

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT NORTH YORKSHIRE AND YORK

24 JUNE 2011

### REPORTS OF LGNYY THEMATIC BOARDS

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the report of the lead officer for each of LGNYY's Thematic Boards concerning the recent proceedings of those Boards.

#### **2.0 ECONOMY AND SKILLS BOARD**

- 2.1 The most recent meeting of the Board was held on 15 September 2010. The proceedings of that meeting were reported to LGNYY's meeting on 8 October 2010.

#### **3.0 TRANSPORT BOARD – REPORT OF DAVID BOWE (CORPORATE DIRECTOR – BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL)**

- 3.1 The Board has contributed to the assessment of potential expressions of interest to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The key assessment criteria are the purpose of the LSTF (to support economic growth while reducing carbon), the long term financial sustainability of the proposal and the deliverability of the proposal within the time scale of the LSTF (before 2014/15). Expressions of interest have now been submitted by the County Council for a Harrogate sustainable transport package as the potential solo bid and an East Coast Tourism Economy package as the potential joint bid with the North York Moors National Park.
- 3.2 The Board discussed the ongoing countywide Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) project. CPE is where the enforcement of most parking offences on the public highway is undertaken by local authorities and not the police. A joint approach has been adopted and all partner authorities are fully involved as the project progresses. A public consultation will run from the 13 June to 5 September to seek people's views on the parking issues that matter to them.
- 3.3 There is a need to adopt a consistent mechanism to secure developer contributions to pay for the essential transport infrastructure that is required to facilitate delivery of LDFs in each district. The Strategic Transport Improvement Master Plans (STIMPS) approach was endorsed by the Board for consideration and approval by each individual authority. Both the City of York Council and the East Riding of Yorkshire Council are considering adopting the mechanism to ensure a consistent sub-regional approach. It is expected that the STIMP work will readily transfer to form the transport portion of any Community Infrastructure Levy charging tariff.

**4.0 HOUSING BOARD –  
REPORT OF WALLACE SAMPSON (CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HARROGATE  
BOROUGH COUNCIL)**

**Progress report as at 31 May 2011**

**Enhanced two tier project title:** Affordable Housing

**Project Description:** Working together to increase the number of affordable housing units

**Project Lead:** Colin Dales, Hambleton and Richmondshire District Councils  
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**Progress To Date/Update**

- 1) In terms of the 2010/11 full year outturn, affordable home completions totalled 840 new homes, 617 with public subsidy and 223 without. In terms of better homes (private sector housing improvements), actual and committed expenditure totalled £2.57 million. Over 1800 homes in the private sector benefited from improvement/energy efficiency work.
- 2) The Second Homes Evaluation Panel has made its final recommendations to the County Council's Executive and 7 housing schemes have been approved:
  - Women's move-on scheme – Harrogate
  - Foyer Project – Richmond
  - Extra Care – Skipton
  - Extra Care – Settle
  - Craven Hold (home ownership for people with long term disabilities)
  - Hambleton Hold

This represents a total funding commitment of £2.5 million from the second homes affordable housing fund.

A number of recommended schemes have not received NYCC Executive approval and further funding has been withdrawn. This means that 6 housing projects recommended by the Second Homes Evaluation Panel will not be progressed.

- 3) The Single Housing Strategy has been approved by all partners which represents a major milestone in partnership working.
- 4) Work has been completed on a North Yorkshire Local Investment Plan, converting strategic housing priorities into delivery. The plan has been approved by the LG NY & York Housing Board.
- 5) The Rural Housing Enabler Programme funding ended on 31 March 2011 and a new business plan has been developed to continue this important programme beyond 1 April onwards. The business plan is

heavily dependent on a bid for LAA Reward Grant and Housing Association contributions. £100,000 in LAA Reward Grant funding has been approved and further discussions are being held with Housing Associations working in North Yorkshire regarding their contributions. There is a risk that Housing Association contributions will not be made which will result in the winding up of the programme after 31 March 2012.

- 6) A county-wide strategic housing market assessment has been completed, representing the biggest housing survey ever undertaken in the county, achieving significant efficiencies/economies of scale. The results will be used to develop housing policies and provide a sound evidence base for LDF's. A presentation is to be made to the LG NY & York Housing Board on 6 June followed by presentations to individual Local Authorities between 8 and 22 July. A presentation to the NY Housing Forum is also planned for 12 July. It is anticipated that the Housing Board will sign off the findings at its September meeting.
- 7) The sub regional staffing resource has been reduced from 3 members of staff down to 1 due to funding reductions beyond 31 March 2011.
- 8) A North Yorkshire Housing Partnership website is being developed in order to improve information / consultation opportunities.

#### **Barriers to Progressing the Project over the Next Period**

- 1) The main barrier continues to relate to the affordable homes targets 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 overall target will not be achieved.
- 2) Lack of suitable land continues to be a barrier to the delivery of affordable housing.
- 3) The Supporting People financial recovery plan continues to be implemented with further savings being needed following CSR – work is currently being undertaken to assess the detailed impact.
- 4) Homes and Communities Agency funding has been cut as part of CSR by approximately 70%. The impact on North Yorkshire is that, in essence, no new development money will be available during 2011/12. Future funding will be based on a new affordable housing model whereby rents will be up to 80% of market levels. This will impact differently across the county depending on housing benefit levels and the strength of the private rental market. Housing Associations are currently undertaking financial modelling to assess the true impact of the new regime and have submitted development "offers" to the Homes and Communities Agency. Each Local Authority has been made aware of offers received by the HCA and negotiations continue.

- 5) Private sector housing improvement funding ceased from 1 April 2011, again as a direct result of CSR. Local Authorities will still have the freedom to fund private sector housing renewal from their own funds but it is likely that this area of activity will stop with Disabled Facilities Grants being the core business.
- 6) One piece of good news, homeless prevention grant has been protected/increased as part of CSR.

## **5.0 SPATIAL PLANNING WORKSTREAM – REPORT OF BILL WOOLLEY (CITY OF YORK COUNCIL)**

A summary of the Spatial Planning Board's recent work is set out below, covering proposed future arrangements for cross boundary spatial planning, the future of the Spatial Planning Board and a draft Local Strategy Statement.

### **Cross boundary spatial planning – proposed future arrangements**

At a meeting of the Spatial Planning Board on 9 March Members were given a update on discussions that have taken place around the future resourcing of cross-boundary spatial planning capacity for the sub region. This included a briefing of the key conclusions from the Heads of Planning meeting held on 15 February which was well attended and provided helpful feedback.

Members commented that spatial planning is important, providing the framework to make decisions. If cross boundary working doesn't take place Members considered that there will be a fragmented approach to planning, the LEPs won't be well served and there will be no sounding board for innovative thinking or new ideas. It was stated that there needs to be a willingness from Local Authorities to commit officers and resources and that cross boundary working needs to be a priority for Local Authorities. Although it was acknowledged that Members would not be in a position at this meeting to make this sort of commitment, it was hoped that by the next meeting there could be a business case to demonstrate how cross boundary working can work. Any business plan must be short and concise.

### **The future role of the Spatial Planning Board**

At the same meeting Members also considered the future of the Spatial Planning Board. Members discussed that the thematic boards differ in nature – spatial issues and delivery and that all the spatial issues should be covered by the Spatial Planning Board and that spatial planning has a role to cover strategic issues. Spatial Planning is 'the glue' for cross boundary working, adding value to delivery and implementation.

Members also noted that Task and Finish Groups were a good idea to cover specific issues such as the Community Infrastructure Levy.

### **Draft Local Strategy Statement**

Members were presented with a case for a Local Strategy Statement (LSS) that would clarify the status of the Regional Spatial Strategy as an interim

measure for Local Authorities. A LSS would provide a strategic context for both plan making and major development proposals.

While Local Authorities may attach weight to different parts of the RSS for their own purposes Officers considered that a sub-regional view on strategic principles would be beneficial for a number of reasons:

- to confirm the strategic principles of the RSS that will or have been translated in LDFs and demonstrate an evidence based approach to these;
- to provide strategic principles for dealing with planning applications that raise cross-boundary issues;
- to deal with issues where LDF policies have not or will not replicate those in the RSS i.e. to fill gaps in the policy framework for local planning authorities; and
- provide a clear start point for the specific spatial planning issues that are relevant to the forthcoming work of the Local Enterprise Partnerships in North Yorkshire and York and Scarborough, Hull and East Riding.

The development of a Strategy Statement would also need to be seen in the context of the wider North Yorkshire and York Sub-Regional Strategy and the duty to co-operate in the Localism Bill.

A draft LSS was tabled for discussion. Members noted that a LSS based on the strategic policies of the RSS would act as a platform to build LDFs on, a level playing field for everyone to work from. It would also show that the sub region can collaborate and work together. However, there was also concern that an LSS may open Local Authorities up to challenge and could be detrimental for LDFs that were close to examination. It was noted that Richmondshire have already prepared their own LSS.

Members agreed that they were happy to receive the LSS but would provide comments on the draft LSS at a future meeting.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 That the reports be noted.

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County Hall  
Northallerton

RAG  
16 June 2011