



Report of the Director of City Development

Development Plan Panel

Date: 5 May 2009

Subject: Regional Update

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

Executive Summary

1. Following the preparation and implementation of the Sub National Review, organisational and governance structures at a Regional level have now changed. These changes have been brought into effect from 1 April 2009 and have implications for the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) process in Yorkshire & the Humber and as a consequence, upon the preparation of Local Development Framework (LDF) documents at a local level. The purpose of this report is to provide Development Plan Panel members an overview of the changes and to note the implications for the RSS and LDF process.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Development Plan Panel members on the new arrangements for Spatial Planning within Yorkshire & the Humber, following the implementation of the conclusions of the Sub National Review.

2.0 Background information

The Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration

- 2.1 The Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration - SNR - was first announced by Government in the 2006 Budget. Its aim was to take stock of the various measures that Government had put in place since 1997 to improve economic development across the regions and tackle pockets of deprivation.

- 2.2 The SNR was seen as an integral part of the Government's announcements around promoting greater devolution and ensuring regions and local areas play a greater role in tackling the challenges they face. It also supported the focus on strong cities and city-regions as key drivers for economic and social prosperity. Nevertheless, there were some concerns amongst councils that the focus on regional governance could actually serve to undermine the roles and responsibilities of local authorities as the democratic leaders of their communities.

- 2.3 The outcome of the SNR was published in July 2007, recommending that Local Authorities be given new powers and incentives to drive local prosperity, economic growth and regeneration, tackle social deprivation and address inequality. It called for regional governance to be simplified, and recommended that existing strategies at the regional level – such as Yorkshire Forward's Regional Economic Strategy and the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly's Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Framework - be integrated and re-assessed.

Implementing the SNR

- 2.4 Following publication of the SNR, the Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) and Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) carried out a consultation exercise on how to take the recommendations forward. In November last year CLG and BERR published their joint response, which committed Government to:

- creating a new duty on local authorities to carry out economic assessments of their areas, in line with Government guidance;
- creating new statutory (but voluntary) sub-regional authorities for economic development purposes and also allowing for the creation of “multi-area agreements” for authorities to work together towards shared economic objectives;
- giving the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) – e.g. Yorkshire Forward – joint responsibility, with a Board of Local Authority Leaders, for the production, implementation and monitoring of a new single Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS); and
- bring to an end the Regional Assemblies, including the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly, in their current form and instead provide Local Authority Leaders and the RDAs collaborative responsibility for regional spatial planning matters.

What this means for Yorkshire & the Humber

- 2.5 In anticipation of the new regional arrangements and the need for local government and the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to work jointly on the new single Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS), LGYH and Yorkshire Forward submitted a

combined response to government consultation, explaining how it was proposed to work together to make the Government's proposals work for Yorkshire and the Humber.

- 2.6 The LGYH and Yorkshire Forward model (see Appendix 1) breaks the region down into four City-regions or "Functional Sub Regions" (FSRs), namely: the Leeds City Region; Sheffield City Region; Hull and the Humber Ports; and York and North Yorkshire. Each FSR will develop their own, sub-regional arrangements to promote greater economic prosperity by enhancing links between local authorities in these areas.
- 2.7 The Yorkshire & Humber model has been identified as good practice. Regional governance structures will be responsible by the end of this year for taking forward the IRS for Yorkshire and Humber:
- A LGYH "Leaders' Board", consisting of 8 council Leaders (2 from each FSR), working alongside Yorkshire Forward's Board, as a "Joint Regional Board" (JRB) to lead on the IRS and regional spatial planning decisions.
 - Four Thematic Boards, to provide expert strategic advice to the JRB on the issues of Planning, Regeneration and Housing, Work and Skills, and Transport. Two of these Boards are to be chaired by LGYH representatives and two by Yorkshire Forward.
 - A separate Independent Board to provide challenge on the subject of sustainability and ensure that this is reflected across all Thematic Boards.
 - LGYH-led networks of council Leaders and Chief Executives to ensure that wider health, community safety and cultural issues can be built into the single IRS.
- 2.8 In the meantime, before the new legislation is in place, Yorkshire Forward and LGYH have agreed interim arrangements to make sure that regional planning decisions can continue to be made following the decision to dissolve the Yorkshire & Humber Assembly on 1 April 2009.
- 2.9 The Yorkshire & Humber model ensures that the four Functional Sub-Regions, all 22 local authorities, police authorities, fire and rescue authorities, National Parks – and, through them, the numerous voluntary, neighbourhood and community partners – can work together to ensure that the new single IRS and subsequent delivery plans are built, genuinely, from local-level and FSR priorities.
- 2.10 From 1st April the functions of the Assembly will be split between Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) and Yorkshire Forward, who will be jointly responsible for regional arrangements from this date. I have attached a briefing note giving you details of the Sub National Review, along with information on the impact on Yorkshire and Humber of the new regional arrangements. Also attached is a copy of the press release submitted by LGYH and Yorkshire Forward this week giving you more information.
- 2.11 From 1st April the functions of the Assembly will be split between LGYH and Yorkshire Forward, with the two organisations supporting a new Joint Regional Board – made up of eight members of the Yorkshire Forward Board and eight Council Leaders - responsible for developing an Integrated Regional Strategy that delivers sustainable economic growth in Yorkshire and the Humber.
- 2.12 LGYH will be leading on the 'housing and regeneration' and 'spatial planning' functions within a team developing the Integrated Regional Strategy. The 'transport'

and 'work and skills' functions will be transferred to Yorkshire Forward with the Assembly employees currently working on these agendas transferring to them after the 1st April. From this date LGYH will lead on:

- The People, Places and Partnerships agenda
- Workforce and Organisational Development
- The Improvement and Efficiency agenda (RIEP)
- Housing and Regeneration
- Spatial Planning (including : The need to request the opinion of the Regional Planning Body as to the general conformity of Development Plan Documents with the Regional Spatial Strategy, when they are published prior to submission to the Secretary of State (Regulation 29, 2008). There is still a need also, to consult the Regional Planning Body on regionally significant applications that are likely to affect the implementation of the Regional Spatial Strategy (as set out in the criteria for identifying such applications issued in December 2007 by the Assembly).

3.0 Main issues

Regional Spatial Strategy Update

- 3.1 In January 2009, Development Plan Panel considered a proposed response to the Regional Spatial Strategy Update. Members will recall, that following the Adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy (The Yorkshire & Humber Plan) in May 2008, the Yorkshire & Humber Assembly undertook a period of informal consultation on a 2009 Update. The focus of the consultation material was upon how to 'accommodate the Region's need for new homes over the next two decades'. Within this context, the "Spatial Options" consultation material sets out a number of key questions regarding the scale and distribution of housing growth and how to best meet the accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- 3.2 The period of informal consultation on this material closed on 30 January 2009 and via Development Plan Panel and Executive Board, the City Council submitted a formal response. Following receipt of representations, the Regional Assembly (now Local Government for Yorkshire & the Humber) have been undertaking the following activities:
- Review the representations received
 - Continuing to develop the evidence base
 - Hosting a "Housing Enquiry" to review the position on housing (Held on 13 April and Chaired by Professor Ian Cole, Sheffield University)
 - Reviewing options for the next stages of the RSS Update process.
- 3.3 In reviewing options for the next stages of the RSS process, the Regional Planning Board (18 March) has considered three possible alternatives. These were: to continue with the original RSS Update timetable, to continue the process but to be more targeted at addressing particular technical issues (including managing flood risk in East Yorkshire) or to merge the RSS Update process in to the early stages of the preparation of the new Integrated Regional Strategy (the regional strategic document to eventually replace the Regional Economic Strategy & Regional Spatial Strategy). The Regional Planning Board was subsequently minded to recommend that the third option should be adopted and for this to be considered by the Joint Regional Board (see Appendix 1) at its meeting in May/June.

3.4 Whilst the regional position is evolving, it should be emphasised that the Leeds LDF documents, 'will need to be in general conformity', with the RSS adopted in May 2008 and that the preparation of the new Integrated Regional Strategy (once adopted), will have an influence upon longer term spatial planning and economic development within the city. With regard to the adopted RSS, there are a number of positive areas which reflect and support local Leeds objectives and priorities but the scale of the housing challenge remains a fundamental challenge to be addressed going forward.

4.0 Implications for council policy and governance

4.1 None at this stage

5.0 Legal and resource implications

5.1 The preparation of Leeds Local Development Framework documents, need to be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (Yorkshire & Humber Plan) and the future Integrated Regional Strategy.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 This report has set out the 'headline' changes, at a regional level, arising from the preparation and implementation of the Sub National Review. These have implications for the LDF process in Leeds now and in the future in terms of both technical issues and governance arrangements.

7.0 Recommendations

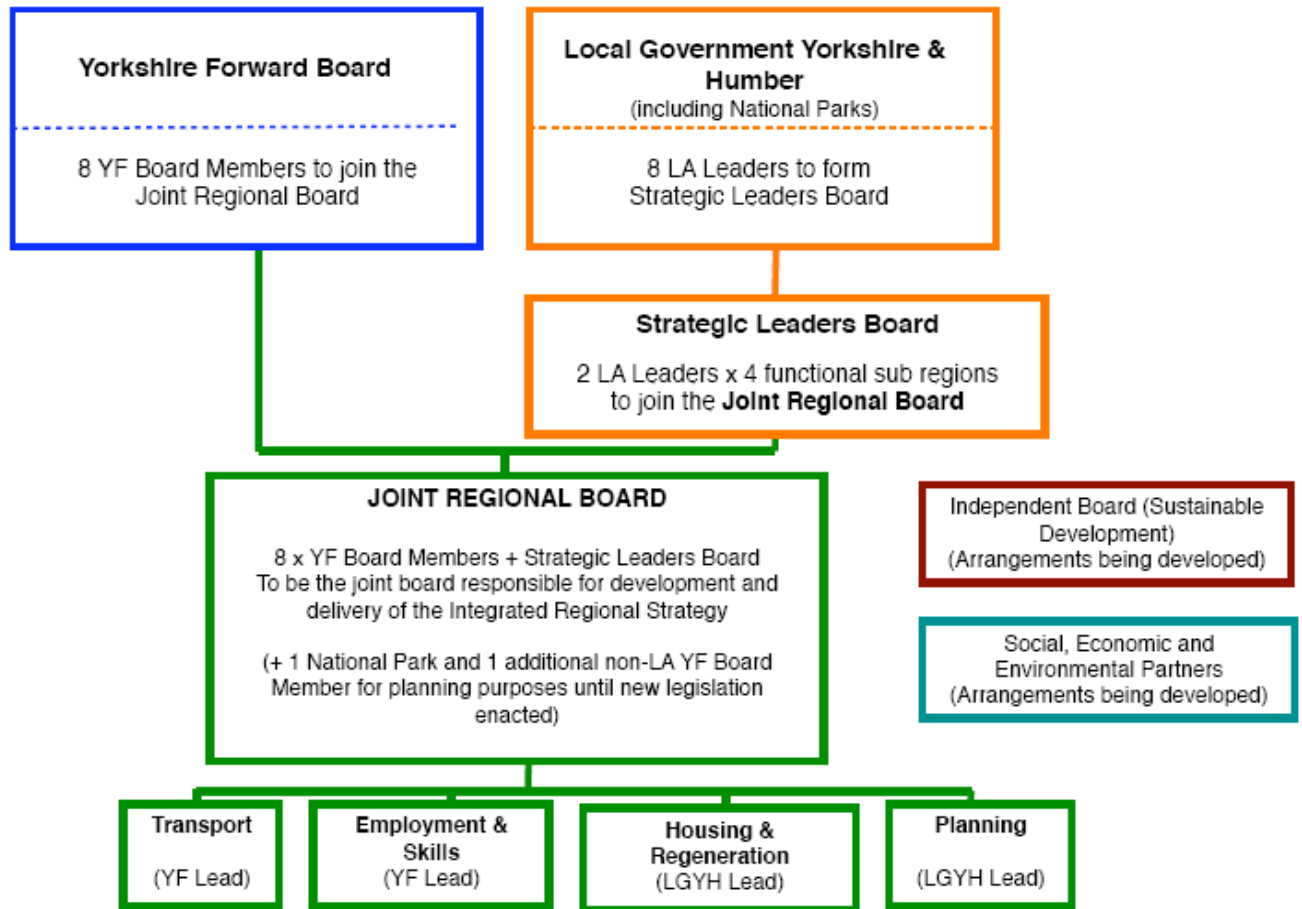
7.1 Development Plan Panel is recommended to note the contents of this report.

Background Papers

Regional Spatial Strategy

Appendix 1: Regional Governance Arrangements

Regional Governance Arrangements from 1 April 2009



Summary of Regional Governance Structure Proposals

