



Ryedale District Council

REPORT TO: Policy & Resources Committee

DATE: 26 June 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Forward Planning & Economic Development Manager
Julian Rudd

SUBJECT: Malton Town Centre Strategy – Consultation Arrangements

WARDS AFFECTED: Malton & Norton

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of further consultation arrangements for the Malton Town Centre Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) To endorse the consultation arrangements detailed in this Report.
- b) That visits be organised for Members to observe and learn about two nearby Town centres that are successful and broadly comparable.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The draft Malton Town Centre Strategy has been prepared over the last year by WSP and Atisreal and is intended to identify measures (with particular reference to 10 areas of the town centre) that will turn around the decline in Malton's retail performance and also address housing, leisure and transport issues. The Strategy is also intended to identify an agreed approach to the current livestock market site. The Strategy is jointly funded by RDC and Yorkshire Forward. When the draft Strategy was presented to a Special Meeting of Policy & Resources Committee in March 2008 it was resolved:

- (a) That the Malton Town Centre Strategy be received as a basis for further consultation.
- (b) That the establishment of a Steering Group be supported and that the four Group Leaders and Malton Ward Members be authorised to determine the membership of the Steering Group.

3.2 To assist the future deliberations of Members on key issues affecting Malton, it is important to achieve a wide input to the consultation, tapping into those who choose to shop outside of Ryedale. Such views will supplement the observations of established interests that are being aired through the Steering Group that was established in response to the resolution of the Committee.

4. REPORT

4.1 The proposed approach is two-pronged. This seeks general views about shopping habits and about Malton town centre and potential improvements, together with a more specific consultation about the proposals for identified sites in the draft Malton Town Centre Strategy. The detailed elements of the proposed consultation have been set out in a Community Engagement Plan, prepared with significant input from the Council's Policy Manager, and approved by the Corporate Management Team (copies are available on request). The Plan explains:

- Context for the engagement process
- Objectives
- Timescale
- Who will be involved
- Methods
- General Strategy
- Risks
- Measures to optimise effectiveness
- Reporting and feedback methods
- Evaluation

4.2 The key elements of the consultation approach are:

- A questionnaire asking broad questions about Malton town centre and shopping habits and preferences. This has already been sent to all Parish and Town Councils and will go to all Ryedale households via the Ryedale News (June edition). This will also be on the Ryedale DC website and people will be encouraged to fill this in via a variety of publicity methods, including working with partners such as Ryedale Voluntary Action to use the questionnaire as a basis for discussion at their events. A freepost address will be used to further encourage people to complete the questionnaire.
- A two-day event in Malton town centre in August (date to be confirmed) at which people are fully informed about the issues driving the need for change and improvement in Malton, together with a detailed explanation of the specific proposals in the Strategy and the reasons for choosing these. People will then feedback at the event by indicating their preferences for each site. To assist the process of relaying important information and the driving factors behind the Strategy, a video presentation is being produced that all attendees will view before entering the main exhibition. This video would also be used on the Ryedale website (a first) to inform those who cannot attend the event and who wish to comment on-line. The video will also be reproduced on DVD to send to town and parish councils and local groups as part of a Town Centre Strategy consultation pack, in order to gain the views of the widest possible audience.

- Member visits to two thriving and broadly comparable towns within the Region are also proposed during July to observe and learn about the measures that have been taken to achieve their success.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In December 2007, this Committee endorsed the allocation of the 2007/08 Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) award to specified tasks and projects, including £65K for 'Local Development Framework (LDF) Progression & Market Town Renaissance' (to include sustainability appraisals of LDF Development Plan Documents, progression of new Planning Charge, Renaissance Market Town project progression [such as the Malton Town Centre Strategy] including master plans and site briefs, economic development activity, A64 junctions evidence and other transport studies). This supplemented the £40K of PDG allocated toward Market Town Action Plans by this Committee in August 2006, which was partly used to fund the Council's original contribution towards the Malton Town Centre Strategy, in partnership with Yorkshire Forward.
- 5.2 Given the above Committee resolutions, the Council's Corporate Management Team has recently agreed use of some of the 07/08 £65K allocation of PDG to fund the further consultation work on the Town Centre Strategy. There are likely to be further one-off costs associated with the extended consultation exercise that also do not fall into our original contract with WSP and Atisreal, such as attendance at Steering Group events and further consultation / investigations with NYCC Highways. The Corporate Management Team also agreed that such costs are funded through this element of allocated PDG expenditure.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Given the importance of the Town Centre Strategy to the future well being of Malton, the above approach is considered necessary and appropriate.

OFFICER CONTACT:

Please contact Julian Rudd, Forward Planning and Economic Development Manager, if you require any further information on the contents of this report on: Ext 327 or via julian.rudd@ryedale.gov.uk