



Goodbye and Hello

Welcome to the final edition of essentials, our quarterly newsletter which has kept you up to date with activity and developments on the regional scene during the life of the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly.

As regular readers will be aware, new changes brought about by the Government's Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration (SNR) will see the Assembly disappear from April 1 this year, with our functions transferring to Local Government Yorkshire and Humber and Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency.

A Joint Regional Board, made up of the LGYH Leaders' Board and Yorkshire Forward Board Members, has been established, which has responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of the new single Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS). This will replace the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy. Until new legislation is introduced, it will also be designated as the Regional Planning Body.

Core regional activity previously led by the Assembly will continue to be delivered along with the IRS. This work includes:

- updating the Yorkshire and Humber Plan; taking action on housing aimed at, amongst other things, securing the ongoing delivery of new affordable homes and initiatives on climate change where professional input will be led by LGYH; and
- the ongoing development and delivery of the region's long-term transport priorities, supporting new accountability arrangements via the Regional Select Committee, and championing sustainable development in the region where professional input will be led by Yorkshire Forward.

The new arrangements will ensure the development of the new Single IRS will be built from the local level, through the four Functional Sub Regions (FSR) in the region. It will take



Not in photograph: Paul Jagger, Lyndsey Bunn, Jenny Poxon, Stuart Clewlow, Carole Cozens, Harriet Fisher, Fay McCulloch, Kelly Jevons, Sue Malik, Nicola Baylis, Julie Johnson, Amanda Johnson.

account of the local and FSR priorities.

The four thematic regional boards working on spatial planning, regeneration and housing, work and skills; and transport will also have a key role to play in the development of the IRS. Each Chair and Vice Chair will be a Local Authority Leader or a Yorkshire Forward Board Member or nominee. Other members will include representatives from the FSRs, local authority councillors, stakeholders and agencies with expertise or an interest in the work of the Boards.

Yorkshire Forward will provide secretariat support for the Joint Regional Board, the Work and Skills Board and the Transport Board and associated networks. LGYH will support the Housing and Regeneration Board and the Spatial Planning Board, along with associated networks.

In addition, arrangements for an Independent Board looking at sustainable development issues are still being developed following consultation across the region.

Peter Box, Chair of the Assembly, said the significant change the Assembly had helped deliver over the last few years needed to be maintained.

"Our starting point for the new structures is a clear and shared vision for the future success of the region," he added.

"As we move on, we must ensure we build on our strong foundations and experience to develop even better ways of working to benefit our communities and business."

(Details of the contacts for general queries about the new structure and for the new Boards and their associated work areas are on the back page of essentials).

Reflections

Over the last eight years the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly has been at the forefront of shaping regional working and has been a key driver of the enormous change that has characterised our region.

Looking back over our albeit brief history, there's no doubt those involved with the Assembly - from local government leaders and officers, stakeholders and other partners to the staff support team - have made the best of our opportunities and there's also no doubt that our region has benefited as a result.

Be it through the development of the Regional Spatial Strategy, delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy, the work of the Regional Housing Board, our scrutiny work or the recently-launched Regional Adaptation Study, the Assembly has often challenged traditional ways of thinking and brought innovative approaches and solutions to a host of cross boundary, cross-sectoral and cross party issues.

This has required real leadership from us all and real partnership working, sometimes across hitherto unlikely alliances. While things haven't always been smooth - and if difficult decisions are

to be taken, we can't always take the path of least resistance - we have succeeded through discussion, negotiation and a collective desire to do what's best for the communities we all serve.

And as we look to the future we must also remember some of the things that we have learnt. We must build on the work of the Assembly, improve it and adapt it to suit the new era, keeping firmly focused on our goal to continue working together to develop our region and to tackle the new and difficult challenges we now face.

It's been a pleasure to serve the Assembly during its lifetime and a pleasure working with you all.



Peter Box
Chair



Paul Jagger
Deputy Chair

Transport Boost

Regional transport bosses have backed a package of transport improvements worth more than £1.35 billion and aimed at meeting business and commuter travel needs in Yorkshire and Humber.

Members of the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly's Regional Transport Board have re-iterated support for 26 projects across the region and also endorsed four additional schemes in Leeds, Sheffield and Doncaster worth more than £160m, mostly for public transport improvement in Leeds and South Yorkshire and for improving the A164 between the Humber Bridge and Beverley.

Following the meeting to review progress on Yorkshire and Humber's regional transport funding allocations (RFA), the Board endorsed the package as part of a wider funding bid that has now been presented to Ministers. This is part of the region's overall advice to Government on regional funding requirements.

The four new schemes supported were (total RFA support figures in millions):

- The second phase of the New Generation Transport scheme in Leeds - £98.8m
- Additional vehicles for the Sheffield supertram system - £14.3m
- A bus rapid transit network in South Yorkshire, to include linked park and ride sites in Sheffield and Doncaster - £30.5m
- Improvements to the A164 between the Humber Bridge and Beverley £11.7m.

An additional £12.1m is also to be provided for the White Rose Way Scheme, Doncaster.

In addition, the package also includes measures to boost transport expenditure across the whole Region, by supporting increased funding for local transport projects in the short-term to help address the current economic downturn.

Recent figures have shown Yorkshire and Humber has had a 12.1% rise in traffic since 1998, larger than the national average. This equates to a persistent rise in traffic of around 40,000 extra cars on the region's roads each year.

RSS 2009 Update

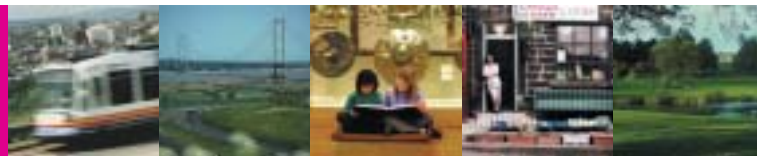
More than 200 organisations and individuals have taken part in work to feed into the recent Spatial Options consultation for the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

As a result, 130 responses to the Spatial Options have been received from a wide range of stakeholders including local authorities and other public sector organisations, developers and landowners, charities, town and parish councils and interest groups.

You can view the Spatial Options, and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, on the Assembly's website (www.yhassembly.gov.uk). The consultation responses are also available to download from the Assembly's website.

The consultation has helped surface some key issues and concerns relating to the RSS review including issues around the economic downturn and housing delivery; land supply; migration; and infrastructure. In response to these concerns, the Assembly has begun work to gather further information and evidence to inform the review.

The options responses and the further work outlined above will all help shape the future development of the region's approach to spatial planning. Careful consideration is being given as to how best to achieve this, in light of the move to preparing the Integrated Regional Strategy. Please contact Harriet Fisher on 01924 331597 or email rssupdate@yhassembly.gov.uk for more information.



Adapting to the Climate Change Challenge

Two key new studies, looking at how local communities might be affected by, and need to cope with climate change, have been launched.

Environment Minister Hilary Benn was the keynote speaker when the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Change Adaptation Study and the revised Climate Change Plan for Yorkshire and Humber were unveiled.

Launching the reports, Mr Benn said: "The Yorkshire and the Humber region has an impressive record of taking steps to deal with climate change. It was the first region to produce a plan to tackle the problem in 2005. Today I am pleased to have the chance to launch the new Climate Change Plan and Regional Adaptation Study. The task for all of us now is to get on with it."

The Adaptation Study is the culmination of almost a year's work assessing the likely problems caused by climate change, and identifying both what can be done to adapt the region's infrastructure and services to deal with the problems and which organisations are best placed to take the lead on delivering the work. The study also provides each local authority in the region with a framework to highlight key vulnerabilities such as cost, urgency and constraints, which need to be addressed to help implement adaptation in individual areas.

The Climate Change Plan for Yorkshire and Humber is aimed at regional and local leaders, and for decision makers in all sectors. It provides principles that will help the region adapt to climate change and reduce our contribution to its causes. It also provides a framework for action that will influence other plans in the region such as local Sustainable Community Strategies and the single Integrated Regional Strategy.



Arthur Barker and Hilary Benn launch the reports.

Following the 2007 floods, in this region alone:

- In Hull 8,600 homes (20,000 people) and 1,300 businesses were flooded;
- In Sheffield the Neepsend electricity substation was shut down with loss of power to 40,000 people;
- More than 1,000 people were evacuated from villages near Ulley reservoir dam following structural damage - this also led to the M1 in South Yorkshire being closed for 40 hours.

More than 100 key stakeholders attended the launch at the Royal York Hotel at an event which also included a question and answer session with experts from local government, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Forward and the Regional Flood Defence Committee.

Arthur Barker, Chair of Local Government Yorkshire and Humber and the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly's Sustainable Development Board, said both pieces of work were important steps in ensuring the region is ready and able to cope with climate change in the future.

For full details of the Adaptation Study log on to www.adaptyh.co.uk. For more details on the Climate Change Plan for Yorkshire and Humber or the work of the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Change Partnership, contact Jon Clubb on 01924 331555, email jon.clubb@lgyh.gov.uk

Monitoring report submitted

The Regional Spatial Strategy Annual Monitoring Report for 2007/08 has now been submitted to Government to and is available to download from our website.

AMR2008 is the first year that the specific outcomes of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan, the RSS issued in May 2008, have been monitored. Its findings start to suggest what should be priority actions for regional bodies over the coming year and together with the information in Progress in the Region, the AMR will help to shape the new Integrated Regional Strategy.

The priorities identified from AMR2008 are the need to:

- Focus development on the settlement network
- Complete housing numbers nearer to RSS targets
- Match housing types to housing needs
- Increase the provision of affordable housing
- Provide accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Improve understanding of and provision of Green Infrastructure
- Achieve modal shift including improving accessibility of new developments by non-car modes
- Implement Regional Transport Priorities
- Increase Renewable Energy installed capacity
- Improve recycling rates across the whole Region

A summary of AMR2008, a full copy and a Data CD, are available via www.yhassembly.gov.uk or the Planning Delivery and Conformity Team, 18 King Street, Wakefield, WF1 2SQ Tel: 01924 331555 or mail@yhassembly.gov.uk

Yorkshire Forward contacts

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From April Chris Martin will become Deputy Chief Executive at LGYH responsible for leading the local authority side on the development of the Integrated Regional Strategy. Sue Jeffrey will be leaving full-time work to concentrate on a range of different projects including

developing her role as Chair of Tees Valley Housing, and renewing an interest in local politics in her home Borough of Redcar and Cleveland. Below they provide some final thoughts about the future of regional working.

Many of you will have seen the legacy document we recently published. It describes the work of the Assembly since 2001 and we would like to place on record our thanks to all Members, partner organisations and staff who have ensured that we have achieved so much.

In addition to a strong legacy of practical outcomes, the Assembly leaves behind a successful template for regional working, and much of the new regional governance structure will be recognisable to those of you who have been involved with us over the years. But despite the familiar feel there are some significant differences in the new arrangements. It is how these differences are exploited that will be the test of whether or not we are really up for making the new system work.

The first is the opportunity to build a new and powerful alliance between local government and Yorkshire Forward. This has the potential to deliver a step change in regional co-operation and joint working in pursuit of our common objective of strong and sustainable economic growth.

The second is the prospect, through the Integrated Regional Strategy, of securing the joined-upness that we constantly refer to but somehow have always just fallen short of being able to deliver.

The third, and perhaps most important, is the chance to establish a new relationship between the national, regional, sub-regional and local levels, redefining the relative influence of each and putting more emphasis on doing business in an inclusive way and in the right place.

Together these changes should ensure that all our actions are much more effective and responsive. But to make the most of the opportunities they present requires commitment from everyone.

In the past we have made a success of regional working in Yorkshire and Humber in the face of only qualified support nationally and from the region. This time around the regional approach has been fine-tuned over many months to work within the new national policy framework proposed by Government. Given the effort that has gone in to getting the region this far, our successor bodies now deserve to be given a real opportunity to show just how much more effective regional working can be when delivered with unanimous approval and support.

We wish you all the very best of luck.

Influencing the Region's Future

The structures for future regional decision making are clear, with Local Government Yorkshire and Humber and Yorkshire Forward taking enhanced roles when the Assembly is abolished at the end of March.

However, over the last months, it's also been recognised by Government and others that regional decision making will be deficient without contributions from stakeholders - there will be a gap.

These partners are proposing that this should be filled by the unique, evidence based expertise, intelligence and experience stakeholders offer from their constituencies, whether sector, interest or geographically based.

With support secured for next year (2009/10), it will enable the creation of a modern, constructive regional resource, well placed to contribute informed and particular perspectives to policy making.

Key objectives will include:

- A recognised contribution to the development of the Integrated Regional Strategy
- Valued support supplied to, and recognised by, regional organisations and partners involved in the new regional boards
- An expanded and updated membership of regional partners and stakeholders, seen as offering essential support to regional decision-making.

An information event to update stakeholders and regional partners on the new regional arrangements and how they might contribute is being held on Tuesday 31 March, from 9.15am to 1pm at the Queens Hotel, Leeds. For more details, contact Jane Hustwit at hustwit@rhodes.freeuk.com