

Report To: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 23rd May 2013

Lead Officer: Leader of the Council & Lead Member for Economic Development / Corporate Director Economic & Community Ambition

Report Author: Strategic Regeneration Manager

Title: Town and Area Plans

1. What is the report about?

The report is about monitoring the Council's performance in delivering its Town Plans and their benefits to the towns themselves and outlying communities.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The reason for making this report is to identify any slippage in the delivery of the Plans and actions to improve performance and to assist the Council to come closer to its communities.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee considers and provides observations on the progress made with the delivery of Town Plans in their first year

4. Report details

Town Plans for the county's seven largest settlements apart from Rhyl were endorsed by Cabinet between December 2011 and March 2012 during the term of office of the previous County Council. Following the elections in May 2012, presentations were made to the five relevant Member Area Groups to enable newly elected members to familiarise themselves with the contents of the previously approved Town Plans and to initiate a review of their contents to ensure that they were still valid and to enable any additional priorities to be incorporated.

A process for monitoring the performance of the Town and Area Plans was developed in conjunction with the Business Planning & Performance service to complement the reporting arrangements for the Corporate Plan. Detailed performance reports are being presented to the Member Area Groups on a quarterly basis which highlight the delivery confidence attached to each of the live priority actions in the relevant Town and Area Plans using the same Red-Orange-Yellow-Green status which has been adopted in the corporate project management methodology. The first report for the quarter ended 31st March 2013 was presented to the recently completed round of meetings of the Member Area Groups. The information in these individual Town and Area reports will be aggregated and

included in Quarterly Performance Reports submitted to Cabinet. The aggregate report for the quarter ended 31st March 2013 is attached as Annex A to this report. A commentary about individual actions to which a red or orange status has been attached is included at Annex B. A summary of the principal outcomes for the first year of the Plans is attached as Annex C.

An allocation of funding from the budget for delivering the corporate priority for improving the local economy was endorsed by Cabinet on 15th January. This has enabled those priority actions identified for early implementation which could only be delivered within a reasonable timeframe with financial support from this budget to proceed. These actions will feature in the next quarterly reports to the Member Area Groups and will be presented to the round of meetings scheduled to take place in July.

The Town Plans approved to date did not address the needs and priorities of smaller and more rural communities. Detailed arrangements for the development of the existing Town Plans into Town & Area Plans were agreed by Cabinet on 16th April. Work has recently commenced on this process with the first round of meetings for Town & Area Plan Champions and ward members scheduled to take place this month.

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

The Corporate Plan identifies vibrant and economically active towns and communities as essential components of a strong local economy. The implementation of Town & Area Plans will support implementation of the corporate priority for improving the local economy and will also assist the Council in meeting its ambition of being closer to the community.

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

Since the previous report made to this Committee about Town Plans, a further capital allocation of £200,000 was made from the capital plan for 2013/14 for improving the local economy. This brings the total amount currently available to £1.55m of which £0.6m was committed to early priorities by Cabinet on 15th January leaving a balance of £0.95m to allocate.

It is intended that Rhyl Going Forward projects will be largely funded either from the £175,000 corporate allocation for regeneration made in 2011/12, or in the case of larger scale projects, through specific proposals to be considered by the Strategic Investment Group prior to decision by Cabinet. There may however be some call on the funding allocation for Town and Area Plans for Rhyl Going Forward projects.

7. What consultations have been carried out?

The Town Plan Co-ordination Group has discussed the proposals outlined in this report. The original Town Plans were subject to extensive consultation and the arrangements for consultations during the development of Town & Area Plans were agreed by Cabinet on 16th April.

8. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Not applicable

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

The risks associated with implementation of the Town Plans are:

- failure to deliver priorities identified for completion in the early years of the Town Plans, and
- failure to address the needs and priorities of smaller and more rural communities

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 6.1, 6.3.2(c) and 6.3.4(b) sets out Scrutiny's powers with respect to town plans, the county and its inhabitants, and the Council's performance in delivering its objectives.

Contact Officer:

Strategic Regeneration Manager

Tel: 01824 706860