

**MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING:
7 FEBRUARY 2008**

ACTION

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Deputy Chair welcomed members to the meeting and the apologies were **noted**.

A full list of attendees and apologies is attached at **Annex A**.

2. The Rt Hon Rosie Winterton MP

The Deputy Chair welcomed Rosie Winterton MP, the new Regional Minister for Yorkshire and the Humber, to the meeting.

The Minister then addressed the Board and took questions from members. The key points from this address are attached at **Annex B**.

3. Business Plan and Budget 2008/09 – 2010/11

The draft Assembly Business Plan and Budget was presented to members.

It was explained that the plan sets out, in detail, the work programme for 2008/09 and indicates in more general terms the direction of work for 2009/10 and 2010/11. It was stressed that the associated budget focuses only on 2008/09.

In the discussion that followed, a number of key points were raised:

- Although the Business Plan is a three year document, it should not be set in stone – we need to ensure it is flexible enough to take into account the new arrangements.
- Paragraph 7, bullet six; *'To strengthen day-to-day working relationships between the Assembly and Yorkshire Forward in advance of the move to an integrated body to ease the transition to new arrangements, particularly in relation to staffing issues'* – this needs to refer to working relationships with others in

addition to Yorkshire forward (e.g. City Regions, stakeholders etc).

It was noted that, since the circulation of the draft Business Plan, the Business Planning Guidance had been published by Government. Members were advised that the next steps in the business planning process would now be:

- Update the Business Plan to take into account the guidance. This would include adding in:
 - Risk assessment and mitigation.
 - Quarterly, rather than half yearly targets (although the ERN was likely to object to this and further discussions would take place).
 - Maximise CLG spend on core activities (e.g. Housing, Planning, Scrutiny), with local authority funding showing added value elsewhere – particularly Sustainable Development.
- Submit draft Business Plan and Budget to Government Office by 12 February 2008.
- Amend Business Plan and Budget to take into account any informal feedback from Government Office.
- Final version to be signed off by Chair and Deputy Chair prior to submission to CLG by 29 February 2008.
- Letter of approval from CLG expected on 28 March 2008.

Members **noted** the revised next steps, and **agreed** the draft Business Plan and Budget, subject to formal endorsement by the full Assembly.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 13 March 2008

Nicola Baylis, Business Services Officer
11 February 2008

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING: 7 FEBRUARY 2008

Attendees

Cllr Kris Hopkins	Chair of Regional Housing Board
Cllr Steve Galloway	Chair of Regional Planning Board
Paul Jagger	Deputy Chair
Cllr Arthur Barker	North Yorkshire Local Authority Partnership and Chair LGYH
Paul Rogerson	Regional Chief Executives Group (Observer)
Cllr John Weighell	Rural Local Authorities
Gary Topp	SEE Partners
Michael Noble	SEE Partners
Naheed Arshad Mather	SEE Partners
Patricia Farrell	SEE Partners
Cllr Roger Stone	South Yorkshire Local Authority Partnership
Cllr Robert Light	West Yorkshire Local Authority Partnership

Visitors

Rosie Winterton MP	Regional Minister for Yorkshire and the Humber
Roz Hook	Minister's Private Secretary

Observers

Felicity Everiss	Government Office (Observer)
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Staff

Chris Martin
Iain Lovell
Mark Shaw
Nicola Baylis
Rob Warm
Sue Jeffrey

Apologies

Cllr Peter Box	Chair
Cllr Mark Kirk	Chair of Regional Transport Board
Cllr Carl Minns	Hull & Humber Ports City Region Partnership
Cllr Stephen Parnaby	Humber Local Authority Partnership

Cllr Andrew Carter
Penny Hemming
Cllr Jan Wilson
Tom Riordan

Leeds City Region Partnership
SEE Partners
Sheffield City Region Partnership
Yorkshire Forward

KEY POINTS FROM REGIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING WITH ROSIE WINTERTON MP: 7 FEBRUARY 2008

The Rt Hon Rosie Winterton MP, Regional Minister for Yorkshire and the Humber, met with the Regional Executive Board on Thursday 7 February 2008. The key points from the Minister's introductory remarks are as follows:

- The Minister thanked the Board for inviting her to attend the meeting and emphasised that she was looking forward to working with members in the future.
- She stated that was a crucial time for regions - with SNR, representation and the proposed Select Committees all having an impact.
- The region needs to ensure it tackles some of the issues raised at the Regional Forum event on 4 February 2008, about how the voluntary and community sector are engaged.
- Need to ensure the good work being undertaken in the region continues under the new arrangements.
- Regeneration and economic growth in the region are progressing well, although there is still a long way to go.
- She concluded by asking members to let her know if there is anything she can do to help – and also let her know if there is anything she is doing that is not helping!

Members were then given the opportunity to pose questions/comments to the Minister. The key points raised are detailed below:

- Q Help to avoid the misunderstanding between national and local government would be appreciated (e.g. How the Eco-Town proposals were dealt with).
- Q The decision to increase housing numbers in the RSS seems to have been made without consideration being given to the impact this will have on transport, jobs, schools, health etc.
- Q Need to ensure the region has flexibility around the new housing numbers as each local authority has different pressures regarding land etc. For example, it may be helpful to allocate housing numbers to the region as a whole, and allow local authorities to negotiate between them their individual allocations.
- A The Minister confirmed that CLG and DfT were currently looking at the responses to the Proposed Changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy. She stated that she was aware that it was difficult for the region to not to want to put infrastructure proposals in the RSS that were not covered by the Regional funding Allocation but stressed that it was important to include only what would actually be paid for – not a 'wish list' for the region. She acknowledged

that, politically, this could be a difficult issue, but stressed that the region needed to understand that it should be focussing on achievable goals.

- Q The Assembly has achieved a great deal through negotiation and collaboration, despite political differences, and understands the value of SEE Partner engagement at regional level.
- Q The Regional Executive Board has evolved into an effective decision making group. The Assembly and its Boards work together well, discuss the issues and make informed decisions. However, it seems that somehow the Assembly has not achieved the outcomes that Government expected. It is important the Government clarifies exactly what it expects from the region so that the new arrangements can be shaped around these expectations to create something effective and more purposeful.
- A The Minister declared an interest in this issue, as she had worked with John Prescott, the former Deputy Prime Minister, on Assemblies and had supported the idea of elected regional government. When the North East voted against a directly elected Assembly, thought had to be given on where to go next and how to develop regional structures.
- Q Need to get accountability through local authority structures, and this will only work if executive powers are devolved to local authorities.
- Q It is important that the economic drivers for the region are taken into account; therefore City Regions have an important role in the new arrangements.
- Q Discussions around SNR are becoming increasingly focussed on local authorities. SEE Partners are quickly becoming 'second class citizens', therefore they need to ensure that their voices are heard as SEE Partners have an important representative role which give them a unique insight. Maybe the Yorkshire and Humber region could begin a process on joint engagement?
- Q Yorkshire Forward and Local Government Yorkshire and Humber have discussed these issues and are keen to promote partnership working.
- Q It would be helpful to have a local authority/SEE Partner awayday to discuss this in detail.
- A The Minister confirmed that if the region developed a blueprint that it thought would work, she would be happy to put it forward to Government.

Nicola Baylis, Business Services Officer
February 2008