

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NORTH YORKSHIRE AND YORK

16 SEPTEMBER 2011

GENERAL UPDATES

Purpose of report

- 1 To provide a brief update for information on issues that do not require a full paper.

Local Government Yorkshire and Humberside Report of Councillor Tom Fox (Scarborough)

- 2 I am one of 3 Vice-Chairs on the LGYH Council, which has not met yet. It is scheduled to meet on 20 October 2011.

LGYH Work and Skills Board Report of County Councillor Chris Metcalfe

- 3 The Regional Work and Skills Partnership last met on 14 July and were chaired by Phil Coppard (Chief Executive Barnsley). The substantive item on the agenda was the future arrangements of the RWSP. It was felt that this could possibly be the penultimate meeting and therefore discussion was around the activity in the each of the LEP areas and how they are proposing to engage with the employment and skills agenda and their relationships with agency partners. The chair has written to all the LEPs seeking their views on how they are addressing the employment and skills agenda and seeking their views if the time is right for the RWSP to wind down.
- 4 We received a presentation on "Rebalancing the Yorkshire and Humber Economy". This was developed by the Chief Economists department at Yorkshire Forward and demonstrated the good quality analysis and intelligence on regional and sub regional economic activity that will be lost when Yorkshire Forward ceases to exist.
- 5 The next and possibly final meeting will take place in October.

LGYH Independent Sustainability Board Report of Councillor Brian Phillips (Hambleton)

- 6 This Board has not met recently.

Yorkshire and Humberside European Regional Development Fund Performance Management Board for North East and West Yorkshire Report of Councillor Derek Bastiman (Scarborough)

- 7 Set out below are my notes from the meeting held on 30 June 2011:-

We were informed about the transition of the team to CLG and that things were going to plan. With the departure of Malcom Taylor as head of the Y&H ERDF programme, CLG have appointed Lesley Calder who runs the North East ERDF Programme to take over the role post transfer. Lesley will be responsible for both the North East and Yorkshire and Humber programmes and will split her time equally between the two.

- 8 It is anticipated that 30 members of the team will transfer on 1 July. The full complement of the posts budgeted for the programme is 45. Clearly there will be gaps in resource capability and capacity post transfer. However, Malcom has worked closely with Lesley and CLG to ensure these gaps are filled quickly to ensure that momentum of the programme is maintained.
- 9 One bit of good news is that support was given to the bid by NYnet to improve the connectivity of the Broadband within the County. The ERDF bid was for £15M with match funding of £19M from BDUK. This should help secure employment and create opportunities throughout the County.

**Yorkshire and Humber Rural Affairs Forum Management Group
Report of County Councillor Peter Sowray**

- 10 The RAF has not met since 1 February 2011.
- a) As part of its new agendas, the Government is no longer endorsing RAFs – and from March 2011 is providing no more funding to support their activities. In April 2011, the Government introduced the concept of the Rural and Farming Network. Effectively, it is intended that this should replace Rural Affairs Forums and Food and Farming Forums. There will be no funding from Defra; the groups are expected to be self-supporting.
 - b) Discussions have taken place between the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Rural Affairs Forum, the Chairman of the Food and Farming Forum (FFF) and the Yorkshire Agricultural Society about submitting a joint Expression of Interest to Defra for a group covering Yorkshire and representing rural issues / communities to be part of Defra's new Rural and Farming Network.

It is therefore proposed that the YHRAF will formally close at the end of September.

**Sub-Regional Housing Board
Report of Wallace Sampson (Chief Executive, Harrogate Borough Council)**

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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- 11 Progress to date/update:-
- a) A significant number of new affordable homes are currently in the pipeline for completion during the current financial year. A full four-year outturn report will be produced for September's LGNY & York Housing Board, and a brief summary will be included in the next report to the LGNY&Y Board. Quarter 1, 2011/2012 monitoring figures are not yet available but will be available for the next report.
 - b) The Rural Housing Enabler Programme funding ended on 31 March 2011 and a new business plan has been developed to continue this important programme. 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. A meeting was held between Local Authorities and Housing Associations

working in North Yorkshire on 18 July to discuss a funding model which Housing Associations are most comfortable with. A revised contribution proposal has been developed, taking on board Housing Association views and formal funding commitments (or otherwise) have been requested. A final update will be given via the next report.

- c) 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. A presentation was made to the LGNY & 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 was also given on 12 July. It is anticipated that the Housing Board will sign off the findings at its September meeting. A copy of the presentation is available on request, but the key findings can be summarised as follows:-
- There were 16,000 responses to the survey.
 - The 345,000 properties in North Yorkshire have a low vacancy rate (2.6%) and a very low long-term vacancy rate (1.2%).
 - 4% of households consider their home to be in serious disrepair.
 - There are high levels of under-occupation in many parts of North Yorkshire.
 - There are approximately 12,300 households in housing need with annual newly arising need estimated to be 2,878 households.
 - The estimated annual turnover of the affordable housing stock to “soak up” this need is 1,677 homes.
 - There is a significant shortfall in larger affordable homes and a sustained need for supported housing.
- d) A North Yorkshire Housing Partnership website has been launched in order to improve information/consultation opportunities. Key documents such as the single Housing Strategy and the Local Investment Plan are available via the website.
- e) The LGNY & York Housing Board have agreed in principle to enter into a commissioning role with the Yorkshire Energy Partnership and will consider the matter further at its next meeting in September. The key benefits of this approach, which will have no financial implications for Local Authorities, can be summarised as follows:-
- Joint commissioning of energy efficiency work will create savings/economies of scale.
 - Local authorities will have greater influence over energy efficiency programmes.
 - Re-inventing of wheels will be avoided whereby an existing well functioning body with an established mandate is used to fulfil a commissioning role, rather than creating another sub regional body.

12 Barriers to progressing the project over the next period:-

- a) The main barrier continues to relate to current housing market conditions which are hindering the contribution that the planning system can make to affordable homes delivery.
- b) Lack of suitable land continues to be a barrier to the delivery of affordable housing.
- c) Homes and Communities Agency funding has been cut as part of CSR by approximately 70% which has created a great deal of uncertainty in terms of future outputs. 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 have submitted their development “offers” to the Homes and Communities Agency based on the new regime. Each Local Authority has been made aware of offers received by the HCA and negotiations continue. The current feeling among the housing colleagues is that Housing Associations are taking a cautious approach to their future development plans.

- d) Private sector housing improvement funding ceased from 1 April 2011, again as a direct result of CSR. Local Authorities still have the freedom to fund private sector housing renewal from their own funds, but current feedback from Local Authority colleagues is that this area of activity has stopped with Disabled Facilities Grants being the core business.

Sub-Region – Former Planning Board and former Transport Board

- 13 Since LGNYY’s last meeting, neither the sub-regional Planning Board nor the sub-regional Transport Board has met.

North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum

- 14 Exercise Vale, planned for 16 August 2011, was postponed because of the riots in other parts of England and is now expected to take place in December 2011. This will test the plans partners have in place with regard to a major incident requiring a police firearms response, casualty extraction and triage, and survivor reception centre.

Police and Crime Panel

- 15 The meeting of nominees (Leader or Portfolio Holder) on how to take forward the issue of a Police and Crime Panel will be held on 28 September 2011. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill is expected to receive royal assent in autumn 2011, with the election of the first Police and Crime Commissioners in May 2012.

Proposed Meeting of Sub-Regional Tourism Portfolio Holders with Councillor Peter Box (Local Authority Representative on the Welcome to Yorkshire Board)

- 16 Councillor Peter Box has written to Councillor Tom Fox (Vice-Chair, LGYH) offering to meet North Yorkshire and York sub-regional tourism Portfolio leads to discuss Councillor Box’s role and how he/they can work most effectively together as local government to maximise the benefits of tourism for the local economies and communities. Councillor Tom Fox has asked for the National Park Authorities to be also involved in such a meeting.
- 17 Contact is being made with the following tourism Members to canvass their availability to attend a meeting with Councillor Peter Box:-
- City of York Council - Councillor Sonja Crisp
 - Craven District Council - Councillor Knowles-Fitton
 - Hambleton District Council - Councillor Peter Wilkinson
 - Harrogate Borough Council – Councillor Caroline Bayliss
 - North York Moors National Park Authority – nomination awaited
 - North Yorkshire County Council – County Councillor Chris Metcalfe
 - Richmondshire District Council – Councillor Melva Steckles
 - Ryedale District Council - Councillor Janet Frank

- Scarborough Borough Council – Councillor David Jeffels
- Selby District Council – *nomination awaited*
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority – Stuart Parsons

Recommendation

18 It is recommended that LGNY Y notes the above updates.

RICHARD FLINTON
Honorary Secretary
Local Government North Yorkshire and York
25 August 2011