriptions.
- 2.3 Local Authority pensions were discussed. The conclusion was that the Final Salary arrangements should stay but that the “final” bit should be replaced by a “career average” figure. I would personally have preferred the scheme to be replaced, for new joiners, by a Money Purchase arrangement but I was outvoted.
- 2.4 We discussed whether LGY&H should become the “host” organisation for the region’s European Regional Development team – or part of it, anyway. Some ERDF people work for GOYH and their jobs will all stay, in some form, within the Civil Service. More recent ERDF grants have been made, however, through Yorkshire Forward and the ERDF team there will consequently be homeless. The proposal was put forward by the LGY&H officers but was *not* agreed by the Executive – not without more work being done, anyway. We feared that “hosting” might also lead to a degree of liability.
- 2.5 The Northern Way has run out of money and, unlike LGY&H itself, probably *will* have to wind up on the 31<sup>st</sup> March this year. A last ditch attempt to keep it going by extracting £40,000 a year each from Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield had been vetoed by Leeds.
- 2.5 It has been a fascinating job representing LGNY&Y on the LGY&H Executive and I am grateful for the opportunity to have done it.

**3.0 LGYH SPATIAL PLANNING BOARD –  
REPORT OF COUNCILLOR ANN REID (YORK)**

- 3.1 The Regional Spatial Planning Board has not met and therefore there is no report.

**4.1 LGYH REGENERATION AND HOUSING BOARD**

- 4.1 No information received.

**5.0 LGYH TRANSPORT BOARD –  
REPORT OF COUNCILLOR STEVE GALLOWAY (YORK)**

5.1 The Board has not met and it is doubtful if it will meet again.

**6.0 LGYH WORK AND SKILLS BOARD –  
REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS METCALFE**

6.1 I was unable to attend the last meeting and therefore have nothing to report.

**7.1 LGYH INDEPENDENT SUSTAINABILITY BOARD –  
REPORT OF COUNCILLOR BRIAN PHILLIPS (HAMBLETON)**

7.1 The Board has suspended its meetings whilst awaiting further information on Regional arrangements.

**8.0 YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR NORTH EAST AND WEST  
YORKSHIRE –  
REPORT OF DEREK BASTIMAN (SCARBOROUGH)**

8.1 The next meeting takes place on 31 January 2011.

**9.0 YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER RURAL AFFAIRS FORUM MANAGEMENT GROUP –  
REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR PETER SOWRAY**

9.1 The Yorkshire & Humber Rural Affairs Forum (YHRAF) met on 9 November 2010 to discuss the implications for rural communities of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and the 'Big Society'.

9.2 Jonathan French, *York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit*, updated the group on the progress of LEPs in the region. LEPs should not be seen as successors of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). LEPs will not take over RDA functions nor will they have comparable budget. There will be no central government funding to cover LEP overheads and running costs: it will be up to partners to provide resources. York and North Yorkshire partners are currently exploring how existing resources could be deployed to support a LEP.

9.3 Although there is much talk of 'localism' the trend is toward national centralisation. The contraction of resources is leading to a return to departmental silos in central government. Economic development must bring in the resources of the 'Big Society' if growth is to be achieved. Delivery will shift from agencies to institutions, such as FE colleges, and there will be less money across the board. LEPs give the private sector an active role in driving forward the local economy, rather than just stating what they want to see happen. Some businesses are already engaged in the York/North Yorkshire LEP process and a private sector steering group will meet shortly.

9.4 In rural areas it is particularly important that the role of micro businesses is not overlooked. In Richmondshire for example, as many as 50% of jobs are provided through self-employment and by businesses with 5 or fewer staff. The role of the voluntary and community sector as LEP partners was raised as an essential component if LEPs are going to embrace the 'Big Society'.

9.5 Janet Thornton, *Rural Action Yorkshire*, and Sophie Price, *Y&H Regional Forum* continued this theme with a presentation on 'Untangling the Big Society'. The model of devolving services currently delivered by government to local communities is gaining popularity in other countries, such the USA and Japan, as an aging

population and financial pressures make it impossible to sustain the current delivery model. The challenge will be to manage the transition from a welfare state to local support.

- 9.6 The lower level of services already delivered in rural areas means that communities have already taken on the 'Big Society' role. There are many examples of communities stepping in to set up libraries in village halls and pubs, and developing community hubs to provide local access to services. The interpretation of 'local' will depend on the function or service in question as centrally managed delivery may sometime be the most cost-effective. The implications of 'localism' need to be thought through: for example, a target of 80% agreement on planning applications could result in a NIMBY charter.
- 9.7 There is a danger that the pace of change will cause local authorities to revert to silo driven cuts, rather than a reconfiguration of service delivery. The voluntary and community sector should be consulted to give them the opportunity to propose alternative solutions.
- 9.8 Ivan Annibal, *Rose Regeneration/Lincolnshire County Council*, cited the example of North Dorset District Council as an example of good practice, in his afternoon presentation. Following a 'weak' comprehensive performance assessment in 2004 and a financial crisis, North Dorset was forced to decentralise services. By engaging closely with the local voluntary and community sector, and investing £250k in capacity building, savings of £3m were made.
- 9.9 The key messages from the YHRAF to local authorities are:
- LEPs must take account of rural employment patterns and recognize the needs and contribution of micro businesses.
  - Local authorities should give voluntary and community organisations the opportunity to develop alternative delivery models before cutting services.

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 That the reports be noted.

RICHARD FLINTON  
Honorary Secretary  
County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON