

REPORT TITLE: GREEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2024/27

20 FEBRUARY 2024

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor Lucille Thompson, Cabinet Member for Business and Culture

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The Winchester District Green Economic Development Strategy was considered by the policy committee and approved by Cabinet on 20 October 2021. The first action plan was considered by the policy committee 21 June 2022 and covered the period up to March 2024.

This paper introduces for consideration a draft GEDS Action Plan 2024 - 2027 (see appendix 1).

This action plan will focus on activity over the next three-year period to March 2027. It frames the work of the Economy & Community Service and will be delivered collaboratively with officers across the council along with stakeholders and businesses from across the district.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Policy Committee are asked to:

1. Note the review of the action plan 2022 – 2024
2. Review and comment upon the GEDS Action Plan 2024 – 2027

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 The staffing resources required to implement the GEDS Action Plan will come from within the existing Economy and Community Service as well as officers in lead teams across the council, as outlined in the action plan.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The GEDS aims to make sure Winchester District benefits from the new jobs, goods, and services the whole of the UK will need in the next decade. As a next generation strategy, the GEDS is also designed to deliver well-being, reduce inequalities, develop resilience, and enable the transition to a more sustainable economy.
- 2.1.2 The Winchester District Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS) was developed in 2021 by specialist consultancy Urban Foresight and Third Life Economics. The Policy Committee received reports during the creation of the strategy on 22 June 2021, BHP017 and on 21 September 2021, BHP020.
- 2.1.3 The first action plan focussed on nine actions, spanning all GEDS policy themes and was considered by the policy committee on 21 June 2022.
- 2.1.4 Three of these actions were new workstreams which aligned to the Culture, Creative and Visitor Economy policy theme. This included a cultural strategy, which will be considered at Cabinet on 14 March 2024 and a pilot co-mentoring scheme connecting creative and traditionally non-creative enterprises to share knowledge. Scoping, evidence base and review of best practice has also taken place as part of the development of a sustainable tourism strategy, which will be completed as part of the GEDS Action Plan 2024 – 2027.
- 2.1.5 The remaining six actions focussed on activity which had already commenced and will continue as part of the GEDS Action Plan 2024 – 2027.
- 2.1.6 12 actions were established in the exploratory and research stage and have been considered for implementation in the GEDS Action Plan 2024 – 2027.

2.2 Purpose of the Action Plan

- 2.2.1 This second GEDS action plan focuses on activity over the period March 2024 to March 2027. It considers most actions originally set out in the GEDS, which tackle the issues and challenges the district faces against delivering the eight outcomes outlined in the strategy.
- 2.2.2 Reflective of the GEDS itself, this plan is an agile, flexible, and adaptable plan and should not be regarded as final as it will recognise opportunities as they arise over the next three years.

2.3 Links to the Council Plan and other key strategies

2.3.1 The action plan links to “Vibrant local economy” and “Tackling the Climate Emergency and creating a greener district” as well as “Living Well” and “Homes for All” along with the areas of enhanced focus including greener faster. It also considers other key strategies and programmes of work across the council including the Movement Strategy, the Local Plan, Central Winchester Regeneration etc, ensuring effective collaboration and avoiding duplication of effort. In addition, consideration of strategies beyond the district including Hampshire Economic Strategy and the changing regional government arrangements have been considered. Example of linkages to the Council Plan include:

Tackling the Climate Emergency/Greener Faster	<p>Deliver urban heat mitigation measures</p> <p>Deliver green infrastructure and ecosystem services in built-up areas</p> <p>Co-ordinate local food producers and landowners to enhance biodiversity</p> <p>Co-ordinate green energy initiatives</p>
Vibrant local economy	Deliver a sustainable tourism strategy
Homes of all	<p>Deliver a significant retrofit campaign</p> <p>Collaborate to transform major developments into exemplar sustainable schemes.</p> <p>Encourage increased housing supply</p>

2.4 Issues and challenges

2.4.1 There are a range of issues and challenges outlined in the GEDS, however since it was written there are more recent issues affecting the economy including international conflicts, high inflation, rising costs of living and recruitment demand outstripping supply. These have been considered when developing the actions within the plan. These include national, regional as well as local issues.

2.4.2 More specifically when considering Winchester district directly, the action plan outlines the strengths and weaknesses along with the opportunities and threats which continue to face the district now and into the foreseeable future. The actions, as part of this second GEDS action plan, aim to recognise and

act on the strengths, capitalise on the opportunities, minimise the weaknesses and address the threats.

2.5 Monitoring and evaluation

2.5.1 The action plan illustrates a set of performance indicators relevant to each theme and group of actions. These offer the baseline against which a measure of the effectiveness and impact over the action plan period, whilst recognising that some of these indicators will take a long time to change and require wider intervention than the council alone can provide.

2.5.2 The council will annually review delivery of the action plan and monitor progress towards achieving the eight outcomes highlighted in the strategy. A quarterly economic dashboard is now published to regularly track the performance of the local economy.

2.6 Governance

2.6.1 The council's continued commitment to carbon neutrality and the adoption of the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) has led to a Winchester District Climate and Green Economy Partners Forum being developed, which recognises the close synergy between economic development and carbon neutrality and streamlines engagement with relevant stakeholders.

2.7 Routes to delivery

2.7.1 The GEDS has been developed collaboratively across the district's business community. This collaboration will continue through the mobilisation of this action plan.

2.7.2 The delivery of the GEDS action plan is embedded in workstreams across the council. Where appropriate sector specific groups, task and finish groups and project teams will be developed to lead on delivery of activity.

2.8 GEDS Action Plan 2024 - 2027

2.8.1 The action plan is split into two sections. The first section summarises the actions undertaken in the previous action plan and of those which are continuing in the GEDS Action Plan 2024 – 2027.

2.8.2 The second section splits 28 GEDS actions across four lead teams; Economy and Tourism, Sustainability and Natural Environment, Transport and Housing, Planning, Development and Regeneration teams.

2.8.3 Performance indicators have been established for each of the five GEDS policy themes.

2.8.4 Each action has been staged and phased. 18 actions are in design and development stage, seven in implementation and three in concept testing stage. Of these one action is continued from the previous action plan, 24 are underway and three are new for the 2024 – 2027 action plan.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3.1. No action plan is produced: this option was rejected as it is considered crucial that a clear plan for how the outcomes outlined in the GEDS will be realised by 2030.

3.2. A longer-term action plan to 2030 is produced: this option was rejected as it was felt that ongoing deliver would benefit from a series of time bound plans covering the life of the strategy. This second action plan builds on the achievements of the 2022 to 2024 Action Plan and sets the priorities and direction for the next three years.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

BHP017 - [Agenda for Economy and Housing Policy Committee on Tuesday, 22nd June, 2021, 6.30 pm - Winchester City Council](#)

BHP020 - [Agenda for Economy and Housing Policy Committee on Tuesday, 21st September, 2021, 6.30 pm - Winchester City Council](#)

CAB3319 - [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 20th October, 2021, 9.30 am - Winchester City Council](#)

BHP033 - [Agenda for Economy and Housing Policy Committee on Tuesday, 21st June, 2022, 6.30 pm - Winchester City Council](#)

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Draft Green Economic Development Strategy Action Plan 2024 - 2027