

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

**FROM: Acting Head of Planning Policy and
Economic Development**

REPORT NUMBER **F45**

TO: STRATEGY

DATE OF MEETING 29 June 2006

ADOPTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2006/07 – 2008/09

1. **SUMMARY**

The Council has recently consulted on its draft Economic Development Programme 2006/07 – 2008/09 with local stakeholders. No major changes to the document are proposed as a result of the consultation process, but a small number of minor changes are suggested for Members' approval.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the proposed amendments set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

2.2 That the draft Economic Development Programme 2006/07-2008/09, as amended in accordance with 2.1 above, be adopted.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no direct financial implications.

4. **KEY INFORMATION**

4.1 The Council has recently devised its Draft Economic Development Programme 2006/07 – 2008/09, as presented to Strategy Committee on 12 January 2006 (appended to Paper E243). Some amendments suggested at that meeting were incorporated into the consultation draft on which comments were sought from local stakeholders. Their comments (see Appendix 2) have been studied, and some changes are proposed to the draft document, which if approved, will be made before the finalised document is produced.

4.2 The consultation period was 1 February – Wednesday 30 March, with responses being sought via questionnaire (Appendix 3). A total of 21 responses was received over the period of the consultation.

4.3 The consultation was launched at the Babergh Business evening on 1 February 2006, which was attended by around 80 people, including businesses, partner organisations, senior Council officers and Members. The Council sent copies of the Programme and questionnaire to a range of local partners, neighbouring Suffolk local authorities, and all town and parish councils in Babergh District. The Programme and questionnaire were also made available on the Council website.

4.4 No major changes to the Programme are proposed as a result of the consultation.

5. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Schedule of Changes

Appendix 2 - Feedback

Appendix 3 - Consultation Questionnaire

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO**

Consultation responses, Planning Policy and Economic Development Division.

CONTACT: Neil Henry

DIRECT LINE: 01473 825868/ext 2268

Section	Page	Change
Executive summary	3	Community economic development – add bullet to New priorities ‘Encouraging business links with the community’
Executive summary	4	Skills development – add bullet to New priorities ‘Encourage community & workplace learning through local hubs’
Introduction	5-6	Economic context – add ‘Babergh is a largely rural district, with two market towns – Sudbury and Hadleigh, a large rural area and encompasses part of the Ipswich fringe. The majority of businesses are located on industrial estates in our two main towns, especially Sudbury. Rural workspace remains popular and an important element of the district’s property offer. Babergh’s economy is influenced by the presence of three large towns – Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Colchester situated close to the district’
Business development	15	Business advisory services – add ‘The Council is keen to maintain and develop regular contact with its larger employers’
Business development	16	Information – add ‘The Council’s business rates department promotes the take up of business rate relief to potential beneficiaries’
Place development	18	Haven Gateway Partnership – add bullet ‘Commercial Rural Regeneration – proactive support for farmers to promote diversification through development of redundant buildings to commercial workspace’
Place development	19	Supporting regeneration projects – add ‘Support the regeneration of Sudbury town centre with other Babergh departments and external partners’
Community economic regeneration	21	Community Energy Project (CEP) Area Forum – ‘enhance community access to existing facilities in the town, such as leisure, education, arts etc’
Community economic regeneration	21	Local Strategic Partnerships – amend sentence ‘The purpose of the partnerships...’ to ‘The purpose of the partnerships are to devise a Community Plan for their areas, and to jointly support, fund, and provide services for local communities, including businesses’
Community economic regeneration	22	New section ‘Encouraging business links with the community’. The Council will support initiatives to link business with local community groups building upon existing activity in Sudbury. These projects provide vital resources and expertise to community groups, whilst improving employee skills and links to the local community for businesses. Funding for this activity will be investigated with partner organisations.
Skills development	23	Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – amend sentence ‘Babergh will assist this process...’ to ‘Babergh will assist this process by promoting such programmes to enhance take-up by local businesses and consider selectively financing priority areas where funding or provision gaps exist’
Skills development	24	New section ‘Encourage community & workplace learning through local hubs’. The Council will work with local education providers including Suffolk College, West Suffolk College and University Campus Suffolk to encourage employers to train their workforce by provision of local learning centres in Hadleigh and Sudbury.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2006/07 - 2008/09, FEEDBACK

What do you think are the main issues affecting the local economy at present?

	Yes	No	Comments (Numbers refer to questionnaire unique reference)
Skills shortages?	7	2	7. Reinstate apprenticeships in all trades 8. Balance of skills 13. There is a need for Technical Colleges & apprenticeship schemes 15. Yes at technical level 17. Certainly in the skilled manual trades, e.g plumbing 21. There is a lack of apprenticeships available to Sudbury. 11. This is critical particularly those occupational skills which overlap between initial Further Education and degree level study.
Labour costs?	1	1	4. Labour Costs are low in the area 15. High pay rates by large companies is affecting small businesses 9. These seem to escalate each year.
Competitiveness?		1	4. Prices are competitive in some areas of business. 15. Rent, electricity & red tape. Compliance costs are affecting competitiveness 21. Sudbury has free parking which encourages more visitors. 9. Rural communities & small businesses can't be as competitive as large organisations are
Others (please list)			2. Housing cost & availability 3. Debt in the general population 4. Fuel prices in the area are expensive. Too many charity shops 5. Commercial Property and Land 6. Increased regulation & bureaucracy - cost of compliance. 7. Large stores are taking over Sudbury market place. 10. Labour shortage 21. There is a loss of A1 retail units compared to A2, 3, 4 & 5. 21. There is a need for affordable business units. 21. There is a lack of infrastructure causing congestion in Sudbury. 18. Poor infrastructure. Inadequate public transport. No safe facility for cycling. Lack of employment opportunity. 13. Communications, transport and travel as businesses sometimes find themselves isolated.

What do you think are the main issues affecting the local community at present?

	Yes	No	Comments (Numbers refer to questionnaire unique reference)
Affordable housing?	11		3, 4, More affordable housing How can young people live and work on low wages in our area? 8. Bureaucracy stifles speed of provision therefore out of step with demand 9. Is an issue in some areas more than others. 21. The lack of affordable housing is a major problem in Sudbury. 19. None available. 13. Boxford has been fortunate with 2 recent schemes and hopefully more schemes in the future
Lack of services?	3		4, Good. Railway station required in Great Cornard 7. Breakdown of Local Health Services - no new hospital in Sudbury, no dentists 15. Transport services for those on a lower income. 17. Not in Nayland but in other villages - except for evening transport 21. Increase in housing has an impact on all services e.g. health 18. Especially transport and lack of policing. Lack of facilities for old and young 9. Have coped well in the circumstances
Social Inclusion?	1	1	1. Not the majority but does impact on the minority 10. Show a plan on working with excluded youth 19. Critical severance for pedestrians through lack of footpath 11. More emphasis on training young adults aged 19-24. As there are a significant number of young adults who are unskilled and unable to get employment and finding training is difficult. 13. Poverty is at the root cause of most problems and therefore development of work opportunities will resolve matters rather than handouts.
Others (please list)			4. Will the local services be able to cope with all the new houses 6. Motivation of workforce - difference in base salaries compared to what is available on the dole 18. Inappropriate planning decisions e.g. Ganges. Public opinion often ignored. 21. The lack of infrastructure and increase in housing causes major congestion. 21. There is a need to manage the expansion of Sudbury 21. There has been a growth in the night time economy and thus the noise will need to be monitored. 6. Expectations of young people in the workplace

Please provide comments on the thematic interventions we have identified

Business Development	<p>1. Excellent - balanced & well thought out</p> <p>3. Very encouraging when identifying rural communities. Relaxation in work placing planning/ expansion</p> <p>4. Support for small businesses is excellent.</p> <p>5, Not enough help for medium sized companies looking to grow. More business to business networking is needed</p> <p>7. Good work but need to keep off the Green Belt</p> <p>9. This is being well considered.</p> <p>10. Continue business Development Plan. Support the larger employer and establish strong links.</p> <p>14. The need to continue to develop and provide publicity to potential users, particularly finance access.</p> <p>17. All these plans seem admirable as long as they are presented in clear simple language to the people who run small businesses.</p> <p>18. Chelmondiston PC would like to be consulted and involved on any decision involved regarding the developments at Pin Mill.</p> <p>15. Need for more starter/ graduation units. Retain free parking</p> <p>21. BDC needs to review the business rates for independent traders in the market towns for possible rate relief.</p> <p>13. Good advice/ support early on businesses within rural areas is essential. Could be difficulties for providers & support functions.</p>
Place Development	<p>1. Well balanced and good spread across the Babergh District</p> <p>3. More information needed</p> <p>4. Reassuring to know that additional workspace is available at reasonable cost</p> <p>7. Introduce more healthy eating into school's and leisure facilities</p> <p>8. These are constantly changing areas, closely linked to central government whims</p> <p>11. Suffolk College is particularly cognisant of the Haven Gateway Partnership. There are significant opportunities to develop the workforce and extend the work skills base through partnership working.</p> <p>11. Would welcome the opportunity to develop post-19 training provisions as the LSC are unable to fund the current demand.</p> <p>14. Reasonably comprehensive</p> <p>15. Western Bypass and widening improvements to northern relief road.</p> <p>17. All these plans seem admirable as long as they are presented in clear simple language to the people who run small businesses.</p> <p>21. SCC is urged to continue to work on developing the infrastructure and Sudbury Western bypass. Development continues on the Town Centre Regeneration.</p> <p>18. The Shotley Peninsula should be maintained as an area of peace & tranquility and not developed in the same way as Harwich or Felixstowe</p> <p>13. Small units on the outskirts of villages would be a way forward but lack of past development would make this difficult for a viable scheme.</p>
Community	<p>1, 4, Good</p> <p>3. More information needed</p> <p>7. More leisure facilities and encourage their usage</p> <p>8. These are constantly changing areas, closely linked to central government whims</p> <p>9. Thought has gone into it.</p> <p>10. Support community groups more in order to make them more professional</p> <p>14. Ensure that the LSP provide real outcomes which will assist businesses.</p> <p>17. There seems to be a lot of different organisations working together. Is there too much duplication?</p> <p>18. We encourage the development of a year round foot ferry from Shotely Gate.</p> <p>15. Need urgent development plan for entire area around bus station. Also urgent review for Market Hill in conjunction with road improvements.</p> <p>21. Sudbury Town Council strongly support the establishment of credit union points in the district.</p> <p>13. Villages were working units not just dormitories and this needs to be developed. Small industrial units on the outskirts of villages would enhance the economical life of small communities however there would be drawbacks.</p>

Skills Development	<p>1. Try and bring training into more local centres</p> <p>2. The ability to attract graduates or qualified professionals to facilitate economic development. The provision of conveniently placed housing within Babergh.</p> <p>3. Need to encourage a practical skills base</p> <p>4. Difficult to fund in-house training, is there any Government funding available?</p> <p>7. More apprenticeships</p> <p>6. The establishment of a university in Suffolk is vital to the future of the area.</p> <p>8. Expansion of Hadleigh High School into a Sixth Form to coincide with Suffolk university establishment</p> <p>9. Needs to be tackled earlier on when youngsters are growing up. Better careers advice in schools with thought to pupils aptitude not status.</p> <p>10. Ask employers what skills are needed and don't rely on schools and college to provide the answers.</p> <p>10. Develop local projects supported by businesses.</p> <p>14. Continue to build on work in hand; particularly links with schools</p> <p>11. It is judged that there is still a major requirement to maintain provision within the field of ICT which cuts across all business needs.</p> <p>17. The university may be good for Suffolk pride but make sure it does not attract young to inadequate academic courses with no job future instead of good technical courses as at the Suffolk College.</p> <p>18. More information needed about the Learning Skills Council.</p> <p>21. There is a need for an outreach centre in Sudbury.</p> <p>13. Skills development for the over 16's is very important. A university for Suffolk is also great as it ensures a percent of high earners stay in the county, provided the work is available.</p>
--------------------	---

Does this strategy meet the needs and priorities of your business/organisation? If not, how can we address this?

Yes	4
No	

If No Why	<p>2. Local housing is needed at all levels to attract skills into the area. Can't purely rely on local training or neighbouring boroughs & districts to house talents. Such a strategy of people commuting outside is environmentally questionable and stretches the already weakened infrastructure.</p> <p>3. Struggling with requirements relating to ; employment law, health & safety, environmental disposal</p> <p>6. Concerned about the 'run down' nature of the Farthing Road area. Can the Haven Gateway not help here?</p> <p>10. There must be more business involvement within the community</p> <p>11. Suffolk College is delighted that Babergh remains supportive of establishing University Campus Suffolk</p> <p>11. The college is pleased to remain in partnership with the Shotley Peninsula Learning Group which may help young adults who are not currently in employment.</p> <p>13. As a parish council we can only comment generally. The strategy does meet the needs and priorities of areas like Sudbury & Hadleigh. But small communities need greater support from local & central government if through business development the economic life of small communities is to be enriched.</p> <p>17. Lengthy documents in 'local government speak' don't get read by the people who need to read them.</p> <p>14. Generally good but needs to be practical and contribute to the needs of business - make a positive contribution to real needs.</p>
-----------	---

Do you have any other comments on our economic development programme?

General Comments

5. May be beneficial in conducting small forums in local areas e.g. Sudbury & Hadleigh
6. Well thought out plans within the budget constraints
7. Would like justification from Anglian water on the construction of new houses
7. Footpaths and cycle ways need to be extended/ maintained
8. Comprehensive & applicable
9. This has been covered well with the exception that it needs to realise that the area needs young people to tackle the proposed programmes.
16. Express concerns regarding the loss of small business units and retail units within Bures St Mary. Also the increased use of the B1508.
18. This document was not user friendly: very long, wordy and difficult to understand. We are very concerned about the stated intention to keep local health services
20. Newton Parish Council are in accord with the Draft Development Programme.
21. Sudbury Town Council is generally supportive of the overall plan.
10. There is more support needed from Babergh the Economic Development team should be increased.

**BABERGH DC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2006/07 – 2008/09
CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

Your comments are important to us to ensure that our economic development strategy meets the needs of the local economy and our businesses. Please complete and return this form no later than **Thursday 30th March 2006**.

Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Address	
E-mail address	
Telephone number	

<i>What do you think are the main issues affecting the local economy at present?</i>	
Skills shortages?	
Labour costs?	
Competitiveness?	
Others (please list)	

<i>What do you think are the main issues affecting the local community at present?</i>	
Affordable housing?	
Lack of services?	
Social exclusion?	
Others (please list)	

<i>Please provide comments on the thematic interventions we have identified</i>	
Theme	Your comments
Business development	
Place development	
Community Economic Development	
Skills development	

PLEASE TURN OVER

BABERGH DC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2006/07 – 2008/09
CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Does this strategy meet the needs and priorities of your business/organisation? If not, how can we address this?

Do you have any other comments on our economic development programme?

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Return questionnaire to:

Neil Henry
Economic Development Manager
Babergh DC
Corks Lane
Hadleigh
Ipswich
IP7 6SJ