

SUBJECT:	<i>Chiltern DC and South Bucks DC Joint Economic Development Strategy</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Leader – Cllr Bagge</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Interim Director of Services - Anita Cacchioli</i>
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WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>All</i>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To Consider the response of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and The Planning Policy Joint Member Reference Group (due to links with the emerging Local Plan) to the proposed Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017-2026 (Appendix 1) and to note the initial Action Plan (Appendix 2).

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet recommend to Council approval of The Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017-2026.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 At its meeting on 8th February 2017, Cabinet considered and approved the Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017 to 2026 in order that it may be considered by its Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who would also receive the initial Action Plan.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 7th February Chiltern District Council's Cabinet resolved that the Strategy be adopted, subject to no changes being suggested during consultation with the Chiltern Services Overview Committee and South Bucks Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet meeting.
- 2.3 Due to links with the emerging Local Plan, the Strategy was also referred to the Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group at its meeting on 8th March for consideration.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The adoption of a strategy to reinforce the commitment and work towards achieving the vision contained in the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Business Plan (2017-2020) and Joint Sustainable Community Strategy 2013-2026 as well as the recommendations of the Councils' 2014 Peer review and to support the emerging Local Plan is recommended.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks sets out the two Councils' economic development priorities for 2017–2026, presents the economic opportunities for the districts as well as their strengths, weaknesses and the threats they face.

- 4.2 The Economic Development Strategy considers the Councils' roles in shaping economic growth that is appropriate and beneficial for the two districts, residents and businesses while ensuring that the local economy remains competitive and can continue to be largely self-managing but directed to serve the needs of the community.
- 4.3 The Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy shares the vision of the districts' Joint Business Plan, that by 2026 the districts will continue to be "prosperous and diverse economies that encourage local employers and small businesses". It also addresses the Joint Sustainable Community Strategy aspiration of "supporting the local economy to continue to thrive and provide local jobs for local people".
- 4.4 The Councils' emerging joint Local Plan is seeking to plan to meet the needs for employment and local businesses to 2036 within the context of a step change in housing delivery, increasing needs for jobs, a highly-constrained area with limited space for employment development and challenges of competing land uses, viability, supply and infrastructure needs. The Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and could be an important part of the evidence base to support delivery of the plan objectives and proposals.

5. Content of Report

- 5.1 At its meeting on 20th March 2017 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation on the research findings and consultation responses that had informed the strategy, they also considered the proposed Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017 -2026 and noted the initial Action Plan.
- 5.2 Members were advised that due to links with the emerging Local Plan, the Strategy was also referred to the Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group which considered the Strategy at its meeting on 8th March. The Committee were advised that the Planning Policy Member Reference Group welcomed the Strategy, there was general support and agreement with the findings, which would be used to inform the draft local plan, in addition Overview and Scrutiny noted that the Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group made the following comments:
- 5.3 a) The Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group welcomes and supports the Economic Development Strategy as part of the evidence base for the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan and that the Strategy objectives where relevant align with evidence base findings so far for the Local Plan. As such the Economic Development Strategy would inform the draft Local Plan in due course.
- b) The Economic Development Strategy's consideration of tourism in the Districts was particularly welcomed and Cabinets were encouraged to seek to develop this part of the Economic Development Strategy through any further reviews and engagement with local businesses and organisations where relevant.
- c) The Economic Development Strategy was supported as part of potential evidence for delivery of the Local Plan proposals and policies, themselves informed by the Economic Development Strategy. For example, helping to enable an Innovation Centre or the provision of incubation or business units. The Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group requested that when and if cabinets consider council scope for involvement in Bucks Advantage or other

types of delivery vehicles that the potential for furthering Economic Development Strategy objectives and delivery of related parts of the Local Plan be taken into account.

d) Future monitoring and updates of the Economic Development Strategy to be supported as the document needs to be kept up to date and justified if it is to continue to have weight in the consideration of planning decisions.

5.4 Overview and Scrutiny welcomed the Strategy and noted that an Action Plan had been developed that would be used to deliver the economic strategy. They supported the views of the Joint Planning Policy Reference Group, and highlighted the following actions:

- Encouragement of the most appropriate take up of telecoms, broadband and mobile connectivity by home based businesses
- The need for better data infrastructure
- The need to ensure that investment takes place in communications infrastructure of all kinds, (not just broadband)
- The need for local employment and affordable housing so that residents could live and work in the districts sustainably,
- Promotion of tourism
- The Committee stressed the importance of ensuring the on-going measurement of the economy's performance against the strategic objectives.

5.5 The Committee noted there was no specific resource to deliver the strategy and that it would be included in service plans across the Councils. The actions would be progressed and monitored within service areas as part of the annual review process. It was envisaged that the actions would evolve over time in line with the broad direction of the strategy, informed by further reviews and engagement with local businesses and organisations.

5.6 In addition, the Committee felt that the following information should, where possible/available, be used to help inform the Strategy:

- Number of residents who work and live in the District once homeworkers have been excluded.
- With regards to the data on sufficiency of broadband speed, a request was made that this information be broken down to separate out home based businesses.

5.7 The data on homeworkers in each of the districts is available from the Census. Table 13 of the strategy document identifies the number and percentage of residents that both live and work in each of the districts. In Chiltern the total shown includes 7,343 that work "mainly at or from home" while in South Bucks it is 5,354.

5.8 In relation to sufficiency of broadband speed, it has not proven possible to obtain data of sufficient granularity to be able to separate out home based businesses. We are able to identify that at 88.2% South Bucks superfast coverage is below the national (93.0), regional (95.0) and county level (90.0), with Chiltern at 92.4%. (source Think Broadband) This data supports the findings in the Strategy and initial Action Plan activity.

- 5.9 Information has been requested at a postcode level from Connected Counties, the more postcode level information may (or may not) suggest some fine tuning of the Action Plan specifically with regard to home based businesses and connectivity. At the meeting it was acknowledged that availability and take up were two quite different things, as a consequence an additional activity has been added to the Action Plan relating to ensuring that local residents are aware of the options available locally.
- 5.10 At its meeting of 21st March Chiltern District Council's Service Overview Committee welcomed the Strategy and Action Plan, supported the views of the Joint Planning Policy Reference Group, noted the observations of SBDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out above and request that the additional information referred to in 5.6 be provided to help inform the Strategy.

It resolved to note the proposed Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks councils 2017-2026 and the initial Action Plans.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultation with business and other key stakeholders is imperative in the development of a credible economic strategy. In addition to internal consultation with officers and councillors, a cross section of the business community and representative organisations from across Chiltern and South Bucks were consulted through on line and telephone surveys. The online survey received 219 responses split evenly across both districts and covering most of the wards. There had also been an additional telephone survey with 266 participants that had fed into the research findings. In addition, there were more interactive focus group and face to face consultations with larger business' in each of the districts and with partners including Bucks Business First, Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and Chiltern Chamber of Commerce contributing. Whilst participants in the online survey were self-selecting, the findings from all sources were still considered significant, particularly with the inclusion of the telephone sample that was fully stratified and weighted.

7. Options

- 7.1 To Approve the Economic Development Strategy, themes and actions and recommend to full Council for adoption.
- 7.2 To Approve the Economic Development Strategy, themes and actions with amendments and recommend to full Council for adoption.
- 7.3 The adoption of a Strategy to reinforce the commitment and work towards achieving the vision contained in the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Business Plan (2017-2020) and Joint Sustainable Community Strategy 2013-2026 as well as the recommendations of the Councils' 2014 Peer review and to support the emerging Local Plan is recommended.

8. Corporate Implications

Financial

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from the adoption of the Economic Development Strategy, the financial implications of any future projects that may arise from the Strategy will be considered at the time with separate business cases presented for approval as required. The Strategy could assist the Councils in seeking external funding opportunities that may arise and in discussions with others such as the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Legal

- 8.2 Economic Development activities are not a "statutory duty" of Chiltern or South Bucks Councils; however, within the Local Government Act 2000 all local councils were given legal powers to allow them to safeguard the "economic, social and environmental well-being" of their local areas. This was superseded by The general power of Competence; a power available to local authorities in England to do "anything that individuals generally may do". It was provided for in the Localism Act 2011. It was brought into force for local authorities on 18 February 2012.
- 8.3 The Strategy would support the preparation and delivery of the employment/economic objectives of the Local Plan, the preparation of which is a statutory requirement. The Strategy will form part of the Council's formal Budget and Policy Framework, reinforcing the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Business Plan (2017-2020) and Joint Sustainable Community Strategy 2013-2026. As such, consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required under the Council's Constitution. The Strategy will need to be reconsidered by Cabinet before firm proposals are recommended to full Council for adoption.

Risk Assessment

- 8.4 Minimal risk as the Councils are committed to supporting business as set out in the existing Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Business Plan (2017-2020). The Strategy could also de-risk to a degree the soundness of the Local Plan as to meet the test of soundness the Council will need to be able to demonstrate that it can be deliverable.

9. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 9.1 Prosperous and diverse economies that encourage local employers and small businesses so we can protect the areas' economy for the future and achieve a better balance between the jobs available and the people to fill them;
- 9.2 High quality education and lifelong learning which improves people's lives, enabling them to make well-informed decisions and play their full part in the community;
- 9.3 A wide range of high quality housing, including a good supply of affordable homes to help meet community needs and maintain our services and communities;
- 9.4 Effective and targeted transport solutions, including a well-maintained transport infrastructure with improved north-south and east-west links;

10. Next Step

10.1 To recommend adoption of the Economic Development Strategy to full Council. To present the strategy and Action Plan to the Joint Strategic Partnership, share with other key partners and take into account in the service planning process, with progress against objectives reviewed annually and shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to SBDC Cabinet of 8th February 2017 and Minutes there of • Report to SBDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20th March 2017 and Minutes there of • Minutes of CDC Cabinet 7th February and Services Overview of 21st March 2017 • LGA peer Review 2014 • Emerging Local Plan documents and evidence base http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036 • Chiltern & South Bucks Economy Survey, 2016 • Buckinghamshire Business Survey, 2016 • Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Business Plan (2015-2026) http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3820&p=0 • Joint Community Strategy 2013 http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3250&p=0 • HalifaxQualityofLifeSurvey2016 http://static.halifax.co.uk/assets/pdf/mortgages/pdf/161217-Halifax-Quality-of-Life%202016-FINAL.pdf • National Infrastructure Commission, Connected Future (2016) on 5G telecommunication technology https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/577906/CONNECTED_FUTURE_ACCESSIBLE.pdf • paragraph 3.16 of the 2016 Autumn Statement: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571559/autumn_statement_2016_web.pdf • IDBR, ONS, 2016, DWP, 2016, Business Demography, 2016, MYPE, ONS, 2016, APS, ONS, 2016, ASHE, 2016 • Regional Accounts, ONS, 2016, Experian Local Market Forecasts ©, September 2016, APS, ONS, 2016, DWP, 2016, Business
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	<p>Demography, 2016, Companies House, 2016, ASHE, 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRES, ONS, 2016 • SNPP, ONS, 2016 • Business Demography, ONS, 2016 • Census 2011, ONS, 2014 • Origin-Destination, Census 2011, ONS, 2014 • Indices of deprivation, DCLG, 2015 • https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464597/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Research_Report.pdf • ERC's Growth Dashboard (2016): http://www.enterpriseresearch.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/ERC-UK-Local-Growth-Dashboard-FINAL.pdf • Theresa May's 2016 speech to CBI for the importance of Scale Ups: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/cbi-annual-conference-2016-prime-ministers-speech <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32457/11-1429-strategy-for-uk-life-sciences.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Secretary Sajid Javid speech https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/manufacturing-doing-what-works <p>"Fixing the Foundations" the Government's 10 point plan for raising rural productivity https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/454866/10-point-plan-rural-productivity-pb14335.pdf</p> <p>Page 25 Chancellors Autumn Statement https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571559/autumn_statement_2016_web.pdf</p> <p>https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-bucks,E07000006</p> <p>page 11 of the Midlands Engine Strategy</p>
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