

**Trowbridge Area Board – Thursday 26 January 2012**

## **Chairman's Announcements**

### **Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Consultation**

Transforming Trowbridge, the public/private regeneration partnership for Trowbridge has the following observations to make with regard to the LSTF and improvements to Trowbridge railway station.

Trowbridge is designated as one of the three Wiltshire towns to accommodate major strategic growth. Effectively this means for Trowbridge that over the next 20 years it will be one of the most significant housing and employment growth hubs in the sub-region and we can practically expect a growth in population of up to 18,000 people in and around the town over this period. As a response to this anticipated growth and as a consequence of the town's existing needs, Transforming Trowbridge has been established as a public/private Special Purpose Delivery Vehicle to coordinate and deliver the regeneration of the town centre.

Through its facilitation role, Transforming Trowbridge has been instrumental in promoting investment opportunities in the town and bringing together developers with the Council's planners, etc, at an early stage, in order to achieve a positive process. To date this approach has generated over £60 million of development through The Gateway retail scheme and the Sainsbury's superstore at the former Brewery site. In addition we have a lead role in planning for the regeneration of the wider town centre and we are working with the owners of St Stephen's Place, the former Bowyers site and Peter Black to ensure comprehensive and linked development. Moreover we have commissioned a Masterplan for the town to ensure that we have a strategic framework for the regeneration of Trowbridge and that the town ultimately fulfils its status as the County Town of Wiltshire.

In order to serve the planned major growth in Trowbridge and its hinterland and ensure its sustainability, it is essential that public transport provision significantly develops beyond its current state. The stakeholder consultation we have undertaken as part of the emerging Masterplan for Trowbridge has identified the criticality of the railway station in supporting economic vitality and viability in the town (a function that is bound to increase in importance as the growth of Trowbridge continues).

Stakeholders have also identified the importance of the station as a "gateway" to the town and that in this capacity it has significant potential to enhance public perceptions of the town and to better link with existing town centre and planned developments. Unfortunately, the level of passenger facilities and the general environment in and around the station singularly fail to fulfil this potential and in fact contribute to the current poor perception of Trowbridge as well as doing little to encourage the economic vitality of the town.

The Masterplan (the Scoping and Vision Study, August 2010) provides further illustrative detail of our aspirations with regard to movement in general and the railway station in particular. I would add that we entirely support using LSTF as a vehicle to deliver appropriate improvements to Trowbridge station and its linkages to the adjacent development site and the wider town centre.