

CABINET MEETING
24TH JANUARY 2008

Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus: SCOPING PAPER

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Shared Prosperity
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Promoting Economic Prosperity
KEY PRIORITY:	Regeneration
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Stephen Clee
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Planning Health and Environment
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ken Harrison - Ext 2557 ken.harrison@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix A - Kidderminster Prospectus: 'Connecting Kidderminster' Scoping Paper - This has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request (see front cover for details)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the purpose and scope of the '*Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus*' and seek agreement for the preliminary public consultation proposals set out in the '*Connecting Kidderminster*' Scoping Paper.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

The 'Kidderminster Prospectus: Connecting Kidderminster Scoping Paper' contained at Appendix A to this report be approved as the basis for public consultation; and the programme and proposed public consultation arrangements set out at Sections 7 to 9 of Appendix A be approved.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In September 2007, Cabinet considered a Report outlining the process for preparing a 'Prospectus' for the regeneration of Kidderminster and endorsed the programme for preparing, whilst agreeing to give further consideration towards funding its development during 2008/09.
- 3.2 The Prospectus will take forward the Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy for Kidderminster, which was adopted in 2005, through the development of a more detailed delivery plan. The Prospectus will complement the work of the three key partnerships in the town i.e. Horsefair, Broadwater and Greenhill Partnership; Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership; and Oldington and Foley Park Neighbourhood Pathfinder. It will also complement the emerging Local Development Framework which it will inform and be informed by. In particular, the initiative will dovetail with the Council's proposals for Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. The Prospectus aims to focus on 'making it happen' and will be a live tool for delivering regeneration.
- 3.3 The Regeneration Prospectus will be about re-organising and breathing new life into the town. It covers a wide variety of issues and requires a co-ordinated approach. No one agency, person or body can deliver effective 'regeneration' in isolation... it is about facilitating joint working and bringing together the right people and resources.
- 3.4 The Prospectus will support the delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy, which recognises Kidderminster as 'a town undergoing an economic restructure'. It will also assist with the delivery of sub-regional and local priorities as set out in the emerging Local Area Agreement, Sustainable Community Strategies and Wyre Forest District Council Corporate Plan.
- 3.5 During the course of recent years, the District Council has been putting the necessary infrastructure in place to deliver economic regeneration – consistently recognised as a Council priority.
- 3.6 With the need for two stages of consultation; high quality design including artist impressions to bring the document to life; and market appraisals to provide a reality check, it is envisaged that the Prospectus could be adopted as early as November 2008.
- 3.7 The draft scoping paper (Appendix A) was considered at the meeting of the Community and Regeneration Committee on the 9th January 2008. Recommendations emerging from this meeting will be reported directly to Cabinet.

4. **SUMMARY**

- 4.1 The Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus: Scoping Paper ('Connecting Kidderminster') is provided at Appendix A to this report. The aim of the Prospectus is set out as follows:

“To support the delivery of the West Midlands Economic Strategy by establishing a set of deliverable action programmes for the regeneration of Kidderminster that compliments on-going work in Stourport and Bewdley and ensures the town fulfils its economic potential whilst contributing towards the success of the region and meeting the needs and expectations of residents, business leaders and visitors within the town and surrounding communities.”

- 4.2 The Scoping Paper seeks to stimulate discussion about the issues that need to be tackled i.e. what really matters to residents, businesses and visitors? Should we be talking about transformational change for Kidderminster? How can we make it happen together? These are key questions which the Prospectus will seek to address in order to provide a way forward.
- 4.3 The Prospectus will not go back through the detailed statistics and robust evidence base developed for the 2005 Strategy, although it will summarise the headline indicators for the key neighbourhoods. This summary will be prepared jointly with the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder.
- 4.4 The proposed title to the Prospectus 'Connecting Kidderminster' is suggested for two reasons. Firstly, the title resonates with the 'Connecting to Success' title of the Regional Economic Strategy. Secondly, it also appears that there is a need to connect the opportunities in order to un-tap the potential and connect the town to the success of the wider region.
- 4.5 It will therefore briefly consider the crucial inter-relationships between Kidderminster and the nearby towns of Stourport on Severn and Bewdley. Areas of common interest such as traffic congestion, accessibility to opportunities outside of the District and sub-region will be explored with a view to developing possible improvements. What, if anything, can be done to improve links between Kidderminster and the M5.
- 4.6 In all instances any regeneration blueprint will need to be worked-up in partnership with the wider community including the landowners, potential developers, major funders and delivery agencies such as Advantage West Midlands. This will ensure that the vision is grounded in reality.
- 4.7 With a focus on 'economic' regeneration it is intended for a representative of the district's business leaders to be sought to 'champion' the Prospectus amongst the business community.

Horsefair, Broadwaters & Greenhill Partnership

- 4.7 In December 2007 this Cabinet considered the recommendations to emerge from the LSP Review Panel's scrutiny of the Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership. The first recommendation was that:

"the District Council develop a clear position statement for the economic regeneration and neighbourhood renewal of the Horsefair area of Kidderminster, to ensure there is a strategic and co-ordinated approach between all partners thus maximising potential resources investment".

- 4.8 That is one of the principal aims of the Prospectus and timetable set out in this report.
- 4.9 Unlike the Oldington & Foley Park Ward, there is perhaps a much clearer need for physical regeneration in Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill in order to provide a better quality environment for residents and business. This area will be a particularly significant focus for the Prospectus.
- 4.10 A particular focus is likely to be the 'Churchfields Business Park' which may provide up to 10 hectares for new development and could provide the key to unlock many of the areas most pressing physical challenges – not least transport and traffic. Given the likelihood of major redevelopment, the Prospectus will also need to consider the role of the former British Sugar site and other business addresses that may accommodate displaced businesses.

Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership

- 4.11 The Town Centre Partnership launched in 1994 is primarily focussed on supporting the town centre as a business location and shopping centre. The Partnership is itself going through a transformation with a new structure, Business Plan and a Town Centre Manager will be appointed shortly. The District Council's REP Section has a major supporting role, which helps to link the Partnership into the wider regeneration agenda.
- 4.12 In recent years Kidderminster Town Centre has experienced significant levels of development and this looks set to continue. As one of only 25 designated "Strategic Centres" across the West Midlands region, Kidderminster Town Centre has an increasingly important economic role for the town and wider District. The town centre will remain a key focus for the service sector including shopping, commerce, commercial leisure, education, learning and the arts, offices and potentially tourism.
- 4.13 The Prospectus is likely to include the proposals to redevelop the former Littlewoods store in Worcester Street where improved links to Bromsgrove Street Car Park might be achieved. Big questions such as traffic circulation and public transport accessibility will need to be considered through the proposed series of consultation events.

Oldington & Foley Park Neighbourhood Pathfinder

- 4.14 In many ways, the Oldington and Foley Park area has a very different set of challenges. The Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder is a seven year programme up to 2012 established to address the challenges facing the area.
- 4.15 The Stourport Road Employment Corridor (SREC) lies in the Oldington and Foley Park Ward. The delivery of major redevelopment schemes including the former British Sugar site; the development of skills; and alignment of these with the needs of local businesses may provide an important programme within the Prospectus.
- 4.16 One of the key challenges for the SREC will be addressing congestion. The suggestion of a 'Hoo Brook Link' may present a possible solution that needs to be explored further.

Capacity Auditing

- 4.17 The establishment of the Regeneration & Economic Prosperity (REP) Section within the Planning, Health and Environment Division, represents a significant step in helping to build the capacity to co-ordinate and assist in delivering the ambitious regeneration agenda. The formation of the Section brings together economic development and tourism with aspects of strategic planning, town centre management, business support, urban design and regeneration professional disciplines.
- 4.18 One of the first issues to be addressed by the Prospectus will be to gain a full understanding of the resources and capacity of the various partner organisations and the wider community.
- 4.19 The Prospectus will look to understand and where necessary, address any capacity issues relating to regeneration and renewal, but in essence the co-ordination of the regeneration programme will be guided by the Regeneration and Economic Prosperity Section of the District Council working closely with partners including the Oldington and Foley Park Neighbourhood Pathfinder.

5. PROCESS & TIMETABLE

- 5.1 This first stage of preparing the Prospectus will involve a series of consultation events (combination of conference, seminars and workshops) bringing together the major stakeholders and recognised experts from across the region, to understand the scale of the challenge and opportunity. It is proposed that this preliminary work will lead to more detailed work being undertaken during Spring 2008 with a second stage of consultation bringing some of the ideas to life through the preparation of a highly visual and promotional document ('the Prospectus').

5.2 It is envisaged that the proposed consultation stages for the Prospectus will be complementary to the timetable for the preliminary stages of the LDF Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and Site Allocations Development Plan Documents.

5.3 Provisional Timetable:

Dec – Jan 2008	PART ONE: Prospectus scoping paper considered by the Communities and Regeneration Committee and Cabinet
Mar - Apr 2008	PART ONE: Public Consultation on Prospectus Scoping Paper
May 2008	Consultation responses considered
June – Jul 2008	PART TWO: Draft Prospectus including artists impressions, graphics and market appraisals considered by the Communities and Regeneration Committee and Cabinet
Sept - Oct 2008	PART TWO: Public Consultation on final draft prospectus and action plan
November 2008	Adoption of Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The costs of developing the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus Part One (above) can be met from existing budgets. However, it is proposed that Part Two of the process of preparing and launching the Prospectus will be funded through a proposed new budget of £25,000 for 2008/09.

7. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no legal or policy implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising for the Council from this report.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1. The 'Regeneration Prospectus: Scoping Paper' is an important step towards the creation of a clear vision and framework for delivering physical regeneration that compliments the partnership initiatives in place across the town. It will bring together the key opportunities and should help to attract additional external resources into the area.

10. CONSULTEES

- Head of Community and Partnership Services
- Head of Property and Operational Services
- Head of Financial Services

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- West Midlands Economic Strategy: Consultation Draft, May 2007
- Kidderminster Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy, 2005
- Wyre Forest District Local Plan, 2004
- Wyre Forest District Design Quality SPG, 2004