

LEICESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC SENIOR OFFICERS' GROUP**1 AUGUST 2007****NEW GROWTH POINT UPDATE****Background**

1. The Three Cities and Three Counties Sub-Region has been given the status of a New Growth Point (NGP) by the Government, following a successful bid by the 6Cs Partnership.
2. This status will enable partners in Leicestershire to access funding to provide a wide range of infrastructure and facilities, and carry out studies and research, in support of future housing growth.
3. An initial Programme of Development has been prepared, and is being updated, to inform high-level Government funding decisions through CSR. An initial draft was submitted to CLG at the end of May. Feedback (largely positive) has been received from CLG. An updated draft will be submitted in mid-August.
4. In Leicestershire the recent focus has been on strengthening the infrastructure 'need' section of the programme, in particular in relation to the five Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) proposed in the Draft Regional Plan.
5. A 'final' Programme of Development will be submitted to CLG in early October 2007. This will need to include detail of funding proposals for 2008-11, and outline proposals for beyond 20011.
6. It is anticipated that the bulk of infrastructure funding in 2008-11 will be directed at schemes within Leicester, and that the focus of the programme in Leicestershire will be research, feasibility studies and other preparatory work to support longer term housing provision at the SUEs. Nevertheless should there be infrastructure schemes in the County which if implemented in 2008-11 would help bring forward housing provision these could be included in the Programme.

Latest Position

7. You may recall that in May County Council officers got in touch with yourselves as key partners, asking for project ideas relating to the infrastructure needed to provide for the proposed housing growth. These

were included in the draft Programme of Development submitted on 31 May 2007. Feedback received from CLG and GOEM referred to:

- (i) Government being grateful for the effort that has been made to demonstrate and evidence the need for projects referred to in the draft Programme; helping a stronger case to be made to the Treasury for more funding support.
 - (ii) All projects referred to in the draft Programme having potential to be delivered as they contribute to the objectives of Sustainable Communities.
 - (iii) The precise mechanism for funding for 2008 to 2011 not being known, it is most likely to be a block grant through Local Area Agreements based on the need identified in the draft Programme. The LAA body will be responsible for spending the funding on defined local NGP priorities.
8. The Leicester Shire HMA Programme Board met for the first time on 10 July 2007 to consider proposals for Leicester and Leicestershire, and the Three Cities and Three Counties NGP Programme Board met on 16 July 2007 to consider proposals for the 6Cs as a whole. The most recent iteration of the main programme and Appendix 2 for the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA can be viewed via http://www.leicestershiretogether.org/index/meetings_and_events/ssog/ssog_1st_aug_07.htm
9. On 18 July 2007 CLG published draft guidance on preparing Programmes of Development for NGPs. This very helpfully includes six key criteria on which CLG will advise Ministers. It also advises that the following be covered in the Programme:
- (i) an indication of all infrastructure dependencies relating to the delivery of proposed housing growth;
 - (ii) an understanding of infrastructure requirements which might slip through the funding net of other public agencies or which might not attract developer contributions; and
 - (iii) clear prioritisation of projects.
10. Recent Government announcements about increased future housing provision and the publication of the Housing Green Paper and Sub-National review of Economic Development have further elevated the profile and status of the New Growth Point programme.

Next Steps

11. The increased national profile being given to housing and the importance being attached to New Growth Points provides us with an opportunity to ensure that new housing development is of very high quality, forms part of genuinely sustainable mixed developments, and contributes to the improvement of existing places and communities in Leicestershire. To maximise the benefits to Leicestershire we need to convince Government of

our ambition, and of our ability to deliver. We are up against competition for funding from 28 other NGP locations in England.

12. In developing a successful programme it needs to cover the full range of infrastructure facilities and services new communities will require, including social, economic, green and transportation infrastructure. All partners are, therefore, encouraged to examine the draft Programme available at http://www.leicestershiretogether.org/index/meetings_and_events/ssog/ssog_1st_aug_07.htm and ensure this is the case.
13. The process of approving the final Three Cities and Three Counties NGP Programme for Development will be as follows:

August/ September: Individual partners to consider the NGP Programme, including at Cabinet/ Board level.

Mid September 2007: Leicester Shire HMA Programme Board (to consider proposals for Leicester and Leicestershire)

3 October 2007: Three Cities and Three Counties NGP Programme Board (to consider proposals for the 6Cs as a whole)

Early October 2007: Submission of Programme

Recommendations

14. It is recommended that:-

- (i) **SSOG note the content of this report;**
- (ii) **SSOG ask all partners to contribute to the further development of the NGP programme between now and early October.**

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