

## **The IRF: The Proposed Way Forward**

### **Introduction**

In light of Arup's analysis of the IRF consultation responses, the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly intend to move forward with production of the Integrated Regional Framework on the basis of option 3 (i.e. as a transition document towards the Single Regional Strategy). It will identify the main landmark issues and questions that the region needs to act on now, and ultimately integrate into a SRS. A more detailed discussion of options and ways forward for the IRF in light of the SNR are set out in Arup's paper (attached).

The IRF needs to make clear where it is going, and what purpose it serves amongst other influential regional documents. The main points and features that will help guide the preparation of the draft IRF document during the next 2/3 months are as follows:

### ***Role of IRF***

- The IRF needs to have a clearly articulated purpose, and a well-defined remit.
- In light of the Sub-National Review, and the announcement of a single regional strategy (SRS), the IRF needs to serve as a 'transition' document that will pave the way by providing clarity on the regional picture on sustainable development, for the SRS (it will help inform but will not be the first chapter/part of the SRS).
- As well, the IRF needs to demonstrate its clear role now as a challenge document, encouraging the Region to take action above and beyond that already taking place to address key sustainable development issues facing the Region.
- A stronger evidence base feel needs to be put in to the IRF, this will give it robustness through the period of wider change.
- The IRF needs to be regionally specific - through examples and clearly emphasised regional data, a more regionally centred document can be produced.

### ***Landmark Issues***

- The landmark issues included in the draft should not be presented as the be all and end all of SD issues across the region.

- The landmark issues, while important, appear too much as regional weaknesses/problems. This is because as it stands they are introduced without any context or look at progress on sustainable development in its widest sense.
- The document should also discuss strengths and opportunities, with the landmark issues included much further into the document after a clear regional context has been set.
- The landmark issues should be linked to a series of objectives/directions to give the document the capacity to influence.
- In discussing progress, opportunity and gaps, the final IRF should challenge all individual organisations/agencies to integrate SD principles into their work streams and strategies or action plans.
- In discussing landmark issues, the IRF will, by implication, define its own aims. These aims, and any subsequent objectives and indicators, need to be directly linked to the landmark issues, so as the IRF can make a real difference.

### ***Next Steps***

- The sustainability appraisal section of the IRF may best be left until a later date. The RSDF contained an appraisal tool that may still be useable in its current format. However, with the time constraints on finishing the IRF, this work may need to be pushed back and handled as a separate issue after Christmas.
- Effort will be best placed on tightening the IRF approach up around the landmark issues – clearly stating the evidence base, direction, indicators, targets etc associated with the issue.
- Splitting up the climate change issue offers the scope to cover issues such as flood risk and energy better.
- A growth issue may also help the IRF to play a helpful role in steering the Region on current issues around housing, economic growth and infrastructure requirements.

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