



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Full Council
Date of Meeting:	1 st March 2007
Report from:	Head of Regeneration
Title of Report:	Regeneration Strategy
Agenda Item Number:	12

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's endorsement for the attached District Regeneration Strategy.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Development of the draft District Regeneration Strategy has involved a very robust process of consultation over the past 9 months. Specifically, this has included:

- Stakeholders from all sectors at two Regeneration Strategy development events
- Corporate Management Team
- The Economic Regeneration Policy Group of the District Partnership
- The Housing & Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Briefings for all councilors
- Executive approval on 9th March 2007

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The development of a District Regeneration Strategy will make a significant contribution to Priority 4, Regenerating the District, giving a clear strategic direction to the delivery of that corporate priority.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

There are no direct, additional financial implications arising from this report. All of the actions that this Strategy proposes are either a) already agreed by the Council; b) the subject of further investigative work which will include an assessment of financial implications; or b) cost-neutral or manageable within existing resources.

Value for Money at a strategic level has been a key consideration in development of this Strategy.

At this strategic level, the ERPG in overseeing the development of the Strategy went through a process of reviewing our current activities, and the impact of these activities in meeting our strategic objectives. In examining the evidence base in terms of where further, continued, or different action was required, the Group came forward with recommendations for actions that would maximise the impact of our efforts, recognizing the resource constraints within which partners operate.

At an individual project level value for money considerations will be reflected in the development of every proposed action (for example in the procurement processes, or review of existing activities).

4.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

4.3 Personnel

There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report, though the regeneration service is currently undergoing a restructure which will make it better able to respond to the challenges of delivering the Strategy.

4.4 Other Services

There are no direct implications for other services arising from this report, but the existence of a District Regeneration Strategy will assist and complement the activities of other services, such as housing, leisure, and environmental health.

4.5 Diversity

Objective 3 of the draft Strategy is to achieve strong communities, with diversity being an integral part of this objective.

4.6 Risk

At a project specific level – for those projects built into the Strategy – risk management will be integral to the development and delivery of those projects. At a strategic level, in overseeing the development of the Strategy, a number of risks have been identified and considered.

The key identified risks have included:

- i. The risks involved in delivering an ambitious but realistic Strategy. This will be mitigated by the proposals for using the clear mechanism for overseeing the delivery of the Strategy, involving all LSP policy groups, via the LSP Steering Group. This will enable problem areas to be identified and addressed at an early stage.
- ii. The risk that the actions of the Strategy will be delivered but will not achieve the objectives of the Strategy. Though it is felt that there will be a clear link between these two, this risk will be mitigated by the regular review process contained within the Strategy.
- iii. Risks of significant external factors (eg macroeconomic or political) impacting on the Strategy. While this risk is less manageable, it is felt that the existence of this Strategy, and the structures and partnership working to oversee delivery, will give a robust base on which to develop the future regeneration of the District.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

Community safety considerations have been integral to the development of the Strategy, in particular with regard to Objective 3 (Strong communities).

4.8 Other Implications

There are no other implications arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the draft District Regeneration Strategy. This is the final draft version, as approved by the Economic Regeneration Policy Group of the LSP. The Strategy is currently being graphically designed, in order that the document that will be presented to full Council for final endorsement will be more reader-friendly, but the substance of the content, subject to any comments from Executive or Council, is final.

5.2 This is the first Regeneration Strategy for the District, and is a long-standing corporate (and LSP) commitment. The Strategy has been developed by the Council on behalf of the Economic Regeneration Policy Group for the LSP, and has been developed as a Strategy for the District, not just for the District Council.

5.2 The Strategy identifies a number of issues that are relevant to the future regeneration of the District, such as:

- The importance of the Town Centre to the life of the District
- A number of positive indicators, such as:
 - Economic activity and employment
 - Rising population
 - The rise in incomes
 - Low levels of crime
- A number of challenges, such as:
 - The relatively low levels of local businesses
 - Pockets of deprivation that exist within the District

5.3 The proposed vision of the Strategy, reflecting the collective aspirations of partners, including the Council's vision is as follows:

“By working together we will enable the District of Chester-le-Street to meet the economic, social, and environmental needs of our communities.

We will do this by:

Ensuring that the District contributes to, and benefits from, regeneration of the Tyne & Wear City region;

Ensuring that the benefits of regeneration are felt by all of the District's residents;

Ensuring that the District and its communities maximise, and fulfil, their enormous potential as great places to live, work, and invest.”

5.4 In order to achieve that vision, five strategic objectives have been identified:

- To ensure that the District is at the heart of the growth of the region.

- To ensure the potential of the Town Centre is fulfilled, as a vibrant market that is an attractive place for all people to visit, with easy access to quality facilities, and that acts as a hub of economic, social, and cultural activity for the whole District and beyond.
- Ensuring that the benefits of regeneration are felt by all of our communities.
- To maximise the learning and skills attainment of the District.
- To maximise the economic performance of the District.

5.5 Within each of these Strategic Objectives, the Strategy identifies a number of specific actions that will support and enable the delivery of these objectives. Many of the issues that have been identified in the process of development of the Strategy are already being addressed by existing projects and initiatives, such as:

- The regeneration of the Town Centre
- SHIP1 (Grange Villa)
- SHIP2 (Edmondsley, Grange Villa, Pelton Fell, and Sacriston)
- The NRP at Pelton Fell

One of the key aims of the Strategy is to enable the better strategic coordination of these activities, as well as to identify new actions to tackle the identified challenges.

5.6 At a spatial level, in line with the evidence that is outlined in full in the document, it is recommended that as well as the Town Centre being a priority because it can and does act as a hub of the District, activity should focus on three regeneration corridors:

- In the north-west, at Drum Industrial Estate, Pelton, Pelton Fell, Grange Villa, and Beamish
- In the south-west, at Edmondsley, Sacriston, and Kimblesworth
- In the east, at Riverside, Lumley, and Bournmoor

This will provide focus to our collective efforts, and ensure that the areas with most potential or need of intervention are the beneficiaries of a concerted and coordinated regeneration effort.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Council are recommended to adopt the District Regeneration Strategy

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO

- 7.1 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2006-2016
- 7.2 Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (North East Assembly)
- 7.3 Draft Regional Economic Strategy (One NorthEast)
- 7.4 Regional Housing Strategy (Regional Housing Board)
- 7.5 Northern Way
- 7.6 Lyons Inquiry into Local Government

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