

REPORT FROM: PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY SERVICES MANAGER

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND COVID RECOVERY PLAN

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The Covid pandemic has affected the wider economy and the economy of Pendle. The report sets out a recommended approach to seek to aid economic recovery as effectively as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The Committee agree to the commissioning and production of an Economic Recovery Strategy.
- (2) That Committee approve the recommendations for financing the Strategy.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to put in place the most effective Strategy for economic recovery and the need is to do this as swiftly as feasible.

ISSUE

- 1 Pendle adopted a Jobs and Growth Strategy ("the JGS") in 2013. The JGS looked over a 10 year horizon and looked at the economy of Pendle which at the time was starting to reset itself after a prolonged period of economic recession. It was designed to address the major economic issues of the time and fitted in with the wider economic strategies that were emerging. It also fed significantly into the policies in the Local Plan. Many of the outputs sought in that have been achieved or are coming to fruition.
- 2 The JGS helped to shape our approach to growing our economic base. The Strategy was approaching the end of its timeframe and work started to update and reshape it during the early part of 2020.

- 3 During 2019 there were a number of economic strategies that were also in a situation where they needed to be refreshed such as the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan as well as the LEP Business Plan.
- 4 Lancashire had had a Growth Deal agreed and projects financed by this were being brought forward including projects in Pendle eg parts of Brierfield Mill. Regionally the Greater Lancashire Plan was starting to be developed whilst nationally the first Local Industrial Strategies ("LIS") were being approved (Greater Manchester, West Midlands) and work on a Lancashire LIS was being progressed with the production of the evidence base. All this was in parallel with the uncertainty of an unknown Brexit situation.
- 5 The Covid pandemic has changed things considerably. The impacts on the economy are wide ranging. Some of them are known such as the immediate impacts on our aerospace industry and on the leisure economy. Some impacts will increase in severity when for example the furlough schemes come to an end. Many impacts will be longer term in for example areas such as education.
- 6 People and businesses have been assisted in the short term by the financial measures that have been temporally put in place. There is now a need to look towards the short and medium term to look at how we can most effectively use our resources, those of other agencies and importantly the private sector to hasten economic recovery.
- 7 We have been engaged with producing the evidence base for the Town Deal which includes evidence on the economic impacts of the pandemic. That evidence needs to be built on for the whole of Pendle and placed into a package of tangible measures to aid our economy.
- 8 Whilst we have a good understanding of the impacts of Covid that needs to be put into an economic recovery strategy. Having external expert help in delivering this would ensure that we get the most robust and viable strategy we can to help our economy recovery. It is recommended that we engage consultants to assist us in producing an recovery strategy.
- 9 We would recommend that the Strategy is produced with the Vision Board which comprises of a range of people mostly from our business community. The Vision Board is best placed to help us understand the impacts the Pandemic is having on individual businesses.
- 10 A well placed and structured Plan would also allow us to focus on our priorities for future schemes. This in turn would better place us to pursue fu8nding opportunities as and when they emerge,
- 11 The evidence underpinning it would involve research into the impacts of Covid but fundamentally would also need to include direct input from the business community through interviews with them and workshops on themes such as impacts on the leisure sector.
- 12 The Recovery Strategy would look at the need for interventions in the economy and how they could be delivered in the economic environment we work in. The proposal is then to work around considering four thematic priorities:
 - Our Place
 - Our Business
 - Our People
 - Our Connectivity

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: There are no policy implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Financial: Building on the work undertaken as part of the Nelson Town Investment Plan, the Council has retained Hatch Urban Solutions to support the delivery of the Economic Recovery and Development Strategy. Pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 18.7 the Corporate Director has agreed this alternative arrangement to the normal requirement to obtain three written quotations for the engagement of the consultants recognizing the need for flexibility on account of the work already undertaken by them.

The cost of undertaking this work is estimated at £15k and will be funded jointly by the Pendle Vision Board, using funding allocated by the Council to support the work of the Vision Board and a grant from the Local Government Association.

Legal: There are no policy implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Risk Management: The economic development of the Borough is a key part of the Council's Strategic Plan. In particular, it states that the Council will work with our public sector and private sector partners to generate jobs and economic and housing growth in Pendle in a way that secures its long-term economic, environmental and social wellbeing. In view of this, the Council's Strategic Risk Register includes a risk that a failure to develop economic and housing growth risks the future sustainability of the Borough's economy. The development and subsequent delivery of the Economic Recovery and Development Strategy is one way in which the Council will mitigate this risk.

Health and Safety: There are no health and safety implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Sustainability: The Economic Recovery and Development Strategy will consider opportunities for clean and green growth given emerging the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and the need to respond to climate change matters.

Community Safety: There are no community

Equality and Diversity: Acknowledging that economic growth should benefit all parts of the Borough's communities, the Economic Recovery and Development Strategy will need to recognise the diversity in Pendle's different places and provide for inclusive growth opportunities particularly given the different strengths/weaknesses of the local economy.