5. Summary

This report presents information from the “Area Assemblies: A New Way of Working” and “The Harthill Peregrin Way” applications to the Local Government Yorkshire & Humber Awards Competition for 2007, which have been put forward to the second round by the LGYH Judges in the following category:

Making a Difference to People and Places
Stepping up to the Challenge: Award for engaged, inclusive, cohesive communities/neighbourhoods

Finalists will be notified in October with an awards ceremony in York on November 27th.

6. Recommendations

That members consider the following:

i. MEMBERS NOTE THE SUCCESS OF THE APPLICATIONS SO FAR
7. Proposals and Details

The CIU were asked to consider submitting applications to the Local Government Yorkshire & Humber Awards programme. Two submissions were devised: a generic Area Assemblies application, which gave great detail on the new way of working, and gave numerous examples of the successes and type of work that the Assemblies are engaged in. The second application was a specific example of partnership working, with a community group taking the lead, in Harthill’s Peregrin Way.

Harthill Summary

Harthill is a very rural community and therefore quite isolated especially as public transport to the village is limited. Peregrin Way is a sheltered housing scheme and the TARA is made up of elderly residents who work hard to improve things for what is often a socially isolated group, and in particular the TARA strives to make sure everyone is included. The TARA was set up with the help and support of the Rother Valley South Area Assembly office and the 2010 Neighbourhood Champion, and was identified through the Area Planning process initiated by the Area Assembly office and at the request of the 2010 Neighbourhood Champion.

For example, the group working in partnership with the Area Assembly office and the 2010 Neighbourhood Champion has set up an I.T. project enabling elderly residents to access online shopping, insurance etc, and has liaised with community transport to provide opportunities to access shopping centres/supermarkets in the area.

The TARA works hard to prevent disabled residents from becoming isolated. Members of the group encourage the many disabled residents to get out and about and provide support to those who are wheelchair bound taking them on days out. They also physically bring them along to social events and training which is held in the centre (even though group members are elderly themselves).

The group has recently refurbished the community centre and is in the process of trying to raise funds to turn a piece of waste ground outside into a sensory garden. The TARA works well with local agencies including RMBC and 2010 and are currently liaising with the Learning Net to set up a program of adult community learning.

Area Assembly Summary

Early in 2006 RMBC made a decision to change the role and function of area assemblies “away from being simple consultation and information sharing, towards area based co-ordination and delivery of service improvements and regeneration activities”. In order to effect this change a new model was created which sees area assemblies eventually becoming mini LSPs (Local Strategic Partnerships) overseen by a Co-ordinating Group, made up of ward members, partners and community reps, and with support being provided from within the Council. This decision reflects the role of the council and elected members as community leaders. Although only operating since Nov 2006, the Area Assemblies have achieved huge successes by aligning community priorities and council and partner service delivery, tackling local issues by facilitating and managing a partnership approach and by adopting neighbour management principles.

The application covered the structure of the process, from the Area Assembly to the Co-ordinator Groups, Task & Finish Groups and NAGs. Detailed examples were given on the
Young People Engagement Groups, Problem Landlords, Operation Impact and NRF project work that various Area Assemblies have conducted.

**Current Situation**

Both applications have been successful in passing the first round of the LGYH Awards Panel. This year’s Making a Difference in Yorkshire and Humber Awards ceremony will take place in November and RMBC will hear late October whether these applications have been submitted to the final.

The Harthill application was also suitable for entry in the Duke of York Awards and this has subsequently been submitted. So far we have had no word on whether this application has been approved.

**8. Finance**

Financial costs so far are the costs of officer time in preparing the applications and any subsequent case study required for publication if successful. Should we be successful in reaching the final, then the cost of attending the ceremony for appropriate officers/managers/Elected Members will also need to be factored in.

**9. Risks and Uncertainties**

None.

**10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Should the application win an award then this will be a massive PR boost for the Area Assembly project, but just getting through the RMBC selection process and then the subsequent LGO first round are an important success that should be promoted where appropriate.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Area Assemblies: A New Way of Working LGYH Awards Application
Harthill Peregrin Way LGYH Awards Application
Harthill Peregrin Way Duke of Yorks Application

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