

Agenda Item No. 6(i)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

16 November 2017

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

SOUTH DERBY GROWTH ZONE (HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE)

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek Cabinet approval for the County Council to play a defined role in the preparation and delivery of infrastructure required as part of a major land-use planning and regeneration initiative.

(2) **Information and Analysis** The concept of a 'South Derby Growth Zone' has emerged from a number of initiatives and aspirations for regeneration, land-use and infrastructure planning to the south of Derby City and adjoining parts of South Derbyshire district. These include existing high-value employment provision on the Rolls Royce campus, the current Infinity Park technology and commercial development within the City, plus significant areas allocated or proposed for housing and further business park development in southern Derbyshire. The attached plan shows the location of the Growth Zone and the development envisaged within it.

In total, the Growth Zone is capable of providing over 3,000 homes and 5,000 jobs in addition to those already in place. The term 'Infinity Garden Village' is also being used for the same proposals, reflecting an aspiration for the development to meet the standards of being "well-planned, well-designed and sustainable".

This high quality of development is regarded by partners for the South Derby Growth Zone concept as vital to its success. A successful funding application was made by South Derbyshire District Council to the Homes and Agency during 2016 for Garden Village status, which brings financial support towards project development. The area also falls within the scope of the Trent Valley Vision which will be a key influence on defining longer term ambitions and outcomes.

There are a number of key infrastructure challenges to be addressed if ambitions for this area are to be realised. These include education provision, flood prevention, green and sustainable transport corridors but also some key highway connections. The A50 Stoke-Derby link runs west to east across the

south of the defined Growth Zone and suitable access to this trunk road is regarded as fundamental to the successful delivery of the project's outcomes. These proposals have been incorporated into the East Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy, reflecting the need for a suitable supply of both housing and employment sites to ensure the region is able to capitalise on the benefits afforded by HS2, particularly improved connectivity supporting the realisation of these proposals, is an expression of interest was submitted in September 2017 to the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund for significant financial resources to aid infrastructure delivery.

Project governance for the South Derby Growth Zone is starting to emerge and consists of a Partnership Officer group including Derby City Council, South Derbyshire District Council, private sector developers and the County Council. Partners would welcome a formal expression of the role which the County Council wishes to fulfil, specifically, attendance at the high-level Steering Group by a senior officer and the Council acting as applicant to secure planning permission for the highway infrastructure.

Linked to the provision of jobs and houses, the Growth Zone will inevitably impact on a number of other County Council functions and these include:

- The generation of additional demand for travel, with impacts on highway capacity and public transport provision.
- The generation of demand for school places – primary and secondary.
- Management of flooding and drainage within the area of the Trent Valley.
- Digital Derbyshire.

Within all the above are opportunities to contribute to existing Council Plan priorities and commitments, including:

- Attracting new businesses and other investment into Derbyshire – linked to the Council's emerging Inward Investment Strategy.
- Delivering major regeneration projects, (e.g. Infinity Park).
- Ensuring that Derbyshire maximises the opportunities afforded by HS2 for local people and businesses.
- Improving transport and highways infrastructure and developing the key cycle network to connect local people to jobs and leisure opportunities.
- Creating healthy environments which encourage active lifestyles.
- Supporting businesses so they have an active, healthy and productive workforce.
- Encouraging more active lifestyles, developing more opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport.
- Developing a long-term vision and strategy for the Trent Valley area that can deliver significant environmental, social and economic benefits for the area.

- Working with partners and local people to reduce air pollution in the County to protect the public's health.

Given the above, it is recommended the Council seeks to play an active role in the development and delivery of the project, within the constraints of available resources, or additional resources as may be secured through external funding. A draft memorandum of understanding is being developed to clarify the roles and responsibilities to be taken by each partner. This is not intended to be legally binding but sets out broad areas of responsibility rather than specific resource commitments and defines the areas within which each partner will be operating. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees in principle to the Council becoming a signatory to the memorandum of understanding and authorises the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment, in liaison with the Director of Legal Services, to enter into appropriate agreements to support effective management and delivery of the project. Cabinet is advised that the draft memorandum sets out (alongside obtaining policy support) the following areas of County Council involvement:

- a) To Chair the project Steering Group
- b) Participate in working groups for transport, planning development, masterplanning, funding and commercial
- c) Lead on the submission of relevant planning applications for the preparation and construction of highways
- d) Provide officer support from highways, traffic and transportation teams
- e) Acquire land for the benefit of highways and associated infrastructure works
- f) Assist on the Infinity Park Garden Village project
- g) Commit funding, resources and officer time to the project at a level considered appropriate and as agreed by the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

The most significant of the proposals set out above is for the County Council to act as applicant for the new highway infrastructure, the majority of which proposed would be adoptable by the Council, so there is some logic in the Authority taking this role. The project will also involve connections to the A50, adoptable by Highways England and potentially a small section of road within Derby City to link the new road to Infinity Park.

A project of the scale and complexity of the South Derby Growth Zone will require careful coordination and management. Appointments to project manager roles have already been made by the private sector partners and by Derby City Council, and it is understood that South Derbyshire District Council is also seeking to do so. Management of the preparation and delivery of highway infrastructure will represent a major project in its own right, should Cabinet agree that the County Council assumes this role, and it is recommended that officers initially establish the extent to which the necessary

resources can be met from those already in place. It is inevitable that further reports will need to be brought to Cabinet over the life of this project, potentially regarding land assembly, the addition of schemes to the capital programme and, where appropriate, the commitment of resources.

(3) **Financial Considerations** At this stage, Officer time has been committed to the South Derby Growth Zone. Subject to further discussion with partners it may be necessary to make recommendations to Cabinet in due course over additional resources to support the application process and delivery of the project.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The Director of Legal Services will advise on any agreements necessary in connection with the project.

(5) **Environmental, Health and Transport Considerations** As set out in the body of the report, the South Derby Growth Zone will, irrespective of the role played by the County Council, have a significant influence on all matters of environment, health and transport but the garden village concept is clearly aimed at minimising such impacts and creating sustainable high quality settlements.

(6) **Property Considerations** The South Derby Growth Zone will involve land under a number of different ownerships, some of which may need to be transferred to County Council ownership in due course to facilitate road construction. At this stage, though, no firm proposals are in place.

(7) **Social Value Considerations** The Growth Zone has the potential to provide a wide range of benefits, from the direct provision of community facilities to employment and skills opportunities, and support for the Trent Valley Vision. There is significant opportunity through the substantial procurement process associated with this development to support local supply chains and local job provision.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity and human resources considerations.

(8) **Key Decision** No.

(9) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(10) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details - Jim Seymour, extension 38557.

(11) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That Cabinet:

- 11.1 Notes the intention of Derby City Council, South Derbyshire District Council and private-sector partners to work on the delivery of the South Derby Growth Zone.
- 11.2 Agrees in principle to the participation of the County Council in those aspects of project delivery set out in the report.
- 11.3 Authorises the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment, liaising with the Director of Legal Services, to enter into necessary agreements consistent with this involvement.
- 11.4 Notes that further reports will be presented to Cabinet as plans for the project are developed.

Mike Ashworth
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