

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2018-23**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider the Council's Economic Development Strategy for 2018-23, which is attached at Appendix 1.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Strategy sets out a vision and related activities to tackle the identified barriers to growth in five key themes. These are as follows:

- Developing a Skilled Workforce
- Increasing Growth and Productivity
- Developing Local Infrastructure
- Facilitating Vibrant Towns and Villages
- Promoting the Unique New Forest Offer

- 2.2 The Strategy highlights in particular the need to balance supporting the existing base of 9000 businesses with encouraging appropriate new investment into the District. Furthermore it recognises the special characteristics of the natural landscape whilst delivering sustainable economic growth.

- 2.3 In May a Task and Finish Group met to consider the draft Strategy, and suggested that 10 key actions be given priority focus within the Strategy. The Group was also keen to ensure that the Strategy reflected the importance of housing in economic development; details of this can be found in Section 6.8 of the document.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None directly from the Strategy.

### **4. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None directly from the Strategy.

### **6. COMMENTS OF CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

- 6.1 The Panel underlined the importance of ensuring that suitable communication and transport infrastructure was delivered to support key new developments. Consequently there would be a need to engage and influence the associated bodies to

bring about the necessary changes and make representations to them as required. Paragraph 6.18 of the Strategy has been added to reflect this.

- 6.2 It was agreed that an annual update report is received to review progress of the key themes and actions contained within.

## **7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS**

- 7.1 I fully support this strategy which has been prepared over many months and in collaboration with the New Forest business community. It covers a critical 5 year period for both the New Forest and UK economies presenting both challenges and opportunities. This Economic Development Strategy prepares the New Forest for both of these.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 That the Economic Development Strategy 2018-23, as attached as Appendix 1 to this report, be recommended for the Council for approval.

### **For further information contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

Attached