

Chief Executives' Group - North Yorkshire and York
16 March 2012

CLG Integration Strategy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the recently published CLG strategy on integration and provides an opportunity for an initial discussion with regard to a partnership approach to the challenges identified in the strategy.

2 Background

- 2.1 CLG recently published "Creating the conditions for integration" which "sets out the Government's approach to achieving a more integrated society, focusing on creating the conditions for everyone to live and work successfully alongside each other". This document has been expected for some time, since the publication of the revised national Prevent strategy by the Home Office in June last year.
- 2.2 The document can be downloaded from www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/integration and the press release viewed at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/2092147>.
- 2.3 It's a CLG document, rather than cross-government, both in presentation and much of the content. No introduction from a minister. No new funding or programmes, but many references to existing government programmes that contribute to integration (including the Big Lunch, nationwide community music day, protecting councils' freedom to pray, reforms to immigration rules, national citizens service, work with troubled families, free schools programme, helping people of all backgrounds to enter and succeed in the Asian and Oriental catering sector).
- 2.4 Integration is defined as creating the conditions for everyone to play a full part in national and local life.
- 2.5 The document identifies five key factors that contribute to integration:
- Common ground (clear sense of shared aspirations and values, which focuses on what we have in common rather than our differences)
 - Responsibility (strong sense of our mutual commitments and obligation, which brings personal and social responsibility)
 - Social mobility (people able to realise their potential to get on in life)
 - Participation and empowerment (people of all backgrounds have opportunities to take part, be heard and take decisions in local and national life)
 - Tackling intolerance and extremism (robust response to threats, whether discrimination, extremism or disorder, that deepen division and increase tensions)
- 2.6 Past approaches to promoting integration have involved expensive programmes dictated from Whitehall, and made integration the preserve of narrow interest groups instead of the everyday business of communities, public services, the private sector and wider civic society. Integration comes from everyday life with people coming together through day-to-day activities, not 'integration projects' which

too often feel irrelevant and prove unsustainable. Mainstream services will make the most impact on integration rather than any specific new integration activity

- 2.7 The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies and others carrying out public functions to consider in their day-to-day work the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- 2.8 The Government sees its role as being to create the conditions for integration to happen; and to inspire and enable civil society and local areas to take action on integration issues that are important to them; by
- speaking honestly about the issues facing us and creating the space for response
 - giving people the power, knowledge and control which enables them to come together locally as an integrated community
- 2.9 The Government will encourage local areas to take the lead in building integration:
- integration is a local issue and requires a local response which brings together public, private and civic and philanthropic partners
 - government will strongly encourage the different local partners to work together to drive action and to learn from each other in promoting integration and challenging extremism
 - local authorities are well placed to take a leading role working through existing partnerships with the police, other agencies and the business and voluntary sectors

3 Local response to the CLG strategy

- 3.1 It would be helpful to an initial discussion with regard to a partnership approach to the challenges identified in the strategy. The Government will be encouraging local partners to work together and local authorities to take a lead role. Most local partners also have duties arising from the Equalities Act 2010.
- 3.2 Although the numbers of incidents that demonstrate a lack of integration are lower in North Yorkshire than some neighbouring areas, there is, from time to time, evidence of tensions between communities in North Yorkshire and recorded instances of hate crime.
- 3.3 Initial views are invited on the spatial levels at which local partners should work together. Also, the extent to which the existing Prevent partnership structures can or should take on a broader role to promote integration in addition to their existing work on preventing violent extremism.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 That the Group notes the CLG strategy on integration and has an initial discussion with regard to a partnership approach to the challenges identified in the strategy.