

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Cabinet
Date of Committee	23rd February 2006
Report Title	Draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy 2006-2010
Summary	<p>The vision of the Department's new Strategy is "to create a sustainable and vibrant local economy which promotes employment and prosperity for all". It is based on three strategic objectives:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To improve the competitiveness of the local economy. 2. To provide clear leadership and influence. 3. To build community capacity to reduce social exclusion and embed sustainable regeneration.
For further information please contact	<p>Jeff Marlow Strategy Unit Tel. 01926 418029 jeffmarlow@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	Yes/No
Background Papers	<p>Advantage West Midlands – Regional Economic Strategy. Government Skills White Paper. PTES Research Unit Analysis - 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. Report for Overview and Scrutiny Seminar 2005 - The future of the automotive industry in Warwickshire. Warwickshire Strategic Plan. PTES Research Unit - Quality of Life Report.</p>

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- *Details to be specified*

Other Committees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 26th January 2006.				
Local Member(s) (With brief comments, if appropriate)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Councillor P Barnes</td> <td rowspan="3">} for information</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Councillor M Jones</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Councillor P Morris-Jones</td> </tr> </table>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Councillor P Barnes	} for information	Councillor M Jones	Councillor P Morris-Jones
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Councillor P Barnes	} for information				
Councillor M Jones					
Councillor P Morris-Jones					

Cabinet - 23rd February 2006

Draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy 2006-2010

Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy

Recommendation

That Cabinet agrees with the draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy 2006–2010 and recommends its adoption.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current Strategy runs to the end of 2005 and has helped maintain a strong economy across the County and address areas of deprivation. Following a Best Value Review during 2004 we have commissioned research, gathered intelligence and undertaken analysis to determine the direction a new strategy should take. This has included the latest deprivation figures; a review of the automotive sector, the Governments Skills White Paper; the Treasury drive to see Regional Development Agencies focus more on competitiveness; and the impact of globalisation. The Strategy also takes into account the key issues revised by partners during the production of the County Strategic Partnership Plan.
- 1.2 The County is clearly performing well in the regional context but is less robust when measured against a number of national indicators and in particular when benchmarked against Counties and Districts to the immediate south and east. The new Strategy will build on the success to date but will also be informed by a need to acquire the attributes of growth areas such as the south east; to anticipate, accommodate and imaginatively respond to funding challenges; to significantly develop the skills base; build and embed capacity to sustain regeneration; focus on innovation and enterprise in securing a competitive edge, and using this to drive local regeneration; and to encourage working across administrative and organisational boundaries.

2. The Strategy

- 2.1 The draft Strategy is attached at **Appendix A** the draft 1st year Action Plan is attached at **Appendix B**.
- 2.2 In line with the Council's Corporate Objective, the vision of the Strategy is to "create a sustainable and vibrant local economy which promotes employment

and prosperity for all". To do this we will create an environment in which businesses are able to innovate, create and sustain jobs; residents are encouraged to learn, acquire skills and competencies, and enhance their employability; and those experiencing deprivation and disadvantage are given targeted help. This reflects the four Pillars of the Regional Economic Strategy, the priority objectives of the Jobs, Skills and Learning theme of the County Strategic Plan, and key elements of the County Council's Vision in which it is recognised as a community leader with a focus on the citizens of Warwickshire.

2.3 Our Strategic Objectives are:-

Improve the Competitiveness of the Local Economy – with a focus on:-

- (i) Establishing and implementing a Countywide Employment and Skills Strategy to help shape and drive our future organisational plans and activities.
- (ii) Developing the knowledge driven employment sectors, and an enterprise and entrepreneurial mindset in schools, communities and business.
- (iii) Providing premises to overcome market failure.
- (iv) Working with partners to develop the skills, competencies and qualifications of the workforce.

Provide Clear Leadership and Influence – with a focus on:-

- (i) Ensuring our economic performance is benchmarked against the best with a particular focus on embedding activities more closely with the south east region – the UK's engine of growth.
- (ii) Work with departments in the Council to secure additional economic and social benefit, ensuring that we influence other strategies appropriately.
- (iii) Ensuring effective co-ordination and communication of the support available to business and residents in the County.

Build Community Capacity to Reduce Social Exclusion and Embed Sustainable Regeneration – with a focus on:-

- (i) Improve employability skills and support confidence building measures amongst those living in the most deprived areas and the most disadvantaged groups so that they can secure better paid jobs.
- (ii) Use our resources and interventions to act as pump priming in the most deprived areas to secure sustainable regeneration.
- (iii) Ensure that increasing numbers of residents can make a contribution to and gain from economic growth.

- 2.4 An outline first year Action Plan supports the delivery of the Strategy and success will be measured in terms of a number of key indicators most of which are targets in the County Strategic Plan. These include regional ranking for Gross Value Added, deprivation indices, average incomes, and skill levels.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The draft Strategy provides a clear rationale and framework for measures to improve competitiveness within the County and to target sustainable regeneration activities to those areas of greatest need.

JOHN DEEGAN
Strategic Director of Environment and Economy
Shire Hall
Warwick

9th February 2006

Cabinet - 23rd February 2006

Draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy 2006-2010

Basic Principles

1. Our strategy will aim to deliver the Council's vision and objectives for the economy developed in conjunction with partners, communities and stakeholders and will focus on:
 - (i) Improving performance.
 - (ii) The need to adapt to continual change.
 - (iii) Providing community leadership for Warwickshire.
 - (iv) Working in partnership.
 - (v) Maintaining ownership at the local level.
2. Our Strategy has been prepared in the context of the regional and sub regional economic strategies and informed by the Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan. We will work with Advantage West Midlands and partners through the Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership on delivering these, to ensure that Warwickshire takes best advantage from being within the West Midlands Region.
3. The south-east drives economic performance in the UK and we will reflect this in our activities in both geographical and sectoral terms.
4. Our regeneration policies and actions will be sustainable and will be based on the best and most up to date economic intelligence.
5. Programmes we undertake will focus on activities supporting the development of the economy, through economic regeneration, developing the visitor economy, including tourism and building the skills of our workforce to meet the present and future needs of the economy.

Context and Issues

1. The Warwickshire economy has witnessed considerable improvement over the last decade as evidenced by growth in GVA. Linked to this improvement eligibility for European Union (EU) structural funds has diminished as the EU's focus for structural funds investment moves towards the emerging economies of Eastern Europe. We will be challenged to secure large scale EU funding for capital investment and receive support on the scale that we've enjoyed in the past. There are however other EU funding opportunities that will require different types of working and partnership than we've been used to in the past but we are increasingly well placed and experienced in the new skills required.

2. Traditional manufacturing will continue to see job losses in the face of increased competition from China, India and South Asia.
3. There will be a need to identify and support those manufacturing sub sectors that offer the best potential for quality jobs and sub regional added value and we must recognise and support those service sectors that offer potential for job growth.
4. We will need to use those development sites identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy and Warwickshire Structure Plan to attract the cutting edge technologies that will benefit the wider sub regional economy.
5. Different parts of the county face different challenges and so support will need to be targeted so as to respond to the needs of localities, sectors and communities, including rural and urban needs.

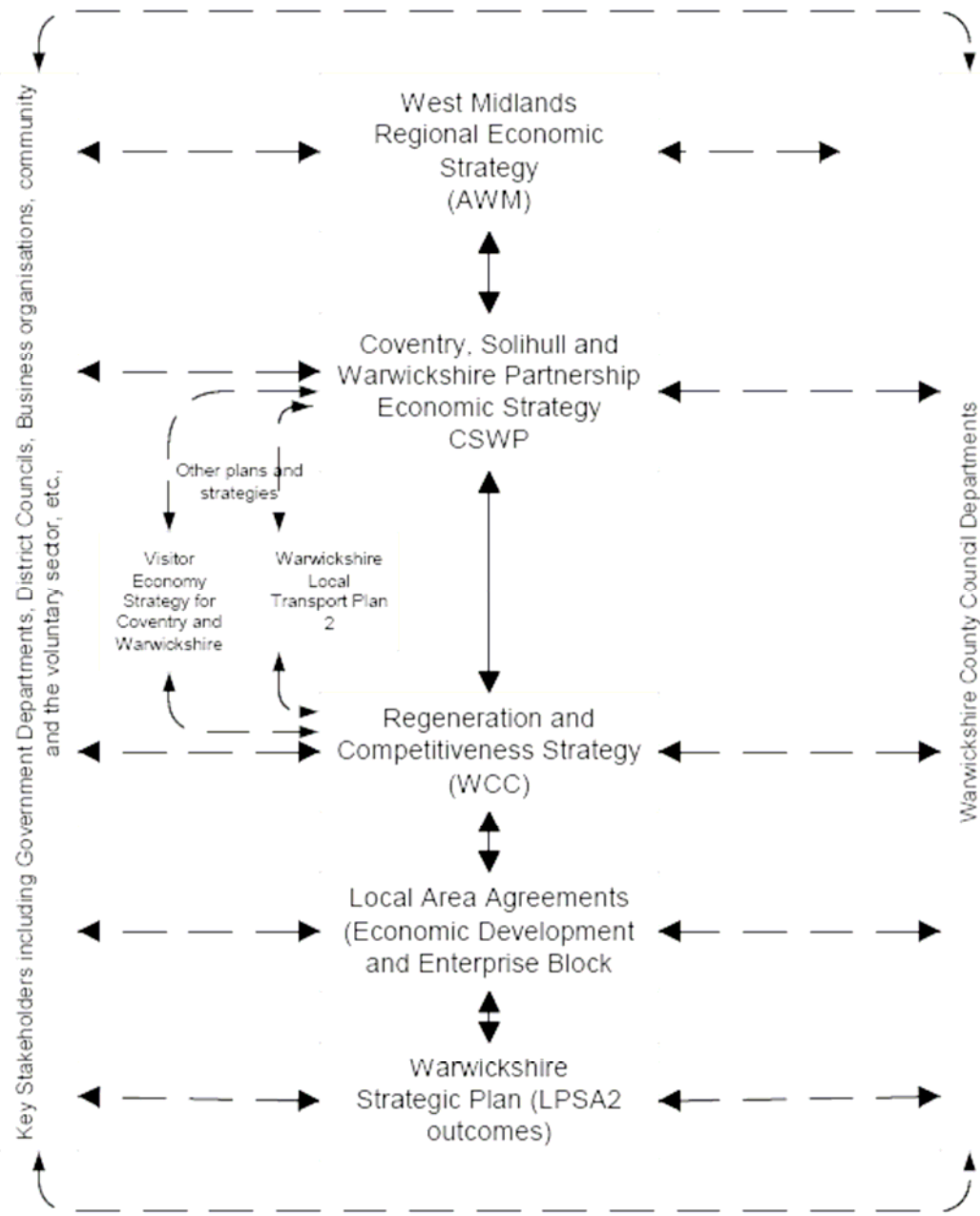
Strategic Context

1. The Strategy fits with a series of other strategies and policies relating to the economy of the sub region and its relationship to these is sketched in the diagram of “nesting “ strategies set out below. We do however note that the period up to April 2007 will see both a review of the Regional Economic Strategy, as well as a new regional basis for the delivery of business support.
2. The County Council’s vision is for “a vibrant local economy which promotes employment and prosperity for all.” To do this we must create an environment in which businesses are able to innovate, and to create and sustain jobs; residents are encouraged to learn, acquire skills and competency to enhance their employability; and help is targeted to those experiencing deprivation and disadvantage.
3. This vision reflects the four Pillars of the Regional Economic Strategy: -
 - (i) Developing a diverse and dynamic business base.
 - (ii) Creating the conditions for growth.
 - (iii) Regenerating communities.
 - (iv) Promoting a learning and skilful region.
4. The vision also reflects the priority objectives of the Jobs, Skills and Learning theme of the County Strategic Plan as set out in Table 1 below: -

Table 1: Priority Objectives of the Jobs, Skills and Learning Theme of the Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan are to: -

- Support business to grow with particular emphasis on growth of higher added value business, particularly in areas of under representation.
- Create a more diversified economy.
- Provide relevant and accessible training to businesses to assist in re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce.
- Improve basic skills in the most deprived areas of the County and in under-represented groups.
- Reduce the number of economically inactive residents by helping those who would want to work secure work.
- Provide learning opportunities and careers advice to people to make informed career choices about the jobs likely to be available to them.

Diagram 1: -Nesting Strategies, the Strategic Context for the Development of Warwickshire’s Economy



Strategic Aims of our Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy

1. **Our strategic aims are to:-**
 - (i) Improve competitiveness.
 - (ii) Provide leadership and influence.
 - (iii) Reduce exclusion by growing community capacity.
2. The new Strategy will build on work we have done to date that has contributed to significant improvements in the local and sub regional economies, which are now performing well above the regional average.
3. We will measure our performance against an annual action plan and will re evaluate our priorities and actions each year.
4. We recognise that to achieve sustainable economic growth we will need to maximise the potential of our resource base. This includes land and premises, agency support, finance, the labour force and entrepreneurship.
5. We will seek to ensure that everybody benefits from the growth of our economy including those on the margins of the community.
6. We recognise that improving educational achievement and skills central to achieving the vision and that better links are needed between the education and training agendas with those of regeneration and competitiveness. The Council will be working with the Learning and Skills Council, Chamber Business Link and employers to ensure that the Council's policies and actions towards skills workforce and employment development meet our economic development objectives and improve the qualities of the workforce of Warwickshire.
7. The Council will seek innovation in its activities and delivery of services in support of the economy and build on the good practice already established in a number of key areas including:-
 - (i) Opportunities Centres (Regeneration Zone and Rugby).
 - (ii) Pride in Camp Hill.
 - (iii) Bayton Road industrial Estate Hub.
 - (iv) Business Improvement District (BID) national pilot in Rugby Town Centre.
 - (v) The strategic business support package with Business Link.
 - (vi) Establishing a clear framework for producing external funding applications for regeneration.
 - (vii) Provision of environmental advice to business Stratford Waterfront Masterplan.
 - (viii) The Eliot Park Innovation Centre in Nuneaton.
 - (ix) The Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods project.
 - (x) The Equal project arising out of our work on Work Life Balance.
 - (xi) The development of the visitor economy.
 - (xii) Attracting new high value-added investment to the County.

Our Strategic Objectives are to:

A. Improve the Competitiveness of the Warwickshire Economy by: -

- (i) Work with partners to establish an employment and skills strategy for the county.
- (ii) Attracting and supporting an increase in the proportion of businesses in the knowledge driven employment sectors.
- (iii) Encouraging and supporting the development of new products, processes and technology amongst business with a special focus on environmental technology (including those related to climate change), performance engineering and medical technology.
- (iv) Supporting and encouraging enterprise, and entrepreneurship amongst young women, BME communities and the business community at large to secure increased business start up and their longer term sustainability.
- (v) Working with partners to make sure that the workforce has the skills, competences and qualifications to meet the changing demands of a growing competitive economy; and employers adopt good work practices to secure, develop and retain their workforce.
- (vi) Working with strategic and local partners to secure the best economic and labour market intelligence that is available so that informed decisions can be made by employers, employees and school leavers.
- (viii) Working with partners to understand and manage structural change in the economy, and the drivers of high performing regions.
- (ix) Providing premises to overcome market failure and thereby ensure business start up and growth can be accommodated, particularly in areas of limited local job opportunities.
- (vi) Sustaining the viability of our town centres.
- (x) Supporting market towns renaissance and rural diversification.
- (xi) Ensuring that the Warwickshire environmental and transport infrastructure are managed to facilitate business growth through improved accessibility, distribution, community safety and visual image.
- (xii) Developing and implementing a visitor economy strategy and tourism action plan, supporting rural diversification.

B. Provide Clear Leadership within the Regional and Sub Regional Economy and Exert Influence with our Partners by:-

- (i) Work with partners such as the Chamber and CSW to undertake an “environmental scanning” role and lobby on strategic issues affecting the economic vitality of the area.
- (ii) Helping to shape regional and sub regional strategies and future funding programmes so as to help maximise external funding for County projects.
- (iii) Ensuring unique Warwickshire and sub regional characteristics are recognised as distinct from the rest of the West Midlands.
- (iv) Working with internal and external funding partners to shape programmes relevant for County needs.
- (v) Seeking to ensure that the Council acts as an exemplar in recruitment, skills development and training, working practices, and purchasing policies.
- (vi) Developing a local toolkit to assess and, where appropriate, secure added value from partnership working
- (vi) Ensuring our economic performance is benchmarked against the best with a particular focus on embedding activities more closely with the south east region – the UK’s engine of growth.
- (vii) Developing inter Departmental working across the County Council to secure additional economic and social benefit, ensuring that we influence other strategies appropriately, and can develop a world class workforce.
- (viii) Identifying and promoting best practice in economic regeneration.
- (ix) Ensuring effective co-ordination and communication of the support available to business and residents in the County.
- (x) Securing maximum support through Advantage West Midlands and the European Union, as well as other funding opportunities.
- (xi) Ensuring a property portfolio to support individual business development, and work with partners to secure development sites that support economic diversification and attract high technology relocations and expansions.
- (xii) Promoting and, where appropriate, leading on flagship renaissance projects.

C. Build Community Capacity to Reduce Social Exclusion and Embed Sustainable Regeneration by:-

- (i) Working with others to ensure that those in disadvantaged groups and locations secure opportunities to access training and employment.
- (ii) Improving employability skills and support confidence building measures amongst those living in the most deprived areas and the most disadvantaged groups so that they can secure better paid jobs.
- (iii) Promoting the adoption of good work life balance employment practices by employers across the County.
- (iv) Using our resources and interventions to act as pump priming in the most deprived areas to secure sustainable regeneration.
- (v) Ensuring that increasing numbers of residents can make a contribution to and gain from economic growth across the County through community learning and enhanced educational attainment.
- (vi) Reviewing and developing the infrastructure necessary to support and grow the social enterprise and voluntary sectors.

Conclusion

The implementation of this strategy will help to deliver the County Council's corporate business plan objectives of: -

Improving levels of prosperity for all across the whole of Warwickshire
Increasing sustainable employment opportunities
Improving the employment potential of Warwickshire's residents.

Through monitoring our performance and benchmarking against others we will track our successes and achievements in implementing our strategy over the next 4 years.

Cabinet - 23rd February 2006

**Draft Regeneration and Competitiveness Strategy
2006-2010**

Action Plan

Key Tasks

1. Progress plans with partners for “themed” Major Employment Sites, especially Ansty (Medipark) and Stoneleigh Park (land-based industries).
2. Commission business start-up facilities at CBC 3 and SFWBC 3.
3. Town Centres:-
 - (i) Deliver first phase of Nuneaton & Bedworth Town Centres’ Master Plan.
 - (ii) Roll out BIDS concept in selected town centres e.g. Leamington.
 - (iii) Commitment to look at regeneration of other Town Centres e.g. Kenilworth.
 - (iv) Support and develop town centre champion roles for Nuneaton and Bedworth, Leamington, Warwick and Kenilworth.
4. Progress Stratford Waterfront flagship project and support the Complete Works of Shakespeare festival.
5. Develop and deliver niche business support services meeting local needs. Council priorities and complementing new regional developments of Business Link.
6. Facilitate support to help the creation and growth of social enterprises.
7. Work with Partners to support Market Towns and address programme succession issues, including continuing engagement with former mining communities
8. Support rural services and partnerships including the CWS Rural Forum, the Rural Hub, Market Town partnerships, and address the needs of rural areas.
9. Implement a retail support and environmental improvement programme for priority neighbourhoods in Nuneaton and Bedworth.
10. Ensure continuation of business support under the new Regional agenda.
11. Resolve future of Bayton Road HUB business resource centre.

12. Develop a county wide Employment and Skills Strategy and put in place related organisational changes as a consequence of modernisation agenda.
13. Continue to invest and innovate on ways of ensuring hardest to reach groups are enabled to develop appropriate skills and training, and supported into new employment opportunities, in particular across Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire Districts through further development of the PEP and Recruitment Now employment partnerships.
14. Consolidate construction Training Opportunities Centres including new facility at Rugby.
15. Implement Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan.
16. Consolidate WCC involvement in tourism and engagement in opportunities presented by the Olympics.
17. Develop and deliver a programme of inward investment promotion designed to secure new investments in Warwickshire in the priority clusters and to take advantage of other emerging opportunities.
18. Pride in Camp Hill:-
 - (i) Deliver Phase 2 Village Centre including construction of new community centre.
 - (ii) Agree funding strategy for Phase 3 with AWM and English Partnerships.
 - (ii) Support to construction of industrial units at Midland Quarry.
19. Seek longer term funding for Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods, within context of its contribution to localism and the County's modernisation agenda.
20. Maximise opportunities to attract external funding for economic development and regeneration activities by leading engagement in CNRZ, EU programmes and work with sub regional partners on Corridors and Clusters activity.
21. Undertake market research, consultation and performance monitoring to inform our activities and policies, and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services.

This Action Plan may need adjustment in the light of budget decisions and preparations for the Local Area Agreement.