

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 6</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>02 MARCH 2023</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>CATEGORY: OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>FRANK MCARDLE (01283 595702)</b> <a href="mailto:frank.mcardle@southderbyshire.gov.uk">frank.mcardle@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>SOUTH DERBYSHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH STRATEGY</b>	
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS10,11</b>

## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 To endorse the South Derbyshire Economic Development and Growth Strategy 2023-27.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 This report seeks Member's endorsement of a new Economic Development and Growth Strategy for South Derbyshire, setting out the vision and aims for the District Council working with its partner organisations over the next five years.

## **3.0 Detail**

### **Background**

- 3.1 Recent years have been particularly turbulent. In 2016 the decision was taken that the UK would leave the European Union in 2020. Withdrawal coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 onwards and the associated economic recession. Then in 2022, Ukraine was invaded exacerbating the increasing cost of living and leading to rising energy costs, inflation and interest rates.
- 3.2 South Derbyshire's economy has proved to be relatively resilient in the face of the series of economic shocks arising from national and international events. However, these events and their impacts are continuing to unfold, leading to an uncertain economic outlook.

## Recent Events

3.3 Economic developments in South Derbyshire in recent years have included the following:

- Major investment by multi-national companies, including the upgrade of the Burnaston plant to manufacture a new Corolla model based upon the Toyota New Global Architecture automobile platform, and the development of hydrogen combustion engines at JCB Power Systems in Foston.
- Major tourism investments, including new facilities at Calke Explore and National Trust involvement in Staunton Harold and Foremark reservoirs, construction of the Piazza retail/leisure scheme at Mercia Marina, along with numerous smaller projects by individual visitor economy businesses.
- Construction of the Woodville Regeneration Route, unlocking development land on former industrial and mineral extraction sites within the Woodville Regeneration Area.
- Support for jobs and careers fairs, promoting opportunities and help available to unemployed residents.
- Nine million trees have now been planted in the National Forest, taking tree cover from 6% at its inception to 21% today, and attracting some 9 million visitors per annum.
- Regeneration of the former Drakelow power station site, one of the largest disused brownfield sites in the East Midlands, is underway.
- Key local businesses have continued their rapid growth, including Ascott Transport Limited, IVC Brunel Healthcare, Keystone Group and Roger Bullivant Limited.
- High levels of private sector house building, on sites across the District.
- South Derbyshire continues to have one of the fastest growing populations in the country, rising from 94,000 in 2011 to 107,000 in 2021.
- The Digital Derbyshire initiative has brought faster broadband to over 100,000 homes and businesses across the county.
- Delivery of an extensive programme of support to businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, including millions of pounds distributed through grants and rate relief schemes.
- Support for the South Derbyshire Business Advice Service offering advice to new and existing businesses, plus workshops for those thinking of starting in business.
- Attraction of a bottling plant to Foston to serve Lidl supermarkets, possibly the largest single investment in South Derbyshire since Toyota.
- Development of a Visit South Derbyshire website and opening of a new Visitor Information Centre in Swadlincote.
- Launch of the Creative Melbourne Gallery, exhibiting work by artists and makers, and providing space for creative businesses.
- Support for a range of town centre activities, including high profile events such as the Walking with The Snowman art trail and Melbourne Festival, together with the development of shopping guides and destination videos.
- Continued support for the East Staffordshire & South Derbyshire Business Awards, which is now well established in the local business community.
- Promotion of the national Love Your Local Market initiative, to raise the profile of markets and attract new customers and traders.
- Attraction of visitors to the area through annual events such as the National Forest Walking Festival and Heritage Open Days.

- Support for employability programmes delivered in the community, such as the Work Club and ALICE projects.
- Continued improvements to shopfronts in Swadlincote, most recently No.s 5-15 West Street, in order to enhance the visual appearance of the town centre.
- Delivery of a business start-up support programme offering expert advice and grants to prospective entrepreneurs.
- Support for the DeCarbonise programme, offering energy audits and grants to businesses to help them to reduce their carbon footprint.
- The Transforming The Trent Valley initiative has secured funding to make positive improvements for wildlife, heritage and communities in the Trent Valley.
- Local authority support for public transport services, including the Airway 9 bus service to East Midlands Airport and East Midlands Gateway business park
- Opening of the Swadlincote Innovation Centre at Bob Wheeler House on the George Holmes Business Park, offering a package of office premises and support to new entrepreneurs.
- Development of the Destination South Derbyshire website, promoting South Derbyshire to potential investors.

### **Economic Development and Growth Strategy 2023-27**

- 3.4 A new Economic Development and Growth Strategy has been developed, in consultation with local businesses and partner organisations. It is proposed that this will cover the period 2023-27, with a vision:

*To promote greater sustainable economic development and growth in South Derbyshire, in order that it becomes a more prosperous place to live, with better jobs and prospects for its residents and businesses.*

- 3.5 A copy of the proposed Strategy can be found at Appendix A, focusing upon the following key themes:

- business support and productivity
- low carbon/clean growth
- connectivity and inclusion

- 3.6 The aims of the Economic Development and Growth Strategy are expressed as ambitions, reflecting the need for the joint commitment of the public, private and voluntary/community sector organisations operating in South Derbyshire, and in some instances the availability of external funding. As such, the key delivery vehicle will be through the South Derbyshire Partnership and, in particular, the Sustainable Development Group.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **5.0 Corporate Implications**

### **Employment Implications**

5.1 There are no employment implications arising directly from this report.

### **Legal Implications**

5.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

### **Corporate Plan Implications**

5.3 The Economic Development and Growth Strategy will contribute to

- 'Our Environment' which aims to keep a clean, green District for future generations – work with residents, businesses and partners to reduce their carbon footprint; and, enhance the appeal of Swadlincote town centre as a place to visit.
- 'Our People' which aims to work with communities and meet the future needs of the District – support social mobility to ensure people have the opportunity to access skilled jobs, higher and further education.
- 'Our Future' which aims to grow our District and our skills base – attract and retain skilled jobs in the District; support unemployed residents back into work; and, encourage and support business development and new investment in the District.

### **Risk Impact**

5.4 With a growing population and a need to address climate change issues, there is a risk that South Derbyshire residents will become increasingly dependent on out-commuting to neighbouring areas to find employment opportunities.

## **6.0 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

6.1 Preparation of the Strategy involved extensive consultations with local businesses. Consultations were also undertaken with partner organisations - many of these are members of the Sustainable Development Group of the South Derbyshire Partnership which will have a key role in delivering the Strategy.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

6.2 Activities supported by the Economic Development and Growth Strategy are expected to have a range of positive equality and diversity impacts, particularly relating to enhancing employability.

### **Social Value Impact**

6.3 Activities supported by the Economic Development and Growth Strategy are expected to have a range of positive social value impacts, particularly linked to enhancing employment.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.4 Environmental sustainability considerations were a key consideration in the development of the Economic Development and Growth Strategy.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

- 7.1 The South Derbyshire Economic Development and Growth Strategy sets out a vision and aims for the District Council and its partners over the next few years, to support and enhance the local economy.

## **8.0 Background Papers**

None

## **Appendices**

- A. South Derbyshire Economic Development and Growth Strategy 2023-27.