

Scrutiny – 11 February 2010

## FORWARD PLANNING

### Report of the Head of Strategic Planning and Economy (Designate) for South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council

**Statutory Powers:** Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

**Financial Implications:** None

**Purpose:** To respond to Scrutiny Members' request.

**Links to Council Priorities:** The Forward Planning Service links to all Council Priorities, most particularly CP1, CP2 and CP3

#### Recommendation:

**That Members note the report, take the opportunity to raise their questions and make recommendations to the Executive.**

#### Background

1. At the meeting of Scrutiny on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009 Members requested that officers from the service attend the Group meeting in February 2010 to respond to Member questions specifically in respect of how the team operated (minute SC.38/09). They also expressed the belief that both comments from the general public and Members were being overlooked and that conclusions were being reached without the prior consultation of local Members. Clarity was sought regarding how the service was making decisions.
2. Whilst it was envisaged that the item would take the form of a question and answer session, Members did request a very short briefing paper to include information relating to the size of the team and its budget, which it felt would be readily available from the Community Regeneration Service Review report which was presented to the Community PDG at its meeting on 29 September 2009.

#### The South Hams LDF

3. The Council has made extremely good progress with its Local Development Framework (LDF), and is recognised as a leading authority in the field. This has arisen out of Member aspirations for key elements of the plan (particularly the Council's affordable housing targets and its vision for the Sherford new community, which have required high commitment to the LDF) coupled with the dedication, skill and experience of its officers.

4. The LDF is a portfolio of documents, designed to grow and adapt to fit local circumstances. There are several essential elements of the portfolio, of which the Core Strategy is the overarching requirement. The diagram at **Appendix A** shows a typical LDF portfolio.
5. Key elements of the South Hams LDF have been adopted – the Core Strategy, the Sherford Area Action Plan and the Affordable Housing Development Plan Document (DPD). Several other parts of the LDF are also in place – the Statement of Community Involvement, several Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), the Annual Monitoring Reports and the Local Development Scheme.

### Current context

6. The team is very heavily engaged in work to maintain progress against the Council’s programme for the LDF. The most substantial volume of work relates to progression of the 5 Site Allocation DPDs, dealing with Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, Totnes and the Rural Areas. Other documents currently under way are the Development Policies DPD, whose examination is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> March this year, and the Plymouth Urban Fringe DPD, which is being carried out jointly with Plymouth City and Devon County Councils.
7. The latest version of the LDF programme is attached to this report as **Appendix B**, although Members will be aware that the Council decision to re-consult in several communities is delaying publication of the 5 Site Allocation DPDs until at least March this year.
8. Also attached, as **Appendix C**, are relevant extracts related to Forward Planning from the Community Regeneration Service Review reported to Community Policy Development Group on 29<sup>th</sup> September and Prosperity Policy Development Group on 18<sup>th</sup> November last year.
9. Also presently underway is business planning for delivering strategic planning through shared service arrangements with West Devon Borough Council. A joint Member workshop on 12<sup>th</sup> February will receive an update report.

### Strategic Risk Assessment

Opportunity	Issues / Obstacles	Benefits
Adopted LDF documents, giving increased clarity and certainty about strategic vision, objectives, planning policies and development proposals for the district.	<p>The long timescale involved.</p> <p>The challenge of attaining ownership by partners and stakeholders, particularly local communities.</p>	<p>Improved progress against Council Priorities, particularly CP1, CP2 and CP3.</p> <p>Enhanced receipt of funding and grant.</p>

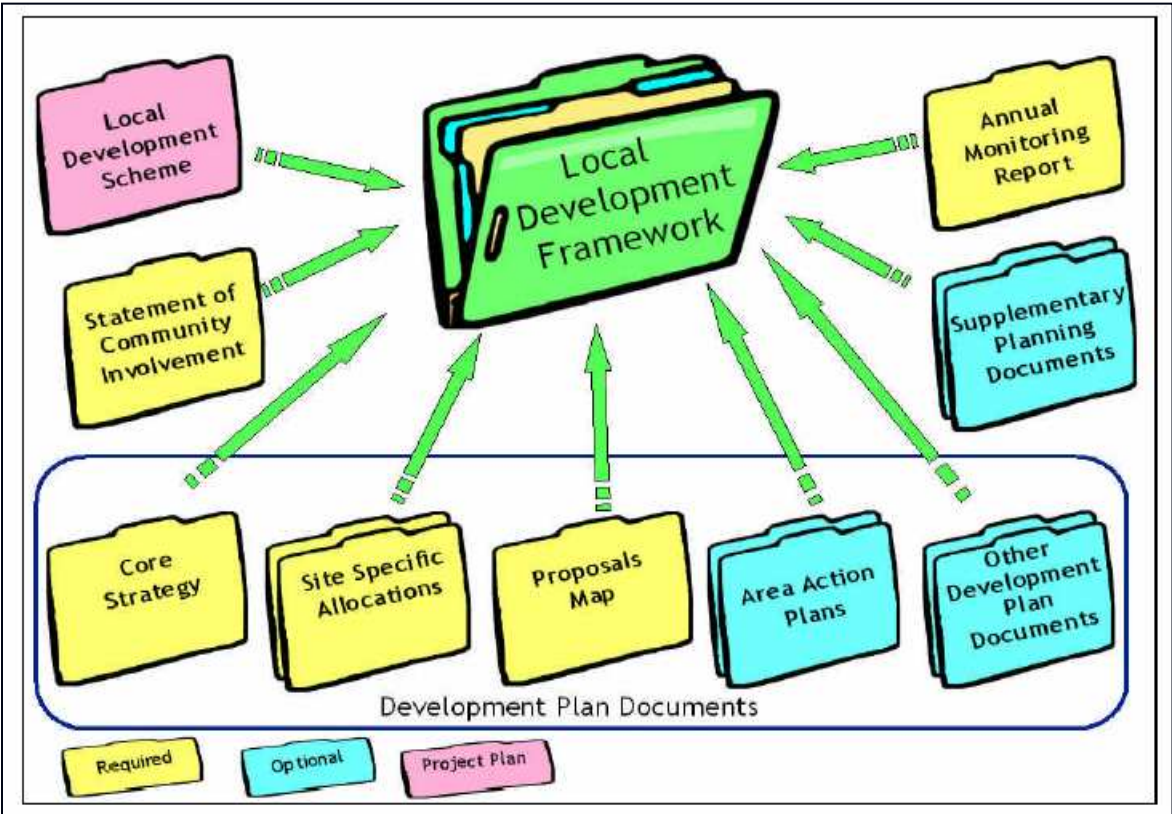
Graham Swiss  
Forward Planning Manager

Scrutiny  
11 February 2010

Lee Bray  
Head of Strategic Planning and Economy (Designate)

**Background Documents:** None

THE TYPICAL ELEMENTS OF A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



ITEM

ITEM

Community / Prosperity Policy Development Groups –

29<sup>th</sup> September 2009 / 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009**COMMUNITY REGENERATION – SERVICE REVIEW****Report of the Head of Community Regeneration****Statutory Powers:** Various**Financial Implications:** None arising directly from this report

**Purpose of this report:** Members have requested reports on all services to assist their annual budget setting. This report provides an overview of the Community Regeneration service, although the Economic Development function in particular was considered by the Prosperity Policy Development Group on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009.

The report aims to facilitate understanding of what the service does, what are the principal outcomes and how it is aiming to develop. The service links to all Council priorities, and particularly strongly to CP1, CP2 and CP3.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Group RESOLVES to comment on the report, and identifies any observation that it wishes to be considered by the Executive during the 2010/11 budget setting process.**

**Background and service profile**

1. The Council's Community Regeneration service was formed in 2004 and draws together the five professional teams to deliver economies and efficiencies in service provision:
  - a. Community Development
  - b. Forward Planning
  - c. Economic Development
  - d. Affordable Housing
  - e. Major Developments
2. The service is squarely placed at the forefront of top Council priorities. Its key functions and objectives are set out in the 2009-2010 service plan:

	<b>Key Functions of the Service</b>
1	Community development including delivery of the South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2011 and support for a range of community & voluntary sector organisations
2	Development planning including continued production of the South Hams Local Development Framework (LDF) portfolio of documents and engagement with regional and sub-regional planning processes
3	Meeting local housing needs, particularly for affordable homes, and delivery of the Housing Strategy
4	Supporting economic development and regeneration including delivery of the South Hams Prosperity Strategy 2006 – 2011, and management of a range of

	funding streams
5	Facilitating delivery of major developments in the district, particularly the sustainable new community at Sherford and Langage strategic employment site
6	Working with external partners and other Council services to achieve delivery of key strategic priorities

	<b>Key objectives for the Service</b>	<b>Link to Council Priorities / Cross Cutting Themes:</b>
1	Promote a sense of community well-being across all sectors and increase the involvement of stakeholders in improving quality of life for all	CP1 – 6 CCT1 – 3
2	Deliver sound and sustainable development planning that addresses local needs and priorities	CP1 – 6, CCT1 – 3
3	Deliver affordable housing in line with Housing Strategy targets and the Housing Development Programme	CP1 – 6, CCT1 – 3, CP1 focus
4	Create the conditions for the maintenance and growth of quality economic activity	CP1 – 6, CCT1 – 3, CP2 focus
5	Facilitate delivery of a sustainable new community at Sherford with a range of partners	CP1 – 6, CCT1 – 3

3. The work of the five professional teams is closely linked and there is a great deal of shared working towards shared objectives in delivery of these functions. For example:
  - a. The Community Development team play a key role in helping to facilitate community engagement across (and beyond) the service
  - b. The Forward Planning and Affordable Housing teams work closely together to advance sites for affordable homes in rural communities
  - c. The Affordable Housing Manager has led for the Council in negotiating affordable housing provision at the Sherford new community
  - d. The Economic Development and Affordable Housing teams provide advice and support to the LDF processes, advice to Development Control, and support to the Major Developments team (eg: Sherford S106 negotiations)
4. The service is very predominantly staffed by professional officers whose dedication and capability is required to operate at a high level in order to successfully address the matters that the service is engaged with. The current staff structure is attached as Appendix 1.

### **Service budget pressures and savings**

5. The following budget heads combine to deliver the Community Regeneration service:
  - a. Community Development
  - b. Planning Policy
  - c. Transport Policy and Public Transport
  - d. Economic Development
  - e. Housing Strategy
  - f. Registered Social Landlords

6. Operationally some aspects of these (for example, concessionary fares) are a poor fit with the service and their delivery depends heavily upon the activities of partners or other Council services.
7. The controllable Community Regeneration service budget for 2009/10 is about £772,300. With the required 2010/11 savings target shared out proportionately across the Council the service is required to identify about £27,850 of efficiency savings.
8. The division of costs according to **budget heads** (including recharges from other services) includes Transport Policy and Public Transport, the major part of which relates to Concessionary Fares. This is non-controllable and heavily skews the pattern of costs. However, if the Transport budget head is omitted the pattern of costs is very similar to that between service strands, as follows:

	2009/2010 (£)	%
Community Development	204,400	17%
Planning Policy	446,900	38%
Transport Policy and Public Transport	584,900	-
Economic Development	223,500	19%
Housing Strategy	262,500	22%
Registered Social Landlords	38,200	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,760,400	-
<b>Total excluding transport policy</b>	1,175,500	100%

9. The bulk of the controllable service budget (over 80%) is made up of staff costs, predominantly salaries, and the controllable salaries budget is divided between **service strands** as shown below:

	2009/2010 (£)	%
Community Development	68,800	12%
Forward Planning (inc Head of Service and service admin support)	292,860	50%
Economic Development*	116,800	20%
Affordable Housing	112,510	19%
<b>TOTAL</b>	590,970	100%

\* **including** vacant external funding officer post

10. The bulk of other "controllable" service costs are associated with:

	£ (approx)
• contributions to various schemes, including	
1. CAB	40,200
2. CVS	33,300
3. South Hams Volunteer Centre	7,600
4. Ring and Ride	11,300
5. Youth Enquiry Scheme	8,900
6. Rural Housing Enablers	4,000
7. Devon Rural Network	1,000
8. Devon and Exeter Racial Equality	1,500
• commercial initiatives fund	3,000
• other controllable costs (equipment, printing and stationery, postage, phones, subsistence, conferences, travel)	46,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	157,100

11. The breakdown of staff in the service is as follows:

Head of Service	1.0
Community Development	1.6
Economic Development	3.0 (inc external funding officer vacancy)
Forward Planning	6.2
Affordable Housing	3.0
Major Developments	2.5
Admin support	2.0
<b>Total staffing</b>	<b>19.3</b>

12. A brief history of savings offered, approved and delivered is set out at Appendix 2. This shows that the service has always found and delivered the required target savings, although it has become increasingly difficult to do so and has not been without some reductions in service levels in some areas.
13. Achieving the required saving in the current year depends upon deleting the External Funding Officer post from the establishment. Some of the work of that post can be delivered externally, for example, through Devon Renaissance. Other elements (such as project monitoring to demonstrate delivery of objectives in relation to successful bid schemes) remain in house as a call against the Economic Development team's capacity.
14. The service has made no bids for additional resources in recent years. It draws upon the Planning (LDF) Reserve to fund a range of out-sourced work and some staff costs. It also draws upon either the Economic Initiatives Reserve or the Economic Regeneration & Community Well-being Reserve to fund economic initiatives or to provide an element of matched funding for external projects. Last year the Council received an award of £1m (capped) Housing and Planning Delivery Grant, based on its good LDF progress. Developments in the Plymouth Eastern Corridor are also benefiting from a share of Plymouth's New Growth Point funding.

### **Shared Services / Joint Working**

15. Opportunities for shared service arrangements with West Devon across the service's various activities are currently being explored. The services are differently arranged in the two authorities and a variety of possible arrangements are under consideration.
16. The Community Regeneration service is accustomed to joint working. Indeed, many of its activities depend upon partnership and we are proactively sharing resources in a variety of areas. Specific examples of joint working already in place include:
- a. The Plymouth Housing Market Area (HMA) Partnership (Plymouth, Caradon, South Hams, West Devon and Dartmoor) which commissioned the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and updates
  - b. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) jointly with West Devon
  - c. Sherford New Community, the Eastern Corridor and Plymouth fringes, various activities including, for example:
    - i. Joined up adopted Area Action Plans with Plymouth
    - ii. Eastern Corridor Board with various agencies
    - iii. Plymouth Urban Fringe DPD jointly with Plymouth and Devon
  - d. Joint Prosperity Strategy Action Plan, engagement at regional / sub-regional level and economic development initiatives with West Devon

- e. Monitoring the LAA with West Devon
17. Joint approaches to other key strategies and activities, particularly including the Sustainable Community Strategy and Housing Strategy, are also being put in place.

### Principal Outputs

18. Particularly significant headline outcomes **achieved** over recent years **and/or in process** include:
- a. Reviews of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Action Plan agreed by the South Hams Strategic Partnership
  - b. Administration of Council grant funds (Community Grant Fund, Members' Localities Budgets, Investment in the Community Initiative, Langage S106, Ivybridge Tesco S106, Dartmouth supermarkets S106)
  - c. Support for local communities and the voluntary sector (SLAs with CAB and CVS, Ring & Ride, parish plans)
  - d. Sound adopted LDF documents including the Core Strategy, the Sherford AAP and Affordable Housing DPD
  - e. £1m HPDG awarded in recognition of that progress and LDF Pathfinder Status
  - f. Processes to evidence Site Allocations DPDs for towns and key villages
    - i. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
    - ii. Sustainability Threshold Assessment
    - iii. Prince's Foundation's Design Review Assessment (EbD)
  - g. Affordable Housing Beacon Status
  - h. Initiatives to support delivery of affordable housing
    - i. Sub market rent initiative
    - ii. SHIRE scheme
    - iii. Village housing initiative
  - i. £12.5m external (HCA) funds secured for affordable housing schemes and over £7.5m in bids
  - j. £1m received for affordable housing through S106 agreements, further £1m agreed and £13m under discussion
  - k. Over 300 affordable homes built 2004-2009 and over 400 projected 2009-2012 subject to viability
  - l. Joint review in progress of the Prosperity Strategy Action Plan aligned with West Devon
  - m. Production of a guide to help local residents and businesses during the recession
  - n. Proactive support for redundant employees of local businesses facing closure / reorganisation
  - o. £3m of economic development projects (£1m SHDC contribution securing £2m external funds, mostly European) drawn into the district 2003-2009.
  - p. 25 Devon Renaissance supported projects (£1m DR funds drawing £6m+ into South Hams; £15,000 pa SHDC funds)
  - q. Secured £3.6 million 'Local Action' funding to 2013 from the Rural Development Programme for England
  - r. 44 community schemes supported through CGF 2005 – 2009 (£231,017 in SHDC grant aid delivering project value of £2,102,456).
  - s. Delivery of new employment premises in Dartmouth and Totnes.
  - t. Watermark scheme, Ivybridge, with £3,200,000 of external funding secured.

- u. Approval of the planning application for Sherford and £100m+ planning obligations secured subject to S106
- v. Over £25m external funds drawn into the district, particularly including
  - i. £12.5m HCA funds secured for affordable housing schemes
  - ii. £1m+ HPDG
  - iii. £3m of economic development projects (mostly European funds)
  - iv. £1m DR funds drawing £6m+ into South Hams
  - v. £3.2m funding for the Watermark, Ivybridge

**Strategic Risk Assessment:**

Opportunity	Issues / Obstacles	Benefits
An overview of the Community Regeneration service and its role in the delivery of Council priorities	The possible impacts of service level reductions	Effective budget setting and management geared to Council priorities
Identification of areas to make potential savings, reduce costs or improve service levels	Opportunities for shared services or joint working	Consideration of alternative methods of service delivery
	Public expectations and Council reputation	Improved delivery of Council priorities
	The impact of the recession on progressing service objectives	

**Conclusion**

19. The Community Regeneration service faces a challenging agenda close to the heart of Council priorities. Over the past few years it has successfully put in place many of the policies and processes required to progress those priorities. Delivery has been hampered by the current recession, but the pieces are in place for the Council to be able to respond proactively to the promised upturn.
20. The service has also taken steps to respond to the problems and challenges faced by local communities and businesses during the recession, supporting local businesses and their employees with advice, publishing a guide to help in difficult times, and promoting a range of initiatives to support affordable housing.
21. Although the service is not an income generator as such it plays a major role in enabling external funds of all kinds to be drawn into the district. It has also succeeded in securing high level receipt of some government grants (HPDG).
22. In summary, although there are few truly meaningful comparative indicators available, it is considered that the service performs at a high level and delivers good value for money.

Lee Bray  
Head of Community Regeneration

**Background Documents:**

Community Regeneration Service Plan  
 Council Budget Book

# APPENDIX 1 - COMMUNITY REGENERATION SERVICE STAFF STRUCTURE

## COMMUNITY REGENERATION SERVICE South Hams District Council September 2009

Head of Community Regeneration  
**Lee Bray**

Community Development	Economic Development	Forward Planning	Affordable Housing	Major Developments
<p>Community Development Officer (Team leader) <b>Kay Kilgallon (0.6 FTE)</b></p>	<p>Economic Development Officer (Team leader) <b>Michael Cozens</b></p>	<p>Forward Planning Manager (Team leader) <b>Graham Swiss</b></p>	<p>Affordable Housing Manager (Team leader) <b>Liam Reading</b></p>	<p>Major Projects &amp; Development Officer (Team leader) <b>Paul Tyler</b></p>
<p>Community Development Assistant <b>Amanda Harvey</b></p>	<p>External Funding Officer <b>Vacant</b></p>	<p>Forward Planning Officer <b>James Doxford</b></p>	<p>Housing Enabling &amp; Development Officer <b>Debbie Holloway</b></p>	<p>Major Developments Implementation Planner <b>Ian Sosnowski</b></p>
	<p>Business Support Officer <b>Carol Trant</b></p>	<p>Forward Planning Officer <b>Denise Vigars (0.6 FTE)</b></p>	<p>AH Enabling Officer <b>Cassandra Harrison</b></p>	<p>Urban &amp; Rural Designer <b>Mark Harris (0.5 FTE - post shared with Teignbridge)</b></p>
		<p>Planning and AH Officer <b>Rachel Danneman</b></p>	<p><b>Devon Strategic Housing Group</b> (SHDC hosting for Devon-wide authorities)</p>	
		<p>Forward Planning Assistant <b>Bridget Green (0.6 FTE)</b></p>	<p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator <b>Mary Ridgway</b></p>	
		<p>Forward Planning Assistant <b>Rebecca Black</b></p>		
		<p>Strategy Monitoring and Research Officer <b>Andy Marilton</b></p>		
<p>Community Regeneration Admin <b>Karen Duffield    Jenny Farmer</b></p>				

## APPENDIX 2 – HISTORY OF BUDGET SAVINGS

	£ Offered	£ Approved	£ Delivered
<b>GRAND TOTAL 2005/06 – 2009/10</b>		<b>142,500</b>	<b>142,500</b>
<b>2009/10</b>			
Staff restructuring and efficiencies	30,000	30,000	*30,000
<i>* delivered subject to deletion of External Funding Officer post</i>			
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>
<b>2008/09</b>			
Invite contributions from other partners towards Comm Dev Officer	10,000		
Cease or reduce Community Grant Fund	25,000	5,000	5,000
Cease support to Devon Race Equality Council	1,500		
Cease Support to Enterprise South Devon	15,000	15,000	15,000
Cease support to Ring and Ride	11,000		
Reduce staff training and dev budgets	4,000	4,000	4,000
Ongoing savings at Devon County Show	1,000	1,000	1,000
Reduce expenditure at Farmers Markets	3,500	3,500	3,500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>28,500</b>	<b>28,500</b>
<b>2007/08</b>			
Invite contributions from other partners towards Comm Dev Officer	10,000		
Community Development staff training and dev	4,000	4,000	4,000
Cease contribution to Devon Rural Network	1,000		
Reduce Farmers Markets expenditure	1,000	1,000	1,000
Delete several small grants (now part of CGF)	7,500	7,500	7,500
Regrading posts	2,100	2,100	2,100
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14,600</b>	<b>14,600</b>
<b>2006/07</b>			
Streamlining processes and exploring partnership opportunities	20,400	20,400	20,400
Cease Support to Enterprise South Devon	15,000		
Integrate staff training and dev budgets	4,000	4,000	4,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>24,400</b>	<b>24,400</b>
<b>2005/06</b>			
Cease annual contribution to Local Plan Reserve	30,000	30,000	30,000
Cease support to Ring and Ride	11,000		
Reduce B&B (homelessness) budget	10,000		
Reduce R&M (homelessness) budget	10,000		
Cease CGF	25,000		
Cease support to CCD	3,000	3,000	3,000
Cease/reduce support to CAB	40,000		
Cease/reduce support to CVS	32,000		
Reduce Dartmouth Regatta budget (£6,000 over 2 years)	3,000		
Cease Southampton Boat Show	4,000	4,000	4,000
Reduce Devon County Show	3,000	3,000	3,000
Reduce contribution to Enterprise South Devon	5,000	5,000	5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>