

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2012  
title: RIBBLE VALLEY ECONOMIC STRATEGY REVIEW 2012  
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
principal author: CRAIG MATTHEWS

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To receive an update on the Ribble Valley Economic Strategy.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Council Ambitions - In addition to Ribble Valley Borough Council striving to meet its three ambitions, it also recognises the importance of securing a diverse, sustainable economic base for the Borough. The work of the regeneration section seeks to promote this.
- Community Objectives – The issues highlighted in this report will contribute to objectives of a sustainable economy and thriving market towns.
- Corporate Priorities - Delivery of services to all
- Other Considerations - None

### 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 As previously reported to committee the original Ribble Valley Economic Strategy had undergone a review in order to reflect new structures and approach to economic development as a result of new policy developments and changes in the delivery of economic development, regeneration and business support nationally and locally.

2.2 The Strategy sets out the economic aims and objectives for the area around 5 thematic areas of activity to guide the council in setting its own activities and resources, as well as providing a framework for partnership working, and supporting and influencing the strategies, priorities and the resource allocation of others operating in the field of economic development across Ribble Valley and the wider area.

2.3 Previously, members agreed to establish a working group to address economic development issues, consisting of Cllrs. Ranson, Hirst, Hore, Mirfin, Horkin, Rogerson and Yearling, to further support and monitor delivery of the economic objectives and activities detailed within the Strategy, and address the issues in relation to the Ribble Valley economy.

### 3 INFORMATION

- 3.1 At the last Policy & Finance Committee on 25th September 2012, members decided to refer the Economic Strategy Review document, as well as the draft Terms of Reference for the newly formed Economic Development Working Group, to enable that group to meet and discuss the documents in further detail and report back to this Committee at its next meeting.
- 3.2 Following this, the Economic Development Working Group held its inaugural meeting on 7th November 2012, during which the group reviewed the draft Terms of Reference and a final draft copy is attached at Appendix A of this report.
- 3.3 During the meeting the group were also provided with information on a number of current topics such as the potential regeneration opportunities at existing employment sites and the need for further employment land and premises, highlighting the strategic importance of the Barrow Brook site on the A59 to support the future employment and growth needs of the area.
- 3.4 The group then considered the key actions identified in the Council's Corporate Plan as follows: -
- To embrace the localism agenda and encourage parish councils and local communities to take more responsibility, wherever possible, for the local delivery of services
  - To develop an appropriate scheme for the future of the market development area
  - To develop, with relevant partners, measures to support the visitor economy
  - To identify options to deliver employment land
  - Work with the County Council and others providers to improve the local infrastructure
- 3.5 As part of this a number of discussions took place regarding the groups role to assist the delivery of regeneration and economic development activities in the borough and how it could best contribute towards those needs. It was recognised that there was a need for a review of the Economic Strategy. The group considered the merits of revisiting the review document, but concluded it was more important to focus on key activities, and to endorse the document as a contextual reference that could be reviewed as new information was available and that the document should be endorsed on that basis.
- 3.6 The detailed action plans previously published were also discussed, and members considered that the actions were broad, and act as a more operational reference for officers of the Council rather than targeted, although it was also recognised that the actions had some relevance, the working group were keen to see a much more focussed list of priority actions to support the Councils' key objectives and economic development activities.
- 3.7 The working group then discussed a more focused list of activities to provide the basis of key projects and activities with upon which to concentrate. A list of those project areas recommended by the group is attached at Appendix B. These work areas will be developed, forming the basis of project activity going forward.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

##### 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – None at present, however some projects may be identified as the Strategy progresses and in such matters, a report will be presented to the Policy & Finance Committee.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal - None
- Political – None
- Reputation - The matters covered in this report link with the Council's objectives of a sustainable economy and thriving market towns.

#### 5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

##### 5.1 Confirm the terms of reference for the Economy Working Group (Appendix A)

##### 5.2 Endorse the Draft Strategy Review and Action Plans as a basis for reference, and;

##### 5.3 Agree the proposed project priorities for economic development (Appendix B)

CRAIG MATTHEWS  
REGENERATION OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS: -

1. Ribble Valley Economic Strategy Review 2012

For further information please ask for Craig Matthews, extension 4531.

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP  
TERMS OF REFERENCE  
STRUCTURE AND REPORTING

- The group will be known as the Economic Working Group of the Policy & Finance Committee
- The Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee will chair the group.
- The minutes of any meetings will be reported to the Policy & Finance Committee.
- The meeting dates will be reactive to provide a policy steer and to respond flexibly to economic development and regeneration issues as they arise.

#### AIMS

- The aim of the sub-group is to aid the delivery of regeneration and economic development activities in the borough.
- To ensure the supply of employment land provision in the area meets with business, economic and employment growth needs.

#### OBJECTIVES

- To promote understanding of general economic needs of the Borough and to advise the Council's Policy & Finance Committee as appropriate.
- To support delivery of the economic objectives set out in the RVBC Corporate Plan and Economic Strategy.
- To ensure members are aware of economic development activities and to provide an opportunity for member guidance on economic issues within the Borough.
- To provide an informed response where appropriate on economic and business development proposals in the borough.
- To work in partnership with other public and private organisations, business groups and other local authorities to assist the delivery of economic development activities.
- To ensure the needs of the business community in Ribble Valley are addressed.

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

CURRENT PROJECT PRIORITIES

1. Employment Land and Premises

- Developing measures, which ensure that current employment land and premises provision in the area meet with business, economic and employment growth needs. Identify measures to bring these forward including options to deliver land and premises and maximising opportunities from empty properties in the Borough.

2. Clitheroe Market

- To bring forward options for an appropriate scheme for the future of the market development area in line with the aims within the Clitheroe Town Centre Masterplan.

3. Tourism & Visitor Economy

- To further develop measures, activities and events to support tourism and the visitor economy in Ribble Valley.

4. Transport & Infrastructure

- Promoting the extension of rail services from Clitheroe to Hellifield and improvements to services between Clitheroe and Manchester and Clitheroe and Preston, and working with the County Council and others providers to improve the local infrastructure.