

Yorkshire and Humber Regional Skills Audit

Research for Integreat & Yorkshire
Forward into the Region's Capacity to
Deliver Great Places

May 2008

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1: Introduction and Summary

Why this work is needed

- 1.1 In January 2008 Integreat and Yorkshire Forward commissioned SQW Consulting to carry out an audit of the region's economic development and regeneration skills as an indicator of our capacity to deliver the "Great Places"¹ envisaged in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), and to progress the agenda proposed within the Sub National Review of Economic Development & Regeneration (SNR).
- 1.2 The RES emphasises that strong towns and cities and quality of place are key to the economic prosperity of the region, and it sets out a programme of renaissance to complement activities undertaken by local authorities and other partners. In this it supports the "Place Shaping" role of local authorities advanced in the Lyons Review of Local Government (Annex E).
- 1.3 The SNR proposes the most fundamental changes in local and regional economic development since the 1970s. It argues that this requires a substantial upgrading of the local delivery capacity, especially in relation to the role of principal² local authorities and regional development agencies. The present research is designed to assist in the development of comprehensive work programmes to increase delivery capacity across the region, especially that within local authorities and some regional and sub regional partners.
- 1.4 In addition to the challenges posed by Great Places and SNR, research for the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC), following the debate started by the Egan Review³ in 2004 (see section 2), raised similar questions. In 2007 the ASC report 'Mind the Skills Gap' (MSG) showed that nationally shortages of key skills, lack of understanding across, and between professionals and communities, were hindering economic, physical and social regeneration. It also pointed to the likelihood of growing shortages in some regions and oversupply in others.
- 1.5 MSG was based on surveys, case studies and existing data, but the evidence it assembled is inevitably less robust for individual regions when sample sizes reduce and confidence levels fall. The present work is to some extent a follow up of MSG, looking in more details at Yorkshire and the Humber, but prompted by SNR it has looked particularly at the potential of public sector economic development and regeneration, asking the questions "Does this key sub-sector have the skills necessary to deliver current and future agendas, and what are the actions required to enhance them?"

Public Sector Economic Development & Regeneration

- 1.6 Why have we concentrated on this relatively small group in the Sustainable Communities Sector (SCS)? First, Egan, MSG and other work have identified them as critical because they are the people most often given the responsibility of bringing together other professionals,

¹ For a glossary of terms and abbreviations please see Annex G

² "Local authorities" from now on means the 22 principal authorities in the region – see Annex H

³ *The Egan Review*, see Annex F for full reference of all main publications cited

agencies and sectors to facilitate sustainable development. So if their skills are deficient or capacity inadequate this has a critical effect on the entire process.

- 1.7 Secondly, as much previous work also makes clear, skills gaps are met more directly in the private sector, most immediately by higher pay, recruitment and other incentives and by more flexible working, whereas the immediacy or scope for such a response in the public sector are more problematic. As explained below (section 2) the response in the public sector is probably more sustained, but is also more constrained by having to be delivered mainly by local government, which has a particularly complex range of skills issues to address. Not surprisingly therefore, *“the private sector tends to be staffed with a younger workforce, and faces fewer barriers to recruiting good staff”*⁴.
- 1.8 Thirdly, if the region is to tackle required restructuring and in particular justify the promised devolution of spending and powers, then it has to address public sector delivery capacity as a matter of some urgency, as the latest SNR document makes clear. It is not surprising therefore that in the current consultation the first specific question makes clear the importance of exercises such as the present one.

*Q1. How should RDAs satisfy themselves that sufficient capacity exists for programme management and delivery at local or sub-regional level?*⁵

- 1.9 In commissioning this work Integreat and Yorkshire Forward, have illustrated that they are committed to gaining a detailed understanding of the region's delivery skills and to ensuring it is well positioned to meet the radical new challenges to local and regional development. In their enthusiastic cooperation with the research, the region's local authorities and other organisations have signaled their willingness to participate fully in this re-positioning and to make improvements to increase current capacity.
- 1.10 While concentrating on the public sector, this research did attempt to capture some snapshot views from the voluntary and private sector, mainly by talking to representative organisations. In this context it is worth noting that none dissented from this focus at this time. They did however emphasise there are other challenges within their sectors that also need to be addressed in future discussions and research.

Defining the Target Groups

- 1.11 The core of consultees (Table 1.1) was drawn from the 22 local authorities within the region. The process is described in more detail in section 5, but this normally involved discussion with the officer responsible for economic development or regeneration, supplemented in small authorities by an additional head of a built environment section, and in larger ones two relevant section heads or equivalent.
- 1.12 Key partnership organisations were contacted as a priority due to the increased importance placed on sub-regional working and partnership, not just within the SNR, but also within local and regional strategies. Professional bodies represented in the region within the SCS and recruitment and interim management agencies, and HR directors were consulted.

⁴ *Mind the Skills Gap*, page 8

⁵ *Prosperous Places*, page 21

Approximately 25% of consultees were from private or third sector forum organisations, where they were likely to have a wide practical experience of recruitment or skills issues. In all 23 organisations and 110 individuals were contacted, of whom 99 completed the full proforma which provided the basis of much of the analysis in section 5.

Table 1.1: Main Consultees

- Yorkshire Forward
- 22 Principal local authorities
- Partnership organisations, including city regions & regeneration partnerships
- Professional bodies
- Most relevant Sector Skills Councils
- Recruitment & interim management companies
- HR directors
- Private & voluntary sector forums

1.13 Table 1.2 provides a comparison of the main “target groups” for Egan, MSG and this Integreat/Yorkshire Forward Regional Skills Audit (IRSA). It makes clear that although the sample for this region is larger than in the MSG work IRSA is much more focused in terms of target groups. As a result discussions could be more wide-ranging and comprehensive qualitative information was gathered. This in turn led to many detailed suggestions from respondents, some of which we have incorporated in section 7.

Table 1.2: Target Groups

Egan Review	ASC/ Mind the Skills Gap	Integreat Regional/ YF Skills Audit	IRSA Notes/Comments
Implementers and Decision Makers		Partnership skills	Partnership bodies e.g. city regions, sub-regions etc
Built Environment Occupations	Planners, designers, architects, highways, surveyors	Built environment occupations	Professional bodies, and all local authorities
Environmental Occupations			Professional bodies & some local authorities only
Social Occupations	Housing Officers	Housing Officers	Initially professional authorities, but some private, voluntary & public bodies (RSLs)
Economic Occupations	Economic Development Officers	Economic Development & Regeneration practitioners	Professional bodies, and all local authorities
Community Occupations			Limited coverage via voluntary sector forums & LAs with-in house CDW
Cross-Cutting Occupations		Policy & strategy activities	Mainly in partnership working

Qualitative research, networks and recommendations

- 1.14 In view of the scarcity of demand side data on SCS skills, MSG concentrated on the development of an evidence base, and spent relatively little time on developing recommendations for delivering change, or in establishing methods for monitoring and evaluating future work. As a result the work provides a valuable overview of the issues and characteristics which need to be explored at the national level, but the immediate recommendations were either very general or largely reflected existing activity. More is said about this in section 2 and deal the MSG model is discussed in some detail in section 3.
- 1.15 In the current research the collection of data and consideration of capacity development were closely linked, but the emphasis was much more on potential network development and measures to improve future monitoring and evaluation and much less on data collection. There was intent to move from a “snapshot” view of skills to the capture of time series data, even if this is likely to be more qualitative. Extremely helpful discussions with Integreat and Yorkshire Forward confirmed their desire to secure a body of evidence and networks on which they could build future activities.
- 1.16 It can be argued that this is a method more suited to a time of rapid change, economic and organisational, and likely to be more valued by practitioners, especially if they have contributed and helped to reach appropriate conclusions. Additional rationale for such an approach included:
- MSG and other work identifies generic skills as key and they are only partially related to more readily measurable professional skill shortages
 - York Consulting gap analysis ⁶ stressed the unreliability of data at the regional level and the importance of qualitative information in tackling these issues
 - There is already a wide degree of consensus on the sort of recommendations generated by MSG and similar reports, and this is unlikely to change
 - The implications of the key initiatives – the Sub-National Review, the new Homes and Communities Agency, Comprehensive Spending Review 2007, London 2012, City Regions – will critically affect assumptions and demand in the next few years, and lead to wide fluctuations in estimates
 - Public sector organisations tend to be sceptical about reports that identify critical skill shortages that, as is seen in section 2, they have lived with on a regular basis

The rest of the report

- 1.17 Section 2 provides more background to some of the key issues relating to the capacity and skills debate generated from Egan onwards and provides other relevant general information about skills issues. It provides important context for the SCS debate within first, the general skills issues that are being addressed within the UK Economy and second, and the local

⁶ Gap Analysis for Sustainable Communities Professionals

government sector. This section also suggests some of the key changes that SNR and Great Places will require in terms of capacity and skills.

- 1.18 Section 3 provides some information on the MSG model and how it predicted the Yorkshire and Humber figures indicated in that report. It shows how data limitations prevented us from applying the model at a regional level, but that this need not hinder positive recommendations.
- 1.19 Section 4 describes how the range of generic and specialist skills which formed the basis of consultation discussions were derived. Section 5 then goes on to describe the consultation process, the results and our initial conclusions.
- 1.20 Section 6 advances a Typology of capacity and skills issues which helps to clarify the thinking around many of these questions, and which can form a basis for a coherent set of recommendations, with a clearer idea of who is responsible for implementing them. Section 7 then provides an initial list of recommendations, including a process for their implementation and refinement. Finally, there are annexes providing further information, including detail on some of the concepts, terms and background information.

2: The Skills Debate in the Sustainable Communities Sector

Constant Change

- 2.1 A major difficulty in establishing whether there are adequate capacity and skills is that, as one consultee described it, “*the sector is in a permanent state of change*”. Indeed some agencies seemed to have lived with an almost constant state of actual or potential re-structuring over the last 10 years. Many key developments and players have also been bidding and initiative driven and externally resourced (e.g. Neighbourhood Renewal, SRB, and LEGI).
- 2.2 Just as important, the sector is often at the forefront of responding to external challenges, such as economic re-structuring, globalisation and now climate change. By definition, some consultees argued, this sector will always have a permanent and obvious capacity and/or skills deficit - today's knowledge set will be inadequate for tomorrow's challenges.

“I have worked in regeneration for nearly 25 years with a reasonable record of success. I have a professional qualification and a higher degree, but there has never been a time when I thought my range of skills was adequate for the job! That is why it is exciting – when you stop doing new things and learning it is time to retire.”

- 2.3 A further parameter is imposed by the requirement that much activity has to cross private, public and third sector divides. This may be especially problematic in the UK, as many have argued that it has a tradition of more rigid separation of sectors, relatively limited mobility and a less than positive attitude to learning, compared to some of our main competitors.

“I am lucky that I have worked in both private and voluntary sectors before local government, but that makes me a rarity. I am constantly struck by the lack of understanding and appreciation between the different sectors – they might come from different planets.”

It is understandable that the SCS skills debate has often been public sector driven, but this nevertheless sits uncomfortably with the general acceptance that ultimately it is private sector investment that will determine economic prosperity, and that it is the success or vitality of the third sector which will largely provide community and social cohesion.

- 2.4 Ironically, some of these characteristics are well illustrated by and lack of urgency evidenced by the protracted evolution of the SCS Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs). First advocated as essential to increasing capacity and skills in 1998, by the Urban Task Force (at that time mainly as a way to improve urban design skills), they were again identified as crucial in the 2003 Sustainable Communities Plan (with a widened sustainable communities role), but it was only after the 2004 Egan Review that they were actively taken forward in most regions. In broad terms then it took nearly six years for the first RCE to be established and working within an English region, during which time the landscape of local regeneration had radically altered.

2.5 Reviewing the progress of the skills debate it is easy to understand the perspective of another of the consultees when he argued

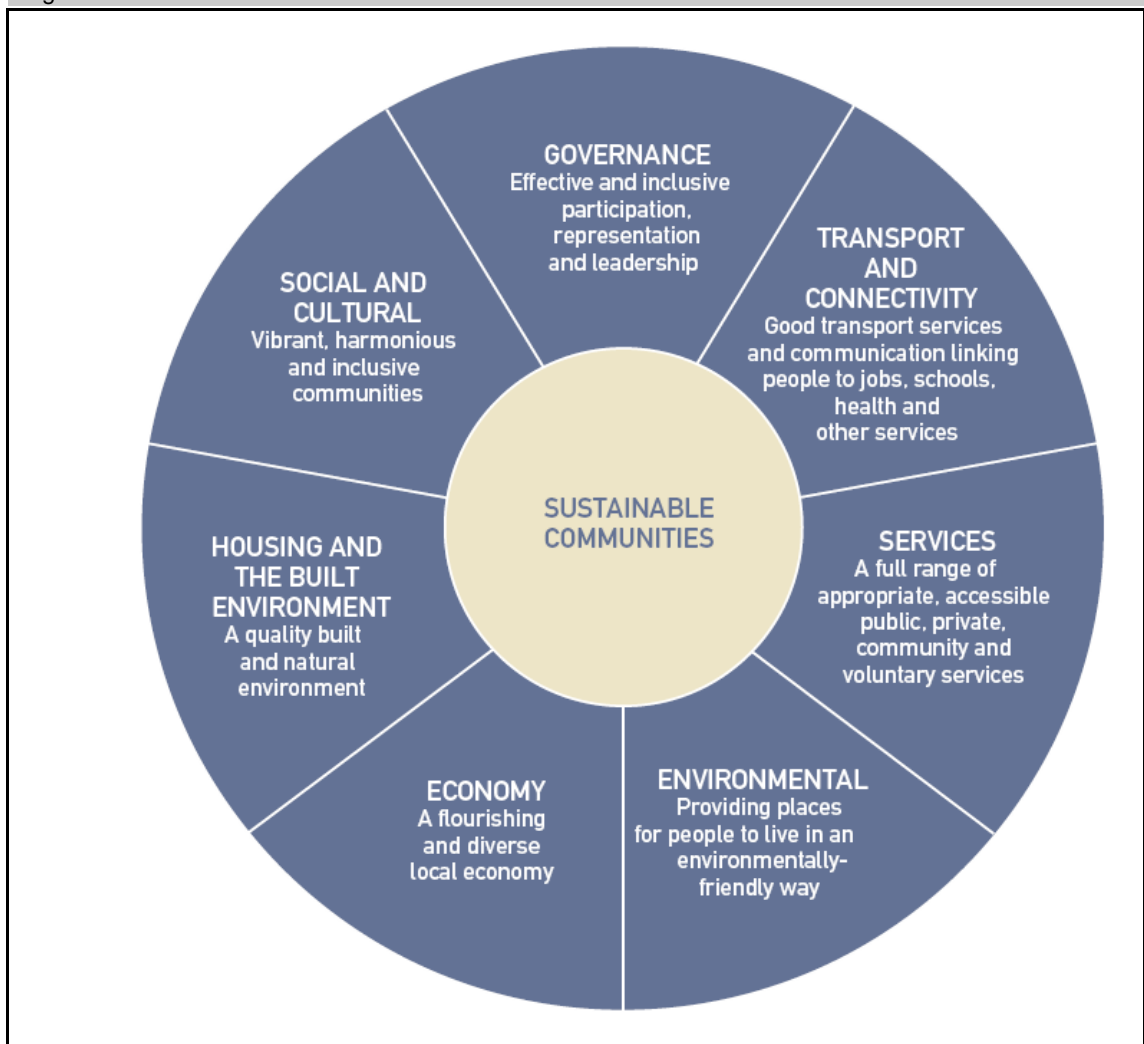
“We seem to have been debating skills deficits forever, but in that time there is little additional practical support for senior people and the emphasis on individual CPD and personal networking has become more and more important while we get busier and are more centrally driven by Government priorities.”

This is a challenge recognised in SNR and one that is met in this report by recommendations set in a suggested framework that will clarify responsibility and future debate.

The Egan Review

2.6 The Egan Review was initially established to look at the skills and training required by professionals, planning authorities and developers and how they could work together to improve the communities they serve. It also considered how skills gap can best be bridged. Produced at the same time as the ODPM produced its Sustainable Communities Plan it effectively re-defined what was meant by sustainable development at that time, with the key elements summarised in the frequently quoted figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2-1



Source: The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities, ODPM 2004

- 2.7 More is said about the particular key skills identified by Egan in section 4 below, but it should be noted here that he distinguishes between six 'core occupations' (below), 'associated occupations' and a wider group of people having a legitimate interest in the SCS.
- Implementers and decision makers – in government and elsewhere
 - Built environment occupations – e.g. planners, engineers and architects
 - Environmental occupations – e.g. environmental managers
 - Social occupations – e.g. housing and social services
 - Economic occupations – e.g. private sector investors & public sector EDOs
 - Community occupations – e.g. community development workers and wardens
- 2.8 Taken together the SCS workforce is defined as consisting of about 1.25 million economically active people (which of course excludes many important third sector actors) or around 4% of the total workforce at that time. Egan concluded that action was required to encourage entry into the core professions, to provide better information and upgrade skills – especially what he termed “generic” rather than particular professional or technical skills. He made a series of detailed recommendations about the allocation of responsibilities, the improvement of processes and the development of skills.
- 2.9 There was overwhelming support for these conclusions, but criticisms tended to crystallise into two contrasting views. On the one hand, it was argued that the Review had missed key elements of the Sustainable Development mix (for example the critical role of unpaid third sector actors or services for children or families), and on the other that it was so general as to contain few specific measures that were not already being implemented, other than the creation of RCEs and the ASC.

The Leitch Review & the Historic Skills Deficit

- 2.10 While the immediate research context for the present research is provided by ASC research and Egan, the SCS debate needs to be seen within the general discussion of the UK's 'historic skills deficit' described in the 2003 skills White Paper⁷. Ironically this became much easier quite quickly after Egan, with the publication in 2005 of the interim Leitch Review⁸.
- 2.11 The interim report committed the final Review to identifying the UK's optimal skills mix for 2020 to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice. It also sought to set out the balance of responsibility for achieving that skills profile and consider the policy framework required to support it. The final report, drawing on a model developed by Cambridge Econometrics and Warwick University, showed that urgent action was required to raise achievements at all levels and across most sectors. It argued that to do this will mean a doubling of attainment at most levels of skill. Within this context the SCS skills deficits described below look either to be relatively modest or well within the parameters set for other sectors.

⁷ *21st Century Skills; Realising Our Potential* (National Skills Strategy White Paper), HMSO, July 2003

⁸ interim report, *Skills in the UK: the long term challenge* 2005

- 2.12 Pervading themes within the recommendations are the need to engage employers, employees and the wider community and to create a more positive attitude to learning. The debate engendered by Leitch has recently led to the launch on 1 April 2008 of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES). The UKCES is charged with the aims of raising the UK's prosperity and opportunity by improving employment and skills across the entire economy. In this context it is also important to note the Government's commitment to reform both 16-19 education and adult training by 2010, with the former returning to local authority control.

ASC Research

- 2.13 It has already been noted that the immediate background to this research is provided by a raft of work commissioned by the ASC and particularly the MSG report, gap analysis carried out by York Consulting and supporting technical reports. We thank the ASC for help in providing background information on this and ongoing follow up work. Some of the main points made within the ASC body of research relevant to the present work, are worth summarised briefly at this point, in table 2.1 below.

Table 2-1: Some Key Points from ASC Research

- Since the Egan Review there has been notable progress made towards improving skills by the ASC, the RCEs, Sector Skills Councils and professional institutes.
- The core SCS workforce comprises a broad mix of built environment, public service and professionals working across public, private and voluntary sectors.
- The SCS includes those within traditional professional or technical groupings, as well as newer groups such as regeneration professionals or community workers.
- The private sector tends to be staffed with a younger workforce, and faces fewer barriers to recruiting good staff.
- Competition for good professionals can be strong and was thought in 2006-7 to be increasing, with private sector firms seeming better able to attract scarce candidates.
- Government spending policy has affected how key public sector bodies are able to organise recruitment, and resulted in lower staff levels than they would ideally like.
- Regeneration/economic development officers do not have the option of rigorous technical training, unless they enter through other professional occupations or undertake specialist postgraduate training.
- Regeneration/economic development officers are often expected to drive forward cross sector working, demanding both technical knowledge and comprehensive generic skills.
- There are some essential professionals not fully involved, but this is more about a failure to engage rather than a lack of knowledge.
- Generic skills are often perceived to be more important to delivery than professional or technical capability.
- While there is no common understanding of what makes up sustainable development, it is widely recognised that the best projects result from multi-disciplinary activities which fully involve the communities.
- A number of factors point to the frequent and increasing use of consultants to undertake core or supplementary public sector functions, with varying degrees of success.

Source: ASC reports various – see Annex

- 2.14 The scale of the SCS workforce, even with the more limited definitions adopted in the later ASC research is considerable. For example MSG estimates it to comprise of 750,000 people. This is a considerable reduction on Egan's 1.25 million, but still a formidable and complex sector. Again therefore it is inevitable that the recommendations for action, summarised in table 2.2, are extremely general.

Table 2.2: Mind the Skills Gap Recommendations

- Promote a national drive to address skills gaps
- Recognise generic skills are key
- National programmes developed and delivered on a cross-profession basis
- Short courses and dissemination of best practice
- Work to address labour shortages, recruitment and retention
- Identify, recognise and promote technical skills
- Promote best practice
- Develop and embed a common understanding of sustainable communities
- Undertake further research

2.15 Perhaps the most useful single conclusion for the present study, reinforcing a key message from Egan, is that generic skills are increasingly viewed as more important than particular technical or professional capability.

Local Government Skills & Workforce issues

2.16 With the current research being focused on public sector economic development/regeneration it is important that SCS skills and capacity issues are again set within an appropriate context. In particular it is useful to see them in relation to the local government workforce in general and the particular characteristics within this region.

2.17 Local government in England and Wales employs nearly 2.3 million people. This amounts to almost 1 in 10 of all people working in the UK, making it the largest single employment sector and 45% of the public sector workforce. Some key facts about the local government workforce include:

- there are approximately the same number of part-time and full-time workers
- there is an uneven gender divide - women account for a significantly higher proportion of part time workers, and nearly three-quarters of all local government employees, compared with slightly under half (49%) for the whole economy
- the average labour turnover rate over the last decade has varied between 13 and 15% per annum
- almost 90% of all authorities regularly report recruitment and retention difficulties with one or more professional/managerial occupations
- it is generally older than that of the whole economy

The latter characteristic has been given increased profile by recent research pointing out that a third of the local government workforce is due to retire in the next 10 years⁹.

2.18 Given these characteristics it is was to be expected that the Human Resources Directors contacted as part of the study, while not complacent, were unfazed by some of the skills and capacity issues identified in Egan and subsequent ASC and other research. More will be said more about these issues in the next section, but one can see from table 2.3 that SCS recruitment problems, while significant within the region, are similar to those experienced in a wide range of other local authority activities.

⁹ *Leading Lights: Recruiting the next generation in local government*

Table 2.3: Occupations for which Local Authorities in Yorkshire & Humber report recruitment problems

Environmental Health	80.0%
Social Worker Children and Families	66.7%
Planning Development Control	62.5%
Social Worker Residential	58.3%
Planning Other	56.3%
Care assistant	50.0%
Home care staff	50.0%
Legal	50.0%
Social Worker Community care	50.0%
Civil Engineering	43.8%
Cleaner	43.8%
School crossing patrol	41.7%
Teachers	41.7%
Trading Standards	41.7%
Building Control	40.0%
Building Surveying	31.3%
Electrical Engineering	31.3%
Mechanical Engineering	31.3%
Accountancy	25.0%

Source: Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey (2006), regional breakdown

- 2.19 HR Directors pointed to the national work of the Local Authority Employers' Organisation on skills shortages, and workforce and other surveys since at least 2001 which have tracked progress on these issues. These have so far been supplemented by research focusing on eight of the ten services most affected by skill shortages.
- 2.20 With a population of more than five million the Yorkshire and Humber region has just 22 local authorities (9 Metropolitan Councils, 5 Unitary Councils, 7 District Councils, and 1 County Council) compared to 60 plus in the South West or North West. Moreover, over half of them are top rated 4 star-authorities and all are now listed as improving well. Many of the local authorities employ more than 10,000 staff and in some cases more than 20,000 making them easily the largest employers within their areas. One would therefore expect them to possess a wider range of expertise and an increased capacity in comparison with local authorities in other regions.

SNR, Lyons Review and Place Shaping

- 2.21 As we have already said the implications of SNR are substantial, heralding the biggest changes to local and regional economic development for 30 years. Although some key issues are still to be decided after the current consultation, it is already apparent that a number of SCS skills will become even more significant – most obviously those involving local economic development, regeneration and partnership working.
- 2.22 The main proposed SNR changes are summarised briefly in Annex D, but it is useful to note here in particular the phasing out of regional assemblies and the introduction of Integrated Regional Strategies (IRS) led by RDAs. Although RDAs have for long been acknowledged as strategic economic leaders, they will now have an added responsibility to ensure that the

business, social and environmental partners in each region can engage and participate effectively in regional strategic planning. The lead responsibility for spatial planning at a regional level will require a considerable change in RDA skill sets.

- 2.23 Similarly, although local authorities and RDAs work together in all parts of England, the post SNR world envisages a much closer relationship. Indeed it is the crux of the new system, and without it progress on planning and delivery will be difficult to achieve. The following quotation is an indication of how the two main players are meant to interact.

3.7 A key principle of the SNR is to ensure that decisions are made at the right spatial level, by devolving powers and responsibilities in line with economic outcomes. The business-led RDAs will become increasingly strategic through their lead role on the regional strategy and will, as now, want to commission partners to deliver outcomes agreed in the strategy. RDAs will delegate their single pot funding where appropriate, for spending on promoting economic growth and regeneration on a programme, rather than project, basis, to those best placed to deliver economic growth outcomes. Local authorities will play an increasing role in this delivery, with a proposed legal duty to assess their economies and the ability to act with neighbouring local authorities to tackle common problems.¹⁰

- 2.24 Taken with the Lyons Review (see Annex E), the Local Government White Paper and a range of other Government policy initiatives, SNR reinforces the importance of the role of local authorities in local economic development, something which was previously seen as a discretionary activity. Previous SNR consultation has already identified concerns over the capacity of local authorities in economic development/SCS as a major issue as indicated in paragraph 1.8 above.
- 2.25 This new importance is reflected in the proposal to make local economic assessments a statutory function for local authorities, with the implication that this previously permissive activity is now critical to what Lyons termed the “place making” role of local authorities. This comes at a time when local government is experiencing a general increase in responsibilities, including some in areas critical to SCS, such as children’s services, health and further education. These new responsibilities come at a time when employment projections expect a significant reduction in the local government workforce both nationally and regionally over the next 10 years.

Great Places

- 2.26 The current Regional Economic Strategy for the Yorkshire and the Humber strongly reinforces the messages of SNR, the Lyons Review. From its introduction (“*what stands out is our region’s unique combination of towns, cities and rural areas. It is these places that are playing a crucial role in driving our economy forward*”) onwards it makes the case for the link between general economic strength and the revival of the regions towns, cities and rural areas. In doing this it is reflecting not only local aspirations, but an increasing body of evidence which is well summarised in the following quotation:

¹⁰Prosperous Places, CLB/BERR, March 2008, page 20

Evidence increasingly shows that great places and strong economies go together. Research such as the ODPM's Migration Model shows desirable, lively towns and cities, with access to good jobs, facilities, environments, and with a pleasant feel attract and retain the skilled - and highly mobile - people that are most in demand in a knowledge economy. In fact, migration data shows only 12% of graduates live in the local authority district they were born in compared to 44% among the rest of the population. High added value businesses seek to locate in the same places to access these skilled employees and project the right image. This creates more spending that further boosts the vibrancy and attractiveness of the place...and the cycle goes round.¹¹

- 2.27 The RES uses the concept of “Great Places”, summarised in figure 2.2 to provide a summary of our regional take on sustainable economic growth linked heavily to area regeneration or place making.

Figure 2-2



Source: Regional Economic Strategy

- 2.28 The overall result is an economic vision which could have been written specifically with SNR and Lyons in mind and which heavily reinforces the importance of the capacity and skills issues being explored in this research.

Yorkshire and Humber's economic vision is to be a great place to live, work and do business, that fully benefits from a prosperous and sustainable economy. Achieving this is based on the three Aims of

¹¹ Source: Regional Economic Strategy, Paragraph 3.116

*realising the potential of all the region's **people**, growing existing and new **businesses**, and protecting, enhancing and utilising its **environment***

Six Objectives translate these Aims into action on the ground. The central principle of quality and pride of place binds them together, and the themes of sustainable development, diversity and leadership and ambition underpin the way they are delivered.¹²

¹² *Regional Economic Strategy, page 8*

3: ASC/Arup Model

Introduction

- 3.1 The ASC's *Mind the Skills Gap*¹³ modelled labour demand and supply for the Sustainable Communities Sector, with the specific aim of identifying shortages by occupation and by region. It suggested that nationally there would be significant skills shortages in key professions. There would also be substantial regional variations, with the most severe shortages in the South East, whereas the North and Midlands might well have a surplus. MSG suggested that by 2012, there would be a 12% over supply within the sustainable communities sector in Yorkshire and Humber. The fastest growing surpluses were predicted in relation to housing specialists and planners; and the fastest growing shortages were predicted in relation to developers, engineers, environmental specialists, neighbourhood/community specialists and surveyors.
- 3.2 These findings were re-examined with the aim of determining the strengths and weaknesses of the model, and exploring any alternative quantitative data available to cast light on the future demand for skills and labour in the region's sustainable communities sector.

The Arup model

- 3.3 The "Mind the Skills Gap, Technical Report 2 – Forecasting" by ARUP, produced in July 2007, looks in detail at labour shortages by occupation and then at labour shortages by region.

Table 3-1 LFS Categories used

Landscape Architects, Urban Designers and Architects	2431: Architects 3121: Architectural & town planning technicians
Developer	1231: Property housing & land managers
Engineer (inc. civil, structural, transport etc)	2121: Civil engineers 2122: Mechanical engineers 2123: Electrical engineers 2128: Planning & quality control engineers
Environmental specialist	3551: Conservation & environmental protection officers
Housing and welfare officer	3232: Housing & welfare officers
Neighbourhood/community development specialist	1184: Social services managers 3231: Youth & community workers
Planner	2432: Town Planners
Regeneration/ economic professional	NOT IDENTIFIED IN LFS
Sustainable development specialist	NOT IDENTIFIED IN LFS
Surveyor	2433: Quantity surveyors 2434: Chartered surveyors (not quantity surveyors)
Transport Planner	NOT IDENTIFIED IN LFS

Source: SOC

¹³ ASC (2007) *Mind the Skills Gap: The skills we need for sustainable communities*.

- 3.4 The ARUP work uses data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS 2001 – 2005) to forecast the supply of the labour from 2006 -2012 using the occupational categories shown in Table 3-1.
- 3.5 The Labour Force Survey is a national sample one and is useful in determining the general regional situation, but there are issues regarding the use of this data at a regional level for the specific occupations. This is mainly due to the small sample size of some of the relevant categories listed above.

Sampling variability

- 3.6 Some of the sampling variability is illustrated by looking at the fairly misleading category of “Developer” (defined in the ARUP work using SOC 1231), which is actually mainly public sector property and land managers.

Table 3-2 Number of “developers” in the Yorkshire and Humber region in 2007

LFS Category	Quarter 1: Jan – March 2007	Quarter 2: April – June 2007	Quarter 3: July – Sept 2007	Quarter 4: Oct – Dec 2007	Seasonally adjusted
1231: Property housing & land managers	6,896	3,705	5,548	7,360	5877

Source: LFS Quarterly Survey, 2007

- 3.7 Table 3-2 suggests that there are 5877 people employed in the “Developer” category in 2007. However, as mentioned previously, the LFS survey is a sample survey and the estimates produced in Table 3-2 are subject to sampling variability.
- 3.8 Using the formula provided by the LFS we can be 95% confident that the minimum number of people employed within the defined “Developers” category is **2885** and the maximum number is **8869**.¹⁴
- 3.9 The calculations show that there is a considerable sampling variability and therefore the Labour Force Survey data is not robust enough to look at labour shortages by occupation at Yorkshire and Humber level.

Demand forecast method

- 3.10 In addition to the problems illustrated above regarding the calculations of the supply forecast and the problems regarding the robustness of the Labour Force Survey. There are also issues regarding calculating the demand forecast. The “Mind the Skills Gap, Technical Report 2 – Forecasting” by ARUP does not provide details on precisely how they have calculated the

¹⁴ This is shown in the following calculation.

Total Population (N)¹⁴: 4,323,800

Sample (n)¹⁴: 11,112

Grossed up observation (M)¹⁴: 5,877

A 95% confidence limit is $M \pm \sqrt{M \times 4 \times N/n}$ ¹⁴

Therefore, MIN = $5877 - \sqrt{5877 \times 4 \times 4,323,800/11112}$

= 5877 – 2992

= **2885**

MAX = $5877 + \sqrt{5877 \times 4 \times 4,323,800/11112}$

= 5877 + 2992

= **8869**

demand forecast 2006 to 2012. In order to assess if we think the ARUP report stands true at the Yorkshire and Humber level we need to look more deeply into how they have calculated:

- the average annual growth factor derived from the Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) for CLG's communities function
- accelerated growth rate derived from the sustainable communities plan.

3.11 Arup were approached with a request to share these details, which was not taken up, so we were unable to include any information on these elements. Issues to explore further may include whether it is appropriate to use DEL or whether alternative expenditure for example RDA expenditure should be used. It was also clear that the results of the Comprehensive Spending Review or more forward-looking policies such as the Sub National Review were not considered and built into the model, although work is currently ongoing to update these projections taking the former into account.

3.12 Finally, the global economic outlook has worsened considerably since the publication of the ASC report. It may be that there is a need to revisit the assumptions upon which the model was based to correctly predict the future needs of the region. Certainly the small numbers of private sector consultees within our sample were extremely gloomy about general economic prospects and expressed the view that demand for SCS skills would therefore fall sharply in the next year.

Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey - recruitment and retention

3.13 One indicator of a tight labour market is recruitment and retention difficulties and staff turnover. The Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey (a biennial survey last carried out in 2006) found that

- 87.4% of authorities reported a recruitment or retention difficulty with one or more non managerial/non professional occupations, slightly down from 93.4%.
- the median labour turnover rate in local government slightly decreased from 14.6% in 2004/5 to 13.6% in 2005/6

3.14 High numbers of local authorities reported recruitment and retention difficulties in occupations related to the built environment, nationally and regionally, as can be seen in Table 3-3.

3.15 These results appear to contradict the *Mind the Skills Gap* viewpoint that demand was stronger in the southern part of the country.

Table 3-3 : Recruitment and retention difficulties in the built environment

	% reporting Recruitment difficulties		% reporting Retention difficulties	
	Yorkshire and Humber	England	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Planning – DC	62.5%	55.3%	43.8%	32.6%
Planning – other	56.3%	49.5%	31.3%	27.9%
Building control	40.0%	50%	20.0%	26.2%
Civil engineering	43.8%	21.6%	12.5%	N/K
Building surveying	31.3%	31.1%	12.5%	15.3%

Source: *Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey (2006)*

3.16 Local authorities were more likely to offer market supplements to built environment occupations than in other sectors:

- 39.7% of authorities in England offered a market supplement to building control
- 17.2% to building surveying
- 6.9% to civil engineering
- 5.6% to housing management
- 35.2% to development control; and
- 25.5% to ‘planning other’.

3.17 Planning and building control also featured highly in a national report by the Employers Organisation (2005) entitled *Local Government Workforce Profile and its top ten skills shortage areas*. Planning and building control were ranked fifth and sixth, respectively.¹⁵

The Regional Econometric Model

3.18 Yorkshire Forward’s Regional Econometric Model (REM) does not provide forecasting at the level of detailed (4-digit) SOC or SIC codes. However it does provide employment forecasting at the level of broad industrial sectors to 2020.

3.19 The model forecasts regional employment across all industries to grow by 4.9% between 2008 and 2020. During the same period, public sector employment (excluding health and education) is forecast to decrease by 5.4%, to 115,861 jobs. Its share of regional employment will shrink from 4.5% currently to 4.1% by 2020.¹⁶ Similar trends are forecast for the UK as a whole. This has important implications for recommendations to deal with skill shortages, as we will see in section 7.

¹⁵ Providing slightly different figures to the Local Government Pay and Workforce Survey results discussed above, the Employers Association found the vacancy rate for planning and building control was 8% and 6% respectively; and turnover 13% and 9%. 60% and 59% of respondents reported recruitment difficulties in planning and building control, respectively. 47% and 41% reported retention difficulties.

¹⁶ Yorkshire Forward / Experian Business Strategies Ltd, Office for National Statistics, Regional Econometric Model, spring 2008

- 3.20 However, when looking at occupational data generated by the REM, the picture is somewhat different. The category 'business and public service professionals', which includes public and private sector economic development, architects, town planners and surveyors (alongside legal, accountants, social work, probation, clergy, librarians) is forecast to grow in Yorkshire and Humber by 1.38% to 103,165 by 2020, while the category 'science associate professionals', which includes science and engineering technicians, draughtspersons and building inspectors, is forecast to grow by 2.54%., to 40,339.
- 3.21 Given the broad brush nature of the way in which the data is broken down by industry and occupation however, these figures are insufficiently detailed to provide robust estimates for the sustainable communities sector. They do however provide some maximum values within which any estimates should sit.

Conclusions

- 3.22 In considering methodological issues in determining skills gaps for sustainable communities, *Mind the Skills Gap*¹⁷ identified a need to avoid reliance on quantitative data, because of the difficulties inherent in accurately establishing the size and scope of the sector. This is attributed to limitations of the datasets, variations in quality of research and the difficulty in comparing across professions, geographies and years.
- 3.23 The York Consulting gap analysis report cited earlier concurred, stating that:
- 'findings derived from such information should come with something of a health warning... Any quantitative exercise would benefit from being supplemented by more qualitative research.'*¹⁸
- 3.24 The discussion contained in this chapter has illustrated some of these difficulties and set out some of the high level figures which are available to us. We now turn to further analysis of the more qualitative data generated by the primary research.

¹⁷ p.92-95

¹⁸ York Consulting, p3-11

4: Which skills are critical?

Where does the Generic Skills list come from?

- 4.1 We have already seen above that the national debate over the right skills for the Sustainable Communities Sector has tended to emphasise the primacy of generic over particular professional or technical skills, while not underestimating the importance of the latter. As we indicate below, substantial best practice data specifically derived from local government also reinforces this conclusion. Stated starkly by Egan -

We believe that it is the generic skills, behaviour and knowledge that will make the difference between successful delivery and failure.¹⁹

- 4.2 This view was endorsed by discussions with practitioners before we carried out the main survey and overwhelmingly supported in the main consultation exercise itself. The following was a fairly typical, if forthright expression.

I am a professional myself, with two separate sets of specialist training in the last 10 years and I am an active RTPI member, but I would be the first to say that you can put all the experts together you want without fear of reaching a conclusion! What you really need as a senior regeneration practitioner is the ability to make things happen, and that comes from practical things like being able to convince others, articulate the need to change and speak the same language as politicians and the public”

- 4.3 The specific skills we investigated are listed and defined in Annex A. It must be immediately acknowledged that these are not mutually exclusive skills, but the discussions and interviews described in the next section indicated that they were commonly accepted as being reasonably distinct enough to allow assessment and debate.
- 4.4 We used the skills descriptions advanced by the Egan Review as an initial basis for this study, but modified them in order to take account of local circumstances within the region, and also to take account of more recent changes in the SCS agenda. A summary of their evolution from previous studies is provided in Annex B, but here we will provide a short narrative explaining our reasoning and identifying some key aspects.

The Egan Review

- 4.5 Egan identified 13 specific generic skills, which were listed as follows:

1. Inclusive visioning
2. Project management
3. Leadership
4. Breakthrough thinking/brokerage
5. Team and partnership working
6. ‘Making it happen’
7. Process and change management

¹⁹ Egan Review, Page 10

8. Financial management and appraisal
 9. Stakeholder management
 10. Analysis, decision making, evaluation
 11. Communication
 12. Conflict resolution
 13. Customer awareness
- 4.6 In many summaries of Egan they are reduced to a shorter “key generic skills” list, for example – visioning; leadership; project management; management of stakeholders and conflict resolution; evaluation and feedback; engaging and talking to ‘communities’ in their own terms; and being aware and recognising P/political context and issues and their synergies and dynamics. This is relatively easy to do in various combinations by simply expanding the definitions for each category, but as no previous work had been carried out for this region, Integreat and Yorkshire Forward were keen for us to examine as wide a range of skills as was practical.

People, places and prosperity

- 4.7 The largest assessment of local government’s capacity to deliver on local economic development and regeneration is provided by the Audit Commission’s 2004 study, *People, places and prosperity: Delivering government programmes at the local level (PPP)*. This report is based upon external assessment of more than 60 local authorities, plus case studies.
- 4.8 PPP is a practical and influential report in an area in which there is still a shortage of comprehensive surveys. It was also incidentally the first major report to suggest the introduction of Local Area Agreements as a way of improving delivery and performance management. Although not looking at specific skill sets for SCS, unlike Egan or later ASC work, it suggests that the local government should focus on three key areas of expertise if it wants to increase its capacity.
- communication
 - leadership &
 - negotiation and conflict resolution
- 4.9 PPP suggests a number of key conclusions can be drawn from best practice which by implication is extremely useful in identifying critical generic skills. These include that progress is most likely where national and local priorities are fully aligned and where local partners achieve coherence in establishing their priorities and targets. Complex accountability, funding and partnership arrangements all seriously inhibit the chances of success. Unusually for an Audit Commission document however, the report reserved its major criticism for the role of central government. Its priorities, it argued suffers from what it termed a “Humpty Dumpty effect”

Efforts to promote economic growth, social justice and environmental sustainability fracture when they hit the ground in departmental silos, just like Humpty when he fell off the wall. Local leaders play the role of all the

*King's horses and all the King's men, as they try to put the pieces back together again.*²⁰

4.10 The thinking exhibited in PPP seems to have much in common with the reasoning displayed in various SNR documents. The importance of local leadership is seen as critical in both. Successful areas are the ones where local leaders are able to:

- develop coherent programmes of change that are based on local needs and opportunities
- engage with communities to ensure that interventions are responsive to local concerns
- make the most of the skills and resources of all sectors to ensure that the area has the capacity to deliver its ambitions
- capture learning from previous activity and transfer it to new interventions
- pay attention to the sustainability of interventions, ensuring mainstreaming in the longer term.

4.11 PPP makes a convincing case that the most critical skill of all is the strategic understanding and leadership of senior officers and elected members.

*When delivering their overall agenda, local authorities and key local decision-makers need to consider their capacity to meet the challenges that they have set out. They need to understand which organisations are essential to the delivery of the vision for the area, how committed they are to the vision, how committed they need to be and what capacity they have to respond positively to what is required of them. Developing and using influencing and capacity-building strategies will be essential where key stakeholders lack the necessary commitment or wherewithal to deliver priorities*²¹.

Mind the Skills Gap

4.12 Mind the Skills Gap uses the same generic skills list as Egan, although in a different order. Also, despite spending much of its efforts estimating demand for particular technical or professional occupations, it recognises the primary importance of the generic skills.

4.13 MSG makes the point that individuals may have divergent views in respect to their personal as opposed to their organisation's skill base. Other groups may be seen as being deficient not in generic or specific skills but in their willingness to engage outside their traditional remits.²² This may then point towards a more systemic failure in the areas such as information and communication, rather than in terms of institutional skills provision.

4.14 MSG sometimes reduces a long list to a summary of key skills. Typical skills that are required across occupations are summarised as:

²⁰ *People, places and prosperity*, page 2

²¹ *People, places and prosperity*, page 17

²² *Mind the Skills Gap - The skills we need for sustainable communities*, p14

Partnership working and leadership skills: identifying potential partners; partnership development; interpersonal skills; communication; partnership management; conflict resolution; and delivering through partners.

Programme design and delivery: visioning, strategic planning and management; identifying, selecting and establishing plausible intervention; influencing mainstream service delivery; managing the delivery chain; problem solving; and managing, monitoring and evaluating interventions.

Learning from what works: understanding evidence-based practice; identifying sources of evidence; identifying information and learning needs; applying what works; using what works to reshape mainstream service provision; and tailoring what works to local circumstances.²³

- 4.15 In summary the view expressed in MSG is that while there is not necessarily a conflict between these generic and professional/technical skills, there are challenges in ensuring that both dimensions are sufficiently understood and for organisations to have an appropriate mix. Some of the more traditional professions run significant risks of becoming confined within narrow professional boundaries.

Yorkshire Forward/Integreat RSA

- 4.16 As indicated we used the skills descriptions advanced by the Egan Review as an initial basis for this study, but modified them in order to take account of local circumstances within the region, and also to acknowledge more recent changes in the SCS agenda. They have also been adjusted slightly to make them resonate better with respondents who were predominantly from the public sector and local government. In particular we tried to reflect the specific skills sets suggested by PPP more fully, by including brokerage, different types of partnership and cross sector working

Additional Specialist Skills

- 4.17 Five “new” areas of specialist skills were added because of their suggested importance in current SCS initiatives.
- Urban Design & Process
 - Sub-region, LAA & MAA working
 - Understanding the low carbon economy
 - Understanding how to nurture innovation and creativity
 - Understanding transport and infrastructure requirements
- 4.18 The final list, which contains 19 generic and specialist skills in total, is provided in Table 4.1 below.

²³ *Mind the Skills Gap*, p19

Table 4-1 YF/IRSA list of generic & specialist skills

1. Project Management
2. Leadership
3. Brokerage or enabling
4. Team working – cross professional
5. Partnership working – with private sector
6. Partnership working with the third sector
7. Change management
8. Financial management & appraisal
9. Policy analysis & strategy
10. Performance management
11. Communication
12. Conflict Resolution/Community Cohesion
13. Community engagement
14. Engaging with hard to reach groups
SPECIALIST SKILLS
1. Urban Design & Process
2. Sub-region, LAA & Multi-area working
3. Understanding the low carbon economy
4. Understanding how to nurture innovation and creativity
5. Transport and infrastructure requirements

Additional Skills Identified by respondents

4.19 The appropriate and comprehensive nature of this list was confirmed as surprisingly few respondents identified additional skills. Those that were included some areas which perhaps only five and certainly ten years ago would have been considered to be integral to local economic development and regeneration.

- Inward investment
- “Making things happen”
- Small business advice
- Enterprise development/new start ups

In the case of the former respondents from only two local authorities specifically indicated that they were actively seeking inward investment as a major part of their community or economic development strategies. In the case of the second this was seen to be part of the leadership role, while the absence of the last two reflected a relative decline of enterprise promotion in its own right by local authorities outside LEGI areas.

5: Consultation Results

The process, survey forms and response

- 5.1 As indicated in section 1, the core of consultees was drawn from the 22 local authorities within the region. Over 100 individuals and more than 20 organisations were contacted in a combination of telephone and face to face interviews. Respondents were assured of their individual anonymity and that comments specific to their authority would not be made in the final report.
- 5.2 Evidence gathering and discussion centred on a standard proforma described below, which invited participants to provide an assessment of current skills and capacity, including recruitment and retention issues relating both to their employing organisation and the wider Sustainable Communities Sector. Less structured discussions were held with key organisations, such as Local Government Yorkshire & Humber (LGYH), the Regional Skills Partnership and a number of advisory organisations.
- 5.3 We managed to contact and discuss these topics with senior officers in all 22 local authorities, and obtained completed survey forms from 20. Normally this involved discussion with the officer with overall responsibility for economic development or regeneration, supplemented in small authorities by an additional head of a built environment section, and in larger ones by at least two section heads or equivalent.
- 5.4 Key partnership organisations were contacted as a priority due to the increased importance placed on sub-regional working and partnership, not just within the SNR, but also within local and regional strategies. We obtained responses from officers working for all three regional cities development programmes, as well as a number of other sub-regional partnerships.
- 5.5 Professional bodies represented in the region within the SCS and recruitment and interim management agencies, and HR directors were also consulted. Approximately 25% of consultees were from private or third sector forum organisations, chosen as they were likely to have a wide practical experience of recruitment or skills issues.

The survey

- 5.6 The standard survey form is attached as Annex C. This was mainly completed through a telephone interview, supplemented by a few face to face discussions. In a small number of cases the form was completed and returned by the respondent or filled in online. In addition to this main form a shorter version was sent to a range of skills, training and recruitment organisations. It should be noted that the results given below relate only to the main survey, except where specifically mentioned.

Focus groups & key organisations

- 5.7 Two focus groups were organised to test the emerging findings and to explore some of the key issues, including the suggested typology described in section 6. We would like to record

our thanks to the busy people who found an afternoon to hear a presentation on the initial results and who freely suggested a wide range of additional recommendations.

- 5.8 It was extremely valuable to discover widespread support for the typology and to share an understanding of the practical challenges that improved networking will have to overcome. Similarly, a clear preference for web based learning modules and the use of existing partnerships and other networks as a means of disseminating the findings was again valuable.
- 5.9 An interesting pilot initiative in the Leeds Bradford Corridor was mentioned at both focus groups. Here Integreat and both City Councils are developing a programme designed for the regeneration delivery teams, including master classes, visits and officer exchanges with other local authorities. We also heard that the Regeneration Department at Bradford is creating a regeneration academy to facilitate training for all staff within its Department
- 5.10 In a few cases, such as LGYH, we supplemented these focus groups debates with a number of detailed discussions, and again we wish to record our thanks to the people concerned.

A positive response

- 5.11 Before looking in detail at the results from the main survey we should record that overall there was an enormously positive response to this exercise. 95% of those we targeted agreed to participate, despite their extremely busy diaries. With SNR, Lyons and the general debates concerning economic development/regeneration, there was an overwhelmingly feeling that this exercise is very timely and supported their own desire to reappraise current activity. This positive attitude is a potential strength within the region in meeting present challenges.

This couldn't come at a better time. We are reorganising our own economic development service and we are re-writing our community strategy to take account of SNR and the place making agenda. We think we are doing some things well already, but we recognise we have to raise our game and we have got to welcome anything which can help us.

Positive partnerships in a region with a strong sense of identity

- 5.12 Most important of all perhaps in meeting the challenges of SNR etc. was the very positive endorsement – largely unsolicited – of the quality of partnership working in the region. There was a belief that significant progress was being made throughout most of the region in developing sensible and productive joint working.

I was a sceptic about whether we would overcome the traditional local rivalries, especially at the political level, but I have to acknowledge that we are making real progress. People are realising that they have common interests even if they support different football teams.

- 5.13 There was a common endorsement of the role of the RDA, which some contrasted with their experience or knowledge of other regions.

Of course it isn't all sweetness and light with YF, but when I hear colleagues moaning from other regions I realise that in recent years we have made real strides at working together.

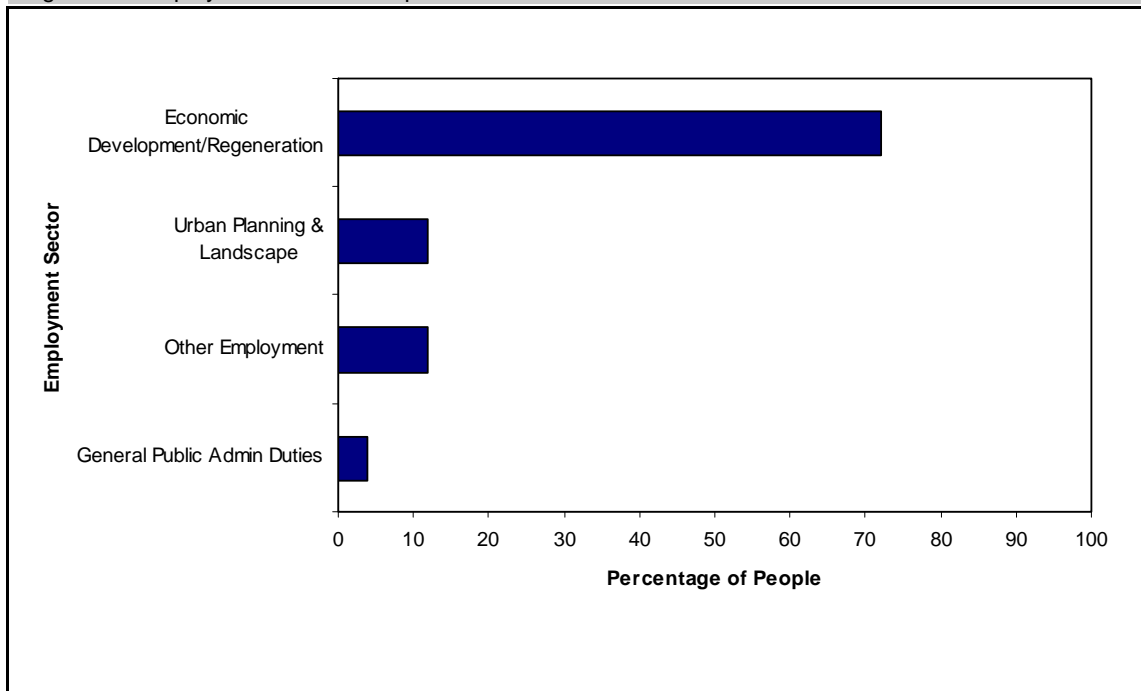
- 5.14 There was also a feeling that the region as an economic and political entity made more sense than most others, and that would help to meet the challenges ahead.

Yorkshire & Humber does hang together much better than other regions. The Humber City sub region links together East Yorkshire & Lincolnshire, the other two city regions make a lot of sense and there is clearly an identity and common interest in North Yorkshire. When you look at other regions they seem much less clear in how they fit together.

Composition of respondents

- 5.15 Figure 5-1 illustrates that over 70% of respondents to the main survey described themselves as being predominantly in our main target group, economic development or regeneration. The “other” category includes a range of related activities, such as housing, community development and area management. Respondents from non SCS delivery organisations, for example recruitment companies, professional and training bodies, completed a shorter version of the standard survey, and their responses are not recorded in this and the following figures.

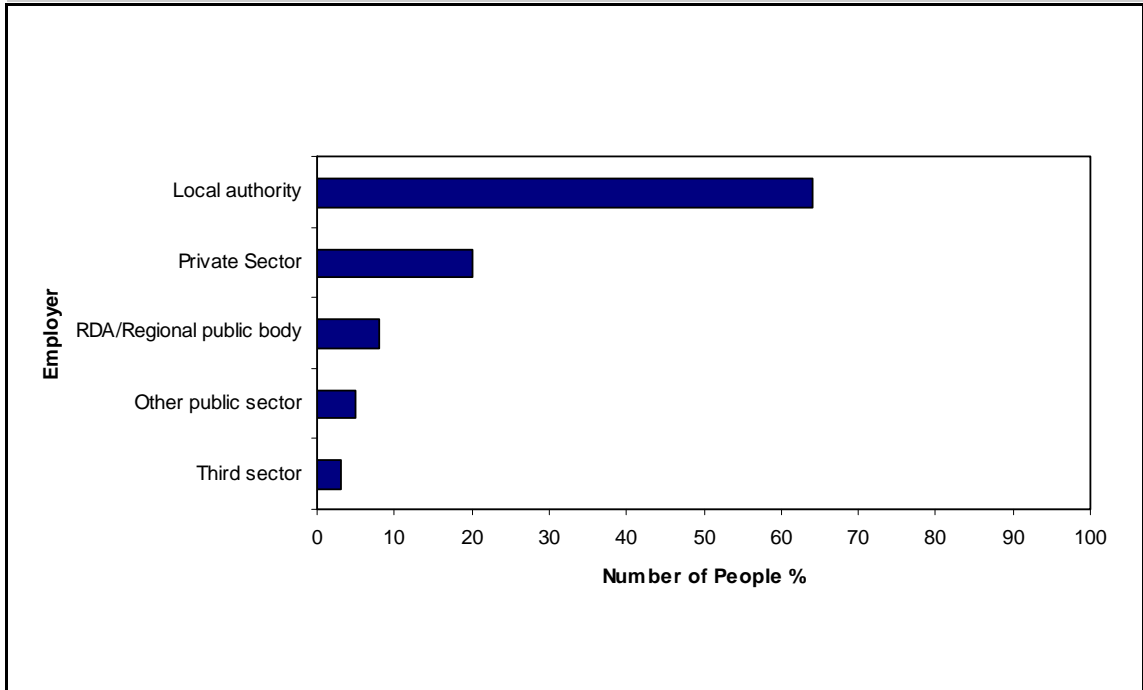
Figure 5-1 Employment Sector Composition



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

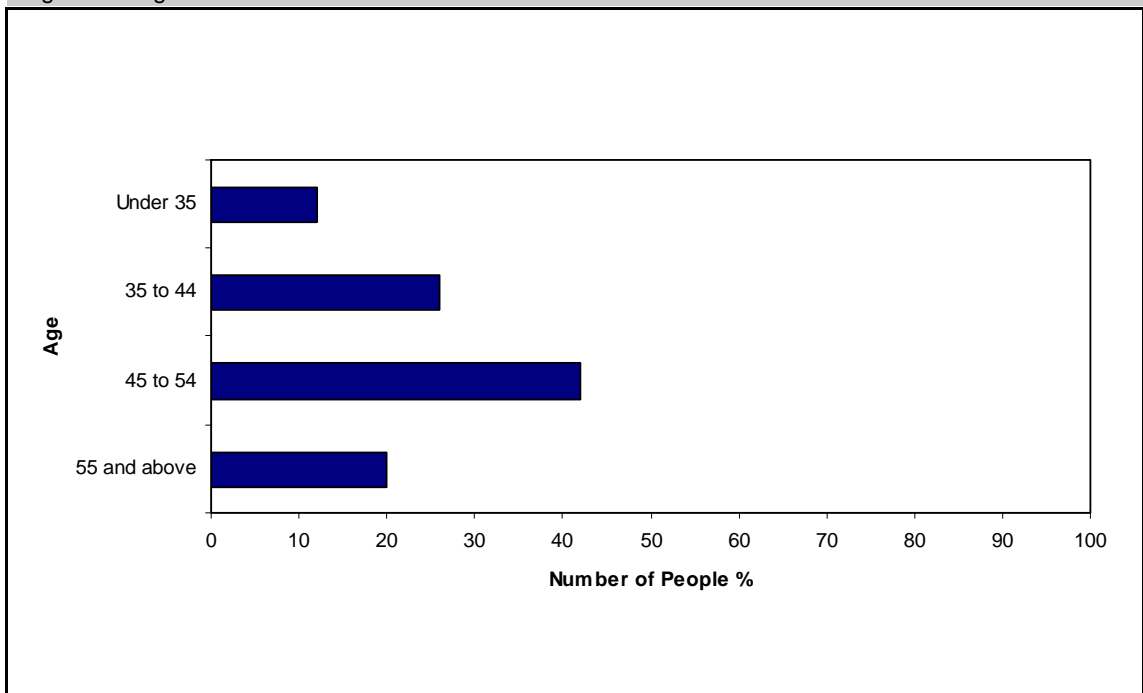
- 5.16 Figure 5-2 shows that almost 70% of respondents to the main survey worked for a local authority with the private sector (just over 20%) as the next largest group.
- 5.17 Given the seniority of the people we were dealing with – 75% were directors or heads of service – then it is not surprising that they are predominantly 45+ years of age, with almost 20% being 55 years or older.

Figure 5-2 Employers



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

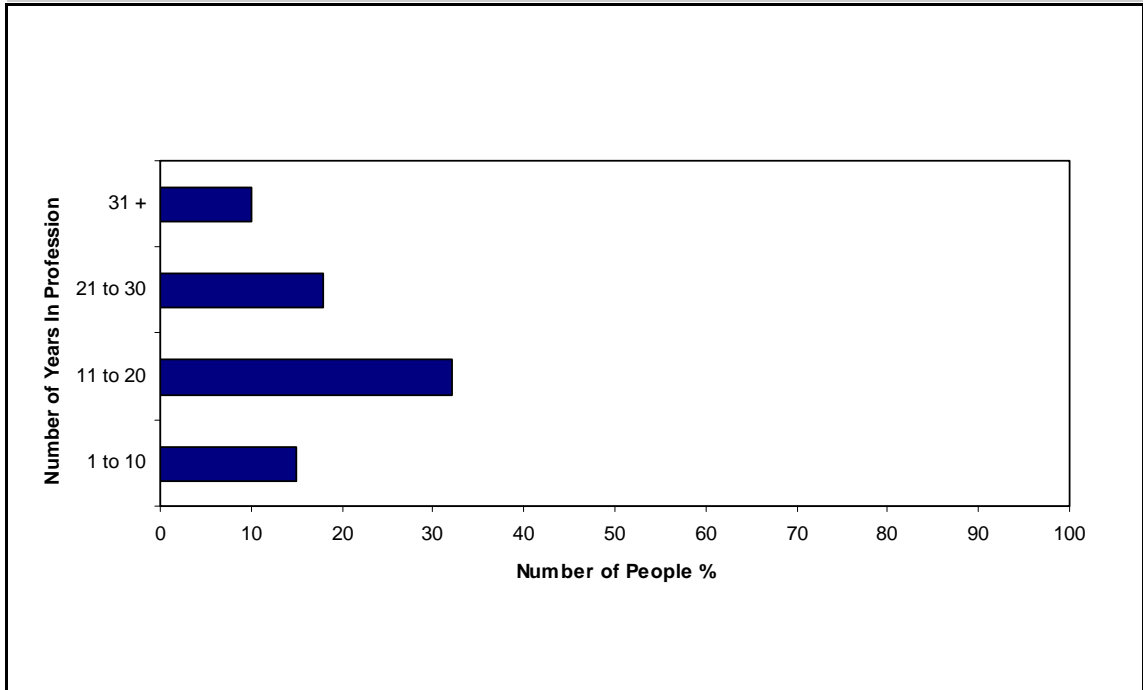
Figure 5-3 Age



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

5.18 Respondents were also very experienced with less than 15% have fewer than 10 years relevant experience and a third having more than 20 years (figure 5-4).

Figure 5-4 Number of years in professions

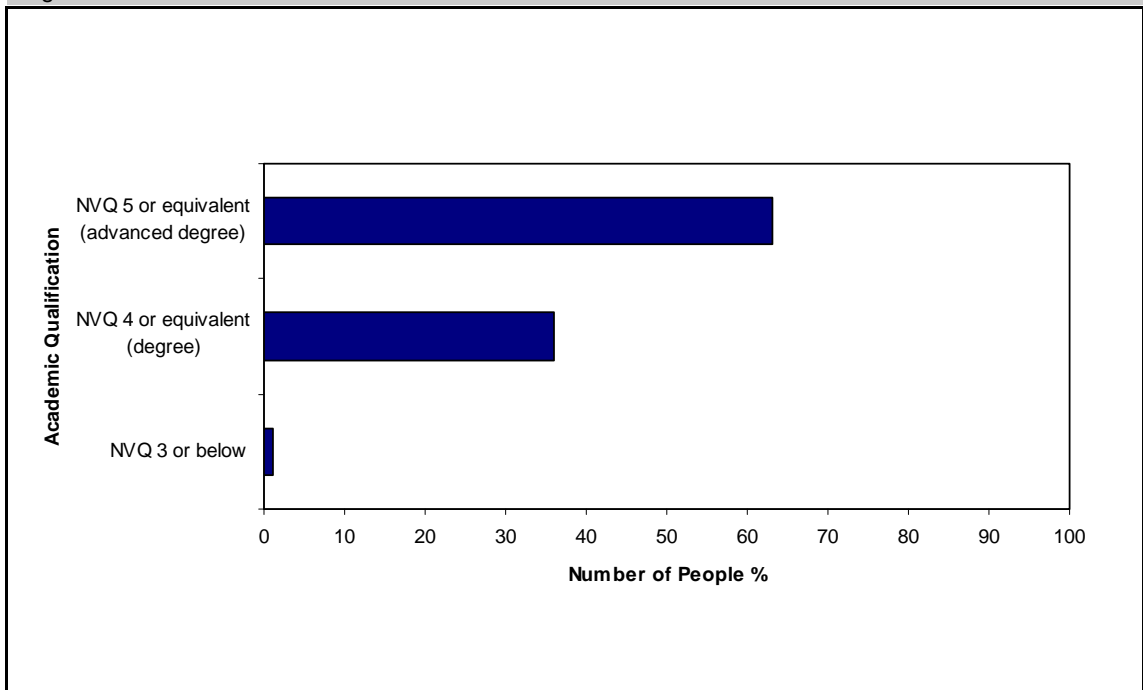


Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

Education & Qualifications

- 5.19 Their level of academic qualification is impressive with almost all having NVQ4 or above, and more than 60% having NVQ5. Indeed many of the participants had more than one advance qualification and several had two distinct SCS professional qualifications.

Figure 5-5 Academic Qualifications

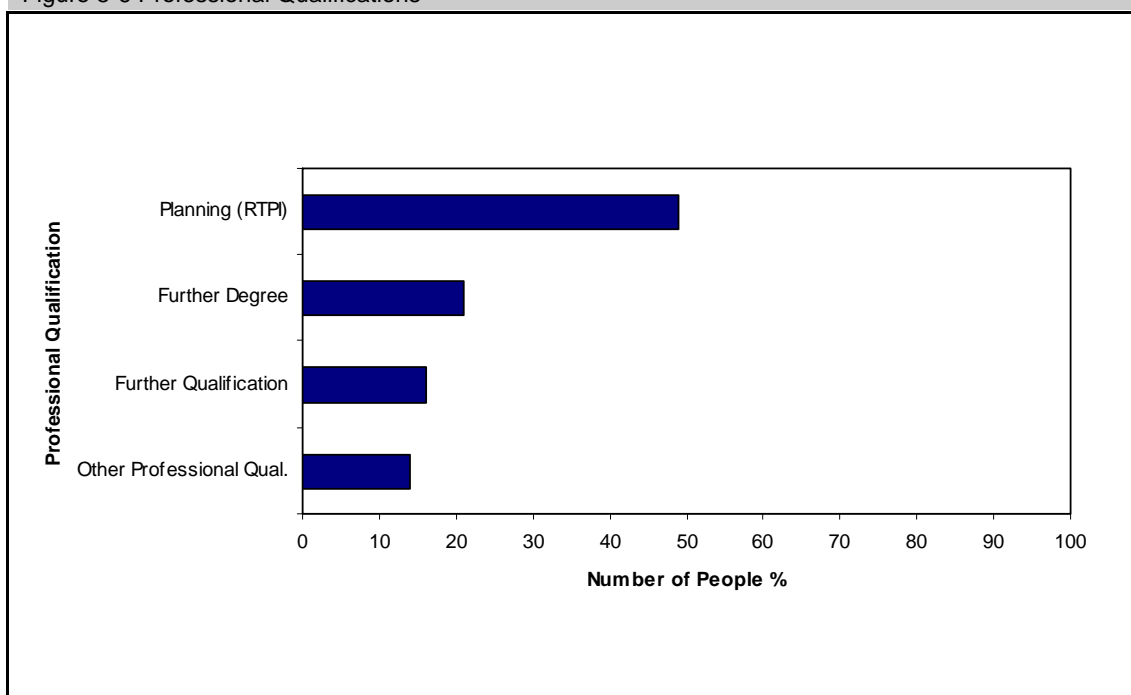


Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

High proportion of planners

- 5.20 Perhaps the first surprising characteristic is the overwhelming preponderance of RTPI trained planners at the top of the regeneration hierarchies in Yorkshire and Humber, with just over 50% in this category. Remembering that only 10% of respondents described themselves as being employed in a predominantly “urban planning & landscape” activity this was unexpected. Although some additional SCS professions such as chartered surveyors and architects did have a small presence, the largest other group, which was still small in comparison, was made up of those who had taken masters degrees in regeneration or urban development by day-release in local universities such as Sheffield Hallam.

Figure 5-6 Professional Qualifications



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

- 5.21 The survey seems to carry very positive news to RTPI members in terms of the value placed on their professional expertise, but there are some curiously mixed messages. In some cases respondents seemed to be indicating that they had prospered despite their planning background and in many more cases they described themselves as lapsed or ex-planners.

Yes, I have to confess that I started out as planner, but don't tell my staff I try to keep it quiet! Seriously, it is a lot easier to describe yourself as a regeneration or economic development officer in public or with elected members. The term “planner” especially in this part of the world (North Yorkshire) carries too many negative connotations.

- 5.22 There was also recognition that as well as negative connotations “planning” also had specific, ongoing problems in participating positively in the wider regeneration or SCS debates.

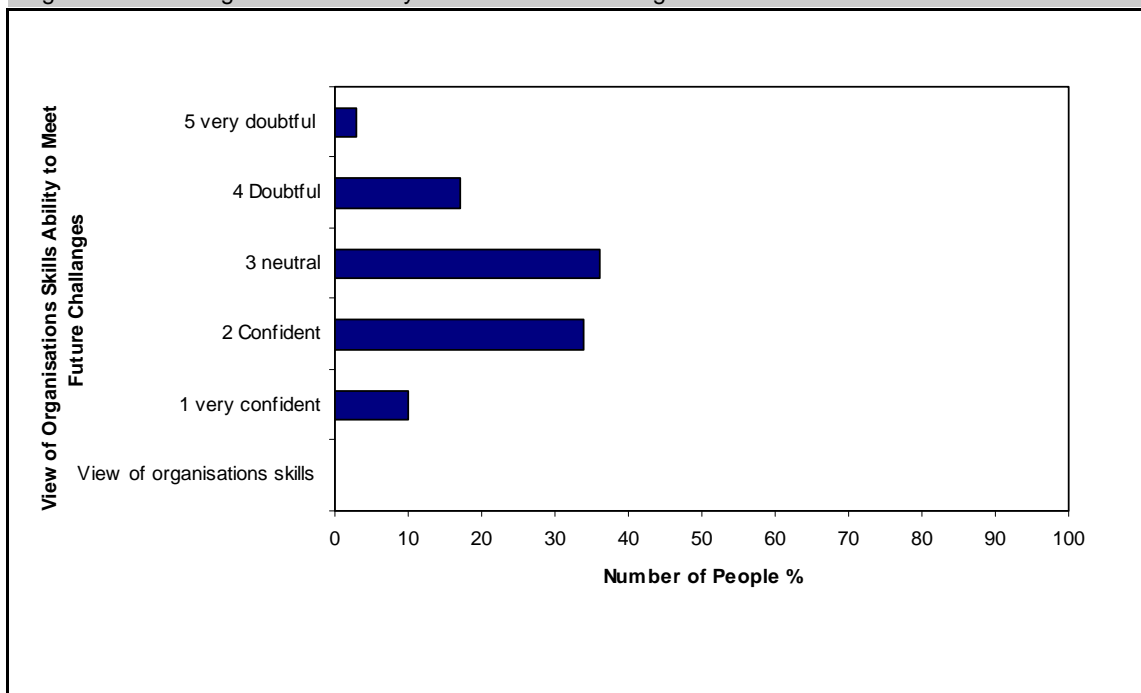
All of us who have been trained in planning know that it is not just about development control and saying no to people. It should be about the same things as regeneration and economic development, but the reality is that it is virtually impossible to get the resources to be proactive in planning. Who wants to be the councillor who argues for more planners? On the

other hand you can make the case for more resources for regeneration with some prospect of support.

Confidence in meeting future challenges

- 5.23 A key area of enquiry concerned the confidence of respondents in the ability of their organisation (or the part of it for which they were responsible or felt qualified to express an opinion) to meet the challenges of SNR, Lyons etc. and deliver the “Great Places” envisaged in the RES. A supplementary question also asked for an assessment of “their professions” readiness to meet these challenges.
- 5.24 In Figure 5-7 it can be seen that almost half of respondents were either confident or very confident about their organisation’s ability to meet these challenges, with about a fifth doubtful or very doubtful. The overall impression was of a group that was strongly positive about the future, although dividing temperamentally into “glass half empty and half full categories”. Less than a quarter of respondents were doubtful about their organisation’s ability to meet future challenges.

Figure 5-7 Their organisation’s ability to meet future challenges



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

- 5.25 The overall enthusiasm level was reduced by the largest single group who were “neutral” most often not in the sense of being undecided about their organisation, but about how SNR, Lyons and to a lesser extent Great Places might work out. These might be termed the professionally sceptic and cautious.

The narrative coming from SNR is great, but haven't we heard it all before? What got me in the first document was this phrase about it being a continuation of the Government's devolution agenda. I must have been away when that happened! We are still the most centrally controlled country in Europe and it looks ever more and more strange as the Scots and Welsh go steadily their own way. I know we are up for the changes in

SNR, but I don't intend reorganising the whole of our world until I am convinced it will be worthwhile and the Government will follow through.

This neutral group also comprised of a significant number who felt that confidence was itself a mark of complacency or that it was politically unwise to be seen as being too committed at this stage.

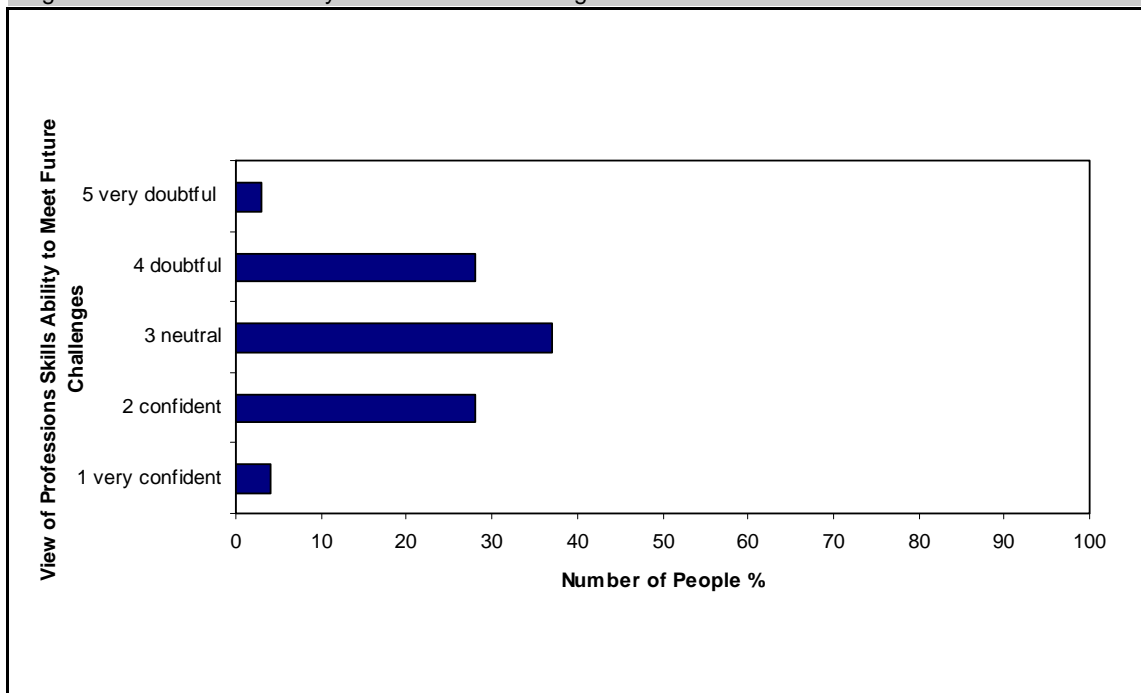
I have plumped for the neutral response, but I actually think we are quite well set up to meet the new challenges. Why however, should I make it seem easy or commit to something which might not find favour in the current political climate where the Government seems to be on its last legs?

Similarly, even where respondents felt positive about their organisation and the region, they harboured doubts about either the wider agenda or the overall economic prospects.

I am actually more positive about the prospects for the region than I have ever been – mainly because we seem to be really getting our act together to work with one another – but that is usually just when you get slapped around the face with the wet fish of recession.

- 5.26 Responses for the wider profession – usually taken to mean SCS or the wider economic development/regeneration sector rather than a particular professional activity – mirrored these responses, with a slightly lower confidence level, as can be seen in Figure 5-8.

Figure 5-8 Profession's ability to meet future challenges



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

- 5.27 Discussion on this topic often brought comments on the porous nature of this “profession” or sector.

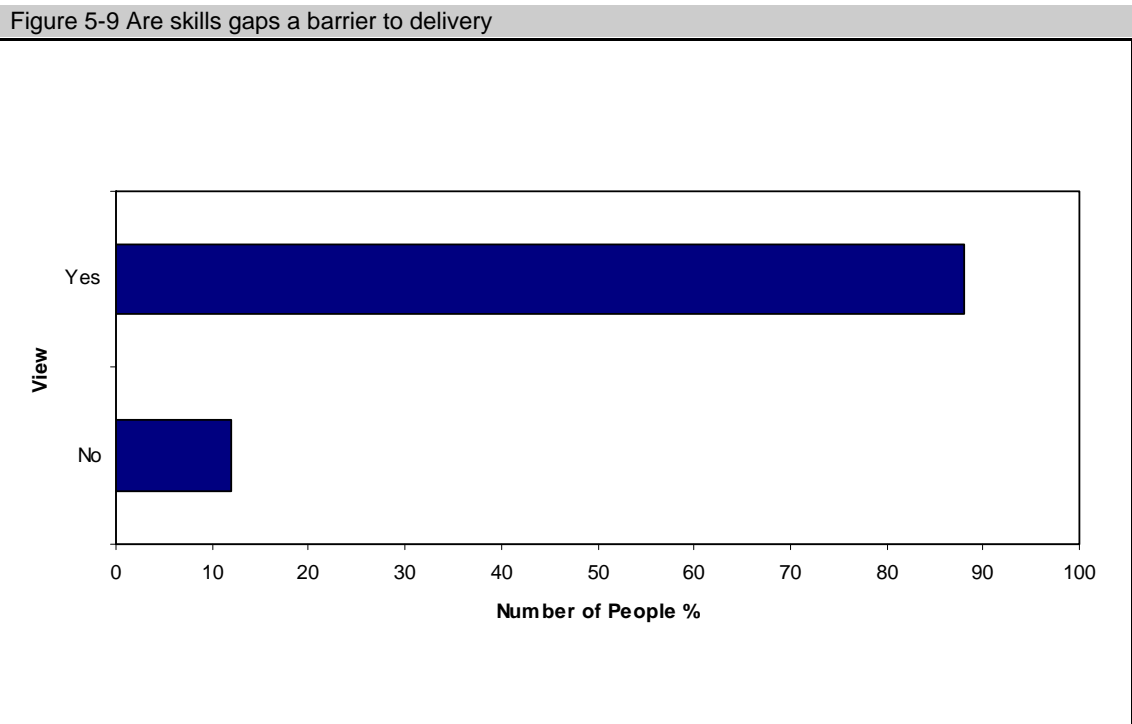
I suppose that one of the interesting things is that Lyons, SNR and the rest – and to be fair the trends before them – tend to illustrate that now everyone seems to be able to come to the party. When I started doing economic development 15 years ago it was a particular range of activities

– building industrial units, start up advice, a bit of inward investment etc.
– now it seems to involve the total range of local authority functions and lots of others – from raising educational aspirations to reducing health inequalities. Of course it is right we should be doing this, but on a bad day you worry that the impact is so diluted, that there isn't any!

What skills are missing and at what levels?

5.28 Given the perspective of an ever changing and expanding sector, it is not surprising that there was an overwhelming belief that skills deficits were inhibiting delivery, as is illustrated by figure 5-9, where nearly 90% of respondents are indicated as choosing this option. In actual fact the response was almost unanimous, because the few who said “no” typically qualified it with a statement similar to that below.

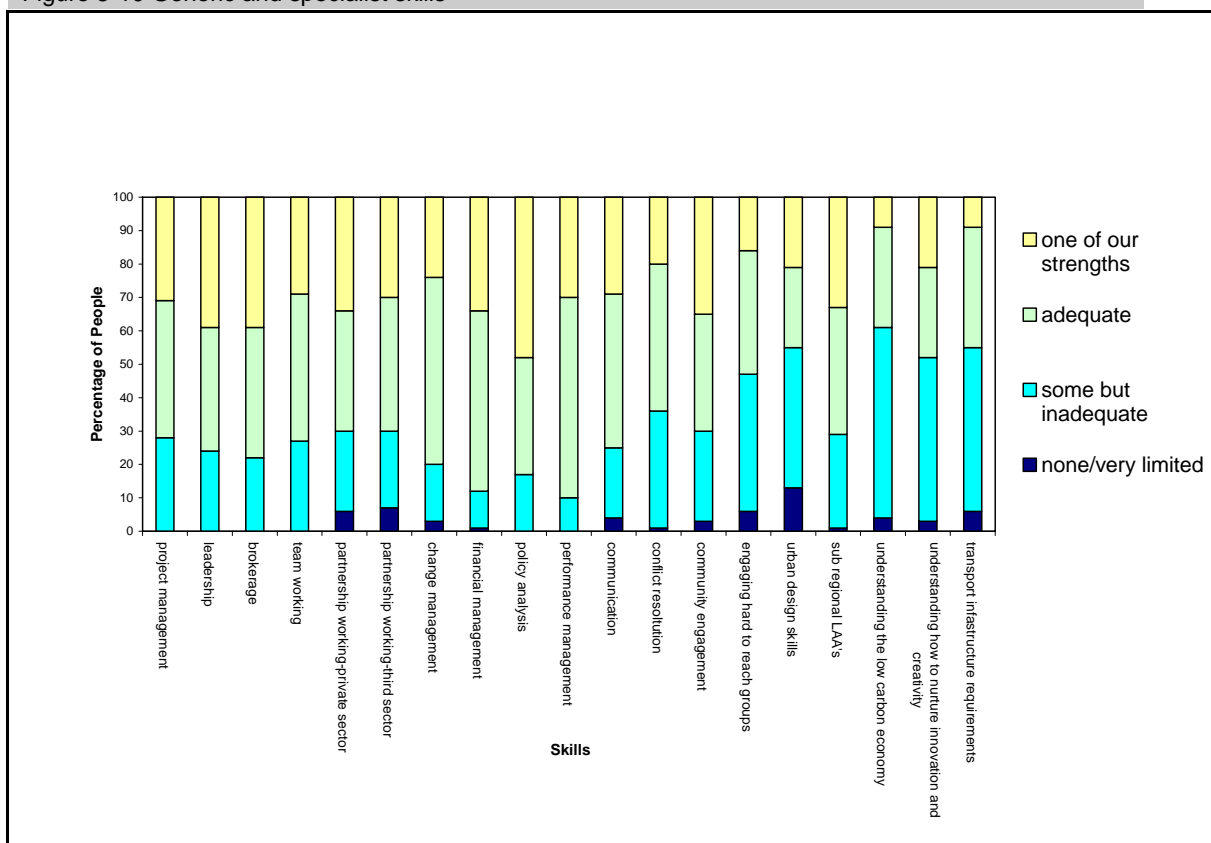
Of course skills are never 100% adequate, but generally that is not the problem, it is capacity. We have some outstanding people, but there aren't enough of them, especially when the agenda keeps on expanding.



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

- 5.29 It has already been noted that few respondents identified additional skills over and above those in the standard survey form, but which of those listed were regarded as areas of strength and weakness? Figure 5-10 provides an overall summary of the results from this survey.
- 5.30 Interestingly, every respondent felt that their authority had at least one area of where it was strong and equally all saw areas of weakness in terms of both generic and specialist skills.

Figure 5-10 Generic and specialist skills



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

- 5.31 One key difference between respondents in larger and smaller authorities is that the latter tended to pick the same particular strengths, community engagement, partnership working of various kinds and engaging difficult to reach groups. The explanation for this was that their size meant they were intimate organisations, closer to local communities and much less prone to silo working.

Shire districts clearly don't have the delivery capacity of metropolitan authorities, but they have some advantages from their human scale. They are close to the communities they serve and understand them well. Nor can you hide yourself away from partners or the community.

- 5.32 There was a less obvious pattern for larger authorities, but they did tend to be more likely to identify such issues as change management and partnership working of all types as a relative area of weakness. On the other hand, lead authorities on city regions naturally identified this as one of their strengths. There was potentially a paradox here, neatly summed up by one respondent.

I have worked for large and small authorities in the region, so I think I can see their strengths and weaknesses. The dilemma is that the small councils are good at engaging the community and understanding its needs, but don't have the capacity to deliver. On the other hand the big authorities have the capacity, but are faced with much more complex or polarised communities and struggle to establish priorities and break out of silo working.

Specialist skills

- 5.33 With the exception of sub regional working, the specialist skills – transport, innovation & creativity and understanding the low carbon economy – were all identified as relative areas of weakness.

Every time we do community consultation then transport comes up as a priority, but we don't really know how to respond.

Even where these councils are identified as being ahead of the game, there is still a feeling of needing extra help.

It has been suggested that we should be a Beacon Council on environmental and carbon reduction issues, but so far we have little evidence of real progress. Perhaps it is in the land of the blind!

- 5.34 These three specialist skills were closely allied with urban design as being the only ones where a large number of respondents felt that their organisation could beneficially access them externally.

Most of the generic skills are needed in-house to do the job properly, but on things like urban design and climate change there is a positive benefit in accessing external expertise. It is difficult to imagine that expertise in areas like these is going to be anything other than mediocre when developed in isolation - surely it is better to share skills in these areas and let someone have a fresh look at the issues?

Policy analysis

- 5.35 Policy analysis was seen as a relative strength which looks significant in view of the proposed economic assessment duty in SNR and the similar consultation paper on *Planning for Sustainable Economic Development*²⁴. These results should be tempered however by the fact that we talked to a disproportionate number of people who regarded this as one of their main activities.

Brokerage, Partnership & Team Work skills

- 5.36 While there was a general belief that strategic, sub regional partnership working was making good progress, especially among those authorities heavily involved, the persistent difficulties of overcoming silo mentalities was commonly reported. More surprisingly many had doubts about the adequacy of working with the private and third sectors. Typical reasons cited were the lack of sufficient time to adequately engage, and others' views that in LAA, MAA and other agendas which seemed either very public sector or performance management driven.

Our LSP started life as predominantly a partnership between the private and public sector to regenerate the local economy. Now it seems to be mainly about performance management of the public sector and the private sector members have gradually drifted away or attend irregularly.

²⁴ *Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development*, DCLG, March 2008

- 5.37 Other reasons cited were that the private sector had become less locally based and therefore more difficult to engage at the right level.

Ten years ago we still had major locally based employers who took an interest in the town. Now we have no major locally based companies at all. If we make a good connection then you can guarantee they will be transferred to another branch. The small businesses on the other hand are not good joiners, so although we talk to the Chamber and FSB, we never know if they are really representative and we still end up being accused of not consulting.

The notable exceptions to this pattern were the city authorities where town centre regeneration seems to have ensured a continuing strong relationship with the private sector.

- 5.38 Third sector relationships were regarded as equally problematic, although paradoxically partly because of the complexities of their relationships with local authorities.

It is difficult to characterise relationships with the voluntary sector because there are so many interests. Children's services, leisure, culture, environment, they all have their differing partners and ways of working. Our problem is often making some strategic sense of this and trying to present a coherent response when that is required.

- 5.39 One common point across the region is on the difficulties of properly resourcing the increasingly important network of partnerships.

Partnerships are really the name of the game at the moment and I have really been surprised at the progress made in city regions, but they are always difficult to resource. You get lots of elected members and chief executives together and they build a head of steam, and suddenly you are running with lots of strategic agendas on a shoestring. It is fine devoting your own resources to support these efforts, but members have to understand that other things will have to go on the back burner for while.

- 5.40 There is also an understanding that partnerships generally demand a high level of strategic awareness, knowledge and leadership.

I think it is really rewarding and interesting working in a strategic partnership environment, but I am constantly aware that I am dealing with much more senior local authority and other officers who have been doing this sort of thing for 20 years longer than me!

Change, Financial, Performance & Project Management

- 5.41 On what might be termed the practical skills of delivery there was a general belief that these had improved significantly over the last few years and were no longer the relative weaknesses identified in the Egan Review. Even where skills such as project management were identified as being relatively weak areas, the comments tended to relate to experience rather than technical skills.

I have identified project management as a relative weakness, but we have done a good deal of Prince 2 and similar training. What we are struggling with is that we just can't find the people with real practical experience

rather than theoretical knowledge. On the other hand we are trying to deliver an exceptional number of projects compared to the past.

5.42 It is worth noting at this stage that some of the survey results contrast with the some of the results of the Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey (2006). It found that the most common skills gaps (across all occupations) were:

- organisational development and change management (cited by 72.1% of authorities)
- business process redesign and analysis (61.0%)
- performance management (59.9%) and
- people management (59.3%)

5.43 Of course that survey was not looking specifically at SCS issues, nevertheless, the performance management regimes required by LAAs and similar initiatives also seem to have led to an acknowledged upgrading of these skills.

Communication, Cohesion & Engagement

5.44 Taken together these related skills produced a variable response, but overall there was recognition of the need for improvements in these areas. These issues were regarded by many as intrinsically difficult or thought provoking.

I found the communication and engagement questions to be the most difficult to address. Certainly we produce press releases and publications in a more professional way. We have a consultations strategy that we usually follow and we have seen more positive stories in the media. But are we really engaging with communities and changing views, raising aspirations etc.? I still suspect that we are only scratching the surface.

5.45 There was recognition that these were often regarded as an “add on” to either the regeneration process or the core skills of the practitioner, rather than essential requirements. In addition there was an awareness that these skills were often more effective when exercised in partnership.

We all like to do our own press releases and publications, but it is much more effective when it happens with a range of partners, including the local community. We just did this with a project and had lots of local people invited and not just the usual chain gang. It not only attracted more column inches, but it has led to lots of follow up activity from local organisations and we effectively have fifty additional PR officers telling the positive story out in the community.

5.46 Particular challenges in which outside advice and help would be welcomed included working with hard to reach groups and the general area of community cohesion. Several respondents also suggested that the region was “missing a trick” by not having an obvious regional repository of good news stories in regeneration.

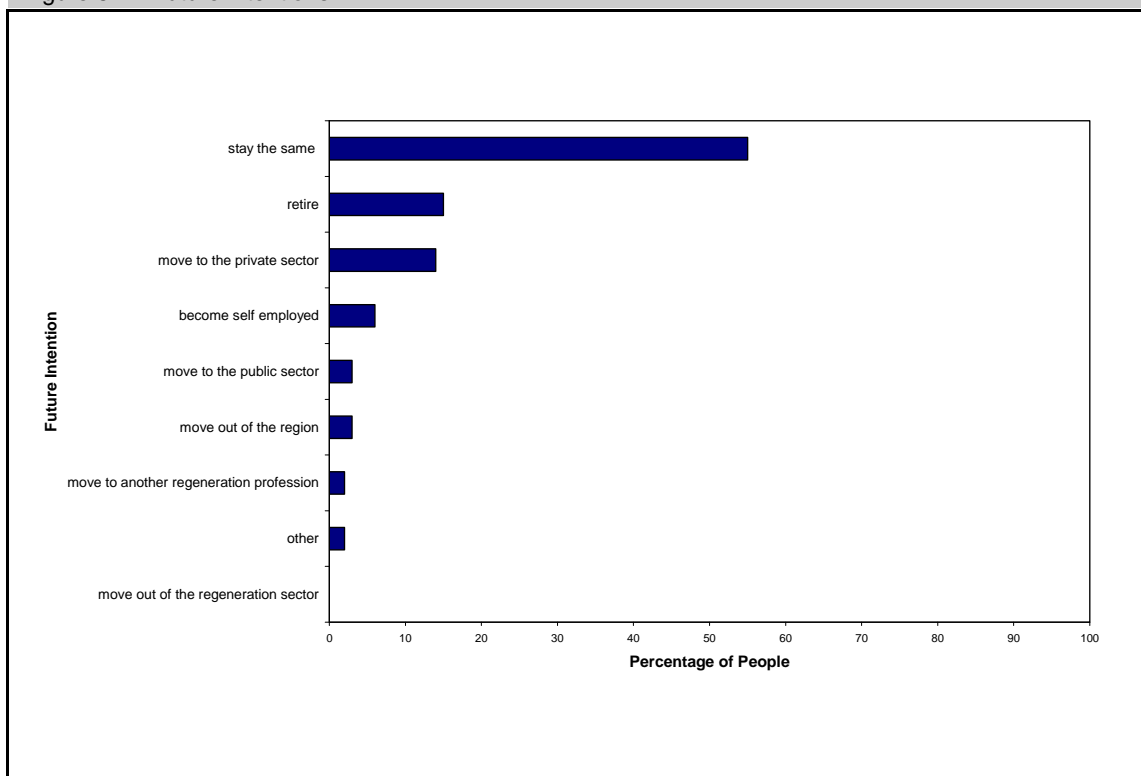
Future intentions & job satisfaction

5.47 We asked respondents to the main survey about their job aspirations over the next 3-5 years and the answers are recorded in Figure 5-11.

5.48 The largest category with about 60% response is to “stay the same”, which actually refers to those who are happy to remain within the same sort of job and activity in the future, although this is often combined with aspirations to meet new challenges, perhaps gain more recognition, seniority or rewards. The next biggest group (20%) is where, mainly because of age or years of service, they expect to retire. If for a moment we disregard this latter group, then we can see that almost three-quarters of respondents are actually keen to remain within their current activity. This reflects, despite the frustrations they may encounter on a regular basis, a very high degree of job satisfaction.

I suppose it isn't the done-thing in local government to be enthusiastic about your job – you are meant to be resigned to it – but actually I do like doing what I am doing. Sometimes you think you are going backwards, but overall you can make a real difference to the area and peoples' lives, and that makes it worthwhile. It is also intellectually challenging and most days bring a bit of something different. It is not your run of the mill bureaucrat's job.

Figure 5-11 Future intentions



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

5.49 Equally positive is the fact that although many of the respondents originated outside the region, less than 5% saw their futures elsewhere.

I have to confess to being from down south! There is no way I would go back to London or probably the South East in general. Whatever the downsides on life here the overall quality of life is much better and I can

afford a lifestyle I could never aspire to down there. There is also still a real sense of local identity which I value as everywhere becomes the same.

- 5.50 The only other statistically significant choices, moving to the private sector and becoming self employed were particularly attractive to older respondents who were looking to a lifestyle change.

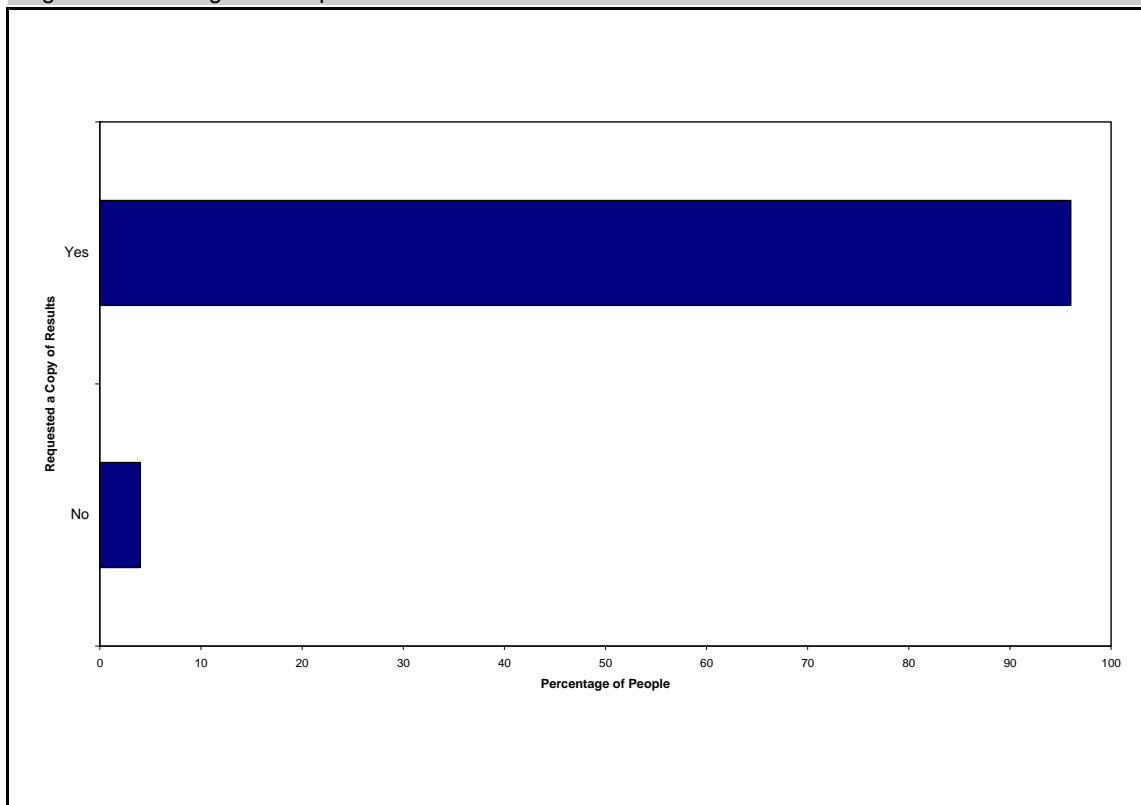
Although I am basically happy with my job I can't see me working these sorts of hours when I am 60 or 65. That's why the idea of perhaps working part time in consultancy or being self employed appeals.

- 5.51 It seems quite clear that one of the major threats to the current skills base is the potential number of people who will be retiring in the next few years and the number who may move to seek more flexible working.

Willingness to participate in future activity

- 5.52 We have noted above the very positive response elicited by this research and this was reflected in questions relating to the willingness to participate in the future updating of the skills information and initiatives to tackle the issues identified. Over 95% of respondents agreed to participate further, as shown in Figure 5-12.

Figure 5-12 Willingness to update the skills database



Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

Comments on particular skills & issues

- 5.53 The survey forms were used as a basis for wide ranging discussions: other relevant comments are recorded here to help inform the recommendations and discussion in section 6.

Understanding Sustainable Communities

- 5.54 The first recommendation of the Egan Review the need for a common understanding of what was meant by sustainable communities.

We recommend that Government, local authorities and other stakeholders (built environment professionals, public service providers, developers and community organisations) adopt the common goal and a common understanding of what the term 'sustainable community' means. Our definition and seven components constitute a model that others may wish to use. It may need to be supplemented to reflect local priorities and the views of local people.²⁵

Remembering that our respondents are an exceptionally articulate, well educated and experienced group of people it is clear that this aspiration has been badly missed! Perhaps this was inevitable given, as we saw in section 2 that Egan was immediately criticised for missing key aspects of what was required in a sustainable community, but it is should be acknowledged that the terminology can itself be self-defeating.

Sustainability is written into our development process – every major project for example needs a sustainability appraisal – but we do not find it a useful concept with multi-agency working or elected members, let alone with the general public.

- 5.55 Many respondents similarly argued that the “jargon” of sustainability needed to be addressed by better communication skills to make them relevant to the public. We were given the specific example of a new “Sustainable Community Strategy”, which was renamed the Community Strategy after it was subject to a plain English check. So although the professionals we interviewed continue to use sustainability as a key concept the comments are worth recording as an overall check on the importance of conducting these debates in accessible language.

Leadership

- 5.56 Many respondents highlighted the importance of leadership (political and professional) in being able to take risks and make things happen. They were particularly critical of elected members, and their lack of understanding of economic issues. On the other hand they conceded that there was too little accessible information produced for them and little opportunity for informal dialogue to counteract this. This reinforces the message of the PPP report on best practice which we summarised briefly in section 2.

Policy Analysis and Strategy

- 5.57 While most reported this as strength many smaller authorities recognised it as weakness. There was also an acknowledgment that the proposed new duty in SNR meant that there were obvious opportunities for sharing development in this area, and practical and political benefits in developing a common assessment framework.

²⁵ Egan, page 23

Communication

- 5.58 While communications was sometimes recognised as an individual weakness it was almost as likely to be seen as a local strength, but there was much more consistent support for seeing this as a collective weakness or opportunity at a regional level. In this context it is closely linked to the comments on the lack of good practice information.

Yorkshire has been in relative economic decline for a generation. That traditional self-confidence has reduced and this is exacerbated by our natural tendency to see the glass as half empty. Yorkshire Forward do a bit, but collectively we are very reticent about singing our own praises and of course this reinforces the cycle of low aspirations.

- 5.59 Part of this problem, many believed was the lack of single source of good practice and good news on regeneration issues for the region. Some respondents had used the Yorkshire Futures, “What Works” website (www.yorkshirefutures.com/whatworks.html), but tended to think of this as a “policy officers” facility that was not user friendly for the general or occasional user. Similarly, some had used the ASC website, and while again recognising it as useful, regarded it as too “academic” or nationally orientated to fulfil this function. An increasing number used the Integreat website, but felt that it lacked sufficient good practice examples. Similarly, the Yorkshire Forward website was viewed as good on RDA activity, and increasingly useful as a general source of news on regeneration, but lacking in inspirational case studies. It is however noted in section 7 that Integreat’s website is currently being re-designed with the intention of becoming an essential resource for local practitioners.

External versus integral skills

- 5.60 Larger authorities generally expected to have an almost complete set of generic and specialist skills in-house, with the exceptions noted above, but smaller authorities were happier to access them externally or were willing to contemplate the idea of shared expertise.

Capacity and skills

- 5.61 Many respondents, when asked to choose between skills or capacity deficits as the biggest concern opted for capacity. It is important that recommendations address this especially in the light of SNR. One of the weaknesses of much of the debate summarised in section 2 is the failure to distinguish between capacity and skills issues. There is a suggestion in the next section about how some clarity might be brought to this, but at this stage it is worth emphasising that for a significant minority (approximately 25%) it is capacity which is perceived as the key challenge, not upgrading skills.
- 5.62 In this there were some very distinct sub regional variations. In North and East Yorkshire/South Humber a common sentiment was as follows.

Yes you can always upgrade the skill you have, but generally we have not been able to recruit the number of people we need to do what is now required. We are traditionally a lean council and things like economic development have not been a high priority so we just don't have the posts some of our neighbours have. When we do manage to find some additional resources we then struggle to attract good candidates – often because we

aren't paying the going rate or there is a perception that this isn't a good place to advance your career.

- 5.63 In South and West Yorkshire recruitment problems are reported as being less problematic and there is a tradition of larger economic development or regeneration establishments. A typical comment follows.

Of course you never have enough people, but in an organisation of 20,000 there is always scope for help from other departments on big or one-off issues, and over time there is the scope for shifting resources. For example, we tended to focus on delivery and we never had much of a research and strategy capability in economic development, but now our policy people provide this and have led in the revision of the strategy.

- 5.64 These views are backed up by comments of the recruitment companies interviewed who all had clients across the region. They reported that it is much easier to fill the posts they dealt with in South and West Yorkshire than their equivalents in the North or East. They also commented that pay rates are noticeably lower in the latter areas, which further exacerbates these difficulties.

6: Towards a Typology of Skills Shortages

What do we mean by skills shortages?

- 6.1 How are we to make sense from the complexity of issues raised in these discussions of skills shortages? Practitioners seem confident about some skills and aware of gaps in relation to others. Typically, individuals may have divergent views in respect to their personal as opposed to their organisation's skill base. In addition, as has been remarked elsewhere, organisations or individuals may be perceived to be deficient not in generic or specific skills but in their willingness to engage outside their traditional remits.²⁶ Skills issues also inevitably raise questions of capacity, partnership and the interaction of organisations and even sectors.
- 6.2 Communities in the 21st Century are intrinsically complex so it is not surprising that we struggle with these complications. If we look back at the apparently simple Great Places diagram attached as figure 2-2 it is soon obvious what challenges this poses in practice. Some individuals and some professions seem to thrive in this complexity while others might prefer a more exact science. Reports and action plans on skills issues need at least to make this more intelligible and not more complicated.
- 6.3 Looking at the widespread scepticism expressed by practitioners at the progress made following the debates generated by Egan and the impressive range of ASC narratives on these issues, it seems as if much of this may be due to confusion over the types of issues being addressed. Yet on the other hand there are a wide range of skills strengths evident from the views expressed by our respondents, and many of these have in part been generated by actions that seem to have followed the parameters marked out by Egan, ASC and RCEs. Again a clearer idea of what remedies are being pursued and by whom, may help to create a more positive response. We therefore suggest a typology of skills issues, which in turn may lead to a more coherent programme of recommendations and lines of responsibility.

A suggested Typology of Skills Issues

- 6.4 Figure 6-1 advances a typology of skills issues which we have used to frame our recommendations. This was discussed and refined by focus groups who agreed that it was a sensible starting point for future discussions. The typology fixed on four distinct, but inters related issues being raised in these debates.

- Labour Market
- Knowledge Management
- Organisation Capacity
- Partnership Working

²⁶ *Mind the Skills Gap - The skills we need for sustainable communities*, p14

6.5 The first category is what might be termed the “normal” skills gap issues. Is demand and supply for discrete professional skills adequate? Do we have enough planners, architects and other specialists for example? Even this apparently simple idea becomes more complicated as we introduce the concept of the generic skills mix, which we have heard many regard as more important than particular professional or technical qualifications. A further complication is then introduced by the priority given to relevant, practical experience. Effective remedies for dealing with the issues raised here might include raising the profile of the sector and addressing factors such as pay and conditions.

Figure 6-1 Typology of Skill Shortage Issues & Indicative Remedies

Type of Issue	Specifics		Possible Remedies
Labour Market	Not enough qualified people	Poor retention	Raise sector profile Extend career opportunities Pay, conditions, status etc.
	Candidates lack right aptitudes	Inadequate generic skills mix	Clarity of specification Better training & networking
		Lack of relevant experience	Secondments, work experience
Knowledge Management , Innovation and Exchange	Knowledge management for change	Evaluation & Review – “thinking-time”	Good practice Better dissemination
	Continuing professional development	Innovation Information Exchange	Professional networks
Organisation Capacity	Capacity or resources shortfall		Higher political profile Shared specialist resources Peripatetic teams
	“Silo” working within organisations		Cross organisational networks Multi-professional teams
Partnership Working	Cross sector cooperation		Cross sector networks Better use of consultants
	Inter- agency working		Inter agency teams Clarity of purpose Subsidiarity
	Sub-regional & multi-area working		Joint resourcing arrangements

Source: Regional Skills Audit SQW

- 6.6 The second category, Knowledge Management, has strong links with some of the generic skills required, but it also carried an implicit acknowledgment that this area of activity is one that requires an unusual level of CPD and change management. The focus groups were keen to expand this to include “Innovation & Exchange”. While recognising that there is a personal responsibility for upgrading one’s knowledge base, it was also argued that there is an organisational responsibility for combating this effective skills shortage due to the lack of time for evaluation, review and networking. Without this, organisations are failing to learn the lessons advocated by PPP and other good practice guides. The most effective way to address these issues might consist of action such as better good practice guides, other measures for better dissemination or improving professional and information networks.
- 6.7 The third category is one which recognises the organisational aspects of skills issues, most obviously the lack of capacity. Just as important however is the challenge of trying to get people to break down organisational and professional silos. Here the appropriate remedies might include developing multi-professional teams, initiatives to improve understanding and share agendas and opportunities for cross-organisational working.
- 6.8 The fourth and increasingly important category is related to the need to work in partnership on many agendas. There are many similarities with the previous category, but we are talking about the even more daunting challenge of extra organisational working, and cooperation across geographical boundaries. Here one might recommend such activities as cross sector networks and inter agency delivery teams.
- 6.9 The evidence from respondents shows that they recognise that all four of these issues need to be addressed for an effective response to present and likely future challenges. Workforce issues are important, but most of our respondents think that these issues are outside their immediate control and perhaps are most suited to national initiatives. Categories 2 and 3 are about how the their organisation learn, are managed and quality of leadership. They reinforce the conclusions of the PPP best practice guide examined in section 4. The final category is particularly challenging because it is a rapidly expanding in importance and there is relatively little best practice material. It also relies on complex inter-organisational and even cross-sector relationships to formulate improvement strategies.

7: Recommendations

- 7.1 In this section we set out a series of recommendations to Yorkshire Forward and Integreat. In a sense they are draft recommendations, because most require further discussion with a range of partners, and can beneficially be supported by the relevant networks, especially the respondents to the present research. We would also advocate that consideration be given to the formal adoption of a joint programme by these two bodies and Local Government Yorkshire and Humber.

Local Government Yorkshire & Humber

- 7.2 LGYH is the regional partnership of local authorities, which enables them to work together and collaborate on issues of common purpose. With their permission we have appended the LGYH Executive Summary of their Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (RIES) in Annex H, because we feel there are areas of common recommendations between those we make and those set out there. The importance within SNR of improving local authority delivery capacity and the prospective devolution of responsibilities provides a natural link. This is further reinforced by the fact that two of the three key issues identified in the RIES - "Economic Growth, Prosperity & Inclusion", and "Climate Change & Sustainability" are ones on which invite close cooperation. Finally, LGYH see responding to SNR as a key immediate activity.
- 7.3 Adoption of the recommendations within this report by LGYH would bring an immediate credibility and visibility with Chief Executives and senior elected members and would be a further demonstration of the region's ability to work together on SNR issues.

Integreat

- 7.4 In addition to the rapid changes at LGYH it should be recorded that during this research Integreat was in the process of recruiting and inducting a new team and re-focusing their activities. One of their first actions was to commission this work and assist SQW in the resulting research. Integreat's web site is also currently being re-designed to allow it to better reflect best practice case studies and profile practical and innovative work across the region.

Joint Programme of Recommendations

- 7.5 Figure 7-1 illustrates how a joint programme of recommendations might look in practice. Suggestions are divided into the four categories described in the typology advanced in section 6, above with a suggested lead body for each. In practice the categories might be further subdivided to allow a sensitive and complex allocation of responsibilities. Equally other partners might later be identified to lead on particular recommendations.

Labour Market Issues

7.6 We would suggest that labour market issues should not be a priority for Integreat or Yorkshire Forward. For the Sustainable Communities Sector the ASC have been involved in national initiatives which might be supported locally when appropriate. Equally for the local government sector there are a wide range of measures from the national employers' organisations, including those designed to raise the profile of career opportunities that might be assisted. We would advocate that LGYH should lead on these issues. The major contribution that Integreat might make is by providing the good practice and web based resources mentioned below, which could help to raise the overall, positive profile of the sector.

Figure 7-1 Indicative Programme of Recommendations

Issue	Lead	Active Support	Focus
Labour Market	LGYH		Local Government Career Profile Recruitment & retention Flexible working, secondments & better work practice
		YF	Better data Private sector intelligence
		IY	Professional bodies & 3 rd sector links
Knowledge Management, Innovation and Exchange	IY		Good Practice Better dissemination Support cross sector networks Web based learning Virtual networks
		LGYH	Climate Change Economic Growth & Evaluation Duty
		YF	Strategic Policy & IRS Dissemination of Evaluations
Organisation Capacity	LGYH		SNR & place shaping profile Shared specialists
		YF	SNR Specialists & peripatetic teams Regional networks
		IY	Pilot learning initiatives e.g. Leeds/Bradford academies 3 rd sector involvement
Partnership Working	LGYH		Inter agency working City/sub-region working
		YF	City/sub-region working Renaissance/Great Places
		IY	Joint professional bodies links 3 rd sector access

Retention

- 7.7 Issues such as retention are principally for the local government sector, but some role is possible for YF/IY in using current and future funding of specific posts to specifically widen career experience and broaden secondment opportunities.

Better Data

- 7.8 As we saw in section 3, Yorkshire Forward's Regional Econometric Model (REM) provides useful background information, but not sufficient detail in the areas we have explored in this work. Similarly, the Local Government Workforce Survey, especially with its regional breakdown, provides useful specific information, but is not comprehensive for the sector. The considerable body of research commissioned by the ASC also provides useful background material, but as we have seen, the confidence levels fall rapidly when this is applied to the region. We would advocate that the LGYH network and that now available from respondents to this research, should be used as an ongoing source of qualitative data, with a short update survey at least annually. Other sources should be explored over the longer term.

Extending Career Opportunities

- 7.9 There was considerable evidence that part-time or flexible employment, might be an effective way to continue using the expertise of early retirees and some of those contemplating self-employment or a move to the private sector. This may well be appropriate issue for LGYH to lead, but there may be a role for Yorkshire Forward or Integreat in helping to pilot specific initiatives, or the potential to use this expertise in particular projects such as town renaissance.

Secondments, better work experience

- 7.10 For many respondents skills shortages often correspond to a lack of people with practical experience, especially in project delivery. There is also a reported lack of variety and career enhancing opportunities especially in smaller authorities. One practical way to tackle this is to produce better work experience and more opportunity for secondments. There is undoubtedly scope for improvement in these areas, particularly with political and practical support from LGYH.

Private and third sectors

- 7.11 This study has concentrated on the economic development and regeneration role of the public sector, but respondents in the private and third sectors emphasised that they also have specific skills issues that need to be addressed. We suggest that the further work should be considered to investigate the options for a similar exercise for these sectors, perhaps initially focussing on the latter as the current economic uncertainties will probably inhibit a positive response from the former.

Knowledge Management

- 7.12 It is suggested that Integreat's main contribution to tackling the skills issues identified in this report is in the area of Knowledge Exchange, Innovation & Management. As indicated,

respondents argued that in a rapidly changing sector primary responsibility, at least for senior practitioners, will always reside with the individual. This said, and particularly with Lyons, SNR and Great Places in mind, there is much that can be done to support individual and organisational learning.

- 7.13 In this context it is important to pursue skills and learning strategies which are considered as practical by the respondents within this survey, and to which they have had a chance to contribute and commit. The most promising way in which this can be achieved is by encouraging and utilising existing networks.
- 7.14 “*Not more networks or events!*” was a common call, but there was overwhelming support for the idea of utilising existing ones more effectively. Similarly, networks need a clearly defined purpose. We would therefore urge Integreat, Yorkshire Forward and LGYH to collectively engage with the main networks to see if they can lend practical assistance, initially with a view to them disseminating the information contained in this report and considering the recommendations. In the longer term we urge Integreat and LGYH to promote an ongoing skills and learning dimension to the networks’ activities. Key networks in this context include
- Professional bodies
 - LGYH Climate Change & Economic Growth boards
 - City and other sub regional & other partnerships (see below)

Good Practice

- 7.15 Most respondents to the survey have experience that allows them to make judgements with a perspective of many years in local regeneration. They also network with colleagues in other regions and a not inconsiderable number have worked in other parts of the UK. We therefore take their positive views on current activity, including improving partnership working, as an encouraging indicator. In addition, many pointed to examples of good practice in their own local areas to illustrate recent progress. Nevertheless, as we have seen, in the important areas of Communication, Cohesion & Engagement, there was recognition of the need to improve local activity. This was even more commonly perceived as a weakness at the regional or sub regional level.
- 7.16 In addition to commenting on the overall lack of local, good practice examples and a single source of “good news” stories for the region, a number of respondents from architectural and design backgrounds also bemoaned the lack of visual examples.

One picture is worth a thousand words, but however many you use, you still can't tell a better design story! I am also staggered by how difficult it is to get consistent before and after pictures, which you think would be standard for any major project.

- 7.17 Developing the Integreat and the Yorkshire Forward websites as an automatic source of good practice and good news stories would be an important contribution to tackling these issues. There is no reason why this should not be partly tackled by linking to other sites such as Yorkshire Futures and ASC, as well as producing new material or encouraging others to produce it.

- 7.18 It was suggested to us that this might be facilitated by requiring recipients of grant or other assistance to commit to providing suitable, web based material.

Given that we have to jump all sorts of hurdles to receive grants from the Government or RDA it has always surprised me that there is no requirement to produce any accessible narrative or photographic record. I am sure it need not be onerous if standardised, and on the other hand it would be good to have this generally for other areas.

- 7.19 Such an approach would have the ability to assist with some of the sector profile issues described above.

Web Based Learning

- 7.20 Given the current workloads of many of the respondents to the survey the focus groups were keen that future learning material should be heavily web based, to allow flexible study. Some respondents had already made informal use of a varied range of resources, and we are aware of work by the ASC and IDeA looking at web-based resources for economic development CPD. We suggest that this should be closely monitored by Integreat, Yorkshire Forward and LGYH, and a local contribution be made as appropriate.

You-Regenerate Website

- 7.21 A novel idea advanced by one respondent and supported by a focus group was the possible creation of a You-Tube type facility, where members of virtual networks might be invited to contribute their experiences on an anonymous, but regulated basis. We are aware that facilities such as IDeA's Knowledge site have offered similar facilities, with varying degrees of success, depending on take up, but this is worth considering in any re-design of local web sites.

Better Dissemination

- 7.22 Many respondents and both focus groups argued that we need to concentrate on better dissemination of lessons from existing activity. This might be partly addressed by the suggestions on good practice, but it was also argued that we actually tend to learn more from our mistakes than our successes.

Of course what everybody really likes to read about is the disasters! But seriously, if we could overcome the problems then it is the lessons from things that didn't always work perfectly that have the most to offer in terms of learning.

- 7.23 The practical difficulties of this were widely recognised, but one specific suggestion is that we should raise the profile of evaluations that have been completed, and where confidential information is involved, at least make a summary of the main conclusions available to the wider regeneration community. Yorkshire Forward is already doing so with evaluations they have commissioned and this should be encouraged across all partners. Positive references were made in this respect to the fairly recent innovation in "Regeneration & Renewal" magazine to have a specific section for such evaluation summaries. This should be discussed as a practical recommendation with LGYH and the evaluation team at Yorkshire Forward.

Professional Networks & CPD

- 7.24 Although recognising that professional networks are often weakest where they need to be strongest – particularly among senior regeneration/economic development officers – there was still an acknowledgment that it is through their activities that much relevant in-service skills development takes place. It is important then that Integreat, Yorkshire Forward and LGYH continue to develop their relationships with these bodies, and continue to facilitate their activities.
- 7.25 Practical help might include assisting with their learning and workshop activities, especially where these address specialist or generic skills priorities, and providing resources to develop or publicise them. Integreat is facilitating such activity and is already seen as a source of information on some of them.
- 7.26 One negative comment that was received from respondents is that an increasing number of local authorities have withdrawn payments of individual professional membership fees for their staff. Our mainly senior respondents did not feel that this was a serious loss to them individually as they had seen the benefits of membership and could well afford to continue them. They did however feel that it sent the wrong message especially to newer and junior entrants to the sector, and was inconsistent with Egan and other recommendations.

Where CPD is accredited by professional institutions we recommend that employers work with those institutions to consider how best to accredit on the job training in generic skills and interdisciplinary working.²⁷

- 7.27 This would seem to be behaviour inconsistent with other attempts to encourage better skills, and is not happening within the private sector. LGYH might wish to consider this issue, and perhaps urge member authorities to at least consider paying professional fees for new entrants or those involved in significant learning programmes. They may also wish to consider whether individual authorities might wish to take up the Egan recommendations on CPD or whether this might be progressed collectively.

Cross Professional Networks

- 7.28 Integreat's existing initiatives to link together professional networks was widely mentioned as a positive activity. The continuation and expansion of these efforts was widely supported as a means of breaking down professional silos.
- 7.29 Respondents to the survey and in other discussions included only a handful of those from the housing professions (mainly those working in local authorities and RSLs), but there was a widespread belief that they were not routinely included in the wider regeneration debates. There was also recognition that they had particular skills sets that could enhance any regeneration network. The proposed creation of the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is a good opportunity for looking at specific events and activities that might promote the wider involvement of housing within these debates.

²⁷ Egan, page 70

Organisational capacity

- 7.30 The capacity of organisations, especially local authorities, is of course substantially down to political choices. Respondents did however have little doubt that it is necessary to raise overall capacity if we are serious about many of the challenges in SNR and Great Places, and if local authorities want to embrace the place shaping role envisaged by the Lyons Review. This is especially challenging in a time when the local government workforce in region will probably not grow. This issue is mentioned in the latest SNR consultation document in relation to the proposed economic assessment duty, but it could equally be applied to local authorities' wider role.

Lack of capacity to carry out the assessment effectively among some local authorities is an issue that has been raised by a number of stakeholders since publication of the SNR. The Government will work with the Local Government Association and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) to assess capacity and develop strategy for overcoming any shortfall that is identified. This – and subsequent capacity building programmes – will be supported through the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy.²⁸

- 7.31 Integreat, and particularly Yorkshire Forward, can contribute to this work in cooperation with LGYH, and in the latter case will ultimately have to make their own judgements before the anticipated devolution of delivery can take place. In the short term, in addition to participating in the current study and its outcomes, it may be that the most productive engagement with the respondents to this survey could be on SNR responses, preparing for the proposed economic assessments and agreeing parameters for future individual capacity assessments.
- 7.32 Local authorities are multifaceted organisations with many relevant areas of expertise which often may not be labelled “sustainable development” or “sustainable communities”, so there is particular challenge here for LGYH and the networks described in this report in widening involvement.

Higher profile & leadership

- 7.33 We have seen in section 5 that one problem with widening involvement is finding a common understanding of sustainable communities or development. “Regeneration” is seen as being about problems rather than opportunities, and economic development is still understood by some as being about “just” job creation. Perhaps this is why the Lyons Review chose the term “place shaping” which does not have the negative baggage attached to the others.
- 7.34 The message from this work is that we are a long way from a common understanding, even among professionals, and anyway over time the concepts will change. Practitioners are not overly concerned with this dilemma, but advocate using whatever terms are most appropriate for a particular audience. The key thing to most of them is to raise the overall profile of these debates and try to make them more inclusive.
- 7.35 A particularly strong suggestion made by some respondents was that elected members, perhaps through activity by LGYH or other networks should be provided with more support

²⁸ *Prosperous Places*, Page 43

and opportunity to debate these issues. This they felt would lead to a generally more supportive environment and help to improve the quality of political leadership.

Shared specialist resources

- 7.36 The idea of sharing specialist resources or accessing them externally was a possibility which was raised quite frequently in smaller authorities and in the North and East of the Region. This is an issue which merits further discussion, initially possibly between LGYH and Yorkshire Forward, but there may be potentially a brokerage role for the RCE.

Peripatetic teams

- 7.37 Similarly there was some support for the idea of peripatetic teams to help areas deal with “one-off” issues such as a major redevelopment. It was suggested that such an approach has already partly started in respect to regional cities, the York & North Yorkshire Partnership Unit, and parts of the Renaissance Programme. If so, then consideration should be given to whether this could or should be extended in the light of SNR.

Multi-professional teams

- 7.38 Most multi-professional teams function within local organisations, and especially local authorities, so again this is mainly local decision. LGYH, the RCE and RDA may however have a role in providing good practice information. Support was expressed for the development of a Regeneration Academy in Bradford, and for the “Joint Practice Forum” between Bradford and Leeds. Integreat is hoping to roll out similar initiatives in five more areas, including Sheffield/Rotherham, Coastal, Rural and Growth Points. These have potential benefits in developing multi-professional working and creating better cross authority partnerships.

Partnership Working

- 7.39 Partnerships are, as one respondent said “the name of the game” at present, and increasingly important, not least as a result of SNR and the city regions debate. Respondents were keen to see existing networks used for a whole variety of purposes to address skills and capacity issues and in this context the key partnerships that were frequently suggested, included, the three city region partnerships, the York & North Yorkshire Partnership Unit and the LGYH boards on climate change & economic growth.
- 7.40 Initially these bodies should be given an early chance to consider the recommendations in this report and how they might contribute to them. Equally, it would be reasonable to engage in dialogue about the practical ways in which they might be assisted by Yorkshire Forward, LGYH and Integreat.

Beyond Bradford Website

- 7.41 One practical example of how Integreat, LGYH or Yorkshire Forward might assist is by providing access to a common site which simply explained, with elected members and the

public particularly in mind, the various regional structures and policies which impact on local development.

- 7.42 As an example of such a facility we commend the website <http://www.beyond-bradford.org.uk/>. In the description on the website it explains its purpose as follows.

This site aims to provide you with all you need to know about important regional bodies, events and policy developments affecting the Bradford District. We aim to answer the following questions:

What are the main bodies affecting the daily lives of Bradford's people?

What are the main regional strategies and how do they relate to Bradford District strategies?

What new developments are taking place across the region?

What regional meetings and events are taking place which will shape developments in Bradford?

- 7.43 Such a facility would clearly be of general utility to all local areas across the region.

Cross sector networks

- 7.44 The creation and maintenance of cross sector networks is difficult to implement as there is often no ready appreciation of common interests and no obvious lead body, but nevertheless we can only echo the Egan Review's comments.

We firmly believe that attempting to upskill professionals in isolation will not produce the outcomes we are seeking. Instead success will lie in changing the behaviour, attitudes and knowledge of everyone involved, many of whom may not have realised in the past that they had anything to do with each other, or with sustainable communities. We want to see planners interacting with tenant associations, highways engineers teaming up with urban designers, and central government officials who plan hospitals and schools working with those who will be maintaining the surrounding streets and buildings in ten years time. There is no quick fix – sustainable communities are a holistic long-term objective requiring a holistic approach to skills to deliver the outcome we are seeking.²⁹

- 7.45 Integreat have successfully organised cross professional networking in the past, but the most effective local, cross sector networks are probably those represented by some of the more successful local strategic partnerships. LSP networks at the regional level are fairly undeveloped and have in the past relied on GOYH for support. We suggest that LGYH, Integreat and GOYH should consider whether a specific network facility might be provided to encourage LSPs to contribute to the skills debate.

- 7.46 Private sector involvement in local economic development was identified as a weakness in many areas. Yorkshire Forward as a business led development agency may be able to assist LGYH and perhaps even individual principal authorities in managing or securing proper private sector engagement in local economic development strategies.

²⁹ Egan, page 54

Better use of consultants

- 7.47 In some cases the use of external consultants is viewed as a reasonable response to skills shortages, but respondents reported a mixed experience. Other reports have also pointed to the often poor use of external consultants. We believe that Integreat and LYGH should consider the potential of providing or encouraging others to provide workshops on how to engage and use consultants. They should also consider whether the facilitation of a local consultants' network might also assist to alleviate these problems and increase mutual understanding.

List of Draft Recommendations

1. Labour Market

- a. Consideration should be given to the formal adoption of a joint programme by Integreat, Yorkshire Forward and Local Government Yorkshire and Humber.
- b. Labour Market issues should be left mainly to nationally based organisations, with support to initiatives from LGYH on local government workforce topics.
- c. Yorkshire Forward's Regional Econometric Model, the Local Government Workforce Survey, and data from the respondents' network should all be monitored, with the latter being updated annually.
- d. Yorkshire Forward and Integreat should assist LGYH in exploring more part-time or flexible employment, as a way to retain the expertise of early retirees and others contemplating self-employment or a move to the private sector.
- e. Integreat, together with Yorkshire Forward, should explore with LGYH the opportunities for more secondments and better work experience.
- f. Further research work should be considered to investigate skills issues for the private and voluntary sectors, initially focussing on the latter.

2. Knowledge Exchange, Innovation & Management

- a. It should be agreed that Integreat's main contribution to tackling skills issues will be in the area of Knowledge Exchange, Innovation & Management.
- b. Ensure that skills and learning initiatives are considered practical by allowing respondents to the survey have had a chance to contribute and commit to them, starting with the dissemination of this report.
- c. Develop the Integreat and the Yorkshire Forward websites as an automatic source of good practice and good news stories and improve links to other sites such as Yorkshire Futures and ASC.
- d. In any YF/IY website redesign consider the creation of a "You-Regenerate" facility as a method of encouraging sharing of learning and practice.
- e. Follow the lead of Yorkshire Forward and raise the profile of evaluations making sure that a summary of the main conclusions is available to the wider regeneration community.
- f. Continue to support and build links with existing professional networks especially where they are specifically addressing generic issues in CPD, including offering practical help such as assisting with their learning and workshop activities

- g. LGYH should ask its members to consider the implications of not paying individual professional membership fees for their staff, especially for newer and junior recruits to the sector.
- h. Where CPD is accredited by professional institutions we recommend that employers work with those institutions to consider how best to accredit on the job training in generic skills and interdisciplinary working.
- l. Integreat's existing successful cross professional networking and Joint Practice Forums should continue.
- i. The proposed creation of the HCA should be used as an opportunity for specific events that promote the wider involvement of housing professionals.

3. Organisation Capacity

- a. LGYH and Yorkshire Forward, in cooperation with Integreat, should commit to jointly preparing for the proposed economic assessments and agreeing parameters for future individual capacity assessments.
- b. Partners should commit to action to raise the profile of successful activity within the region.
- c. Integreat and Yorkshire Forward should where practical offer general support to LGYH in any member training initiatives designed to improve their understanding of economic or regeneration issues.
- d. The idea of shared specialist resources for smaller authorities merits further discussion, initially between LGYH and Yorkshire Forward.
- e. Similarly, the further use of peripatetic teams to help areas deal with "one-off" issues such as a major redevelopment should be considered.
- f. Integreat and LGYH should attempt to provide good practice information on the use of multi-professional teams including Joint Practice Forums.

4. Partnership Working

- a. Existing partnership bodies should be encouraged to consider the recommendations in this report and how they might contribute to them.
- b. Partnership bodies should be asked to engage in dialogue about the practical ways in which they might be assisted by Yorkshire Forward, LGYH and Integreat.
- c. Integreat, LGYH and Yorkshire Forward should consider whether the Beyond Bradford Website might provide a model for a similar facility to be used across the region.
- d. LGYH and GOYH should consider whether a specific network facility might be provided to encourage LSPs to contribute to this skills debate.

- e. Yorkshire Forward as a business led development agency should consider whether it may be able to assist LGYH in managing or securing proper private sector engagement in local economic development strategies.
- f. Integreat and LYGH should consider the potential of providing or encouraging others to provide workshops on how to engage and use consultants.

Annex A: Skill Definitions

GENERIC/SPECIALIST SKILLS	DEFINITIONS
Project Management	Defining a project, planning, delivery & assembly & coordination of team. Monitoring & evaluation of outcomes.
Leadership	Within regeneration context, providing inspiration to embrace action & change, especially to link community, political & professional goals.
Brokerage or enabling	Creating or seeing common ground between agendas & encouraging different interests to work effectively together & appreciate common outcomes.
Team working – X professional	Promoting effective collaboration across professions, including seeing common, underlying interests. Reducing competition & developing common concepts & language.
Partnership working – with private sector	Recognising particular role of private sector & being able to enter into positive dialogue & agree joint action.
Partnership working with the third sector	Recognising particular role of the third sector & being able to enter into positive dialogue & agree joint action.
Change management	Systematic approach to dealing with change, including positive attitude to managing key components. Looking at ways to improve existing regeneration process.
Financial management & appraisal	Fully appreciating and managing financial aspects of projects & programmes, including appraisal, risk & reward. Being able to make the case for investment, including bidding for funds.
Policy analysis & strategy	Taking decision based upon proper analysis of available information, including prevailing policy trends, and existing strategies at local & wider levels. Includes proper use of evaluation techniques.
Performance management	Appreciation & use of information providing evidence of performance of key projects & services over time. Includes being able to make a distinction between easily measured outputs & fundamental outcomes. Also appreciation of which activities are key to regeneration in particular localities or service areas.

GENERIC/SPECIALIST SKILLS	DEFINITIONS
Communication	Being able & willing to communicate consistently & effectively with a wide range of relevant audiences, including local communities, professionals & stakeholders. Includes effective listening & responses.
Conflict Resolution/ Community Cohesion	Being willing to face up to difficult issues & seek appropriate resolution. This relates both to division within the regeneration actors & within the various communities being served.
Community engagement	Ability to engage regularly with community concerns & to make regeneration activities relevant to them in a systematic way which involves regular feedback and clear responses.
Engaging with hard to reach groups	Consistent ability to engage groups outside the mainstream & to make clear their relevance to the regeneration process.
Urban Design & Process	Understanding of the process in its widest sense, including “sense of place”, the community implications of design & the relationship between residential, economic & other factors in successful design.
Sub-region, LAA & Multi-area working	The ability to see regeneration in its wider context, both in terms of city regions & cross functional working. Understanding of the relationship between short term outcomes & longer term agendas.
Understanding the low carbon economy	An appreciation of the local implications of climate change & the challenges & potential opportunities of a low carbon economy.
Understanding how to nurture innovation and creativity	The emerging importance & characteristics of the knowledge economy in its wider sense, & the actual & potential contributions that regeneration can make.
Transport and infrastructure requirements	Understanding the critical nature of sustainable transport to regeneration in the future, including the potential for further investment & integrated solutions.

Annex B: Origin of the IRSA Skills

Generic Skill	Y&H RSA	Reason/notes
<i>Egan/MSG</i>		
1. Project management	√	Separate, non-project related performance management skill in 20
2. Leadership	√	
3. Breakthrough thinking/brokerage	Amended to 14	Amended to include enabling to make more distinctive from leadership
4. Inclusive visioning	X	Similar in meaning & replaced by 12 & 21 which are more easily understood
5. Team working/partnership	Amended to 15	Amended to specifically X professional working
6. Making it happen, given constraints	X	Less distinct explained within LG context for many respondents
7. Process/change management	√	
8. Financial management/appraisal	√	
9. Stakeholder management	X	Overlaps 2 & 11 & partly covered partnership working 16 & 17
10. Analysis, decision making, learning from mistakes, evaluation	Amended to 19	
11. Communication	√	
12. Conflict resolution	√	Addition of community cohesion
13. Customer awareness	X	Difficult to differentiate between this and 11, 18 & 21
<i>New/amended IRSA generic skills</i>		
14. Brokerage or enabling	√	Slightly greater emphasis on delivery/enabling
15. Team working X professional	√	See note to 4
16. Partnership working with private sector	√	See note 9
17. Partnership working with 3 rd sector	√	See note 9
18. Community Engagement	√	
19. Policy analysis & strategy	√	Very similar to Egan/MSG 10
20. Performance Management	√	new
21. Engaging hard to reach groups	√	
<i>Suggested IRSA specialist skills</i>		
22. Urban design & process	√	Role in Great Places, renaissance towns etc.
23. Sub region, LAA & Multi-Area Working	√	Importance in delivery & SNR agenda
24. Understanding low carbon economy	√	Increase in importance since Egan in 2004
25. Understanding innovation & creativity	√	Increase in importance since Egan in 2004
26. Transport & infrastructure	√	Increase in importance since Egan in 2004 & in city region agenda

Annex C: The Survey

IRSA Survey

1. Personal details *(Complete prior to interview)*

Name	
Job title	
Organisation	
Postal address	
Postcode	
Contact Tel number	
Contact email address	

2. Type of Employment *(Complete prior to interview)*

Architectural	
Urban planning & landscape	
Engineering, scientific & technical	
Social science research	
Environmental consulting	
Quantity surveying	
Housing	
General public admin duties	
Econ.Dev./Regeneration (excluding above)	
Other	

3. Employer *(Complete prior to interview)*

local authority	
RDA/ regional public body	
RSL/Housing Association	
Other public sector	
Private sector	
Third sector	
Professional/ representative body	

4. Age

Under 35 35-44 45-54 55 plus

5. Professional Experience

How many years have you worked in this or similar professional roles?

6. Academic Qualifications

(Tick highest achieved)

NVQ1 or equivalent	
NVQ2 or equivalent (GCSEs)	
NVQ3 or equivalent (A levels)	
NVQ4 or equivalent (degree)	
NVQ5 or equivalent (advanced degree)	

7. Professional qualifications *(Tick all that apply)*

Chartered (Architect, Engineer, Planner, Surveyor, etc)	
---------------------------------------------------------	--

Other professional qualification (please describe)	

8. There are currently many calls for changes in the way that we deliver economic development and regeneration. For example, nationally in the Sub National Review of Economic Development (SNR) and the “Place Shaping” suggested by the Lyons Review. More locally in the ‘Great Places’ concept underpinning the Regional Economic Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber, which emphasises that strong towns and cities and quality of place are critical for a successful economy.

**a. In this context can I ask you to tell me how confident you are that your organisation is equipped with the right skills to meet these challenges?
 (Please grade 1-5, with 1 being very confident and 5 very doubtful)**

1	2	3	4	5	DK
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b. More generally do you think your profession is currently equipped to meet these challenges?

1	2	3	4	5	DK
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c. Are skills gaps currently a barrier to effective delivery of economic development, regeneration and meeting these challenges?

YES/NO

d. If YES - What skills are missing and at what levels?

**9. Further to the challenges posed in SNR, “Great Places” and “Place Shaping” etc, can I ask you to look at the attached table listing some specific skills?
 (See attached Table)**

For each of them could you tell me whether you feel that your organisation, department or section has the right skills to meet the challenges?

Supplementary Questions

- a. If inadequate, could you indicate how your organisation is likely to upgrade them?**
- b. If a strength, would you be prepared to explore possibility of sharing you expertise?**

If there are any other important skills you would like us to note, please identify in Question 10.

10. Have you any other comments you wish to add concerning skills and the future delivery of Regeneration/Sustainable Communities?

11. Would you please tell us about approximate employment numbers and recruitment needs in your organisation, section or department?

Current employment (number of FTEs)	Current vacancies (number of FTEs)	Expected change in next year (+/- number of FTEs)	Do anticipate any problems in filling these posts?	Please comment below on the reasons for any hard to fill vacancies
<i>(please also indicate approximate size of organisation if not apparent from above)</i>				

12. In the NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS, do you think you will:

(Please tick ALL that apply)

<i>If you ticked, please give your reasons for considering a move: (select from drop down menu)</i>								
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Better salary	Better prospects	More challenge	More hours	Fewer hours	Higher skilled role	Job Security
Retire?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Become self-employed?	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Move to another regeneration profession? (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Move out of the regeneration sector?	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Move to the private sector?	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Move to the public sector?	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Move to the voluntary sector?	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Move out of the region?	<input type="checkbox"/>							

If any other reasons, please described –

13. Would you like to receive the results of this work when it is completed?

YES/NO

14. Would you be prepared to help update this information from time to time, and work as part of a formal or virtual skills network with Integreat and Yorkshire Forward to address any skills needs?

YES/NO

Annex: Question 9 - Table

GENERIC SKILLS						Any Comments
<p><i>If limited or inadequate</i>, then how will they address this R = Recruit new staff E = Use external expertise, T = Train existing staff DK = Don't Know Indicate all quoted</p> <p><i>If strength</i>, then would they be prepared to explore possibility of sharing their experience Y/N/DK</p>						
	None/very limited	Some but inadequate	Adequate	One of our strengths	Address/Share	
Project Management						
Leadership						
Brokerage or enabling						
Team working – X professional						
Partnership working – with private sector						
Partnership working with the third sector						
Change management						
Financial management & appraisal						
Policy analysis & strategy						
Performance management						
Communication						
Conflict Resolution/ Community Cohesion						
Community engagement						
Engaging with hard to reach groups						
SPECIALIST SKILLS						
Urban Design & Process						
Sub-region, LAA & Multi-area working						
Understanding						

the low carbon economy						
Understanding how to nurture innovation and creativity						
Transport and infrastructure requirements						

Annex D: SNR – Main changes proposed

D.1 The review of sub-national economic development and regeneration was announced by the Chancellor in March 2006, and overseen by the then Financial Secretary to the Treasury John Healey. The review argues that since 1997 substantial reforms have already been made to devolve decision making “local authorities and regional agencies have been empowered to support the Government's objectives to encourage economic growth and tackle deprivation at every level”. The proposals in the review are meant to continue this trend.

Key changes

- Each region will have a single strategy co-coordinating jobs, economic growth, housing, planning and environmental objectives
- A proposed new duty for local authorities to analyse the economic circumstances and challenges of their local economy
- Groups of local authorities in city regions to work together through new Multi-Area Agreements and pool responsibility on a more permanent basis
- Extended round of Regional Funding Allocations to give regions a greater say on how spending is prioritised including for transport and regeneration investment
- RDAs will have a more clear focus on increasing economic growth
- Increased scrutiny of RDAs by local authorities
- Simplified and strengthened performance management of RDAs by central government
- RDAs will be expected to delegate funding to local authorities where practical
- Funding for school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and the contribution of FE colleges to the 14-19 phase will transfer from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to local authorities' ring-fenced education budgets
- RDAs will have greater role in meeting business support needs to help simplify the number of schemes down to no more than 100 by 2010
- Changes to neighbourhood renewal to concentrate help to more deprived area
- A Minister for each of the regions, to provide a sense of strategic direction for their region and to give citizens a voice in central government

Single Strategy

- RDAs to develop the single strategy on behalf of the region
- As the first step local authorities will draw-up proposals setting out a vision for the development of their area.

- Local authority leaders in the region will be asked to approve the draft strategy before it is submitted to independent examination.
- D.2 Local authorities will also have a stronger role in the public scrutiny of RDA performance, as will the new regional select committees currently being considered by Parliament.
- D.3 From 2010, as individual councils gain far stronger responsibilities in shaping priorities in their wider region, Regional Assemblies will be phased out.

Annex E: Lyons Review

- E.1 Add The Lyons Inquiry³⁰ the Local Government White Paper³¹ and the Local Government Association have all characterised local authorities as ‘place-shapers’ of their localities – determining the outcomes needed from public services and ensuring they are set up to deliver them.
- E.2 For local government to make a success of place-shaping it needs to have the capacity and ability to engage in sophisticated dialogue with partners who can help deliver local outcomes. It also needs to place a stronger emphasis on its economic development and regeneration role as key aspects of place shaping.
- E.3 The provision of services, representation, regulation and emergency provision are all required of local government, but are not sufficient to engage many people, or realise the full potential of people or places. The Lyons Review argued that there is a leadership role that requires ambitious and exciting ideas. Key areas are -
- the development of the *local economy*
 - building and shaping *local identity*
 - maintaining and improving *social cohesion*
- E.4 Local leadership – from politicians and communities - is crucial. Developing economies in global markets, reinforcing and shaping identity, responding to environmental change, and improving social cohesion are all difficult, but consensus and progress are often more attainable at the local level. These and other important issues cannot be addressed if they are subject to frequently changing priorities. The role of the centre is to provide frameworks and guidance, rather than attempt standardised solutions.

³⁰ Place-shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government, Lyons Inquiry into Local Government, March 2007

³¹ Strong and Prosperous Communities: The Local Government White Paper, DCLG, October 2006

Annex F: Main Publications Cited

Egan - The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities, ODPM 2004 & Sustainable communities: a programme of focus groups to support the Egan review of skills Executive summary, ODPM, 2004

Regional Futures: England's Regions in 2030, English Regions Network, RDA Planning Leads Group, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Department for Transport, January 2005

Housing and Welfare Officers - Summary of Findings, ASC/Arup, September 2007

Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey 2006, February 2007.

National recruitment and retention initiatives relating to the local government top ten skills shortage areas 2007, IDEa, May 2007

Generic Skills and Cross-occupational Learning for Sustainable Communities, ASC/OPDM, February 2006

Gap Analysis for Sustainable Communities Professionals, ASC/York Consulting, March 2007

The Callcutt Review of housebuilding delivery, CLG Publications, November 2007

Local government pay and workforce strategy survey 2006, LGAR, March 2007

Mind the Skills Gap: The skills we need for sustainable communities, ASC, 2007

Taking Forward the Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration, CLG/BERR, December 2007

Prosperous Places: Taking forward the Review of Sub National Economic Development and Regeneration, CLB/BERR, March 2008

Review of economic assessment and strategy activity at the local and sub-regional level, CLG, March 2008

Planning and Optimal Geographical Levels for Economic Decision Making – the Sub-Regional Role, CLG, March 2008

Why Place Matters and Implications for the Role of Central, Regional and Local Government: Economic Paper 2, CLG, 2008

21st Century Skills; Realising Our Potential (National Skills Strategy White Paper, HMSO, July 2003

Leitch - Skills in the UK: the long term challenge (interim report) 2005, Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills (final report) 2006

The Beacon Scheme: Recommendations to Ministers on Beacon Authorities for Round 9, IDEa, October 2007

Leading Lights: Recruiting the next generation in local government, Nigel Keohane for New Local Government Network, April 2008

People, places and prosperity: Delivering government programmes at the local level, Audit Commission, June 2004

Annex G: Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms

ASC	Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC)
CLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
Egan Review	see publications
GOYH	Government Officer for Yorkshire & the Humber
Great Places	Term within Regional Economic Strategy
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency (proposed)
IRSA	Integreat/Yorkshire Regional Skills Audit (this report)
LAA	Local Area Agreements
LEGI	Local Enterprise Growth Initiative
Leitch Review	see publications Annex F
LGYH	Local Government Yorkshire and Humber is the regional partnership of local authorities, which enables them to work together and collaborate on issues of common purpose
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MAA	Multi Area Agreements
MSG	ASC's report entitle "Mind the Skills Gap" (see publications)
Place Shaping	See Annex E
PPP	<i>People, places and prosperity</i> – see publications
RCE	Regional Centre of Excellence (in this region Integreat)
REM	Yorkshire Forward's Regional Econometric Model
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RIES	Regions Improvement and Efficiency Strategy
RSL	Registered Social Landlord – mainly housing associations
SCS	Sustainable Communities Sector – used as shorthand for the skills sets examined in Egan and MSG
SNR	Sub National Review of Economic Development & Regeneration (see Annex F)
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SSDA	Sector Skills Development Agency
UKCES	UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)

Annex H: Local Government Yorkshire and Humber

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document presents the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (RIES) for the period 2008-2011. It sets out our vision for authorities and their partners in delivering excellent performance and value for money throughout the region and provides the background and context in terms of needs analysis and the progress made to date. The strategy outlines organisational arrangements for the new Yorkshire and Humber Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) and the work programmes that are being developed to support authorities and their partners. Detailed work programmes will be set out within an annual business plan that will be developed for each year of the three-year programme.

Our vision is to provide leadership, challenge and support for public sector improvement and value for money across the region that results in:

- The transformation of public services in our priority areas;
- Self-improving authorities that lead and support others, and are open to challenge;
- Active self-directing and value adding networks that drive innovation and share learning; and
- An improvement and efficiency 'hub', offering access to coherent and co-ordinated high quality support to all authorities and their partners.

Achievement of our vision will enable authorities and their partners to deliver a step change in performance that includes achievement of successful Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and the delivery of 3% efficiency targets. Our strategy is based upon analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of councils under the existing CPA regime and an analysis of capacity and emerging priorities of LSPs within the LAA process. Alongside this evidence, priority issues have emerged from dialogue with local authorities and partners on key issues such as personalisation and climate change, where networks of professionals are working to tackle the same issues. Councils in the region have come together to seize the initiative on promoting economic growth, responding to the challenges in the SNR and on key issues such as housing. The issue of improving performance and building capacity remains a priority. The strategy reflects how regional working and partnerships will add real value through focusing on common issues, realising shared solutions, developing shared services and enabling efficiency. It is designed to ensure that all councils perform at the level of the best on all services.

The Yorkshire and Humber region

With a population of more than five million people and around 270,000 businesses, the Yorkshire and Humber region is as big as Denmark, Norway or Scotland. It has recovered from the huge loss of traditional manufacturing jobs in the final decades of the last century and has enjoyed strong economic growth, low unemployment, business growth and transformation of our major cities. The region possesses a diverse and stimulating mix of urban and rural areas that underpins both economic growth and a high quality of life. Above all the region consists of its people: diverse, hardworking, proud, resourceful, honest and ambitious. Many of the improvement issues that councils face stem from this context. The region faces significant and complex challenges as it continues to grow and develop. Chief amongst these are the inter-related challenges that we have as priorities within the RIES:

- Economic growth, prosperity and inclusion;
- Climate change and sustainability; and
- Personalisation, Health, Social Care and Criminal Justice.

The region's 22 local authorities - nine Metropolitan Councils, five Unitaries, seven District Councils, one County Council and four Fire and Rescue Authorities - will play a key role in providing the vision, leadership, skills and capacity to tackle these challenges. At the same time, Leaders and Chief Executives in the region remain committed to further Corporate Improvement and Value for Money within their own organisations and across all public services.

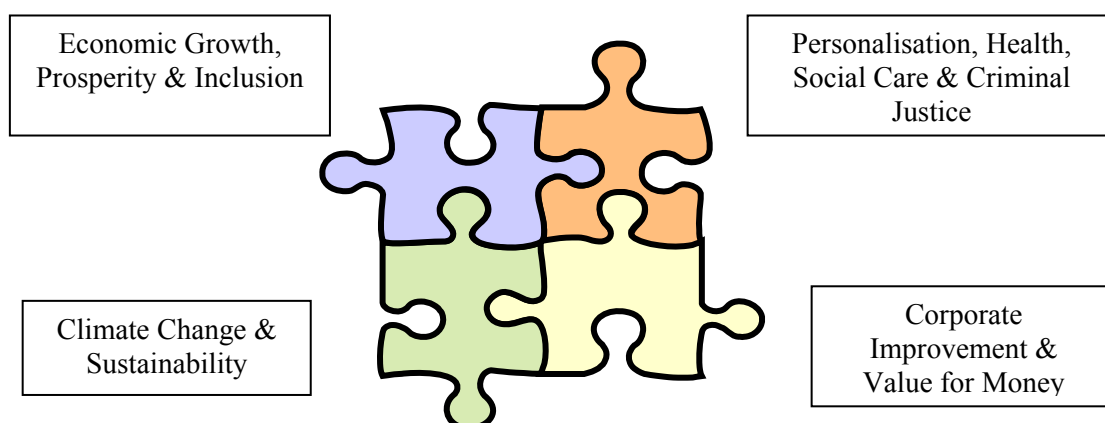
We will deliver this vision by building on the progress made to date, learning from our experience and by connecting together the existing resources for improvement and efficiency that exist across the region. There is a great story to tell about the region on improvement and efficiency – over half of our authorities are 4 star and all are improving well – but we need to be bolder, more challenging and more innovative in the future. This is why our approach set out within this strategy is based on the transformation of public services – doing things differently and doing different things.

Our Approach

In considering the improvement and efficiency priorities for the region we believe that the time is right for a new approach. To date there has been a focus on a 'deficit model' that has sought to support authorities in recovery and address under-performance. Clearly this will still feature within our approach, where necessary, but more significant are those authorities facing the particular challenge under CSR07 to modernise their services, while simultaneously delivering additional efficiency savings. This is the transformational challenge.

The new strategy will lead a drive for transformational change across the public sector that aims to deliver a step change in improvement and efficiency in the region. This requires a different approach. As a result of our analysis and consultations within the region, our RIES will focus on three key strategic and interlocking issues in addition to maintaining our focus on corporate improvement and value for money.

This looks like:



Chief Executives in the region have agreed that the strategy should focus on making a major impact on a small number of priorities whilst working on the improvement and efficiency agenda. Approximately 5% of funds will support management and administration of the RIEP to ensure effective functioning of the regional 'hub', delivery of the strategy and engagement with other RIEPs and central government. Resourcing of the key strategic priorities will be divided proportionately as follows:

- 60% of funds will support Councils and partners on local transformation and direct work on procurement and transformation, including support identified following challenge and to meet emerging LAA priorities;
- 40% will support the other three key priorities which will also include efficiency and improvement of services and outcomes identified in LAAs - major opportunities for efficiency exist in these areas, for example, in working with vulnerable women offenders.

Our approach has been built from the 'bottom up'. We have consulted widely on the vision and content of the strategy and will continue our work in the region to share our vision and develop engagement across all authorities and their partners, improvement and support agencies, and stakeholders. We will review the strategy as further details emerge of the LAAs and MAAs across the region ensuring that we are able to support their delivery.

Work is underway on developing a business plan for the new RIEP and we have commissioned work on the development of clear branding within the region. Further detailed work is being undertaken on our four programme areas, including clarity on:

- Programme contents
- Budget allocation
- Key targets and anticipated outcomes

We recognise that within this strategy we have focused our attention on the high-level outcomes to be achieved. Further detailed work is being undertaken to ensure we have absolute clarity on the outcomes to be delivered – taking account of emerging details from LAAs and MAAs – and on how we intend to measure and evaluate our progress. We have brought together the areas working on developing MAAs and have already identified in detail the resources needed to take these forward. Further work will be brought into the strategy over the next six months and will be subject to further consultation before sign off by the RIEP Board.

Enhancing and strengthening our RIEP will achieve delivery of the strategy. In particular, we will be concentrating our efforts towards:

- Building an effective regional hub, co-ordinating overall delivery through strategic commissioning processes;
- Delivering effective challenge and support to tackle under-performance;
- Ensuring political leadership and engagement in driving the delivery of the strategy
- Offering support for learning, innovation and collaboration; and
- Designing and delivering our four strategic programmes, as outlined above, overseen by new Programme Boards.

What We Will Achieve

We have agreed a number of high-level objectives and outcomes to guide the implementation of our strategy. These are summarised below and will be augmented by detailed targets and outcomes that are currently being designed within each of our programme strands.

We have established performance management arrangements under the Capacity Building Programme and are adapting these to fit our new programmes ensuring that we report on a regular basis through our governance structure to all authorities and their partners.

We are working to create greater cohesion within the region on supporting improvement and on making sure we add real value by reducing the amount of process and sharpening focus. In developing the strategy, we have already begun to do this through integrating existing improvement and efficiency work and networks into the partnership.

Objective	Outcomes	Measures
To develop and embed a sector-led collaborative transformation and continuous improvement that is citizen and customer driven	Better outcomes for people and places	Take-up of shared initiatives
	Customers receiving more integrated and joined up services	Volume of shared staff/resources
	More collective product	Increase in customer satisfaction
	More collective/joint delivery	Reduction in number of complaints
	An increase in shared staff and resources	Improved public perception of authorities (survey)
	Transformational programmes	Improved CPA/CAA assessments and direction of travel
To embed a culture of authorities directing their	People feel they are receiving value for money services and support	Participation in 'challenge'

Objective	Outcomes	Measures
own improvement and VfM through mutual support and challenge	Strong political engagement across all authorities	Improved PIs
	Challenge is welcomed and expected	LAA delivery
	Real improvement and VfM is achieved	Community and partner perceptions of leadership
	All authorities participate	Improved CPA/CAA assessments and direction of travel Efficiency achievements
To develop and sustain a series of self-directing and value adding networks across the region that expand learning and drive innovation	There will be new knowledge and thinking about public services	Increase in the number of value adding networks
	There will be greater involvement and diversity	Increase in the number of individuals and partners engaged
	Services will be transformed by new ways of working	Volume of service transformation
		Improved CPA/CAA assessments and direction of travel
To establish an accessible, coherent and vibrant 'hub' for improvement and efficiency that is owned by authorities and offers high quality support	All authorities will be engaged	Improved CPA/CAA assessments and direction of travel
	There will be no 'poor' or 'weak' authorities in the region	Number of reports and publications
	Authorities will offer greater VfM	Number of active learning communities
	There will be demonstrable progress in tackling strategic priorities	Increase in shared/pooled staff and exchange RIES evaluation