

## North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership - Executive

10<sup>th</sup> February 2011

### Sustainable Community Strategy and priority-setting for North Yorkshire

#### **1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To ask the NYSP Executive to agree the three new headline priorities for North Yorkshire, as proposed by the Thematic Partnership Chairs.
- 1.2 To ask the NYSP Executive to agree that work is undertaken to refresh the Sustainable Community Strategy, on the basis of these headline priorities.
- 1.3 To invite comments on the proposed format of the refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1 It was agreed at the last Executive meeting in October 2010 that the Thematic Partnerships would spend a few months considering what the three or four collective priorities for North Yorkshire might be going forward, and report back to the Executive at the February 2011 meeting. In addition, a workshop session was held at the annual NYSP conference on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2010 at which delegates were invited to input their early thoughts on this.

#### **3 Suggested priorities and approach**

- 3.1 Following the meeting of Thematic Partnership Chairs on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011, the following three collective priorities have been agreed by the Chairs and it is proposed that the NYSP Executive agree these priorities with a view to further work being done to refresh the Sustainable Community Strategy. The proposed headline issues are:
  - **Protecting and supporting vulnerable people**
  - **Supporting economic growth and employment**
  - **Improving accessibility for all our communities**
- 3.2 These priorities are fairly broad as they stand and could encompass a wide variety of issues. The Thematic Chairs have agreed that key to the 'success' of these priorities will be drawing out specific issues beneath them which will form a narrower focus for the Sustainable Community Strategy. As agreed at the last NYSP Executive, a revised Sustainable Community Strategy must be meaningful to local people and we must ensure that it explains clearly what the intended outcomes will be of progressing work under these priorities.
- 3.3 A unifying issue raised at the meeting of Thematic Chairs was around the differences in quality of life experienced by people within North Yorkshire, in terms of the gulf that exists in some areas between wealth and poverty, good access to services and lack of it, etc. It was felt that this could form a focus for the revised Sustainable Community Strategy and the priority issues that

become the central focus. It may be, for example, that the strategy focuses on a number of key geographic areas or groups within the community. Further analysis and identification of where the widest gulfs and differences exist would be required to achieve this.

- 3.4 In terms of how a revised Sustainable Community Strategy might look, the Executive has agreed previously that it should be a pared down plan, focussing on the key issues. In order to provide a starting point for discussion about how the Strategy might look, enclosed at Appendix A is a draft outline which proposes a very brief and concise document which could include, for example, a short introduction, detail on the three key priorities and some brief text around performance management. The latter will require some further consideration as, in the absence of a Local Area Agreement, members would need to consider whether and how the Strategy should contain any performance information.
- 3.5 The content of the enclosed draft is very rough at this stage and is intended only to give a suggestion of how the Strategy might look. Some of it has been drawn from content developed in 2010 for the previous refresh document. It will require the input of key partners to draw out more specific issue such as health inequalities, to bring the content up-to-date and to reflect how partners might tackle these. Comments are therefore invited from Members on issues such as:
- Length;
  - Format (what should and shouldn't be included); and
  - Any specific issues about content which would be helpful to moving development work forward.
- 3.6 In the longer term, it is clear that it may not necessarily be the current NYSP which leads on delivery of a revised Strategy and to this end the draft has been written to focus on priorities for the county, rather than priorities for the NYSP itself.
- 3.7 Developing a revised Sustainable Community Strategy would require us to build in some time for stakeholder consultation and of course the final draft would require approval at a meeting of the full council at NYCC before it can be implemented. In following this process, it will clearly take several months before the Strategy could be finalised and as such it's likely that implementation would not take place until the autumn.

#### **4 Recommendations**

4.1 That members agree the three key priorities for North Yorkshire as proposed by the Thematic Chairs.

4.2 That members agree to further developmental work being undertaken to refresh the Sustainable Community Strategy, using the three priorities.

4.3 That members consider and agree on the approach to developing a revised Strategy (drawing on the proposal at Appendix A) and next steps for development.

Diane Parsons  
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26<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Appendix A: Outline proposal for a revised Sustainable Community Strategy

Appendix A – Outline proposal for a revised SCS

## North Yorkshire's Future Sustainable Community Strategy 2011 - 2014

*North Yorkshire - a place of equal opportunity where all can develop their full potential, participate in a flourishing economy, live and thrive in secure communities, see their high-quality environment and cultural assets maintained and enhanced, and receive effective support when they need it.*

### Our vision

This strategy sets out the key priorities for North Yorkshire over the next three years. It is a refresh of the ten-year Strategy published by the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership in 2008. Whilst our long-term vision for the county remains the same, an awful lot of change has taken place both nationally and at a more local level over the last three years, including the considerable cuts to public sector expenditure and resulting changes in the public sector. This update is essentially **a three-point plan** for the next few years, focussing on three critical areas which partners have agreed should be our focus to sustain our vision. We have deliberately made this update document brief and simple in format to focus on what are the critical issues for the next few years. *[Add brief wording later about the doc being reflective of consultation / how it has developed etc.]*

North Yorkshire offers a high quality of life to many but is still a low wage economy with pockets of serious urban and rural disadvantage and deprivation. It is also a sparsely populated county, with a population of around 591,000 covering an area of 3,102 square miles. The county's population is increasing and getting older, thereby creating additional challenges to sustainable services such as health and social care provision. These are just some of the issues facing communities and service providers over the coming years and have helped to inform where we should be focussing our efforts. We have drawn on a wide range of available data in identifying our priorities. *This information can be accessed via STREAM, the local information system for North Yorkshire at [insert web link].*

### Our Three Priorities

Sustainability is at the heart of our strategy. This means making sure that we plan and deliver services which enable all communities to flourish and thrive now, without compromising quality of life for future generations.

*[Need to add something here re contribution of communities and voluntary / community sector.]*

We believe that the following three priorities will also help us to make communities more sustainable and will focus efforts on areas of critical need. Our priorities for 2011 to 2014 are:

- **Protecting and supporting vulnerable people**

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- **Supporting economic growth and employment**
- **Improving accessibility for all our communities**

*Need to include text here about other issues such as climate change which won't be explicitly highlighted or linked in to the above priorities but are nevertheless important to all partners – and how these will be progressed alongside the Strategy.*

**Protecting and supporting vulnerable people**

In difficult economic times, the most vulnerable people in our communities can often suffer the most. “Vulnerable people” can include children and young people, older people and other, specific, groups such as people who have experienced domestic abuse or people who have a disability, to name a few.

This agenda is about prevention, intervention and effective partnership-working to improve quality of life for those who are vulnerable in our communities. Below are just some of the many examples of challenges requiring our attention in achieving this aim:

- Child poverty in the county impacting on the ability of some young people to develop and flourish;
- High levels of alcohol harm and alcohol-related A&E admissions in parts of the county;
- An increasing requirement for dementia support because of our growing older population;
- Vulnerable people needing access to available affordable housing in their communities;
- Crime and anti-social behaviour in communities leads to a reduced sense of wellbeing and security, particularly for the most vulnerable.

A large number of specific targets and action plans are already in place to support and protect some of the key vulnerable groups in North Yorkshire. Partners in North Yorkshire will add value to this work by:

- Working to safeguard all vulnerable people in our communities;
- Supporting more older people to live independently in their own homes and ensuring dignity in care;
- Making our communities safe for all by working in partnership to reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- Improving housing services and assistance for specific vulnerable groups;
- Ensuring joint planning and commissioning of support and care services;
- Support all children to thrive both in and out of school and provide a range of multi-agency local preventative services to support vulnerable parents and families.

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### **Supporting economic growth and employment**

This is one of the key elements that underpin sustainable communities and quality of life. Our vision incorporates an aspiration to develop sustainable communities which enable everyone who participates to flourish and which are a place of opportunity for all. The current economic climate poses significant challenges in delivering our vision but there are also opportunities for us in tackling these and in preparing ourselves for a brighter economic future. Some of the challenges and opportunities facing North Yorkshire within this arena include:

- A mixed economy which is reliant on a smaller working population than elsewhere in the region and the country;
- North Yorkshire's stunning natural environment and heritage are key to its economic success, as well as encouraging creative industries and investing in a sustainable, year-round tourist industry;
- A need to overcome our access and connectivity issues through better transport links and high-speed broadband connections;
- Tackle potential large-scale unemployment in the next few years, particularly from the public sector;

We must continue to develop employment opportunities across the county, improve our infrastructure and the quality of our workforce. The partners in North Yorkshire will work to achieving greater economic growth and supporting employment by:

- Stimulating and supporting enterprise and an enterprising culture.
- Develop a contemporary, high quality cultural and environmental offer.
- Attract and develop knowledgeable and creative people.
- Improve access to training and employment for vulnerable groups.
- Ensure a connected sub-region through the improvement of broadband infrastructure.

We need to be mindful of other, existing structures and strategies in place in this area. This document complements the aims and targets of the existing sub-regional strategy for York and North Yorkshire and the Local Enterprise Partnership will have responsibility for driving forward economic development in the sub-region.

### **Improving accessibility for all our communities**

North Yorkshire is a place of opportunity with a lot to offer those who live, work and visit here. But the large, rural nature of the county and the fact that its population is so dispersed can prove to be a barrier to people being able to make the most of its opportunities.

We also need to be mindful that, whilst offering a good quality of life to many, there exist considerable gaps and differences in parts of North Yorkshire between

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- wealth and poverty,
- healthy and sick,
- accessible and remote.

We need to work to close the gap between those whose quality of life, health and general wellbeing is poor and those with better quality of life. At the root of this issue is improving fairness, equality and accessibility to services for 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.

In considering these difficulties we should think about:

- Place - difficulty accessing services because of where people live. For example in many rural areas, barriers to access may include accessing health services, post offices and lack of broadband internet.
- People – difficulty accessing services because of personal circumstances. For example, this may relate to age, wealth or disability.

In isolation either of these can result in accessibility difficulties but in combination the problems can be significantly worse. In the next few years, the impact of public sector cuts will place considerable additional pressures on both service providers and communities, particularly in rural areas.

The partners in North Yorkshire will work towards achieving access in communities through:

- Good quality, affordable public and community transport
- Improving connectivity and take-up of high-speed broadband internet in communities (*see also supporting economic growth and employment*).
- Improving how we provide our services, as partner agencies, in a way that makes it easier for communities to contact us and receive basic information.
- Supporting financial inclusion for more deprived communities;
- Working with rural or remote communities who have lost key services to help connect them better to services in their locality.

*Need to include something more specific here (and/or in ‘vulnerable people’) around health inequalities and how this issue might be tackled.*

Whilst this document sets out our priorities for the next three years, these issues will continue to be important for some years to come. Maintaining effective partnership relationships and communications around our shared priorities will also continue to be important if we are to tackle the challenges of these tough economic times and prepare for longer-term sustainability. We will of course review our priorities in three years, to make sure that we

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continue to progress work based on evidence of need and where partnership efforts are most required.

**How will we know if we have achieved our goals?**

*Need a short performance management section here, to include regular monitoring by the relevant partners. Partners to consider how we deal with the performance side of things post-removal of LAA and whether this will be incorporated into the SCS itself.*

*Perhaps we could draw up action plans for each of the priorities - to include any targets etc – and make these available via the website?*