

### Open Report on behalf of Executive Director for Environment and Economy

Report to:	<b>Economic Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>8 September 2015</b>
Subject:	<b>Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy</b>

#### Summary:

Lincolnshire County Council's business plan will be produced during autumn 2015.

In order to provide a strong contribution on the economic development aspects of the business plan it is proposed that the Economic Scrutiny Committee considers each of the three commissioning strategies that contribute directly to economic growth. These commissioning strategies are:

- Environment
- Enterprise
- Infrastructure

This report considers the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy and its relationship to the Enterprise Commissioning Strategy. This follows on from the consideration of the Enterprise Commissioning Strategy in July where Members confirmed that the ambitions and actions in the Commissioning Strategy were appropriate and supported.

It should be noted that the Environmental and Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committees will be asked to consider each strategy and the relationships between them ahead of the Executive being asked to formally adopt each of them early in 2016. Due to the schedule of meetings and work programmes of each committee this may mean each Scrutiny Committee sees information in a different sequence and will be updated at a different point in the process about the relationship between the strategies.

#### Actions Required:

Members are invited to review the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy and in particular to address the following questions:

- Is the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy aligned appropriately to the Strategic Economic Plan?

- How far does the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy serve to facilitate the ambitions of the Economic Scrutiny Committee based on the work programme of the Committee?
- Is the balance between the commissioning and influencing of actions appropriate to available resources?
- Added together, how far do the objectives of the Strategy match your levels of ambition?
- How would you like to scrutinise the delivery of this Strategy?

## **1. Background**

### The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) as an overall strategy

The overall strategy for economic growth in Lincolnshire is the Strategic Economic Plan which is promoted by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GL LEP). Officers from the County Council were asked to prepare the Strategic Economic Plan for the LEP, and the Economic Scrutiny Committee discussed and shaped the Strategic Economic Plan at their meetings in September 2013 and March 2014.

The Strategic Economic Plan has the objective of creating 13,000 new jobs, helping 22,000 businesses to grow, and building 100,000 new homes over a 20 year period. A summary is attached as Appendix A. There are five objectives within the Strategic Economic Plan:

- Driving the competitiveness of key economic sectors (agri-food, manufacturing, and visitor)
- Developing our emerging sectors (low carbon, ports and logistics, and health/care)
- Skills, innovation, technology and promotion
- A place to invest (housing and communities)
- A location for investors (environment/heritage, transport, water management, utilities)

Full details of the Strategic Economic Plan have previously been presented to the Committee and details can be found at [www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk](http://www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk).

The County Council do not intend to produce its own economic development strategy but instead to align strongly to the Strategic Economic Plan. This means that the main focus of the County Council's development activity will support the achievement of the Strategic Economic Plan. There will occasionally be times when the Council leads or supports a project which does not directly support the Strategic Economic Plan but which meets other priorities of the Council, but that will be rare.

The Strategic Economic Plan will be refreshed over summer 2015. This is because some of the specific actions in the Strategy are now being delivered, and because other actions have been refined over the 18 months since the Strategy was published. The aims of the Strategy will not change, but some of the detailed actions will be refined. The Greater Lincolnshire LEP currently engages regularly and directly with around 100 stakeholders, but the refresh of the Strategy does provide an opportunity to engage further with district councils and business representatives.

### Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy

The County Council is supporting the growth ambitions set out in the Strategic Economic Plan. Those ambitions are designed to change the economic base for the County. Not all the Commissioning Strategies can carry the same priority and it is proposed that the Environment and Infrastructure commissioning strategies are aligned so as to facilitate the SEP and Enterprise Commissioning Strategy.

Appendix B explains the connection between the three commissioning strategies that have a direct impact on the achievement of the Strategic Economic Plan. It shows that parts of the Environment and Infrastructure commissioning strategies meet the Strategic Economic Plan.

Appendix B also shows that the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy is broken down into five main outcomes.

The main philosophy in the Enterprise Commissioning Strategy is that we will facilitate private sector schemes where possible rather than leading them ourselves. The Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy needs to create a culture and working environment in which the key outcomes can be achieved whilst ensuring that the growth ambitions can be realised.

This will require the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy to facilitate a way of working that avoids protection of the environment for its own sake being the main philosophy. The main philosophy will need to recognise how the wider economic and social benefits of a thriving environment contribute to the creation of a thriving place thereby maximising the economic benefits for that place.

The Council's Natural Environment Strategy was completed in 2012, and links with the Climate Local Plan and the Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk Management Strategy to provide an aligned approach to these areas of work within the framework of the commissioning strategies. As such, it is intended that between them these 'service-specific' strategies can support implementation across commissioning strategies, helping to create links between them and with other commissioning strategies managed by different Director areas.

Improved co-ordination of resources and commissioning of strategic-scale initiatives to join up the benefits of existing and projected initiatives lie at the heart of the Natural Environment Strategy. Under this remit, and linking into the GLLEP's

agenda for growth, the Council has been successful in leveraging in £250,000 through the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project, £1.7m from the Coastal Communities Fund towards Gibraltar Point and the Coastal Observatory, while the partnership context provided along the coast has led to Lincolnshire becoming one of the national pilots for the coastal communities team initiative.

Current plans for the immediate and medium term future, therefore, centre on developing our partnership approach, using the opportunities available to all our partner organisations to maximize potential for drawing in external investment while driving priorities for the natural environment that prioritise the capacity of the environment to grow the visitor economy, and hence contribute to the economic growth of the county as a whole.

The main outcome areas will incorporate the following priority actions:

### **Reducing carbon emissions**

In our commissioning approach we will seek to tackle carbon emissions and energy reductions in our own activities, and working with other organisations, communities and individuals to do so

And to work with others to further the Climate Local commitments (in addition to the above) which are :

- Increasing local resilience to the changing climate through developing community resilience plans, awareness raising and training
- Build a thriving low-carbon sector and attract further investment to support low carbon growth and green jobs
- Create an accessible Lincolnshire with a low carbon transport system
- Work with partners to promote energy and resource efficiency, reduce energy dependency and alleviate fuel poverty

### **Flood risk management**

The Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk Management Strategy 2012-2025 sets out the following priority objectives

1. There will be a common works programme of measures to manage flood risk and drainage by 2013 (achieved)
2. Existing resources will be used in the most efficient way possible. We will attract as much external funding as possible, and will secure new resources locally and nationally.
3. The likelihood and impact of flooding from all sources will be reduced where possible from current levels by 2025. This includes accounting for increases in the risk of flooding caused by climate change.
4. Emergency planning and response arrangements managed by the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum will form part of a single, co-ordinated approach to managing flood risk and drainage as a whole.
5. The Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Partnership will work with local communities to develop flood risk and drainage management

services that meet local needs.

6. Local communities and businesses will be more aware of flood risk, and with the help of public authorities, will take steps to protect themselves through individual and community action.
7. Planning and development control across the county will take account of all forms of flood risk and sustainable drainage; development which could increase flood risk will be minimised, as will inappropriate development in areas of significant flood risk.
8. Flood risk and drainage management will be more accountable to the public through the local democratic process, and through more freely available information about flood risk and measures taken to control it.
9. Flood risk, drainage management and future development will contribute to better water quality, wider environmental benefits and sustainable growth.

In addition, since 2014 a joined up approach to flood risk and water resource management has been developed with the GLLEP, set out in a joint Water Management Plan to be launched in November 2015.

### **Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment**

The Natural Environment Strategy 2012-18 sets out the following priority objectives

- Lincolnshire's countryside, coastline and towns are much richer in biodiversity by 2018
- The natural environment is better understood and is valued by residents, visitors and businesses for its intrinsic value and for its contribution to the local and regional economy and the health and amenity of local communities
- Effective promotion of Lincolnshire's natural environment, increases the county's profile as a tourist destination, contributing to increasing visitor numbers and the amount of time they spend within the area
- The natural environment of Lincolnshire is more resilient to climate change, the impacts of which are better understood
- The Council's approach to the natural environment is integrated across its different service areas and with that of its partners and local communities, making the most of existing resources and exploring to the full opportunities for attracting additional external resources and greater joint working between partner organisations.
- Planning policy balances promotion of sustainable growth and economic regeneration with the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. This will be achieved by liaison with Local Planning Authorities and through the Council's Minerals and Waste and Local Transport Planning Policy functions

In common with the flood risk agenda, the Council is promoting, through the

GLNP, a joined up approach with the GLLEP, particularly aiming to identify and maximise benefits to the county's economy from an enhanced visitor offer and health and amenity benefits to local communities.

### **Waste management**

The waste service will operate in an efficient and effective way to dispose of all wastes presented in as sustainable a manner as possible to lessen the impact on the environment, whilst at the same time seeking to minimise the costs so the service represents best value to the residents of Lincolnshire.

Working with district partners through the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership the waste service will seek to maximise the amounts of waste sent for recycling, and to reduce the levels of contamination thus ensuring high quality recycle with real financial value to lower costs and wherever possible produce an actual income to the authority.

The waste service will continue to look for ways in which the amount of waste from the general public can be reduced, waste that is presented can be sent for re-use, and ways in which the overall service to the public can be improved or costs can be reduced.

### **Sustainable Planning**

The planning service will provide a service to Developers and District Councils to ensure the 'open for business' philosophy is embedded into the service through enabling the delivery of development.

We will work in partnership with Districts to ensure an appropriate policy basis is included within Local Plans and provide the necessary support to deliver effective infrastructure planning.

A proactive approach will be taken to supporting development and sectors that align to the sector priorities within the SEP.

We will ensure an effective supply of land and sites to deliver the aggregate supplies required to deliver the housing growth being promoted across the County.

We will ensure an effective supply of regulated waste sites to deal sustainably with waste arisings resulting from the housing growth.

The services will become more customer focussed in terms of working with developers and partners to deliver a high quality service and development within the county.

We will promote a single point of contact principle, in that for a particular development both developers and partner organisations will have a focal point within the Development Management Teams, who will guide the development through all the relevant processes, from inception through to completion. Whilst

this may involve the development management staff acquiring and commissioning advice from the wider organisation, they will remain the focal point for developers and partners and be accountable within the planning process.

We will ensure that Development Management is joined up in terms of providing advice and services such as; highways advice, highway adoptions (Section 38s), highway improvements (Section 278s), flood risk and drainage (SuDS) advice and planning contributions (Section 106) requirements, as a single point of contact. This will mean that the Development Management staff and teams will be multi skilled in these respects. The intention is that when developers or partner organisations engage with the County Council (e.g. development team approach) they will be able to discuss all issues such as flood risk/drainage and highways etc. at the one time.

The Council Business Plan shows that the outcomes for 2015/2016 are:

NO OF JOBS CREATED AND/OR SAFEGUARDED	Target 2015/16 = 758
NO OF BUSINESSES SUPPORTED	Target 2015/16 = 350
NO OF QUALS ACHIEVED	Target 2015/16 = 902
EXTERNAL FUNDING ATTRACTED TO LINCS	Target 2015/16 = £54.8m
REDUCE THE RISK OF FLOODING	
Number of flood incidents (contextual measure)	
Number of flood prevention schemes implemented by LCC – 2015/16 = 24	
REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS	
CO2 emissions from County Council activity	Target 2015/16 = 71,385t
Buildings (contextual measure)	
Business mileage (contextual measure)	
Fleet mileage (contextual measure)	
Community greenhouse gas emission levels for Lincolnshire (contextual measure)	
INCREASE RECYCLING	
Waste landfilled (ENV01)	Target 2015/16 = 13,000t
Household waste recycled and composted (NI192)	Target 2015/16 = 55.0%
Composted waste (BV82b) (contextual measure)	

Indicators for 2016/2017 will be created that reflect the adoption of the Commissioning Strategies and consultation will occur with both the relevant Scrutiny Committee and with those organisations who will be commissioned to deliver the Strategy.

#### Economic Scrutiny Committee's comments on the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy

The Economic Scrutiny Committee has had the purpose of informing the council's strategic approach to economic development and the actions that support it. The purpose of this report is to ensure that the relationship with Protecting and

Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy meets the Committee's expectations.

In scrutinising and advising on the Commissioning Strategy, the Economic Scrutiny Committee may want to explore the following questions:

- Is the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy aligned appropriately to the Enterprise Strategy and the Strategic Economic Plan?
- Will the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy facilitate the growth ambitions?
- Is there an appropriate balance between the two strategies to promote growth and ensure effective management of the natural environment?
- Are available resources appropriate to achieve direct commissioning where needed as well as effective influencing where this is a more appropriate approach to securing resource?
- Does the relationship between the strategies effectively address the role of partnership working and the ability to influence effective commissioning of activities both internal to LCC and from external organisations?

The issue of ongoing scrutiny of the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy is considered to be an issue for the Environmental Scrutiny Committee to consider, but it would be helpful if there are any views on how that should be done so that they can be forwarded to that Committee.

- How would scrutiny of the delivery of the Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy be best achieved?

## **2. Conclusion**

The Enterprise Commissioning Strategy is aligned to the Strategic Economic Plan. This means that a detailed strategy is not required, but it is useful to describe the priorities that the Council will commission in support of the Strategic Economic Plan.

The Protecting and Sustaining the Environment Commissioning Strategy is building on the previous approach to the Environment Strategy adopted by the Council but making more of the economic benefits to be derived from a well managed environment.

The linkages set out in this report have a clear rationale and are considered to reflect the previously confirmed ambitions of the Economic Scrutiny Committee although it is useful for the Committee to explore how well those linkages reflect the Committee's work to date.

## **3. Consultation**



**a) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

n/a

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Summary of SEP
Appendix B	Commissioning Strategy diagram

**5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Andy Gutherson, who can be contacted on 01522 554827 or [Andy.Gutherson@Lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Andy.Gutherson@Lincolnshire.gov.uk).

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