

York and North Yorkshire Rural Partnership - Update

Local Area Agreement

The Partnership was involved in the negotiation of the 18 targets within the "Stronger" section of the LAA. The targets cover a diverse range of cross cutting issues that include the voluntary sector, housing, transport, access to services and the environment. A number of targets are still to be negotiated in the refresh process and these include reducing carbon dioxide from local authority operations and two targets about stronger communities.

Part of each meeting is also dedicated to in depth discussion about a small selection of linked targets in order to facilitate greater understanding amongst partners and allows target lead officers the opportunity to discuss any problems/barriers to achievement and develop solutions.

The partnership will continue to actively monitor progress of the targets on a quarterly basis for those targets it has responsibility for. In general, and given that this is still an early stage, progress on targets has been satisfactory. Two areas of concern are first, affordable housing and, second, climate change. The slowdown in the economy has led to a general downturn in house building and this has made the delivery of affordable houses tied to market housing much more difficult. This is an issue affecting the country as a whole and is only likely to be resolved by factors outside the control of NYSP partners. The issue with climate change is one of agreeing targets in a situation where existing systems for recording CO2 emissions are patchy at best and then agreeing specific actions that will deliver the targets.

Structures

The group is conscious of a lack of clarity and potential overlap with other rural groups in the sub-region. This partly comes about because of its dual role as a Rural Partnership and as a NYSP Thematic Group. The relationship with the bodies dealing with rural economic matters could be better defined (is the group giving the rural social view?) as could its role in relation to other rural groups such as the Rural Practitioners Group and the Rural Affairs Forum. These issues could be seen as more significant given the growth of the City Region agenda and the greater extent of rural areas in North Yorkshire as compared with the rest of the region.

Round up

Reports and presentations received at recent meetings of the Rural Partnership include :

Regional Rural Affairs Forum
Geographic Programme (Economy and Enterprise)
Presentation - Managing Landscape Change in North Yorkshire
Flood and Coastal Erosion (LAA target)
Improved Local Biodiversity (LAA target)
CO 2 Reduction (LAA target)

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