

STRATEGY FOR BUSINESS – “HELPING LOCAL BUSINESS GROW”

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve a draft Business Strategy to form the basis for consultation with partners and members.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 “Helping Local Business grow” is one of the Council’s top priorities. Given the changes that have taken place within the Council’s own economic development team there is a need to review the strategy for working with business to help it prosper within the New Forest.
- 2.2 The New Forest Business Partnership (NFBP) has identified the need for the Council to outline its new strategy.
- 2.3 This is a good time to review the strategy as organisations like the Em3 Local Enterprise Partnership are also reviewing their Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and later in the year the Council will be submitting its own Local Plan, which will set the background to achieving prosperity over the next 20 years.
- 2.4 The national political and economic agenda would appear to look for each local area to step up and make their case for economic and business success from inward investment. Thus areas are in competition for resources to assist with helping their local businesses to be successful. The key areas for achieving success will be about taking advantage of the opportunities that are available and getting the right policy responses in place for planning, transport, housing and skills.

3.0 PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUSINESS STRATEGY

- 3.1 A draft Business Strategy is set out at Appendix 1 for approval by Cabinet.
- 3.2 Following Cabinet approval of the draft strategy it is proposed to engage with the New Forest Business Partnership and other relevant partners. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel will have the opportunity to review the strategy before a final draft is agreed by Cabinet later this year.

4.0 CRIME AND DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report. The promotion of a healthy, vibrant economy is however a key factor that feeds into achieving this Council’s objectives for all the above implications.

5. LEADERS COMMENTS

- 5.1 The prosperity of the New Forest District relies on there being a successful business community. Within the New Forest we have over 8,000 businesses, some of which are global, but many are small or micro and it is important that we work with all of them and support them in the very competitive economic world. I believe this strategy maintains the commitment we made, in our manifesto, to the importance of successful business for the overall prosperity of our community.

6.0 RECOMMENDED:

- 6.1 That the draft Strategy for Business, attached as Appendix 1 to this report; be approved to form the basis for consultation with the New Forest Business Partnership and other relevant partners; prior to it being reviewed by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel in the light of the responses received.

For further information contact:

Bob Jackson, Chief Executive
Tel: 023 8028 5588
E-mail: bob.jackson@nfdc.gov.uk

Flo Churchill, Executive Head Economy
Housing and Planning
Tel: 023 8028 5588
E-mail: flo.churchill@nfdc.gov.uk

Matt Callaghan, Business Support Officer
Tel: 023 8028 5588
Email: matt.callaghan@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None