

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE SCRUTINY

COMMITTEE

23 MARCH 2016

Title: Newcastle Economic Development Strategy: Year Four Review and Year Five 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 which will be considered by Cabinet 16 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 Five Action Plan (2016-17), which also contains a summary of progress made in Year Four (2015-16).

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 considers the recommendations of cabinet 16 March and identifies any additions or modifications to the Year Five Action Plan.

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 with dedicated financial commitments are:

- Work in partnership with Make It to attract new employers to the Borough and support existing businesses to expand
- Procure consultants to undertake work on the Keele master plan.
- Support BID to apply for further funding from Arts Council England for an event in 2016
- Support Go Kidsgrove to apply for Heritage Lottery funding to design and create an interactive map to promote Kidsgrove heritage and services to canal users
- Introduce software to modernise payment methods for market traders
- Use the Enjoy website and promotion for tourism from the Destination Management Partnership

Conclusions

The Year Five Action Plan is to be reported to Cabinet on 16 March, it is intended that they consider the attached draft action plan and approve for the Executive Director for Regeneration and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy People and Partnership to make any amendments following the recommendations of the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee. I verbal update will be given at the Scrutiny meeting to confirm the decision of Cabinet.

Relevant Portfolio Holder

Councillor Elizabeth Shenton, Portfolio Holder for Policy, People and Partnerships.

Background Materials

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

Appendices

The draft version of the Year Five Action Plan.