
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING:	29 SEPTEMBER 2016	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	FRANK MCARDLE CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
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SUBJECT:	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2016-2021	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS03, EDS10 & EDS11

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members approve the new South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To seek Member's support for the new Economic Development Strategy for the District.

3.0 Detail

Background

- 3.1 In 2013 Members approved the South Derbyshire Economic Development Statement which carried forward the vision and objectives set out in the earlier South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy (2008-2012). In November 2015 Members determined that a new Economic Development Strategy should be prepared, reflecting recent changes in economic development structures and policies and local economic conditions.
- 3.2 A programme of research, consultation and analysis has subsequently been undertaken. This has included a questionnaire-based telephone survey of one hundred businesses in South Derbyshire which was independently conducted, in partnership with Groundwork. A broad cross section of respondent businesses was achieved, with a mix of geographical location, size and sector. Further responses were received via the option to complete the Business Survey online. In parallel a review of relevant policy documents was undertaken, together with an analysis of existing studies and socio-economic data.
- 3.3 The findings of the desk research and Business Survey were combined to create an Issues Paper outlining the emergent issues for the new strategy. These were presented to Members and used as the basis for workshops with businesses and partner organisations. The Issues Paper was also made available for public comment

via the website. The aim was to test the findings, to identify any issues that had been overlooked and to consider actions that would address the challenges. This work was then used to update the Strategy.

The Role of the Strategy

- 3.4 The function of the Economic Development Strategy is to set out an understanding of the economic challenges and opportunities currently facing South Derbyshire and to put forward a vision for the further development of the District's economy. The Strategy will also contribute to the development of other key policies, including the Local Plan.
- 3.5 Whilst the production of the Strategy has been led by the District Council, it sets out a common understanding and vision that has emerged from research and consultation with all interested parties.

Implementation

- 3.6 South Derbyshire District Council is involved in a range of economic development activities that directly contribute to the development of the local economy and workforce of the District. These include the following:
- Attracting inward investment
 - Providing sites and premises for employment
 - Attracting visitors
 - Supporting business development
 - Providing visitor information
 - Implementing economic development initiatives
 - Undertaking research, feasibility studies and project development, and providing support to partnerships
- 3.7 The actions of the Economic Development Strategy are expressed as Ambitions. This reflects the fact that the majority are dependent upon the joint commitment of the public, private and voluntary/community sector organisations operating in South Derbyshire. In some instances, they will also be dependent on securing external funding.
- 3.8 As such, the key delivery vehicle for the Economic Development Strategy will be through the South Derbyshire Partnership and in particular the Sustainable Development Group.

Vision, Objectives & Ambitions

3.9 The proposed new Economic Development Strategy can be found at Appendix A. The Vision, Objectives and Ambitions for the Strategy are as follows:

A more prosperous, better connected, increasingly resilient and competitive economy will make South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit at the heart of The National Forest.

BUSINESS	Business support, access to finance & innovation
1.	To attract new inward investment , plus reinvestment by existing businesses
2.	To provide business support , advice and signposting including to financial, exporting, innovation and other assistance
3.	To promote the development of the area's key sectors , such as manufacturing and tourism
SKILLS	Recruitment, employment & skills
4.	To work with businesses to meet their workforce needs , raising skills levels and productivity
5.	To address employability barriers, such as work-readiness, and the accessibility of work and training
6.	To equip young people with the skills and resources to realise their potential, promoting entrepreneurship and matching their aspirations with knowledge of the local economy
INFRASTRUCTURE	Infrastructure for economic growth
7.	To provide a range of employment sites and premises, and pursue associated infrastructure improvements
8.	To seek improvements to access and connectivity – both transport links, sustainable travel modes and services, and superfast broadband and mobile telephone coverage
9.	To support vibrant town centres as commercial, community and service centres

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The Economic Development Strategy will contribute directly to the Corporate Plan's vision to 'make South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit' and in particular to the theme of 'Progress - Encouraging inward investment and tourism opportunities: To further build on our significant achievements we will continue to help grow and diversify our strong economy to show that South Derbyshire is well and truly open for business. This includes harnessing the potential of The National Forest.

We will maximise opportunities for the future by encouraging the formation of new enterprises as well as the continued growth of existing businesses, visitor spend and inward investment (the injection of money from an external source into the District)'.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The Economic Development Strategy will contribute directly to the South Derbyshire Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy vision of 'a dynamic South Derbyshire, able to seize opportunities to develop successful communities, whilst respecting and enhancing the varied character of our fast growing district'. 'Sustainable Development' is highlighted as a key theme, with the aim of achieving 'sustainable existing and new communities that meet the population's needs and aspirations'.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The previous Economic Development Strategy and Statement set the vision and direction for a successful period of economic growth in South Derbyshire, with increasing numbers of jobs and low levels of unemployment. The new Strategy aims to take this forward over the period 2016-21.

7.2 In the coming years, South Derbyshire's economy will face a number of unique challenges, including maintaining the success of the manufacturing sector, accommodating high levels of population growth and, maximising the potential of The National Forest. South Derbyshire will also share some economic development challenges common to many areas, such as changing shopping habits that will continue to impact upon town centre vitality, or shortcomings in connectivity in more rural areas.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 South Derbyshire Economic Development Statement 2013
South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy 2008-2012

Appendices

Appendix A: South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021