

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER DISTRICT TEN-YEAR GREEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

21 SEPTEMBER 2021

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr. Martin Tod, Cabinet Member of Economic Recovery

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This paper summarises the work that has been undertaken in developing the next ten year Winchester District Green Economic Development Strategy.

The strategy, see Appendix 3, sets out a framework and overall direction to influence the development of the district's economy over the next ten years, including its role in enabling the commitment to being carbon neutral by 2030. It supports a green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and will present a compelling proposition of Winchester district as carbon neutral, sustainable place in which to live, work, study and visit.

The strategy is underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base and extensive programme of stakeholder engagement. It builds on our existing sector and business and skills strengths, using them to springboard to a greener, more technologically driven, creative economy. It recognises that growth must be shared by all, reducing inequalities with high quality job opportunities for all demographics across the district.

This Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS) provides a framework of scenarios, themes and outcomes forming the foundation from which the city council and stakeholders can work collectively to co-create a shared plan of short, medium and long term actions, supported by a robust and measurable programme of implementation. The strategy proposes a range of indicative and longer term actions that will be considered, refined, adapted or changed as the next stage of action and resources planning is undertaken.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Policy Committee are asked to:

1. Review and comment on the draft strategy. The committee are requested to respond in particular to:
 - a) The scenarios, policy themes and associated outcomes outlined in 3.5 and sections six and seven of the Strategy
 - b) The next steps associated with delivering an action plan outlined in 3.8 and sections eight and nine of the Strategy
 - c) The role of the city council outlined in 3.9
2. Note the process following policy committee in order for the strategy to be adopted as outlined in 4.

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 The resources required to complete the development of the strategy have been secured as outlined in CAB3265/21 October 2020. A £45,000 allocation was agreed to be made from the Climate Emergency Programme budget along with approval to appoint a specialist consultant. Urban Foresight were selected following a procurement process to produce a strategy capable of driving and delivering a green sustainable economy. The consultant offers expertise in delivering innovative approaches to developing visions and strategies, with particular expertise and knowledge in green strategic development.
- 1.2 The creation of the action plan with priorities following approval of the Strategy will include resource planning to ensure these are aligned with its implementation.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

- 2.1 Work commenced on developing the strategy in April 2021. There are two key stages of work, as outlined below. Stage 1 is completed and Stage 2 is nearing completion. The Policy Committee have had opportunity to comment on Stage 1 along with the Vision and emerging themes at previous meetings.

Stage 1 – Scoping and Engagement
Research and analysis of economic data and trends, especially in emerging and developing issues, and the response to the economic impact of COVID-19 on different business sectors.
Innovative engagement approaches to reach a wider audience base, beyond the expected stakeholders and partners. Use of reference groups and strategic conversations.
Stage 2 – Strategy production
Creation of a long-term future economic vision , built on censuses with buy-in from the resident and businesses populations and that encompasses a short term COVID-19 recovery and adaptation plan.
Development of economic priorities based on evidence and the specific challenges and opportunities facing Winchester district.
Recommendation of the actions, interventions and investments from both public and private sector needed to achieve the long-term future economic vision.
Creation of a persuasive proposition to promote Winchester district as a location for sustainable investment in new and emerging sectors.

- 2.2 The consultancy contract is being managed in accordance with the council’s contract management framework against five workstreams (WS) with specific performance outcomes for each as set out below. The areas shaded in grey indicate the work completed to date:

WS1 Evidence Base Research	WS 3&4 Vision & Strategy Development
Baseline	Vision development
Mapping Influencers & Drivers	Action plan development
Competitor Analysis & Benchmarking	WS5 – Reporting & Collateral
Economic & Infrastructure GAP Analysis	Strategy Report
Evidence Base Report	GIS Base Map
WS2 Engagement & Consensus	Presentation Deck
Reference Group consultation	Investment Proposition
Focus Groups	
Interviews	

3. Overview of the strategy

3.1 Winchester district faces similar global and national challenges to many other non-metropolitan districts – climate crisis and decarbonisation, post-COVID recovery planning, digitalisation, and countering growing inequalities in a rapidly aging society, among others. This Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS) outlines how these can be addressed and make the most of the opportunities for sustainable development and economic growth in a way that is distinctive to Winchester district.

3.2 It does this by presenting the GEDS as a ‘next generation’ approach to planning and managing change. It looks beyond the traditional economic indicators and recommends a wider range of economic development activity and new ways of working. The strategy offers a way of thinking about change through the lenses of strategy and contingency planning frameworks which are flexible, adaptive and inclusive and recognise the district’s diverse geographies and communities.

3.3 The strategy has been built on an extensive and robust evidence base presenting a baseline and trends across all the major dimensions of district’s economic, social, and environmental wellbeing. This is supported by a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement delivered through round table discussions and interviews including a combination of local and regional public sector organisations, large and small businesses from across the district, academic institutions, community groups and charities. An overview of stakeholders’ feedback is illustrated in a SWOT analysis and has informed the eight outcomes as illustrated below.

3.4 The strategy illustrates a headline vision which underpins the overall strategy. It demonstrates a collective green growth ambition opposed to one or the other and outlines how the district and the strategy will interpret what is meant by a green economy. The vision also tackles the degree of shared ambition and how that sits within a wider strategic context.

3.5 The strategy is structured in three distinctive parts which overlap and should not be viewed in isolation. They are four scenarios; six policy themes and eight outcomes.

- Four Scenarios

The four scenarios are neither singular choices nor mutually exclusive. They are suggested as lenses through which the council and its partners can plan, manage, and refresh pre-pandemic legacy programmes and projects, and prepare future funding bids and recovery plans as new national and regional opportunities evolve. They can stimulate initiatives and assist in considering impact mitigation of future shocks. They provide the backbone of an agile strategy where the priority actions can be dialled up or down in response to changing political, economic, social, technological or environmental trends.

- **Levelled Up**
Ensures economic growth and development across the district. Addresses inequalities and promotes inclusion and participation in the future
 - **20 minute communities**
Addresses live/work offers for residents in the city, towns and villages which will inform new investments and services
 - **Resilient**
How the district responds to climate crisis, pandemic and future shocks through green infrastructure, an emphasis on local supply chains, flood protection, energy, and biodiversity improvements
 - **A vibrant place for business**
Maps how to exploit the district's business dynamism and our creative and design capabilities to ensure a competitive, technologically advanced route to future economic success
- Six Policy themes (outlined in more detail in the attached strategy)
 - Innovative business and economy
 - Skills and competitiveness
 - Culture, creative and visitor economy
 - Connected, public and electric transport
 - Affordable low carbon housing
 - Green infrastructure, biodiversity and renewable energy
 - Eight Outcomes
 - Increased business density and diversity
 - Higher skills and productivity
 - Reduced socio-economic and spatial inequality
 - More affordable, sustainable, and flexible housing stock
 - Net CO₂ emissions reduced to zero
 - Greener transport and less congestion
 - More local renewable energy
 - Increased biodiversity and green infrastructure

3.6 The strategy recognises that the initiatives outlined will not be the only ones to emerge in the coming years and indeed not all those illustrated may be realised. It therefore adopts a methodology of a “graphic equaliser” to enable agility within the strategy as activity undertaken within the policy themes turn evidence into intelligence, allowing flexibility and opportunistic actions, where appropriate, to plan and manage change strategically, in a way that builds on the district's distinctive assets, capabilities and potential.

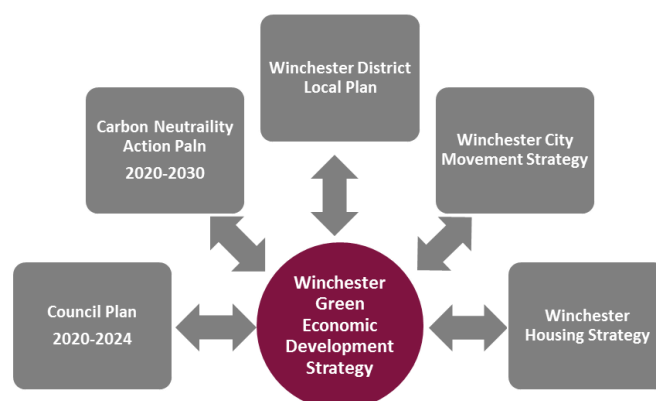
3.7 The four over-arching scenarios, the six policy themes and eight associated outcomes are aligned to key council plans and policies including the Local Plan, Winchester Movement Strategy, Winchester District Carbon Neutrality Action Plan and housing plans and to Local Enterprise Partnership economic and industrial strategies. They position the district in terms of Hampshire 2050 regionally and set a framework and way of working that can support the businesses, organisations and communities across all locations within the diverse district of Winchester.

3.8 Section seven of the Strategy – policy themes and illustrative actions – identifies a number of potential actions that fall into four categories as outlined below:-

- Enabling Policy - the council creating leverage to enable businesses and communities to act
- Investment/Delivery work programmes that the council will lead
- Partnership working – the council will be an equal stakeholder operating collaboratively to facilitate and coordinate action by all
- Research/Feasibility - shared work programmes building evidence bases for and appraising future interventions

The illustrative actions will form a starting point from which to develop and agree with stakeholders in a shared delivery action plan with associated resources and measurable programme of implementation. They are not therefore to be adopted as part of the Strategy approval. The process for creating a shared action plan will be developed and might include formalising the Green Economic Development Reference Group, which formed part of the stakeholder engagement, into a GEDS Steering Group enabled by the city council and stakeholder led.

3.9 The strategy outlines a recommended role for the city council within the shared delivery of the Winchester District ten year Green Economic Development Strategy. This includes the role of strategy and delivery leader. Therefore, GEDS principles will require embedding within all key strategies across the city council's services and feature in all appropriate work programme across the organisation. See illustration below:



- 3.10 In addition to the above the city council will be the convenor of co-created solutions and an enabling partner of solutions which are delivered by others. The latter is key and to support this an emphasis on partnership working is vital.
- 3.11 Within the City Council's leadership role it will make maximum use of all possible tools at its disposal, including:-
- Using planning as an active strategic tool to encourage the spatial outcomes required by the GEDS
 - Aligning procurement approaches to support the delivery of strategic outcomes envisaged by the desired scenario outlined in the GEDS
 - Ensuring assurance processes regarding Winchester City Council capital investment and interventions reflect the stated priorities committed to within the GEDS
 - Senior Leadership of Winchester City Council to internally and publicly reflect message, resolve, and ambition of the GEDS

NEXT STEPS:

- 4 Following the Business & Housing Policy Committee held on 22 September 2021, the Winchester District ten year Green Economic Development Strategy will be considered at Cabinet on 20 October 2021.
- 4.1 Commencing in October the Economy Team will develop the process for stakeholder engagement on Policy Themes and Proposed Actions to create the action plan by January 2022. Built into this plan will be the review mechanism to enable work programmes to be adapted and changed utilising the four scenarios to check the prioritisation of outcomes is still appropriate and to ensure the strategy remains current along with any need to commission further evidence.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

- 5 The budget and approval to procure external consultants was given in report CAB3265, Creating a New Green Economic Development Strategy considered by Cabinet on 21 October 2020 (Appendix 1).

Other Background Documents:-

6. Request for quote for the provision of consultancy to produce a Ten Year Green Economic Development Strategy for Winchester District to transition to a carbon neutral, inclusive economy is attached, (Appendix 2).
- 6.1 Winchester District Ten Year Green Economic Development Strategy is attached, (Appendix 3)
- 6.2 Evidence Base (Appendix 4)

APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1 Creating a New Green Economic Development Strategy, CAB3265, 21 October 2020
- Appendix 2 Request for quote for the provision of consultancy to produce a Ten Year Green Economic Development Strategy for Winchester District to transition to a carbon neutral, inclusive economy
- Appendix 3 Winchester District Ten Year Green Economic Development Strategy
- Appendix 4 Evidence Base