
Report To:	Regeneration Committee	Date:	1 September 2011
Report By:	Corporate Director- Regeneration and Environment	Report No:	RC/11/09/04/SJ/JH
Contact Officer:	Stuart Jamieson	Contact No:	01475 712401
Subject:	Building a Sustainable Future: Regeneration Discussion Paper		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval of Inverclyde Council's response to the Scottish Government's Regeneration discussion paper. In order to meet the deadline of 10 June 2011, the response has been submitted to Scottish Government, subject to Committee approval.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Regeneration Discussion Paper, 'Building a Sustainable Future' was published in February 2011 and is intended as a starting point for a wider debate and discussion about regeneration in the current climate.
- 2.2 Rather than a full consultation, the paper aims to focus on key challenges, opportunities and priorities for the future and sets out where the Scottish Government sees the main regeneration challenges and the types of questions raised over how to address these issues effectively.
- 2.3 Inverclyde Council's Economic Development Service has prepared a response to the Consultation and this response is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 2.4 Regeneration has a key role to play in delivering increased sustainable growth and it is important that Inverclyde Council is positively involved in the discussion.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Committee:
- Approve the response that was submitted, subject to Committee approval, to Scottish Government on 10 June 2011.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Finance:

Financial Implications – One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Personnel: N/A

Legal: N/A

Equalities: N/A

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: REGENERATION DISCUSSION PAPER

Introduction

Inverclyde Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the wider debate on regeneration. Recent years have seen significant changes to the policy and funding environment for regeneration and the economic recession has led to substantially reduced public sector funding. Undoubtedly, this will impact upon our ability to address the physical, social and economic effects which result from disadvantage and deprivation.

Chapter 1 – What have we learnt and what should our priorities be?

Summary

A co-ordinated physical, social and economic approach to regeneration is well documented however progress has been predominantly within the physical as opposed to the social aspects of regeneration. A greater understanding of wider economic and spatial factors is needed. Partnership working with strong community involvement is required. Previous development funding models are no longer viable and as budgets tighten new ways of funding regeneration should be considered. There continue to be disadvantaged areas of Scotland where deep rooted social problems remain and this needs to be tackled focusing on a range of inter-related outcomes with funds and actions directed through local services to bring improvements in employment, health, education, crime and the environment.

Response

Many disadvantaged areas have been supported by a growing public sector and by regeneration funding, such as the Town Centre Regeneration Fund and Inverclyde has benefited over many years from European Structural Funds. However, in a time of budgetary constraints, many of these areas will be hardest hit and, in our opinion, this will only result in wider spatial inequalities.

To maximise the impact on the ground, partnership working with strong community involvement (through the CPP's) will be required in order to consider new, sustainable ways of maximising resources to fund regeneration.

Working at the local level enables Inverclyde Council to strengthen our communities, to help build their social capital and their capacity to respond to local challenges. There appears to be a move by the Westminster Government by placing an emphasis on people having greater involvement in the decisions affecting their area i.e. 'Big Society'. However, there is also the need for better synergy between national policies, programmes, funding and local initiatives.

Inverclyde Council suggest the following as priorities:

- Acknowledge that regeneration is broader than just physical regeneration. Place-based approaches need to support people-based approaches therefore we would wish to see a continued approach of equal standing for people and place that will complement one another.
- Recognise the importance of sustainable regeneration over time to the social, economic and environmental foundation of local communities, thereby providing a legacy.
- To protect public sector jobs in the most deprived areas. (Inverclyde is one of the areas forecast to have the highest estimated public sector job losses by 2016 as a proportion of our overall employment base). If significant numbers of public sector jobs are lost in such areas, the local economy will undoubtedly suffer from lost income making it difficult to sustain businesses.
- To consider how best to measure and learn from success or failure.

Chapter 2 – Investing in the Economic Potential of our Communities

Summary

The challenges facing the development industry combined with limited public sector resources suggests that new approaches and models for funding physical regeneration are required.

There are difficult decisions to be faced as to where investment should be made to maximise impact and return. The importance of town centres to the economic, social and cultural fabric of communities is emphasised.

The role of the planning system is key in ensuring that decisions are made faster and new development is directed to the right locations. The importance of housing is also identified and how housing associations could assist in delivering and meeting local outcomes. Building the capacity of local businesses to help them bid for development contracts is also discussed.

Response

Whilst some would argue that regeneration includes promoting the growth of wealthy areas such as Aberdeen, Inverclyde Council are of the opinion that the focus of regeneration and associated funding must continue to be on deprived communities and reversing decline.

Regeneration funding has traditionally come from Europe. However, post-2013, fewer European funds will be available and the ability of local authorities to identify match funding will become more challenging. With fewer funds, competitive bidding will become increasingly important.

Riverside Inverclyde, the Urban Regeneration Company, has made a positive contribution to the local regeneration agenda and has received funding from Scottish Government, Inverclyde Council and Scottish Enterprise. Inverclyde Council would wish to see a continuation of regeneration funding for local areas of need in order to reduce disadvantage and inequalities.

In terms of the Planning system, a flexible approach to changing economic circumstances allows new business opportunities to be realised.

The removal of unnecessary planning barriers to business development is essential to support economic development. As referred to in Page 24 of the document, the Inverclyde Construction Forum helps members to secure new contracts. This is central to building the capacity of local businesses as well as providing workforce development opportunities thereby supporting the regeneration agenda.

It is not clear from the document the level and extent of Scottish Enterprise's involvement in regeneration therefore it would be beneficial if this could be explained in more detail.

Community Planning Partnerships have already demonstrated, particularly through European Employability initiatives, that they are a successful model for delivering local regeneration activities and this strong partnership approach will continue to be encouraged within Inverclyde.

Chapter 3 – Community-Led Regeneration

Summary

Scotland's communities are a rich source of creativity and talent. Communities coming together to work on the things that matter is a way of unlocking that resource. Many will need support to unlock that potential and the need for quality community capacity building is essential. Challenges for the future include how leadership for championing community-led solutions is embedded within the public sector, that supporting community-led solutions is a part of mainstream business rather than the occasional project. Transfer of assets to local community organisations is also examined.

Response

Inverclyde Council has formed robust partnerships with other public sector organisations and the third sector in Inverclyde resulting in a very positive employability programme.

In addition, we have supported a range of local community and voluntary groups to build their capacity so that they are in a strong position to bid for contracts and deliver projects that contribute to the regeneration agenda: Community Engagement; Health Inequalities, Raising Employability and Tackling Addictions.

Inverclyde Council recognise that many of these groups have the willingness and passion to undertake projects, nevertheless, it is likely they will continue to require support to help them to do so. As such, consideration should be given as to how the public sector is resourced to support community based organisations.

We also need to learn from other models of best practice in Scotland. What were the benefits? How cost-effective was it? Has it delivered sustainable outcomes? It is important that good practice is shared.

Chapter 4 – Tackling Area Based Deprivation – Local Neighbourhood Services

Summary

SOA's allow CPP's to achieve national priorities taking account of local circumstances and priorities. The majority of Scotland's social problems – unemployment, poor health, drugs etc are considerably more acute in a small number of areas. Allocating relatively small amounts of funding to stand alone projects will not achieve the far reaching change in life outcomes needed. There is a need to consider how mainstream Scottish Government funds can be combined with resources targeted at local areas to drive change.

Response

Regeneration is a complex process and it can be difficult to demonstrate how effective our interventions have been, particularly when the benefits of regeneration may take place over long periods of time.

Each neighbourhood faces its own unique challenges, often requiring a package of targeted interventions. Inverclyde Council supports place-based targeted interventions that are co-ordinated through the Community Planning Partnership.

As a local authority, we cannot tackle regeneration alone and we recognise that an effective, co-ordinated partnership approach is the only way to address such issues. Moreover, regeneration alone cannot address the issues of poverty and inequality.