

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 20 SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS MANAGER (ENVIRONMENT)

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THETFORD – PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT

Summary: In April of this year all 29 of the National Growth Points were invited to produce a draft Programme of Development as a basis for future funding bids to Communities and Local Government (CLG). CLG asked for a first draft to be prepared by 31st May 2007 and a further draft by 31st July 2007. Final versions are required by 1st October 2007.

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 In April of this year all 29 of the National Growth Points were invited to produce a draft Programme of Development as a basis for future funding bids to Communities and Local Government (CLG). CLG asked for a first draft to be prepared by 31st May 2007 and a further draft by 31st July 2007. Final versions are required by 1st October 2007.

2. KEY DECISION

2.1 This is not a key decision.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

3.1 The matter raised in this report falls within the following Council priorities:

- A safe and healthy environment
- A well planned place to live which encourages vibrant communities
- A prosperous place to live and work

4. THETFORD - PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The Thetford Programme of Development is known as the Thetford Prospectus and essentially covers a bid for funds in the region of £25.5m to £30m for infrastructure required to support the planned growth for Thetford. (These figures are still subject to on-going consultation with Stakeholders). The purpose of the Programme is to enable CLG to make informed bids into its own Comprehensive Spending Review process for the Growth Points. The CSR covers the financial years 2008/9 to 2010/11. Breckland is the lead agency in preparing the Programme although the Whole Moving Thetford Forward Partnership has been involved in contributing to its content. This includes organisations such as Norfolk County Council, the Primary Care Trust, Norfolk Police, Thetford Town Council, Keystone Development Trust, Forestry Commission and Natural England amongst others.

4.2 Breckland has received positive feedback from CLG on the two draft submissions to date and indeed CLG have circulated the Thetford Prospectus to other Growth Points as an example of best practice. CLG have produced some guidance on how to produce the documents but this has tended to be late in the process and therefore there is considerable variation between how various growth points have put their programmes together.

4.3 The key purpose of the document is to identify what the key pieces of infrastructure that are required to be funded to support future growth in Thetford. These projects need to be supported by evidence of their cost and need. Projects have been grouped

in themed areas as follows:

- Access and movement – approximately £5-6m

This includes bus and rail station enhancement/improvement projects, traffic modelling and school and work based travel plans

- Development and Regeneration – approximately £17m

This includes social infrastructure improvements to police and health facilities, development of a design code for new development, the implementation of a cultural package and town centre improvements.

- Environment – Approximately £2.5m

To enable delivery of a range of green infrastructure projects including new green areas, improving access, research on protected birds species and support for a study to examine the potential of combined heat and power

- Capacity – Approximately £1m

Feasibility for delivery including project development expertise.

- 4.4 The Programme must be submitted to CLG by 1st October 2007 and then the next stage would be the announcement on the CSR due in the “autumn” of 2007.

5. OPTIONS AVAILABLE

- 5.1 Members can be asked to endorse the submission of the Programme of Development to CLG

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The submission of a Programme of Development for Thetford will enable CLG to prioritise its own bids into the CSR process to enable funding to become available for all 29 National Growth Points.

7. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 7.1 Members are asked to endorse the submission of the Programme of Development to CLG

Appendices:

Where appropriate, this report has taken account of the need for compliance with

- The Council's Equal Opportunities Policies and Gender Equality Scheme
- Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998

Section 40, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006