

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of Local Growth Scrutiny Committee on Monday 13th March 2023

Business Growth Strategy – Monitoring Update (Full) 2022/23

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Growth / Economic Development

Classification	This report is public
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on progress against the Action Plan attached to the Council's Business Growth Strategy.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Bolsover District Council's Business Growth Strategy focusses on how the Strategy and Development Directorate will prioritise its own work and its work with internal and external partners to achieve the Council's ambition:

To become a dynamic, self-sufficient and flexible Council that delivers excellent services, whilst adapting to local aspirations and acting as the economic and environmental driver for Bolsover District.

- 1.2 To maintain focus on achieving the Council's ambition the strategy is organised around the Council's economic priorities:
- i. Making the best use of our assets;
 - ii. Ensuring financial sustainability and increasing revenue streams;
 - iii. Unlocking Development Potential: unlocking the capacity of major employment sites;
 - iv. Enabling Housing Growth: increasing the supply, quality and range of housing to meet the needs of the growing population and support economic growth;

- v. Working with partners to support enterprise, innovation, jobs and skills; and
 - vi. Promoting the District and working with partners to increase tourism
- 1.3 The action plan attached to the Business Growth Plan includes specific details of how these priorities will be achieved through various ongoing projects. The action plan also contains a section dedicated to 'building back better' which highlights action we're taking to promote clean, inclusive growth and improve the environmental quality of the District.
- 1.4 The action plan has been updated and a full review conducted with updates on actions that relate most to the Council's economic priorities. The most recently updated action plan is attached in full to this report as Appendix A.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 **Building Back Better** – the focus of this strand is promoting the environmental improvements and nature recovery of the district, through investment in the built environment, but also in the carbon reduction and NO2 reduction through the introduction of sustainable methods of transport. The significant recent activity is the Local Nature Recovery Network Summit, held at The Arc on 10 February, with stakeholders, which included a series of pledges and commitments made.
- 2.2 **Enabling Housing Growth** has seen a significant change over the last update period, with the Council's construction partner – Robert Woodhead Construction Ltd – entering into liquidation on the 14 September 2022, and changing the structure of the existing Dragonfly. Dragonfly Developments was brought into full ownership of the council in November 2022. A Full business case was presented to Council in February with a decision to transfer a number of services into the new company.
- 2.3 **Increasing Revenue Streams** – projects continue to progress, with consultation and engagement activities being carried out on both of the growth plans for Creswell and Shirebrook respectively. The Crematorium development continues to make good progress with a start on site expected in the late spring.
- 2.4 **Making the Best Use of our Assets** – this strand has seen the biggest changes as part of this update, with new actions introduced in to the action plan, including the review of Independent commercial property and the Grazing and non-Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land. Now that the appraisal of garage sites is complete, and a receipt in excess of £1m received, it is important we now turn the focus on to other assets the Council own, and consider these for retention or disposal.
- 2.5 Work on the redevelopment proposals for Pleasley Vale are also now building momentum, following the recruitment of Kay Gregory in to the role of Senior Economic Development Officer (Pleasley Vale). Recent commissions include flood modelling, statement of significance, stakeholder engagement with Historic England, Environment Agency and Mansfield District Council.

- 2.6 **Promoting the District and Increasing Tourism** – progress is being made on the review of the tourism strategy and walking and cycling strategies. There has also been significant increase of activity around the business support programmes being developed now we have secured the £1.9million UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation from Government. The business support and Visit Bolsover projects will commence delivery March 2023.
- 2.7 **Working with Partners** – all four activity areas have seen significant progress over the last review period. As referenced in 2.6 above, the award of UK SPF monies to the Council has meant delivery can commence with procurement and appointment of delivery partners for business support initiatives.
- 2.8 As members will hear on the meeting’s agenda, there has been progress made with the Social Value Policy, with the Director of Economic Development attending a series of workshops for learning and embedding best practice, but that there is a great opportunity for this local authority to review and better embed across all departments a strong social value ethos. Work is ongoing to strengthen our draft policy and revise it to best reflect the opportunity, which is further supported by the recent purchase of LOOP – a social value monitoring toolkit.
- 2.9 The Director of Economic Development and the Business Growth Manager have been engaged with the One Public Estate (OPE) Team, informing a recent county wide engagement / consultation exercise on the potential for Opportunity Development Fund (ODF) for Bolsover Town. This fund and support would explore the publicly owned buildings within the town, scope for colocation, and opportunity for redevelopment and/or reconfiguration of the public estate within the town. This would have a strong alignment to the work already undertaken by the team on the recently unsuccessful Levelling Up Fund application, in readiness for round 3 later this year.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Local Growth Scrutiny is provided with updates on the Business Growth Strategy to ensure appropriate progress is being made on the Council’s corporate priorities and to provide feedback or support where necessary to enable officers and members to work as one Council to achieve the Council’s ambitions.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The alternative is not to provide updates on a quarterly basis but this may risk loss of focus on achieving the aims of the Council within the quickest practicable timescales. This is particularly significant given that income generation from projects and proposals in the Business Growth Strategy are included in the projections contained within the Council’s MTFP.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Members to note the report and provide feedback on progress for officers to consider and take appropriate action where necessary.

Approved by Councillor Liz Smyth
Portfolio Holder for Growth / Economic Development

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: A number of projects and proposals in the Business Growth Strategy have risk and financial implications, of which, most are positive insofar as they are around bring forward good developments and income generation. However, these issues are worked through in detail and in consultation with the Section 151 Officer on a case by case basis.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details: The Business Growth Strategy does not in itself have any legal or data protection implications but a number of projects and proposals in the Business Growth Strategy will. However, these issues are worked through in detail and in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council on a case by case basis as required.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: The update sets out the actions and interventions supported as part of the Business Growth Strategy to contribute to the environmental enhancements and carbon reduction across the district.

Staffing: Yes No

Details: The Business Growth Strategy does have some staffing implications insofar as the capacity and resource available will influence how quickly projects and programmes are delivered. However, staffing issues are dealt with separately as they arise in consultation with the Head of Paid Service and relevant portfolio holders.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

<p>District Wards Significantly Affected</p>	All wards affected
<p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Details:

<p>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.</p>
<p>As noted in the report, the Business Growth Strategy and associated action plan is closely linked to achieving the Council's ambitions and economic priorities.</p> <p>Achieving a number of the objectives in the Business Growth Strategy will also have a positive impact for our customers and the environment.</p>

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Building Back Better
2	Enabling Housing Growth
3	Increasing Revenue Stream
4	Making Best Use of our Assets
5	Promoting the District and increasing tourism
6	Working with Partners
7	Unlocking Development Potential

<p>Background Papers <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p>