

## **A Review of The Malton and Norton Area Partnership (MNAP)**

### ***Summary***

A Working Party was tasked by the MNAP Executive to undertake a review of MNAP's role and purpose against the backdrop of significant changes to local government structures following the formation of North Yorkshire Council (NYC) and setting up of the York and North Yorkshire the Mayor's office and the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Since it was formed over 20 years ago MNAP has represented a cross section of our community including businesses, charities and local councils and has achieved many notable successes which have improved facilities within our communities.

The structure of NYC features a locally based delivery model which features 'Local Community Partnerships'. These are non-political delivery orientated groups representing a cross section of local community interests. They develop local action plans identifying projects and priorities and are supported by NYC. The Mayor of York and North Yorkshire, who controls many devolved funding streams, also wants to deal with community partnerships.

It seems clear that MNAP could become a recognised Local Community Partnership. This would provide a community voice to influence policies, programmes and funding to secure more investment for our towns. NYC strongly support this approach. To become recognised it will require the participation of one or more NYC members.

In recent years MNAP has continued without any revenue support. Moving forward this is not considered to be sustainable. Therefore, securing a modest level of financial support for a secretariat function will be important to attract new members and a new chair.

The Working Party found that there is a clear need for MNAP and that given the right backing locally it could be very effective at influencing policy including the new North Yorkshire Local Plan, securing investment and driving forward the many projects identified through the neighbourhood plan.

The full report of the Working Party follows.

### ***Introduction***

1. There have been a number of significant changes to the structure of local government across North Yorkshire in the past few years. In April 2023 the new North Yorkshire Council was formed as a unitary authority at the same time the Districts, including Ryedale, were abolished. A year later in May 2024, the first Mayor of York and North Yorkshire was elected. The mayor will lead the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and will chair the Combined Authority Board. This role comes with devolved powers and control over various funding streams.
2. Against this backdrop, at its February AGM Malton & Norton Area Partnership (MNAP) decided to set up a Working Party to undertake a strategic review of its purpose and role to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
3. MNAP has worked for the communities of Malton and Norton for the last 20 plus years. It was set up under the auspices of the Regional Development Agency at the time, Yorkshire Forward, to help them consult and deliver grant funded community and community development projects. It is representative of the wider community including businesses and the voluntary sector. It has been set up to be non-political and focussed on delivery, i.e. getting things done.
4. Over the years it has played a lead role in initiatives including;
  - the appointment of a Town Manager for Malton;
  - public realm improvements to Market Place and the Shambles in Malton's town centre;
  - undertaking improvements to the Riverside Park in Norton;
  - replacing the boardwalk and bridges along the River Derwent from Malton and Norton to Old Malton;
  - and building the new Skate Park in Norton Road.
5. Tackling the appalling flooding and drainage issues in the towns is a current focus of MNAP's attention.

### **Working Party Findings and Recommendations**

6. The following is a summary of the feedback from conversations held with a number of stakeholders and the findings of the Working Party.

### ***The formation of North Yorkshire Council (NYC) and the Mayor of York and North Yorkshire***

7. Delivering services through 'locality' working is a core underlying principle of the new NYC.

8. Under its 'Localities Programme' NYC has encouraged the setting up of 'Community Partnerships' as inclusive, independent, and trusted entities within their communities.
9. A number of pilots have been running (Sherburn in Elmet, Ripon, Rural Ryedale, Easingwold, and Leyburn) which are led by a range of key community stakeholders.
10. These are all self-organising with minimal resource provided by the Council, but with Officer involvement from the Communities team in Localities and local member involvement and leadership support.
11. Key features of Community Partnerships are that they;
  - Are non-political delivery orientated groups
  - Represent a broad cross section of the communities they serve
  - Have NYC member involvement
  - Serve a geographical area that includes multiple parishes
  - Prepare Local Action Plans to identify projects and priorities
  - Have identified the need for administrative and development support and are sourcing this from within the local community
11. The Communities Partnerships programmes falls under the Communities Team within NYC. Alongside the Communities Team it will also be important for MNAP to develop relationships with the Economic Development and Regeneration Teams who will have a key role to play in policies and programmes aimed at growth and investment.
12. The Mayor has also strongly indicated a wish to engage with local communities through community partnerships.

***Is there a need for a Community Partnership?***

13. Most emphatically yes. NYC in particular strongly support MNAP becoming a recognised Community Partnership
14. An effective Community Partnership would provide a community voice to influence policies, programmes and funding to secure more investment for our towns.
15. Representing both Malton and Norton and the surrounding parishes,
16. MNAP can provide an overarching perspective on strategic issues e.g. transport, flooding, drainage.
17. As a non-political delivery focussed organisation it should appeal to Members with skill sets to help deliver projects.

18. Given the changing administrative backdrop there is a timely opportunity to refresh the MNAP offer with new leadership, management and members.

***What should be MNAP's role and purpose?***

19. The key purpose of MNAP should be to promote and support the development of facilities to improve the quality of life and opportunities for our residents.
20. Lobbying, influencing and acting as a consultative body, e.g. at a strategic level feeding back on the new North Yorkshire Local Plan and the Mayor's Scarborough to York corridor initiative, at a local level helping to shape plans for Castlegate.
21. Its role as a consultative body needs to recognise it is not a statutory consultee, but its work e.g. on the Local Plan, could be undertaken in partnership with the Town Councils e.g. through working groups.
22. Brokering, facilitating and delivering projects with partnership organisations. Recognising there are limitations in terms of liability and insurances for the existing Partnerships. Direct delivery through forming special purpose vehicles could be achieved on a case-by-case basis.
23. Overseeing a Local Action Plan. Malton has an agreed Action Plan based on the Neighbourhood Plan. Norton needs to prepare one. MNAP can support the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan policies.
24. Applying for funding. MNAP can be a suitable vehicle for funding not available to Town Councils and for other programmes which require a community partnership application. The recently launched Mayor fund for High Streets is an example of this.
25. Networking was highlighted as an opportunity for MNAP to help try and breakdown silos and stimulate activity and growth, possibly using social events rather than dull meetings.
26. MNAP's activities should be guided by a Local Action Plan, but will inevitably be influenced by Members interests and skills.
27. MNAP should avoid over-reaching and limit its activities to the constraints imposed by its volunteer resources.
28. Communications is a key role. Information on current/planned projects presenting facts in a non-biased way using the mailing list, newsletter, web site and social media, if resources allow.

***Funding for MNAP***

29. A modest level of revenue funding is needed to support a secretariat. The current Chairman wishes to stand down and the lack of administrative support has made it difficult to appoint a new Chair. Initially, the secretariat resource could be quite modest and low cost, say 1-2 days a month.
30. Inspire funding via NYC is possible and we should work with NYC to identify other sources. Malton and Norton Town Councils could make a modest contribution as a show of support for MNAP.
31. Funding for capital projects will need to be sourced from a range of local, regional and national sources.

### ***Membership and Leadership***

32. As a voluntary organisation MNAPs effectiveness will be determined by the Members it can attract and their willingness to commit time. Promoting the opportunities to become involved is important. The use of working groups to take on specific projects can be effective.
33. The current chairman wishes to stand down and the organisation requires a replacement. (see also secretariat funding above).
34. A small management group might be formed to support the chair and share the workload.

### ***Is the constitution fit for purpose?***

34. Yes. In all material respects it appears fit for purpose, subject to checking with NYC.
35. An update is needed to reflect the change from Ryedale to NYC member involvement.
36. MNAP is constituted as a Partnership which makes its Members jointly and severally liable. This is not an issue where MNAP does not take on any direct liabilities, but it restricts its ability to enter into direct contracts. In the past this has been managed by partner organisations (benefitting from insurances and indemnities) contracting directly.
37. It would be relatively straightforward to change the constitution to a charity or a company limited by guarantee in the future. It would also be possible to set up special purpose vehicles for specific projects.
38. There may be scope for MNAP to co-ordinate or merge other CIC's currently set up to promote the town.

### ***Actions to be pursued***

39. NYC Communities team should be asked to;
- review the MNAP constitution to confirm it meets Community Partnerships requirements
  - help us identify funding for the secretariat through Inspire or other sources
  - seek NYC Member involvement in MNAP
40. Norton Town Council needs to prepare its own Action Plan in order that a co-ordinated Malton and Norton Local Action Plan can be produced identifying projects and priorities.
41. Both Malton and Norton Town Councils need to consider a modest contribution towards revenue funding.
42. A short statement should be prepared describing clearly MNAP's purpose and role – there were comments that it is not well understood.
43. MNAP need to develop links with;
- the Mayor's office.
  - Derwent Training and with the Skills and Employability Working Group of the of the former LEP (now Mayoral Authority)
  - Circular Malton (Sue Jefferson)
44. The redevelopment of the livestock Malton and its relocation was highlighted as a project MNAP should take an active interest in.