

NORTH AND WEST YORKSHIRE BUSINESS RATES POOL JOINT COMMITTEE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK TO BE AGREED

This Accountability Framework has been developed by the North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool (BRP). The BRP is made up of 14 authorities:

- City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
- The Metropolitan Borough Council of Calderdale
- Craven District Council
- Hambleton District Council
- Harrogate Borough Council
- Kirklees Council
- Leeds City Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Richmondshire District Council
- Ryedale District Council
- Scarborough Borough Council
- Selby District Council
- The Council of the City of Wakefield
- City of York Council.

The BRP is a voluntary arrangement between the member authorities made possible by the Business Rates Retention scheme which allows local authorities to retain locally 75% above the baseline of its business rates growth income.

This Accountability Framework has been produced in order to provide clarity on the relationship between the North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool and those organisations to which it provides funding. Specifically, the requirements that will be placed on those organisations and the expectations of the North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool from the organisations.

In 2019/20 the BRP will make funding available to support projects which meet the five strategic aims of the Pool:

The aims of the BRP are as follows:

- Reducing Digital Isolation
- Inclusive Growth
- Culture, Sport and Major Events
- Business Support, Trade and Investment
- Enabling Housing Growth

Only local authorities of the North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool can apply to the BRP. Should an applicant who is not a local authority wish to apply for funding they must do so with a local authority Leaders support as the lead sponsor. Henceforth the organisation(s) making the application for funding shall be known as the “Organisation(s)”, regardless of whether a local authority or not.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Organisation applying for funding

This Accountability Framework has been developed to establish a set of protocols and demonstrate the expectations of the BRP in relation to those to whom it is providing funding. Organisations in receipt of funding from the BRP must assume that they will be expected to abide by the following rules:

Relevance: Funding provided must be spend on achieving the organisations strategic aims.

Accountability: Organisations must be able to explain to the BRP how the funding provided meets the strategic aims of the Pool. This may include senior management of the Organisation attending a meeting of the Pool or recognised sub-group, as agreed by the Joint Committee.

Transparency: The funding provided by the BRP is, in essence, public funds, as such the Joint Committee expect that funds should be spent in accordance with Local Authority practices.

Decision Making and Flexibility: We recognise that organisations may need to respond to their changing environment, and that the context in which funding is provided can change. Future decisions taken will meet the strategic aims of the North and West Yorkshire BRP, where necessary, with the active involvement of the Joint Committee.

Responsibility: Accountability is the obligation to take responsibility. Organisations applying for funding should understand relevant policies, best practices, laws and regulations in Local Government, as well as the BRP's strategic aims, and ensure that their processes are compliant.

Applications for funding

Applications for funding should made using the WYCA coordinated process.

Applications will include:

- Funding request summary
- Project details, including key activities to be funded
- Project outputs and outcomes
- Project funding details
- Project timetable

Successful application for funding

Where organisations make a successful application for funding, the details in the application, including performance measures, will be encompassed in a grant agreement, prepared by the lead authority's Legal Services and signed by the lead authority's Chief Financial Officer on behalf of the North and West Yorkshire BRP.

Performance will be measured against the grant agreement, reverting back to the application form if required.

During the period of funding, or for an agreed period following the end of the project, the Organisation may be called upon to report back to the North and West Yorkshire BRP. The North and West Yorkshire BRP also require open governance and decision making processes are in place. This may include providing minuted meetings around project decision making or the attendance of the Organisation's senior management at a Pool meeting.