
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING:	7 JUNE 2007	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	MIKE ROYLANCE (Ext. 5725)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2007-2012	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: ES10, ES11

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Approves the South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy 2007-2012.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To seek Member's approval for a new Economic Development Strategy for the District for the period 2007-2012.

3.0 Detail

Strategy Approach

- 3.1 As Members are aware the current South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy has expired. A Project Brief for a new Strategy was approved in June 2006.
- 3.2 Desk research exploring the current position of the District and key trends, through the review of available statistics and existing studies, was undertaken and included the preparation of an Issues Paper. This Paper was then used as the basis for a series of consultation activities during 2006.

Member Consultation

- 3.3 A number of events were held to inform Members about current economic development issues and gather their views on issues and priorities. These included a presentation to Members of the Environmental and Development Services Committee on 9 March 2006, a workshop and a tour of the District.

The Workshop enabled Members to consider economic development issues from the perspective of both businesses and local residents.

Business and Partner Consultation

3.4 A questionnaire-based survey of one hundred businesses in South Derbyshire was conducted, predominantly by telephone, in partnership with Groundwork Derby & Derbyshire. A broad cross section of respondent businesses was achieved, with a mix of geographical location, size and sector. The businesses involved were then invited to a well-attended workshop in July together with partner organisations, from the public, private and, voluntary and community sectors, to discuss the issues arising.

Issues into Actions

3.5 Following analysis of the results and consultations, draft proposals were prepared. Two events were then held in November to which all interested parties were invited. Here participants discussed amended and agreed the proposals and contributed to the development of more specific objectives. A presentation was also made to South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership's Vibrant Economy Group in December and the proposals debated.

3.6 The findings were then analysed and a review of the policy context undertaken (including 'A Flourishing Region' - the new Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands for the period 2006-2020), with the Strategy completed in January.

The Strategy

3.7 The Strategy sets out the following vision: *To promote greater economic wellbeing in South Derbyshire, in order that it becomes a healthier, more prosperous and safer place to live with better jobs and prospects for local people and businesses.*

3.8 The document follows the broad structure of the new Regional Economic Strategy, with three key themes:

- Raising Productivity (business development).
- Ensuring Sustainability (business infrastructure).
- Achieving Equality (people and communities).

3.9 The Strategy's role in terms of 'promoting economic, social and environmental well-being' and 'making South Derbyshire a healthier, more prosperous and safer place to live' may be seen most immediately in terms of Achieving Equality but is fundamentally underpinned by both Raising Productivity and Ensuring Sustainability.

3.10 A copy of the Final Draft Strategy is attached as Annex A. The Strategy sets out the following objectives and ambitions in order to realise the vision for South Derbyshire.

Objectives and Ambitions

Raising Productivity	To enable people and business in South Derbyshire to become more competitive and innovative
Ambition 1	Raising skills levels, promoting a culture of learning and improving training facilities
Ambition 2	Attracting new inward investment and encouraging reinvestment by existing businesses
Ambition 3	Developing tourism and the woodland economy, maximising the potential of The National Forest to address rural issues
Ambition 4	Providing business support and innovation assistance, particularly in key growth sectors
Ensuring Sustainability	To provide the infrastructure for businesses and communities to thrive in South Derbyshire
Ambition 5	Improving accessibility to opportunities, particularly employment and training
Ambition 6	Providing sites and premises for future employment needs, co-ordinating provision with transport and other infrastructure
Ambition 7	Continuing the revival of Swadlincote town centre as a service centre and focus for the community and visitors
Achieving equality	To help all people in South Derbyshire to realise their full potential
Ambition 8	Overcoming employability barriers to entering the workforce, particularly amongst people facing multiple challenges
Ambition 9	Raising aspirations and expectations, particularly amongst young people

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 It is anticipated that it will be possible to meet all costs associated with the preparation of the Strategy from the existing Economic Development Promotions budget for 2007/08.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 As previously stated, the preparation of a new Economic Development Strategy will:

- improve understanding of local economic and related issues and enhance engagement with local businesses;

- establish a key strategy document, setting out a common vision, objectives and priorities for the District;
- contribute to the development of other key strategies, including the Local Development Framework and Community Strategy;
- help to co-ordinate the activities of the numerous public, private and voluntary and community agencies engaged in economic development activities; and,
- raise awareness of economic development issues in South Derbyshire amongst key agencies, assisting the attraction of external funding and other support.

6.0 Background Papers

- 6.1 Background papers, including the South Derbyshire Issues Paper, are held on Policy and Economic Regeneration divisional files.