

**CAMBRIDGE SUB REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP  
(Report by Director of Operational Services)**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To consider progress on the Cambridge Sub Regional Infrastructure Partnership.
- 1.2 To approve a financial subscription to the Partnership.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Cabinet received a report on 15 November 2001 (which was approved at Full Council on 6 December) formally considering the first stage of the Cambridge Sub Region Infrastructure Partnership (known then as the Implementation Study by Roger Tym & Partners). This was given a qualified welcome as a first step in addressing the infrastructure issues. Approval was given to work with other Cambridgeshire Local Authorities to develop the proposals outlined in the Study.
- 2.2 The County Council and District Councils have been working together since then to develop the mechanisms and processes to enable development and infrastructure improvements to be delivered in the Cambridge Sub Region. A diagram is attached as Annex A which shows the structure of the current partnership arrangements.

**3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 The progress of the Partnership has been delivered by 5 sub groups of Officers from the Cambridgeshire Local Authorities, with assistance where necessary from consultants under the themes of:
  - Planning Process
  - Sustainable New Settlement
  - Affordable Housing
  - Transport
  - Section 106

The progress made is outlined below.

## 3.2 **Planning Process**

- 3.2.1 Following the EIP Panel report, the schedule of proposed modifications has now been published for consultation until 17<sup>th</sup> June. It is anticipated that the Structure Plan will be formally adopted in September.
- 3.2.2 In parallel with this, the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are actively taking forward the local planning processes.

## 3.3 **Sustainable Development**

- 3.3.1 The development of the new town at Longstanton/Oakington is one of a number of major proposals which needs to be progressed quickly through the plan-making process in order to meet the objective of granting planning permission for site development to commence during 2006. This project is led by South Cambridgeshire District Council as the local planning authority for the area with responsibility for preparing the relevant co-ordinating planning framework and granting planning consent. The Project Team has now been expanded to incorporate representation from the South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership and Cambridge City Council.
- 3.3.2 A key objective of the New Town Steering Group is to develop the Local Development Framework (LDF) policies ready for formal deposit in Spring 2004. As part of the development of those policies over the next twelve months, it is anticipated that informal consultation will be undertaken in September. Working with the County Council, the Local Strategic Partnership and infrastructure providers, the New Town Steering Group will also identify the infrastructure and service requirements for the New Town. A stakeholder conference is to be held to help determine the vision for the New Town.

## 3.4 **Affordable Housing**

- 3.4.1 The Affordable Housing Group has commissioned a team of consultants, led by Three Dragons, to work with stakeholders on the preparation of a Sub Region Affordable Housing Delivery Plan.
- 3.4.2 The purpose of the process is to establish:
- i) a shared understanding between partners of the critical issues limiting the supply of affordable housing (concerning land supply, S106 agreements, funding arrangements and how these resources are combined);
  - ii) improved relationships and understanding between key stakeholders, including landowners, developers, housebuilders, RSLs, mortgage lenders, local authority housing and planning officers and elected Members (notably Leaders and relevant portfolio holders);
  - iii) a vision, shared between the stakeholders, of how to achieve a step change in housing provision for sale and rent;

- iv) an agreement on the partnership arrangements between the stakeholders to address the barriers to and realise the innovative and good practice needed to realise the vision;
- v) a programme and timetable for future delivery paving the way for sustained commitment to investment in affordable housing.

### 3.5 **Transport**

3.5.1 Considerable progress is being made on a number of key transport projects, although further resources need to be brought in to deliver key schemes in conjunction with new developments.

3.5.2 The County Council is working co-operatively with Gallaghers on the development of the Cambridge-Huntingdon Rapid Transit Scheme. Key issues have been identified and these are being addressed by a joint project steering group, which includes representatives from the District Councils. The group has access to substantial consultant expertise and work undertaken previously, eg. environmental impact data, which is helping to inform the new project. Specific issues are being dealt with in liaison with District Councils, for example, a task force has been set up to address the St Ives to Huntingdon section. The County Council is leading the project and will be submitting an application for Transport and Works Act Powers in November.

3.5.3 Work is also progressing on key highway projects, including the Cambridge Southern Fringe access road. The pace of progress with this and other key schemes will partly be dependent on the success of the Communities Plan Growth Area Bid.

### 3.6 **Section 106**

3.6.1 The Section 106 group has been working to establish clear guidelines for collection of Section 106 (S106) monies and to assess the scope for maximising the levels of contribution.

3.6.2 The group has made some progress in this respect, but it is becoming increasingly clear that given the pace of major developments across the county (with for example, negotiations already underway on sites such as the new town, South Cambridge and St Neots) the speed at which guidance on how S106 contributions can be maximised needs to be hastened.

3.6.3 The group has devised an alternative approach to assessing the role of S106 contributions and the practicalities of negotiating successful S106 agreements and maximising contributions. Key elements of this will be:

- i) identifying what infrastructure requirements are needed overall and the likely apportionment of those requirements (in conjunction with the work on the Business Plan);
- ii) preparing a mechanism for systematically and fairly negotiating planning obligations with developers.

### **3.7 Comments on Progress of the Partnership**

- 3.7.1 One of the key aspects of progress has been the explicit recognition of development projects and infrastructure requirements in the market towns in Huntingdonshire. In addition, as part of the work, a bid has been submitted to Go-East under the Government's Communities Plan Growth Area Delivery Grant. As part of this bid submissions have been made for the delivery of the Sapley Square Regeneration Project, a Public Transport Interchange in Huntingdon and St Ives, and to provide the public transport infrastructure between St Neots and Cambridge. A copy of the full (60 pages) bid is available from the Director of Operational Services.
- 3.7.2 The work of the partnership is primarily provided by the local authorities in terms of staff time. Some significant additional funding comes from the East of England Development Agency. The District Councils have now been asked to provide some finance to contribute to this work for the year 2003/04 onwards. For Huntingdonshire this is £17.5K and this can be met from the contingency fund for 2003/04. All other Cambridgeshire Local Authorities have indicated that they will be contributing. An MTP bid will be made for budget provision 2004/05 onwards.
- 3.7.3 Discussions are now taking place about the delivery mechanisms for the infrastructure and Government has indicated that the sub-region needs to consider if an urban development company, urban regeneration company or formal partnership company is appropriate.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 That Cabinet:
- a) support the continued work of the Partnership;
  - b) approve the use of £17.5K of the contingency fund to contribute to this work; and
  - c) consider any further comments they wish to make on the delivery vehicle.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Cambridge Sub Regional Implementation Study Bid

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