

Date: Friday, 15 February 2019

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6ND

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PLACE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

7 Local Economic Growth Strategies (Pages 1 - 4) To review Local Economic Growth Strategies.

Contact: Gemma Davies, Head of Economic Growth, tel 01743 258985

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Committee and Date

Place Overview Committee

15th February 2019

Item

Public

UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGIES FOR KEY MARKET TOWNS

Responsible Officer

Gemma Davies, Head of Economic Growth

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1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report advises the Place Overview Committee of the progress made with Local Economic Growth Strategies for the Key Market Towns; these being defined as Oswestry, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Bridgnorth, Ludlow and Shifnal. Shrewsbury is being taken forward through the Big Town Plan framework.
- 1.2 The strategies are at different stages of development, with four out of the six strategies nearing completion.
- 1.3 The final plans are expected to be complete by the end of March 2019. The strategies provide the local delivery of the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy to reflect the geography and diversity of Shropshire and the key sectors, growth and ambitions for the market towns.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Place Overview Committee to continue their support of the Local Economic Growth Strategies development work and the implementation of the action plans contained within them.

3.0 Opportunities and risks

- 3.1 While the Local Economic Growth Strategies are centred on the larger market towns, they are not confined by ward boundaries and therefore take in the wider hinterland and surrounding geography.
- 3.2 The key market towns are the economic focus for the surrounding (usually) more rural parishes which have smaller local centres within them. The surrounding areas turn to the key market town for key services such as GP surgeries/ medical centres, libraries, transport hubs and secondary and further education provision and well as supermarkets and such.
- 3.3 Some interest has been expressed from our smaller market towns in the development of their own strategies. There is opportunity to provide our smaller market towns with their own strategy template, in particular the action plan templates. The place plan officer for the area could also be assigned as a key

contact to enable open communication channels and assist with enabling conversations. A template has already been supplied to Church Stretton and Wem.

- 3.4 There is the potential risk in offering workshops to smaller towns in terms of setting a precedent and potentially over committing the resource needed to facilitate assisting each smaller town with the production of a strategy.

4.0 Financial assessment

- 4.1 There are no financial implications. The work is being undertaken as part of existing resources.

5.0 Report

- 5.1 The Local Economic Growth Strategies are focused on the local delivery of economic growth in the key market towns outlined above, including the wider hinterlands and surrounding parishes.
- 5.2 The strategies are not statutory documents but will act as an evidence base for those that are, as well as guiding the delivery of economic growth priorities locally. The documents are being co-created and informed by Shropshire Council, working closely with the Town Councils, Parishes and businesses in the areas.
- 5.3 The strategies are focused on the delivery of economic growth and will fully align with other documents such as the Place Plans and other statutory documents which fall under the Local Plan Review work, all of which will take into consideration allocations, together with housing & employment land requirements.
- 5.4 The framework for the development and engagement of the Local Economic Growth Strategies has comprised of;
- Full support and collaboration of the local elected member;
 - Initial engagement with the Town Council to propose the development of the strategy;
 - Workshop sessions held with Town Councils and various stakeholders, including wider parishes and the business community.
- 5.5 Another key document is the Place Plan (currently 18 in total in Shropshire), the purpose of which are to help Shropshire Council deliver its Local Development Framework. To do this, Place Plans identify and prioritise infrastructure needs within the local area and identify partners and funding sources to support delivery of those infrastructure needs. There are many facilities and assets that contribute to a place and the Council's role in place shaping is an important one as it creates the conditions and environment that attract people and businesses to the area. New Place Plan officer roles within the Economic Growth team have been assigned areas across the county and will be assisting in the development of the strategies.
- 5.6 **Next Steps**
- 5.7 Workshops have now taken place within all of the towns apart from Shifnal which has been slightly delayed. A date for the Shifnal workshop is being arranged.

- 5.8 The feedback gathered from the workshops to date has been extremely beneficial in helping to inform the strategy, vision and action plans. The workshop held in Ludlow was particularly successful and well attended, with Philip Dunne MP also taking part in the session.
- 5.9 Action plans covering each priority are currently being produced which will set out economic growth delivery within the strategies.
- 5.10 Feedback sessions are being programmed in with the Town Councils to introduce the drafts and circulate for comment.
- 5.11 Sessions are also being programmed in with a number of Officers across directorates to look at the action plans and agree the most appropriate leads for this work which will be a mix of Shropshire Council, Town Council, and Businesses (Business Improvement Districts where appropriate). The first session covering Whitchurch and Oswestry Action Plans took place last month.
- 5.12 It is the intention that once the drafts have been finalised that the Place Plan officers will help to coordinate the action plans and facilitate the delivery by acting as a conduit between the towns and the council.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The economic growth function will continue to develop the Local Economic Growth strategies and will where appropriate, help facilitate smaller towns to produce an action plan for their local area.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

N/A

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Peter Nutting

Cllr Steve Charmley

(Joint Portfolio Holders – Economic Growth)

Local Members

Appendices

None

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