

Note for Scrutiny Board

ECONOMIC SERVICES

1 Introduction

Economic Services' key objective is to attract people and investment to the City. Our work is about improving Leeds as a place, and about raising the profile of the City. Key themes for the service are:-

- Urban renaissance and regeneration
- Investment and development
- Competitiveness - of Leeds as a place, and of Leeds' businesses

Perhaps more than most services, we can only achieve results by working with others. Indeed, staff are committed to working in partnership to provide quality services that meet the needs of our customers and stakeholders.

Our services will help deliver the Vision for Leeds and the Council Plan. .

2 Description of Services

The services provided by Economic Services are delivered through 4 business units:

- Business and Enterprise - inward investment, marketing, business support and attracting funding, joint work with Leeds Chamber of Commerce.
- City Centre Management – work to ensure the city centre remains attractive to shoppers, residents, investors, workers and visitors.
- Regeneration Support - major development, including in the City Centre and Holbeck areas, physical regeneration frameworks and projects in neighbourhood renewal areas, and the Leeds Regeneration Partnership, Civic Architects Unit.
- Tourism – Gateway Yorkshire – the Tourist Information Centre, Conference Leeds – the business tourism desk, tourist development and marketing.

3 Achievements 2006/7 include:

- Successful bid for Local Enterprise Growth Initiative funding - £15m+ over 3 years to support enterprise in deprived areas.
- Completion of major city centre public realm improvements – Briggate, Park Square, Merrion Gardens and Assembly Street/Chancellor Court on time and within budget.
- Selection of Leeds as location for a 'large' casino
- Enquiries for sites of premises (inward investment and relocations) 9% higher than 2005/06. Increasing use of on-line search facilities.
- Increasing use of 'urban design' workshops to help investors and developers improve their design and improve the physical functioning (legibility) of the city
- Improvements to customer service at Gateway Yorkshire and increased retail sales
- All promotional material rebranded in the Leedsliveitloveit style and new inward investment web-site launched – locateinleeds.co.uk

4 Issues for 2007/08

a) Co-location of services with the Chamber of Commerce and other business support providers.

From mid June 2007 the Business & Enterprise and Tourism Services have been co-located with the Leeds Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Leeds Media, the West Yorkshire Employers Coalition, the China-Britain Business Council and the British American Business council in refurbished premises – White Rose House on York Place. This will enable closer working with partners and provide a single gateway for businesses. The concept has the strong support of Government Office and Yorkshire Forward. It is hoped that as other organisations see the benefits of co-location they will also want to take part.

b) Partnership Working

Partnership working has always been important in economic development and will continue to be so. Within Leeds co-location is an attempt to make more sense of the multitude of agencies and bodies. There is a real challenge to involve those bodies that have a regional or sub-regional focus and it is hoped that the new Local Area Agreement and 'duty to co-operate' will facilitate this.

c) City Centre Public Realm Improvements

In order to maintain the success of the City Centre and ensure investment continues, continued renewal of the public areas is essential. Major investment is required over the next few years and all potential sources are being explored. We must be able to respond to the challenge from other centres like Manchester and Sheffield as well as the rise of internet shopping and a new 'vision' for the City Centre will be developed to help ensure the continued success of the city centre.

d) Leeds Economy

Expectation around the continued prosperity of the Leeds economy remains high, yet in today's global economy we have to work hard to 'stand still' let alone improve. The attraction of international companies is becoming more important. The challenge is how best to resource this.