

RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

04 SEPTEMBER 2012

REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For members to comment on and approve the draft Economic Development Strategy.
- 1.2 To request Members to approve a change to the permanent establishment through the recruitment of an Economic Development Officer to lead on many of the actions identified in the Economic Development Strategy for Melton Borough Council as the lead partner for the Strategy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That members comment and approve the draft Economic Development Strategy**
- 2.2 **Members recommend to the Policy Finance & Administrative Committee a change to the establishment by the recruitment of an Economic Development Officer and a supplementary estimate of £7,500 from the working balance for 2012/13.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES / BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members in 2008 approved the 'Melton Economic Regeneration Strategy 2008-2013'. Due to the current economic recession and recent economic assessment a review of this has been undertaken and a new 'Economic Development Strategy (attached as Appendix A) has been developed.
- 3.2 The Economic Development Strategy provides a framework for partners from all sectors- public, private, voluntary and community- to respond to the economic challenges facing Melton.
- 3.3 This strategy has been developed from a robust evidence base, which has been used to identify the key economic issues currently faced by Melton. It outlines local actions to tackle local issues, set within a wider strategic framework, the successful delivery of which will support the sustainable growth & development of Melton's local economy in line with the Melton Core Strategy.
- 3.4 It is important to note that this is a strategy for Melton Borough and not just Melton Borough Council. The strategy provides an overarching framework to improve the local economy, and whilst the council has a key role to lead on, and co-ordinate, this work, it is vital that the strategy has the support and commitment of all local partners engaged in this field.
- 3.5 At their meeting of 19th July 2012, the Melton Community Partnership approved the Draft Economic Development Strategy for a 6 week consultation period (to end on 31st August

2012). Melton Borough Council is the lead partner for the strategy, however, the strategy is a partnership document with commitments from all partners of the MCP.

3.6 The 4 strategic Priorities that the Strategy identifies are:

1. **Promoting Innovation and Enterprise-** to develop a strong competitive economy by encouraging emerging technologies and innovation
2. **Enhancing Aspirations, Skills and Creating Economic Activity-** to develop a workforce to meet the needs of the local marketplace and raise ambition
3. **Improving the Vitality of the Boroughs Town and Villages-** to create better places for local employment, shopping and entertainment
4. **Maximising Inward Investment and Tourism-** to work with other agencies to maximise and promote a competitive economy.

3.7 The Strategy provides under each strategic priority in with clear actions, sub actions and milestones.

3.8 Proactive economic development & regeneration activity is considered critical to the ongoing success of the Borough's economy & the development of sustainable communities across the Borough. It is a key underpinning theme of the Council's Corporate Plan's vision 'to enhance the quality of life for everyone in the Borough of Melton to achieve a sustainable, prosperous & vibrant community...a place where people want to live, work & visit'.

3.9 The actions identified in the Strategy require coordination and delivery and therefore members are requested to approve a change to the establishment through the recruitment of an Economic Development Officer who will lead on many of the actions.

3.10 A detailed job description will be developed, however, some of the key responsibilities of the post will be to :

- Project manage and monitor the day to day delivery of the Economic Development Strategy and projects that have been commissioned to test innovative approaches to tackling employment and worklessness issues in the borough.
- Responsible for keeping on top of national, regional and local economic, employment and skills policy.
- Engagement with businesses and Educational organisations
- Deliver economic development, employment and business priorities.
- Responsible for the collection and analysis of data, policy research and strategy development and project management

4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1.1 There are clear links to priorities within the corporate plan:

- Support people and businesses through the economic downturn
- Improving the well-being of vulnerable people

- Improve quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Encourage people to take an active role in their communities.
- Meet the Economic needs of Borough
- Maximise the potential of Melton Mowbray Town centre

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Projects that are developed in support of the Economic Development Strategy will be subject to their own assessment in regards to costs and if applicable project mandate and business case will be developed.

5.2 The anticipated salary costs (excluding Employer costs) for the Economic Development Officer is approximately £25,472-£30,851, the post will be career graded. Members are asked to recommend to the Policy, Finance and Administrative Committee this change to the establishment with costs being met from the Working Balance for 2012/13 and built into the 2013/14 base budget onwards.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 No direct legal implications have been identified.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report, however, as part of the development of an evening economy there will be links to creating a safer town.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 An equality impact assessment is attached as Appendix B

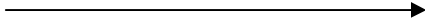
9.0 RISKS

9.1

Very High A				
High B				
Significant C				
Low D				

Risk No.	Description
1.	Actions within the strategy not delivered (with EDO officer in post)
2.	
3.	

Very Low E			1	
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic



Impact

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The Melton Community Partnership considered and approved the draft Economic Development Strategy for a 6 week consultation period ending on 31st August 2012.

11.2 The draft Strategy was sent to all of the delivery groups supporting the Melton community partnership for comments

11.3 The draft Strategy has been available for comment on the Council's website for 6 weeks. To date 2 comments have been received:

- Melton Mowbray & District Civic Society
- Individual comment

11.4 The Civic Society feels that 'The character and charm of the town should be protected and enhanced if it is to attract sustainable economic development. Melton Mowbray's future and strength lies in its unique character. We should avoid at all costs becoming a clone of other town centres'.

In regards to specific comments they have stated 'our specific comments are broadly supportive but ask that the Civic Society should be further consulted as the detail emerges and as part of the monitoring and review of implementation. Some of the specific comments will be picked up by officers in the final document and others relate to the Melton Community Partnership

11.5 The individual comments 'It is good that Melton wants to develop itself and although the draft blueprint lacks detail it appears to have ambition. One of the great things that Melton has is its position in the country. It is very central and that needs to be exploited' There are further comments around out of town shopping centres, rural capital of food and high street shops

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 Melton Egerton, Melton Dorian, Melton Warwick and Melton Craven are the wards directly affected.

Contact Officer: H Rai- Head of Communities & neighbourhoods

Appendices Appendix A- Draft Economic Development Strategy
 Appendix B- Equalities Impact Assessment

Date: August 2012