

# Local Government North Yorkshire and York

3 October 2014

## General Updates

### Report of the Honorary Secretary

<b>1.0 Purpose of the Report</b>
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1.1 To provide a brief update on issues which do not require a full paper.
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#### **2.0 Sub-Regional Housing Board – Report of Mary Weastell (Chief Executive, Selby District Council)**

Progress report as at 26 August 2014.

Enhanced two tier project title: Affordable Housing

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

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#### 2.1 Progress to date/update:

- (a) As reported by the previous update report, work is on-going to strengthen the links between housing investment priorities and economic priorities of the new Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Strategy in order to ensure that new funding opportunities are maximised. The Local Government North Yorkshire and York Housing Board ('the 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 25 November 2013 articulating what the key links are and highlighting new / emerging housing investment "asks". This has ensured that key housing messages cross over into the Growth Plan and vice versa, thus ensuring close alignment of these two key strategic priorities.

(b) The outcomes from our key housing “asks” within the Growth Strategy bid can be summarised as follows:

- 4 key strategic housing sites – North Northallerton, Catterick Garrison, Olympia Park and Middle Deepdale – infrastructure funding from the Local Growth Fund – this element of the bid was successful with £21 million secured for all our strategic housing sites.
- A ring fenced budget for housing in NY and East Riding - £60 million HCA funding and money from HCA capital receipts – this element of the bid was not successful but the Government recognises the particular housing needs identified across the LEP area and commits the HCA to work with the LEP and other partners to find solutions to our local strategic housing priorities.
- Added value asks (to come from the above ring fenced budget) including extra care housing, Rural Housing Enabling, affordable warmth, purchase and repair, shared accommodation for young people and a sub regional “Help to Buy” programme – this element of the bid was partially successful as the HCA will work with partners to deliver additional extra care housing.

(c) This announcement presents a key challenge as to how the Housing Partnership will work with the Homes and Communities Agency and partners to deliver solutions to the issues we have raised. Work has already started in this respect via meetings with HCA colleagues. Some key issues / challenges will include:

- Do we have enough partners to deliver our ambitions?
- Can local authorities bring more to the table in terms of commuted sums and/ or new homes bonus?
- Can we provide evidence to support the case for additional HCA grant where needed e.g. developing housing in deep rural areas?
- Does the outcome of our housing bids give sufficient confidence to work up specific initiatives such as coastal purchase and repair and extra care worker accommodation?

Further dialogue will follow between the HCA, Housing Board and partners in order to take this investment forward and establish clarity around what will and will not be funded.

(d) A review of the Rural Housing Enabler programme is underway in readiness for a new programme from 1 April 2015. A key element of the review revolves around a funding model to ensure that the programme remains financially sustainable. A consultation meeting has been held with registered providers on an appropriate funding model which will be submitted to the next meeting of the Housing

Board. A proposal will then be put to the registered providers. It will be known during December whether the programme can be sustained beyond March 2015 i.e. whether it retains financial support from registered providers. The current draft funding model (subject to approval) can be summarised as follows :

- Local Authority contribution = £6,500 per year
- NY Moors National Park = £2,500 per year
- Housing Association retainer = £3,000 per year
- Housing Association “pay per unit” contribution = up to £30,000 (capped)

- (e) Work is underway in developing a new post April 2015 York and North Yorkshire Housing Strategy with a new set of draft key priorities to be considered by the Housing Board in September. The draft key housing priorities have been developed following consultation with key local authority housing leads. Clearly, a key theme running through the revised strategy will relate to the ambitious housing supply targets as set out in the Growth Strategy.

## 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 continues to lower as housing market confidence grows.
- (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 the medium term.
- (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.
- (d) Local opposition to housing (including affordable housing) is also hindering progress in boosting housing supply. The Housing Board has written to the Housing Minister to request that more supportive key messages come out of Government, supporting new housing and the key role it plays in boosting local economies and sustaining communities. The Chair of the Board has also met with the Housing Minister when he visited the region in July in order to reinforce this message.

- (e) Funding the infrastructure needed to bring housing sites forward is also a barrier which has, at least in part, being resolved via the allocation of Local Growth Funding. However, this is likely to be an on-going pressure as further key sites come forward.
- (f) Selby District Council have also had a further a barrier raised by developers and agents on their patch which relates to delays in statutory agency consultee responses to planning applications. Views are being sought to find out if this is common across North Yorkshire.

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

3.1 *Report awaited.*

**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 There has been no meeting of the Y&H ERDF recently for me to attend.

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

5.1 Neither Councillor Bastiman nor Councillor Tracey Simpson-Laing were able to attend the last Board meeting.

**6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 That the report be noted.

**Richard Flinton**

Honorary Secretary to Local Government North Yorkshire and York

25 September 2014