
By: Mark Dance, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development
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To: Economic Development Cabinet Committee
8th November 2012

Subject: Business Planning Priorities - 2013/14

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report details provisional headline priorities for the 2013/14 Business Plan for the Economic Development and Regeneration teams. Cabinet Committee members are invited to consider and comment on the priorities, in order to influence the development of the draft Business Plan which will be discussed by EDCC members at their meeting in January 2013.

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The County Council's economic development and regeneration function is provided through the Economic and Spatial Development (ESD) commissioning team in the Business Strategy and Support directorate, which is responsible for strategic policy formation and direction, and the Regeneration Projects (RP) delivery team in the Enterprise and Environment directorate, which has responsibility for project management and delivery. Their main purpose is to deliver the regeneration and economic objectives set out in Delivering Bold Steps and the County Council's regeneration framework, Unlocking Kent's Potential.
- 1.2 The annual Business Plan is owned and developed by the Director of Economic Development, Corporate Director and Cabinet Members, with support and quality assurance provided by the Policy and Strategic Relationships Team in the Business Strategy Division. The Economic Development Cabinet Committee has an important pre-scrutiny role in shaping and influencing the development of the Plan, before it is approved by Cabinet with a formal key decision in March 2013. The Cabinet Committee will then continue to have an oversight and assurance role of the Plan's delivery through the twice yearly 'business plan outturn' monitoring process.

2. Proposed Headline Priorities for 2013-14

- 2.1 To help achieve economic growth in the County, it is proposed to develop our work programme around the same three core priorities set out in the 2012-13 Business Plan. The delivery of those priorities remains very much a substantive work-in-progress for the County Council and its partners, and involves the continuation of a number of major activities as well as emerging projects. They are closely aligned to

the key economic development and regeneration objectives set out in Delivering Bold Steps and Unlocking Kent's Potential, and are set out briefly below for Members' consideration.

- a) **Encouraging Business Growth** – this will involve developing and strengthening our sector based approach to engaging with Kent's businesses; providing support and intervention where the County Council can have most impact to facilitate business and employment growth, such as initiatives to attract foreign direct investment and to promote international trade, and the development of workspace to support new and fledgling businesses; and providing specific support to businesses, such as those with growth potential and, in north and east Kent, through the TIGER and Expansion East Kent programmes.
- b) **Developing Strategy and Partnerships:** this will involve championing the needs of Kent's businesses, and working with external partners in the public and private sectors to deliver KCC's long term economic development and regeneration ambitions.
- c) **Delivering Infrastructure and Housing:** this involves continuing to develop and exploit new and existing funding streams and mechanisms to enable the delivery of new housing, infrastructure and regeneration projects to support economic growth. These include high-speed broadband, the provision of strategic infrastructure in north Kent, and working with the district councils in unlocking key development sites as well as targeted housing interventions.

2.2 The Business Plan will also identify emerging projects for the coming year address the financial and policy challenges influencing the delivery of the headline priorities. These include capitalising on opportunities for securing external funding and income generation, for example through the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and anticipating and responding to changes in national policy or legislation.

2.3 Members are invited to consider and comment on the headline priorities set out in paragraph 2.1 above.

3. Timetable

3.1 It is intended that, over the next few weeks, officers will develop the details to be included in the Business Plan under the headline priorities proposed above. The timetable for preparation and approval of the Plan is shown below alongside other relevant milestones.

- **November and December 2012** – details of draft Business Plan prepared by officers; budget and Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP) finalised following Local government Finance Settlement.
- **January 2013** – EDCC considers final budget; Cabinet endorsement of draft budget and draft MTFP; EDCC considers draft Business Plan for 2013-14; following feedback from EDCC the draft Plan is then submitted to two Cabinet Members for approval.
- **February 2013** – County Council approves budget and MTFP; draft Business plan is submitted to Strategic Business Advisor for QA.
- **March 2013** – Business Plan is finalised.

- **April 2013** – Cabinet approves Business Plan; the new Plan is published online and implemented from April 2013.

4. Recommendation:

- 4.1 Economic Development Cabinet Committee is asked to COMMENT on and NOTE the headline priorities for the Business Plan 2013-14, as set out in this report.

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Background Documents:

None