

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY SCRUTINY INQUIRY
DATE OF DECISION:	14 MARCH 2011
REPORT OF:	CHAIR OF SCRUTINY PANEL C
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
N/A	

BRIEF SUMMARY

From July 2010 to January 2011 Scrutiny Panel C undertook an Inquiry into the Knowledge Economy. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) considered the final draft of the Inquiry report on 17th February 2011 and approved it for submission to the Executive. The Scrutiny Inquiry report contains 6 recommendations which have been highlighted in Appendix 1. The Cabinet needs to formally respond to these recommendations within two months to meet the requirements in the Council's constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To receive the attached Inquiry report on the Knowledge Economy;
- (ii) To develop a formal response to the recommendations contained within it, including an action plan detailing how the Executive proposes to take forward any of the recommendations contained in the report.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The overview and scrutiny procedure rules in part 4 of the Council's Constitution requires the Executive to consider all inquiry reports that have been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and to submit a formal response to the recommendations contained within them within two months of their receipt.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. None.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. The Panel undertook the Inquiry over 4 meetings between July and October 2010 and agreed, at a meeting on 27th January 2011, the 6 recommendations contained within the Inquiry report attached at Appendix 2.
4. Scrutiny Panel C received evidence from a variety of organisations, individuals and officers from Southampton City Council. A list of witnesses who provided evidence to the Inquiry is shown within Appendix 2.
5. Evidence gathered throughout the Inquiry led the Scrutiny Panel to conclude that many of the key elements required for a thriving knowledge economy are in place but need joining up, and that a number of projects which would improve the City's offer are already in development. These include:-
 - Delivery of schemes such as the Cultural Quarter, West Quay 3 and the Royal Pier Waterfront; all 3 of which would enhance the perception of the City;

- The Local Development Framework (including Core Strategy, City Centre Action Plan).
6. The evidence presented to the Scrutiny Panel identified a number of areas where improvements are required to support the development of the knowledge economy. The areas identified by the Scrutiny Panel matched closely with the key priorities for the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) that emerged at the end of the Scrutiny Inquiry.
 7. The 6 recommendations agreed by Scrutiny Panel C reflect the key strategic role the Solent LEP will have in driving economic development in Southampton and the need to avoid duplication. If implemented the Scrutiny Panel believe that the recommendations will boost the development of Southampton's knowledge economy thereby strengthening and diversifying the economy of the City.
 8. The Executive needs to consider the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations and to formally respond within two months of the date of receiving this report in order to meet the requirements set out in the Council's constitution.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

9. The Scrutiny Panel are of the belief that the recommendations contained within the appended report could be progressed by re-focussing council officer and partner's time and existing work programmes.

Property/Other

10. None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

11. The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Other Legal Implications:

12. None.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

13. The proposals contained within the appended report are in accordance with the Council's Policy Framework.

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KEY DECISION? Yes/No No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	N/A
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1.	Knowledge Economy Inquiry - Summary of Recommendations
2.	Knowledge Economy Inquiry - Final report of Scrutiny Panel C

Documents In Members' Rooms

	None
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

	None	
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