

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
TRANSPORT, ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JULY 2012

LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE & YORK

Report of the Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the application to Defra for formal recognition as a Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for North Yorkshire & York, and our continuing involvement in the further development of this partnership.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In the Natural Environment White Paper, government has set out as one of its key proposals, its intention to establish “*Local Nature Partnerships*” across England. Their overall purpose would be to “bring a diverse range of individuals, businesses and organisations together at a local level to create a vision and plan of action of how the natural environment can be taken into account in decision making.”
- 2.3 BES Executive Members approved proposals for a submission to Defra for LNP development funding on 21st October 2011. Approval was also given, subject to gaining consensus amongst a range of parties, for an application to be made to Defra in June 2012 for formal recognition of a Local Nature Partnership for North Yorkshire & York.
- 2.4 This report provides Committee Members with an overview of the process we have been through over the past eight months leading up to the submission of our application to Defra on Friday 1st June 2012. The full application document has been attached to provide detailed information about the partnership and what it seeks to achieve.

3.0 PROCESS

- 3.1 Confirmation of funding (£19,985) was received from Defra in December 2011 for developing our proposals for a LNP. Since then, there have been extensive discussions testing out the appetite for a LNP with a number of organisations and individuals that have an interest in conserving and enhancing the natural environment for benefits to wildlife, people and the economy. Information captured during these conversations was used to form the basis of a workshop held in York on the 28th February 2012.

- 3.2 The general consensus from those participating in the workshop was that there are a number of benefits to having a North Yorkshire & York Local Nature Partnership and that North Yorkshire County Council should develop more detailed proposals to lay the foundations for an application to Defra.
- 3.4 A proposal document was prepared and circulated to a wide group of stakeholders on 30th April 2012, together with an invitation to a second development workshop on the 22nd May 2012. At the workshop unanimous support was given to the proposals and to the submission of the application to Defra for endorsement.
- 3.5 A core group of key stakeholders including the York - North Yorkshire - East Riding LEP, Natural England, North York Moors National Park Authority, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, City of York, Craven DC, Harrogate BC and Scarborough DC assisted us in shaping up the final application document which was submitted to Defra on the 1st June 2012. A response from Defra is expected before the summer recess in July.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Defra envisages about fifty LNPs forming across the Country. It is our understanding that there are forty eight applications going in for endorsement. Based on these numbers there is good reason to be optimistic that our application will be accepted. On this basis we intend to start approaching key individuals with an invitation to become shadow LNP Board Members.
- 4.2 The shadow LNP Board will be in place for the first six months to lay the foundations for the partnership and perform the key tasks highlighted in response to question 2b of the application document attached.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Committee Members are asked to note our continuing involvement in the development and running of the North Yorkshire & York Local Nature Partnership.

DAVID BOWE
Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services

Author of Report: Ian Fielding

Additional Documents: North Yorkshire & York LNP Application Document

Local Nature Partnership Application COVER SHEET

Name of proposed LNP: North Yorkshire & York

Capacity Building Fund Reference: LNPR2-77

Contact Details:

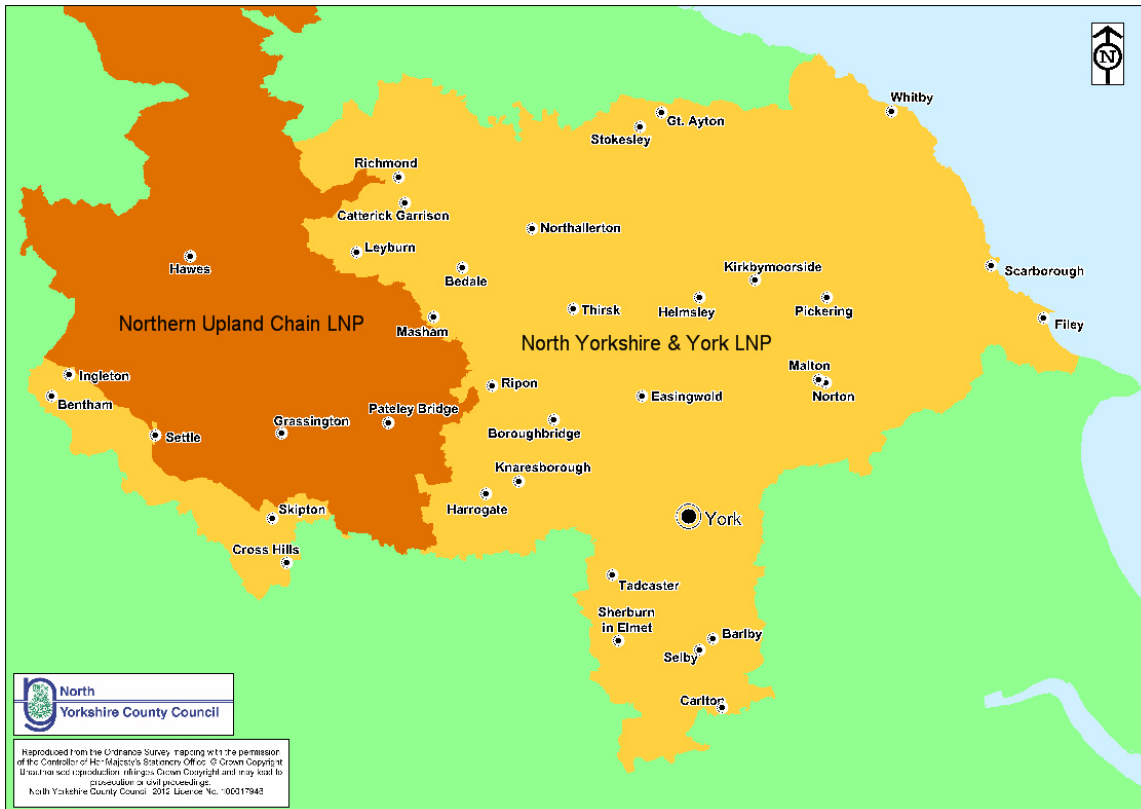
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Section A: A description of your proposed LNP

Q.1. Please describe:

a) The geographical location and boundary of your proposed LNP.

This Local Nature Partnership covers all of the County of North Yorkshire and the City of York, except for the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Nidderdale AONB which are included in the neighbouring Northern Upland Chain proposed LNP area. Please see map below:



b) Your partnership's current membership and structure, including the level of involvement of the different members (feel free to use a diagram if it is helpful)

The core list of stakeholders that have been engaged with this proposal from the outset, a number of who are likely to form the Board of the partnership, are representatives from:

- North Yorkshire County Council
- District councils: Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough and Selby.
- City of York Council

- North York Moors National Park Authority
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
- Howardian Hills AONB
- Nidderdale AONB
- Natural England, Forestry Commission, English Heritage, Environment Agency
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, National Trust
- Country Land & Business Association (CLA) and National Farmers Union (NFU)
- York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership
- Groundwork North Yorkshire
- Welcome to Yorkshire
- North Yorkshire Health & Wellbeing Board
- Local Access Forum – North Yorkshire

Each of these organisations has been communicated with individually by phone, e-mail or in one to one meetings. They have also taken part in two stakeholder workshops in February and May of this year. A core group from the list above were also directly involved in drafting this application document.

After the core stakeholders agreed that an LNP for North Yorkshire and York would be of value, a wider list of stakeholders were sent the draft proposals and invited to the second stakeholder workshop held in May of this year. A number of these organisations will be, or are already, involved in themes, projects or partnerships that are of interest to this LNP and are likely to form the wider LNP membership. Those included in the wider list of stakeholders are:

- Aire River Trust
- British Waterway
- Buglife
- Campaign for Farmed Environment
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- East Yorkshire Chalk Rivers Trust
- North Yorkshire and Cleveland Coastal Forum
- Internal Drainage Board (Vale of Pickering)
- LEADER Coast, Wolds, Wetlands & Waterways
- LEADER Yorkshire Dales
- LEADER Yorkshire Moors, Hills and Coast
- Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Leeds City Region Secretariat
- Lower Ure Conservation Trust
- Mental Health Social Care Lead
- Mineral Products Association
- Ministry of Defence
- Neighbouring Local Nature Partnership Contacts
- North & East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre
- North Yorkshire Geodiversity Partnership
- North Yorkshire Sport
- NY&Y Forum for Volunteering

- Older People's Partnership Board
- Open Country
- Physical and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board
- Richmond Swale Valley Community Initiative
- RSPB
- Sustrans
- The Conservation Volunteers
- Ure Salmon Trust
- Woodland Trust
- Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
- Yorkshire Dales River Trust
- Yorkshire Farming & Wildlife
- Yorkshire Gardens Trust
- Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
- Yorkshire Water
- Yorwoods

Thirty five people attended the wider stakeholder workshop held on the 22nd May 2012 and all participants gave their verbal support to the formation of the LNP. The final membership of the partnership will be determined after we have heard the outcome of this application process.

Section B: A summary of your ideas and plans for an LNP in your area

Q.2. We are keen to capture a summary of both what your ambitions are for an LNP in your area and an overview of the initial steps you plan to take towards it. Please:

- a) Summarise what you feel the LNP role could mean for your area - what difference could your LNP make at a strategic level and how might it go about doing it?**

The **aim** of this partnership will be to **manage, conserve, and enhance the natural environment of North Yorkshire & York to benefit wildlife, people and the economy.**

This LNP will provide a range of benefits that will add value to the area:

Environmental value – Organisations need to work together better in order to better deliver 'integrated' benefits for the natural environment, and to move away from isolated site protection towards enhancing nature at a landscape scale and strengthening natural linkages across the LNP area. The LNP will add value to the area by working with existing groups to identify ecological networks and ensure that work on the natural environment is more joined up at a strategic level. A strategic vision and action plan will be created to guide partnership work across the LNP area.

Efficiency – All organisations face unprecedented and increasing funding pressure. In the past organisations have worked with each other on initiatives and projects where we have a shared interest. Given the huge pressure on our resources, we now need to find a new way of working that goes beyond traditional approaches. This proposal is for public sector, not for profit sector organisations and local communities to collaborate and seek agreement in delivering a shared set of environmental priorities. The LNP will be an ideal mechanism to help deploy limited resources efficiently and to maximum benefit, with reduced risk of duplicated effort. One area that the LNP will explore is the potential for joint service delivery for professional advice for the natural environment (e.g. to planning authorities in relation to statutory undertakings).

Funding – The partnership will develop a long term strategic vision for nature in the area and this will be used as a means to attract funding by demonstrating a well co-ordinated approach for nature across the area. Having a diverse range of cross-sector partners from a strategic to a local level will provide a wide base of expertise and open the LNP up to a wide range of possible funding streams, offering small, medium and large sums of money. The partnership will also help to identify biodiversity offset areas within the LNP area, which present a good opportunity for funding towards nature improvement.

Leadership & influence – The LNP will provide “leadership” and “strategic input on the natural environment”. It will represent the interests of all existing partnerships and organisations that have an interest in nature by providing an authoritative voice for nature across the area, raising awareness of the benefits that nature provides to people and the economy and influencing decision making around environmental protection and enhancement.

Economy & health & well-being – Whilst there is a growing body of national evidence on the benefits and services that nature provides for people and the economy, there is a lack of awareness of this connection and its value within the LNP area. The LNP will work closely with the Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Health & Wellbeing Boards to raise awareness of the connection between nature, people and the economy and commission projects or programmes of activity that help strengthen these links.

Strategic Planning - Work is also needed to better understand the relationship between natural and built infrastructure. When development occurs further consideration needs to be given to how that development integrates with the surrounding environment, or even how the development may add value to the environment through innovative landscape planning and building design. The LNP will help by providing strategic advice on development plans and local development decision making including assistance in the identification and recognition of biodiversity offset areas. The LNP will create a central hub for data and information on the natural environment to assist decision making. The partnership will also encourage the creation of strategic approaches for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure in Local Plans, as recommended in the National Planning Policy Framework.

b) **Provide a high level summary of the key actions you plan to undertake in the first 6 months if you become a Government-recognised LNP – ideally in a table / list of bullet points of not more than 2 pages.**

| Key Action | Description |
|----------------------------|---|
| Formation of the LNP Board | <p>A shadow LNP Board will be established for the first 6 months of operation to shape the Partnership and develop further detail on the areas outlined in this application. During the shadow phase the work of LNP will be led by North Yorkshire County Council. During the shadow period the Board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the membership to ensure that it is suitable for taking the partnership forward • Establish a partnership agreement and determine governance arrangements • Establish formal links with the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership and the York and North Yorkshire Health & Wellbeing Boards • Establish a formal reporting mechanism to Local Government North Yorkshire & York and a recognised position within its partnership structure • Develop a communication plan for the LNP • Lead on further development of the draft strategic vision developed in the lead up to this application |
| Strategic Vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the early strategy work done during the application process to develop a set of priorities for the local environment that will make the maximum contribution to nature whilst also contributing towards the economy & health and wellbeing of North Yorkshire communities |
| Action Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A LNP action plan will be drawn up to identify and 'commission' a programme of environmental action including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreement on priority landscape projects - Specific actions based on key themes of nature, health, economy & climate change - Role of partners in delivering the actions |
| Communications Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication will begin with a series of press releases to promote and raise awareness of the LNP • Ideas on communication discussed during the application process will be developed into a communications plan to strengthen engagement with a wider audience (particularly in areas of economy and health). The plan will include the development of a website, options for an online forum / newsletters and details on how performance will be monitored and reported. It will also set out further detail on communication with neighbouring LNPs. |

Section C: Your preparations and plans for becoming an effective LNP

Q.3. Describe any progress you have made towards developing, and / or how you plan to develop, a strategic vision for your area and how you plan to use your vision to inform your work and priorities.

It is clear from all the discussions that we have had with prospective partners that the Partnership must deliver more on the ground than would have otherwise been the case had it not existed.

It has been agreed that in order to make that action planning process most effective the LNP will need a framework around which decisions on local priorities can be set. The Partnership will therefore draw together existing strategic frameworks and data sets and synthesise a set of environmental priorities that all organisations in the LNP area can agree upon.

Environmental action will take the form of a series of projects, which may either be centred upon areas within North Yorkshire or focus on specific themes arising from the interests of the partner organisations. Projects will include working with the Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver work that will enhance the natural and cultural environment and contribute to the tourism and land based enterprise.

The Partnership Board will endorse projects across the LNP area and monitor their individual and collective performance. Individual partner organisations will take the lead in progressing projects, where they meet their own organisational agenda as well as that of the LNP. The lead organisation will identify those partners that will be needed to assist them in the delivery of the specific projects and co-ordinate action accordingly.

In setting out its ambition for LNPs, Defra expressed the need to improve nature at a landscape scale and make strong links to the green economy and the health and wellbeing of communities. Understanding this, we have drafted some initial ideas on a strategic ambition for North Yorkshire & York based on four priority themes.

Nature – The areas of highest wildlife value are protected and managed and habitat connectivity is improved to help species thrive and adapt to change. There is an increasing understanding and appreciation of the range of services and benefits that natural environmental assets bring to North Yorkshire & York's communities and economy.

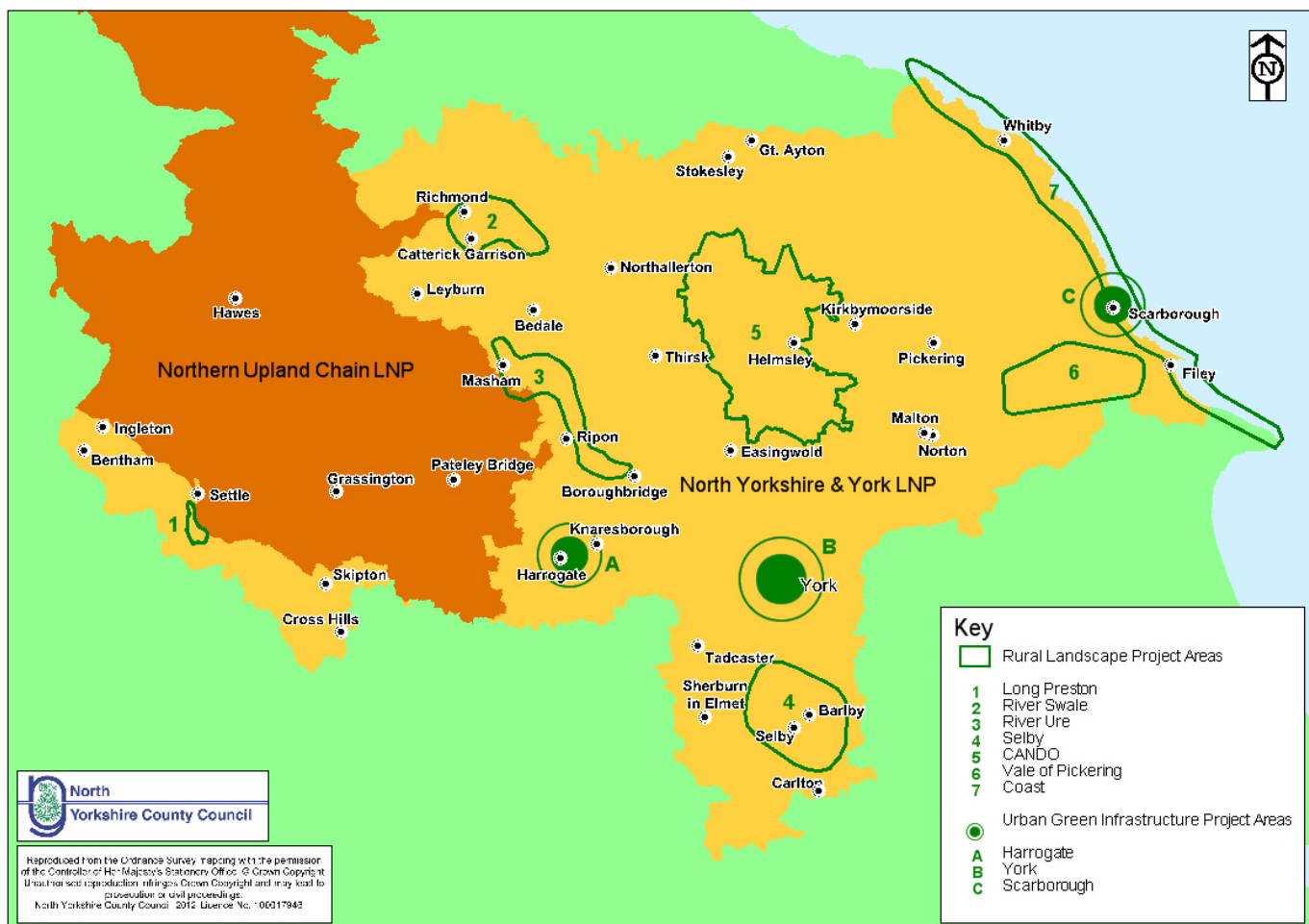
Economy – Increasing recognition of the contribution to North Yorkshire and York's tourism economy made by access to its high quality landscapes and stunning countryside. All forms of environmental based enterprise (e.g. farming, food, forestry, mineral and waste etc) conduct their businesses in a way that contributes to the needs of the natural environment whilst continuing to contribute to North Yorkshire and York's economy. More businesses relocate or choose to expand locally, in part because of the high quality environment and quality of life.

People & communities – The health prospects of local communities are measurably enhanced through access and use of natural spaces and by physical outdoor activity. Local communities gain direct benefits from their involvement in the natural environment,

through community planning, local events, practical conservation tasks, volunteering, training, skills and access-to-work opportunities. The rights of way and cycling network is improved in those places where it will deliver greatest benefits for local communities. Educational attainment is enhanced through use and understanding of the natural environment.

Climate change – The potential for the natural environment along North Yorkshire’s river corridors to manage floodwaters and for landscapes in the uplands and lowlands to absorb, store or slow rainfall is enhanced so protecting downstream communities from flooding. Habitats all along the river corridors are improved, and better connected, to enable species to migrate with the changing climate. The carbon storage potential derived from a range of habitats makes a positive contribution to the impact the sub-region has on climate change. The rights of way network around urban centres plays an increasing role in non-motorised (low carbon) access for commuting, access to services and other day to day activities.

The map below is a first attempt at identifying priority places for action across North Yorkshire & York based on some of the data and strategies mentioned by participants at the first workshop and in conversations with partners over recent years.



The draft priority places are marked in green and highlight a series of existing or proposed project areas. The table below provides further details on why these areas were identified:

| Priority Project Areas | Existing or Proposed | Why this area? |
|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Long Preston | Existing project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential expansion of current successful Long Preston Wet Grassland Project and Ribble Restoration Plan, which is concentrating on restoring the River Ribble SSSI and surrounding environment • Opportunities to continue river restoration • Combined protection of the historic environment and increased biodiversity • Work with local landowners, businesses and village communities • Increased tourism potential • Increased access and recreation • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base |
| River Swale | Proposed project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for river restoration and increased biodiversity • Better co-ordination of quarry restoration projects • Archaeology and historic houses & gardens • Local food produce, farming heritage, local businesses. • Increased access and recreation for tourism and local centres of population in Richmond & Catterick Garrison • Links to Richmond Swale Valley Community Initiative • Links to SPROUT*, Opportunity Plan for North Yorkshire Rivers Renaissance • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base |
| River Ure | Proposed project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for river restoration and increased biodiversity • Better co-ordination of quarry restoration projects • Nationally important archaeology and historic houses & gardens • Local food produce, farming heritage, local businesses. • Increased access and recreation for |

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--|
| | | <p>tourism and local centres of population in Ripon, Boroughbridge and Masham.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to SPROUT*, Opportunity Plan for North Yorkshire Rivers Renaissance • Links to Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Area • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base • Links to Regional Biodiversity Opportunity Priority Landscape Areas |
| Selby | Proposed project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetland enhancement project to demonstrate the various uses of wetland and open water habitats. • Increased access through water heritage trails and links with visitor attractions in the area. • Improvements to degraded landscape character and sense of place • Increased access for communities in Selby and surrounding villages for health and well-being • Links to Selby Countryside Strategy • Links to Selby District Renaissance Plan • Links to Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to SPROUT*, Opportunity Plan for North Yorkshire Rivers Renaissance • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base |
| Vale of Pickering | Existing project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining together of the successful Cayton & Flixton Wetland Project with the work being undertaken on the internationally significant prehistoric archaeology. • Combined protection of the historic environment and increased biodiversity • Work with local landowners and village communities • Increased tourism potential • Increased access and recreation • Green links between Scarborough and project area. • Links to Vale of Pickering Statement of Significance and draft actions. • Links to Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to SPROUT*, Opportunity Plan for |

| | | |
|---|------------------|--|
| | | <p>North Yorkshire Rivers Renaissance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base |
| CANDO – Cultural And Natural Development Opportunity area | Existing project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of Landscape Character • Restoration of a series of habitats on a landscape scale • Archaeology and historic houses & gardens • Increased tourism potential • Increased access and recreation • Important educational opportunities for cultural and natural heritage • Promotion of economic links with habitat restoration e.g. Forestry grants. |
| Coast | Existing project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing partnership in place – North Yorkshire and Cleveland Coastal Forum • Important ecological network with range of specific issues - coastal erosion coastal grassland verses agricultural fields, high levels of footfall • Tourism economy already very important to the area – high visitor numbers currently • Access and recreation opportunities and issues – Cleveland Way National Trail • Business links via caravan parks etc. • Onshore and offshore opportunities. • Links to Coastal Forum Strategy |
| Harrogate | Proposed project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tourism potential • Increased access and recreation • Biodiversity opportunities to link the urban and rural environment e.g. links between gardens and parks and open countryside for species movement • Increased inward investment • Links to Harrogate’s emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base |
| York | Proposed project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tourism potential • Increased access and recreation • Biodiversity opportunities to link the urban and rural environment e.g. links between gardens and parks and open countryside for species movement • Links to York: ‘New City Beautiful’ economic vision |

| | | |
|-------------|------------------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to York's emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base • Links to SPROUT*, Opportunity Plan for North Yorkshire Rivers Renaissance • Links to Ouse and Lower Derwent Valley Corridors |
| Scarborough | Proposed project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tourism potential • Increased access and recreation • Biodiversity opportunities to link the urban and rural environment e.g. links between gardens and parks and open countryside for species movement • Enhanced setting for inward investment. • Green network links between Scarborough, Eastfield and Vale of Pickering landscape project areas • Links to Yorkshire & Humber Green Infrastructure Evidence Base • Links to potential projects in the Vale of Pickering and along the coast. |
| | | * SPROUT - Strategic Partnership for the River Ouse and its Tributaries |

There may also be specific projects taking place within neighbouring LNPs that our partnership may wish to have some involvement with because of the cross boundary benefits that may be realised e.g. Fresh Aire Landscape Project, Yorkshire Wolds Landscape Project

These ideas on a strategic approach have been shared with all the organisations that we have been engaging with and further discussions took place at the wider stakeholder workshop held on the 22nd May 2012. There is support in principle for this approach with partners but we realise that more detailed discussions will need to take place with partners to confirm the landscapes selected or identify any areas, or important themes, which may be excluded at present and need further consideration. For instance, human activity has shaped the landscape character that we see today and has had a strong influence on the natural environment. Whilst the historic environment might not drive the location in which LNP projects take place, its assets and influences need to be understood by the partnership and built into landscape project design. In developing its strategic vision the LNP will clarify priority locations and themes.

It is recognised that the priority places selected here should not be looked at in isolation and that they must form part of a larger vision for an integrated natural / green infrastructure network that stretches across the LNP area. In 2010, work was completed on a regional green infrastructure evidence base that mapped a connective network across the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber Area. This evidence base provides a useful starting point for a long term vision for a stronger better connected natural

environment. In choosing priorities there will be areas of this integrated network that are excluded from focus by the partnership at this time but that will be addressed at some point in the future.

In responding to question 2 we have explained that the development of a strategic vision and a programme of action will be the first priorities of the LNP if it is successful in being formally recognised by Defra later this summer.

Q.4. Describe how the individuals and organisations in your current membership reflects the range of skills, expertise, interests and level of authority needed to become an effective LNP and how you will address any gaps.

In our response to question 1b, earlier in this document, we have set out who we have engaged with in preparation for submitting this application and who is likely to be involved in the LNP Board or wider membership. Together they reflect a wide range of skills, interests and authority across a number of sectors e.g. local authorities, third sector, business, government agencies.

The Partnership Board will be made up of individuals representing a number of cross-sector organisations that have an influence at a strategic scale. The representatives on the Partnership Board will hold a senior position within their organisation and have sufficient influence to steer resource and action planning in their own organisations.

The individuals, organisations and groups that attended the second stakeholder workshop on the 22nd May are likely to form the wider membership of the LNP. Whilst the list of those that were included in the circulation of the LNP proposal, and invitation to the wider stakeholder workshop, was quite diverse there has been more interaction from those with a specific interest in the natural environment. Whilst this is understandable in a Local Nature Partnership we will ensure that the final composition of the membership also has sufficient representation from those with an interest in the economy and health and wellbeing. One of the first tasks of the shadow LNP Board will be to identify gaps in representation.

The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership has been involved in the drafting of this application and is keen to be engaged with the LNP. We will seek their advice on stronger connections with the economy and business engagement. We have not had the same level of engagement with the Health & Wellbeing Boards at this time but are actively seeking to address this at present.

There are also some other organisations, groups and individuals involved in, or interested in, the conservation and enhancement of nature in North Yorkshire & York that we have not made contact with at this time, mainly at a more local level. The LNP will ensure that all those with an interest in the natural environment, or the benefits that it provides, are aware of the work of the partnership and have a mechanism for reflecting their views in developing priorities and action planning. Local groups play a vital role in delivering benefits to nature across North Yorkshire & York and their help will be vital to inform detailed decision making at a local level as they hold the knowledge and expertise required for on the ground delivery.

Q.5. Describe how you have involved and engaged, and / or how you plan to involve and engage, wider interests who may not be represented in your membership in your work.

Our proposals for a LNP were circulated to a wide range of individuals, organisations and groups that could benefit from the work of the LNP to varying degrees. However as the benefits that nature can offer to those with a wider interest is not immediately obvious; a large number didn't provide comment or attend the wider stakeholder workshop on the 22nd May 2012. Further work will be done in the first few months after the partnership is endorsed to raise awareness of the wide reaching benefits that nature can provide for those that have a wider or less obvious connection. By demonstrating the connections we are confident that those with a wider interest will become more engaged with the work of the LNP.

The database that we have started to develop whilst preparing for this LNP is a good start point for the circulation of information on the LNP. The creation of a communications plan will be one of the primary tasks of the shadow LNP Board and this will explore all options for effective communication. A website will be set up as this will be an essential tool for keep a wide audience of people aware of what the LNP is up to and how people can get involved. The sharing of best practice and the discussing of new ideas will be done on a day to day basis through an online forum on the website and we will also explore the possibility of holding an annual conference to deepen the level of engagement.

Q.6. Describe any progress you have made towards establishing, and / or how you will establish, the partnership's credibility in the area and ensure it has the ability to effectively engage and collaborate with a range of local senior decision makers.

The partnership's real credibility will be determined by its success in delivering the actions that it sets out to achieve and this can only be done once it has been formally established. However, the amount of interest that this proposed LNP has already stimulated at a senior level within a number of organisations, and with Executive Members within North Yorkshire County Council, provides a useful indication that this partnership will be credible and that it has the right people interested to effectively engage and collaborate with a wide range of local senior decision makers.

It is anticipated that, over time, through its involvement with a wide range of environmental, economic and social well-being interests, the LNP will grow its credibility amongst environmental and non-environmental organisations alike. There would be an expectation that constituent partners would take steps to recognise and value the broad-based nature of the Partnership.

Establishing formal recognition within the partnership structure of Local Government North Yorkshire & York will also add credibility to the LNP.

Q.7. Describe any progress you have made towards ensuring, and / or how you will ensure, that the LNP has effective and accountable governance and decision making processes.

The Partnership will be directed by a Partnership Board (the Board) of between 8 and 12 members. Representation will be balanced between local authorities, community and voluntary groups, and other Government and non-government organisations. The detail of the Board appointment process will be set out in formal governance arrangements to be adopted by the Partnership at its first meeting.

Board members will hold a senior position within their organisation and have sufficient influence to steer resource and action planning. The Board will provide overall leadership and agree the strategic priorities for the Partnership. Board members will also act as champions for specific sectors, themes or projects.

Each champion will be connected to a lead officer responsible for co-ordinating action and delivery within their specific sector, theme or project. The lead officer will work with the Board champion to report on progress but also to lever support and influence other Partners as appropriate. The champion and lead officer do not necessarily have to be from the same organisation.

The Board champions will receive progress updates from each of the lead officers to determine performance across the whole LNP area. Areas of best practice identified within a specific sector, theme or project will be fed back to all the lead officers to see if the benefits achieved are transferable to help raise overall performance. If a sector, theme or project is struggling to perform the specific issue will be discussed by the Board and if appropriate a task and finish group will be formed to help address the matter.

Individuals, organisations or groups that form part of the wider membership will be able to input into the LNP Board via the specific champion or lead officer that they feel is most appropriate to their specific area of interest.

In order to tie-in with other decision making structures, the LNP Board will look to create a formal reporting mechanism to Local Government North Yorkshire & York. The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP is formally recognised as the lead on strategic matters in relation to the Economy in North Yorkshire and York. There is no equivalent partnership set up for handling strategic environmental matters and the North Yorkshire & York LNP Board would be ideal for fulfilling this role.

Details on governance arrangements, decision making processes and frequency of meetings will be determined by the Board when they come together for their first meeting, which will be held in September 2012, if this application for formal endorsement is successful. It is understood that some form of constitution or other 'governance' document will be necessary and that it is likely to cover the following points:

- Name of partnership;

- Partnership structure (and provisions for review of it);
- Detailed governance arrangements (e.g. membership rights, attendance, voting rights etc) for each part of the partnership structure;
- Purpose;
- Role;
- Commencement and duration of partnership;
- Legal status;
- Membership, including roles and responsibilities;
- Appointment of Chair (and Vice Chair where appropriate) and a process for their appointment, term of office and removal;
- Accountability (e.g. to own authority/organisations, any partnership 'Board' etc, need clarity on decision making powers);
- Conflicts of interest;
- Dispute resolution;
- Variations;
- Financial Arrangements and Management;
- Performance Management arrangements;
- General Health and Safety arrangements
- Administrative arrangements;
- General provisions (e.g. information sharing between partners, confidentiality, data protection, freedom of information, equalities and sustainability etc);
- Exit strategy.

Support on the drafting of the agreement will be provided by North Yorkshire County Council's legal, policy and finance teams. These teams have recently prepared the governance agreement for the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership and this will be used as a template for the LNP agreement.

Q.8. Describe how your partnership plans to embed the value of the natural environment into the strategic planning and decision making of others, particularly the economic and health and wellbeing sectors.

The partnership will form strong links to planning authorities to ensure that areas of the highest natural value are taken into consideration in development framework policy and local planning decisions. The partnership will encourage the creation of strategic approaches for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure in Local Plans, as recommended in the National Planning Policy Framework.

During the scoping stage for this LNP strong links have been established with the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (Y, NY&ER LEP). A member of the LEP will be invited to sit on the LNP Board to help develop the links between the natural environment and the economic agenda to ensure that benefits to the economy are maximised through the work of the Local Nature Partnership. The Y, NY&ER LEP have identified the visitor economy as one of their initial key priorities for growth and there are very strong and obvious links that can be made to the Local Nature Partnership through this theme.

The North Yorkshire and York LNP will work closely with the Yorkshire West LNP and the Northern Upland Chain LNP on opportunities that would benefit the strategic direction of the Leeds City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership, for example, in the delivery of the LCR Green Infrastructure Strategy. It has also been agreed that the Yorkshire West LNP will be the main contact for the LCR LEP on nature improvements within the City Region.

The partnership will also establish strong links with the North Yorkshire and York Health and Wellbeing Boards. A representative from one of the Health and Wellbeing Boards will be invited to sit on the Local Nature Partnership Board to help develop links between access to nature and the health agenda and to ensure that benefits to health and wellbeing are maximised through the work of the LNP. The partnership will ensure that the benefits that access to nature can provide for health and wellbeing are captured in the new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy that will follow.

Q.9. Describe how you see the LNP adding value to the range of other local projects and initiatives concerned with the sustainable management of the natural environment in your area, including any Nature Improvement Areas, biodiversity off-set pilots and catchment partnerships and other land management initiatives.

In our response to question 3 we have set out some initial ideas on our strategic vision for the partnership. In the approach we are proposing, a series of priority landscape scale projects will be identified across the LNP area and endorsed by the Partnership. Some of the areas that have been identified already have landscape scale projects or initiatives in place and others are landscapes that include some localised projects that could benefit from being joined to form a more strategic landscape scale project. One of the aims of the LNP will be to encourage the formation of landscape scale projects in priority areas that do not already have a co-ordinated initiative in place, and to establish a means of sharing best practice from successful landscape scale initiatives to assist in their establishment.

The North York Moors National Park and the Howardian Hills AONB are good examples of places within the LNP boundary where continued work with land owners and other partners can result in landscapes that are providing a wide range of services for the benefit of wildlife, people and the economy. Much can be learned from the approach taken in these designated landscapes and applied to other landscapes across the LNP area where environmental assets are more fragmented and their management less co-ordinated.

There are currently no Nature Improvement Areas or biodiversity off-set pilots within the North Yorkshire & York LNP boundary. One of the aims of the LNP will be to assist in determining which areas would best fit the requirements for a Nature Improvement Area or a biodiversity off-set area and getting the landscapes formally recognised. The priority areas that have been suggested so far, in the work leading up to this application, may or may not be appropriate for these purposes.

In addition to the sharing of best practice between projects we are planning to identify where projects are struggling and create task and finish groups to assist in targeting the particular issue causing concern. The sharing of best practice, the identification of issues and determining the need for task and finish groups will be a function of the LNP Board.

Q.10. Describe the opportunities you see for funding the delivery of your aims, for instance by aligning and targeting local resources and sources of funding, and how you plan to support the running of the partnership.

In responding to question 3 we have set out some initial ideas on a strategic approach to targeting the natural environment of the LNP area. The strategic vision and action plan will be used to target and align the resources of the partners, providing greater efficiency and less duplication of effort. The strategic vision and action plan for the LNP will also be used as a means to attract funding by demonstrating a well co-ordinated approach for nature across the area. Having a diverse range of cross-sector partners from a strategic to a local level will open the LNP up to a wide range of possible funding streams, offering small, medium and large sums of money. To achieve significant landscape gains reasonably large sums of money are likely to be needed. Particular focus will be given to funding sources that provide substantial amounts e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund, LIFE +, Water Framework Directive funding. The creation of biodiversity offset areas within the LNP may also present a good opportunity for funding towards nature improvement, and some local authorities have already expressed an interest in this approach.

Whilst achieving LNP status does not directly provide the partnership with funds it is hoped that Government endorsement will be seen as a positive signal to potential funders.

Given the current financial constraints placed on each of the partners at present, the partnership will initially be sustained through in-kind contributions.

Initial leadership in development of the core functions and the strategic priorities will be resourced by North Yorkshire County Council by diverting existing staff resource.

Whilst North Yorkshire County Council has put forward their officers to fulfil this co-ordinating role initially, there is scope for partners to also offer staff time to assist in delivering the core priorities. The County Council may also approach specific partners for particular expertise in areas such as funding.

North Yorkshire County Council is also proposing to perform the secretariat function for the first year of the partnership. This will involve maintaining information databases of all Partnership contacts, circulating meeting papers, administering practical arrangements (e.g. room bookings) and undertaking other administrative tasks needed for the efficient running of the partnership. The role of secretariat will be changed on an annual basis with each partner in the LNP taking a turn to perform this role as an in-kind contribution.

During the first year of partnership development, it may be possible to demonstrate the need for a dedicated Project Manager to drive the partnership forward, provided that a

suitable source of funding can be secured. The Partnership Manager would need to add value to a degree that would more than demonstrate the investment towards their post in terms of salary and on cost to the partnership.

Q.11. Describe why your boundary is the most appropriate one for your LNP and why any overlaps are necessary. Please also tell us about what you have agreed with neighbouring LNPs about how you will work together, including how any overlaps will be managed or resolved.

The area originally chosen for the LNP covered the entire County of North Yorkshire and the City of York. This area was defined by current administrative boundaries, which are already strongly connected in terms of two tier authority and partnership working. There are also strong natural connections between the designated upland areas and the lowland vales through the various river corridors that run through the County to feed the Humber. Management of the various river corridors is likely to be a focus for the partnership because of the benefits that can be gained in terms of habitat connectivity and managing climate change issues such as flooding.

Early on in discussions it became clear that the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB areas had a stronger connection with the aims of proposed Northern Upland Chain LNP in terms of co-ordinated upland habitat management. It was agreed that these two designated upland areas would be removed from the North Yorkshire & York LNP area and that a strong cross-boundary relationship would be established to ensure that areas of mutual interest will be managed through communications between the two LNPs (e.g. promoting the visitor economy benefits of the natural environment across the whole of North Yorkshire). It was also felt that the removal of the designated areas did not compromise the validity of the North Yorkshire & York proposal.

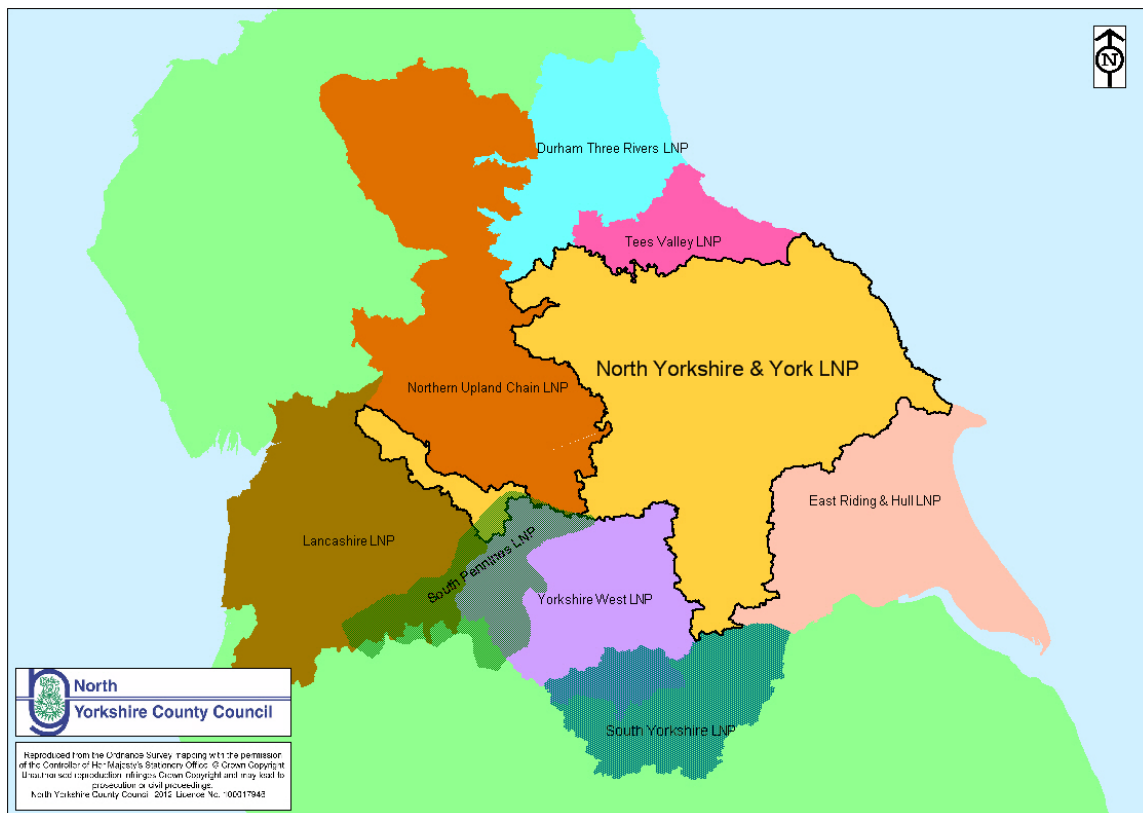
An agreement has been made with the proposed Yorkshire West LNP to have adjoining rather than overlapping boundaries. The North Yorkshire and York LNP will work closely with the Yorkshire West LNP and the Northern Upland Chain LNP on opportunities that would benefit the strategic direction of the Leeds City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership, for example, in the delivery of the LCR Green Infrastructure Strategy. It has also been agreed that the Yorkshire West LNP will be the main contact for the LCR LEP on nature improvements within the City Region.

We have accepted the overlap with the South Pennines LNP as the geographical overlap is minimal and will not cause an issue for the operation of the North Yorkshire & York LNP. Should an area of mutual interest be identified within the overlapping area then communication will take place between the two LNPs to ensure that management of the specific theme or project is handled efficiently and without the risk of duplicated effort.

There are several other proposals that sit alongside the North Yorkshire & York LNP boundary. The need for cross-boundary working will be more immediately apparent in some of these than others. For example, there is the obvious link to the Hull & East Riding LNP which is within the same Local Enterprise Partnership area as North

Yorkshire & York and shares potential synergies around landscape characters and environmental objectives e.g. the Yorkshire Wolds and the Lower Derwent Valley

In the build up to submitting this application communication has taken place with all neighbouring LNPs. An agreement in principle has been reached with all our neighbours that if any area of mutual cross-boundary interest is identified then discussions will take place between the two LNPs in question to ensure that management of the specific theme or project is handled efficiently and without the risk of duplicated effort. This initial agreement will be strengthened and formalised in the communication plan that will be drafted within the first few months of this LNP receiving recognition. The map below shows all the neighbouring LNPs that border the North Yorkshire & York LNP area:



Q.12. Describe how you plan to monitor and evaluate your work, including how you will know you are making a difference.

Once the partnership has chosen the landscapes that it will focus upon, an exercise will be carried out to determine the level of information that is held by various partners on the

present condition of those landscapes to determine a monitoring start point. If insufficient information is available in any area of data then work will be commissioned to establish the current status.

The lead officers from LNP projects will provide regular progress reports to the LNP Board via their designated champion. The reports will include a series of performance indicators for a range of themes including biodiversity (linked to BARS, EBS 2020 and the Single Data List 160-01 target for local wildlife sites), economy, community engagement and improved access for health. Links to existing partnerships that report on benefits to the natural environment, such as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan partnerships and the SINC partnership, will be made clear so that double counting is not an issue and role of the LNP in supporting these groups is understood. The details of monitoring and reporting processes will be developed within the communications plan which will be prepared within the first six months of this LNP receiving formal endorsement.