

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS

Agenda Item 13a

CAMBRIDGESHIRE TOGETHER AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT UPDATE

To: **Cambridgeshire Horizons Board**

Date: **24 September 2009**

From: **Director for Development**

Purpose: **To update the Board on progress with Cambridgeshire Together, with particular reference to the Managing Growth Partnership.**

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

- i) Note the overview report (Appendix A) to the Cambridgeshire Together Board**
- ii) Agree to regular updates being provided on supporting communities through the economic downturn to this Board, noting the report considered by the Cambridgeshire Together Board (Appendix B), and comment on actions that can be taken to support communities.**
- iii) Note progress with the Comprehensive Area Assessment**
- iv) Note the inauguration of the *Making Cambridgeshire Count* initiative and comment on the issues for the Managing Growth partnership / Horizons Board**

Contact:	Name: Job Title: E-mail address: Telephone No.	John Onslow Director for Development john.onslow@cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk 01223 714053
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1. MANAGING GROWTH THEMATIC PARTNERSHIP

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire Horizons Board has responsibility for overseeing the Managing Growth Partnership, which is one of five thematic partnerships under Cambridgeshire Together. Councillor Dr David Bard represents the managing Growth Partnership on the Cambridgeshire Together Board.
- 1.2 Key responsibilities for the Horizons Board in the context of Cambridgeshire Together are:
- Reporting on and consideration of progress with Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets for all housing and affordable housing
 - Maintaining an overview of progress against growth indicators
 - Consideration of interventions and actions to address targets and the growth objectives in the longer term Cambridgeshire Together vision
- 1.3 An overview report on managing growth is produced for the Cambridgeshire Together Board twice a year. The latest report, which was due to go to the Cambridgeshire Together Board on the 22nd September, is attached at Appendix A. An oral update of the outcomes of the above meeting will be given at the Horizons Board meeting.

2. SUPPORTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

- 2.1 Cambridgeshire Together Board has requested that each thematic partnership notes the report that went to the July Cambridgeshire Together meeting (Appendix B) and considers how it is supporting communities through the economic downturn. Cambridgeshire Together has also asked that each partnership regularly considers this issue and actions that they can take in supporting communities.
- 2.2 Delivery of housing (market and affordable) is the core work of Horizons, working with the Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Board and key partners, including the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and local authorities. This work includes key programme areas, such as the Housing Growth Fund capital and revenue programmes and work on future funding mechanisms (Item 14). As reported in Item 11, the proposed reduction in HGF capital would, if it goes ahead, have a major impact on delivering infrastructure to support housing delivery.
- 2.3 It is proposed to regularly report on the effects of the economic downturn to the Horizons Board.

3. COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 Following the launch of Comprehensive Area Assessment in April 2009, partners have engaged in regular, open and constructive dialogue with the Audit Commission around the progress and performance of the Cambridgeshire Together Partnership.
- 3.2 The assessment has been very much focused on our collective progress in delivering against the Cambridgeshire Vision and Local Area Agreement, over and above that of individual organisations. To demonstrate our shared progress, in addition to our usual end of year performance reporting, partners have developed the Cambridgeshire Area Self-Assessment. The Managing Growth section was previously circulated to Horizons Board members.
- 3.3 The Self-Assessment pulls together the range of achievements, performance levels and areas for improvement from across all of our Strategic Thematic Partnerships and sets out where we feel we are as a partnership in terms of our collective efforts to address the issues that matter most to communities in Cambridgeshire.
- 3.4 The Cambridgeshire Together Board was due to receive draft findings of the assessors at its meeting on the 22nd September. An oral update on matters relevant to the Managing Growth partnership will be provided at the Horizons Board meeting. The key areas of focus are:
 - Joining-up community engagement activity across the partnership
 - Tackling the inequalities that exist, particularly for certain communities of interest – such as Gypsies and Travellers or older people, and for particular geographic locations around the county in areas of relative deprivation.
 - Economic prosperity, particularly during the economic downturn
 - Homelessness and affordable housing.
 - The causes and impacts of crime, especially in crime hotspots.
 - Progress in improving the environment, including impact on growth and transport.

4. MAKING CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNT

At its meeting in July, the Cambridgeshire Together Board approved a proposal from the Public Service Board (Chief Executives of the local authorities and other key public sector organisations) for Making Cambridgeshire Count; an initiative with financial support from Improvement East. The ultimate purpose of the Making Cambridgeshire Count project is to build on the sound base of the Cambridgeshire Together vision and support and accelerate the drive to make the most of all the resources at our disposal and transform services, so that we provide what our communities want and need, and so that people think Cambridgeshire is a great place to call home.

4.1 To summarise, the project has the following objectives:

- To develop a stronger, shared understanding of the needs and aspirations of our communities, based on evidence, and a clear and common understanding of our shared priorities, reflected in a real and relevant Cambridgeshire Plan that drives action across all our organisations.
- To encourage commitment to this vision, which translates into the way we plan and use resources and manage performance.
- To foster collective responsibility amongst local leaders for outcomes, opportunities, challenges and successes, which translates into frank and meaningful conversations, a willingness to challenge, a drive for excellence, and a desire to be inspirational.
- To stimulate cultural change throughout each of our organisations that will allow creativity to flourish and encourage colleagues to be genuinely enthused about their work, so that they work to their full potential in order to achieve excellent outcomes.
- To embed a culture of efficiency and transformation in the mindset of all our partner organisations, so that we get maximum value from every penny spent, and a focus on transforming services to focus on outcomes, as a natural part of business-as-usual.
- To work together across organisational and geographical boundaries to spend and share our combined available resources (financial and other assets) in way that achieves maximum impact, so that we achieve our shared priorities and deliver added value.
- To transform (through challenge, review, de-commissioning and reshaping) at least four or five services, so that they are completely focused on delivering high quality outcomes for the people of Cambridgeshire, in a way that makes best use of our collective resources, irrespective of who actually delivers the service.
- To improve our performance and deliver excellent quality services for the people of Cambridgeshire.

4.2 The focus of the work is taking place between now and March 2010, but will then be embedded in organisations and have a lasting effect on the way public services are delivered across Cambridgeshire.

4.3 There are several examples of effective joint working within the remit of the Managing Growth Partnership that will contribute to a sound base for Making Cambridgeshire Count, including the work of the Horizons Board and its supporting groups, such as the officer Growth Partnership Board and officer / stakeholder Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Board, and initiatives such as the Joint Urban Design Team. However, with the impacts of the economic downturn and expected long-term reduction in public sector funding, it will become even more important to ensure that the Managing Growth Partnership contributes to more efficient and effective delivery of services across organisational boundaries.