

DRAFT LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGIES FOR KEY MARKET TOWNS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Responsible Officer

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1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report advises Cabinet 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 has been taken forward through the Big Town Plan.
- 1.2 Five out of the six strategies are now complete. Talks with Shifnal Town Council are underway to complete the Local Economic Growth Strategy for Shifnal.
- 1.3 The strategies provide the local delivery of the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy to reflect the geography of Shropshire and the key sectors, growth and ambitions for each of the market towns.
- 1.4 The consultation will be made available on Shropshire Council website for 6 weeks and will be open to the public, Town and Parish Councils and stakeholders to put forward their comments.

2.0 Recommendations

Cabinet agree to;

- 2.1 Note the progress with development of the draft Local Economic Growth Strategies to date and note their importance to the delivery of the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy at market town level.
- 2.2 Approve the draft Local Economic Growth Strategies as set out in Appendix 1 for public consultation.
- 2.3 The Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration be given delegated authority to

consider the outcomes of the consultation, implement any changes within the final documents and publish the Local Economic Growth Strategies.

REPORT

3.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 While the draft 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, Ellesmere and Wem.
- 3.4 It has been identified that whilst workshops and other support could be made available to smaller towns, this would need to be proportionate and balanced against resources available and outcomes to be scoped and gained in each instance.
- 3.5 An Equality Inclusion and Social Impact Assessment has been undertaken to support the Local Economic Growth Strategies and is appended to this report. Following consultation on the Local Economic Growth Strategies, any identified impacts in equality terms, whether negative or positive, will be considered in the light of the feedback received. A further screening ESIIA will be undertaken following the consultation, to provide opportunity for collation of the feedback and for any adjustments to proposed actions as a result. A medium positive impact would be intended for the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, and also Social Inclusion. This would be due to an emphasis on skills and learning, flexible working to accommodate caring responsibilities and action to address access challenges for those living in low income households and/or those living in rural areas, such as young people, e.g. fuel poverty and digital / broadband connectivity

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 These draft Local Economic Growth Strategies do not have any direct financial implications for the Council because any project included within the strategies will be assessed on an individual basis and be subject to a full financial appraisal before any Council funding is committed. Any external funding which is sought to support the delivery of any projects in the future will need to be considered on a case by case basis.

5.0 Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1 Energy and fuel consumption:
The draft Local Economic Growth Strategies will provide an opportunity to foster shorter journeys to work by generating local employment opportunities.
- 5.2 Renewable energy generation:
The draft Local Economic Growth Strategies will provide opportunities to support the installation of renewable energy technologies by businesses and developers to help meet their energy needs and to capture the value of energy such as heat which is currently wasted.
- 5.3 Carbon offsetting or mitigation:
The draft Local Economic Growth Strategies have the potential to encourage local businesses and developers to better understand their carbon footprint and to engage them to invest in clean energy technologies and measures such as tree planting or habitat creation to mitigate or offset remaining carbon emissions.
- 5.4 Climate Change adaption:
The draft local Economic Growth Strategies provide an opportunity to reference the need for businesses to assess and build in resilience to climate risks which could affect their operation, customer base and staff.

6.0 Background

- 6.1 The draft 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.
- 6.2 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 have been co-created and informed by Shropshire Council, working with the Town Councils, Parishes and businesses in the areas.
- 6.3 The strategies are focused on the delivery of economic growth and will align with other documents such as the Place Plans and will be taken into account as background evidence to inform the emerging Local Plan Review

which will allocate land to deliver defined housing & employment land requirements in these towns.

6.4 The framework for the development and engagement of the Local 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, and in Ludlow, the local MP.

6.5 The strategies align with the Place Plans, the purpose of which are to help Shropshire Council deliver its Local Development Framework and the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy. To do this, Place Plans identify and prioritise infrastructure needs within the local area. 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.

7.0 **Next Steps**

7.1 The initial draft Local Economic Growth Strategies were sent to respective Town and Parish Councils in each area for initial consultation. The comments have been considered and additions to the draft Local Economic Growth Strategies made as a result.

7.2 Sessions have also taken place 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, Businesses (Business Improvement Districts where appropriate) and the Marches Growth Hub.

7.3 The consultation will be made available on Shropshire Council website for 6 weeks and will be open to the public, Town and Parish Councils and stakeholders to put forward their comments.

7.4 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.

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

- 7.6 It is proposed at recommendation [2.3] that the consideration of the outcome of the consultation and the decision on the final versions of the Local Economic Growth Strategies referred to within this report (and their publication) is delegated to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration.

List of Background Papers
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr. Steve Charmley - Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration
Local Members Cllr. Les Winwood Cllr. Tina Woodward Cllr. Michael Wood Cllr. Christian Lea Cllr. Elliot Lynch Cllr. William Parr Cllr. Robert Tindall Cllr. Richard Huffer Cllr. Tracey Huffer Cllr. Viv Parry Cllr. Andy Boddington Cllr. David Evans Cllr. Lee Chapman Cllr. Vince Hunt Cllr. Paul Milner Cllr. John Price Cllr. Clare Aspinall Cllr. Joyce Barrow Cllr. Steve Charmley Cllr. Nick Beardsley Cllr. Matt Lee Cllr. Robert Macey Cllr. Mark Jones Cllr. Steve Davenport Cllr. Thomas Biggins Cllr. Gerald Dakin Cllr. Peggy Mullock Cllr. Paul Wynn Cllr. Roy Aldcroft Cllr. Karen Calder Cllr. Rob Gittins Cllr. Roger Hughes

Cllr. David Minnery
Cllr. Paul Wynn

Appendices

Copies of the Local Economic Growth Strategies for Oswestry, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Bridgnorth and Ludlow

Equality Inclusion and Social Impact Assessment