

North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership - Executive

26 June 2008

Community Engagement Frameworks

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the NYSP Executive on current community engagement across Partnership organisations.
- 1.2 To investigate the opportunities for joint working in the light of the requirements for all public authorities to increase the involvement of local people in decision-making and the exercise of their functions.

2 Background

- 2.1 From 1 April 2009 The Local Government and Involvement in Public Health Act 2007 places a new duty on best value authorities to involve local people in decision-making and the exercise of their functions. This will include:
- Providing information;
 - Consulting; and
 - Involving in another way.

It is emphasised in the guidance that this may mean going beyond existing mechanisms, and that authorities should consider providing opportunities to:

- **influence decisions** (e.g. participatory budgeting; citizen juries);
 - **provide feedback on decisions, services and policies** (e.g. 'have your say' section on the authority website; feedback forms being made available);
 - **co-design/work with the authority in designing policies and services**
 - **co-produce/carry out some aspects of services for themselves** (for example having responsibility for the maintenance of a community centre; the transfer of assets or the management of assets; communities taking part in 'street clean up' or environmental conservation work); and
 - **work with the authority in assessing services** (e.g. citizens acting as mystery shoppers).
- 2.2 Specific drivers for the police can be found in the Police Act 1996, National Community Safety Plan and other legislation and guidance. Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006 requires NHS organisations to involve and consult patients and the public.
- 2.3 The Government's agenda is currently very focussed on the engagement and empowerment of local people. A Community

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Empowerment, Housing and Economic Regeneration Bill is planned, and there have been recent consultations about petitions and participatory budgeting.

- 2.4 More detailed information about the drivers for better community engagement across the partner organisations is included at Appendix 1.

3 Strategic focus

- 3.1 There is a clear strategic role for the NYSP and LSPs in community engagement.

- 3.2 The 'Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities' draft guidance describes one of the functions of an LSP as:

- 'to have oversight of and aim to co-ordinate community consultation and engagement activities of individual partners and where appropriate combine them.'

- 3.3 Comprehensive Area Assessment will look at how agencies are working together across their area to provide services for, and engage with, the community. With the duty on all agencies to be engaging more fully with the public it is important to ensure that North Yorkshire can show that this is being done with a co-ordinated focus.

4 Current community engagement

- 4.1 All partner organisations already carry out a great deal of community consultation and engagement, some of which is very specific and may also be statutory, and some of which is more general and ongoing. These encompass, amongst other things, Citizens' Panels, Area Forums and Committees, Community Safety Groups, work with parish councils, voluntary and community organisations, regeneration partnerships and youth councils.

- 4.2 More detailed information about the range of community engagement mechanisms in North Yorkshire is included at Appendix 2.

- 4.3 Structures for community engagement vary across the County but there are important points of commonality:

- **Rural / Urban** – All partner organisations have rural and urban areas with which they need to engage and there would be merit in sharing good practice and jointly working to develop models which are suitable for use in both of these situations. A great deal of the 'best practice' models of community engagement nationally are designed to be used in more compact, urban communities.
- **Neighbourhoods** – All partner organisations are committed to doing more work at this level and there is a common need to clarify

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what a neighbourhood means and how it might look in the context of North Yorkshire and the different services which agencies provide.

- **Local Strategic partnerships** – Partner organisations already contribute to much multi-agency community engagement through their LSPs.
- **Parishes** – Many partner organisations have done some work with parishes across the County and there is scope for sharing best practice.
- **Area based work & service specific work** – There is a need to look at both these aspects of community engagement throughout all agencies.
- **Local Area Agreement and Place Survey**
- **Work to engage ‘hard to reach’ groups** – This is a priority for all agencies.
- **North Yorkshire Compact** – All organisations have signed up in principle to the Compact. This has implications for engagement with the voluntary sector.
- **Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)** – LINKs will be a mechanism for communities to have a stronger voice in health and adult social care services. A host organisation (North Bank Forum) has been appointed to facilitate the establishment of Local Involvement Networks for North Yorkshire and City of York.
- **Neighbourhood policing/safer neighbourhoods** – Significant new resources have been put into this agenda by the police.

4.4 It is also clearly important to maximise use of resources, expertise and knowledge across organisations, and limit the need for agencies to set up separate structures to meet their responsibilities to engage with communities.

4.5 Currently some partner organisations have, or are developing, corporate community engagement strategies which inform their work in this area. Some of these strategies involve partners and multi-agency working such as the joint Police Force and Police Authority strategy and the work being carried out in Richmondshire and Hambleton at LSP level, but there is nothing in place at a North Yorkshire level.

5 Proposed area for joint working – a NYSP Community Engagement Framework

5.1 Having regard to the ‘duty to co-operate’ on organisations under The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the new Comprehensive Area Assessment process, the Executive is recommended to develop and adopt a NYSP Community Engagement Framework.

5.2 Work is currently being done in two Action Learning Sets in the county (Richmondshire and Hambleton) around community engagement

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strategies and this learning would make a significant contribution to any development process.

- 5.3 Consultations and engagement are not always as joined up as they might be across the partners and there are opportunities to avoid duplication and 'consultation fatigue' by working more closely on this issue. Consultations in relation to the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 are an example of an opportunity in this regard.
- 5.4 The proposed framework would embrace a set of shared principles and joined up mechanisms, where possible and appropriate. The following are examples of what could be included:
- Joint locality engagement
 - Joint commissioning of Place survey etc
 - Single consultation database
 - Joint citizens' panels
 - Joint mechanisms for engaging with communities of interest and minority groups
 - Enhanced role for local elected Members
 - Local multi-agency problem solving
 - Toolkit and training for officers and Members
 - Shared costs.
- 5.5 It is recommended that a Task and Finish group be set up to draft a framework for consideration at the December 2008 meeting of the NYSP Executive, following consultation with NYSP partners and at the NYSP Wider Partnership conference in October 2008.
- 5.6 It is suggested that the Task and Finish group should comprise representatives of the following organisations: North Yorkshire County Council, the seven District Councils, York and North Yorkshire PCT, North Yorkshire Police Authority, North Yorkshire Police, the two National Park Authorities, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, Yorkshire Local Councils Association, and the Voluntary Sector.
- 5.7 The Corporate Policy Unit at NYCC is able to convene the Group and provide the secretariat.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The NYSP Executive is recommended to:
- Agree the need for joint working on community engagement
 - Agree the development of a NYSP Community Engagement Framework

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- Agree the formation of a Task and Finish group to progress this work and bring a draft framework to the December 2008 meeting of the Executive, following consultation with all members of the NYSP Partnership.

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June 2008

Appendices:

- 1 Drivers for community engagement
- 2 Community engagement mechanisms

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Drivers for Community Engagement across public services

The following is an overview of drivers for community engagement. It is not intended to be exhaustive and is not in any order of priority.

Council tax precepts

Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states that “a relevant authority (a billing authority or a major precepting authority) shall consult persons or bodies appearing to it to be representative of persons subject to non-domestic rates under sections 43 and 45 of the 1988 Act as regards hereditaments situated in the authority’s area.”

Consultations must be made as to each financial year, and must be about the authority’s proposals for expenditure (including capital expenditure) in that financial year; and the Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe matters which are to be treated as expenditure for this purpose.

The duty to consult as to a financial year shall be performed—

- where the authority is a billing authority, before it makes calculations (otherwise than by way of substitute) in relation to the financial year
- where the authority is a precepting authority, before it issues the first precept to be issued by it for the financial year.

Best Value and Duty to Involve

The Local Government and Involvement in Public Health Act 2007 places a new duty on best value authorities (from 1 April 2009) to involve local people in decisions. This will include:

- Providing information
- Consulting
- Involving in another way

Community Empowerment White Paper

In 2007 the Government published “An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success”.

The Action Plan, produced in partnership with the Local Government Association, sets out how the government will deliver on its commitment to bring about greater devolution and empower communities.

It contains over 20 actions towards giving residents and communities a greater say in the facilities and services in their local areas. A Community Empowerment, Housing and Economic Regeneration Bill is planned.

Local Government White Paper ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’

This includes the commitment to: ‘Give communities a real voice and councillors new powers to better respond to local concerns’.

The Sustainable Communities Act 2007

The Sustainable Communities Act aims to promote the sustainability of local communities. It begins from the principle that local people know best what

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needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area. It provides a channel for local people, via their local authority, to ask central government to take such action. The Act is designed to strengthen the role of communities and also aims to ensure that they are better informed about the public funding that is spent in their area. New “local spending reports” will provide quick and easy access to information about where public money is spent. This will enable local authorities, their partners and communities to take better informed decisions about the priorities they choose to pursue to promote the sustainability of their local community.

Participatory Budgeting: Draft National Strategy

Participatory budgeting is a process by which ordinary residents decide how to allocate part of a public budget. The Government has stated an ambition to have some level of participatory budgeting in place in all local authorities by 2012. The strategy is out for consultation currently but there are several local authorities already developing pilots in the UK.

Putting People First

The Concordat ‘Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care’ sets out the shared aims and values which will guide the transformation of adult social care, ensuring it is fair, accessible and responsive to the individual needs of those who use services and their carers.

‘Our Health, Our Care, Our Say’ White Paper

Community engagement is a strong theme in this White Paper, with a particular focus on outcomes.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 also gave upper-tier local authorities and PCTs the duty to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. JSNA is a process that will identify the current and future health and wellbeing needs of a local population, informing the priorities and targets set by Local Area Agreements and leading to agreed commissioning priorities that will improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities. The stages of JSNA include stakeholder involvement and engaging with communities.

Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)

As part of the LDF a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is required. The SCI shows how and when planning authorities intend to consult local communities and other stakeholders when preparing documents. A key outcome of the SCI will be to encourage ‘front loading’ – meaning that consultation begins at the earliest stages of each document’s development so that communities are given the fullest opportunity to participate in plan making and to make a difference.

Every SCI must provide open access to information, actively encourage the contribution of ideas and representations from the community and provide regular and timely feedback on progress.

LAAs, LSPs etc

There is a need to engage and consult communities in relation to a number of statutory plans and processes including the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) responsibilities, Local Area Agreements (LAA), Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Chapter 1 of the Local Government and Involvement in Public Health Act 2007 makes clear the need to consult in relation to LAAs.

Comprehensive Area Assessments

It is clear that within the CAA there will be a focus on the actions of service organisations (individually and collectively) to engage citizens and people who use services.

Together We Can Initiative

The Government's 'Together We Can' initiative, launched in 2005 aims to provide more opportunities for people to influence policy decisions that affect their lives and communities. Closer working within government and between public bodies is one of the key themes of the initiative.

National Indicator Set and the New Place Survey

The National Indicator Set includes a number of indicators that can only be gathered through public surveys. This process will be governed by the New Place Survey that will require local authorities to undertake periodical public surveys in a prescribed way and include a range of prescribed questions. There will also be scope to include local questions.

Service Specific Requirements

In addition many agencies/functions have a general or specific statutory duty to consult local people either in informing the business planning/priority setting process or in relation to local developments and plans.

Arrangements for obtaining the views of the community on policing

The Police Act 1996 Section 96 states that:-

Arrangements shall be made for each police area for obtaining—

- the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area, and
- their co-operation with the police in preventing crime in that area.

Arrangements for each police area shall be made by the police authority after consulting the chief constable as to the arrangements that would be appropriate.

Paragraph 30 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 amends section 96 of the 1996 Act to extend the duty on police authorities to cover the making of arrangements for seeking the cooperation of the community in preventing anti-social behaviour in addition to the prevention of crime.

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Local policing objectives

The Police Act 1996 Section 7 states that “every police authority shall, before the beginning of each financial year, determine objectives for the policing of the authority’s area during that year.

Before determining objectives under this section, a police authority shall:-

- consult the chief constable for the area; and
- consider any views obtained by the authority in accordance with arrangements made under section 96.

However, Section 7 of the of the Police Act 1996 will shortly be replaced by a new Section 6ZB through the P&J Act (schedule 2, para 9(3)). The wording about who they should consult in setting objectives remains.

Local policing summaries

Section 8A of the Police Act 1996 (as inserted by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005) requires police authorities to produce local policing summaries and distribute them to every household on at least an annual basis.

Policing plans

The Police Act 1996 Section 8, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 (6Zb) states that;

Before the beginning of each financial year every police authority shall issue a plan (a “policing plan”) setting out—

- the authority’s objectives (“policing objectives”) for the policing of its area during that year; and
- the proposed arrangements for the policing of that area for the period of three years beginning with that year.

Before determining policing objectives, a police authority shall—

- consult the relevant chief officer of police, and
- consider any views obtained by the authority in accordance with arrangements made under section 96.

The regulations may make provision as to persons who are to be consulted, and matters that are to be considered, before determining policing objectives.

Local Crime Information Project

From mid 2008 (poss July) it will be a requirement on the Police/Police Authority to make local crime data available via its website. This is likely to be at neighbourhood level.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Regulation 12(1) and (2) of the Crime & Disorder (Formulation & Implementation of Strategy) Regulations states

“For the purpose of preparing the strategic assessment and preparing and implementing the partnership plan the strategy group shall make arrangements for obtaining the views of persons and bodies who live or work in the area about-

the levels and patterns of crime and disorder and substance misuse in the area; and

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the matters which responsible authorities should prioritise when each are exercising their functions to reduce crime and disorder and to combat substance misuse in the area.”

It goes on to define the persons & bodies that should be consulted.

Regulation 12(3) requires that regard must be had to other consultations undertaken by partners.

Regulation 12(4) requires that in carrying out consultations there must be at least one public meeting per year that must be attended by senior people from the CDRP partners.

Diversity

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 police authorities have a duty to consult on the likely impact of proposed policies on race equality and ensure public access to policing information and services.

In addition, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 states that the general statutory duty of specified authorities: have due regard to the need:-

- to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and requires public authorities to promote gender equality and eliminate sex discrimination.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a statutory general duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality

This means that public authorities must, in carrying out all functions, have due regard to the need to the needs and views of these and other minority groups which in turn means that engagement strategies and practices (especially around service planning/priorities etc) must take these requirements into account.

Neighbourhood Policing

The Governments neighbourhood policing agenda clearly sees neighbourhood policing as the vehicle to achieve resident-led neighbourhood management involving a range of partner organisations. The HMIC inspection criteria for neighbourhood policing includes significant elements relating to multi agency/community engagement and involvement in service delivery, local problem solving and planning.

National Community Safety Plan

The 2006-2009 National Community Safety Plan lists as one of the key priorities “to ensure that sufficient arrangements are in place to deliver a range of opportunities for local communities, and to respond to their concerns”

There are also numerous consultations and surveys, some of which are statutory including:

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British Crime Survey – Survey carried out on a rolling basis, (each month) but reported annually.

User Satisfaction Survey – Telephone survey of victims of crime (approx 500 per quarter).

Public Attitude Survey – Random selection of public. Telephone survey conducted monthly (200 per month).

Witness and Victims Survey – telephone survey of witnesses & victims of crime

Public Engagement – NHS statutory requirements

Under Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006 NHS organisations are statutorily required to involve and consult patients and the public in the:

- planning of the provision of services;
- development and consideration of proposals for changes in the way services are provided, and
- decisions made by NHS organisations affecting the operation of services.

PCT Commissioners act on behalf of the public and patients, with the engagement process being the mechanism through which local trust, legitimacy and accountability is established with the populations they serve.

LINKs

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) will be the mechanism for communities to have a stronger voice in health and adult social care services. They will replace Patient and Public Involvement Forums which were abolished at the end of March 2008. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act provides LINKs with powers to help carry out their role. Under the legislation, certain duties are placed on commissioners and providers of services.

Community Engagement mechanisms

At a meeting between the NYCC Corporate Policy Unit, the District LSP co-ordinators and the North Yorkshire Police Authority the following overview of community engagement mechanisms was drawn up. The contributions of other organisations were added at a later date.

North Yorkshire Police

- Exempt from duty to involve, but have similar duty
- Neighbourhood policing agenda
- Multi agency approach
- Joint force/authority community engagement strategy
- Engaging partners on individual basis
- Must be at neighbourhood level
- CAPS – looking to devolve into something else
- Independent Advisory Groups – BME groups
- CDRP duties

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

- Integrated Risk Management Plan – annual consultation
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Post incident surveys
- A range of different types of work involving contact with the public, eg. Crucial Crew, Drive Alive, School visits, Youth Safety Project, Summer Schools, Water Safety, Home Risk Assessments etc
- Migrant workers forum
- Islamic awareness / community engagement days

Selby

- SDC Community Engagement Strategy
- SDC Community Engagement Officer Group
- JAGs - multi agency groups with community safety focus
- Parish Forums - quarterly
- Tenant & Resident Associations
- Tenants' Forums
- Active Community Investment Partnerships (formerly CIPs)
- Local Development Framework engagement
- Youth Council
- Selby Together - faith led multi agency group working with
- migrant workers, produced first welcome pack in North Yorkshire
- Citizens Panel
- Pilot CMB planned for October 2008 - Working group

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includes representative from Community Investment Partnerships, NYCC, NY Police & NY Police Authority and NY Fire & and Rescue Service. Audit Commission interested in project

- Urban Renaissance Town Teams
- Action Planning events

Scarborough

- 4 area forums – LSP structure. Feed into community strategy
- 4 area committees – recent review. Some delegated powers. Mirror forum areas.
- Urban renaissance programme – Scarborough town. Economic development focus.
- Parish plans / neighbourhood plans
- Eastfield – community action plan and neighbourhood management
- Neighbourhood regeneration in disadvantaged areas
- Place survey – mini pilot. Refresh action plan for community strategy
- Rural engagement – different model from urban. Pilot on neighbourhood level
- Audit on community engagement.

Ryedale

- Remnants of CIP groups and RMT Town Teams
- Focus on parishes – Parish Liaison Officer
- Parish planning – worker funded through 2nd homes money
- LSP will adopt parish plans as local community plans
- Neighbourhood networks/forums – looking at these
- Community engagement strategy – consistency. Link to the LDF
- Possibly devolve funding to parishes
- Wolds Action Group – cross boundary with ERYC
- Farmers – hard to reach group
- Polish liaison officer
- Mobile youth club - the Ryepod – can be used for engagement purposes.

Hambleton

- 5 area groups linked to LSP – community led partnerships. Market towns and rural areas. Chaired independently in most cases. Bi-monthly meetings in most cases. Newsletters/leaflets.
- Community link officer – supports area groups
- Some have sub-groups for particular issues
- Parish planning – feed into area groups
- 5 area committees – being established; respond to council issues brought up at area groups. Not grant allocation.
- Action learning set – want common framework
- Audit of community engagement

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- Place survey – may supplement on annual basis
- May set up citizens' panel.

Craven

- 5 area forums. Multi agency engagement. Run by Council. No delegated authority at moment.
- Ad hoc engagement working with other agencies eg Childrens' centres
- Future – develop forums. Look at boundaries. New structure. Funding needs to be considered
- Market Town initiative areas
- Parish planning
- Brief mapping exercise
- May be need to develop protocol
- Use statistics more to inform and involve
- Stronger communities team including performance and website
- Toolkit for Members – to consider
- Community events – go out to people

Harrogate

- No area committees
- Harrogate town not parished
- Meetings with parish council groups (BC and NYCC)
- Parish plans
- Community engagement officer
- Community engagement working group
- Community engagement strategy
- Tenant involvement
- Rural investment plan incl. engagement
- 4 regeneration partnerships
- Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – large element of community engagement
- Scrutiny – councillor call for action etc
- NY compact – code of practice on consultation
- HARPIG (Harrogate Public Involvement Group) – meeting of agencies. Linked to LSP.
- Citizens' Panel
- Capital projects – eg lottery funded Library project. Requirement for engagement.
- Mapping exercise planned
- Happy to work together on training, quality assurance and sharing best practice

Richmondshire

- CIP groups – 'resting' currently as officer support has been removed.

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- Working to put new structure in place. New structure must be resourced.
- Area forums – not full engagement
- Want to work at neighbourhood level
- Pilots
- Increase parish engagement
- Action Learning Set to develop strategy – joint consultation.
- Joint LSP Citizens' Panel
- Youth Council
- 'Hard to reach' – ongoing dialogue not done as well as specific project work.
- Online survey software
- LSP is working with BME community

NYCC

- Specific consultation based on service directorates on basis of area. This is different for each service although there are some overlaps.
- Communities of interest
- Citizens' panel
- Place survey
- 7 area committees – district boundaries. Some executive functions, small budgets.
- Participatory budgeting – report to Management Board on how this might be developed
- Different staff involved across the County
- Framework – common elements across the County. In development. CAA process.
- Neighbourhood level working – needs developing. Challenge on resources. Concentrate on pilots / priority areas.
- County councillors – ensure involvement
- Rural and urban areas – may need different models

Yorkshire Dales National Park

- Surveys, eg. residents' surveys, visitor survey, settlement surveys, national opinion poll
- Forums, eg. District Area Forums (Craven) Neighbourhood Development, Forum (South Lakeland District Council)
- Publications (eg. our own "Dales" and the "Visitor")
- Community Conferences, eg. South Lakeland Community Conference
- Website consultation eg. National Park Management Plan, Planning consultations
- Sites Notices eg. (planning notices) neighbourhood notification,
- Local Advertisements (statutory notices) and using our own publications "The Dales" and the "Visitor"
- Press Releases

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- Public Meetings eg. conservation area character appraisals.
- Member Working Groups

North York Moors National Park

- 4 Parish Forums meeting quarterly
- Primary Land Users Group meets twice a year, comprising major landowners and other organisations with land interests
- Disability Advisory Group – meets quarterly, comprises representatives of different ranges of disability groups
- Residents and Visitors Surveys
- Working with 4 local communities at present on Parish Plans and Village Design Statements
- Run planning training events for Parish Councils annually
- Specific consultation based on projects eg. Heritage Connections, CANDo, River Esk Pearl Mussel project
- Attend Parish Council meetings where invited
- Consultation Strategy adopted 2006