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# Report

**Subject** : Economic Development Performance Indicators  
**To** : Planning & Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel  
**Date** : 22 October 2007  
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## 1.0 Purpose of Report

At their meeting on 18 June 2007 the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel requested the presence of performance indicators relating to economic development on their quarterly performance management reports. This report details the issues and difficulties surrounding the provision of these indicators.

Members are asked to note the issues raised within the report and to agree to receive Economic Indicator reports on a quarterly basis.

## 2.0 Economic Development Performance Indicators – Key Issues

2.1 It is necessary to clarify with members what is being referred to when discussing Economic Development performance indicators as there are a) indicators that relate to the health and vitality of the local economy, and b) indicators that measure the performance of Economic Development officers.

2.2 A key function of the council's Economic Development service is to report on and monitor indicators which reflect the health and vitality of the local economy, for example; employment and labour market statistics, population and business numbers to ensure that relevant bodies can respond to issues raised within strategic planning and work programmes. This monitoring is currently carried out through the production of:

### 1. An annual '**South Wiltshire Economic Assessment**'

(<http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/economic-assessment-2006-8.pdf>)

This report gives comprehensive coverage of all relevant economic data (and analysis where possible) with sections on:

- South Wiltshire Economic Performance
- Business and Enterprise
- Labour market
- Property
- Tourism
- Salisbury City Centre
- Tourism
- Crime, Health and Deprivation

This would be used to inform Salisbury District Council's Economic Development Strategy, by providing a general overview of the south Wiltshire economy and, where possible, an

insight into possible trends and patterns for the area's economic future. It benchmarks south Wiltshire (where possible/appropriate) against other local comparative areas. As this has been produced this year for the first time by the Economic Intelligence team at Wiltshire County Council it now benefits from a 'strategic guidance' section which draws together the headline issues contained in the report and provides recommendations for action where appropriate.

2. A quarterly '**Economic Indicators Report**'

(<http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/economic-indicators-june-2007.pdf>)

This is produced on behalf of the South Wiltshire Economic Partnership (SWEP) and provides a quarterly summary of key economic statistics. These indicators were selected at a South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance conference in 2006 and agreed by SWEP.

- 2.3 It was recommended in the recent policy review of Sub-national economic development and regeneration (lead by the Treasury, DCLG, and the department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform) that a new statutory duty be imposed on local authorities to analyse the economic circumstances and challenges of their local economy. This is something many authorities including Salisbury District Council have done for many years but would make Economic Development for the first time a statutory role within authorities. The review suggests this is implemented in 2009.
- 2.4 It is not appropriate to use these indicators as a measure of the performance of the Economic Development service as they are not directly attributable. These areas of the economy are influenced by any number of external factors, and are not things that Economic Development can directly impact on or control. There are also constraints in the reporting of these statistics as officers are dependent on certain organisations for data release which is carried out in different time frames, for example this could be yearly, half-yearly or quarterly.
- 2.5 It is difficult to create indicators measuring the performance/output or value of the Economic Development role due to the very strategic nature of the work. There are no functions within the service that are process driven. The service aims to create and maintain a strong and sustainable economy in the district working to ensure that the right conditions prevail in the district for businesses to thrive. Economic Development has been developing and maturing in this role over the last few years. Officer's expertise is now utilised to deliver research which supports the strategic work of the council, for example, producing the Employment Land Review which is a statutory requirement of the new Local Development Framework: <http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/employment-land-review.pdf>. This is the evidence base which will be used to support future employment land policies. This shift in the nature of the work has enabled the service to make budget savings over the last few years as it has not been necessary to spend on consultancy work and as it is not delivering business 'support services' which are provided through other local business support organisations.
- 2.6 A cost of service delivery indicator has been considered but it is inappropriate to use spend per head of population on Economic Development and to benchmark against other authorities as the nature of delivering the service varies so much, reflecting the different needs of different areas and the different approach of authorities.
- 2.7 Measures looking at the effectiveness of SWEP have also been considered but this would be inappropriate also as SWEP do not have specific budgetary responsibilities. Economic Development provides the administrative function for the partnership and allocates a small portion of the budget which is generally spent on events, marketing/newsletters and other operational support. Furthermore, the partnership was reorganised in 2005/06 and with its new Chairman has again become much more strategic and decidedly more focused on influencing projects that will affect the long term economic prosperity of the district.
- 2.8 Progress has been monitored on major Economic Development projects on the corporate performance management system (PACE) however most of these are now complete and due to the unitary decision these will not be replaced – officers were about to begin work on a new Economic Development Strategy for the district which would have resulted in more project work which in turn would have been supported by progress monitoring. This will not be progressed however work has begun on an Economic Strategy for Wiltshire, Salisbury District Council are represented on this project group.

### 3.0 Business e-newsletters

3.1 Economic Development officers have been developing two new e-newsletters to communicate with businesses across the district. These are:

1. Salisbury District Council business e-newsletter:

This will contain information on council services that may affect the day to day running of business in the district, for example, commercial waste collections, changes in legislation and planning issues.

2. SWEP e-newsletter:

This will contain information on major projects, developments and strategic issues, for example, the development of Porton Bioscience and Technology Centre, Salisbury Vision and the Local Development Framework.

3.2 A marketing campaign is being carried out to encourage businesses to sign up to receive these newsletters and a performance indicator has been created for the number of businesses signed up. This will be used to monitor how successful the service is at engaging with the business community. The first editions of these will be distributed in November/December. Officers recognise that at the moment they do not engage effectively with many of the larger businesses in the city, therefore a separate indicator has been set up to look at engagement with private sector organisations with 100+ employees.

### 4.0 Tourism

Tourism also comes under the Planning & Economic Development scrutiny remit. Presently three tourism indicators are monitored and reported on via the performance management system (Salisbury and Stonehenge Tourism Partnership membership and satisfaction as well as the number of visits to the tourism website <http://www.visitsalisbury.com>). As these indicators have been running for a number of years Bryn Jones, Tourism Manager is working on a new set of indicators that better reflects officer's activity. It is likely these will concern the number of visitors, Tourist Information Centre footfall and bookings. Data is currently being collected and Salisbury District Council are participating in benchmarking with Tourism South East. It is anticipated that the new performance indicators where relevant will be incorporated into corporate performance management arrangements in time for the next quarter's reporting round. A Tourism Strategy was adopted last year, which contains specific outcomes and targets though the deadlines are mostly long term (2010 and beyond).

### 5.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that:

Members note and discuss the issues as presented on Economic Performance Indicators and request the Economic Development Manager provides the panel with Quarterly Economic updates and the annual Economic Assessment.

#### Implications:

- **Core Values:** scrutiny of performance forms an integral part of the Council's corporate planning process and supports all of the core values.
- **Financial:** None.
- **Legal:** None.
- **Human Rights:** Have been assessed and no human rights are affected by the content of this report.
- **Personnel:** The impact of scrutiny work is accommodated within existing resources.
- **Community Safety:** None
- **Environmental:** None
- **Wards Affected:** All