

Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.3

Meeting Date: 25th July 2013
Portfolio: Economy and Enterprise
Key Decision: Not Applicable:
Within Policy and Budget Framework
Public / Private Public

Title: CARLISLE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP
Report of: Director of Economic Development
Report Number: ED 21/13

Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this report is to brief Members of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the Carlisle Economic Partnership, its priorities and action plan

Questions for/input required from Scrutiny

1. Links with the Local Economic Partnership

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

The Carlisle Economic Partnership (CEP) is a public/private board designed to assist the growth of the functional economic area. The partnership was established in August 2011 and has been modelled on the County-wide Local Economic Partnership (LEP) in order to feed into and support the LEP.

A fundamental piece of work for the partnership was the development of a robust and comprehensive evidence base which has helped inform the development and implementation of a range of actions to help improve the local economy and drive growth (Report to E&E OandS 29/11/12). These are categorised under the following headings:-

- Priority 1 – Business
- Priority 2 – Skills and Employment
- Priority 3 – Infrastructure
- Priority 4 – Image

Sub Groups have been tasked with identifying actions for each of the four priority areas. Priority 3 Infrastructure is split into two – the Digital Economy Sub Group and the Infrastructure Group.

Priority 1 – Business

The purpose of this group is to inspire and support businesses to reach their potential to grow Carlisle's economy and jobs. Actions include:

- Establish Carlisle Business Growth Hub to support businesses
- Promote and support enhanced international trade activity
- Establish a task group with key manufacturers to identify opportunities and agree
- plans to grow manufacturing
- Develop the food and drink supply chain
- Encourage and facilitate use of low carbon renewable to support sustainability and
- growth of Carlisle businesses

Work on these actions is already underway with the establishment of the Growth Hub, the Business Interaction Centre at Paternoster Row and an initial meeting between a major manufacturer and developer to discuss a potential energy transfer

initiative.

Priority 2 – Skills & Employment

The purpose of this group is to ensure motivated and skilled people, both employees and entrepreneurs. Actions include:-

- Complete Carlisle skills audit
- Engagement in Cumbria's LEP's skills and Employment Commission to examine challenges of deprivation, job opportunities and attracting and retaining graduates
- Support high quality careers advice
- Engaging current and emerging skills and employment funding

A careers event is planned with the schools, college, providers and University in the autumn.

Priority 3 – Infrastructure

The purpose of this is to ensure the right infrastructure is in place to support business competitiveness and growth. This is split into two groups – Digital Economy and Infrastructure. The Digital Economy Sub-Group's key actions are firstly to stimulate demand and create relevant business cases for private sector superfast (and faster) broadband investment and universal/enhanced mobile phone coverage. Secondly to encourage take up of broadband opportunities/addressing availability of wifi.

The Council along with its partners in the CEP are keen to see free wifi access in the City Centre in order to support businesses and tourism. The Council has commissioned a piece of work to understand whether there is a commercial model which would work for Carlisle.

The Infrastructure Sub-Group have a number of key actions including:-

- Co-ordination of public transport provision
- Enhancing and developing key employment sites particularly along the M6 Corridor
- Support airport related activities
- Support and enhance Carlisle City Centre
- Ensure the strategic housing needs to support the economic growth forecasts in the

- Local Plan

A number of these actions are supported and included in the Local Plan Preferred Options. As part of the preparation of the Local Plan the Council needs to produce an Infrastructure Deficit Plan which the sub-group will have an input.

Priority 4 - Image

The Sense of Place/Carlisle Story is fundamental to this and actions will be identified following the completion of this process.

2. CONCLUSION

The CEP has set itself a challenging agenda, however by working in partnership the issues identified can be addressed.

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**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Community Engagement –

Economic Development –

Governance –

Local Environment –

Resources -