

Rural Matters

Modernising Rural Delivery in Yorkshire and The Humber

October 05



Welcome to the sixth issue of Rural Matters, the monthly Modernising Rural Delivery update for the Yorkshire and The Humber (Y&H) region. In response to the Government's Rural Strategy 2004, partners in the region are working together to develop a Rural Framework. The Framework will seek to prioritise and co-ordinate activity, funding and delivery of services for rural areas of the region. The Framework will also give effect to the principles of 'modernising rural delivery' - namely more simplified and efficient delivery of services with strengthened customer engagement in decision-making.

NEWS

Mapping the Delivery of Rural Priorities – UPDATE

In September, the Task and Finish Groups set up to map the delivery of the ten regional rural priorities met to share the work they had done to date.

One aspect of the mapping work has been to identify key areas that need to be addressed within the Framework if it is to effectively align with the principles of Modernising Rural Delivery. Some of the common issues identified so far include:

1. There is a need for greater understanding and a common expression of the form, function and performance of the region's rural areas. There is evidence of significant disparity about what rural communities, businesses and places mean to different agencies and sectors.
2. There is evidence of material overlap and duplication from programmes designed at local and 'area' level to address regional and national priorities with other local programmes.
3. Accessibility from a customer perspective is a core challenge; whether it be access to an integrated support function or personnel; access to a simple and holistic funding package; access to the process of, or ability to influence, local, sub-regional and regional decision making, priority setting and action planning.
4. The lack of continuity (due to short term funding) and cohesive integration with regional and sub-regional priorities of many 'local' action groups leading to inefficiency and duplication / overlap of resource and administration.

In order to achieve a Regional Rural Framework and delivery system that meets its objectives, it seems clear that there needs to be a more effective way of

aggregating and sharing priorities, actions and outcomes / outputs at regional, sub-regional and local level. Whilst the Task and Finish Groups are continuing to develop their mapping work, the Y&H Rural Framework Steering Group is now considering the initial findings and looking at alignment of regional strategy and resources.

Rural Social and Community Programme - UPDATE

The report produced from the regional consultation seminars for Defra's Rural Social and Community Programme which took place in July is now available on the GOYH website (link below). The results from the seminars and workshops have been fed to Defra as part of the consultation which ended 13th October. Key partners are undertaking informal discussions on preparing business plans, but further developments in the region await the outcomes of the official consultation.

<http://www.goyh.gov.uk/goyh/menvrur/rrp/rscp/?a=42496>

Y&H Rural Framework Submission to Defra

The 4th November is the deadline for the next submission of the Y&H Rural Framework to Defra. As with previous reports, this draft will be published on the Framework website once feedback has been received.

Defra - Modernising Rural Delivery

The October issue of Defra's Modernising Rural Delivery national newsletter is available at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/ruraldelivery/default.htm>. This issue contains information on the Rural Funding Review, Rural Pathfinders and the Commission for Rural Communities' inquiry on rural housing issues.



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Progress – Y&H Rural Framework

The Governance of Rural Affairs in Yorkshire and The Humber

The Haskins report and Rural Strategy 2004 at a national level, and the draft Rural Framework for Yorkshire and The Humber at a regional level, all come to the same conclusions about the current arrangements for the delivery of rural policy.

There is a highly confused delivery landscape with a plethora of similarly named organisations and committees active in the countryside. Nobody is certain how, or indeed if, the different bodies work together or to whom they are accountable. Customers and stakeholders struggle to understand the language and to weave a course through the bureaucracy. Local and regional priorities are poorly understood, and not addressed to the satisfaction of people in the countryside.

The Y&H Framework Steering Group is currently looking at a variety of governance structures, considering the following criteria:-

- ☒ The task (i.e. modernising rural delivery) should dictate the structure rather than the other way round: form should follow function
- ☒ The current number and complexity of committees should be reduced
- ☒ New committees should have meaningful names with clarity of purpose, role and mutually beneficial interlinkages
- ☒ Customers and stakeholders should feel that they have contributed to the creation of the structure, and that they will be truly able to influence the delivery of rural services.

Work is progressing quickly to ensure a new regional rural governance structure is fully operational by April 2006 in order to drive forward the implementation of the Y&H Rural Framework and deliver a 'modernised' rural delivery landscape in the region over the coming years. Watch this space for information on how to contribute!

Humber Sub-Region Rural Delivery Pathfinder Update

A key element of the Rural Strategy 2004 was the announcement that Defra would be establishing eight regional local delivery 'Pathfinders' to explore options for ways in which organisations can work better together and to see how rural development activities can be delivered more effectively.

The Humber Rural Delivery Pathfinder covers the unitary council areas of the East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. The objective of the Pathfinder is to test out new ways of improving the well-being of rural communities, businesses and individuals in the Humber Sub-Region by:

- Improved Partnership working
- Streamlined service delivery
- Clearer understanding of funding flows
- Improved alignment of rural strategies and delivery processes
- Increased economic activity
- Improved experience of delivery by rural customers and end users.

Extensive consultation has already taken place across the Humber sub-region including two large rural conferences where attendees were asked what the gaps in service delivery are, what blockages exist and what good practice currently exists.



■ Humber Rural Delivery Pathfinder Area

The Humber Sub-Region Rural Delivery Pathfinder Business Plan has been developed from consultation responses and can be accessed via the GOYH website at:

<http://www.gos.gov.uk/goyh/menrvur/rrp/275762/275769/>