

‘SUSTAIN, RENEW AND PROSPER’ - HILLINGDON’S APPROACH TO REGENERATION 2011-2016

Cabinet Member	Councillor Douglas Mills
Cabinet Portfolio	Improvement, Partnerships & Community Safety
Officer Contact	Jales Tippell - Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services Kevin Byrne - Central Services
Papers with report	a) Sustain, Renew & Prosper: The Hillingdon Approach to Regeneration 2011-2016, Focussing on what works b) Hillingdon Local Economic Assessment 2011 (circulated separately due to size)

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	<p>This report outlines ‘Sustain Renew & Prosper’ Hillingdon’s pragmatic approach to regeneration activity within the borough over the next 5 years, putting residents at the heart of regeneration within Hillingdon.</p> <p>The focus is on promoting the economic viability of Hillingdon’s town centres as well as ensuring that residents across all age groups and skill levels are supported quickly and effectively into sustained employment.</p>
Contribution to our plans and strategies	Sustainable Community Strategy
Financial Cost	The recommendations in this report in themselves have no direct financial implications. However, as demonstrated in the Financial Implications section, this approach has the potential to attract significant external funding into the Borough to enhance the area.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Corporate Services & Partnerships
Ward(s) affected	All wards

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet:

- 1. Agree the objectives for sustainable economic development from ‘Sustain, Renew, and Prosper’ as the regeneration strategy for Hillingdon 2011-2016, encouraging a total approach to appropriate growth, viability and regeneration of town and neighbourhood centres;**
- 2. Note the content of Hillingdon’s Local Economic Assessment as the key evidence base for our approach to economic regeneration supporting local residents and Hillingdon businesses;**
- 3. Instruct officers to continue to press Transport for London (TfL) for:**
 - a) Improved north – south bus routes, focussing initially from the north to Uxbridge and;**
 - b) An extension of Central Underground Line to Uxbridge in the longer term.**
- 4. Welcome the improvements to Hayes and Harlington station which are being carried out through the National Station Improvement Programme and instruct officers to continue to work closely with TfL, Network Rail and Crossrail to secure further good quality improvements to Hayes Station and its public realm;**
- 5. Support the initiatives which are being undertaken to improve the canal in Hayes and West Drayton, including the proposed allocation of funding from the Chrysalis environmental improvement programme towards the improvements at Western View in Hayes town centre;**
- 6. Instruct officers to review planning policies and to report back in the autumn with regard to:**
 - a) The designated town centre boundaries and the mix of uses within them.**
 - b) Introducing a simplified planning system to support new Small and Medium sized Enterprises, with the primary aim of creating employment for local people.**
- 7. Endorse the proposals for taking forward town centre Improvements in Hayes, Northwood Hills and Ruislip Manor (as set out in paragraphs 24 – 31) including improvements to the public realm; developing a shop front investment programme initially in Hayes; providing commercial expertise to independent traders, such as on visual merchandising; and providing a retail apprenticeship scheme for traders through the Uxbridge College Retail Academy.**

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

To note the evidence base and strategic direction of economic development and regeneration in Hillingdon and specifically to set out the way forward on town centre improvements.

The report introduces Hillingdon's Local Economic Assessment and Regeneration Strategy. The documents are intended to underpin Hillingdon's approach to economic regeneration and provide baseline information on the economic position of Hillingdon and its residents.

The Local Economic Assessment confirms that town centres are a key driver for Hillingdon's Local economy. Under the strategy the Council is committed to further developing its successful town centre improvement initiatives in three centres, Hayes, Ruislip Manor and Northwood Hills, in addition to improvement work in Yiewsley and West Drayton.

Hillingdon's town centres are a vital part of the Hillingdon economy. Activity is focused on what works and where we, and our partners, can make a measurable difference to people who live and work within Hillingdon.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Not to produce a local economic assessment or regeneration strategy. This would weaken our ability to work with partners and lever in external investment to provide support for residents and businesses.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

Supporting Information

Hillingdon's approach to regeneration

1. Hillingdon's economic strategy 'Sustain, Renew and Prosper' articulates our pragmatic approach to regeneration activity within the borough over the next 5 years, putting residents at the heart of regeneration within Hillingdon. The focus is on promoting the economic viability of Hillingdon's town centres as well as ensuring that residents across all age groups and skill levels are supported quickly and effectively into sustained employment.
2. Hillingdon's strategy is shaped by feedback from key stakeholders and informed by intelligence from our economic assessment. It aims to carefully manage appropriate growth, viability and regeneration of town and neighbourhood centres, securing additional external funding wherever possible and ensuring that local centres continue to perform a role in providing essential goods and services, as well as social contact.

3. The economic strategy sets out Hillingdon's objectives within three broad themes:

Sustain: Preserving Hillingdon's green spaces, heritage & culture. We will protect the borough's heritage, built and natural environment, promoting civic pride so that people are proud to say they live in Hillingdon;

Renew: Town centre development and opportunity areas, taking forward recognised growth potential within Outer London and ensuring that our town centres continue to provide a strong focus for the communities they serve;

Prosper: Reducing inequality through increased employability, improving the skills of local residents to support them off benefits and into work. We want Hillingdon to be recognised as a business friendly borough, where enterprise is encouraged, businesses are supported and new jobs created for local people.

4. Alongside these priority areas we have identified a set of core principles, which further define Hillingdon's pragmatic approach to regeneration:

- Activity must be to the benefit of our residents. This might be in terms of creating job opportunities, making our town centres easier to access or initiating a greater range of leisure/cultural experiences. Residents are at the heart of regeneration within Hillingdon;
- Activity demonstrates value for our money. Investment and/or activity will be intelligent, supported by evidence from our local economic assessment. This means that benefits will outweigh costs; that we are not duplicating activity and that partnership options are used whenever we can;
- Activity contributes to Council and Local Strategic Partnership priorities. Activity will be focused to support priorities identified within the Sustainable Community Strategy, as these are the things that matter to our residents. We will do all we can in the current economic climate to maintain services that our residents tell us are important;
- Activity requires public sector intervention. This will only be considered where clear improvements in efficiency are achievable and where the intervention tackles the cause of the market failure rather than displacing the market.

Local economic assessment

5. The Local Economic Assessment (LEA) provides a baseline analysis of Hillingdon's economic position, building from Hillingdon's local story to prioritise services our residents value and ensuring we are not duplicating activity and that partnership options are used wherever possible.

6. The LEA includes economic data relevant to Hillingdon's residents, workforce and businesses. The data has been assembled from national statistical resources in line with guidance on producing assessments, and to align with the separate West London assessment. Discussions were held with key partners including Jobcentre Plus, Uxbridge College, Brunel University, Business Link and West London Alliance and comments and material incorporated. Hillingdon's LEA is intended to:

- Provide a foundation understanding of local economic conditions and challenges affecting Hillingdon residents and businesses
- Help prioritise economic regeneration initiatives
- Assist engagement with partners in the public and private sectors
- Link into development of West London strategies and assessments
- Support Hillingdon's position and incentivise economic growth and success in the light of any future changes to local authority funding

7. Hillingdon's unique economic strengths can be seen in:

- Being a diverse borough with established and successful suburbs clustered around a number of town centres, plentiful picturesque green belt and open spaces with access to a network of waterways and lakes as well as successful and thriving businesses;
- Having a young and growing population with an internationally renowned university - Brunel equipping its graduates to occupy the high skill career opportunities within the borough and Uxbridge College, one of London's best performing Further Education colleges within London in terms of success rates across all levels;
- Benefiting from excellent and developing transport infrastructure; including a thriving Heathrow economy (though we will continue to resist expanding airport capacity) and future investment through Crossrail;
- Strong track record of successful partnership collaboration, using resources effectively to achieve measurable outcomes for business and local people;
- Sustaining Hillingdon's competitiveness from opportunity areas such as Heathrow and the Hayes/West Drayton corridor, in addition to promoting Hillingdon's economic potential by means of strategic developments at RAF Uxbridge and Stockley Park Phase 3.

Improvements to public transport

8. Economic prosperity is very much dependent on good transport links. Given the context of a congested road network, the focus is increasingly shifting towards promoting more sustainable forms of transport to support growth and regeneration, such as public transport, walking and cycling.
9. The current public transport provision in Hillingdon has an east-west orientation whilst north - south journeys are usually slow and often indirect. Road traffic pressures across the A40 create a major barrier severing the north from the south. Better north-south links will help connect local people with jobs in the borough. There is therefore a pressing need for improved north - south bus routes with reliable and reasonably frequent services, including improved services to Uxbridge. The council will continue to address the challenge of poor north-south transport links in Hillingdon by working with Transport for London, and in particular by securing funding from TfL through Hillingdon's Local Implementation Plan.
10. Uxbridge is a Metropolitan town centre, which Hillingdon's Core Strategy identifies for further employment and retail growth, along with new housing at RAF Uxbridge, which will create significant new users of public transport in Uxbridge. However Uxbridge is deficient in good public transport links despite being the terminus of the Metropolitan and Piccadilly Underground Lines and numerous bus routes. Uxbridge does not compare favourably with

other equivalent urban centres in terms of journey time to central London by public transport. Hillingdon Council therefore has an aspiration for securing an extension of the Central Line to Uxbridge by means of a spur within the area of railway land to the west of Ruislip Gardens, with the route to West Ruislip also being retained. This aspiration will be included in the Council's Core Strategy. The extension of the Central Line to Uxbridge would support growth in the area, which is needed to maintain its Metropolitan town centre status so that it can compete with its neighbours. By supporting growth, the extension of the Line would also contribute towards the Mayor's aspirations for growth within outer London boroughs as set out in the London Plan. The Central Line service would also reduce congestion on the roads and this would enable buses to run faster.

11. The Council accepts the view of TfL that the business case for the Central Line extension to Uxbridge is weak at the moment but recognises that this would be strengthened considerably if it is programmed to coincide with the fleet replacement on the line, which it is acknowledged may not take place for another 15 years. The development at RAF Uxbridge will result in a significant increase in new residents and employees and would be taken into account, along with other major developments in any review of the business case. The Council will work with TfL to ensure that the business case is kept under review, such that the Central Line extension to Uxbridge may be secured in the longer term. The Council will also work with the Outer London Commission (OLC) to consider ways of progressing the extension of the Central Line to Uxbridge in order to support growth in the area.
12. Crossrail will provide the catalyst for the regeneration of Hayes and West Drayton and an opportunity for both improved public transport interchanges and town centre improvements. Hayes and West Drayton stations will be upgraded as part of the Crossrail works and complementary enhancements to the wider public realm are to be carried out.
13. Work has also recently commenced on improvements to Hayes and Harlington station. Work with partners secured £700,000 of National Station Improvement funding to improve passenger facilities (pre Crossrail) at the station with funding directly between the Department of Transport and the Train Operator. Equally important to the improvement to passenger services will be the impact the new station entrance will create. Using the Victorian buildings adjacent to the Ballymore development, the new station entrance will provide a significantly stronger focal point to the town centre. The generally poor appearance of the station is sometimes cited as a reason why companies are reluctant to relocate to Hayes town, despite the high quality office accommodation on offer locally.
14. Whilst the improvements to Hayes and Harlington station are welcomed, it will be important to secure enhancements to the surrounding public realm, if the station is to operate as an attractive and effective transport interchange. The triangle of land immediately to the north of the station between Station Road and Station Approach is key to securing such enhancements. Officers are working in partnership with the GLA, TfL and Crossrail to find ways of progressing this and the Outer London Commission will also be approached for support.
15. In addition to the works in the vicinity of Hayes and Harlington station, officers are in the process of engaging with the local community, in order to prepare a major bid for funding from TfL to carry out a comprehensive scheme for improvements in the town centre. The bid is likely to be submitted in the summer of 2012.
16. In December 2010, Hillingdon was awarded £1.8m over two years from Transport for London for town centre improvement work in Yiewsley and West Drayton. Proposals for

improvement projects are now being drawn up through engagement with local residents and businesses and ensuring that any proposals complement future Crossrail developments.

17. Officers are also working with partners such as TfL to encourage walking and cycling as more environmentally sound and healthier means of getting into and going around town centres, through improvements, new cycling facilities, safer roads and measures to smooth traffic flow.

Improvements to the canal

18. The Grand Union Canal is a major under utilised feature in the borough. The Council has been working in conjunction with British Waterways, TfL and local partners to improve access to and the appearance of the canal particularly in the vicinity of the town centres. A programme of works, with TfL funding of £220k, is currently underway between Hayes Town and West Drayton, which includes comprehensive towpath surface improvements, access and fencing repairs and upgrades. The next phase, subject to formal approvals, is intended to deliver similar improvements in the section from West Drayton to Oxford Road, Uxbridge, with a budget of £100k.
19. As part of the £1.8m Yiewsley and West Drayton town centre improvement project, Colham Bridge has been identified for major refurbishment and remodelling. Some initial work has already been completed and the next phase is provisionally programmed to start later this year.
20. To complement the works in the area, the Council will shortly start work on a scheme in the centre of Hayes town, which will improve Western View and the canal embankment adjacent to the Ballymore development. The scheme is to be funded by means of a combination of section 106 funds and funding from the Chrysalis environmental improvement programme. It will improve access to the canal by making Western View all one level and it will replace the existing wall with more appropriate railings. New improved lighting and street furniture, the design and landscaping the scheme will serve to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour and encourage wider community use of the area.

Reviewing planning policies

21. Hillingdon boasts a range of town and district centres each with their own character and charm. These include a Metropolitan Centre (Uxbridge) five District Centres (Ruislip, Hayes Town, Yiewsley/West Drayton, Eastcote & Northwood (Green Lane) and three other District Centres (Northwood Hills (Joel Street), Ruislip Manor and Uxbridge Road Hayes, including Lombardy Retail Park).
22. The economic downturn and the increasing use of internet facilities have affected some town centres more than others. This is borne out by looking at vacancy rates, turnover rates and the numbers of retail units lost to other uses, such as hot food takeaways. Officers are reviewing the town and district centre boundaries and retail policies in the Council's Unitary Development Framework, with a view to revising the boundaries and policies where appropriate, to encourage mixed uses of retail, office and housing where this could support the centre.
23. Officers are also looking to introduce a simplified planning system for small and medium sized businesses, which are typically the size of business which would create 10-30 jobs. This would entail the following steps to make planning process easier for business users

where they are seeking consent at appropriate locations (e.g. on brownfield sites not green belt land):

- Changes to the local list of validation requirements to support planning applications, in order to make the bureaucracy associated with applications less onerous.
- Avoiding pre-commencement planning conditions unless they are absolutely necessary (e.g. does the Council really need to see the details of air conditioning units for office developments).
- Clearer guidance on the Council's website specifically for small and medium businesses to help navigate them through the planning process. This would include guidance on building sustainability as well as simplification of the planning process.
- Using whatever planning powers the Council can legitimately use to ensure local employment creation by encouraging businesses to seek to utilise the local workforce. The target would be to achieve a minimum of 20% of new jobs from the Hillingdon workforce. Note that in practice present planning laws may restrict how this objective is met, although this does not stop such a target being sought where possible.
- Fast tracking of applications.

The 'Total Approach' to town centres

24. During the recent recession, Hillingdon's 'Beat the Crunch' initiative recognised the important role the local authority plays in supporting residents and businesses. The impact that suburban town centres can have on driving the economy's growth is widely acknowledged, for example the Mayor of London recently created a £50m fund for outer London town centres, which are not likely to see direct benefits from the 2012 Olympics or Crossrail. We are awaiting details of the eligibility criteria for this fund and have made the case that the definition of key town centres in Outer London should not exclude Hillingdon centres such as Ruislip Manor or Northwood Hills, as these will not benefit directly from Crossrail or 2012 Olympics.
25. In recognising the key role that suburban town centres can have on driving the economy's growth, the Council is considering options to upgrade up to three town centres over a three year period, with funding allocated from the Council's own capital reserves. It is anticipated that this money will form the basis of investment in these town centres, on a range of yet-to-be-approved projects and proportioned according to member-agreed priorities but that other funding will be sought – for example Section 106 and TfL funding as appropriate. Cabinet has resolved to take forward a rolling programme over a three-year period that would provide particular focus on three key town centres:
- Hayes
 - Northwood Hills
 - Ruislip Manor
26. The approach will be joined-up and 'holistic' – in other words, the issues to be tackled will be designed to benefit every stakeholder and will not be confined to, for example, only one measure such as new paving and street furniture, or new shop front grants – although these and more are intended to form an integral part of the whole programme.

27. Workshops have been held with representatives of the local Chambers of Commerce and Residents' Association representatives to begin preparing proposals for Hayes Town, Ruislip Manor and Northwood Hills, identifying key issues of interest. Further meetings will be held with key representatives to develop the proposals further.
28. Given that town centres are key to the local economy, a key priority for Hillingdon's regeneration strategy is to ensure the success and viability of Hillingdon's town centres. The council will be investing in Ruislip Manor, Hayes and Northwood Hills over the next three years by taking a 'Total Approach' to delivering schemes – i.e. maximising the value of Council and external investment to deliver improvements to our town centres. This strategy will build on our current work with partners to secure investment in town centres.
29. There are to be four key elements to the 'Total Approach' i.e.
- i) improvements to the public realm, which may include new parking measures, and/or improvements to footpaths and streets, street signage, street lighting and landscaping.
 - ii) improvements to shop fronts (by means of grant assistance to independent traders). This is to be piloted initially in Hayes town centre.
 - iii) providing commercial expertise to independent traders, such as on visual merchandising and customer service (by re-investment of the final tranche of Local Area Agreement Reward Grant) and
 - iv) providing a retail apprenticeship scheme for traders (through the Uxbridge College Retail Academy). The Uxbridge College retail apprenticeship programme will commence shortly and the College are also in the process of finalising the lease arrangements for a Recruitment and training advice centre, which will be located in the Mall shopping centre Uxbridge.
30. The 'Total Approach' is intended to support independent traders by bringing together all the elements of a successful town centre such as:
- A raised profile and an improved public image;
 - Wider use and increased spending within local centres;
 - Lower crime and anti-social behaviour;
 - A more successful mixed-use economy with a range of goods and services;
 - Easy access to parking, especially short-stay such as Stop and Shop.
31. The 'Total Approach' to town centres will also ensure a co-ordinated approach to maximising the value of Council and external investment to deliver improvements to our town centres. For example, the first phase of funding from Transport for London (TfL) on canal towpath improvement works will focus on the Hayes town stretch of the Grand Union canal. This investment will be matched by Council funds via the Chrysalis programme and section 106 funds. This initiative will deliver an improved town centre environment both in terms of appearance and also through design, it will help to address anti social behaviour, particularly street drinking.

Maximising local job opportunities

32. The Child Poverty Act 2010 places statutory duties on authorities to produce a local partnership child poverty strategy and a needs assessment. The production of our Local Economic Assessment, together with the wider Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, is
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sufficient to address the requirement for a 'child poverty needs assessment' – the government has indicated that this assessment is a matter for local areas. Our economic strategy is intended to address the requirement for a strategic partnership approach to tackling child poverty, focussing on improving access to good quality housing and jobs.

33. 'Sustain Renew and Prosper' includes priorities to reduce economic inequalities by increasing the employability of residents, raising skills levels, and supporting people in moving off benefits and into work. A key part of our strategy is to ensure that Hillingdon continues to be recognised as a business-friendly borough where new jobs are created for local people. Major reforms of the welfare system will affect housing and out of work benefits, and it will be critical to understand the impact locally and ensure that residents are able to access proper support to help them move into work and maintain adequate housing.
34. We recognise that in the past for some of our residents, the financial gains from paid work could easily be wiped out by in-work costs such as transport and childcare. The Coalition Government has identified two key problems with the current system:
- work incentives are poor, and
 - the system is too complex.
35. Reforms underway to the benefit system aim to make it fairer, more affordable and better able to tackle poverty and welfare dependency. As a Council, we are promoting policies that deliver appropriate support to those that are entering the work force and to make the most of job opportunities on the doorstep.
36. There are a number of challenges relating to skills and access to local employment opportunities within Hillingdon. Firstly, a significant proportion of workers in the borough have low-level qualifications or job skills, typically in pockets of deprivation within wards in the south of the borough. There is a need to raise the aspirations and job mobility of these residents by increasing skills so they can take up local employment opportunities.
37. Within Hillingdon we recognise that the consequences of child poverty can be wide-ranging and extend beyond children themselves into later life and society. We will continue to focus activity on what we know works, recognise the strategic role we can take, leading on collaborative working across the public and private sectors particularly in terms of making connections and facilitating local business links. This approach will help us to ensure that our residents have the skills and aspirations to compete for local jobs and increase the opportunities for local businesses to provide apprenticeships.

Economic dashboard

38. Hillingdon's 'economic dashboard' has been produced monthly since 2009. The dashboard was introduced to monitor a range of indicators of the social, employment and business impact of the economic downturn. Following discussion with the SRP LSP Theme Group, we propose to move to quarterly monitoring of a smaller number of indicators. Indicators will include claims for Jobseekers' Allowance and other benefits, empty shop premises and planning applications, apprenticeships and qualifications, housing and housing benefit. The intention is that this will provide a balanced and responsive measure of economic impact in Hillingdon. We will continue to monitor unemployment (Jobseekers' Allowance claims) on a monthly basis.
39. In addition to monitoring economic resilience, we will examine the performance metrics available to local authorities for measuring economic growth and success. This will align with

the Local Government Resource Review already underway and business rate retention options under consideration to encourage local economic growth.

Financial Implications

The partnership nature of this work, means that a number of specific sources of funding have already been identified to take forward town centre, canal and public transport improvements. Timeframe allocations for these sources of funding mean that some projects are already underway. These projects can be summarised as:

- £1.8m over two years from Transport for London for town centre improvements in Yiewsley and West Drayton. Confirmed December 2010, details to be finalised.
- £700k National Station Improvement Funding to improve passenger facilities at Hayes Station (pre Crossrail) funding directly by Department for Transport and the train operator. Work commencing early June 2011.
- £220k Transport for London funding for canal improvements between Hayes and West Drayton. Work underway, which British Waterways are delivering. Phase 2, further £100k investment for similar improvements extending from West Drayton to Uxbridge.

Following a competitive tender process, approval will be sought at July cabinet for the award of contract for a 2-year visual merchandising programme supporting independent traders within Hayes, Ruislip Manor and Northwood Hill town centres. This will be funded in full through the Local Area Agreement reward grant as agreed through the Local Strategic Partnership.

Further investment within Hayes Town Centre has been identified through section 106 agreements and the Chrysalis environmental improvement programme.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The recommendations will encourage a total approach to appropriate growth, viability and regeneration of town and neighbourhood centres. There is to be a particular focus on developing successful town centre improvement initiatives in Hayes, Ruislip Manor and Northwood Hills, in addition to improvement works in Yiewsley and West Drayton. Activity is to be focused on what works and where a measurable difference can be made to people who live and work within Hillingdon.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

The broad approach has been discussed with key partners at the Sustain Renew and Prosper Theme Group. Consultation will be required for changes to planning policies. There is continuing consultation and engagement with residents and businesses in town centres where improvement is proposed to help shape the nature of the work.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Hillingdon's external funding allocations have been included in the revenue budgets and capital programme for 2011/12 onwards.

The availability of capital funding will be confirmed by officers as part of the capital release process.

Legal

It should be noted that there are no statutory requirements for the Council to have a Regeneration Strategy in place as is proposed, however this is considered to be a matter of best practice.

The Council is empowered to introduce such strategies in reliance on Section 1 of the Local Government Act 2000, whereby the Council has a power to anything, which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social, economic and environmental well-being of its community. It includes the power to incur expenditure and to give financial assistance to any person.

Officers during their review of the Council Planning Policies must ensure that any subsequent recommendations accord with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and relevant regulations and Government guidance.

Section 21 of the Child Poverty Act provides a statutory duty for the Council to prepare, produce and publish a Local child poverty needs assessment detailing the needs of children living in poverty in its area, and in doing so, follow the regulations set down by the Secretary of State. The regulations require the council and their partners to:

- Co-operate to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty;
- Prepare a child poverty needs assessment for the area; and
- Prepare a local child poverty strategy based on the needs assessment in consultation with children, parents and relevant organisations that represent them.

The Council must ensure that in producing Local Economic Assessment, together with the wider Joint Strategic Needs Assessment discharges statutory duties outlined in the Child Poverty Act 2010.

If any of the proposals arising out of the needs assessment or review of planning policies require consultation, it is important that officers have regard to the relevant consultation requirements, outlined in regulations. The leading case on consultation is the High Court decision in *R v Brent London Borough Council ex parte Gunning* (1985) 84 LGR 188. In *Gunning*, Hodgson J drew attention to four elements that should exist in the proper performance of consultations. These elements hold true whether the need for consultation is triggered under statute or the common law. Once consultation has been embarked upon the Council must be satisfied that:

- a. consultation took place at a time when proposals were still at a formative stage;
- b. consultation must include sufficient reasons for the particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response;
- c. adequate time was allowed for consideration and response; and

- d. that responses from the public were conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.

These elements reinforce the principles that consultation, when undertaken, must be genuine and conducted in a fair manner to minimise the risk of challenge in any forward proposals the Council consider under the regeneration strategy.

If any decisions are to be taken regarding the release of monies for projects under the Sustain Renew & Prosper' strategy all capital projects are delegated to the Leader jointly with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Business Services. This is contained at Article 7.08 paragraph (e) 11 of the Cabinet Scheme of Delegations of the Council Constitution.

Under the Provisions of section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 a local authority has the power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions. The work carried out in accordance within this strategy would fall within the range of activities permitted by Section 111.

It is important to also note that any future projects whether individual or groups of projects as identified under the Sustain Renew & Prosper' strategy must comply with relevant legal rules in relation to procurement. Projects must be closely monitored by officers in terms of expenditure control and value for money, and in order to ensure legal issues are expeditiously brought to the attention of Legal Services.

Corporate Landlord

The Corporate Landlord supports the recommendations contained in the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL