

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Paper – Part One

Date: 14 July 2009

Report of: Strategic Director, Places

Title: Economic Development Priorities and Partnership Arrangements

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines a proposed approach to developing a comprehensive economic development strategy for Cheshire East.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the approach to the development of an Economic Development Strategy for Cheshire East as set out in this report is endorsed by Cabinet.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Local Government Review presents an opportunity for Cheshire East to develop a comprehensive approach to economic development and to ensure our priorities influence sub-regional, regional and national policy development.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All Cheshire East wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All local ward members

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Local Government Reorganisation has provided an opportunity for Cheshire East to develop a comprehensive approach to economic development across the Borough.
- 6.2 The creation of the new Council also coincides with a renewed focus from Government on the role of Local Government in the delivery of economic development.
- 6.3 The Government published the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill on 5 December 2008. This wide-ranging legislation will give communities and local people new rights to have a say in their local services, strengthen local democracy, reform local and regional governance arrangements and implement measures to drive economic regeneration.
- 6.4 It strengthens the role of local authorities in promoting and delivering economic development and including tools for local authorities to assess economic conditions

and support greater collaboration between local authorities in an area, such as statutory Multi-Area Agreements.

- 6.5 Cheshire East will be expected to play a prominent role in the region on economic development issues, in addition to developing strong partnerships on cross-border issues to the north with Greater Manchester and within the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region.
- 6.6 The current economic climate strengthens the case for strong leadership by the Council on economic issues. Our early work on Recession Mitigation activities has received strong interest from the media and local groups who are looking to the Council for leadership and support.
- 6.7 Cheshire East Council is developing a new Economic Development Service to ensure we rise to the challenges outlined above.

7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs

- 7.1 No implications for transition costs

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 8.1 The financial implications for 2009/10 and beyond will receive further consideration through the mid-year review and budget setting process.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Council is empowered to undertake these activities under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1976."

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 The main risk associated with the contents of this report is that Cheshire East Council due to LGR is not in a position to fully influence regional and national policy decisions which will impact on future investment. The approach set out in the report aims to mitigate this risk through adopting a medium and longer-term approach.

11.0 Background and Options

Developing an Economic Development Strategy

- 11.1 The development of a comprehensive Economic Development strategy is not a statutory requirement but an essential part of developing a set of economic priorities and interventions which can be agreed with partners and inform key statutory documents such as the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework.
- 11.2 Cheshire East also needs to engage pro-actively at a regional and sub-regional level on economic issues. Our future growth and prosperity is linked to future regional policy and the policy decisions of our neighbours in Cheshire West but perhaps more significantly in Greater Manchester.

- 11.3 The region is already developing a new Single Regional Strategy in response to the LDEDC Bill and it is important that Cheshire East makes a full contribution to the process.
- 11.4 Due to the tight timescales it is not possible to develop a comprehensive growth/economic development strategy to inform the development of RS 2010, our Sustainable Community Strategy or the Cheshire East Core Strategy.
- 11.5 However, through consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Prosperity and the LDF, and wider engagement with Members, an early view on spatial and economic priorities is being developed within the timescales required by the region. This is ensuring that Cheshire East is playing a pro-active role in the region and sub-region, and building our case for future public sector investment. It will also ensure that our SCS and LDF process are informed by a clear set of growth and regeneration priorities.
- 11.6 A comprehensive Economic Development strategy will be developed by September 2010 which builds on a detailed evidence base in line with new Government guidance for Local Economic Assessments.
- 11.7 A detailed timetable and project plan is under development. The comprehensive strategy will be developed with full consultation with local, sub-regional and regional stakeholders.

Delivery Arrangements

- 11.8 The Cheshire East Economic Development team will work closely with the emerging sub-regional arrangements and in particular the new Prosperity Commission.
- 11.9 The Economic Development department for Cheshire East Council sits within the Regeneration Service in the Places Directorate, alongside the Visitor Economy and Strategic Highways and Transportation departments.
- 11.10 Strong links are forming with the Planning and Policy Service on issues such as the LDF and Housing.
- 11.11 The three strands of activity which will form the basis of our economic development service are set out below.
- a) **Economic and Regional Policy**
 - Regional policy advice
 - Economic development strategy
 - Links to SCS/LDF
 - Sub-regional relationships
 - Climate change
 - b) **Business Engagement + Enterprise**
 - Business relationships
 - Enterprise initiatives
 - Inward Investment
 - c) **Regeneration/ Project Development**
 - Major capital projects
 - Town centre co-ordination/development
 - Community Regeneration
 - Rural development

- Sustainable Towns
- Crewe masterplanning
- Regeneration programmes

Current Partnership Arrangements

- 11.12 The Council has inherited a delivery arrangement within the Congleton area which requires a review to ensure that the Council can implement an efficient and effective service for economic development and tourism across Cheshire East.
- 11.13 A more detailed review of the implications and future options with regards to this arrangement is contained in Part Two of this agenda.

12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

- 12.1 The issues covered in this paper addresses a number of Year One issues. The proposed approach to the development of Economic Development priorities reflects the need for a pragmatic approach to ensure that Cheshire East does not miss a key opportunity to influence regional policy whilst we develop a more comprehensive strategy over the next 18 months.
- 12.2 The paper also highlights the need to review current partnership arrangements for delivery of economic development in the light of our new Economic Development department.

13.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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