

**Date: 27 November 2007**

**Report: MEMBER FEEDBACK**

Attached, as an **Appendix** to this report is feedback from:

- Dr KM Petyt on his attendance at the meeting of the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly on 4 October 2007

**Richard Parkin**  
**Secretariat Officer**

Background documents: None

13 November 2007



**Name of Event:** Yorkshire and Humber Assembly

**Date of Event:** 4 October 2007

**Name of Member:** Dr KM Petyt

I attended the meeting and Conference of the YHA at Leeds on 4 October. This was held in Saviles Hall at the Royal Armouries Museum, and was in the lavish style which has characterised the activities of the YHA I have so far experienced. There were copious papers and glossy publications available, and we were even given a specially printed jute shopping bag to carry them.

The actual meeting lasted only 40 minutes (as a prelude to an excellent buffet lunch). Only two items were more than formal. First: an update on the Government's proposed changes to the Y & H Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy), which will be the subject of a special meeting called for December. The matter causing most concern is the increase in the housing numbers suggested by Government, which the Regional Housing Board has concerns about its ability to deliver. Second: the Sub-National Review, which sets out how the Government intends to reform governance at the regional level, with an increased role for RDAs following the abolition of Regional Assemblies in 2010.

The afternoon Conference was a more substantial event. After an introductory survey from the Chairman, a local MP who is also Regional Minister for Yorkshire and Humber, Caroline Flint, spoke about the progress Y & H had made in various spheres, and the challenges for the future – largely related to the two subjects above: the RSS and the consequences of the SNR. She emphasised that in regard to new frameworks for regions it would not be the case that “one size fits all”. The next speaker was the Chairman of Yorkshire Forward, Terry Hodgkinson. I was encouraged by his insistence throughout on *sustainable* development; environmental considerations must have equal weight with social and economic ones – we must not look for “growth at any cost”. The third speaker was Max Steinberg, the Board Member of the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit responsible for Y & H. He started by showing that affordability of housing is a concern throughout the country, but the problem has accelerated in our region; a similar picture is seen in the failure of housing growth to keep pace with demand. However, sustainability depends on building houses of the most appropriate type and in the right locations – especially in Y & H we must remember the heritage of our region in the way we build. All three speakers responded to questions in a very competent way.

Malcolm Petyt