

# **SCRUTINY ECONOMY COMMITTEE**

## **3 JUNE 2010**

### **Sustainable Development and Transport Portfolio Programme for 2010/11**

#### **Long Term Spatial Strategy**

The regional Spatial Strategy has been delayed and as a consequence there has been an impact on the Council's production of the Core Strategy. Nevertheless we will press on with delivering the agreed figure for Exeter of 12,000 additional homes between 2006 and 2026.

We will revise the Council's Local Development Scheme, that outlines the scope and programme for documents that will comprise the Council's Local Development Framework, and agree this with the Government Office.

We will consult on a pre submission core strategy in the summer, prior to submission to the Secretary of State in the Autumn and a examination in public next Spring. The evidence base to support the core strategy, such as on infrastructure requirements, flood risk, green infrastructure and the housing market will continue to be developed and updated.

Early delivery of new housing is likely to be required to ensure an adequate supply of housing land.

We will consider representations on the draft Newcourt and Monkerton / Hill Barton masterplans and convert them to adopted supplementary planning documents to enable housing land in these strategic allocations to be brought forward as soon as possible.

#### **The challenge of delivering strategic sites**

As the Government embarks on its comprehensive spending review, it is likely that we will see a major impact on public sector spending; areas such as transport and housing are likely to have significant cuts in national and regional funding. This will have implications for infrastructure planning and we will need to look carefully at our delivery plans for the strategic sites, such as Newcourt and Monkerton.

I have asked the interim Director of Economy and Development to consider putting together a delivery mechanism for the strategic sites. It is important that members understand the infrastructure requirements for the delivery of the additional housing and I would wish to take members through the work we have been doing to build an infrastructure model for the City.

#### **Quality of residential development**

A residential design standards supplementary planning document to ensure high quality sustainable design of new housing developments has been produced in draft form for early discussion with stakeholders with the intention to move forward to adoption. This is an important document that will address the challenge of creating high quality environments at high densities, addressing the impact of the car, poor internal space standards, and mediocrity.

### **The New Growth Point**

The City Council is a key partner in work of the Growth Point and we continue to play an important role in bringing forward the strategic sites both in east Devon and to in the east of the City. Critical infrastructure is intended to be funded from Regional Infrastructure Funding and Dept for Transport funding: Junction 29 and 30 of the M5 and the new railway station at Cranbrook. A decision is awaited on the major scheme bid of £12m for the Junction 29 and 30 improvements and access to the Exeter Science Park is dependent on this funding. I anticipate being in a position to report on the outcome of this bid in October this year. We also expect confirmation from the SWRDA that £12m of Regional Infrastructure Funding has been released in the coming weeks to contribute to these works.

I expect to confirm in coming weeks that New Growth Point Funding has been awarded for the construction of the Clyst Honiton Bypass and that works are expected to commence in October. This will mark the opening up of the Growth area for development.

### **Affordable Housing**

Representations on the draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document will be considered and a revised document adopted in the Summer. We will also consider when to introduce increased affordable housing requirements, through a higher percentage and a lower threshold.

### **Single Conversation**

Officers are working on the production of a Investment Plan as part of the Homes and Communities Agency's Single Conversation process. This will be the principle process by which the City will secure grant funding in the future for affordable housing and support for programmes such as the Growth Point, Carbon management, and regeneration.

### **Climate Change**

Council recently agreed a series of reports that set out a climate change strategy. The priority for 2010 will be a sustainable energy strategy pursued through the Council acting as 'ringmaster' in negotiations and viability studies of district heating schemes for the half dozen largest development areas in Exeter.

### **Bus Station Site**

A City Centre Vision, city centre transport study, concept master planning and viability studies will be undertaken to inform the adoption of a detailed development brief or masterplan in 2011 and pre-application negotiations on a planning application for the site.

The background studies have all now been completed and work has now begun on developing a master plan in conjunction with feasibility/ viability analyses being carried out by Land Securities to help inform the master planning process. A two year exclusivity agreement is being negotiated with Land Securities/ Crown Estate to provide comfort to the parties during this process.

### **City Centre Enhancements**

We will finalise and commence schemes for Gandy Street and Northernhay Gate and finalise proposals for Cowick Street and King William Street Car Park.

### **Long Term Transportation Strategy**

We will continue to work with the County Council to influence the best transportation outcomes for Exeter at a time of significant pressures on government funding. Three specific projects will continue to be strategically important: High Quality Public Transport/Project Exe-Press – a proposal to link Cranbrook and key employment sites with the city centre and St. David's station; Devon Metro – a scheme designed to deliver enhanced local rail services; and major scheme bids by DCC to deliver improvements to the Alphington Road & Topsham Road/Bridge Road corridors, together with a new Park & Ride facility at Alphington.

We will also continue our commitment to promoting sustainable transport, focusing in particular on ensuring that the momentum created by Cycling Demonstration Town status is carried forward to future projects designed to fill gaps in the network and use the planning system to ensure that new developments facilitate cycling as a viable and preferred method of travel.

The emphasis for the final year of the Cycling Demonstration Town programme will be to respond to planning applications to ensure that cycle friendliness becomes the norm, both in the way that we as a council consider planning applications, and in terms of what is actually built.

### **Concessionary Travel**

We are also responsible for the operation within Exeter of the national concessionary fares scheme, although along with a number of Devon authorities we belong to a partnership whereby Devon County Council carries out the administration on our behalf. The scheme is a highly successful one but the shortfall in government funding has created significant problems for Exeter. We have secured an additional £1.65 million for the current financial year, after which responsibility for the scheme will pass to County and Unitary authorities. We have already engaged with DfT and DCLG to try to ensure that the funding shortfall is not repeated in future years.

### **Civil Parking Enforcement**

The priority for the coming year will be to continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the civil parking enforcement function, with particular emphasis on ensuring that it is responsive to the concerns of local residents and underpinned by appropriate regulations. The service operates in a complex and contentious legal and industrial relations environment, and it is important to recognise that this will continue to represent a significant demand on management capacity.

**Councillor Peter Wadham**  
**Portfolio Holder Sustainable Development and Transport**