

Sustainable Community Strategy for North Yorkshire 2011 - 2014

This three-point plan is a refresh of our longer term strategy, published in 2008. Our vision remains the same: **We want North Yorkshire to be an even better place for everyone to live, work or visit.** However, we must focus our efforts on areas of critical need in the next three years, as well as making our communities more sustainable.

Our three priorities for 2011/14

- **Protecting and supporting vulnerable people**
- **Supporting economic growth and employment**
- **Improving accessibility for all our communities**

We recognise that other issues which are not explicitly included within these priorities play a key part in the longer-term wellbeing of communities. However, in such a challenging economic period it's about recognising that with increasingly limited public resources, we must focus our efforts on those areas where we really need to make a difference now to those who critically need our support, and where we can only do this effectively through the partnership.

Protecting and supporting vulnerable people

“Vulnerable people” can include children and young people, older people and other, specific, groups such as people who have experienced crime or people who are disabled, to name just a few.

A key factor which can contribute towards vulnerability is the general quality of life experienced by communities. Whilst North Yorkshire offers a good quality of life to many, for some communities this is not the case and the gap between these is growing larger. There are some rural and urban areas in North Yorkshire where people have significantly poorer health, fewer qualifications, lower income, are more likely to be unemployed, and have a shorter than average life expectancy. Partners need to work together more effectively to identify these areas and tackle these longstanding issues.

Additionally, with an increasing older population in North Yorkshire, partners will also be challenged in sustaining good quality health and social care provision for all who need it.

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This agenda is therefore about prevention, intervention and effective partnership-working to improve quality of life and wellbeing for all those who are vulnerable in our communities.

What we will do

The partnership will focus specifically on:

- **Safeguarding and protecting people of all ages at risk of significant harm.** This will focus on safeguarding for children and vulnerable adults and protecting the most vulnerable.
- **Providing older and vulnerable people with a range of choice for their accommodation, care and support needs.** This will include enabling those who wish to live independently to do so and providing support mechanisms such as Extra Care.
- **Working jointly to reduce health inequalities** - by promoting healthier lifestyles and reducing risky behaviour in all ages; in particular smoking, alcohol and obesity.
- **Identifying communities where multiple deprivation exists and which issues partners need to work on in these areas to tackle this.** This is about all partners working to narrow the gaps that exist between some of our communities in terms of the quality of life they experience.

Supporting economic growth and employment

Our aspiration is for North Yorkshire to be made up of sustainable communities which enable everyone who participates to flourish and which are a place of opportunity for all. We will do this by focussing on business growth, improving our infrastructure and the quality of our workforce, leading to employment opportunities and creating an environment where individuals are encouraged and supported to create their own businesses.

The current economic climate poses significant challenges in delivering our vision. These include having to rely on a smaller working age population than elsewhere in the region and country, overcoming our access and connectivity issues and also tackling large scale unemployment in the next few years, particularly in the public sector. But there are also opportunities for us in tackling these and in preparing ourselves for a brighter economic future. These include the county's stunning natural environment and heritage, which are key to its economic success, as well as doing more to encourage creative industries and investing in a sustainable, year-round tourist industry.

What we will do

The partners in North Yorkshire will work to achieving greater economic growth by supporting the newly formed Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to deliver the following key objectives:

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- **Agriculture and food.** To create business growth through growing the supply chain.
- **Visitor economy.** Provide clarity and improve the offer for visitors and tourists through joint working and collaboration between partners.
- **Rural broadband.** To help rural North Yorkshire maximise its broadband potential (*see also "improving accessibility for all our communities"*)
- **Support for growth of small businesses.** To improve the success and sustainability of new and small businesses through better performance and improved access to finance.
- **Improved networks.** To make LEP businesses in North Yorkshire the best networked and most effective networkers.
- **Skills.** To ensure skills provision is focussed on present and future business needs and to meet gaps in provision.
- **Coastal regeneration.** To support coastal regeneration and the development of an east coast enterprise zone.

Improving accessibility for all our communities

Difficulties in accessing the services people need can result from a lack of local services, a lack of electronic access or a lack of transport to get to the services, or in many cases all three. Other barriers to be considered surround personal circumstances, such as age, income or disability.

In isolation either of these can result in accessibility difficulties but in combination the problems can be significantly worse and the gaps between those who can and do access key services and those who are isolated from them is considerable in places. In the next few years, the impact of public sector cuts will also place considerable additional pressures on both service providers and communities, particularly in rural areas. It will be even more important for public, voluntary and community sector partners to help local communities to support themselves more, working in partnership to help shape local solutions where resources are scant but needs remain.

What we will do

We will work towards improving accessibility for all people within our communities by:

- **Delivering a high-quality broadband service** capable of supporting voice, video and data to meet the needs and long term growth of businesses and individuals in all areas of North Yorkshire.
- **Building capacity within communities** to help them to play a bigger role in shaping and delivering local services.

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How will this plan be taken forward?

Local Government North Yorkshire and York and the Chief Executives Group for North Yorkshire and York will lead the partnership of agencies responsible for ensuring that progress is achieved against all of the key aims of this refreshed plan.

Further information about this strategy, how it has been developed and the other key plans which link in to it can be found at www.nysp.org.uk/scs

Enquiries about this strategy can be sent to:

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