

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
21ST FEBRUARY 2008

West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES)
Delivery Framework: Consultation Draft

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
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1: WMES Delivery Framework - Consultation Draft Appendix 2: Proposed response to the proposed Strategic Priorities, Actions and consultation draft in general Appendix 3: WMES Delivery Framework – Consultation Draft – Activities being undertaken by Wyre Forest District Council <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details).</i>

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the Council’s proposed response to Advantage West Midlands Economic Strategy – Delivery Framework Consultation Draft.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **To approve for submission, the proposed response to Advantage West Midlands Economic Strategy – Delivery Framework Consultation Draft as set out in Appendix 2 in this report.**

2.2 To approve for submission, the current and proposed District Council activities relating to the proposed actions within Draft Delivery Framework, as set out in Appendix 3 of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 28th July 2007, Cabinet approved the District Council's response to the Consultation Draft of the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES).

3.2 The WMES which was prepared on behalf of the region by Advantage West Midlands (AWM), is called 'Connecting to Success'. The Strategy itself was launched on 10th December 2007 with the purpose of providing "a clear framework for achieving future economic prosperity in the West Midlands over the next 20 years".

3.3 It provides the framework for investment in Economic Regeneration throughout the West Midlands to raise the region's economic performance with the aim of raising output per head in the West Midlands to at least the average for the U.K. as a whole.

3.4 AWM is now consulting on the development of the action plan that will help deliver the WMES. This action plan, or "Delivery Framework", as it is known, is currently out for public consultation until 22nd February 2008.

3.4 Cabinet is reminded that the four key pillars of the WMES are:

- Business – the contribution that businesses make to the productivity and growth of the regional economy and the demand for employment of the region's workforce
- Place – focuses on the role of place in attracting and enabling economic growth but also recognising the dissuading and constraining issues such as poor quality environment, that limit investment
- People – the contribution of the region's population and their skills to sustainable growth and increased productivity of the regional economy to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to develop to their full potential
- Powerful voice – raising the profile and engaging with European and International decision makers.

3.6 The Cabinet is advised that the WMES will target its spatial interventions around three primary areas as follows:-

1. Areas of multiple market failure – as identified within the region's regeneration zones which represent concentrations of deprivation and disadvantage

2. Concentrations of knowledge assets – including the high technology corridors (including the Birmingham/Worcestershire central technology belt)
3. Birmingham – as the major economic driver within the West Midlands economy.

However, the WMES also states that it will also focus, albeit with more limited resources, on the following:

- The regions identified market towns – which include Stourport on Severn and Bewdley
 - Locations facing economic change or responding to opportunity – this will include Kidderminster which is identified as a ‘local regeneration area’ within the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 3.7 The WMES emphasises the importance of sub regional partnerships and the Local Strategic Partnerships (through the sustainable community strategies), and the role that they play in identifying and addressing particular and specific local economic development issues. It states how the Local Area Agreements provide mechanisms to potentially help improve the co-ordination of and engagement in economic development and regeneration activity at the local level and with other social and environmental priorities.

4. PROPOSED RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION DRAFT

- 4.1 The Consultation Draft (*Appendix 1* of this report) replicates the WMES in that it is also divided into four sections covering Business, Place, People and Powerful Voice. For each of these activities it identifies a number of priority areas and proposed actions including identifying lead, supporting and delivery organisations, together with an expected outcome/related indicator.
- 4.2 The 23 “Priority Areas” and 40 associated “Proposed Actions” are set out within Section 3 of the Consultation Draft between pages 10 and 39. These proposals are considered to be comprehensive and are the result of initial consultation with relevant sector and support organisations.
- 4.3 A proposed District Council response to the proposed Priority Areas and Proposed Actions and to the consultation draft in general, is set out in *Appendix 2* of this report.
- 4.4 In addition, AWM has requested that consultees advise of each significant activity that they either currently have in progress or are planning to undertake between April 2008 and March 2011 that will help to deliver against one or more of the priorities and actions set out in the Draft Delivery Framework. The proposed District Council response, in the format requested by AWM, is set out *Appendix 3* of this report.

4.5 The Cabinet is advised that the Delivery Framework is proposed to be launched in April 2008 and will be reviewed and revised annually until 2011.

4.6 The proposed response to the consultation draft was considered at the meeting of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 7th February 2008. Recommendations emerging from that meeting will be reported directly to Cabinet.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The WMES is the key strategic document on which the future economic well being of the region is based. The Council's input and response to the development of the Delivery Framework ensures that the key economic issues pertaining to this District have been raised and highlighted with the aim that they will have support at the strategic regional level.

9. CONSULTEES

- Corporate Management Team

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- West Midlands Economic Strategy "Connection to Success" 2007