

Local Government North Yorkshire and York

1 December 2017

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.
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2.0 York, North Yorkshire and East Riding ESI Funds Sub-Committee – Report of Dave Atkinson on behalf of Councillors Andrew Lee (NYCC), Ian Gillies (CYC) and Steve Arnold (Ryedale District Council)

2.1 On Friday 22 September 2017:-

- (a) The Sub-Committee considered updates on progress from representatives of the Managing Authority (Department for Communities & Local Government – EDRF; Department for Work & Pensions - ESF; Department for the Environment Food & Rural Affairs – EAFRD).
- (b) Sub-Committee Members heard updates on ERDF and ESF Programme Implementation.
- (c) The Managing Authority provided an update on the LEP Area Status Report and commented that there was a change in the formatting of the report to reflect a change in focus to delivery and performance.

2.2 On Friday 10 November 2017:-

- (a) The Sub-Committee considered updates on progress from representatives of the Managing Authority (Department for Communities & Local Government – EDRF; Department for Work & Pensions - ESF; Department for the Environment Food & Rural Affairs – EAFRD).
- (b) Sub-Committee Members heard updates on ERDF and ESF Programme Implementation.
- (c) There was a presentation from the DWP Co Funding Organisation, where it was communicated that outputs in some areas has been challenging and there is ongoing action to improve delivery.

3.0 Sub-Regional Housing Board – Report of Mary Weastell, Chief Executive, City of York Council

Enhanced two tier project title: Affordable Housing

Project Description: Working Together to Increase the Number of Affordable Housing Units

Project Lead: Colin Dales, Corporate Director (Operations), Richmondshire District Council, Tel: 01748 901002 email: colin.dales@richmondshire.gov.uk

3.1 Progress to 16 November 2017:-

- (a) Work around the Community Housing Fund continues to move forward with a Lead Hub Coordinator appointed – Jones Lang LaSalle in conjunction with Start Regeneration Consultants. Work is currently underway to commission the various “help” elements (specialist service providers) of the Hub, which will provide advice and assistance to communities as they move their housing projects forward. All Local Authority contributions have been confirmed. A name for the Hub has been agreed – “REACH” – and website development is currently underway. This will become part of the suite of distinct Housing Partnership areas of work, joining the Housing Board and the Rural Housing Enabler Network. The first community led housing scheme under the new programme has been completed at Hudswell in Richmondshire. Confirmation of how future community led housing funding will be allocated (i.e. to Local Authorities or the sector or the HCA etc.) is awaited.
- (b) The Housing Board previously received a report on an approach from the Home Office to extend the Asylum Seeker Dispersal programme into North Yorkshire. The Board’s initial view is not to participate in the programme but officers were instructed to meet with the Home Office to establish basic ground rules around additional funding, local control of dispersals and managing community cohesion issues. A meeting with the Home Office was held in October where local authority concerns were raised and further information/assurances requested. A further meeting, including the current service provider, has now been confirmed and further updates will be given.
- (c) The Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme in North Yorkshire is likely to see its last flight arrival in January 2017 with Richmondshire and Hambleton being the remaining Local Authorities to fulfil their commitment to the programme. Operational meetings have started in this respect, matching incoming families to the properties available.
- (d) The Housing Board and Directors of Development have received a report on unimplemented planning permissions – over 24,000 across North Yorkshire, York and the East Riding – with proposals on how to convert these permissions into housing completions. A key proposal from the report is to create a “hit squad” of required specialists to home in on key housing developments, which are not converting in completions on a prioritised basis. A further report has been drafted to develop this proposal further which will be considered by the Housing Board in December.

- (e) The Government is currently consulting on the future of Supported Housing and the Chief Housing Officers Group will be working on a response in time for the 23 January deadline along with County Council colleagues. The Government's decision not to apply supported housing charges to local housing allowance has been welcomed and will bring some confidence back to the supported housing sector.
- (f) The Housing Partnership meeting dates have been confirmed for 2018 and are available on request.

3.2 Barriers to progressing the project over the next period:

- (a) 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. The Growth Deal makes specific reference to the need to have up to date local plans and associated land supply.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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.
- (d) Funding the infrastructure needed to bring housing sites forward is also a barrier, which has, at least in part, been resolved via the allocation of Local Growth Funding. However, this is likely to be an on-going pressure as further key sites come forward.
- (e) The stalling of new / proposed housing legislation is also becoming a barrier as housing providers take stock and come to terms with all the new policies and proposals and the impact on business plans. This barrier is likely to reduce as time moves on and updates will continue to be provided in this respect.

4.0 **Sub-Regional Spatial Planning and Transport Board (Secretariat: City of York Council)**

- 4.1 A report is not available.

5.0 Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Migration Group – Report of Neil Irving (NYCC) on behalf of himself and Councillor Derek Bastiman (Scarborough Borough Council)

5.1 The Strategic Migration Group (SMG) is the forum where local authorities, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector come together to discuss how migration in all of its forms impacts on our region. The Government provides funding to Migration Yorkshire to develop and support an effective SMG – giving the Home Office a point of contact to have a single strategic conversation with local authorities and others about the management and impact of migration. The SMG meets three times a year.

5.2 The meetings on 13 July and 19 October 2017 received updates on asylum dispersal, resettlement of refugees from the conflict in Syria, unaccompanied asylum seeking children plus the regular and comprehensive Statistics, Policy and Research Update (copies of which is circulated to officers of the North Yorkshire local authorities). Other items concerned the migration policies that might be expected to be developed by the new Government and Parliament, plus the unintended consequences of the introduction on new identity checks on everyone accessing secondary healthcare to tackle ‘health tourism’.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 That the report be noted.

Richard Flinton

Honorary Secretary to Local Government North Yorkshire and York