

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS**

**Agenda Item No: 11a**

**Investment Package Update:**

**The Single Conversation and Local Investment Plan**

*To:* **Cambridgeshire Horizons Board**

*Date:* **23<sup>rd</sup> March 2010**

*From:* **Chief Executive**

*Purpose:* **To update Board members on progress with the Single Conversation and Local Investment Plan.**

*Recommendation:* **The Board is invited to:**

- 1. note the contents of this report;**
- 2. provide views on the draft outline of the Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan;**
- 3. Agree the next steps as proposed in paragraph 3.3**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cambridgeshire Horizons, as the lead body for the Managing Growth theme within Cambridgeshire Together, has been tasked with co-ordinating the Single Conversation process with the Homes and Communities Agency. We are working with colleagues across the local authorities, and with the Cambridge sub-regional Housing Board in this endeavour. The Single Conversation is the means by which the HCA wishes to engage with local areas to try to match their ambitions for growth, regeneration and housing with the support available from HCA, and the wider Government family.

1.2 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have asked that Local Investment Plans (LIPs) are prepared to set the context for the Single Conversation. Guidance on the Single Conversation states:

*The Single Conversation will make connections between housing and regeneration need, market opportunity, planning policy, land supply and development viability. It will move from strategy and the identification of opportunities for intervention, to the required investment, and capacity for delivery.*

*The aim is to reach agreement on the content of a Local Investment Plan. The Plan will articulate the shared priorities of the local partners, the HCA and other partner agencies, such as the Regional Development Agency, as a single local plan.<sup>1</sup>*

## 2. PROGRESS TO DATE

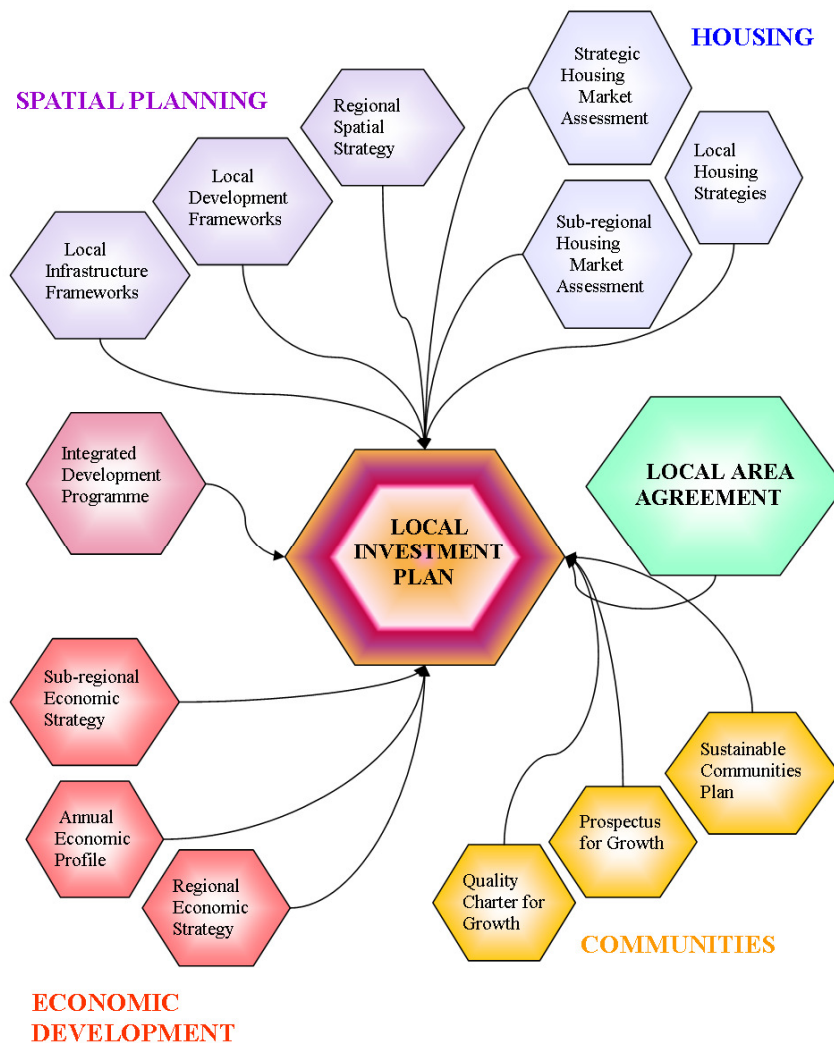
2.1 An initial meeting with HCA was held in late December 2009, with a follow-up taking place on 22<sup>nd</sup> February this year. Among the key issues emerging from that meeting were:

- Agreement that the evidence base Cambridgeshire already has in place (through documents such as the Integrated Development Programme, the Prospectus, and the sub-regional Housing Strategy for example) is fit for purpose;
- A recognition that there is already a strong basis for delivery through the various joint working structures that are well established in Cambridgeshire;
- Given the above, that it was feasible for Cambridgeshire to move quite quickly to develop a Local Investment Plan, drawing on the existing evidence base, which would help to inform future funding bids, including as part of the next Comprehensive Spending Review.

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<sup>1</sup> The Single Conversation Guidance Framework - [http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/HCA\\_single\\_conversation240709.pdf](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/HCA_single_conversation240709.pdf)

- 2.2 The object of the Local Investment Plan is therefore to show the HCA that investment in Cambridgeshire will meet key policy objectives and offer excellent value for money, demonstrating how growth, housing and regeneration projects can come forward, and expressing our collective priorities. In order to ensure that the Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan is clear, crisp and focused, it will be structured as a framework document, with signposts to the detailed work that has already been completed rather than repetition of existing material.
- 2.3 The diagram below shows the key documents that this Local Investment Plan encompasses, by theme. It is not intended to be completely exhaustive, and other sources are drawn on where necessary.



- 2.4 Cambridgeshire Horizons has begun to pull together an outline of a Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan (CLIP), see Appendix A attached to this report. To date, this document consists of a framework, signposting the availability of existing information and strategies relevant to HCA programmes of spend. The next key element of the work will involve close liaison with

Local Authorities, in order to populate the chapter on desired priorities for HCA investment.

- 2.5 The Growth Partnership Board discussed the outline draft CLIP on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and was invited to provide more detailed comments.

### **3. NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1 Ultimately, the CLIP will be used as the key basis for the development of a Local Investment Agreement, which will set out HCA's funding commitments for Cambridgeshire for the next comprehensive spending round period (i.e. the period beyond 2011). In some respects, the process is not entirely dissimilar to the Programme of Development process, which was the precursor to a formal Housing Growth Fund allocation.

- 3.2 Suggested timescales and processes for the development of the Local Investment Plan are as follows:

- Over the next month, Local Authorities to comment on the draft attached and provide information on desired HCA investment priorities through completion of a pro forma;
- CLIP outline draft to be populated with Local Authority priorities and comments, in order to be discussed by Cambridgeshire Horizons Board on 1<sup>st</sup> July;
- Given the importance of the Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan in shaping HCA decision-making and assisting Cambridge sub-regional bids, it is proposed that the process of agreeing the Local Investment Plan will follow that of the Integrated Development Programme. This would mean that each Local Authority Cabinet or equivalent would need to endorse it, before the document returns to the Cambridgeshire Horizons Board for final sign-off. This process is anticipated to conclude by September 2010.

- 3.3 Once an agreed Local Investment Plan is in place, the process that will ultimately lead to negotiating and signing a legally binding Cambridgeshire Local Investment Agreement (which will be between the HCA and all relevant stakeholders) will begin.