

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning &amp; Transportation</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Rotherham's Local Economic Assessment</b>
4.	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

To present to the meeting the first draft of Rotherham's Local Economic Assessment (LEA), seek comments on the layout and content of the document and ask for agreement that it be circulated for consultation to the wider Council, the Local Strategic Partnership and other relevant local partners.

### **6. Recommendations**

- **To note the report.**
- **To feedback any comments on the draft LEA.**
- **To agree that the draft LEA is circulated for consultation to all relevant partners and organisations.**

## 7. Background

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill places a duty on county and unitary councils to prepare an assessment of the economic conditions of their area, one of the key recommendations of the Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration (SNR). The duty comes into force in April 2010, with authorities expected to have produced their first LEA by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

In order to deliver sustainable economic growth, a strong and well informed evidence base is needed. Local Economic Assessments will provide a mechanism for bringing existing evidence from a range of partners together within a common economic evidence base. This evidence base will then inform local, sub-regional and regional strategies, ensuring all policy making is based around a full and shared understanding of local economic challenges.

Local Authorities will take account of local business needs as well as the economic well-being of individuals and communities. They will prepare assessments working with different services, such as: economic development; education; planning; transport and culture & leisure.

### Progress to date

Staff from EDS and Chief Execs have produced a draft LEA, using the guidance produced by DCLG and the IDeA; this is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

The report has been broken down into a number of sections, mainly in line with the guidance, but with some specifically local issues such as Rotherham Town Centre. The full list of sections is:-

- Spatial context
- Demography
- Employment
- Skills
- Business and Enterprise
- Inclusion
- Land, Buildings and Infrastructure
- Environment
- Rotherham Town Centre

Each section provides the most up to date and relevant data/evidence, predominantly focusing on the current situation, but with some historical figures where appropriate and also future forecasts if they are available. The section ends with a summary setting out the key issues with regard to Rotherham's economy.

### Timescales

If endorsed today, the draft LEA will be circulated for consultation with all relevant local partners over the summer. This consultation will end in early October 2010, and the document revised in light of feedback. This "final" version should be completed by the end of October and will then go to relevant Council and LSP Boards for approval, meaning the final Assessment should be a live document before the end of the calendar year.

Assessments need to be kept up to date and fit for purpose. Annual reviews will be undertaken, with a major revision taking place in 2013 when the data from the 2011 census will be available to refresh and update the evidence base.

## **8. Finance**

To date all work on the LEA has been undertaken by RMBC meaning costs, with the exception of staff time, are negligible.

The LEA will be used to inform future strategies and policies and as such will assist in identifying future priorities for funding within the Borough.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Currently it is still to be agreed exactly how the work done at a Rotherham level will link to and complement that carried out at the wider Sub-Regional, Regional and City Region levels.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The finished LEA will inform a wide range of strategies and policies and as such will have implications for the following strategies and policies:-

- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Economic Plan
- Local Development Framework

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Colleagues in Finance and Chief Execs have been consulted on this report.

Discussions have been held with Sheffield City Council to ensure that there is complementarity between the LEAs for both areas, building on the strong linkages between the economies of the two areas.

The draft Assessment was discussed by SLT in their meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

A proposed list of Consultees on the draft LEA are attached to this report as Appendix 2

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