

 Executive – 8 June 2011		Agenda Item No. 8
Title	Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership: 5 year Strategy	
For further information about this report please contact	Bill Hunt Deputy Chief Executive 01926 456014 bill.hunt@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Executive 2 March 2011 – minute number 158	
Background Papers	Strategy Document Minutes of CWLEP Board Report to Executive 2 March 2011- CWLEP Report to Executive 25 August 2010 – Development of a Local Enterprise Partnership	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
Impact Assessments not required at this stage as this is not a WDC Strategy, although they may be required for future work undertaken as a result of this report.	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executive		Author
Head of Service		n/a
CMT	24/5/11	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	24/5/11	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	24/5/11	Andy Jones
Finance	23/5/11	Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holder(s)	23/5/11	Cllr. Hammon
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report explores the relationship between the recently approved 5 year strategy of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, this Council's strategic development aspirations and the process for developing the new Local Plan.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Executive note the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (CWLEP) 5 year strategy and its emerging 2011-12 Business Plan.
- 2.2 That Executive agree to work with CWLEP and the other 6 local authorities represented within it to develop an integrated Coventry and Warwickshire strategic spatial strategy and note that, if approved, further progress reports will be brought to future Executive meetings as appropriate.
- 2.3 That Executive note that the integrated sub-regional strategy will inform, and be informed by, the development of this district's Local Plan.
- 2.4 That Executive note that an Investment Strategy, setting out the resource requirements and delivery mechanisms for the agreed levels of economic growth and development, will be developed and brought to a future Executive meeting for approval.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The CWLEP Board approved the Partnership's 5 year strategy (2011-2016), attached as Appendix One, at its meeting of 18 April 2011.
- 3.2 The Strategy sets out the CWLEP Vision; 'By 2016, through strong private-public sector collaboration, Coventry and Warwickshire will be regarded as one of the best and easiest places in the country to establish, run and grow strong and successful businesses; generating significant new employment and skills opportunities in the area', which will be delivered by:
- Developing new ways of working through a strong private-public sector partnership
 - Focussing on a limited set of priorities that can make a real difference to local economic growth over the next five years
 - Playing a national influencing role with central Government to promote and support the growth of the low carbon mobility sector
- 3.3 Progress in delivering the Strategy will be measured through the development and publication of a balanced scorecard. A balanced scorecard is a strategic planning and management system used extensively throughout the private sector to align business activities to an organisation's vision and strategy, improve internal and external communications and monitor performance against strategic goals. The CWLEP scorecard is currently under development and it is planned that it will be approved by the September Board meeting.
- 3.4 An annual 12 month Business Plan will sit alongside the Strategy, setting out the specific actions that will be undertaken by the partners. The current draft of the proposed 2011-12 Business Plan is attached at Appendix Two.

- 3.5 The finalisation of the Strategy is a key milestone in the development of the CWLEP and of significant importance to all the local authorities in the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region.
- 3.6 However, there is a real danger that the CWLEP strategy will not be adequately integrated with either the Local Development Frameworks being developed by each planning authority or other aspects of each council's strategic policy framework, to the detriment of all.
- 3.7 This risk could be avoided by the development of an integrated sub-regional spatial strategy, which identifies and prioritises the need, across the various local authority boundaries, for employment land, housing and major investments including transport infrastructure.
- 3.8 The development of such an integrated strategy has been previously proposed, prior to the establishment of CWLEP, but progress foundered due to a lack of prioritisation and co-ordination between local authorities. It is therefore recommended that Executive agree this council's commitment to the principle of developing such a strategy and to use all available influence to seek agreement of this approach amongst the other sub-regional local authorities.
- 3.9 Mechanisms for developing a strategy already exist sub-regionally, with various local authority officer groupings which can be co-ordinated through the CWLEP Executive Delivery Board on which Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council (on behalf of the 5 district/borough councils) are represented at Chief Executive/senior manager level.
- 3.10 The Coventry and Warwickshire Leader's Board could also provide strategic political direction prior to formal sign-off by each authority and the CWLEP. Discussions on potential governance and development of the process, begun at District Chief Executive level, will be developed and a further report on issues and options will be brought to a future Executive.
- 3.11 The motivation for the recommended approach is the need to deliver the necessary co-ordination at the highest possible to ensure plans made by each local authority are 'joined-up' and achievable. There is no intention to use the approach to replace the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which will finally be abolished when the Localism Bill receives Royal Assent, by creating a sub-regional strategy that imposes levels of growth on local authorities.
- 3.12 The proposed approach is consistent with the Government's latest revisions to the Localism Bill by Government. Members will recall that the Bill will replace the RSS will be a new 'Duty to Co-operate'. When the Bill was first published this proposed duty would only have prescribed a passive requirement on local authorities to respond if consulted and to provide information to assist the planning process. Significant concerns have been raised as the Bill progresses through its Committee stages, that this proposed duty would be insufficiently robust to ensure effective and proactive co-operation between local authorities and other partners to achieve an integrated strategic and spatial approach to deliver sustainable development.
- 3.13 In response to these concerns the Government has issued an amendment to the original Bill which significantly strengthens the 'Duty to Co-operate'. The amendment will encourage the development of effective solutions to cross-boundary issues without formally re-introducing a regional strategy process.

Although the amendment does not specifically prescribe the types of plans that should be developed at sub-regional level (although various bodies, including the RTPI, intend to lobby for further clarity on this point) the revision will:

- Encourage local planning authorities to consider, seriously and positively, at an early stage in their own processes whether their objectives and the needs of communities could be better dealt with through joint working and co-operation;
- Allow local authorities the freedom to choose how they co-operate and draw up agreements, not just between adjoining authorities but other authorities and bodies in the wider area, i.e. in our case the sub-region;
- Provide a degree of sanction against those whose statutory plans do not address wider needs by requiring the Inspectorate to include consideration of the 'duty to co-operate' when assessing the 'soundness' of Local Development Frameworks;
- Bring non-statutory bodies, notably Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), into joint working arrangements by allowing the Government to prescribe them in further regulation or statutory, Secretary of State, guidance. (Indeed, one idea that seems to have gained credence through the evidence stages, is that the Secretary of State might issue guidance that would make LEPs responsible for policing the 'duty to co-operate' within their area)

3.14 The CWLEP 5 year Strategy will need to be considered during the development of our own Local Plan to ensure that where its strategic priorities align with our own that this are adequately reflected in our strategic framework. It is also envisaged that the development of a sub-regional spatial strategy will influence, and be influenced by, our Local Plan process. For example, the level of growth that we decide our plan is designed to accommodate will have sub-regional significance. Additionally, our ability to deliver our own strategic objectives, including that level of growth, will be impacted on by the need to ensure the necessary capability to deliver strategic investment and infrastructure needs is realisable, some elements of which will inevitably involve a sub-regional approach. This will be explored further when the next report on the development of the Local Plan is brought to the September Executive.

3.15 Officers will also begin the development of an Investment Strategy setting out what resources, internal and external, will need to be deployed, together with the means of doing so, to deliver the level of growth identified within the Local Plan and address the Council's priorities set out in its Sustainable Community Strategy.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

4.1 The Local Plan is the spatial expression of how the Council will deliver its Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) priorities. Integration of the Local Plan with the CWLEP Strategy and an emerging sub-regional spatial strategy will be vital to the achievement of the externally focused elements of the Fit for the Future programme.

4.2 The CWLEP Strategy and the alignment of private-public sector activity to deliver it, as set out in the annual Business Plan, should assist our ability to make sustained progress against the 4 priority themes within the SCS; Jobs, Skills and Employment, Housing, Safer Communities, and Health and Well-Being. The development of an integrated sub-regional spatial strategy should provide further strengthening.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 There are no direct budgetary implications for WDC arising from the CWLEP Strategy.
- 5.2 The development of the Local Plan, Investment Strategy and our involvement in the development of a sub-regional strategy will be contained within existing resource and allocated budgets.

6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The Executive, at its meeting of 2 March 2011 formally approved our membership of CWLEP. In itself, this would not commit us to either aligning our efforts to delivery of the vision and objectives within the 5 year Strategy or to the specific partnership actions within the annual Business Plan.
- 6.2 However, the Strategy is consistent with our own Vision; 'to make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit', as set out within the SCS. Continued direct involvement with the CWLEP work programme will therefore 'add value' to our own efforts to achieve our strategic priorities and it is not recommended that we continue to develop our own approach in isolation, without reference to the Strategy.
- 6.3 Similarly, it would also be an option not to commit to the development of a sub-regional spatial strategy. This has been discounted due to the overriding need to develop a robust Local Plan, which meets our own strategic objectives, including the desired level of growth that is envisaged for the district, while ensuring we have the ability to resist inappropriate development proposals. In order to achieve our objectives there will be a number of cross-boundary strategic planning issues and other considerations that will need to be properly addressed whilst the process of finalising the Local Plan is underway. Some of these issues are cross-boundary with neighbouring authorities but some, for example, transport infrastructure planning can only be addressed on a sub-regional basis.
- 6.4 Disengaging with the sub-regional process (including the CWLEP bodies) has therefore been discounted in favour of the proactive approach outlined in section 3.

7. **BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 The establishment of LEPs was a flagship policy for the Coalition Government, following its early decision to abolish the Regional Development Agencies, including Advantage West Midlands.
- 7.2 Members will recall that following the joint letter from the Secretaries of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) in June 2010, a proposal for a CWLEP was formulated by the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) and the former Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership, in dialogue with the local authorities, universities and key business leaders across the sub-region.
- 7.3 In October 2010 BIS/CLG announced that the CWLEP proposal had been accepted and the body is now formally constituted with a Board comprising 7

'business leaders' and 7 'civic leaders' under the Chairmanship of a business leader, as required by Government.

- 7.4 BIS/CLG have specified that any representation from the university sector should be classed as falling within the 'Civic Leaders' element of the Board, along with wider representation from what is perhaps more traditionally viewed as the public sector.
- 7.5 The Civic Leaders on the CWLEP Board comprise 1 each from Coventry University and Warwick University plus senior elected member representatives; 2 from Coventry City Council (CCC), 2 from Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and 1 representing the five District and Borough Councils.
- 7.6 The district/borough representative is currently the Leader of Rugby Borough Council. At the March Executive the need to ensure that the views of all of the district and borough representatives was adequately represented on the Board was highlighted and it was agreed that the Coventry and Warwickshire Leaders' Board (CWLBB) would be used as the forum for doing so. The requirement to ensure that the CWLBB meets prior to the CWLEP Board meetings remains and work is underway to ensure the calendar of meetings is properly aligned.
- 7.7 The Board is chaired by Denys Shortt, Chairman and CEO of DCS Europe and Enable Software, based in Stratford. Details of the full membership of the Board are available at:
<http://groupwebsites.dcseurope.com/Default.aspx?id=519359>
- 7.8 An Executive Delivery Group has also been established to guide the Board and ensure that the CWLEP workplan is delivered. This group is also a mixture of private and public sector members, including the Chamber, the Federation of Small Businesses, the 2 universities, LEP support staff and local authority and business representatives. The public sector representatives are Martin Reeves, Chief Executive of CCC, Louise Wall, Head of Sustainable Communities at WCC and Chris Elliott, representing the 5 district/borough councils. Full membership details are available at:
<http://groupwebsites.dcseurope.com/Default.aspx?id=523823>
- 7.9 The CWLEP has also established a series of Focus Groups through which the work to deliver the annual Business Plan will be delivered. Full details of these groups are available on the main CWLEP website at:
<http://groupwebsites.dcseurope.com/Default.aspx>