



Pentagon Partnership e-bulletin November 2008

Welcome to the Pentagon Partnership e-bulletin for November 2008. Pentagon Partnership is the strategic partnership for third sector involvement in the economic regeneration of the Tyne and Wear City Region. We do this by **informing and consulting** the sector on economic regeneration news and policy, securing third sector **representation** on decision-making partnerships and **capacity building** – helping the third sector towards a businesslike and sustainable future.

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City Region News

We continue to support representatives on the City Region governance structures and in the coming months will be doing more to facilitate third sector engagement with the City Region and the Multi Area Agreement (MAA). In the meantime, several colleagues have asked if we can prepare a short guide to the City Region / MAA. See below for our 'at a glance' guide to the MAA, and also for your chance to have a say on the transport priorities for the City Region.

Tyne and Wear City Region Multi Area Agreement at a glance

What?

Overseen by the City Region Interim Executive Board, which brings together local authority leaders and the private and third sectors, the MAA is a new contract between the City Region and central government that commits both parties to work together in order to deliver agreed priorities for the economic development of the area.

Where?

The Tyne and Wear City Region is the collective term for the governance structures established to develop and deliver a multi-area agreement in an area based on the 'travel to work' area for the Tyne and Wear conurbation. The City Region consists of the following local authority areas:

- Newcastle
- Gateshead
- North Tyneside
- South Tyneside
- Sunderland
- Castle Morpeth
- Blyth Valley
- Tynedale
- Wansbeck
- Chester-Le-Street
- Derwentside
- City of Durham
- Easington

Population – 1,650,000 (1,000,000 working age)

The vision:

Achieving a more competitive City Region – building competitive industries and world class talent resulting in improved GVA (economic output)

Achieving a more economically inclusive City Region – ensuring economic opportunity and access for all

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The aims:

- To expand the numbers of people in **employment**.
- More of our current and future workforce to be equipped with **higher level skills** to drive innovation, business creation and competitiveness.
- Improving **transport infrastructure** to support sustainable economic growth, and contribute towards stronger integration between places in the City Region and enhanced connection with external markets.

...

Objectives and Asks

The MAA makes a number of 'asks' of government (things the government have agreed to look into doing, in order to help the City Region deliver the MAA – see page 6 of the MAA) and in turn lists a number of objectives / outcomes that the success of the MAA will be measured against (see page 7 and 50-52).

The story so far...

The MAA was drawn up by City Region partners in early 2008 and signed off by the Department for Communities and Local Government in summer 2008. Since then, the City Region team have met with various government departments to negotiate the 'asks' of central government.

In addition to the Interim Executive Board, two partnership boards (the Employment and Skills Board and the Transport Review Group) have been set up to work towards achieving the MAA outcomes that the MAA will be measured against.

Further information

Download the MAA from our website at

<http://www.pentagonpartnership.org.uk/Documents/CityRegion/MAA.pdf>

Read more about the City Region / MAA at www.tyneandwearsregion.co.uk

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Transport Governance Review – your input needed

Earlier this year, the City Region Interim Executive Board agreed to proceed with a review of the governance of transport in the City Region. The objective of the review is to get better strategic decision-making for transport and in turn support sustainable economic growth. A proposed way forward is a strategic transport authority, based on the Transport for London model.

As part of our work with the City Region, Pentagon Partnership has been asked to feed third sector viewpoints into the review. As such, we would like your thoughts on the following key questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the key transport challenges facing Tyne & Wear City Region over the next 25 years?
2. In your opinion, how important a priority is transport investment for the future of the City Region when compared to action in other sectors?
3. What benefits/added value does your organisation derive from your participation in the City Region?
4. Do you have a clear view of which transport decisions are best taken at a strategic level (City Region/metropolitan area) and which are more locally relevant? Is there a case for more functions to be exercised at a strategic level? Which functions are best tackled locally?

We will be collating third sector viewpoints on these questions and presenting them to the Transport Review Group on November 27th; therefore please could you email any responses to these questions to jon.goodwin@pentagonpartnership.org.uk by **Tuesday November 25th**.

This is a real chance for the third sector to influence future decision-making so please do take the time to respond.

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Pentagon News

Human Resources and Employment Law - a *Business Plus* networking event

Our next *Business Plus* event takes place on Thursday 4th December, 12.00pm-2.00pm at Denton Burn Community Association, Slatyford Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE5 2UQ.

The theme of the event will be Human Resources and Employment Law, and we'll be joined by Brian Chapman from the law firm Ward Hadaway.

[Click here to download a booking form for this event](#)

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Business Coaching for the Third Sector

Notes from November's Business Plus event, **How can business coaching help your organisation?** are available [here](#) . The interactive coaching session, led by qualified business coach Pummi Mattu was a huge success and feedback from participants included:

- *very informative / interesting*
- *a useful event... enjoyed the networking aspects and learning about coaching*
- *I'm now more knowledgeable about coaching... I'm now taking this info to our management team*
- *I was already interested in coaching; I may look at doing qualifications for my personal development*

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Getting Physical - *The Third Sector and Physical Regeneration in Deprived Communities*

In association with Tees Valley VCS Forum, Pentagon Partnership recently held two mini-conferences, sponsored by One NorthEast, exploring opportunities for (and barriers to) third sector involvement in the physical regeneration of deprived areas: buying, building and managing properties. Delegates from more than 60 organisations heard about the support available from One NorthEast, the Development Trust Association and local authorities, and about how the economic downturn may even be beneficial for the sector, as the property market slows down and demand for third sector services increases.

Simon Davidson from Tees Valley VCS Forum said:

“Buildings can be a great asset: organisations bring disused buildings back into community use and the acquisition of property can contribute much to their financial sustainability – particularly where it can generate an income.”

Manager of Pentagon Partnership, John McGough added:

“The fact that more than 60 organisations came to these events speaks volumes about the desire for organisations to become more sustainable by building or owning property.

We’ve got some great examples of third sector asset development in the North East and hopefully these events will encourage others to go down the ‘physical regeneration’ route.”

A report entitled ‘The Third Sector and Physical Regeneration in Deprived Communities,’ which highlights the opportunities for (and barriers to) Third Sector asset development, was also launched at the events and can be downloaded from www.voluntaryskills.com/regeneration

Click on the links below to download presentations from the event:

[Tracey Moore \(PNE Group\)](#)

[Debbie Lamb \(Development Trusts Association\)](#)

[Joe Clease and Robin Beveridge \(One NorthEast\)](#)

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DWP seminar on welfare reform

You may remember from [October's e-bulletin](#) that we offered one place at a DWP / Centre for Public Policy Seminars event on November 17th about the Welfare Green paper *No One Written Off*. We're pleased to announce that Adam Stewart from CSV Newcastle has been selected to attend this event and he will be writing a short article on the event for our December e-bulletin.

New Website

Don't forget to check out our new website at www.pentagonpartnership.org.uk for latest news, event booking information and useful documents, including an archive of our e-bulletins.

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Working Together Tyne and Wear

Working Together Tyne and Wear (WTTW) is the VCS Learning Consortium for Tyne and Wear. The aim of WTTW is to increase access to learning opportunities for the VCS in Tyne & Wear.

You may be aware that secretarial / information support for WTTW has recently been transferred from GVOC to the Pentagon Partnership team.

As part of this, we will be keeping WTTW members up to date with information about learning opportunities for the third sector in Tyne and Wear, both by email and via the WTTW website at www.wttw.org.uk

Examples of some of the opportunities we send out are listed below – if you would like to become a member of WTTW, please email us at wttw@pentagonpartnership.org.uk

Right to Bid

This is a new initiative from DWP allowing providers to suggest priorities and bid to address them (as opposed to the traditional commissioning model: DWP identifying a need and inviting suppliers to meet it).

Further information:

[http://www.dwp.gov.uk/supplyingdwp/what we buy/right to bid.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/supplyingdwp/what_we_buy/right_to_bid.asp)

Could you help deliver skills to land-based businesses?

A general call for proposals to help deliver a £1.2m RDPE investment in land-based skills in North East England has been issued by Lantra, the sector skills council for environmental and land-based industries.

Lantra, which is managing the project on behalf of One NorthEast, is looking for training providers interested in helping to deliver a range of training modules to support the land-based sector including practical and technical work; technology; resource management; marketing and promotion; supply chain efficiencies; and management and leadership. The idea is to help businesses improve their profitability, competitiveness and sustainability, but also to encourage more firms to exchange knowledge and increase the demand for higher-level skills in land-based industries.

In all, an estimated 2,000 people working in agriculture, forestry and land management will have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills with help from the LandSkills North East project.

For more, see www.rdpnortheast.co.uk/page/news/article.cfm?articleId=3378

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Other News

The North East Economy: A joint response to changing economic circumstances

In association with the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and HM Treasury, One NorthEast have produced a document to outline the work they will be doing to support businesses, regeneration / housing initiatives and consumers in the wake of the economic downturn.

You can download the document [here](#).

Tender Fund open for business

You may remember our Business Plus event in October, where Lin O'Hara from FutureBuilders England talked about the new Tender Fund, which offers interest-free loans to third sector organisations to help them tender successfully for specific public service delivery contracts.

The tender fund is now open for applications, and you can find out more at <http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk/our-products/tender-fund/tender-fund/>

Download Lin's presentation from our October event [here](#).

Regional Local Employment Partnership Awards

The Regional Local Employment Partnership Awards (LEP's) have now been launched with the North East Ceremony taking place on 26th February 2009 at St James' Park. The online nomination entry site is up and running with the last nominations being accepted on 28th November 2008.

There are 6 categories with an overall achievement award and the regional winners will go onto the national final which will take place on 9th June 2009. The awards are open to all employers and partners involved in delivering LEP's.

The categories are:

- Recruitment Innovation Award
- Commitment to Diversity Award
- Unlocking Talent Award
- Getting Back to Work Award
- Work Skills Award
- Partnership Works Award

Further information and how to nominate can be found at http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Employers/lep/Awards_2009/index.html .

If you require any further information please contact Sarah Wilkinson on 0191 2038512.

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Survey of Community Accountancy Services in Tyne & Wear

[GVOC](#), the local infrastructure organisation for Gateshead, has been commissioned by the [Tyne and Wear Infrastructure Consortium](#) (TWIC) to carry out research into community accountancy services available in the Tyne and Wear sub-region. The intention is to test the feasibility of a partnership or consortium approach to service delivery.

If you are interested in completing the survey please contact Kate Tully on 0191 478 4103 or on email katetully@gvoc.org.uk.

National Survey of Third Sector Organisations

If your organisation hasn't yet taken part in this survey, there is still time; please visit www.nstso.com to make sure you have your say.

Some information from the survey website:

The survey is the largest ever of the third sector. It is funded by the Office of the Third Sector which sits at the centre of government, in the Cabinet Office, in recognition of the increasingly important role the third sector plays in both society and the economy. The survey has been commissioned so that, for the first time, all local authorities can be judged on their performance in creating an environment for a thriving third sector.

Local decision makers will learn from – and be judged by – the detailed picture that emerges, and the survey will shape policy decisions at the local and national level. It will also provide valuable evidence on the performance of local partnerships, funding relationships, opportunities to campaign and influence, and other issues facing the sector at a local level.

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