



To: Members of the Communities
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27 March 2013

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **3.30 pm** on **TUESDAY, 2 APRIL 2013** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

AGENDA

PART 1 - THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THIS PART OF THE MEETING

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 MOVING FROM TOWN TO AREA PLANS (Pages 3 - 12)

To consider a report (copy enclosed) by the Corporate Director : Economic & Community Ambition to seek views from Communities Scrutiny on the process for expanding Town Plans into broader Area Plans incorporating the smaller and more rural communities across Denbighshire.

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

James Davies

Peter Evans

Carys Guy

Huw Hilditch-Roberts

Rhys Hughes

Win Mullen-James

Bob Murray

Joe Welch

Cefyn Williams

Cheryl Williams

Huw Williams

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Town and Community Councils

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 2nd April 2013

Lead Members: Cabinet Lead for Economic Development and
Cabinet Lead for Tourism, Leisure & Youth (including Rural
Development)

Report Author: Corporate Director: Economic & Community Ambition

Title: Moving from Town to Area Plans

1. What is the report about?

During 2011/12, Denbighshire County Council developed and agreed Town Plans for the County's seven principal towns, excluding Rhyl. A similar exercise was carried out in Rhyl to develop the Rhyl Going Forward Delivery Plan. The Town Plans have allowed community needs and priorities to be identified for each major settlement. They have not yet, however, addressed the needs and priorities of smaller and more rural communities. In January 2013, Cabinet agreed to expand Town Plans into broader Area Plans. This report sets out proposals for how that will happen.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To seek views from Communities Scrutiny on the process for expanding Town Plans into broader Area Plans incorporating the smaller and more rural communities across Denbighshire.

3. What are the Recommendations?

Communities Scrutiny Committee is invited to review and comment on the proposed process for expanding Town Plans into broader Town based Area Plans as set out in this report, including specifically:

- The communities associated with each Plan set out in Appendix 1
- The consultation arrangements set out in Appendix 2

4. Report details.

Background

- 4.1 During 2011/12, the Council conducted a major exercise to compile Town Plans for the County's seven principal towns, excluding Rhyl, in order to identify community needs and priorities. A similar exercise was carried out in Rhyl to develop the Rhyl Going Forward Delivery Plan. The Town Plans for Corwen, Denbigh, Llangollen, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan, Ruthin and St Asaph were approved by Cabinet between December 2011 and March 2012.

- 4.2 At its meeting in January 2013, Cabinet approved an initial allocation of funding for projects identified as Year 1 priorities in the Town Plans. At the same time Cabinet agreed to consolidate and expand the Town Plans into broader Area Plans.
- 4.3 Since 15th January 2013, the Town Plans Co-ordination Group has considered the appropriate process for expanding the existing Town Plans into broader Area Plans. In doing so it has addressed 3 main questions:
- a) What is the appropriate 'area' for an Area Plan?
 - b) How should the Area Plans be developed?
 - c) What will they look like?

Areas to be covered

- 4.4 In considering what area the Plan should cover, the Group consider two main options – Member Area Group areas, or areas based on the Towns and the communities that have a traditional or natural affinity to them. Given that Town, and now Area Plans, are intended to enact the Council's commitment to community based planning and its ambition to be Closer to the Community, Group members concluded that second option – Towns and their Associated Communities – was the preferred option. Whilst slightly more complex to manage from a Council perspective, the Group felt that such Plans were more likely to be easily understood by residents. This approach is also in line with best practice in community led planning and the development of market towns.
- 4.5 Appendix 1 sets out the communities to be covered by each Plan. These have been discussed and agreed by Member Area Groups and are believed to represent the 'best fit' natural links between communities and towns.
- 4.6 The Town Plan Co-ordination Group also considered the question of how many Plans there should be. The Group concluded that in total there should be 9 Plans, comprising the existing 7 Town Plans, the Rhyl Going Forward Programme for Rhyl and a new Plan to be developed for Bodelwyddan and its associated communities once decisions regarding the Local Development Plan have been confirmed.

Developing the Plans

- 4.7 The Town Plan Co-ordination Group recognises that good local consultation must be at the foundation of the new Area Plans if they are to be truly community based plans, reflective of local needs and priorities.
- 4.8 The Town Plan Champions, supported by Town Plan Support Officers, will draw up detailed consultation plans for the smaller and more rural communities to be incorporated into their local Town and Area Plan. In order to ensure consistency of approach, the Town Plan Co-ordination Group has agreed a broad framework for consultation. This is set out in Appendix 2. In keeping with the Town & Community Councils Charter, proposals have been designed to ensure that Town/City and Community Councils lead consultation and engagement at local level.
- 4.9 A small number of Councillors will have communities within their wards relating to a Town outside their Member Area Group. Since MAGs will have

an important role in the development of the new Area Plans, the Town Plan Co-ordination Group has considered how best to handle this and recommends the following:

- Local Members will be consulted by the Town Plan Champion on how best to consult with their individual communities
- To inform the local consultation, local Members will be invited at the start of the process to identify any key issues or priorities they are aware of within their communities
- Local Members will be invited to attend relevant MAG meetings when the Area Plan is being considered for approval. If they are unable to attend, the Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure and Youth, acting in his role as Rural Champion, will ensure the interests of all rural communities, including those not normally covered by a MAG area, are adequately incorporated into the emerging Area Plans.

4.10 Area Plans will be developed by the Plan Champions based on the local consultations carried out and will be reviewed by MAGs. Once agreed by the MAG, the Area Plan will be referred to Cabinet for approval. Funding for early priorities can also be allocated at that stage.

Area Plans

4.11 The new Area Plans will have 3 broad sections – one identifying the vision and priorities for each Town, a second identifying how smaller and more rural communities relate to the Town, and a third setting out any specific needs or priorities for the smaller and more rural communities. The consultation proposals discussed above and set out in Appendix 2 will focus on the second and third sections of the Plans.

4.12 It is not intended to revisit the Town Plan section or priorities at this stage, although future phases of consolidation and strengthening of the Plans will allow issues and priorities to be reviewed as circumstances change. A potential route map for future stages of development is suggested in Appendix 3.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 The Corporate Plan identifies vibrant and economically active towns and communities as essential components of a strong local economy. The consolidation and expansion of Town Plans into broader Area Plans extends this work into smaller and more rural communities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 In adopting the Town Plans approach, from 2012/13 the Council identified a £175k annual budget to support implementation of the emerging priorities. Previously the Council also allocated £100k revenue and £480k capital budgets to provide funding for local and community projects. In January, Cabinet agreed that these should combine into a single source of funding for Town and Area Plan priorities. For 2012/13 and 2013/14 **combined** this provided a funding pot of £1.275M, taking into account underspend carried forward from 2011/12.

6.2 An initial allocation of around £600k was made to Town Plan Year 1 priorities in January. The remaining £600k was retained for allocation to early priorities emerging from the wider Area Plans and any projects emerging from the review of priorities for Rhyl.

7. What consultations have been carried out and has an Equality Impact Assessment Screening been undertaken?

The Town Plan Co-ordination Group has developed the proposals outlined in this report. Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC) has also been consulted on engagement of the voluntary/Third Sector in development of the Area Plans.

Communities Scrutiny will review the proposals at a special meeting on 2 April 2013. Comments from Scrutiny Committee will be made available to Cabinet at its meeting on 16th April 2013 when the proposals are presented for approval.

Consultation arrangements for developing the Area Plans are as set out in the report.

8. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The development of town plans is important to provide a process to allow investment in key community and town projects.

9. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The risks associated with implementation of the wider Area Plans are:

- Failure to address the needs and priorities of smaller and more rural communities
- Uncoordinated spend on projects with little or unclear strategic or local benefit
- Failure to fund identified priorities

These risks are addressed through the process outlined in this report, and specifically the consultation proposals set out in Appendix 2.

The risk of not delivering the actions identified for completion in the early years of the Town Plans has been reduced by creating the roles of Town and Area Plan Champions to drive the delivery of the priorities identified within the relevant Town and Area Plans and by allocating budgets to enable priority actions to be funded which otherwise could not be delivered through existing service budgets.

10. Power to make the Decision

Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council the power to do anything which it considers is likely to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Articles 6.3.1, 6.3.2 and 6.3.3 of the Council's Constitution set out scrutiny's role in policy development and matters affecting the area and its inhabitants.

Contact Officer: Corporate Director: Economic and Community Ambition Tel: 01824 706128

Towns & their Associated Communities

Town	Rural Communities	Member Area Group		
Prestatyn	Meliden	Prestatyn		
Rhuddlan	Cwm	Elwy		
	Dyserth			
	Bodelwyddan			
St Asaph	Rhuallt	Elwy		
	Cefn			
	Tremeirchion			
	Trefnant			
	Waen			
Denbigh	Bodfari	Elwy		
	Sodom			
	Henllan	Denbigh		
	Nantglyn			
	Prion			
	Saron			
	Aberwheeler			
	Llangwyfan			
	Llandyrnog			
	Llanrhaeadr			
	Ruthin		Bontuchel	Denbigh
			Cyffylliog	
			Rhewl	
Llanynys				
Llangynhafal		Ruthin		
Gellifor				
Llanbedr DC				
Llanferres				
Maeshafn				
Eryrys				
Llanarmon yn Ial				
Llandegla				
Llanfair DC				
Graigfechan				
Pentrecelyn				
Pwllglas				
Clocaenog				
Derwen				
Bryn Saith Marchog				
Corwen		Gwyddelwern	Ruthin	
	Bettws Gwerfil Goch			
	Melin y Wig			
	Bryneglwys			
	Llandrillo	Dee Valley		
	Cynwyd			
	Carrog			
	Glyndyfrdwy			
Llangollen	Llantysilio	Dee Valley		

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Consultation Proposals for Developing Area Plans

Each Plan Champion will tailor consultation arrangements to meet local needs and circumstances, however consultation for development of the Area Plans will take place within the following framework:

Step 1: Local Members are consulted on issues and priorities for individual communities within their Wards

Step 2: Targeted preliminary discussions are held with key local stakeholders to explore potential community issues and priorities. Stakeholders will vary according to local circumstances, but should cover the following sectors:

- Community Council
- Local School
- Key local businesses/business groups
- Any significant local community or voluntary organisation(s)

Discussions will cover issues and priorities already contained within the Town Plans and will focus on a) how communities ensure they benefit from Town developments, and b) needs and priorities within communities. The purpose of these preliminary discussions is to take soundings to inform the consultation papers rather than definitively agree what should be in a Plan.

Step 3: Issues identified in Steps 1 & 2 above are collated into an issues report for local consultation. Consultation will be led by the Community Council and will be open to any local resident or stakeholder group.

Community Councils will be encouraged to ensure consultation meetings are well publicised within the local community. The Council will also invite comment through its website, feeding back any comments received to the Community Council and Plan Champion.

Step 4: Feedback from the individual community consultations will be collated and presented to the relevant MAG for consideration and review. From this, the Plan Champion will oversee production of the new sections for the draft Town and Area Plan, which will be referred formally to Cabinet for approval once it has been agreed by the MAG.

The Town/Area Plan Co-ordinating Group will review all Plans prior to referral to Cabinet.

Members representing all communities covered by an Area Plan will be invited to attend the MAG meeting at which the Plan is being considered regardless of whether they are a member of that MAG or not. The Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure & Youth in his role as Rural Champion will ensure all rural communities are appropriately incorporated into the Area Plans.

Step 5: Plans agreed by individual MAGs and reviewed by the Town/Area Plans Co-ordinating Group will be referred to Cabinet for formal approval, including allocation of funding for any identified Year 1 priorities.

Area Plans are likely to come forward at different paces depending on the complexity of local consultation. A target date of September 2013 for all Area Plans to be agreed is recommended however.

Key Stakeholders for Preliminary Discussions

Prestatyn Area Plan

to be added

Rhuddlan Area Plan

to be added

St Asaph Area Plan

to be added

Denbigh Area Plan

to be added

Ruthin Area Plan

to be added

Llangollen Area Plan

to be added

Corwen Area Plan

to be added

Route Map for Further Development of Area Plans

How do we move from Town to Area Plans?

Output from discussions with Town Plans Co-ordinating Group, 26/2/13

Where we are

- 7 Town Plans
- Short, medium and longer term priorities for each Town
- An identified budget – revenue and capital
- Some concerns about community support for and buy-in to the Plans
- Some concerns about the level of ambition and strategic links
- Some concerns about links between the Plans and Service plans



Where we want to be

- Broader Area plans covering the whole County area
- Owned by the local community and reflecting their priorities
- Full engagement of local private and third sector (plus other public sector?)
- Ambitious and with clear links to Denbighshire's corporate priorities
- Guiding documents for service planning and funding decisions
- Referenced by Grant funders to identify local support and priority for external grant funding applications
- Living documents that change as need and priorities change



What we need to do

Phase 1 work

Town to Area

1. Agree what an 'Area' is for planning
2. Agree the boundaries
3. Capture local priorities
4. Local consultation and engagement
5. Write and approve new plans

Phase 2 work

Raising the Ambition

6. Evaluate existing priorities in Town Plans against local profiles, strategic priorities/vision etc
7. Facilitate local discussion

Making connections

8. Evaluate Service etc plans against and align with Area plans
9. Raise profile of Area Plans with funding bodies

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