

## **THAMES GATEWAY – SOUTH EAST**

### **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report seeks to brief Group Leaders on progress to date and to consider the way forward.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The Government is now progressing with the extension of the Thames Gateway into South East Essex. At Government level, mechanisms are being put in place to ensure effective operation from Spring 2001 (see Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Under the Gateway initiative, a programme of proposals for South Essex will be developed and implemented over a 10 year timeframe. Funding of this programme will be routed through the Regional Development Agency.

### **3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The delivery of the Government's proposals for the Thames Gateway has already led to the establishment of partnerships between the relevant authorities and organisations in North Kent and also in London.
- 3.2 Councillor Fox, as Council Spokesperson, has met with the Leaders/Spokespersons of other Authorities within the Thames Gateway – South Essex designation – Thurrock, Basildon, Castle Point, Southend – at an introductory meeting to discuss how the affected Local Councils can best work together in partnership to move the initiative forward in South Essex. A further meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2000.
- 3.3 At that meeting on Wednesday the key items on the agenda will include (i) the development of a partnership forum for the affected Councils to develop a South Essex agenda, together with suggested terms of reference (see Appendix 2) and (ii) resource implications/contributions that are likely to be required from each Authority. It is clear that some support will be required, if only in Member and officer commitment, although it may be that contributions will be required in terms of funding or in kind. The Chief Executive will advise further on this at the meeting.

- 3.4 Clearly the Council will need to determine the nature of its involvement and level of commitment that it wishes to give to the initiative. Whilst only a small part of the District actually lies within the Gateway, the investment potential that such designation brings to the South Essex corridor will clearly have implications for the District, in terms of employment opportunities and infrastructure improvements in particular. It is therefore felt that there is merit in playing as full a role as possible in any partnership, to ensure that the Rochford viewpoint is heard. At the same time it is recognised that the resources and budget available to the Council will place its own limitations on the level of support that can be given.

#### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

That the Sub Committee consider its views on the partnership arrangements and the level of support and commitment that should be given.

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Chief Executive

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