

## **SCRUTINY ECONOMY COMMITTEE 13 NOVEMBER 2008**

### **Sustainable Development and Transport Portfolio Programme for 2008/09**

NB: The ordinary typeface is the June report and the italicised text is the update for this meeting.

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

Our biggest challenge will be accommodating the growth in the City's population envisaged by the government. The Secretary of State's modifications to the Regional Spatial Strategy are expected by the end of July and we will need to weigh up our response to that. Whatever the detail, a substantial level of growth will need to be accommodated. We will bring forward the revised Local Development Framework Core Strategy by the year end so that the key parts of the City's future growth can be set out for public response. At the same time we will continue to work closely with East Devon and Devon County Council in delivering our commitments for the New Growth Point.

*The Council has now responded to the Secretary of State's proposed modifications to the Regional Spatial Strategy expressing concerns about the capacity of the City to accommodate the scale of growth envisaged. We are bringing forward revisions to our emerging Core Strategy during November/December and then consulting the public in the Spring. Participation in work to deliver the New Growth Point project continues to be a major commitment.*

#### **Affordable Housing**

We believe an increase in the target and dropping of the threshold are now overdue. We will include the enhanced 35% standard and the lower threshold in the revised Core Strategy.

*Progress on introducing the 35% standard needs to await the completion of work on viability, which is difficult in current conditions. Any conclusions will be reflected in the Core Strategy when it goes out for consultation next year.*

#### **Climate Change**

We will use the planning system to push developers to meet higher standards of construction and insulation and to raise renewables provision. We will be ensuring that Planning and Building Control work closely together to underpin this.

*The Planning team continue to raise the need to meet higher standards of construction and insulation with developers. The level of activity is, as would be expected, relatively low at the moment. We are putting in place arrangements to bring together Planning and Building Control as set out in the paper accompanying this agenda.*

#### **Environmental Enhancements**

We will be implementing the Fore Street, Heavitree enhancement this Summer with Devon County Council and preparing plans for the enhancement of Cowick Street. There are a range of other improvements focused on the City Centre: Paris Street/Sidwell Street will be completed shortly; proposals for Martin's Lane re-paving

will be brought forward shortly; and we will start considering, with Devon County Council, what other enhancements to secondary City Centre streets are justified.

*Work at Heavitree Fore Street will be completed by Christmas and we have begun to design work on a concept for Cowick Street. Our main concern is to get the owners of the St Thomas Centre onboard and we are in dialogue with them. Planning Member Working Group has agreed that Martin's Lane should be a principal priority for this year and we are looking to bring forward other proposals for Gandy Street and Fore Street.*

### **Debenhams and the Bus Station Site**

Our priority will be to ensure a high quality re-modelling of the exterior of Debenhams and to ensure it is brought back into use as quickly as possible. We will also put in place the essential background work for preparing a Master Plan for the bus station site and delivering a high quality bus interchange at the heart of the scheme.

*Progress on the former Debenhams building has slowed reflecting current market conditions. With regard to the Bus Station, we have now completed work on the Height and Massing Study and Executive recently agreed to fund studies relating to Archaeology, Parking and Transportation as a precursor to preparing a Master Plan for the site.*

### **Signing**

We endorse the proposed new pedestrian signing system and will work with Devon to implement it this Autumn.

*A new pedestrian signing system is being implemented from December with work outside the City Centre initially and the City Centre installation work starting in the New Year. Completion of these works will be by February.*

### **Demand Management**

We are committed to working with the County Council to find a package of measures that will limit the growth in car traffic and ensure reasonable air quality. Park and Ride expansion is one of the key measures we need to take and our focus this year will be on the A30 Western approach. We will continue to support the Cycling Demonstration Town Project, Walking Strategy and TravelSmart project.

*We continue to work closely with the County Council on their Major Schemes Bid to improve highway infrastructure and public transport in the key growth areas of the City. Consultation on a Park and Ride site on the west side of the City has been taking place.*

### **Civil Parking Enforcement**

This has been a major project which has seen the transfer of the Traffic Warden function to the City Council and the complete re-casting of the statutory basis for enforcement and of the whole parking function. The transfer has gone comparatively smoothly so far and I'm pleased that people in residents' parking areas are seeing proper enforcement for the first time. If you have any issues, please let me know.

*The team is now fully up to complement and Members have hopefully seen an improvement in the level of evening enforcement which was of the greatest concern. Please let me know if you have any issues that need addressing.*

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