

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>			
MEETING:	Major Projects & External Bodies O&S Panel		
MEETING DATE:	13 March 2007	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	
TITLE:	Small Scale Review of Panel Work - End of Term Report		
WARD:	ALL		
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>			
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>			
None			

## 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 As the Panel meets for the last time ahead of the May 2007 local elections, this report provides a brief overview of the Panel's activities over the past four years, particularly in relation to the work of the Development & Major Projects directorate.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to:

2.1 Review this report and record any comments or suggestions for a future Workplan, for consideration by an incoming O&S Panel after the May 2007 local elections.

## 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

## 4 THE REPORT

4.1 This section of the report provides a year by year summary of the activities of the Panel since elections in May 2003.

### ***May 2003 - March 2004***

4.2 During this period, the Panel was in receipt of regular project monitoring and exceptions reports relating to key major projects including the Bath Spa, Western Riverside, Southgate, and Combe Down Stone Mines.

### ***April 2004 - March 2005***

4.3 In this year, the panel again mainly received update reports on some of the Council's major projects.

4.4 In November 2004 they undertook a short review of the Project Management arrangement surrounding Combe Down Stone Mines. This involved a day long session talking to officers, stakeholders and partners as well as the Executive Member for economic development. The review was a referral from Council and the Panel's recommendations were reported back to Council in January 05.

4.5 Towards the end of this period, the new feature of a 'Routine report' began to be established as a consistent basis for the Panel to be apprised of progress on the entire programme of work being undertaken by the directorate. This comprehensive report is now a regular part of every Panel meeting.

### ***April 2005 - March 2006***

4.6 The Panel began this period with a review of the proposals for Bath Western Riverside. This was conducted in private session due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information. BWR is a complex development and the Panel process was used as a means to engage with elected members as the project took shape. The findings and recommendations of this review had an impact in taking forward the proposals for Bath Western Riverside, particularly in highlighting and promoting a joined up approach to working within the Council. It is anticipated that the report will continue to be used as a useful starting point/reference for future stages of the developments in this area.

4.7 The new Development & Major Projects directorate became established during this period and consequently the Panel spent some time examining the new processes for commissioning major projects within the Council. Papers and panel discussions considered, in depth:

> procurement and contract arrangements

> the concept of gateways processes within project management

> the directorate's role as 'intelligent client' role and relevant operating methods, particularly the Human Resources strategy.

4.8 These reports highlighted procedures designed to ensure that work on major projects is conducted according to rigorous systems.

4.9 Other individual update items on the agenda this year included:

- > Keynsham Development Project Board
- > Combe Down Stone Mines
- > The new Keynsham School: known at this time as the Answers project and latterly named 'St. Keyna'.
- > Elderly People's Homes re-provision
- > Norton Radstock Regeneration update
- > Southgate Development
- > Major Projects Service Plan
- > Directorate process and performance with Freedom of Information requests

### ***April 2006 to March 2007***

4.10 At the start of this period, the Panel began a review into the Boards responsible for Major Projects within the Council. This was conducted via a small task group, and made a series of helpful recommendations for improvements to the role and operation of Boards. A follow-up review had been planned for February 2007 but this did not prove possible and the Panel Chair has proposed that the follow-up is undertaken in the new Council period.

4.11 The Panel undertook an in-depth review of the 'Future for Bath Vision'. The Vision aims to bring future development direction to the city of Bath. Building on the city's historic strengths, its aim is to redefine its identity as a world class heritage city and to uniquely position it both nationally and internationally. The Panel's review was extremely valuable in highlighting the purpose of Vision and defining a set of key recommendations for its implementation to the Executive.

4.12 Specific update items on the Panel's agenda this year included:

> In September, the Economic Development team provided a comprehensive listing of all the 'external bodies' that the Development & Major Projects directorate liaises with. This facilitated a clear understanding of the many organisations, their roles and inter-relationships, and allowed the Panel to begin a dialogue about how best to connect the Council with them. A representative from Business West attended the Panel meeting in November and the Panel Chair proposes that, in the new Council, further conversations be held to develop interfaces , e.g. with SWRDA and EP.

> In September (and again in March '07), the Panel reviewed the Directorate's progress in developing relevant Performance Indicators.

> In November, the Panel considered the role of the Economic Development team following their transfer to Development & Major Projects as part of the Council restructure.

> At this time the Panel took an initial look at the emerging Local Area Agreement (LAA) and agreed to monitor the Economic Block indicators.

> Also in November (and again in January), the Directorate's draft Service & Financial Plan for 07/08 was brought to the Panel for review and comment, ahead of the Council's annual budget setting process.

> In January, the Panel were updated on the Combe Down Stone Mines main scheme contract award, ahead of an Executive decision.

4.13 In February, a final short review was undertaken, as a referral from Council, on the needs of small shops and businesses. The information provided by the review will support development of the Council's Retail Strategy.

## **5 SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR THE PANEL'S WORKPLAN, MAY 2007 ONWARDS**

5.1 In preparation of this paper, discussion with the Panel Chair has proposed the following items for an O&S Panel Workplan, post May 2007:

- > Follow-up review of Project Boards
- > Continue scrutiny of Vision programme
- > 6-monthly monitoring of Economic Development
- > Development of relationships with external bodies
- > Monitoring LAA

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

6.2 As this report is a review of past work, it contains no risks.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Overview & Scrutiny process has played an important part in consulting with members and the public over the work of Development & Major Projects, either through in-depth reviews or for the specific process or functional initiatives of the Directorate, as detailed in this report.

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<b>Background papers</b>	<i>Previous Panel reports and Annual O&amp;S reports.</i>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	