



**To:** HDSP Assembly

**From:** Ann Byrne – Harrogate Borough Council

**Subject:** **The future of the Harrogate District Strategic Partnership (HDSP)**

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011

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## 1.0 Introduction:

Following on from discussions held at a sub-regional level to rationalise the partnership landscape across North Yorkshire Local Government North Yorkshire and York (LGNYY) have agreed four principles for a new approach to partnership working;

- 1) The minimum number and simplest of partnership structures, consistent with delivering the required outcomes and statutory requirements;
- 2) A North Yorkshire and York approach to county/sub-regional partnership structures as far as possible, recognising that a degree of pragmatism will be required given the difference local authority structures in North Yorkshire and York;
- 3) Local partnerships, including shared community engagement arrangements, at the most appropriate level.
- 4) The use of task and finish groups to deal with particular issues, rather than standing thematic partnerships or sub-groups.

It has been agreed that these principles will also be used as a basis for reviewing local partnerships.

## 2.0 Sub-regional changes

### **NYSP:**

What has already been agreed is that the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (NYSP) will be dissolved and replaced by a scaled down structure managed by LGNYY. This will be led and co-ordinated by the existing Leader and a Chief Executives group who will provide leadership and co-ordination of sub-regional issues and priorities. The membership of the Chief Executives group is to be reviewed to accommodate the wider remit of the group. It is recognised that there are statutory requirements for the Children and Young People’s Trust, Health and Wellbeing Boards, Safer Communities and the Local Enterprise Partnerships at a sub-regional level. Discussions are on-going and guidance is awaited as to how these will translate at a local level, within a District.

The thematic groups of the NYSP will also cease to exist unless there is a statutory requirement or a business case to continue. Task and finish groups will be used to address specific priority pieces of work that don’t have an obvious place to be dealt with.

Transitional arrangements have already begun to be rolled out to establish the new structures.

### 3.0 The picture in the Harrogate District

As with most of the organisations within the Harrogate District, there is great pressure with regards to resources and all have to focus on trying to maintain existing services or re-modelling services that are deliverable within the budgets available.

Harrogate Borough Council has continued to provide officer support to the Harrogate District Strategic Partnership (HDSP), led on various thematic and project groups and will continue to support any rationalised structures that are agreed but needs partners to lead on collaborative priorities also.

NYCC are now unfortunately not in a position to provide the £10,000 annual contribution to local partnership working, to the Harrogate District Strategic Partnership as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. There will also be reduced officer support to the HDSP from NYCC. There will not be a 2011/12 allocation to the District of North Yorkshire Community Development Fund which was used to deliver projects that met the local priorities held within the Harrogate District Sustainable Community Strategy.

It is therefore quite timely to review the partnership landscape within the Harrogate District

### 4.0 The future of partnership working within the Harrogate District

A small working group of Chief Executives across all Districts have been looking at reviewing local partnership arrangements, including shared community engagement arrangements with a view to rationalising and making local arrangements more effective.

There is no statutory requirement to have a Local Strategic Partnership at a District level. The main fundamental requirement on a District is to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy, this can be done without a Local Strategic Partnership but some kind of forum would be needed to ensure a collaborative approach and to monitor progress against the Strategy and to deal with any District issues that cannot be addressed within existing established partnerships and groups. It is foreseen that the Sustainable Community Strategy process would be slimmed down in light of rationalising the partnership bureaucracy and structures and the reduction in resources available to the partnerships. A separate report will detail how this will be carried out within the Harrogate District.

With the changes detailed above it is therefore proposed that the HDSP rationalises its governance.

### 5.0 The proposed changes for Harrogate District

Currently the Harrogate District Strategic Partnership consists of:

**Assembly Board** that meets twice a year (Chair: Mike Gardner, Leader of HBC)

**Implementation Board** that meets quarterly (Chair: Rachel Bowles, HBC)

Thematic groups reporting in:

**Stronger Communities** (Chair: Rachel Bowles, HBC)

**Safer Communities** (Chair: Cllr Les Ellington, HBC)

**Sustainable Communities** (Chair: Nigel Avison, HBC)

**Environment** (Action for the Environment) (Chair: TBC)

**Children & Young People** (Area Liaison Group) (Chair: Stuart Gregory, NYCC, accountable to the NY Children & Young People's Trust))

It is proposed that to reduce bureaucracy and time spent in meetings (several partners attend multiple groups as representatives of their organisation, the same people but different agendas) that the current cease to exist and in its place a scaled down structure of:

- **Harrogate District Partnership:** meets 3 times a year (September/October, March, June/July half days, that will be a networking opportunity to focus on the implications of new policy including Localism and the Big Society agendas, service provider changes, funding, community engagement and Harrogate District issues that are cross cutting which no other existing partnership or group operating within the District can address. The forum will also be crucial to the delivery of the Harrogate District Sustainable Community Strategy. The membership will include existing members and key organisational and community leaders from across the District.

One proposal is that the Partnership meetings could be based on a specific theme and the District leads working within that priority theme set the agenda and hosts the event. It is anticipated that based on previous costs each forum would cost around £1200 based on 30 people in attendance. There is some funding left out of the HDSP admin monies to fund the forums for 2011/12. In the following years once the funding runs out partners will be asked to either sponsor a forum event or find a venue suitable in kind.

- **Supporting structures:**

**‘My Neighbourhood’;** The ‘My Neighbourhood’ community engagement framework at a neighbourhood level will be the main collaborative partnership working supporting structure to the forum which will continue to roll out its projects in three priority areas per year. The framework targets resources to areas through using evidence bases and need and contributes to the Localism and Big Society agendas.

**Prevent;** The preventing violent extremism group will continue to meet and monitor progress against the District wide action plan. The group continues to wait for guidance as to how the Government wish for this area of work to be delivered at a local level.

**Task and Finish Groups;** As per the sub-regional structure proposals, it is suggested that the Local Strategic Partnership is seen as the last resort for an issue to be addressed. An issue will be referred to the appropriate lead organisation or existing forum group or partnership. If there is not a suitable group a task and finish group will be established to deal with the issue.

A piece of work that needs to be carried out so that issues can be sign posted to the relevant forum/partnership/organisation is to map all the groups and their leads that exist within the District, this will then be reviewed annually and published as part of the sustainable community strategy.

The proposed structures can be seen in diagram form in **Appendix 1**.

The new structure and governance will be adopted from July 2011. Terms of reference will be drafted for the new forum and will be agreed at the last HDSP Implementation Board meeting due to be held mid June 2011.

## 6.0 Conclusions

In conclusion, partnership working has always been willing and strong within the Harrogate District. We hope that it will continue however with the increased financial pressures upon our organisations and meeting new legislative requirements the partnership landscape needs to change in order to meet these demands.

**It is therefore recommended:** that the HDSP Assembly approves the new partnership working proposals as detailed in this report.

Proposed partnerships structures for 2011-12

