

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE SCRUTINY**

**COMMITTEE**

**18 MARCH 2015**

**Title:** Newcastle Economic Development Strategy: Year Three Review and Year Four Action Plan

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**Introduction**

This report is made in order to provide Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Economic Development Strategy Draft Year Four Action Plan in advance of its consideration by Cabinet on 25 March.

**Background**

In May 2012, the Borough Council approved a five year Economic Development Strategy (2012-2017) in order to focus its efforts for stimulating growth and bringing jobs to the Borough (both directly and through working with partners). An annual action plan is also provided each year to show what actions are being taken to take this forward. These actions are grouped under the following four broad headings:

- Promoting enterprise and supporting local businesses to grow,
- Improving the skills of the local workforce
- Marketing and development, and
- Strengthening the vitality and appeal of the town centres.

Appended to this report is the draft Year Four Action Plan (2015-16), which also contains a summary of progress made in Year Three (2014-15). This is due to be reported to Cabinet (at its meeting on 25 March, or the following meeting if necessary), together with any comments made on the Plan by Scrutiny Committee.

**Questions to be addressed**

The Action Plan proposes action in four main priority areas (see above); members of the Committee are asked to comment on the actions proposed and to consider what other actions might be undertaken (by the Council or by its partners) in the context of these objectives and within the resources available.

**Outcomes**

That Scrutiny Committee identifies any additions or modifications to the Year Four Action Plan for consideration by Cabinet.

### Constraints

The constraints on the Borough Council's efforts to stimulate the economic regeneration of the Borough are largely resources (both financial and staff), the strength of the national and local economy, and the influence which the Council is able to bring to bear on its partners to work together to deliver joint objectives.

Key actions highlighted within the Action Plan include some committed Council expenditure:

Action	Budget
Support for the TCP Enterprize competition	£7k has been allocated from the business rates discretionary relief
Training and Business Support for existing market traders	Market Support Budget.
Work in partnership with Make It to attract new employers to the Borough and support existing businesses to expand	£13,000 within budget.
Secure agreement with HDD for the development of the Ryecroft site	Budgetary provision has been made for the necessary work to bring the project forward to the stage of a developer agreement, should the scheme proceed further funding may be required this will be subject to further Cabinet approval.
Procure external advice to carry out Keele Options appraisal and master planning study	£139,280 is allocated for the Council's contribution.
Use of the Enjoy website and promotion for tourism from the Destination Management Partnership	£3,000 within budget.
Support NTCP to apply for further funding from Arts Council England for an event in 2015	£1,000 match funding from the Strategic Investment Framework.
Work with the County Council to refurbish two town centre subways – Friar Street and Pool Dam	£106 funded from the development of Aldi.

### Conclusions

The Year Four Action Plan will be reported to Cabinet on 25 March or the following meeting if necessary. Prior consideration by this Scrutiny Committee allows members of this Committee to convey comments on the Plan and support for The Plan in advance of Cabinet consideration and allow these to be taken into account as part of the Cabinet decision making process.

### Relevant Portfolio Holder

Councillor Terry Turner, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Town Centres, Business and Customer Services.

**Background Materials**

The Economic Development Strategy 2012-17 is available on the Council's website.

**Appendices**

The draft version of the Year Four Action Plan.