

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24 June 2013



Update on Masterplans for County Durham

Joint Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive and Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with background information on the development of Masterplans within County Durham prior to the presentation.

Background

- 2 As part of the refresh of the Committee's work programme for 2012-2014, it was identified by Members that an update on the development of the Masterplan framework would be included within the work programme which met the objective of the Altogether Wealthier section of the Council Plan for 2012-2016 of vibrant and successful towns.
- 3 At the meeting of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 19 November, 2012 an update was provided to members on the development of the various Masterplans within County Durham. It was requested at that meeting by members that as part of the refresh of the work programme for 2013-2015 that the Committee continue to receive future updates on the progress of the various Masterplans for principal towns across the County.
- 4 It was therefore considered timely that an update be provided by Officers from the Economic Development and Housing Service at the meeting on the 24 June 2013 prior to Cabinet considering a series of regeneration Masterplan reports in September.

Masterplans

- 5 Masterplans provide the detailed programme of activity that is taking place or is planned by the Council and partners in principal towns across the County. They provide the strategic context to delivery and seek to establish key principles to co-ordinate and guide regeneration activity and investment decisions.

6 A series of Masterplan frameworks are being established across County Durham for the following County towns:

- Consett;
- Stanley;
- Chester-le-street;
- Seaham and Murton;
- Peterlee;
- Durham City;
- Spennymoor;
- Newton Aycliffe;
- Bishop Auckland;
- Shildon;
- Crook; and,
- Barnard Castle.

7 The presentation to the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 24 June 2013 will provide an overview focusing on the following:

- Strategic context;
- Developing Masterplans;
- Update on coverage of individual Masterplans within the County; and,
- Examples of ongoing projects as part of the Masterplans project.

Strategic context

8 Masterplans are prepared at a town centre or settlement level and are developed to provide detail on current or proposed activity. They are designed to supplement the information provided through the planning framework and can provide an opportunity to ensure the effective alignment of services or investment by the Council and its partners at a local level. This can include town centre improvement budgets, highways and local transport investment and alignment of the Council's accommodation and customer services approaches.

9 The development and adoption of masterplans provides an opportunity to challenge, prioritise and channel resources to the most appropriate locations and ensure that requirements and opportunities are resourced appropriately. This has become particularly relevant given the ongoing pressures on public finances and the relatively weak private development sector.

Developing and delivering masterplans

10 All masterplans produced follow a similar format and are developed using a multi-disciplinary group of staff driven by the Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) service grouping which typically included Planning, Economic Development, Housing and Transport colleagues and depending on the location other service areas or partner organisations may input throughout the process.

- 11 The Cabinet reports include a detailed consultation log of the external individuals, groups and organisations that have fed their thoughts into the document. A key element of this consultation relates to the relevant Area Action Partnerships, many of which have identified or retain task and finish groups looking at the main centres.

Update on the development of masterplans

- 12 Masterplans for Durham City, Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee, Shildon and Spennymoor will be taken to Cabinet in the autumn. We will then have comprehensive coverage across the County Towns.

Examples of current masterplans

- 13 Through the formal adoption process, coloured copies of masterplans are submitted to the members resource centre for inspection and reference. The presentation to the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee will highlight some of the issues and opportunities currently identified through the masterplanning process.

Next steps

- 14 Officers will seek resources through the Capital Programme to implement the various projects outlined in the Masterplan documents. All Masterplans are considered to “live” documents. Officers will evaluate the implementation of the Masterplans and will update them where required.

Recommendations

- 15 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment upon the information provided during the presentation.
- 16 That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the refresh of the work programme receive a further update on the development of masterplans within County Durham at the meeting on the 9 December 2013.

Background Paper(s)

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny report – Masterplans for County Durham – 19 November 2012.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Each masterplan contains a detailed delivery plan with identified costs across Council services.

Staffing – None.

Risk – Detailed risk assessments will be undertaken for each development project.

Equality and Diversity – Each masterplan is subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. Further, more detailed work will be identified and addressed on an individual project basis.

Accommodation – Accommodation issues will be identified on an individual basis.

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – Appropriate consultation has taken place in relation to the various masterplans within the County, typically utilising Area Action Partnership structures.

Procurement - None

Disability Discrimination Act - None

Legal Implications – The masterplan documents will provide evidence to support the County Durham Plan but it will not have any statutory weight in the planning process.