

		AGENDA ITEM NO.	
Report Cover Sheet			
Name of Meeting:		Executive 10 th December	
Date of Meeting:			
Report Title:		Growth Point Bid	
Summary of report:		Request for support to bid to Government for resources to assist assessment infrastructure issues	
For Further Information Please Contact (report author):		John Archer	
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Policy Framework:		No	
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budgetary framework:		No	
Wards of the District directly affected by this decision:		None directly	
Key Decision?		No	
Included within the Forward Plan?		No	
Is the report Private & Confidential		No	
Background Papers:			
Consultation Undertaken			
Below is a table of the Council's regular consultees. However not all have to be consulted on every matter and if there was no obligation to consult with a specific consultee they will be marked as n/a.			
Consultees	Yes/ No	Who	
Other Committees	n/a		
Ward Councillors	n/a		
Portfolio Holders		Cllr Hammon	
Other Councillors	n/a		
Warwick District Council recognised Trades Unions	n/a		
Other Warwick District Council Service Areas	n/a		
Project partners	n/a		
Parish/Town Council	n/a		
Highways Authority	n/a		
Residents	n/a		
Citizens Panel	n/a		
Other consultees	n/a		

Officer Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports must be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance Services and Legal Services.		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director(s)	19 Nov	Craig Anderson
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Legal	16 Nov	Simon Best
Finance	16 Nov	Finance
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the action undertaken to submit a bid to Government for resources to assess and meet infrastructure needs arising from future growth be endorsed
- 1.2 That the draft approach towards securing structures for cross boundary working to address growth issues as set out in appendix A be approved

2. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Government is making available provision of funds to assist Local Authorities in assessing and providing for infrastructure needs arising from future levels of growth. The money has been made available through the 'Growth Points' initiative which establishes criteria for future levels of anticipated growth for bidding eligibility.

The Regional Planning Partnership recently approved the preferred option of the Regional Spatial Strategy which proposes an additional 10,800 houses for WDC up to 2026. A further and fully comprehensive report on the RSS will be brought to a future meeting of Executive. However the level of growth anticipated at this stage makes the Council eligible for funding for infrastructure appraisal work.

The growth points initiative was communicated to Councils from Government during the latter part of the summer with a closing date of 31st October for submissions to be made. This Council was not in a position to consider the appropriateness of such a bid prior to the approval at Regional level of the RSS preferred option. However, when approved, the levels of growth incorporated within the preferred option qualified the District for submitting a bid. In order to ensure that a bid was submitted within Government timescales it was necessary to make the appropriate submission prior to being able to report to Executive.

The RSS preferred option incorporates similar growth provision for Nuneaton & Bedworth and Rugby and significantly higher provision for Coventry. Coventry is already an allocated growth point and is securing additional funding from this designation. Given the close sub-regional working that has taken place between Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire Authorities and the need for future growth to continue to be planned in a sub-regional framework, both Rugby & Nuneaton and Bedworth have also submitted growth point bids on the same basis that for this Council.

At present the bid is only at the expression of interest stage. Should this be successful, hopefully together with the other sub-regional authorities, then this should provide the opportunity for significant funding to assess and potentially respond directly to the infrastructure issues that future levels of growth will require. In making such a bid the Council has not established its formal position in relation to the RSS preferred option. This it will do following our full report to Executive during the consultation period next year. However, at this stage, the opportunity has been taken to 'put a foot in the door' to secure assistance towards the issues that all of the sub-region is likely to address.

In order to develop greater sub regional working on growth matters, discussion has taken place at the joint meeting of Chief Executives in the Sub Region. Following the meeting, work has progressed on a draft approach towards jointly addressing

growth issues in the Sub Region. This is attached as appendix A. It may be appropriate to consider giving support to this as a way of consolidating good cross boundary working at both officer and member level.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 It would be open for the Council not to make a bid for growth point funding at this stage. This would close down the opportunity, however, for such funding and would not provide the Council with the opportunity to consider further and in more detail the implications of future growth proposals for its own wider sub-regions infrastructure.

4. POLICY AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The purpose of the bid is to draw down additional funding from Government to assist with work that the Council is likely to have to address in any event. It will not have any adverse consequences for existing budgetary provision.
- 4.2 The bid is being made within the context of Government Policy for supporting an assessment of the infrastructure consequences of development set within the recently approved preferred option of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Appendix A

Proposal to Take Forward Delivery of the Growth Agenda in the CSW Sub Region.

The Sub Region is now being proposed a significant amount of growth over the next 20 years. The level of growth is such that in addition to Coventry, Nuneaton/Bedworth; Rugby; and Warwick Districts have also now been invited to apply for growth point monies.

In addition, the possibilities of the proposed new Planning Tariff offers the opportunity to achieve a clear funding stream to ensure that the correct infrastructure is available to support the projected growth in the area.

However, it is clear that all the authorities in the sub region recognise the degree of connectivity that exists and that there will be greater benefits to be attained by a more co-operative and integrated approach than by pursuing such issues separately. This approach is fully in accordance with the approach set out in the Sub National Review.

But words are easy and to turn them into real action and outcomes we recognise that we need to establish a Sub Regional Delivery Group that will:

1. Allow our planning colleagues to look at how we can align the LDF process across the sub-region. We're looking for a timetable and structure of this process to be shared. We want to find a means of collectively "signing up" to our concerted sub-regional approach to LDF planning – recognising that in a literal and legal sense each authority has to do its own LDF.
2. Allow us to approach Liam Byrne, the Minister for the Midlands, to highlight to him what we need from Central Government (particularly the coordination of Central Government departments) in terms of having any chance of delivering the overall housing growth agenda. For example, the Highways Agency and Strategic Transport Planning often restrict growth and unless there was a very clear Government instruction to the Highways Agency to engage and support the Growth Agenda – then much of what needed to happen won't happen at all!
3. Enable us a sub-region together to investigate and integrate our key transport and growth agenda infrastructure requirements.
4. Examine and provide answers to the whole question of how we can finance this essential infrastructure (e.g. ideas such as development tariffs, bonds, etc, were touched upon, but we're anxious to collectively come to a view about the best and most appropriate way forward).
5. Ensure that the core strategies that emerge through the LDF process have to be very clear in terms of how we would intend to finance the essential infrastructure that is clearly demanded by the Growth Agenda.
6. Develop a process for cross-boundary working on the housing growth agenda, highlighting how collectively we will both manage and release land on a sub-regional basis. We do not want to be subject to the pressures and whims of individual housing developers, or to lose control of the balance of timing of housing development between brown field and green space development.

7. Allow the 4 Growth Point bids to be co-ordinated and integrated to achieve maximum effect for the benefit of our communities.

We also recognise the need to engage local democratic representatives and other key agencies to both bring everyone up to speed but also to enable them to make a contribution to the debate and conclusions on delivery mechanisms. It is suggested that as a first step the CSW Forum in Mid December is made into a “Summit on Growth” with a wider invitation list.