

Meeting:	Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Date:	25 September 2006
Subject:	Challenge Panel - Borough-Wide Economic Development – Scope
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek, Director, People Performance and Policy
Contact Officer:	Ed Hammond, Scrutiny Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Business Development
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

- 1) To note the Chairman's nomination to chair this challenge panel.
- 2) To note the plan for the challenge panel, attached, as previously approved by the Chairman.

Reason for report

- 1) Members agreed in July to undertake a challenge panel into this issue.
- 2) To fit in with the agreed consultation on the council's Economic Development Strategy, a panel needs to be held at the beginning of October.
- 3) As such, it has not been possible for members to formally approve the proposals and plan for this challenge panel. They have instead been approved by the Chairman. Members are being asked to note the plan, as attached.

Benefits

- 1) This work will assist the Council in producing a robust and effective Economic Development Strategy
- 2) Members will gain a valuable insight into policy development, and will be able to report on the potential for a more in-depth review on this subject in due course.

Cost of Proposals

Not applicable. The report is not seeking additional financial resources.

Risks

- 1) Recommendations made may not be endorsed by Cabinet.
- 2) Recommendations made may not significantly augment the quality of the Economic Development Strategy.

Implications if recommendations rejected

- 1) Members will not be able to express their opinions on this strategy, which put in place a crucial piece of high-level council policy for the next three years.
- 2) Members will not be able to make a judgment on whether in-depth work is required in this area in the coming years, in the form of more scrutiny review work.

Section 2: Report

2.1 Brief History

Members agreed in July that a challenge panel should be convened in October to examine the Economic Development Strategy, being developed by the council's Strategic Planning unit. A plan for the panel was to be provided to the sub-committee for approval at this meeting.

After the meeting, more details of the consultation process for the strategy became available, and it became clear that in order to engage with it the panel would have to be held in early to mid October. As such, approval of the plan for the panel has been sought by the Chairman in advance of the meeting.

The panel will be examining the documents produced by the Economic Development Review, which are being used as the basis for the draft Economic Development Strategy.

2.2 Plan for Challenge Panel

A more detailed plan is available at Appendix 1. The draft of the briefing for members has been distributed to members involved in the panel separately, and can be made available on request.

The panel will take place in the evening, on or around 11 October. After a wrap-up meeting later in a month, a report will be drafted summarising the panel's findings and submitted to the sub-committee at their meeting in November.

2.3 Consultation

Members have been consulted on the scope as appropriate.

2.4 Financial Implications

This report is not seeking additional financial resources. Any expenses will be met from the agreed scrutiny budget for 2006/07, which is £340,400, of which £266,050 is paid in salaries and £74,350 is available for projects and other expenditure, but no call on this budget is expected to be required for the completion of the work outlined in the scope.

2.5 Legal Implications

The challenge panel is assisting with the exercise of the Council's power to promote or improve the economic well-being of its area under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000

2.6 Equalities Impact

None specific to this report.

2.7 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

None specific to this report.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Appendix 1: Scope for Borough-Wide Economic Development Challenge Panel