

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Economic & Community Policy Development and Scrutiny
MEETING DATE:	24 th January 2013
TITLE:	River Corridor Group Report
WARD:	ALL
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report:	
1. Bath & North East Somerset Council River Corridor Report – Scrutiny Inquiry Day (<i>Report to Cabinet</i>)	

1 THE ISSUE

The River Corridor Group (RCG) produced a report, the *Bath River Avon Economy (2011)*, which includes a number of recommendations. Following the informal Cabinet meeting on the 6th January 2012, the item was referred to the Economic and Community Development PDS Panel. The Panel were asked to undertake its review in its Policy Development role and to advise Cabinet on future decisions (if any) with regard to the Panel's recommendations.

The Panel were asked to consider:-

1. what role the Council could take along with other agencies and organisations to address the issues raised in the RCG report and ensure that these are aligned with the Corporate Agenda and the roles of the different council departments affected by the report.
2. the proposals from the RCG as to its future
3. to provide outcomes from discussions as feedback to Cabinet who will then consider how to move any specific recommendations forward and the (financial) implications of doing so.

At the May 2012 ECD Panel meeting it was agreed that the best approach would be to defer the panel's response back to Cabinet on the best ways to move forward until a special meeting (**Scrutiny Inquiry Day**) - *See Appendix 1 of report*, was arranged which invited all of the interested and key stakeholders to the meeting to develop a shared approach which will take the River Corridor Report from a conceptual idea to a reality:

Objectives of the Scrutiny Inquiry Day (Terms of Reference) – *See Appendix 2 of report*

1. *highlight who needs to be involved and engaged with the process to help focus established interest and to understand the broader corporate implications / priorities in delivering the recommendations*

2. *to inform the Cabinet of the best options/ models available to achieve the RCG Reports recommendation's through building a body of evidence which demonstrates the current and future demands from the community/businesses/other local authorities/quangos etc. to move this forward.*

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Economic and Community Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel is asked to:-

- 2.1 Review and discuss the final RCG report and recommendations and provide any additional outcomes of discussion as final feedback to Cabinet.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Panel is being asked to advise Cabinet whether any specific recommendations fit within the objectives of the Council and should be taken forward. A recommendation from the Panel to act upon recommendation's made, does not cause a financial commitment for the Council to include objectives within a Service Delivery Plan. Any decision to include recommendations will be taken by Cabinet and will follow the appropriate democratic process.

4 THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Inquiry Day involved various methods of invitation, including a local press release, people with an interest in shaping the future role of the River Avon were encouraged by Bath & North East Somerset Council to give their views on how economic regeneration might be achieved along the River Avon by attending a Scrutiny Inquiry Day on October 31st 2012.

Contributors were also asked to discuss the recommendations contained within the River Corridor Report

The day focused on:-

1. *identifying the best sustainable and regenerative ways of taking forward the options and ideas suggested by the River Corridor Group's report*
2. *developing a joint and consistent approach that is shared and understood between key stakeholders.*
3. *Informing the vision for a future Council River Strategy which places a higher social, environmental and cultural value to the river.*
4. *ensuring that key stakeholders together with the Council are at the centre of the reshaping of the river corridor.*

The Scrutiny inquiry Day helped to raise some important questions about the way forward and the decisions, which if made now, may have repercussions for years to come. This report captures the key findings from discussions on the day and helps shape the PDS Panel's recommendations for Cabinet to consider as a way forward.

Please read the attached report for the detailed findings and recommendations developed from the above discussions.

5 EQUALITIES

5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out as part of this report. (see page 5 of report)

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 *Ward Councillor; Cabinet Member; Parish Council; Town Council; Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups;; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Charter Trustees of Bath; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer*

6.2 See page six of report for a description of how consultation was carried out on the day.

7 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

7.1 *Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Corporate; Health & Safety; Other Legal Considerations*

8 ADVICE SOUGHT

8.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	Donna Vercoe ext: 6053
Background papers	Bath Avon River Economy Report
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	