

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

25 February 2015

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 DRAFT BOROUGH ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY

To present a draft economic regeneration strategy for consideration by the Board and to agree consultation and adoption arrangements.

1.1 Draft Economic Regeneration Strategy

1.1.1 As an initial step, this Board approved an informal economic regeneration action plan at its meeting in February 2014 to assist with the then forthcoming peer challenge review. We subsequently reported the recommendations of the peer challenge team in respect of economic regeneration issues to your meeting in September 2014. The peer challenge team felt that a more formal economic regeneration strategy was required which 'links and guides the council's investment across a range of services and projects, jointly owned by elected members and officers across the Council'. That recommendation was accepted by the Board and a draft strategy is now presented for your consideration and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

1.1.2 We have purposely avoided creating a long and complex document. The key issues we have sought to address are:

- to set out in clear terms our priorities for economic regeneration in the Borough including a need to focus on engaging more with our local business community;
- to ensure that all activities and functions of the Borough Council which impact on economic regeneration are fully reflected in the strategy;
- to clearly state how we will interact with key partners and local business to deliver the actions set out in the strategy; and,
- to address issues related to the local growth agenda and a need for Tonbridge and Malling to 'pull its weight' in securing external funding, for example, from funding available from SELEP, working across West Kent as necessary.

1.1.3 Members of the Board are invited to consider the draft text of the strategy and to suggest any amendments that they think might be necessary.

1.2 Consultation and Adoption

- 1.2.1 It is important that we expose the draft strategy to external scrutiny prior to its formal adoption. It is suggested, therefore, this consultation is undertaken in March/April. We will seek the views of our key economic partners including members of the West Kent Partnership, local business support providers, business representative bodies such as the local Chambers and the Federation of Small Businesses and individual local businesses in the Borough.
- 1.2.2 The intention will be to report on the outcome of that consultation and to seek formal adoption of the Strategy at the first meeting of the Board in the new cycle of meetings following the local elections in May.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 None

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 As addressed by the draft strategy.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 n/a

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 That, subject to any comments from the Board, the draft Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy **BE APPROVED** for the purposes of local consultation.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive