

**Subject:**  
REGENERATION IN ROSSENDALE

**Status:**  
FOR PUBLICATION

**Report to:**  
CABINET

**Date:**  
7 JUNE 2006

**Report of:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Portfolio Holder:** CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION

**Key Decision:** NO

Forward Plan  General Exception  Special Urgency  "X" In  
*Relevant Box*

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet on the pilot process of partnership working with Lancashire County Developments Limited and setting out options for the way forward.

## 2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The matters discussed in this report are linked to and support the following corporate priorities:
- *Regenerating Rossendale*
  - *Promoting Rossendale*

## 3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- Capacity to deliver regeneration agenda within Rossendale
  - Ownership of the regeneration agenda
  - Contribution to sub-regional and regional agenda

## 4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 The borough of Rossendale has an ambitious agenda for regeneration which includes a number of key projects:-

- Core Strategy (Local Development Framework)  
To set the planning framework for the borough for the next ten years.
- Area Action Plans.  
Area Action Plans for the priority regeneration areas of Rawtenstall and Bacup & Stacksteads.
- Valley Centre Redevelopment.
- New Bus Station.
- Adrenalin Gateway.
- Elevate.

4.2 In delivering the projects for the borough, Rossendale is contributing to the priorities of the Lancashire Economic Partnership as set out in the Strategic Investment Programme and also to the Regional Economic Strategy. In addition, the regeneration of Rossendale is part of the Transforming Pennine Lancashire Programme. East Lancashire Chief Executives now meet regularly with the Chief Executives of Elevate and the Lancashire Economic Partnership to progress the agenda. Hyndburn Borough Council has partnered with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to progress the Economic Regeneration agenda. Other East Lancashire authorities have considered this approach, particularly in relation to the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid. This regional and sub-regional context must be taken into account as we deliver locally.

4.3 In September 2006 the Head of Economic Regeneration and Spatial Development left the authority and the recruitment of a replacement was not successful. It was therefore decided to put in place interim arrangements through the creation of a “virtual team” which comprised Rossendale Borough Council supported by:-

- Arup – Area Action Plan for Rawtenstall and Core Strategy development
- Urban Vision – major planning applications  
Development Control Service  
Improvement programme
- Lancashire County Developments Limited – project support and development of the “virtual team” approach
- NWRDA – Brownfield land recycling programme and project support.
- Civic Trust – Character Appraisals.

4.4 In addition, there are a number of stakeholders in the regeneration of the borough and a range of groups had been established to take projects forward. A workshop was held on 15 February 2006 to consider a way forward for regeneration. The outcome of this event was an agreed way forward in terms of:-

- A programme management approach to regeneration

- The Economy Theme Group to take forward the role of Programme Board
- A Project Delivery team to be established comprising Rossendale Borough Council staff together with LCDL and NWDA resources.

4.5 The Cabinet agreed the development of this approach at its meeting on 29 March 2006. A further workshop was held for the Economy Theme Group in April 2006 to explore the roles and responsibilities of the Programme Board. The Workshop also defined the scope of the programme to be addressed by the Board. This included the following projects:

- Adrenaline Gateway scheme
- Rawtenstall town centre including
  - Bus Station redevelopment
  - Valley Centre redevelopment
  - Other aspects of the Area Action Plan
- Food production and retailing “cluster”
- Local Development Framework
- Health Campus
- Bacup & Stacksteads Area Action Plan/Elevate
- Marketing Rossendale
- Brownfield Regeneration
- PEER, REAL and economic inclusion
- Business Support
- A681 Corridor improvements

4.6 It was accepted that a number of groups were already in existence to take some of these projects forward and a method of reporting progress to the Programme Board needed to be developed.

#### **4.7 LANCASHIRE COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED (LCDL).**

4.7.1 In September 2006 discussion took place regarding a partnership between Rossendale Borough Council and LCDL. An initial pilot period of six months was agreed at “no cost”. The main areas to be progressed during the six month period were agreed as:-

- Valley Centre Redevelopment – secure fast turnaround of LCC Highways inputs into the development of the pre-planning scheme
- Bus Station – correspondence with Stuart Wrigley in August 2005 had set out that, within a six month period, RBC was targeting planning approval for a fully costed (revenue, capital) Bus Station which links (i.e. traffic, pedestrian and build) into the development of the Valley Centre Scheme.  
LCDL activity again linked to the fast turnaround of LCC Highways inputs into the development of the pre planning application stage. A potential role related to land reclamation issue was highlighted
- Other major Planning Applications  
Key LCDL activity will be to secure fast turnaround of LCC Highways inputs

- Job Retention/Growth  
LCDL to develop a method in partnership with the Council which enables local people to take up the new jobs that become available. This will include the development of relationships with potential employers and the educational sector in terms of skills development. To include the development of a gap analysis together with a three year action plan with targets for job retention and growth.
- Business Retention and Growth  
Process to be put in place for the co-ordination and management of business enquiries. Three year action plan to be developed for increasing the volume and managing the number of business enquiries together with the development of clear targets for business retention and growth.
- Transport  
LCDL to work with LCC transport planners to identify options for improving the transport infrastructure. Top line options appraisal developed for consideration by Lancashire Local.
- NWDA Visit  
Co-ordination of event programme and support with presentations.
- Food Cluster  
Development of the concept.

4.7.2 It was agreed at the end of the six month period a report would be presented to Members outlining the main achievements from the pilot phase and detailing the next steps in terms of partnership working to deliver Rossendale's Regeneration agenda.

#### 4.7.3 Evaluation

The pilot phase has been extremely successful in a number of ways:-

- LCC Highways – the nature of the highway infrastructure in Rossendale is constrained to a great extent by the borough's geography. It is recognised that the regeneration agenda will have a significant impact on this infrastructure and therefore LCC Highways are a key player in the regeneration programme. LCDL have been extremely helpful in developing the relationship between RBC and LCC Highways, (which has been unclear at times) and have secured additional resources to support progress. Regular dialogue now takes place. This has addressed 4 of the original areas to be progressed by the partnership. (Valley Centre, Major Planning Applications, Bus Station and Transport). A report has not been prepared for the Lancashire Locals but the Local Transport Plan has been considered at these meetings.
- NWDA – LCDL supported the visit and contributed to its success.
- Job Retention/Growth

- Business Retention/Growth  
Initial work has taken place to establish a start up service
- Food Cluster - some work has taken place to develop the concept and possible locations within the borough explored.

4.7.4 In addition to the projects highlighted above LCDL have played a significant role in:-

- Adrenalin Gateway – commissioning the pre-feasibility study, supporting the Steering Group and contributing to the scheme being long listed for the People’s Millions Lottery Scheme.
- Regeneration Programme Management approach
- Supported relationship building with stakeholders generally and the Economy Theme Group in particular.
- Supported the two workshops and development of the approach.

4.7.5 LCDL have found the pilot helpful in the development of the Economic Development agenda across the county and developing the engagement with LCC officers.

4.7.6 In conclusion not all the specified targets have been met but the partnership has been a positive one for Rossendale BC and has contributed significantly to the regeneration agenda.

## **4.8 NEXT STEPS**

4.8.1 Cabinet at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 agreed that the posts of Head of Economic Regeneration and Spatial Development and Spatial Development Manager should be dis- established and the posts of Head of Spatial Development and Head of Economic Regeneration and Strategic Housing be established instead. The recruitment to these two posts is currently taking place.

4.8.2 Discussions have taken place with LCDL about the future form of joint working in Rossendale now that the interim support arrangements are coming to an end.

4.8.3 The suggested approach to the way forward is to build on the pilot approach by including an LCDL post within the Regeneration Delivery Team. The team will also comprise officers from Rossendale Borough Council, and will report to the Deputy Chief Executive.

4.8.4 In addition, a bid has been made to the NWDA for a project support officer as a contribution to the Regeneration Project Delivery Team.

## **4.9 OPTIONS FOR REGENERATION**

Option One

For Rossendale BC to continue with the “virtual team” approach to regeneration with the core of this the partnership between Rossendale BC and LCDL, supported by NWDA and other organisations as appropriate to deliver regeneration locally within an East Lancashire, Lancashire and regional context.

#### Option Two

To enter into negotiations with Blackburn with Darwen concerning a partnership in the context of the transforming Pennine Lancashire agenda.

### **5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for Rossendale BC in taking this forward as it is based on re-directing existing resources

### **6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

- 6.1 A Partnership Agreement will need to be drawn up to formalize the arrangements and key deliverables.

### **7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

- 7.1 There are currently no Human Resource implications for the Council.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 This approach enables the partnership working established to be taken forward to contribute to achieving the regeneration agenda for Rossendale.

### **9. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 9.1 That Option 1 is taken forward as the preferred option.

### **10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT**

- 10.1 Lancashire County Developments Limited  
Economy Theme Group of the LSP

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No background papers