



LGYH BUSINESS PLAN: 2011/12

1. Introduction: The Role of LGYH

- 1.1 The fundamental purpose of LGYH is to provide a positive forum for local authorities – councils, police, fire and national park authorities - across Yorkshire & Humber to discuss issues of common interest, agree shared priorities and develop lasting, trusting relationships that allow local government to work across Party Political diversity and change in the interest of better outcomes for local communities and services.
- 1.2 LGYH is a “bottom-up” organisation, whose priorities are determined directly by its Membership. It provides local government in Yorkshire and Humber with a collective voice and a potential vehicle for collaborative activity, where it adds value to what local authorities can achieve at the local and/or sub-regional level.
- 1.3 In particular, LGYH provides authorities in Yorkshire and Humber with an important means of influencing and helping deliver the agenda being set for the wider local government sector by the Local Government (LG) Group at national level.
- 1.4 To develop and sustain this trust and positive collaboration across local government in Yorkshire & Humber, LGYH’s partnership arrangements focus on the following:
 - Local authority Leaders and lead Members co-operating and discussing priority areas for collaboration and influence, on the basis of shared geography, needs and challenges;
 - Chief Executives co-operating and ensuring LGYH is delivering in priority areas of collaboration and influence set by Leaders; and
 - Managing successful Member and/or Officer networks in clearly defined areas, to ensure strategic leadership and delivery of particular priorities.
- 1.5 LGYH seeks to ensure effective connection of all local government and sub-regional partnerships in Yorkshire and Humber into national networks, particularly those of the Local Government Group, to maximise local voice and influence. Where appropriate, this may mean supporting the development of sub-regional partnerships and communication across sub-regions. It also means building effective partnerships with other national sectoral bodies, such as SIGOMA, SOLACE, ‘Think Tanks’, as well as other ‘sub national’ local government partnerships.
- 1.6 LGYH is also committed to transforming itself during 2011/12 to become a more focused, more cost effective organisation, in line with its Memberships needs.

2. Priorities for collaborative activity through LGYH in 2011/12

- 2.1 There are four distinct - but inter-related - priorities for LGYH in 2011/12, as identified by its Membership:
 - i. Promoting the **democratic role of local government** - in terms of the greater devolution of powers and decision-making, as well as the strategic planning and delivery of public services – to improve accountability and outcomes for communities.
 - ii. Supporting the creation of new arrangements for ongoing **improvement and sector-led challenge** in local government that deliver what is needed across Yorkshire and Humber, working in partnership with the Local Government Group at the national level.
 - iii. Working to ensure that **local government has the resources and tools it needs to deliver** for local communities – e.g. by shaping the reform of Local Government Finance, making it more stable and responsive to local needs.
 - iv. Supporting the **workforce development needs** of local government across Yorkshire and Humber, including the provision of specialist HR advice, managing the Regional Employers’ Committee and influencing national policy in areas of pensions, terms & conditions etc.
- 2.2 Across these four priority areas, the following will be important crosscutting considerations:
 - **Enhancing links with the LG Group** at national level, to inform and shape their priorities to that they can respond to the needs across Y&H.

- Creating opportunities for **transformational leadership support and Member development**
- Demonstrating “**localism in action**” across Y&H and helping support a more positive public attitude towards the accountable, democratic role of local government
- Providing a ‘**hub**’ for **information and knowledge exchange**
- Helping maintain successful dialogue between local government in Yorkshire & Humber and **agencies that continue to operate on a ‘regional’ basis**
- Influencing **European and International policy**, supporting councils on implementation of directives, securing funding and creating effective partnerships to support councils in delivery for their local communities

2.3 LGYH provides a means to respond flexibly to *any* issue where local government in Yorkshire & Humber needs to take action collectively. The following service delivery and/or transformation agendas have been identified, based on Membership discussion and feedback, as particular themes, over the next 12 months, where LGYH’s priorities and cross-cutting considerations could be most effectively targeted:

- Supporting local authorities at local level respond to **the transformation of public health services and reform of the NHS**, promoting the democratic role of local government in the health and wellbeing agendas.
- Providing a cross-Party, unified voice to influence the **Localism & Decentralisation** agenda - including the Localism Bill and other relevant legislation - emphasising in particular that risks of imposing unreasonable controls over local government.
- Seeking to influence the **Local Government Resource Review and wider finance reform** by articulating what local government in Y&H needs from such reform, to ensure the delivery of services to local communities.
- Ensuring that the new system of **sector-led improvement and challenge**, being led by the LG Group at national level, reflects the genuine needs of local government in Y&H.
- Supporting authorities and sub-regional partnerships to take full advantage of more local strategic leadership in the areas of **Climate Change and ‘Low Carbon’** developments.
- Providing a consolidated local government voice on the democratic implications of planned **Police and Fire & Rescue Service** reforms, particularly plans for Directly Elected Police Commissioners.
- Ongoing provision of the **Regional Employers’** function, to ensure the development and adaptation of the local government workforce in response to the particular challenges faced across the public sector.

3. Organisational Priorities for LGYH “Transition”

3.1 In addition to delivering against the “operational” priorities, as noted in Section 3 above, 2011/12 represents a year of organisational transition for LGYH, in terms of becoming smaller, and more cost effective.

3.2 Key activities and milestones for the year ahead are as follows:

- Establishing the ‘new’ LGYH organisation, for implementation in 2012/13; and draft business model/plan for the new organisation for detailed discussion from October 2011.
- Managing the continued transition to the new organisation – including accommodation savings, finalising council hosting arrangements, managing out current levels of pension liabilities, finalising any revised subscription model, and associated staff changes and downsizing - by January 2012.
- Reviewing network support and consolidation of priority networks, in line with priorities, by Sept 2011 (and ongoing, based on a “task & finish” approach).
- Reviewing the full potential of LGYH becoming a ‘trading’ organisation in areas that could add further value or allow for the further membership savings – by Sept/Oct 2011.
- Developing a proactive intelligence and knowledge exchange ‘hub’, using new/social media wherever appropriate to increase the speed and immediacy of communications.
- Managing the current RIEP programme to conclusion, May-Dec 2011.
- Facilitate the RIEP programme, financial closedown and nature of its ongoing ‘legacy’ for future improvement and efficiency, by Dec 2011.
- Agree new sector-led improvement and challenge arrangements and implement from Autumn 2011.
- Continuing to deliver events that promote strategic priorities, including the sponsored dinner at LG Group Conference, LGYH Awards, Open Days in Brussels, Northern HR Briefing, and LGYH Annual General Meeting.

4. Wider/Programme Specific Activities

4.1 External funding, additional to Member subscription revenue, has already been secured for the following specific programmes to be managed by LGYH during 2011/12 (though many of which will conclude during the year), in support of its wider operational and organisational objectives:

- Climate Change – Management of Climate Change Partnership; managing RIEP climate change programme; delivery of Climate Change Skills Fund, to March 2012 (Defra funded); ‘EU 2020: Going Local’ partnership project (EU INTERREG funded)
- Community Cohesion – Assistance in the management of the West Yorkshire Community Cohesion programme (RIEP funded).
- Management of RIEP Economic Growth theme - providing capacity building funds to sub-regional partnerships, to July (RIEP funded)
- Worklessness & Skills – Management of RIEP Worklessness Network and associated innovation projects to July (RIEP funded); and support for local government representation on Y&H Work & Skills Partnership (ESF-funding to March 2012)
- RIEP-funded ‘Member Development’ and ‘Organisation Design’ projects – able to continue until funding ceases at the end of the year.

5. LGYH Activities to cease

5.1 In order to deliver against the priorities set out above, in the context of achieving a smaller, more cost effective organisation, in addition to those workstreams concluding in-year noted in Section 4, the following activities previously led or supported by LGYH, have already or will shortly cease:

- Regional Strategic Planning Function, management of Regional Planning Board – now ceased (previously DCLG funded)
- Regional Strategic Housing Policy & Investment, management of Regional Regeneration & Housing Board – now ceased (previously DCLG funded)
- Support for strategic Regional Transport Advice and Transport Advisory Board – now ceased (previously DCLG funded)
- Economic growth/regeneration and liaison with Yorkshire Forward – all activity to now be led by the emerging Local Enterprise Partnerships

5.2 In addition, an ongoing review of all LGYH Elected Member/Officer networks in the context of core priorities and the need to ensure clear “task and finish” approaches to our work, will lead to a number of such Networks ceasing or transferring to alternative arrangements during the year ahead.