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| Committee(s): Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee | Date: 24 November 2021 |
| Subject: Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025 | Wards Affected: All |
| Report of: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy) | Public |
| Report Author: Name: Laurie Edmonds, Corporate Manager (Economic Development) Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: laurie.edmonds@brentwood.gov.uk | For Decision |

Summary

The Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-25 was adopted in January 2020 and outlined the Council's key corporate priorities and objectives. A key priority is to grow our economy. This report seeks approval to adopt an Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025, which will complement and underpin the Corporate Strategy.

The Economic Development Strategy provides greater detail on how we will grow the economy, combined with other priorities to protect our environment, develop our communities, improve our housing, and deliver an effective & efficient council.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- R1. Adopt the Economic Development Strategy as set out in Appendix A.**
- R2. Approve that delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director of Planning and Economy, in consultation with the Chair of Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, to make minor artwork and formatting changes to the Economic Development Strategy in advance of publication.**

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The Council's Corporate strategy 2020-2025 was adopted in January 2020 and defines the Council's priorities for the next five years. Critical to the delivery of this strategy is a set of supporting strategies that assist with delivery of these priorities.

2. The Council's previous Economic Strategy expired in 2020.
3. The new Economic Development Strategy focuses on the three key objectives of the 'Growing Our Economy' corporate priority:
 - a) Promoting Brentwood as a place to set up and do business from;
 - b) Enabling the growth of existing businesses; and
 - c) Encouraging the creation of new enterprises and inward investment.
4. Each theme provides a set of priorities and objectives that will deliver effective delivery of the strategy.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

5. The Council's Economic Development Strategy has come to an end and needs refreshing.
6. The Strategy has been designed to be a short document which can be used to underpin specific action plans or be adapted to future changes in the economy arising from changes in national and international policy and financial circumstances. Objectives will be supported by a work programme providing more detail and defined targets.
7. The three 'Growing Our Economy' themes were created before the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommended set of priorities and objectives take into account the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy and support the recovery of a thriving borough business community.
8. Several reports and technical studies have helped underpin the new Economic Development Strategy, including the Council's emerging Local Development Plan, Economic Development Study (Leeside Consulting, March 2020) and the Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone Place Shaping Audits (Savills Place, March 2020). Update reports on the process of preparing an Economic Development Strategy were regularly brought to Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and some during. During the pandemic the resource of the Economic Development team was reprioritised towards business support. Outputs from that support and work to continue objectives towards growing the economy were presented to committee in March 2021. Work to prepare the Economic Development Strategy has since been resumed leading up to this report.

Reasons for Recommendation

9. The Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025 is critical to the delivery of the Corporate Strategy 2020-2025.

Consultation

10. Key stakeholders from partner organisations, such as the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce and Brentwood Business Partnership, have been consulted through a series of workshops in 2020 and 2021.

References to Corporate Strategy

11. The Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025 supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-25. The strategy aligns with the 'Growing Our Economy' theme but will influence delivery of projects against a wide range of corporate priorities.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and S151 Officer

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12. The resource required to deliver the Economic Development Strategy objectives is being considered as part of the budget setting process. Additional reserves for economic development have been approved by the Council to deliver town and village centre schemes that provide for business support and economic growth. Projected costs of undertaking further work are part of the economic development budget.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Corporate Manager (Democratic Services) and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 3125741/claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk

13. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)

Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

14. The economic implications are contained within this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager (Communities, Leisure and Health)

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15. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
 - a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

16. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for b) or c), although it is relevant for a).

17. The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

Background Papers

- Item 121, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 10 July 2019, Economic Development Update
- Item 167, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 11 September 2019, Economic Development Update
- Item 268, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 27 November 2019, Economic Development Update
- Item 303, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 8 January 2020, Economic Development Update
- Item 370, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 12 February 2020, Economic Development Update
- Item 427, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 18 March 2020, Economic Development Study
- Item 431, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 18 March 2020, Place Audits of Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone
- Item 495, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 9 September 2020 July 2019, Economic Development / Place Audit Update

- Item 746, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 17 March 2021, Year in Review 2020-21

Appendices to this report

- Appendix A: Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025