

# Local Government North Yorkshire and York

7 March 2014

## General Updates

### Report of the Honorary Secretary

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide a brief update on issues which do not require a full paper.

#### 2.0 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, Richmondshire District Council  
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#### 2.1 Progress to date/update

- (a) Work is ongoing to strengthen the links between housing investment priorities and economic priorities of the new (LEP) Growth Strategy in order to ensure that new funding opportunities are maximised. The Local Government York and NY Housing Board has previously agreed that the link between housing and the LEP needed to be strengthened via the new Growth Strategy. The Housing Board received an update report on the 25 November 2013 articulating what the key links are and highlighting new/emerging housing investment “asks”. This will ensure that key housing messages cross over into the Growth Plan and vice versa, thus ensuring close alignment of these two key strategic priorities.

Julian Rudd (seconded to the LEP) and Sarah Hall are leading on the work to fully develop the housing “asks” via the Growth Strategy. This piece of work is taking priority with two NY Chief Housing Officer meetings already held to fully develop and agree what our housing “asks” will be, each with a named sponsor. There is a key focus on what can be realistically delivered during 2015/2016.

The developing housing/LEP work has also prompted questions around future membership of the LG NY & York Housing Board. Registered providers and house builders will have a key role to play in delivering our LEP/housing “asks” and therefore need representation at a strategic level. The East Riding of Yorkshire Council also needs to be considered in terms of their representation on the Board. A report will be submitted to the LG NY & York Housing Board on 3 March 2014 to approve our housing “asks”/outcomes as

well as considering future membership arrangements. As always, there will be a balance to be struck between ensuring the Board remains fully focused whilst ensuring we have the key players around the decision making table.

- (b) There has been growing concern regarding Government proposals to change the way disabled facilities grants are funded and administered and how this will work in a two-tier environment. The situation has been clarified whereby DFG funding will flow into the Better Care Fund and then be passed directly to districts/boroughs. A question mark remains over whether DFG funding will be subject to a payment by results mechanism. Further clarity is being sought in this respect.
- (c) The North Yorkshire Housing Partnership's annual report will be available via the partnership's website by the end of February. There have been delays due to other more pressing work priorities within the Housing Partnership.

## 2.2 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. However, housing market conditions and associated confidence are improving and this barrier is expected to lower in the proceeding months.
- (b) Lack of suitable land continues to be a barrier to the delivery of affordable housing although Local Authority planning frameworks are continuing to develop with a growing number receiving or anticipating Planning Inspectorate approval. This progress should ease housing land supply in general terms.
- (c) Private sector housing improvement funding ceased from 1 April 2011 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 reduced significantly with Disabled Facilities Grants being the core business.

## 3.0 **Sub-Regional Spatial Planning and Transport Board – Report of Ian Stokes (Development Officer (Transport Strategy), City of York Council)**

- 3.1 The Board has not met since July 2013, principally because there has been nothing of particular importance to report to, or requiring a decision by, the Board recently. However, that does not mean that work has not been going on behind the scenes.
- 3.2 LDF Documents and Local Plans are at differing stages of preparation and I believe that there will soon be some items of relevance to present to the Board. Demonstrating compliance with the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate (DtC) remains a key issue, and two DtC workshops commissioned by the Planning Advisory Service have taken place, attended by officers. A future Board meeting may provide the opportunity to 'host' a further Member-oriented workshop.

## 4.0 **Yorkshire and Humberside European Regional Development Fund Performance Management Board for North East and West Yorkshire – Report of Councillor Derek Bastiman (Scarborough Borough Council)**

- 4.1 This Board has not met recently.

## **5.0 Yorkshire and Humber Member Improvement and European Board – Report of Councillor Tracey Simpson-Laing (City of York Council) on behalf of herself and Councillor Derek Basiman (Scarborough Borough Council)**

5.1 Following the end of the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) in 2011, Local Authorities in Yorkshire and Humber voiced their eagerness to continue their good work around service improvement and to maintain the on-going commitment to support each other through “sector led” improvement. As a result, the Improvement and European Board was established to make the key collective decisions on the remaining “RIEP legacy” funding and also help join up the range of sector-led improvement and efficiency agendas taking place across Yorkshire and Humber. The Board was also given a remit to work to maximise opportunities for future European funding.

5.2 The Improvement and European Board has proved to be a strong sub-group of members, progressing work effectively and feeding-back to the LGYH Council on a range of key issues; as well as linking in effectively with wider Member and Officer networks looking at sector-led improvement and efficiencies across the region. Over the last year the Board has particularly prioritised its focus on children’s services and health and wellbeing issues, whilst also seeking to support activity that can maximise economic benefits across the region. Recent developments include:

- Following a review of governance in November 2013 Cllr Derek Bastiman has been elected as Vice Chair of the LGYH Improvement and European Board.
- The Board has supported Children’s Services Leads to debate the big issues facing Yorkshire and Humber, and turn this into action by enabling two regional Child Exploitation Conferences in Rotherham. The conferences have served to further strengthen the political, cross-agency leadership on this agenda across Yorkshire and Humber.
- Providing financial assistance to the Children Lead Elected Members’ Network which is having a positive impact on service delivery and promoting effective collaboration with the national Children’s Lead Member Network and Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS).
- The Board provided a total of £170,000 of funding that was critical in securing the successful bid from Welcome to Yorkshire for the region to host the Tour de France Grande Depart. It has been estimated that the two opening Yorkshire stages of the tour in 2014 will be worth upwards of £100 million to local economies across the region, and this £170,000 has also been a key factor in securing central government funding of up to £10 million.
- The Board has supported work on the development of “green skills” and greater use of more affordable renewable energy within councils, including vehicle fleets and more efficient energy procurement.
- The completion of a EU-funded “INTERREG” project - EU2020 Going Local - which not only brought in revenue of €90,000 but also enabled spin-off projects on Electric Vehicles and renewable energy use through good practice sharing across Europe.
- The Board is supporting Yorkshire and Humber’s engagement with the network of 160 other European regions – known as the “EU2020 Monitoring Platform” - that is shaping how future European funding streams and policies will most effectively generate jobs and economic growth. The Board also

supported Elected Members to attend the Committee of the Regions Open Days, which included a number of meetings with Director Generals of the EU.

- Recognising the changing landscape in local government and the evolving role of scrutiny, the Board is supporting a programme to support scrutiny members and officers, including a regional network for peer support and to promote good practice. A number of scrutiny events have been held across the region, including close work with East Riding of Yorkshire Council and an ongoing programme focused on health scrutiny.
- Providing funding to an innovative programme in Rotherham on developing children's literacy, delivered in a bespoke town centre location. This will be based in Rotherham but has potential to roll out across the region.
- Funding was provided to an innovative Community Interest Company project that will use emerging technology to provide a ground-breaking, two-way digital platform to enhance how local authorities and local firms can interface with each other on contracting and other local business development opportunities. Initial engagement has taken place with a number of councils, including Craven District Council.
- The Board supported a delegation from Yorkshire and Humber to go to Xi'an in China to promote Yorkshire and Humber as a place to do business. This included the Bank of China making introductions to high net worth individuals, contact with Chinese trading associations representing key investment sectors, and large businesses operating within China, but also with other global subsidiaries. Match funding was acquired from BIS to support the delegation. A number of leads are now being progressed; including a focus on aviation, tourism and developing formal trading agreements.

5.3 The Minutes of the meeting of LGYH Member Improvement & European Board held on 20 January 2014 are appended.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 That the report be noted.

**Richard Flinton**

Honorary Secretary to Local Government North Yorkshire and York

17 February 2014



## MINUTES OF THE LGYH MEMBER IMPROVEMENT & EUROPEAN BOARD: 20 JANUARY 2014

### Members in Attendance

Cllr Roger Stone (Chair & Rotherham MBC), Cllr Derek Bastiman (Vice Chair & Scarborough BC), Cllr Jonathan Owen (East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Lead Member on Health and Wellbeing), Cllr Tracy Simpson-Laing (City of York Council), Mayor Ros Jones (Doncaster Council), Cllr Ray Sutton (North East Lincolnshire Council), **Visitors/Officers in Attendance** Joanne Roney (Wakefield Council, Lead CEX on Improvement), Sarah Tyler (LGYH), Paul Cartwright (LGYH), Mark Edgell (LGA)

### Apologies

Cllr Judith Blake (Leeds CC & Y&H Member on National LGA Board), Cllr Glen Miller (City of Bradford MD Council and Y&H Member on National LGA Board), Cllr Tim Cheetham (Barnsley MBC), Cllr Martin Mancey (Hull City Council,) Cllr Imran Hussain (City of Bradford MD Council, Y&H Member on National LGA Board), Cllr Tim Swift (Calderdale Council), Cllr John Blackie (Richmondshire DC and Y&H Member on National LGA Board)

### 1. Welcome, Introduction, Apologies and Minutes

- Cllr Roger Stone, Chair, welcomed all to the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record. The 'matters arising' document was noted, including the update on previously funded projects.

### TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION

### 3. Priorities for collaboration activities for sector-led improvement

Members discussed the paper outlining proposed priorities for the Board, resulting from the discussions at the previous meeting. Members noted that the priorities were very broad (which reflexed the need for the funds to be flexible) but further clarity was welcomed in terms of spending residual funds.

Members reaffirmed this was a key time to come together regarding European issues which is a priority. It was agreed that the Board prioritise funding towards European match funded projects, with a limit of £25,000 for each bid. Projects to be supported will need to include European match funding and demonstrate where the additional Improvement and European Board funding will add value. It was agreed to include European funding as a standard item on future meetings and at the next meeting raise awareness of opportunities for attracting funding into the region.

It was also noted that because there are existing funding pots related to Health and Wellbeing that this would no longer be included in a list of areas that can be match funded. The Board agreed to maintain a strategic overview on Health and Wellbeing but not to provide direct funding to support it. Questions were also raised as to whether the Board should have an ongoing focus on procurement and efficiency. Supporting children's priorities was still supported, but the activity may need to focus on specific areas where Local Authorities need support.

#### SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

- A plain guide is to be produced on the LGYH Improvement Board fund, the priorities and criteria, and the process for application and approval. A maximum of £25,000 is recommended for each bid
- EU funding at the next meeting to provide information and raise awareness of opportunities
- EU funding to be made a standing item at future meetings
- Production of a simplistic and plain English guide to European Funding streams

### 4. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE UPDATE

Sarah Tyler introduced the Child Sexual Exploitation update. A full report is available on request. It was also noted that Rob Mayall is providing ongoing support to the Children's Lead Member Network, utilising funding provided by the Improvement and European Board. Elected Member support is also a key focus of the Network.

Mark Edgell informed the Board that the LGA are in the process of recruiting Regional Associates to work on the Children's Improvement agenda. These will be ex-Directors of Children's Services who will assist coordination with lead portfolio holders, Chief Executives and Children's Services across the region.

## 5. HEALTH AND WELLBEING UPDATE

Cllr Jonathan Owen provided an update on the Health and Wellbeing activity since the last meeting, including the meeting of Health and Wellbeing Board Chairs and Lead Members that took place on 13<sup>th</sup> January. Concern has been raised about the Better Care Fund (previously known as the Integration Transformation Fund) and the fact it is being presented as new money, rather than recycled money. At the Chair's meeting additional concerns were raised about fund accountability, issues relating to the potential holdback of funds and CCG engagement and inclusion. It was noted that all feedback from the Network meeting was forwarded to DCLG and the Department of Health for response and auctioning. A copy of this report is available on request.

Sarah Tyler informed the Board that a meeting took place on 20<sup>th</sup> January on the Better Care Fund and was targeted at officers of Local Authorities and CCGs working with NHS England to support them in developing the Better Care Fund plans. The event was well attended and feedback received has been positive. It was agreed at the event to support follow up meetings, again in partnership with NHS England, in March on further development of the plans.

It was also noted that there is existing funding provided by the Department of Health to support Health and Wellbeing boards, with more money expected in the near future.

### ACTION:

- A letter to be sent to the Minister to emphasise the collective working and need to maximise the funding that comes to the area and also highlight the good work being delivered locally.

## 6. EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

### Feedback from the Y&H business delegation to Xi'an, China

Cllr Roger Stone updated the Board on the Yorkshire and Humber delegation to Xi'an in China, which was funded by the Board plus additional match secured via BIS. Cllr Stone highlighted the main barrier to working with China on developing business opportunities was immigration and visa requirements. A meeting with the Home Office is being arranged to highlight concerns and discuss barriers to inward investment caused by the government's immigration policy.

Mayor Ros Jones highlighted the need for more coordination across the region, to present a united front for attracting investment. Joanne Roney reported that Wakefield Council has existing links with China and recommended that more work is done on a regional and sub-regional basis to ensure that existing relationships are maximized. An understanding of how Local Authorities are working with China would be useful.

### Committee of the Regions Open Day 2013 feedback

Last October the LGYH Improvement and European Board supported a delegation of Elected Members from the Board to attend the Committee of the Regions Open Days. A number of meetings with EU Director Generals were also arranged. Cllr Derek Bastiman updated the Board on the Open Days and meetings. Cllr Bastiman stressed the significance of developing policies linked to 'smart specialisation' and developing 'knowledge alliances' across business and education establishments. It was noted that a number of actions are being progressed following the meetings attended, including encouraging Local Authorities to access EU funding opportunities, working through the European Officer Network and meeting with Yorkshire Universities regarding encouraging more joint work and bids.

It was also noted that Scarborough Borough Council is working with Jon Clubb from the Regional Climate Change Partnership on a bid on skills. This includes working with Hull University and the Grimsby Institute of Further Education, linked to the Skills Academy. Cllr Bastiman informed the Board that Lord Baker is due to visit Scarborough shortly to discuss developing this.

Mayor Ros Jones discussed the benefits of an East Coast Alliance to maximize the potential that can be offered by coastal regions regarding issues such as renewable energy.

- The Board agreed that £5,000 of funding would be allocated to supporting Cllr Bastiman's continued involvement in European / EU2020 work.

## 7. Information Items

### Roma activity and progress

Cllr Roger Stone updated the Board on Roma Integration Strategies being developed through partnership work in the EU. Cllr Stone also told the Board that he is working with colleagues from the European Union and having discussions with David Blunkett and Clive Betts to see if they can use additionality funds to draw down further support to focus in integration.

Cllr Tracey Simpson-Laing informed the Board about the 'European Alliance of Cities and Regions on Integration' and how they can link into this agenda. Cllr Stone told the Board that he is meeting with the Alliance shortly.

Joanne Roney updated the Board on issues related to the G4S contract for housing asylum seekers in Wakefield and issues with allocations.

### All Party Parliamentary Group for Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire

Cllr Derek Bastiman updated the Board on the APPG meetings and highlighted future meetings scheduled for 2014. A full list of the proposed meetings can be found in the LGYH Improvement and European Board papers. Cllr Bastiman drew specific attention to the July meeting which will be focused on green growth and is working alongside the region's universities. More information on the APPG can be provided by LGYH on request.

## 8. Bids received for decision

It was agreed that funding bids received from now on will be subjected to a limit of £25,000. However, the two bids that have been submitted to this meeting will be exempt from this restriction as they have already been accepted and reviewed.

### *Improving Children's Literacy and Confidence*

A bid was received from Rotherham MB Council for £28,100 for an initiative to improve children's literacy and confidence. This funding will help pump prime the development of Grimm and Co. – a sustainable writing destination centre in the town centre for children and young people. The funding will provide match funding which is being provided by the Arts Council.

- Members agreed to this funding bid based on it fitting with the Board priorities around Improving Children's Services.

### *Sector Skills Development*

A bid was received from Scarborough Borough Council for £40,000 to match fund a EU bid for boosting activity on skills development for the East coast and will also benefit the wider Region.

- It was agreed to fund this bid based on it attracting EU match funding and fitting with the Boards identified priorities.

## 9. Date of Next Meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014, 2.00pm - 4.00pm (Orangery, Wakefield)