

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION PRIORITIES

Cabinet Member Cllr Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer Amy Tregellas, Head of Communities & Governance

Reason for Report: To provide Members with details of the Economic Development and Regeneration team's priorities and projects for the current financial year.

RECOMMENDATION: That members note the contents of the report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The service works towards the corporate priorities of Economy and Community:

- Bring new businesses into the District
- Support business growth and development
- Improve and regenerate our town centres
- Grow the tourism sector
- Help communities be more sustainable

Financial Implications: Funding has been identified within the budget to fund a limited number of economic projects. However, the service will be working proactively with partners to draw in further EU and government funding in order to progress some major initiatives.

Legal Implications: None

Risk Assessment: Failure to commit sufficient resources to these service priorities may mean that the Economic Development objectives of the Council will not be realised.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Following the approval of the Mid Devon District Council Corporate Plan in February 2016 the Economic Development and Regeneration Service (including Economic Development, Town Centre Management and Markets) has been developing its priorities for 2016-17 under the themes:

- **Employment** - Increasing the number and quality of jobs / employment opportunities
- **Skills** - Ensuring individuals and businesses have the necessary skills to take advantage of economic opportunities
- **Enterprise** - Supporting businesses to develop and grow
- **Place** - Supporting the regeneration of our town centres, and sustainability of rural communities

The service's priorities and objectives are set out in detail in Appendix A.

1.2 Although the service has been expanding its capacity to deliver the Council's economic priorities, we realise there is a limit to what we can achieve on our own. There is therefore a clear emphasis in the service plan of working in collaboration

with local and regional partnerships. This includes working closely with the Exeter and Heart of Devon authorities (Exeter, Teignbridge, East Devon and Mid Devon) (EHOD) on joint economic initiatives, and with local town teams and business partnerships on individual projects for the benefit of those towns.

- 1.3 Equally, given the limitations on the Council's budgets, there is an emphasis on working proactively to draw down external funding for economic initiatives that will benefit the local business community, such as has been achieved with the successful partnership bid for European LEADER funding and Government funding for the Growth Hub services (business support services). We also try as much as possible to use our budgets as match funding to lever in further private and public funding into individual projects.
- 1.4 One of the key areas for development in 2016-17 is developing our knowledge base, so that what we do is based on sound evidence. This includes undertaking some primary research into the potential of the Tourism sector in Mid Devon to inform the Tourism Strategy, developing a clear statistical base on which to make decisions, as well as learning from good practice such looking into the Broadband for Rural North project in Lancashire.
- 1.5 Over and above these it is important to act strategically and focus on those initiatives that will make the biggest difference to the economy and communities of Mid Devon. This is not always easy to identify in the first instance, so in a number of areas, we are exploring the potential of various initiatives before committing Council resources.
- 1.6 In parallel with this service plan, a separate Tourism Strategy and Tiverton Market Business Plan are being developed to set out in more detail the priorities and objectives for these streams of work.

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Circulation of the Report: Cllr Richard Chesterton, Management Team

List of Background Papers: none

Appendix A – Economic Development & Regeneration Priorities 2016-17

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Theme	Aim	Objectives	Current Projects	Potential Future Projects
0.0 Strategic Direction	Work with partners to develop effective strategies for the growth of the Mid Devon Economy based on a robust evidence base	0.1 To have a clear understanding of the Mid Devon Economy (including the retail environment of our town centres) grounded in a robust evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual contract for the Fame/Mint database established Provide quarterly Economic Updates for Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint data-analyst post with EHOD
		0.2 To develop strategies that reflect Mid Devon priorities and those of the wider area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise and approve Inward Investment Strategy by 31 March 2017 Finalise and approve Tourism Action Plan by 31 March 2017 Work with EHOD partners to develop a joint economic development & inward investment strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a Mid Devon wide Economic Partnership
		0.3 Develop relationships with key local businesses and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Employers Programme (ongoing) Provide continuing support for the Business Forum Mid Devon 	
1.0 Employment				
Increasing the number and quality of jobs	Attract new businesses into the district	1.1 In collaboration with other EHOD authorities to develop a joint economic development & inward investment strategy / marketing strategy to promote Mid Devon as a place to do business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with EHOD partners to develop a joint Economic Development and Inward Investment Strategy by 31 March 2017 	
	(focusing on particular sectors and their supply chains)	1.2 To work with other EHOD partners to identify sectoral cluster groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with EHOD partners to develop a joint Economic Development and Inward Investment Strategy by 31 March 2017 	
		1.3 Work with land owners and developers to bring forward business development sites	Current sites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiverton EUE Hitchcock's Farm Mid Devon Business Park Cullompton Business Park 6 monthly survey of industrial sites 	

		1.4 Work with partners to provide start-up and incubator workspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look into feasibility of workspace bid to ESIF by June 2016 	
		1.5 Work with regional partners to improve broadband to businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with EHOD to investigate options for Broadband projects 	
2.0 Skills				
Job Skills & Employability	Ensuring individuals have the necessary training and skills to take advantage of job opportunities			
		2.1 Help businesses to access the information, advice and funding they need in order to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint procurement of business support services by Feb 2016 (completed) 	
Enterprise Skills	Ensuring businesses have the necessary skills to flourish and grow	2.2 Work with partners to develop Business Hubs & Incubator workspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look into feasibility of workspace bid to ESIF by Dec 2016 	
3.0 Enterprise				
Business development and growth		3.1 Work collaboratively with local businesses, agencies and public bodies to bring resources into the district to enable business growth		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look into the feasibility of a business loan scheme for start-up projects in partnership with EHOD Explore other potential business support projects
		3.2 Support the activities of local business networks and trade groups	<p>Further develop and maintain relationships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Forum Mid Devon Crediton Chamber of Commerce Culm Valley in Business Tiverton Town Centre Partnership Bampton Business Group 	
		3.3 Help businesses to access the information, advice and funding they need in order to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint procurement of business support services by Feb 2016 (completed) Provide support for LEADER project (ongoing) 	
4.0 Growing the Tourism Sector	Increase the number of people visiting,	4.1 Develop a tourism strategy to be adopted by 31 st March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise and approve Tourism Action Plan by Apr 16 	

	staying and spending money in the District		(completed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission and complete research to development our understanding of the tourism sector in Mid District and its potential for growth by 30th Sept 2016 	
		4.2 Develop relationships with key stakeholders in the tourism sector in order to work collaboratively to deliver tourism strategy - Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership/Visit Devon; Mid Devon Attractions Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Mid Devon are represented and promoted 	
		4.3 To support the development and promotion of tourism infrastructure (such as cycle and walking trails, food trails, events & festivals, active leisure opportunities and facilities, heritage assets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cullompton Food Festivals on 9th Apr (completed) & Oct 2016 Boniface Event, 5th June 2016 Tour of Britain, 9th Sept 2016 Green Coat Guides scheme Work with town teams to deliver, market and promote coach parking in each of the three main towns 	<i>(support projects dependant on results of the tourism research)</i>
5.0 Place				
Improving and regenerating our town centres	To increase footfall, dwell time and spend in our town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the leisure, retail and social offer of our town centres Develop and deliver a masterplan for Tiverton Town Centre Work with town teams to deliver projects that will regenerate and increase footfall in our town centres Developing skills so that town centre businesses can grow Developing strong marketing and communication strategies for each of our towns Support local markets in Crediton & Cullompton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the setting up of Tiverton Town Centre Partnership (Completed) Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan Submit application for Cullompton Townscape Heritage Initiative by 31st Aug 2016 Cullompton shopfront scheme (ongoing) Tiverton shopfront scheme (ongoing) Ensure delivery of HSIF projects (ongoing) Cullompton Group Travel Guide Support for Cullompton Farmers Market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore feasibility of Tiverton BID or similar membership scheme if the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership wish to pursue this option Second Stage Townscape Heritage Initiative Bid for Cullompton

6.0 Tiverton Market	<p>Making Tiverton Market a 'destination of choice'</p> <p>Diversifying the customer profile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and diversify the retail offer and create a vibrant retail and community space • Develop community events and special markets • Enhance the trading environment • Improve marketing and promotion through developing the market's brand and identity and expanding digital presence • Provide business support and training to create a business hub for start-up businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish and approve Pannier Market Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2021 by 31 August 2016 • Provide a varied events diary for the next 12 months including six 'Electric Nights' events • Create a business hub as a centre for market entrepreneurship and innovation • Carry out structural repairs on the market building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the actions set out in the Pannier Market Strategy and Action Plan
7.0 Working with communities to create a more sustainable future		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local communities to retain and develop their local facilities and services • Work with local communities on projects that improve the local economy and support community infrastructure • Helping community groups be more entrepreneurial & diversify their income streams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with DCC to develop a bid for ERDF social enterprise support project • Support local community projects e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copplestone Village Hall ○ LARCS Project, Bampton ○ Mills Project 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for rural broadband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look into feasibility of a rural broadband project, using the B4RN model (Broadband for the Rural North) 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Strategic Grants • Administer TAP funding programme 		

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESIF – European Structural and Investment Fund

EHOD – Exeter and Heart of Devon (Exeter City Council, East Devon District Council, Teignbridge District Council & Mid Devon District Council)

TAP – Town and Parish Fund (a joint DCC/ MDDC funding programme)