
Subject:	ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 6 December 2021
Report of:	Christopher Townend, Head of Investment, Growth and Tourism
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Trevor Bartlett, Leader of the Council
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To seek adoption of the Economic Growth Strategy - a central document and important evidence base for the emerging Dover District Council Local Plan.

Recommendation:

- (a) To adopt the Economic Growth Strategy;
- (b) To delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial), in consultation with the Head of Investment, Growth and Tourism and the Leader of the Council, to further amend, edit and adapt the Economic Growth Strategy in the future in response to subsequent review, opportunity and consultation as required.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Dover District Council has recognised the strategic importance of economic growth, investment and tourism to Dover District, as well as its direct correlation and synergy to wider corporate objectives, policies, planning and ambitions – to make Dover District 'a great place to live, work, visit, learn and invest'.
- 1.2 It has been proposed that the Council should adopt and deliver a new and ambitious, overarching, Economic Growth Strategy supporting the District's collective and collaborative aims.
- 1.3 Public consultation on the Economic Growth Strategy took place as part of consultation upon the Local Plan. This final version includes amendments and editing in response to consultation.
- 1.4 The Economic Growth Strategy represents a key document and evidence base for the emerging Local Plan – its adoption is vital to maintaining progress and the delivery timetable of the Local Plan.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Economic Growth Strategy has been created following public and private consultation, as well as internal consultation, and in collaboration with Ciaran Gunne-Jones, Senior Director, Head of Economics at Lichfields. Lichfields is a pre-eminent UK planning and development consultancy with over 50 years' experience.
- 2.2 Economic development, investment, growth and tourism are recognised and considered a central component of Dover District Council's work.

- 2.3 This strategy aims to complement, support and influence Dover District Council's wider strategies, policies and planning decisions, including the emerging Local Plan, Corporate Plan and Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy. It also aims to raise current and future aspirations and opportunities on the national and international stage, due to its strategic importance to regeneration.
- 2.4 The strategy is fully aligned to the objectives of Dover District Council's Local Plan, Corporate Plan, Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy, Heritage Strategy and Climate Change Strategy.
- 2.5 Thorough research and internal and external stakeholder consultation has already taken place. This included informal consultation from November 2020 (ongoing), and formally during Regulation 18 public consultation of the Draft Dover District Local Plan from 20th January 2021 to 17th March 2021. In total, DDC received approximately 3,400 comments from 1,280 individuals/organisations on the draft Local Plan. 33 comments directly related to the Economic Growth Strategy.
- 2.6 The working draft of the Strategy was also shared internally with the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial); Head of Commercial Services; Head of Planning, Regeneration and Development; Head of Museums; and the Head of Assets & Building Control; with feedback and subsequent amendments made. Internal feedback and review was also sought from the Investment, Growth & Tourism Department; as well as the internal Dover Town Centre Working Group (further including the Strategic Director (Resources); Legal Services Manager; Strategic Development Lead (Leisure); Head of Finance & Housing; and the Principal Lawyer (Corporate Projects)).
- 2.7 Please refer to: Appendix 1 – Draft 'Dover District Economic Growth Strategy'.

3. Identification of Options

- 3.1 To adopt the Economic Growth Strategy; and to delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial) in consultation with the Head of Investment, Growth & Tourism and the Portfolio Holder for Investment, Growth & Tourism, to further amend, edit and adapt the Economic Growth Strategy in the future in response to subsequent review, opportunity and consultation as required.
- 3.2 To seek further public and private consultation on the Economic Growth Strategy; and to delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial) in consultation with the Head of Investment, Growth & Tourism and the Portfolio Holder for Investment, Growth & Tourism, to further amend, edit, and adopt the Economic Growth Strategy in response to this further review and consultation. The delegated authority also extending to further amend, edit and adapt the Economic Growth Strategy in the future in response to subsequent review, opportunity and consultation as required.
- 3.3 To seek further public and private consultation on the Economic Growth Strategy; and to request that following this further consultation, review and edit the Strategy returns to Cabinet for adoption and approval.

4. Evaluation of Options

- 4.1 Option 3.1 (Recommended), having already been robustly consulted upon, maintains progress and the delivery timetable of the Local Plan and delegated authority enables swift, nimble and timely amendment of the strategy as required.
- 4.2 Option 3.2 delays Local Plan progress and negatively affects the delivery timetable of the Local Plan; however does offers good practice in regard to further consultation and delegated authority enabling swift, nimble and timely amendment, finalisation and adoption of the strategy following further consultation.

4.3 Option 3.3 substantially delays Economic Growth Strategy and Local Plan progress and delivery.

5. **Resource Implications**

5.1 Delivery of this strategy and its projects, and all related resources and budget, will be included – as required - within the Council's normal, annual, financial plans, budgets and processes.

5.2 The strategy and its projects will directly impact on the resources of the Investment, Growth & Tourism Department, as well as other Dover District Council departments with connected and cross-purpose objectives. Impact may also be felt by Legal, Procurement, Accountancy, Planning and Property Services.

5.3 Where possible and available external funding, grants and sponsorship will be sought to support plans and objectives within the strategy.

5.4 Departmental resources and budgets will be discussed and finalised through normal Dover District Council processes and approvals.

5.5 Other than through funding bids, grants, land sales, joint ventures and direct/indirect taxation, the strategy will not generate direct income for the Council, however it is projected to grow our district's economy, attract further investment and development in the district, and generate more employment, more training and more opportunities for our communities, residents, businesses and visitors.

6. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

6.1 Delivery of this strategy will have a positive human, economic and environmental impact. Related delivery will greatly increase the economic potential and sustainability of the area, as well as levels of employment, skills and training. The District's built environment would also be substantially improved.

6.2 The strategy is mindful of the climate change agenda, and climate change and environmental implications have been considered during its creation.

6.3 Climate change and environmental impacts will be fully considered as part of all related and included projects, within the Strategy, going forward.

7. **Corporate Implications**

7.1 Comment from the Strategic Director (Resources): Accountancy has been consulted and has no further comment. (DL)

7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

8. **Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft 'Dover District Economic Growth Strategy'

9. **Background Papers**

- [DDC Corporate Plan](#)
- [DDC Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy](#)
- [DDC Local Plan \(emerging\)](#)
- [DDC Heritage Strategy](#)

- [DDC Climate Change Strategy](#)
- [A Cultural Survey & Framework for Dover](#)

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