

WEST KENT PRIORITIES FOR GROWTH

Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee – 26 February 2014

Report of Chief Officer of Communities and Business

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Cabinet 6 March 2014

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: The West Kent Partnership has prepared a statement of shared investment priorities, called *West Kent Priorities for Growth*, in order to inform:

- The development of *Unlocking the Potential*; the Kent and Medway growth strategy.
- The development of the *Strategic Economic Plan* (SEP) being prepared by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP).
- The case for future investment from other sources as they emerge, including future European funding streams.

This report supports the Key Aim of the Community Plan (Dynamic and Sustainable Economy)

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Roddy Hogarth

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Recommendation to Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee that the recommendation to Cabinet be endorsed.

Recommendation to Cabinet

To approve the adoption of the *West Kent Priorities for Growth* investment document.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that West Kent investment priorities are included in *Unlocking the Potential*; the Kent and Medway Growth Strategy and the *Strategic Economic Plan* (SEP) being prepared by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

Introduction and Background

1. The West Kent Partnership has prepared a statement of shared investment priorities, called *West Kent Priorities for Growth*, in order to inform:
 - The development of *Unlocking the Potential*; the Kent and Medway growth strategy.
 - The development of the *Strategic Economic Plan* (SEP) being prepared by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP).
 - The case for future investment from other sources as they emerge, including future European funding streams.
2. The investment plan sets out:
 - a brief summary of the current economic opportunities and challenges facing the three West Kent districts, based on the adopted West Kent Investment Strategy 2010-15;
 - the area's key locations for growth (commercial and residential), as outlined in adopted and emerging District Local Plans;
 - the key infrastructure requirements, both to bring forward specific schemes and to support wider strategic economic growth in both West Kent and other parts of Kent and East Sussex;
 - the need to invest in priorities for business, skills and communities.
3. The growth priorities for Sevenoaks District have been identified from other strategic documents such as the Core Strategy, the draft Allocations and Development Management Plan and Growth Without Gridlock (the Transport Strategy) all of which have been widely consulted. . We have consulted Members of the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee. In addition, Sevenoaks Town Council have put forward a new regeneration project relating to Sevenoaks Town and Bat & Ball.
4. We have identified 7 strategic growth sites in the District which have been adopted in the *West Kent Priorities for Growth* document. These are:
 - Swanley Town Centre
 - Sevenoaks Town Centre and Bat and Ball
 - Sevenoaks Vestry Estate
 - Edenbridge- Station Road
 - Fort Halstead
 - New Ash Green Village Centre

5. We have also identified a number of transport and infrastructure improvements.

These are:

- Addressing access constraints to the national road network in West Kent: assessment of improvements to the local motorway junctions including the M20, M26, M25 and M2/A2.
- Reinstatement of the Tonbridge – Gatwick rail service
- Bat and Ball Rail Station, Sevenoaks – improvements
- Alleviate congestion in Swanley - Develop a traffic management control and introduce intelligent transport systems
- Swanley Rail Services to be included in Zone 6
- Superfast Broadband services across the rural parishes in West Kent
- Business - start-up business hubs – Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Fort Halstead
- Studio School – Fort Halstead
- Railway Bridge, Station Road (Edenbridge)- alterations

6. The purpose of creating this document is to ensure that Sevenoaks District priorities are considered for future investment. However, it should be recognised that SELEP growth priorities are likely to be for major projects rather than local improvements.

7. The South East Local Enterprise Partnership was created in 2010 to support strategic economic aims in Kent, Medway, Essex, East Sussex, Southend and Thurrock. All the LEPs have been asked to submit a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to the government in order to unlock investment from the Local Growth Fund. The Local Growth Fund is a pot of money specifically allocated to LEPs to boost the areas of highest growth potential and those that need to close the economic gap.

8. The full *West Kent Priorities for Growth* document is set out in Appendix A.

Key Implications

Financial

There may be minimal costs associated with printing a small number of documents but these would be within existing budgets..

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications for the Council in adopting this document.

Community Impact and Outcomes

The purpose of the document is to encourage future investment; this would benefit the economic well-being and outcomes of our communities.

Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The investment priorities do not discriminate or disadvantage different groups. Inward investment in some of these areas will significantly improve the economic prospects of the population.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	The document encourages investment in some areas which are currently economically disadvantaged. Investment would stimulate and improve equality of opportunity.
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		No steps need to be taken to minimise the above impacts.

Conclusions

Members' approval is sought for the adoption of the *West Kent Priorities for Growth* document.

Appendices

Appendix A- *West Kent Priorities for Growth*

Background Papers:

[Sevenoaks District Council Core Strategy \(adopted February 2011\).](#)

[Sevenoaks District Council Draft Allocations and Development Management Plan \(ADMP\)](#)

Lesley Bowles
Chief Officer for Communities and Business