

Area West Committee – 16th March 2011

7. Chard Regeneration Scheme - Delivery Management Structure

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Purpose of the Report

To advise members of Area West Committee of the revised Delivery Management Structure for the Chard Regeneration Scheme (CRS).

Public Interest

This report provides information on the Delivery Management Structure for the Chard Regeneration Scheme (CRS).

Recommendation

That members note the amendments made to the CRS governance and management arrangements and governance model designed to bring the required skill sets and corporate resources to the delivery phase of the project.

Background

The Chard Regeneration Framework (CRF) is a set of documents (Vision, Regeneration & Implementation Plan) that consider how the long-term growth and regeneration of the town should be directed. It takes into account a range of factors that will need to be addressed in order to achieve social, economic and environmental objectives and to ensure that development is deliverable, viable and sustainable.

Arrangements for the public exhibition of the work were agreed and these documents were successfully exhibited in September 2010, prior to the Chard Core Strategy Consultation on the 15th November 2010.

The delivery, final review and successful public exhibition of these documents marked the final stages in the Chard Regeneration Framework developed by LDA Design, SSSC and partners to establish a long term vision, strategy and delivery plan for the future development of Chard¹. This completed document set (final drafts available at www.southsomerset.gov.uk/chardregen) describes the proposals for the evolution of Chard over the next 20 years and has recently received a commendation in the Royal Town Planning Institute's (RTPI) 2010 Planning Awards.

This report advises members that the CRS is now progressing from its planning and development phase to its delivery phase.

¹ See Background Paper "Chard Regeneration Scheme Briefing: Joint Area Committee West" (18th March 2009) for the strategic context & management structure of this work to date.

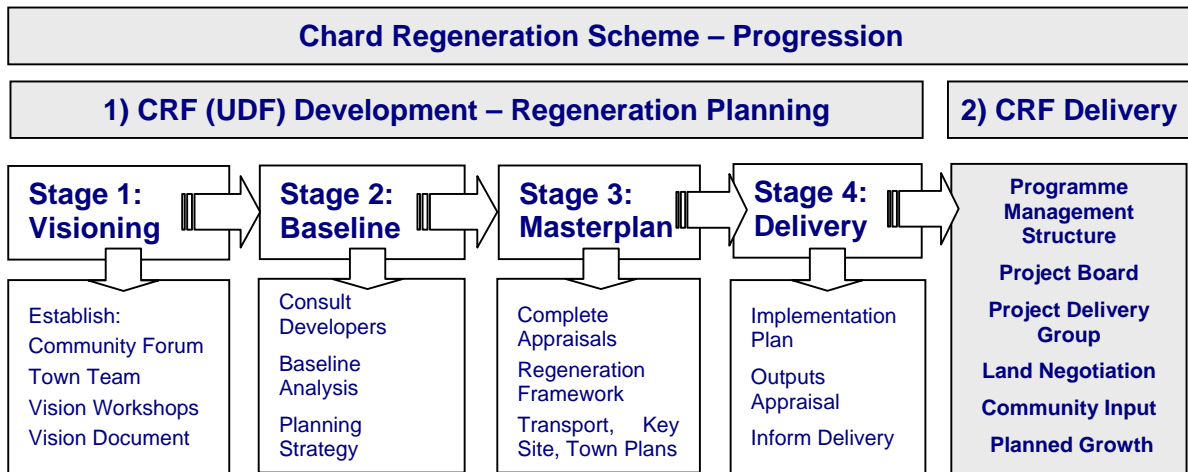


Fig. 1. Chard Regeneration Scheme – Key Deliverables by Stage (Planning & Delivery)

Figure 1 illustrates the successful completion of the 4-stage Chard Regeneration Framework by LDA Design, SSDC & partners which established the long-term vision, strategy & delivery plan for the future development of Chard and the progression of the scheme to delivery stage.

The CRS is a bold plan that has comprehensively addressed the issues that have been holding the development of Chard back for some time. To bring forward development is going to be challenging, especially at this time of recession and public sector spending reductions. The Council now needs to be proactive in bringing forward the growth and regeneration described in the Vision for Chard.

Amendments are designed to bring the appropriate corporate and external skill sets needed to deliver the project objectives. The Economic Development Manager is now responsible for reporting progress to the board. He will manage the project and be supported by a project delivery group, specialist officer input and external valuation expertise.

Crucially, Area Engagement will continue to be supported and led by the Area Development Manager West and his regeneration team.

The ED Manager will be able to use the resources of his own section as well as Development Management and Spatial Planning. Links have been made with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA). Increasingly the opportunities available for infrastructure are going to be limited to key funds such as the Regional Growth Fund, which itself is dependent on the positioning of Chard in the current and future versions of the Somerset Local Investment Plan. Chard is the top market town priority for investment in South Somerset and will continue to be promoted as such.

Project Update

Local Development Framework

CRF Delivery is a critical component of both the Local Development Framework (LDF) project plan and the Core Strategy. The growth envisaged for Chard will necessitate close co-operation between the project board, SSDC officers and developers to present a timely, viable development plan for Chard’s proposed allocation of dwellings. The need for a phased development scheme to ensure immediate development contributes to subsequent phases is one of the most challenging aspects of the CRS.

The plan now requires agreement across landowners and developers to create infrastructure that can help allow growth and relieve the town centre. The HCA have signed up to this and offered assistance, but further support is required. They have thus been invited to join the Project Board and officer groups to support the Board.

Chard Town Centre

The purchase of the former ACI site and the creation of development opportunity with SSDC land is a bold step that can help invigorate the Town Centre, save a historic building and create new public areas.

The CRS Project Board is keen to move forwards and have instructed officers to bring the site to market as soon as possible. There has been developer interest in the site, but the procurement process requires that the site be opened up to other potential developers. Officers are now in a position to invite expressions of interest in this site, based upon an agreed development brief. This is in accordance with the report that was approved by District Executive. This brief will be sent out in March.

Community Leadership & Participation

At this stage of the project, both the Town Team and the Community Forum will be required to provide input to the Project Board to maintain progress towards shared local objectives. Their representation on the Project Board will be via the Area Development Manager (West). The local community engagement responsibility rests with the Area Development Manager (West) as is the norm in all other areas (North, South & East ADM’s oversee local engagement). The programme for this will need to be aligned with the overall timescale of the project and agreed/discussed at the CRS Project Board. This will be a standard item on each CRS Project Board agenda.

Governance and Reporting Lines

The strategic governance and reporting lines for this delivery stage of the CRS and the composition of the project partnership (SCC, SSDC & CTC representation) is illustrated in figure 2 below.

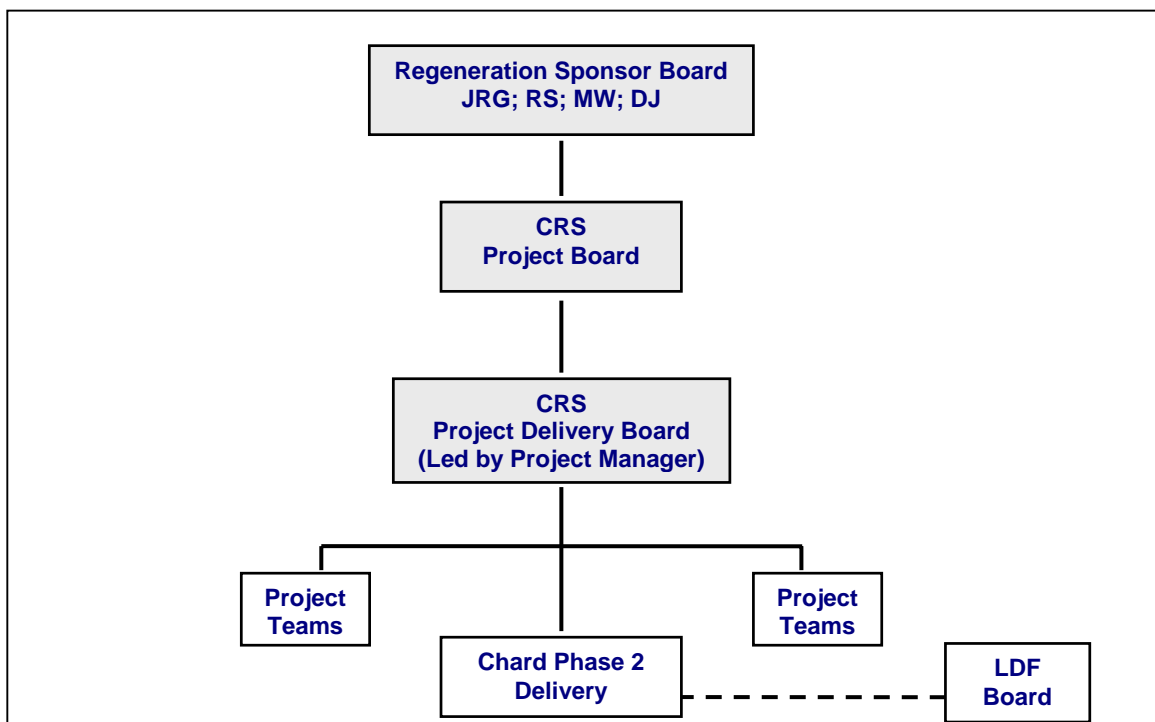


Fig. 2. CRF Stage 2 Delivery Management Structure (March 2011)

Regeneration Sponsor Board

The purpose of this Board is for the SSDC Portfolio Holder – Economic Development & Regeneration to meet directly with SSDC Strategic Director (Place & Performance); Asst. Director (Economy) & Economic Development Manager to maintain an overarching view and a strategic focus on aspects of CRS delivery where necessary.

The Project Board

As we move to the Delivery Stage, the Project Board remains the main body for steering project, delivery. It will maintain decision-based control and ensure that the projects are resourced.

In summary, the responsibilities of the Project Board will be to:

- Maintain crucial 3 authority representation & partnership.
- Retain decision-making power & steer project delivery. Authorise & monitor projects to ensure the maintenance of standards throughout.
- Unlock barriers to project delivery, feeding back to respective LA's.
- Maintain project management through the Economic Development Manager (CRS Project Manager).
- Ensure robust engagement and liaison with the local community thus maintaining the link between community & strategic decision making.

Project Board Composition

The Board will comprise:

User Representation:

- (Area West Chair – South Somerset District Council)
- (SSDC Portfolio Holder – Economic Development and Regeneration)
- (Chard Town Council)
- (Somerset County Council)
- (Area West Development Manager)

External Partner Representation:

- SWRDA Representative
- HCA Representative (as required)

SSDC Officer Representation:

- David Julian (Project Manager)
- Rob Murray (Project Officer)
- Catherine Hood (Management Accountant)
- Administrative Officer (Minutes, Agendas and Actions)

The Project Delivery Group (Implementation)

The main function of the Project Delivery group will be to provide the necessary skills base and capacity to drive projects forward.

In summary, the responsibilities of the Project Delivery Group will be to:

- Move focus from master planning to delivery of the phased development described in the Chard Implementation Plan (LDA Design 2010) and to progress delivery through specific projects.
- To progress the requirements of the LDF and Core Strategy and to produce viable housing and employment plans.
- Include Highways & relevant SSDC & SCC officers to action all delivery requirements.
- Utilise the external support where a skills gap is identified and resources are secured (Any such support will be answerable to Asst. Director Economy on behalf of the Project Management Board).
- To convene project groups as appropriate.

Project Delivery Group Composition

SSDC & SCC Officers (including potential external support):

- Economic Development Manager (Chair & Project Manager)
- Asst. Dir. Econ. (Project Co-ordinator)
- Area Development Manager West (Local Com. Engagement & Liaison)
- ED Officer (Project Support)
- The group will be assigned specialist support as necessary, for example:
 - Conservation Manager
 - Spatial Policy Manager
 - Development Control Manager
 - Major Applications Co-ordinator
 - SCC Principal Highways Liaison Officer
 - External Expertise

Key Milestones

CRS Delivery Milestone:	Timetable (2010 - 2011)
Draft Development Brief for Chard Town Centre Key site (RM)	17th Dec
Procurement, Legal & Officer input to Brief (GR, RS, MW, DB)	17th Dec – 3rd Mar
Development of site Technical Brief to support Dev. Brief ²	23rd Feb – 18th Mar
Draft Brief Circulated for Internal Review (Officers & Members)	9th Mar
Deadline for Internal Comments on the Development Brief	14th Mar
Final Draft to Project Board & Portfolio Holder for Approval	16th Mar
Development Brief Amendments Complete	17th Mar
Market: Dissemination of Final Development Brief inviting EOI	18th Mar – 31st Mar
Deadline for developer EOI in Chard Town Centre site	3rd May
Timetable for wider CRS delivery aligned with LDF project plan	3rd May onwards

Table 1: CRS Delivery Milestones (Town Centre Site Marketing & Disposal, 2010-2011)

² The Technical Brief is currently in development and will be circulated as appropriate after the May 3rd 2011 deadline for initial expressions of interest (EOI) in developing the Chard Town Centre site.

Chard Regeneration Scheme - Further Reports

This is a large and ambitious scheme and it is expected that further detailed progress reports will be made to Area West Committee on a twice-yearly basis.

Financial Implications

No new financial implications will result from adopting the recommendations made in this report.

Corporate Priority Implications

South Somerset District Council aims to increase economic vitality and prosperity in the area, ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities and promote a balanced natural and built environment.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Background Papers:

Chard Regeneration Framework – Vision, Regeneration Plan & Implementation Plan (available online at www.southsomerset.gov.uk/chardregen)
Chard Regeneration Scheme Workshop – Report to Area West Committee – 18th August 2010.
Chard Regeneration Scheme – Regeneration Plan (Executive Decision) – a report to Joint Area Committee – West - 18th November 2009
Chard Regeneration Scheme: Project Initiation Document - 24th June 2009
Chard Regeneration Plan – Final Draft submitted for internal review, October 2009
“Chard Regeneration Scheme – Briefing” to Joint Area Committee – West – 18th March 2009
Chard Regeneration Scheme – Appointment of Members to the Town Team: Area West Committee – 21st January 2009
Chard Regeneration – SWRDA Funding – Confidential Item: Report to District Executive – 2nd October 2008
Chard Town Centre – Purchase of Property – Closed Session: Report to District Executive – 6th March 2008
“Chard Regeneration Framework - a brief for consultants” October 2008”
Developing the Chard Vision - a report to SSDC District Executive January 2007